

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPAL ETHNICITY AND OTHER  
CHOSEN DEMOGRAPHICS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AS  
MEASURED BY THE TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY'S  
ACCOUNTABILITY RATING SYSTEM IN  
PREDOMINANTLY HISPANIC PUBLIC  
HIGH SCHOOLS IN TEXAS**

A Dissertation

by

CHRISTOPHER ADRIAN TRESSLAR

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2010

Major Subject: Educational Administration

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	John Hoyle
Committee Members,	Virginia Collier
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	Ben Welch
Head of Department,	Fred Nafukho

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**ABSTRACT**

The Relationship Between Principal Ethnicity and Other Chosen Demographics and  
Student Achievement as Measured by the Texas Education Agency's

Accountability Rating System in Predominantly Hispanic

Public High Schools in Texas. (May 2010)

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Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. John Hoyle

The focus of this study was to examine the relationship between principal ethnicity and other chosen demographics (community type of the school, average years of teacher experience, and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged) and student achievement as measured by the Texas Education Agency's (TEA's) accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. The study sought to identify causal factors in relation to campus accountability rating and principal ethnicity in an effort to determine if principal ethnicity had an impact on student achievement in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas.

The study examined data obtained from the Texas Education Agency for the 2007-2008 school year. There were 335 schools that met the criteria set forth for the study. The findings of the study stated there was no statistically significant relationship between principal ethnicity and student achievement as measured by the TEA's

accountability system. There were some significant statistical findings in relation to principal ethnicity, accountability rating and indicators of community type of school, years of teacher experience, and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged. Moderate relationships were found between community type and accountability rating and between community type and ethnicity of the principal. There were also significant relationships found between accountability rating and average years of teacher experience as well as principal ethnicity and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged. There was no significant finding between principal ethnicity and average years of teaching experience. There was also no significant finding in relation to accountability rating and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged.

The growing number of Hispanic students entering schools is leading to more campuses becoming predominantly Hispanic in student population. The achievement gap between Hispanic students and White students has continued to be an ongoing problem and important issue. The findings of this study show that ethnicity of the principal does not have an impact on student achievement in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. Hiring administrators should focus on hiring school leaders who possess identified characteristics that lead to improved student achievement.

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to:

My grandmother, Maria Theresa Avalos Tresslar, for your support and unwavering belief in me even when it was impossible to have such belief.

My children, Derek, Danielle, and Desiree, whose existence alone saved me from myself. You are my joy in this life.

My parents, for believing in the value of education and continuing to push me and not accept my failings despite my determination to indeed fail. I was not an easy child to raise, but my mother in particular tried to always see the best in me when others could not and I thank you for this.

Nick Tresslar, my only sibling and a great friend through the best and worst of times. I was blessed to have you as my brother.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all of my fellow classmates who inspired me to complete this work: Vernon Rogers for being one of three people I consider a true friend. Frank Solano for also being a great friend and confidant for over 20 years...we are old!

I would like to thank all of the members of my committee for your help in getting this study completed: Dr. Virginia Collier, thank you for reminding me that it is determination above all else that will get me through this project. Dr. Mario Torres, I want to thank you for making all of your classes interesting and allowing me to voice my thoughts. Dr. Ben Welch, thank you for your time, insights, and most of all your kindness.

Finally, Dr. John Hoyle, thank you for agreeing to be my chair when I was not sure what I was going to do and I felt as if I was aimlessly drifting. Thank you for your guidance and support during this process and your critical feedback. I will always remember you as one of the most knowledgeable people I have ever known, but more importantly to me, one of the most approachable and “real” people I have known as well. Thank you for all of your help.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of the Study

Education has long been a key to raising one's standard of living. Education can offer a means and way to a better life and having an educated population is crucial to any society maintaining or improving its place in the global economy. One of the most important challenges facing the United States is access to an equal quality education to all populations. The reality, however, is that an equal quality education has not been available for many generations and many minority populations (Paredes Scribner, 1995).

Not all students come from the same backgrounds and family situations and, therefore, have very different needs. The push for more accountability and the implementation of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) in 2001 has forced school leaders to focus on traditionally lower performing subgroups of students (U.S. Department of Education, 2001b). The Federal government has enacted laws that now mandate that schools must make real efforts to close the achievement gap between White students and minority populations. School leaders play an important and crucial role in this process. In order to effectively lead this change, school leaders must understand the populations entering into their schools each day and how these populations are rapidly changing. If there are particular traits or characteristics that leaders can possess that prove to be more effective in raising student achievement in schools with large minority

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This dissertation follows the style of *The Journal of Educational Research*.

populations, school district leaders need to be aware so that better hiring decisions may be made.

The demographics of the United States are changing, and in Texas this is especially true as more and more children being born are of color (Hodgkinson, 2000). The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that by 2025, 38% of the population will be people of color and by 2050, 47% of the U.S. will be minority (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The minority group with the greatest rate of growth is Hispanics (Pratt & Rittenhouse, 1998). Texas as a state is presently 51% minority with Hispanics making up 36% of the population, and the percentage of Hispanics will continue to increase (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Texas has experienced a substantially larger increase in non-Anglo/White population in both the 1980s and 1990s, and this trend is expected to continue in the future (Murdock, 2002). Murdock (2002), also noted that Texas has the second largest Hispanic population in the nation and second highest growth rate of Hispanics, and Texas schools are quickly becoming minority-majority with Hispanic students making up the greatest number of students. By the year 2010, half of the children in Texas will be Hispanic and that number will continue to increase due to immigration and the higher birth rate of Hispanics (Klauke, 1989). There will be an increasing number of schools in Texas that are predominantly Hispanic in student makeup. Murdock (2002) projects that 66% of public elementary and secondary students will be Hispanic in Texas by the year 2040.

These schools will require the kind of leadership necessary to close the persistent achievement gap that exists between White and Hispanic students. School leadership can

have a real and measurable positive relationship on student achievement in all schools (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Knowing that school leadership can in fact influence student performance leads to the need to understand what makes up an effective school leader. The first step in defining effective school leadership is to attempt to define leadership itself, articulating what leadership looks like in different settings and situations, and how it can be used to improve outcomes.

Leadership can be difficult to define as evidenced by the large varying amount of definitions and descriptions that exist on the subject. There are numerous definitions of what leadership is and what it consists of, and virtually everyone who has studied the topic has a definition (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). During their study of leadership, Bennis and Nanus (1985) found more than 350 definitions of leadership. Leadership is defined in *Webster's Dictionary* (2002) as, "the capacity to lead others to a common goal" (p. 660). Organizational leadership is the same concept applied to any organization with established goals and this, of course, includes schools. The study of leadership has been debated and discussed for centuries and researchers have attempted to define and quantify the traits and characteristics that make up an effective leader (Bass, 1990). With so many definitions of leadership, they can vary greatly by organization type and purpose, but one thing is clear in all organizations: they are all influenced by leadership and the practices of those in positions of influence (Reeves, 2002). Here is a sampling of definitions of leadership from some of the leading experts on the subject:

I'm talking about *leadership* as the development of vision and strategies, the alignment of relevant people behind those strategies, and the empowerment of individuals to make the vision happen, despite obstacles. This stands in stark contrast to *management*, which involves keeping the current system operating

through planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling, and problem-solving. Leadership works through people and culture. It's soft and hot. Management works through hierarchy and systems. It's harder and cooler. (Kotter, 1999, p. 10)

Most management leaders agree that leadership is *the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation*. From this definition of leadership, it follows that the leadership process is a function of the *leader*, the *follower*, and other *situational* variables. (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993, p. 93)

Leaders in learning organizations...focus predominantly purpose and systemic structure. Moreover, they "teach" people through the organization to do likewise. (Senge, 1990, p. 353)

Leaders are the architects of improved individual and organizational performance. (Reeves, 2002, p. 12)

As illustrated, there are many definitions of leadership, but one thing is clear: An effective leader of an organization can influence positively or negatively the effectiveness and outcomes of the organization (Marzano et al., 2005; Reeves, 2002).

Schools are no different than any other organization in the fact that they can be influenced by the leader of the building and organization. It has long been felt that an effective principal is necessary for a school to be successful and the principal is often considered one of the most important and influential persons in a school (Leithwood & Janzi, 2000; Roe & Drake, 1980). The McREL Institute published a policy brief based on a meta-analysis of studies and found the principal to be the second most influential factor on student learning only behind the classroom teacher (Miller, 2003). There have been numerous studies that have identified common characteristics of effective schools as well as some common traits the leaders of those campuses possess. Some of the most common include having: (a) a clear mission and goals, (b) overall climate of the school

and climate in individual classrooms and departments, (c) the attitudes and ideals of the teaching staff, (d) the classroom instructional practices of the teachers, and (e) the organization and delivery of the curriculum and instruction (Marzano et al., 2005; McEwan, 2003).

Given these commonly held beliefs that school leaders can impact achievement of students, it could be assumed that the principal has a direct impact on student achievement. However, not all studies and researchers have come to that conclusion, Cotton (2003) found that most of the principal's influence on student achievement is indirect as she stated citing her work and others':

In general, these researchers find that, while a small portion of the effect may be direct – that is, principals' direct interactions with students in or out of the classroom may be motivating, inspiring, instructive, or otherwise influential – most of it is indirect, that is, mediated through teachers and others. (p. 58)

Knowing that the principal can impact student performance, there must be some definable attributes and behaviors that successful and effective principals share. Through a meta-analysis of several studies on leadership and its impact on learning, Marzano et al. (2005) examined which characteristics and behaviors had the biggest impact on student achievement. These researchers found several principal behaviors and attributes that affected performance in varying degrees. They did not identify any findings in terms of gender, race, or ethnicity of the principal and how those factors may relate to student performance academically.

The culture of a school can have an impact on student achievement and how students learn (Gay, 2000). Students from minority backgrounds often come from a culture of learning that does not conform to the majority, and this can impact their

learning and ultimately their achievement in school. Some believe that a principal or person of influence in the school from the same background can relate better and in turn improve the culture of a building in relation to minority students. A school leader from a similar culture may understand minority students' needs in a better way and be able to make decisions based on this personal knowledge they share with these students (Garcia, 1999). With the changing demographics of the nation and in particular Texas, this is an interesting assertion. The Hispanic achievement gap in relation to White students has become smaller, but is still a major problem in schools (Haycock, 2001). Only 63% of Hispanic students graduate high school compared to 88% for White students (U.S. Department of Education, 2000). This disturbing and alarming trend must be addressed further. Defining school leader traits that enable Hispanic students to perform at a higher level will help close this achievement gap in the future.

The focus of this research was to examine the relationship between the school instructional leader's ethnicity and student achievement in Texas public high schools that have a predominantly, greater than 49%, Hispanic student population. This relationship was examined based on accountability rating assigned to predominantly Hispanic public high schools by the Texas Education Agency as well as other factors including community type, teacher experience, and percent of economically disadvantaged students. This study aims to identify the relationships these variables have on student achievement in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by reviewing literature on the subject and new findings obtained by empirical research.



### **Statement of the Problem**

The U.S. Census Bureau (1998) estimates that by 2025, 38% of the population will be people of color or of minority status, and by 2050, 47% of the U.S. will be minority. More recent U.S. Census Bureau (2008) projections have Hispanics being the largest segment of the minority population and predict Hispanics will make up 30% of the U.S. population by 2050. By the year 2050, 62% of children are expected to come from some minority ethnicity with 39% of those expected to be of Hispanic classification which is up from 22% in 2008 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). In 2005, less than half of the population in Texas was White and by the year 2040, Hispanics are by themselves expected to be 59% of the population. Texas schools are quickly becoming minority-majority with Hispanic students making up the greatest number of students. In the near future, the majority of Texas school children will be Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). Murdock (2002) projects that 66% of public elementary and secondary students will be Hispanic in Texas by the year 2040. These majority-minority schools will require the kind of leadership necessary to close the persistent achievement gap that exists between White and Hispanic students.

Students of color have higher drop-out rates and come from backgrounds of poverty and violence on a more consistent basis than their White counterparts (Williams & DeLacey, 1996). Many Hispanic students also score well below White students on state standardized tests, and this has been the case for many years (Haycock, 2001). With the growing number of Hispanic students in Texas schools, it is even more important to find strategies to improve achievement for Hispanic students (Banks, 1995). School

leaders are an integral part of student performance, and there are characteristics that make principals more effective in increasing student achievement (Marzano et al., 2005).

With the passage of *No Child Left Behind*, the federal government got involved in setting standards that all students and student subgroups must meet. These standards included testing at least 95% of students in subgroups with at least one hundred students by racial identification, limited English proficiency, and limited socioeconomic status (U.S. Department of Education, 2001a, 2001b). If schools fail to meet the set criteria, they can be sanctioned. School leaders must find meaningful ways to improve the performance of Hispanic students. If there are leadership characteristics that are more effective in helping Hispanic students' achievement, these characteristics must be examined since Hispanic students are the fastest growing segment of Texas school populations. These hiring decisions must be based on finding leaders who possess the skills that improve student performance. Decisions should not be based on race, ethnicity, or political reasons, but should be based on what attributes and experiences a leader possesses.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship of the principal's ethnicity and other chosen demographics (teacher experience, community type, and percent of economically disadvantaged/low socioeconomic status students) on student achievement as measured by the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas.

The McREL Institute has stated that the school leader impacts learner performance second only to the classroom teacher. Marzano et al. (2005) identified the most significant behaviors principals can demonstrate to impact student performance. Texas public high schools with an enrollment of more than 49% Hispanic students will be identified for the study. Conclusions will be made as to the degree of relationship between the principal's ethnicity and student achievement, school community type classification, average years of teacher experience, and percent of economically disadvantaged students in regard to student achievement as measured by TEA. Performance will be examined for each school and for various definable subgroups of schools. The performance rating will be identified by the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) used by TEA. Schools are rated as exemplary, recognized, acceptable, or unacceptable/low performing based on defined criteria.

### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What relationship does the principal's ethnicity have on student achievement as measured by the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
2. What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity in terms of student achievement as measured by TEA's school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas in relation to community type?

- 2a. What is the relationship between accountability rating and community type in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
- 2b. What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and community type in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
3. What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA's school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by average teacher experience?
  - 3a. What is the relationship between accountability rating and average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
  - 3b. What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
4. What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA's accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by percent of students qualifying as low socioeconomic status/economically disadvantaged?
  - 4a. What is the relationship between accountability rating and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
  - 4b. What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

## Operational Definitions

The following definitions were applied to this study.

*Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS):* This statewide system database compiles specific information regarding demographics and achievements of all Texas state independent school districts and their respective campuses. The AEIS database includes quantitative reporting on student performance from the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and demographic information from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) (TEA, 2008a).

*Accountability Rating System:* The system used by the Texas Education Agency to rate school districts and individual campuses is known as the accountability rating system. The ratings are exemplary, recognized, acceptable, and unacceptable or low performing.

*Achievement Gap:* Achievement gap is the gap in performance between minority students in comparison to White students on achievement tests in particular the TAKS exam in Texas.

*African American:* African Americans are citizens or residents of the United States who have origins in any of the Black populations of Africa. In the United States, the terms are generally used for Americans with at least partial Sub-Saharan African ancestry.

*Average Teacher Experience:* Data from PEIMS records state average years of teaching experience of teachers on a campus.

*Community Type:* As defined by Texas Education Agency, schools are placed into one of the following community types: Major Urban, Major Suburban, Other Central City, Other Central City Suburban, Independent Town, Non-Metropolitan: Fast Growing, Non-Metropolitan: Stable, Rural, and Charter School.

1. *Major Urban* - A district is classified as major urban if: (a) it is located in a county with a population of at least 735,000; (b) its enrollment is the largest in the county or at least 75% of the largest district enrollment in the county; and (c) at least 35% of enrolled students are economically disadvantaged.

Austin ISD (227901) is in Travis County, which has a population of 956,901.

Austin ISD's enrollment of 82,181 students is the largest enrollment in the county, and at least 35% of the enrolled students are economically disadvantaged.

2. *Major Suburban* - A district is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is contiguous to a major urban district; and (c) its enrollment is at least 3% that of the contiguous major urban district or at least 4,500 students. A district also is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is not contiguous to a major urban district; (c) it is located in the same county as a major urban district; and (d) its enrollment is at least 15% that of the nearest major urban district in the county or at least 4,500 students.

Castleberry ISD (220917) is in Tarrant County, which has a population of 1,716,365, but it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban.

Castleberry ISD is contiguous to Fort Worth ISD, a major urban district, and its enrollment of 3,413 students is greater than 3% that of Fort Worth ISD.

Goose Creek CISD (101911) is in Harris County, which has a population of 3,922,115 and contains at least one district classified as major urban. Goose

Creek CISD does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban, nor is it contiguous to a major urban district. Although Goose Creek CISD's

enrollment of 20,235 students is less than 15% that of Houston ISD, the nearest major urban district in Harris County, it exceeds 4,500 students.

3. *Other Central City* - A district is classified as other central city if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in either of the previous subcategories; (b) it is not contiguous to a major urban district; (c) it is located in a county with a population of between 100,000 and 734,999; and (d) its enrollment is the largest in the county or at least 75% of the largest district enrollment in the county.

Brownsville ISD (031901) is in Cameron County, which has a population 391,857. Brownsville ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in either of the previous subcategories, and it is not contiguous to a major urban district. Brownsville ISD's enrollment of 48,796 students is the largest in the county.

McAllen ISD (108906) is in Hidalgo County, which has a population of 725,978. McAllen ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in either of the previous subcategories, and it is not contiguous to a major urban district. Although McAllen ISD's enrollment of 24,902 students is not the largest in the county, it is greater than 75% of the largest district enrollment in the county.

4. *Other Central City Suburban* - A district is classified as other central city suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories; (b) it is located in a county with a population of between 100,000 and 734,999; and (c) its enrollment is at least 15% of the largest district enrollment in the county. A district also is other central city suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories; (b) it is contiguous to any other central city district; (c) its enrollment is greater than 3% that of the contiguous other central city district; and (d) its enrollment exceeds the median district enrollment of 735 students for the state.

Harlingen CISD (031903) is in Cameron County, which has a population of 391,857. Harlingen CISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. Its enrollment of 17,838 students is greater than 15% of the largest district enrollment in the county.

Port Arthur ISD (123907) is in Jefferson County, which has a population of 245,904. Port Arthur ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any



of the previous subcategories. Port Arthur ISD is contiguous to Beaumont ISD, an other central city district that also is the largest district in the county. Port Arthur ISD's enrollment of 9,097 students is greater than 3% that of Beaumont ISD and exceeds the median district enrollment for the state of 735 students.

5. *Independent Town* - A district is classified as independent town if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories; (b) it is located in a county with a population of 25,000 to 99,999; and (c) its enrollment is the largest in the county or greater than 75% of the largest district enrollment in the county.

Victoria ISD (235902) is in Victoria County, which has a population of 86,750. Victoria ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. Its enrollment of 13,541 students is the largest in the county.

Winnsboro ISD (250907) is in Wood County, which has a population of 42,124. Winnsboro ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. Its enrollment of 1,458 students is greater than 75% of the largest district enrollment in the county.

6. *Non-Metropolitan: Fast Growing* - A district is classified as non-metropolitan: fast growing if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories; (b) it has an enrollment of

at least 300 students; and (c) its enrollment has increased by at least 20% over the past five years.

China Spring ISD (161920) is in McLennan County, which has a population of 226,456. China Spring ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. China Spring ISD has an enrollment of 2,137 students, and its enrollment has increased by more than 20% over the past five years.

7. *Non-Metropolitan: Stable* - A district is classified as non-metropolitan: stable if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories, and (b) its enrollment exceeds the median district enrollment for the state.

Snyder ISD (208902) is in Scurry County, which has a population of 16,362. Snyder ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. Its enrollment of 2,584 students exceeds the median district enrollment for the state of 735 students.

8. *Rural* - A district is classified as rural if it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. A rural district has either: (a) an enrollment of between 300 and the median district enrollment for the state and an enrollment growth rate over the past five years of less than 20 percent or (b) an enrollment of less than 300 students.

Valley View ISD (049903) is in Cooke County, which has a population of 40,176. Valley View ISD has an enrollment of 682 students and an enrollment growth rate over the past five years of less than 20%.

Dew ISD (081906) is in Freestone County, which has a population of 19,643. Although Dew ISD has an enrollment growth rate over the past five years of more than 20%, its current enrollment is only 160 students.

9. *Charter School Districts* - Charter school districts are open-enrollment school districts chartered by the State Board of Education. Established by the Texas Legislature in 1995 to promote local initiative, charter school districts are subject to fewer regulations than other public school districts. Generally, charter school districts are subject to laws and rules that ensure fiscal and academic accountability but that do not unduly regulate instructional methods or pedagogical innovation. Like other public school districts, charter school districts are monitored and accredited under the statewide testing and accountability system.

George I. Sanchez Charter School (101804) is in Harris County, which has a population of 3,922,115, and the charter district has an enrollment of 633 students.

*Ethnicity*: Ethnicity is the identification of a person based on racial or cultural characteristics. For the purposes of this study, ethnicity will be defined as Caucasian/White, African American, Hispanic, or other.

*Hispanic:* Being a person of Latin decent or Spanish language and cultural background living in the United States is considered Hispanic.

*Low Socioeconomic Status/Economically Disadvantaged:* A student is reported as economically disadvantaged if he or she is: (a) eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program; (b) from a family with annual income at or below the federal poverty line; (c) eligible for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or other public assistance; (d) a recipient of a Pell Grant or comparable state program of need-based financial assistance; (e) eligible for programs assisted under Title II of the Job Training Partnership Act; or (f) eligible for benefits under the Food Stamp Act of 1977.

*Minority Student:* A minority students is any member of the ethnic/racial subgroups, other than White.

*No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB):* The NCLB was formerly the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that established federal standards of accountability for adequate yearly progress of all student subgroups for public schools.

*Predominantly Hispanic Campus:* For this study, a predominantly Hispanic campus is any campus deemed to have at least 49% of students classified as Hispanic. This was based on PEIMS and AEIS data provided by the Texas Education Agency for the 2007-2008 school year.

*Principal:* The instructional leader and chief officer of a designated school campus.

*Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS):* PEIMS is a statewide data management system for public education information in the state of Texas. For

the purposes of this study, the categories of data examined through PEIMS include student and staff demographics, student attendance, course completion data, retention, graduation rates, and dropout information (TEA, 2008d).

*Secondary High School:* For the purposes of this study, a secondary high school is any campus with grades of 9-12 in any combination. This does not include alternative schools.

*Student Achievement:* For the purposes of this study, student achievement will be defined as performance of campus and subgroup populations on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) exam.

*Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS):* TAKS is a standardized testing program implemented in the 2002-2003 academic year for all public schools in Texas. The TAKS tests are aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and are designed to test student mastery of content. The TAKS scores for a campus and district are used in assigning an accountability rating from the TEA.

*Texas Education Agency (TEA):* This agency is made up of the commissioner of education and the agency staff. TEA guides and monitors all activities and programs related to public education in Texas. The TEA administers the statewide assessment programs, maintains a data collection system on public schools, and assigns districts and campuses an accountability rating each year. The TEA is funded by both state and federal funds.

*Texas Public School:* Any public school in Texas that is part of an independent school district and governed by the Texas Education Agency.

*White:* A North American person of European descent.

### **Assumptions**

The following assumptions were made in this study.

1. The researcher was impartial and objective in the analysis of data.
2. The data published by the Texas Education Agency are accurate.
3. The methodology proposed and described offers the most logical and appropriate design for this particular research project.

### **Limitations**

The following limitations of this study were recognized:

1. The scope of this study was limited to the information and data acquired from literature review and public information published by the Texas Education Agency.
2. The scope of this study was limited to the selected public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic enrollment in the state of Texas for the 2007-2008 school year.
3. The findings of this study were based on data from one school year. Performance in that school year may not be indicative of performance in other years.

### **Significance of the Study**

The high school population of Texas students is becoming more Hispanic each year (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). There is still a large achievement gap between Hispanic students and their White classmates, and this gap will continue to exist until viable strategies that increase Hispanic students' learning are found (Lindsey, Roberts, & Campbelljones, 2005). The school principal can be one of the key factors in achievement for students in all schools (Miller, 2003). There are many best practices and measurable characteristics of effective school leaders that lead to increased student performance regardless of student ethnicity (Marzano et al., 2005).

The findings of this study showed the relationship between the principal and student achievement in public high schools in Texas with a predominantly Hispanic student population in relation to principal ethnicity and other variables. The study examined whether students in predominantly Hispanic high schools in Texas performed better when directed by a Hispanic, African American, or White principal or if there is no discernable difference based on the ethnicity of the school leader. The study also showed how students in predominantly Hispanic high schools in Texas performed in relation to the other defined variables. This information will be helpful in the hiring of school administrators to serve in schools with a majority Hispanic population.

### **Contents of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is divided into five major chapters. An introduction, a statement of the problem, the need for the study, specific research questions, assumptions and limitations, and definitions of terms make up Chapter I. Chapter II is a review of the

literature and is divided into the following sections: Hispanic students, the achievement gap, school culture, leadership (definitions, types, and leader attributes), educational leadership, principal impact on achievement, Hispanic school leaders, teacher experience, district community type classifications in Texas, and an overview of the accountability rating system for the state of Texas. Chapter III is the methodology and procedures followed for identification of the population for the study, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter IV is the analysis of data and findings from the study. Chapter V contains a summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further research followed by references.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

This review of literature was designed to provide a background of research for this study. The review of literature provides an examination of Hispanic students and their achievement in relation to majority students, the achievement gap, as well as the role culture plays in and out of school. This is followed by a discussion of leadership in general as well as leadership in the educational setting. The principal position and its influence on students' academic performance will be reviewed. An examination of the literature on Hispanic school leaders, specifically principals, will be conducted as well. The impact of teacher experience on student achievement will also be analyzed. The literature review will also offer definitions and explanations of the community type each school district in Texas is assigned to by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as well as an overview of the state accountability and rating system.

The literature review begins with a review of Hispanic students and their general characteristics as students including academic performance in comparison with majority students resulting in an achievement gap. Culture and the impact it can have on students is then discussed. This is followed by an examination of leadership, which includes: evolution of leadership, definitions of leadership, types of leadership, and leadership attributes. Educational leadership is then reviewed, which includes the impact of the principal as instructional leader and leadership traits of effective principals. This section concludes with a review of literature on Hispanic school leaders.

The final portion of the literature review contains an analysis on the impact of teacher experience on student performance. This is followed by an explanation and definitions of school community types that school districts in Texas are placed in by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). This chapter concludes with a review of the accountability system in Texas and an explanation of the ratings schools are assigned by TEA based on student performance and a closing summary of the literature review.

### **Hispanic Students**

The focus of this study is the relationship between student performance in predominantly Hispanic high schools in Texas and the ethnicity of the principal as well as other variables. The literature review begins by examining the differences in achievement traditionally between minority, in particular Hispanic, students and White students. This difference in achievement is called the “Achievement Gap” (Haycock, 2001). As previously stated, Hispanic students are the fastest growing segment of the student population in Texas. This trend shows no signs of slowing down and by the year 2040, Hispanics are projected to make up almost 60% of the overall population in Texas (Murdock, 2002). Recent U.S. Census Bureau (2008) projections have Hispanics being the largest segment of the minority population and predict Hispanics will make up 30% of the U.S. population by 2050. By the year 2050, 62% of children are expected to come from some minority ethnicity with 39% of those expected to be of Hispanic classification, which is an increase from 22% in 2008 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008).

Hispanic students are more likely to come from poverty and from a family with a lower educational attainment level than do White students. Hispanic students are also

more likely to drop out of school and to score lower on standardized achievement tests (Haycock, 2001; Williams & DeLacey, 1996). All students come to school with issues that can impact their academic performance. Minority students in general are more likely to come from poverty, single parent homes, and with less school ready skills (Paredes Scribner, 1995). In the last 20 years, school reform has focused on improving accountability and raising all students' performance. In addition, there has been more emphasis on closing the achievement gap between White students and minority students. However, much of this reform has been aimed at traditional minority populations, African Americans, and has not been successful in aiding the ever-growing Hispanic school population. More and more Hispanic students are in schools and come from backgrounds that speak a different language and have a different culture (Paredes Scribner, 1995). These are some of the factors that have led to the continued struggles of Hispanic students in comparison to White students.

There are several reasons that some Hispanic students struggle and ultimately fail in schools. Some of the most common include: (a) low expectations compared to other students, (b) language barriers, (c) ill prepared teachers and school leaders, (d) out-of-date decision-making policies, (e) lack of coordination with parents and school, (f) poor self-images, (g) negative peer pressure, (h) school tracking programs that place students in groups that are hard to break from, (i) single parent homes, and (j) more often coming from homes living in poverty. All of these factors and more lead to Hispanic students not performing as well as their White counterparts (Cummins, 1984; Duran, 1989; Figueroa & Garcia, 1994; Garcia, 1994; Reyes & Paredes Scribner, 1995; Valencia & Aburto,

1991). The problems some Hispanic students face in school only get more intense as they progress from the elementary to secondary level. As they get to the secondary level, Hispanic students are more likely to drop out for a variety of reasons. Some common reasons include: (a) instruction not being aligned to their learning needs; (b) lack of meaningful relations between parents and schools; (c) low self-esteem issues that often stem from failing classes and having to repeat them, which leads to being over age for the courses they are taking; (d) socially deviant behaviors, such as gang activity; and (e) higher teen pregnancy rates than any other group of students (Reyes & Paredes Scribner, 1995). The failure of K-12 schools to help Hispanic students succeed ultimately leads to an alarming statistic that has not changed in nearly 20 years. Only 5% to 6% of Hispanic students graduate from college, and this puts them at a distinct disadvantage in the world marketplace as well as having a negative impact on the national economy (Paredes Scribner, 1995).

The struggles of Hispanic students are amplified by the lack of school professionals with an understanding of their needs. There is a distinct lack of educational professionals who share or understand the cultural identities of these students. School professionals who share and or understand the cultural needs and differences of Hispanic students can make a positive impact on their school experiences (Garcia, 1994). As the minority population grows, especially the Hispanic population, schools are becoming majority-minority, yet only one in ten teachers is of color. Most administrators come from the teaching ranks, so this lack of teachers of color impacts the pool of professionals who will eventually be administrators as well. Only 11% of school

administrators are minorities, and only 3% of those are Hispanic, while the Hispanic student population continues to grow at a rate higher than any other group (U.S. Department of Education, 1990).

There is also a shortage of assessment professionals who understand and identify with the needs of Hispanic students. This fact often leads to an overrepresentation in special populations or a deficit-thinking approach that also leads to school failure for many Hispanic students. Assessment professionals, without a thorough knowledge and understanding of Hispanic students, many times identify these students as having a learning difficulty when in fact the struggles can oftentimes be attributed to other cultural or language issues (Paredes Scribner, 1995). Hispanic students being misdiagnosed and misplaced along with many schools' low expectations of them leads to students losing interest in school and ultimately failing and or dropping out of school (Haycock, 2001; Reyes, Scribner, & Scribner, 1999; Romo & Falbo, 1996).

There are some proven measures and strategies that can assist Hispanic students and improve their odds of success in school. In their book, *Lessons from High-Performing Hispanic Schools*, Reyes et al. (1999) reported common themes found during their study of successful schools in Texas that were predominantly Hispanic and poor. They described a school setting conducive to Hispanic students' success as a "learning community." These learning communities were anchored around four major ideas: (a) collaborative governance and leadership, (b) community and family involvement, (c) culturally responsive pedagogy, and (d) advocacy-oriented assessment and quality control. If schools can create environments where leadership includes as

many stakeholders as possible and involves family and community in meaningful ways, it greatly increases the performance of Hispanic learners. Schools that are aware of the cultural identity of their students also have higher achieving Hispanic students. Finally, schools that have well-trained assessment staff that are aware of cultural issues impacting many of their Hispanic students have fewer students misplaced and misdiagnosed and, therefore, fare much better in terms of student performance (Reyes et al., 1999).

If school personnel, and in particular school leaders, are aware of the needs and differences of Hispanic students, better decisions can be made that may lead to better academic performance. The goal of closing the achievement gap has been paramount to school reform. This “gap” in achievement between minority groups and White students is known as the achievement gap (Haycock, 2001) in education; and while it has become smaller in some areas, it continues to be a major issue (Haycock, 2001). Truly understanding students and using proven strategies that work for different subgroups can help minority students perform to a higher level and lessen this gap in achievement.

### **Achievement Gap**

For several years, there has been a significant emphasis on closing the achievement gap between White students and minority students. Significant changes are needed in the way minority children are educated in our public schools. Two trends of minority learners’ academic performance that highlight this need for change are the consistent performance patters among ethnic groups seen by various indicators of school achievement and the variance of achievement for subgroups within those ethnic groups

(Gay, 2000). Minority students, including Hispanics, continue to score below White students in all parts of state assessments (U.S. Department of Education, 2001a).

As the achievement gap was identified and much effort and resources poured into closing this gap, there was some real progress made between 1970 and 1988. During this time, the gap between African American students and White students was cut by about 50%, and the gap between Latino/Hispanic students and White students was cut by about 33%. However, the progress stopped at that point and the gap has begun to widen again since 1988 in some areas and has become stagnant in others (U.S. Department of Education, 2001a). Only 1 in 50 seventeen year old Hispanic students can read and comprehend specialized texts compared to 1 in 12 White students. In math, the gap is also significant, 1 in 30 Hispanic students can solve complex elementary algebra compared to 1 in 10 White students, and 4 of 10 Hispanic seventeen year olds have mastered the use of fractions compared to 7 of 10 White students. By the end of high school, on average, Hispanic students have reading and math abilities are comparable to those of White students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade (Haycock, 2001).

The Hispanic achievement gap in relation to White students has become smaller over the last 20 years, but still only 63% of Hispanic students graduate high school compared to 88% for White students (U.S. Department of Education, 2000). Less than 20% of Hispanic students score at or above the national proficient level, and this is far below the number of White students who score above the proficient level. Hispanic students are also much more likely to drop out of high school. The dropout rate for Hispanics born outside the United States aged 16-24 was 44% compared to 7% for non-

Hispanics as reported in a 1999 report from the National Center for Educational Statistics (Johnson, 2000). In the 2000 Census Bureau study, a comparison of subgroups aged 25 and over stated that only 57% of Hispanics had graduated high school and only 10.6% had graduated from college. In contrast, 88% of Whites had finished high school and 28% completed college (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

The achievement gap is still very much in existence and higher need minority children need better teachers and school leadership to help close and overcome the gap. The best school leaders and most prepared teachers need to be working with minority and at-risk children to get them the skills needed to be on par with their White counterparts. When the best leaders and teachers are allocated to work with these students, significant gains are made and the achievement gap is greatly decreased (Ferguson, 1998).

It has been suggested by some researchers that children of color may perform better when they have a teacher of color. A teacher of minority background can relate to and empathize with students from minority subgroups, and in turn, this boosts their academic performance (Farrell, 1990). There has been research done that found African American students learn more when they have an African American teacher as opposed to a White teacher (Dee, 2004). Some researchers found that African American students worked harder for African American teachers and that the common cultural bonds lead to increased student performance (Milner, 2006; Tillman, 2004). Having similar backgrounds can lead to teachers having high expectations of students and in turn can lead to better to student performance (Pang & Gibson, 2001).



Only 13.5% of all teachers in this country are minorities, but over 30% of students nationwide are minorities or students of color (Lenhardt, 2000). This gap is expected to grow and not decrease in the future as the minority population increases and fewer minority graduates enter the educational field for careers (Torres-Guzman & Goodwin, 1995). This trend also impacts school administrators since most of them come from the teaching staff. There will also be a smaller pool of minority qualified candidates to be principals at a time when the minority student population continues to grow (Lara-Alecio, 2002; Lara-Alecio & Galloway, 2006). These are some of the factors that lead to the achievement gap being an ongoing issue for all minority students in this country.

### **Culture**

The culture of any organization greatly influences the decision-making and procedures that an organization uses (Reeves, 2002). Gay (2000) discussed culture and the impact it has on the school environment. In the context of education, Gay (2000) used the following definition: “culture refers to a dynamic system of social values, cognitive codes, behaviors, views, and beliefs shared by a group to give order and meaning to their lives as well as the lives of others” (p. 8).

Even without being aware of it, culture determines how we think, believe, and behave which obviously impacts how we interact with others, and this is evident in teacher-to-student relations. The way we interact with others consciously or unconsciously affects how we teach and learn in the school setting (Delgado-Gaitan & Trueba, 1991). This culture can be in an individual classroom or it may apply to the

entire building. Pai (1990) stated “There is no escaping the fact that education is a sociocultural process. Hence, a critical examination of the role of culture in human life is indispensable to the understanding and control of educative processes” (p. 3).

Spindler and Spindler (1994) stress the importance of teachers to understand their own and their students’ cultures and how this understanding impacts learning in the classroom:

Teachers carry into the classroom their personal cultural background. They perceive students, all of whom are cultural agents, with inevitable prejudice and preconception. Students likewise come to school with personal cultural backgrounds that influence their perceptions of teachers, other students, and the school itself. Together students and teachers construct, mostly without being conscious of doing it, an environment of meanings enacted in individual and group behaviors, of conflict and accommodation, rejection and acceptance, alienation and withdrawal. (p. xii)

Flippo, Hetzel, Gribouski, and Armstrong (1997) stated “the relationship between literacy and culture is bidirectional. Not only will cultural diversity mediate the acquisition and expression of literacy, but literacy education will also influence and mold an individual’s cultural identity” (p. 645).

Taking the culture a student comes from into account must be at the center of decision-making when looking to improve the performance of underachieving students of color. Culture can have an impact on student learning and how students learn. Students from minority backgrounds often come from a culture of learning that does not conform to the majority, and this can impact their learning and ultimately achievement. The school leader from a similar culture may understand these students’ needs in a better way and be able to make decisions based on this personal knowledge (Garcia, 1999). Minority students can often times benefit from having a teacher or principal from a

similar background serve as a role model. These school leaders provide an example of adults like them that have achieved status and a level of success within the norms of the majority culture (Stewart, Meier, La Follette, & England, 1989; Villegas, 1998). These role models can serve as an example of academic success to minority students and research has shown the importance of both formal and informal models to students of all backgrounds (Standon-Salazar, 2004). School leaders who share a similar cultural background can shape the school and cause the school to have a culture that benefits minority students as these leaders have similar life experiences and backgrounds (Villegas, 1998).

Having school leaders with an understanding of Hispanic students and their needs, may lead to a better learning environment for students and in turn can lead to improved academic achievement. Effective leadership improves any organization and schools are complex organizations that deal in people. Having effective leadership is important in all schools and organizations, but even more so in schools that have high risk or underachieving populations. Many Hispanic students have additional needs in comparison to White students and finding leaders with the skills, regardless of ethnicity, to help them is imperative. The next section of the literature review focuses on leadership in general and in the school setting.

### **Leadership**

In looking at effective school leadership, it is necessary to first examine the evolution of leadership from its early form of simple task management to the complex multifaceted endeavor needed to run complex organizations in the present and the future.

Early study of leadership centered more on management as opposed to what is now considered leadership (Reeves, 2002). Modern management study was started by focusing on how to be more efficient in the factory setting. Frederick Taylor studied production models and ways to improve efficiency in the factory. He viewed workers as machines though and did not focus on the human element of workers or factors such as feelings, worker satisfaction, or motivation. His focus was on improving the machinery of production and a belief that workers would be more productive if they used more efficient models of production with no consideration for personal feelings. Taylor looked at leading and management in terms of a scientific model and workers were simply a part of the equation in the work model (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). One of the first to take into consideration the feelings and emotions of workers was Mary Parker Follet. While Follet still looked at increasing efficient production as the goal, she used a more human relations model to increase production. Modern day leadership uses many of the same ideas such as using worker collaboration and conflict resolution to help workers be more content on the job and in turn become more efficient and productive (Montana & Charnov, 2000).

While Taylor and Follet viewed management as a way to get workers to be more productive and efficient, they focused on the workers and what they were doing in performing the job. Henry Fayol and Luther Gulick looked at increasing production from a different point of view. They focused on how the executive or manager could impact the production of the workers through direction and command in the way duties were performed (Meier & Bohte, 2000). Fayol broke management or administration into five

basic functions: (a) planning, (b) organizing, (c) commanding, (d) coordinating, and (e) controlling. Gulick came up with a list of elements needed for administration that was similar to Fayol's. This list was longer and included: (a) planning, (b) organizing, (c) staffing, (d) directing, (e) coordinating, (f) reporting, and (g) budgeting (Meier & Bohte, 2000). These were the basic fundamentals of management theory and as one can see they focused on the manager dictating to employees ways to improve efficiency. These basics of human management changed and evolved over time; and as the human elements merged with this old style management, it became what we now call leadership.

Once researchers realized that worker feelings, emotions, and motivation did in fact impact productivity, there was further study done on the subject. Hoy and Miskel (2001) cite The Hawthorne studies as the starting point of the behavior school of management theory. The objective of the research was to study the relationship between the physical conditions of the workplace and the productivity of workers. The researchers would change physical factors such as lighting and temperature and record what effect, if any, there was on worker productivity. The study found that while physical factors did impact production, the personal relations between workers were far more powerful in influencing production. Informal organization greatly influenced productivity, and the workers' social structure dictated that they increase productivity of the group. However, workers did not want to do too much so that they would not make others in the group look less productive by comparison. The most surprising and important discovery from the studies was that worker productivity was influenced more by peer social group interaction than by money or management (Hoy & Miskel, 2001).

Further study validated that meeting the emotional needs of the worker and peer acceptance does impact worker productivity. Abraham Maslow studied the needs of people and is known for his identification of the hierarchy of needs theory and the concept of self-actualization. His hierarchy of needs is usually shown in a triangle form, with physiological needs, which would be the basic needs, on the bottom and working its way up with safety and security at level two. Level three is social needs, followed by esteem needs, and finally self-actualization at the top of the triangle. In order to reach the higher levels and eventual self-actualization, Maslow (1998) felt people must first have their lower needs met. He believed people must do what they were meant to do in order to reach self-satisfaction. When speaking of self-actualization and the relationship to organizational management, Maslow (1998) stated:

This is of course a circular relationship to some extent i.e., given fairly o.k. people to begin with, in a fairly good organization, then work tends to improve the people. This tends to improve the industry, which in turn tends to improve management of the work lives of human beings, of the way in which they earn a living, can improve them and improve the world and in this sense be a utopian or revolutionary technique. (p. 1)

Maslow believed that self-actualization can only occur when a person is able to fulfill his or her own personal life goals, and he or she does work one finds fulfilling and meaningful.

One of the first to examine decision-making and the will and choice of the worker was Chester Barnard. In his *Functions of the Executive*, he defined formal and informal organizations (Barnard, 1938). He found that oftentimes, the manager can make more problems than previously existed by making decisions on matters that do not require a decision to be made. He also found that it is important that decisions be made

by those who will be affected by the decision (Roe & Drake, 1980). Barnard's *Theory of Authority* stated that workers in fact had free will to make their own decisions despite mandates from management, and in the end, the workers themselves determined how effective management could be in directing labor (Barnard, 1938). Barnard believed that cooperation between management and workers was the path to the greatest output. In order to reach maximum output, the formal origination must work in concert with the informal organization to meet the individual's need to remain independent, have self-respect, and keep personal integrity (Barnard, 1938).

As simple management grew into what we now term leadership, different definitions and theories of what make up effective leadership developed. In the beginning of the study of leadership, many felt leaders were born instead of made or developed. It was believed that some people just innately possessed leadership skills and only certain people are able to ever possess these skills. Reeves (2002) referenced other leadership ideas of the past in his book, *The Daily Disciplines of Leadership*. He also cited the belief that some are born to lead and others to follow and the disconnect between leadership and those doing the actual day-to-day work.

In their work on management and leadership, Bennis and Nanus (1985) addressed what they called "myths of leadership." The first myth is that leadership is in fact a rare skill. While great leaders may indeed be rare, everyone has leadership potential. Some people may be leaders in one role of their lives, but not in another. Leaders are born, not made is the next myth. As addressed by Reeves (2002) and others, leadership can be learned and the skills can be developed over time with practice and

training. The belief that leaders must be larger-than-life charismatic figures is another myth. Some leaders may be charismatic characters, but most are not. When people accept someone as a leader, they want to be around that person and listen to him or her, but this does not necessarily make them charismatic. Leaders must control, prod, and manipulate the followers of the organization was another commonly held belief. Bennis and Nanus (1985) address this belief by stating: “Leadership is not so much the exercise of power itself as the empowerment of others” (pp. 224-225). Leaders should inspire others to want to work hard and meet expectations and improve rather than have to push them or use rewards and other manipulatives. The final fallacy they address is that leadership exists only at the top of an organization. This is not true, especially in big complex organizations. The larger the organization, the more levels of leadership there are and more informal leadership roles exist (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Reeves, 2002).

Reeves (2002) stated that leaders can be created and exist in various levels of an organization not only at the top. Leadership is a skill like any other that can be developed over time. Leadership is not a power one either has or does not. Leaders are made through developing effective skills and traits. You must have the skills to influence and guide others to be a real leader. By viewing leadership as a set of character traits or connected to a particular position, a belief is created that does not allow for others lacking those stated traits to attain leadership positions. It is much better for an organization to hold the belief that all members of the organization have the potential for leadership even if in fact this is not completely accurate (Reeves, 2002).



Leadership is mostly about relationships with others in the organization. Hersey and Blanchard (1993) felt leadership was the process of influencing others to meet goals. Kouzes and Posner (as cited in Bennis, Spreitzer, & Cummings, 2001) state, “At the heart of the relationship is trust. Without trust you cannot lead. Exemplary leaders are devoted to building relationships based on mutual respect and caring” (p. 85). Hoyle (2002) also emphasized the need and importance of trust, relationships, and love in creating strong organizations and leading with concern for others within the organization.

Change is part of any organization and all organizations must make changes at some point (Barth, 1990). When change is necessary, the leader must do more than speak of vision and missions. They must demonstrate through their actions the change they seek. Starting a new organization, turning around a failing organization, or improving the situation in any organization requires action and not being afraid to engage in that action. Leaders need to do what is needed when it needs to be done, not wait for permission (Bennis et al., 2001). Another important aspect of leading is the ability of the leader to manage himself before managing any others in the organization. Leaders must be aware of their own strengths and weaknesses in order to benefit the organization. Bennis et al. (2001) stated: “Self-knowledge is an essential part of becoming a leader. To become a leader you must become yourself, and this prescription is one of life’s most difficult” (p. 88).

As we move away from the old models of top down management toward the future, there are new models of leadership that emerge. The leadership models of the

future are ones of collaboration and shared leadership. When those in the organization have a voice, it makes them feel empowered and listened to even if the final decision is not what they wanted (Bair, 1992). Greenberg-Walt and Robertson (as cited in Bennis et al., 2001) stated that shared leadership “will be the leadership model of the future” (p. 140). Shared leadership can look different in various organizations. When members of the organization feel they have a voice, they feel empowered in decision-making. This model of shared or collaborative leadership is especially important in education as evidenced by the existence of site-based decision-making teams and various teams or advisory councils that exist to give voice to stakeholders (Reyes et al., 1999; Riley, 1984). Now that a basis of the change from simple management to leadership has been established, a look at some definitions of leadership is in order.

### *Definitions*

The idea of leading people to a common goal or the term leadership has been studied for centuries, and numerous researchers have attempted to define and quantify the traits and characteristics that make up an effective leader (Bass, 1990). Leadership, however, remains a difficult concept to define as it encompasses many, often different, things to different people. There are multitudes of definitions of leadership, so many that it is impossible to use only one. For nearly every person who has undertaken the study of leadership, there is a definition to match (Bass, 1998). With the seemingly countless definitions of leadership, they can vary greatly by organization type and purpose, but one thing is clear in all organizations: they are all influenced by leadership and the practices of those in positions of influence (Reeves, 2002). While doing research on the topic of

leadership, Bennis and Nanus (1985) found more than 350 definitions of leadership. When working in schools, the leader must focus on people and feeling as well as tangible results. The leader is charged with leading other people to a common goal and is not viewed as above them, but as one of them (Starratt, 2004). Organizational leadership is the concept of leadership applied to any organization with established goals (Hoy & Miskel, 2001; Reeves, 2002; Roe & Drake, 1980) and schools of course are such organizations.

Here is a sampling of definitions of leadership from some of the leading experts on the subject:

I'm talking about leadership as the development of vision and strategies, the alignment of relevant people behind those strategies, and the empowerment of individuals to make the vision happen, despite obstacles. This stands in stark contrast to management, which involves keeping the current system operating through planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling, and problem-solving. Leadership works through people and culture. It's soft and hot. Management works through hierarchy and systems. It's harder and cooler. (Kotter, 1999, p. 10)

Most management leaders agree that leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation. From this definition of leadership, it follows that the leadership process is a function of the leader, the follower, and other situational variables. (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993, p. 93)

Leaders in learning organizations...focus predominantly purpose and systemic structure. Moreover, they "teach" people through the organization to do likewise. (Senge, 1990, p. 353)

Leaders are the architects of improved individual and organizational performance. (Reeves, 2002, p. 12)

Leadership is persuasion, not domination; persons who can require others to their bidding because of their power are not leaders. Leadership only occurs when others willingly adopt, for a period of time, the goals of a group as their own. Thus, leadership concerns building cohesive and goal-oriented teams;

there is a causal and definitional link between leadership and team performance. (Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994, p. 493)

Leadership has been and can be mistaken in some organizations for eloquent speaking, buzzwords, and fancy slogans, which it is not (Gladwell, 2005). In the most basic sense, leadership is simply about getting people to do what you want and need them to do in order to meet goals (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Depending on the organization and the goals of the organization, leadership can look different and still be effective.

Starratt (2004) makes the case that leadership in the arena of education must have a “moral” quality to it and not just be about end results. Starratt (2004) states “As a *human being*, the leader is responsible for taking a stand with other human beings-not above them, not as someone removed from the human condition, but as one sharing fully in it” (p. 49). Similarly, Hesselbein (2002) stated “In the end, leadership is all about valuing relationships, about valuing people” (p. 35). The followers within an organization must believe the leader is able to meet their needs. The leader does not have to be perfect. As long as the leader and followers are connected on the goals and issues, the leader will be able to develop loyalty from the followers (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). In earlier views of leadership, leaders needed only to motivate and lead the troops, so to speak. However, the new view of leadership has changed and while the tasks of the leader may be similar and often more subtle, they are equally important. “In a learning organization, leaders are designers, stewards, and teachers. They are responsible for building organizations where people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision, and improve shared mental models – that is, they are responsible for learning” (Senge, 1990, p. 340). This new view of leadership would

mesh much more closely with the ideas of researchers that feel the human element and responsibility for others and their well being are as important as simply improving production or statistics when being an effective leader (Birnbacher, 2001; Hoyle, 1995; Starratt, 2004).

When discussing leadership for this study, it is important to understand where “leadership” evolved from and, in particular, the use of leadership in organizations such as schools. Leadership is different from management. Leadership is the evolution of simple management within organizations. Early organizational hierarchy had structures in place in which a specific person or group was in charge of making sure certain tasks were completed in a timely manner; but this task management alone does not constitute leadership. Begley (2001) described traditional management theory as “a mechanistic, short-sighted, precedent-focused and context-constrained practice” (p. 354). In direct contrast, leadership focuses on organizational structures and the needs of the individuals within the organization. Hughes (1999) contrasted management and leadership this way:

The task of running a complex operation is administration, a task with two dimensions. One dimension, embracing activities related to change and dynamism, is leadership. The other dimension, encompassing productive efforts to manage a status quo in which people can work comfortably, is management. (p. 28)

Hughes stated leadership and management are not meant to be or needed to be viewed as one being good and the other bad. Instead, they are simply different and both equally important aspects of making an organization successful. There are elements of both that must be present and many of the functions are related. Management is related to keeping

order and consistency, but leadership is creating and dealing with change (Hughes, 1999).

While some believe that management and leadership are interchangeable, Bennis and Nanus (1985) believed there were definable differences between management and leadership. In terms of managers, they stated, “They may excel in the ability to handle the daily routine, yet never question whether the routine should be done at all” (p. 21). It is important to distinguish between the skills of management and leadership. Bennis and Nanus (1985) illustrated this when they stated:

“To manage” means “to bring about, to accomplish, to have charge of or responsibility for, to conduct.” “Leading” is “influencing, guiding in direction, course, action, opinion.” The distinction is crucial. Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing. The difference may be summarized as activities of vision and judgment – effectiveness, versus activities of mastering routines – efficiency. (p. 21)

While many scholars of management and leadership believe the two are separate entities, not all are in agreement.

One leading authority on leadership sees no distinct difference between management skills and leadership. Drucker (2001) feels that leadership has less to do with certain qualities or attributes and more to do with the end product or performance. In his view, an effective leader must create, think through, guide, and communicate the mission and vision of the organization which he maintains are the same elements of a good manager. The leader must work to develop and strengthen those around him or her. Finally, the leader must trust those within the organization. Drucker (2001) feels there are shared qualities of an effective leader and an effective manager. The same qualities that are necessary to be an effective manager are the same skills needed to be an

effective leader and the judgment of being successful is the final product in both cases. He sees the skills as interchangeable and independent of each other. With an understanding of what leadership is defined as and examination of various types of leadership strategies will follow.

### *Types of Leadership*

Leadership can be examined from various points of view. Leadership can look different to different people, and it is hard to define because what one person sees as great leadership, another may not (Bennis, 1989). There is not one set of rules or a checklist one can follow to automatically become an effective leader. Leadership as a technical study has to do with the structural and organizational elements of leadership. As has been discussed, much literature focuses on the managerial aspects of leadership in an organization. Often, the management frame of leadership is associated with the issue of making change within an organization (Bencivenga, 2002). O'Connor, Mumford, Clifton, Gessner, and Connelly (1995) studied charismatic leaders in an effort to measure their impact on change within the organization.

Charismatic leaders create a vision based on their personal beliefs, self-concepts, and motives, and they use their personal influence to guide the organization in accepting these visions and goals. Managerial leadership has a direct impact on the effectiveness of the organization (Yukl, 1998). Being able manage the necessary tasks is an important and integral part of being an effective leader. Most of the work in this area is aimed at creating structures that lead to greater organizational effectiveness. Bolman and Deal (2003) stated organizational leaders must cope with uncertain, difficult to define, and

fluid ever-changing situations. Leaders must frame their issues into one of the following contexts: (a) structural, (b) human resource, (c) political, and (d) symbolic. Effective leaders are able to handle problems in all four frames.

Relational leadership provides a framework to consider the aspects of leadership dealing with relationships between people. Bair (1992) studied teachers and site-based decision teams and found that when individuals were given an opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns, they were much more likely to be pleased with the outcomes. Hoyle (2002) spoke of using love to guide decision-making in organizations. Some of the important facets of relational leadership are activity level, task competence, interpersonal competence, power orientation, valuing others, esteem status, and charisma (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2001).

Gardner (1995) identified four factors of leadership that he considered crucial to effective leadership practice: (a) leaders must be connected to their audience, (b) they must have an independent view of life and themselves in which their beliefs and values are held, (c) leaders communicate through their experiences and sharing those experiences by communicating with others, and (d) effective leaders can only feel comfortable where others have a voice and choice. Gardner (1995) also stated leaders must be comfortable with alienating some members at times and making decisions that may cause isolation at times. Effective leaders possess three identifiable qualities: (a) linguistic, interpersonal, and existential intelligence; (b) well-honed instincts; and (c) integrity (Gardner, 1995).



Depree (1997) felt that fostering relationships was an integral part of leadership and being able to connect on an emotional level was a necessary skill for successful leaders. In *Primal Leadership*, Goleman (2002b) discussed his previous work on emotional intelligence and its relation to effectively leading people. High levels of emotional intelligence are indicators of effective leaders (Goleman, 1998). He identified four elements of emotional intelligence. Self-awareness is understanding one's own emotions, moods, and drives and how these impact others. Self-regulation is the ability to control or redirect one's mood and impulses and the ability to reserve judgment and think before acting. Social awareness contains the elements of empathy, organizational awareness, and service to others.

Finally, relationship management includes inspiration, influence, developing others, change agent, conflict resolution, teamwork, and collaboration. Goleman (2002b) further identified several leadership styles: (a) visionary, (b) coaching, (c) affiliative, (d) democratic, (e) pacesetter, and (f) commanding. He placed these leadership styles into one of two categories of either dissonance producing or resonance producing, in relation to organizational performance. Goleman (2002b) stated that resonance producing leadership styles are the most effective for creating and maintaining a healthy effective organization and dissonance producing leadership can cause resentment and in turn hurt morale and outcomes.

Starratt (2004) and Covey (1991) formulated leadership styles that emphasized the importance of leaders acting from an emotionally and intellectually grounded core set of ideals. Covey stated that leadership is made up of four dimensions: (a) security, (b)

guidance, (c) wisdom, and (d) power. Starratt included the value of other people and morals and ethics as being necessary for effective leadership. Moxley (2000) expanded on the idea of collaborative leadership, and he listed five necessary components for this type of leadership to be effective: (a) a balance of power, (b) shared purpose, (c) shared responsibility, (d) respect for other persons, and (e) partnering in day-to-day operations of an organization. Many other researchers allude to the moral responsibility of the leadership role as well (Block, 1996; Etzioni, 1993; Hoyle, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1992). Hoyle (2002) used the metaphor of love to describe the practices of leadership. He stated that effective leaders engage in six fundamental practices: (a) visioning, (b) communicating, (c) teamwork, (d) empowering, (e) mentoring, and (f) evaluating. Hoyle (2002) felt that all six of these should be used in dealing with others and ultimately leadership should be driven from love toward other people. As discussed, there are many facets to the various styles or types of leadership. There are also defined attributes and characteristics that effective leaders share within the contexts of various styles and these will be examined in the next section.

### *Leadership Attributes*

When attempting to define leadership or what makes up an effective leader, some have created lists of attributes or characteristics most effective leaders share. Having a list or set of skills that is known to positively impact leadership and organizational outcomes, assists those doing the hiring in filling leadership positions. Some of these lists are specific to certain disciplines such as education (Hoyle, 1983; Marzano et al., 2005; McEwan, 2003) and will be discussed in further detail later in the literature

review. Other studies and findings have created characteristics that are descriptive of leadership in general.

Team building and collaboration are effective leader skills. Heifetz and Laurie (1997) stated that most effective leaders find ways to use the overall intelligence of their organization. These leaders subscribe to the old adage of multiple heads and ideas are better than one when trying to problem solve or brainstorm. The more input from people involved, the more likely to find useable solutions that will benefit the organization. Recommendations for collaborative leadership models are also promoted by multiple other researchers (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Goleman, 2002a; Schmoker, 2005; Senge, 1990).

Hackman (2002) addressed leadership attributes and focused on collaborative leadership making the following statement:

Effective leaders attend first to the basic conditions that foster team effectiveness – the features of the team and the organizational context that have been discussed in this book. First of all, they make sure they have created a real work team that will have some stability over time. They provide the team with a compelling direction. They fine-tune the structure of the team so it fosters rather than impedes teamwork. They tweak the organizational structures and systems so they provide teams with ample support and resources. And they arrange for, or themselves provide, expert coaching to help teams take full advantage of their favorable performance situation. Effective leaders do these things in their own way, using the idiosyncratic behavioral styles and strategies that they have found to work best for them. And they attend carefully to timing, moving quickly and decisively when opportunities for action open, but never trying to force an intervention when the time for it is not right. (pp. 204-205)

Kouzes and Posner (2002) stated that leaders need to be honest, forward thinking, inspiring, and competent. Bennis and Thomas (2002) stated that leaders must possess four necessary skills: (a) the ability to engage others in shared meaning, (b) distinctive

and compelling voice, (c) sense of integrity, and (d) adaptive capacity. Additionally, Drucker (2001) addressed skills leaders need to possess and said leaders must realize that leadership is a responsibility, not a privilege simply derived by title alone. Drucker stated leaders must earn the trust of others and treat others in the organization as valuable assets.

Hesselbein (2002) described the attributes needed to be an effective leader and stated that a leader values people and understands that people are the greatest asset in any organization. The leader tries to build “shared leadership” and empower all stakeholders. “Through a consistent focus on mission, the ‘how to be’ leader gives the dispersed and diverse leaders of the enterprise a clear sense of direction and the opportunity to find meaning in their work” (Hesselbein, 2002, p. 9). Focusing on people and relationships, this type of leader realizes that people are the most important part of the organization. This type of leader is a good listener and values the input and feelings of those within the organization.

Yukl (as cited in Hoy & Miskel, 2001) created a list of traits leaders need and designated the following as the most important:

1. Leaders who are self-confident are more likely to set high goals for self and for others, try difficult tasks, and persist in the face of adversity.
2. Stress-tolerant leaders make good decisions, stay calm, and are decisive in difficult situations.

3. Leaders who are emotionally mature are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, strive for self-improvement, and maintain cooperative relationships with others.
4. Leaders with integrity have behaviors consistent with their stated beliefs, are honest, ethical, responsible, and trustworthy.

The power to command and dictate others becomes less important to the leader of today as responsibility, vision, collaboration, mission, and relationships become the essential elements of being an effective leader.

According to Maxwell (2002) there are three components necessary to build trust within an organization: (a) competence, (b) connection, and (c) character. One of the reasons there are so many definitions of leadership is the fact that there are so many different situations that leaders can find themselves in, and these different situations can require different approaches to leadership. Kouzes and Posner (2003) stated:

No two leaders, no two constituent groups, and no two days in the life of a leader and constituents are exactly alike. Although the practices of leadership, like those of service, may be definable and can be generalized about at some level, they are distinct and unique at the moment of encounter. (p. 11)

However, leaders do have many of the same attributes and characteristics (Meyer & Slechta, 2002). “Although it is true that some people are born with greater natural gifts than others, the ability to lead is really a collection of skills, nearly all of which can be learned and improved” (Maxwell, 2002, pp. 12-13).

The growth of leadership from simple management has created new ways of directing workers in all organizations in an effort to reach the desired outcomes. Simply being a manager is no longer adequate when being charged with leading organizations

that focus on and serve people such as schools. Leadership is much more than just making sure supplies are available and tasks completed on time. Leadership requires vision and the ability to motivate and challenge those within the organization (Begley, 2005; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Hughes, 1995). When charged with the academic success of students, it is imperative that school leaders be much more than managers. They must be leaders with a unique and complex skill set (Ash & Pearsall, 2000; Hausman, Crow, & Sperry, 2000; Taylor, 2002).

### *Educational Leadership*

Leadership theory can be applied to any organization where individuals work toward common goals. Schools are no different than other organizations and need competent leadership in order to work efficiently (Sergiovanni, 1990). Sergiovanni also stated that many school administrators are simply fulfilling the duties of managers or task masters and in fact are not leading, but simply managing the building. The building principal is often identified as the key person responsible for making substantive change or reform in a school. The principal is charged with being the catalyst and driving force to make changes within a school and the person others look to for guidance (Ash & Pearsall, 2000; Hausman et al., 2000; Taylor, 2002). Kearns and Harvey (2001) stated that school leaders must always be thinking of the future and be predictors of future change; otherwise, they will be caught off guard and ill prepared to deal with the change that will inevitably come. In helping schools meet the challenges of the future, Gay (2000) emphasized the need for school leaders to include all members of the school

community in discussion and decision-making so that a shared vision and mission can be embraced by as much of the community as possible.

Leadership is often credited with being the main factor in determining the success of schools (Bass, 1990). The role of being an effective school leader requires an array of skills including both managerial and leadership. A school administrator does in fact need to have many of the basic managerial skills needed to run any organization, such as setting goals and meeting deadlines. However, schools face many additional pressures and political forces that leaders of other organizations do not have to face. These additional factors require school leaders to possess additional skills and attributes in order to successfully work with all the stakeholders.

Effective school leaders must deal with parents, students, local community, businesses, churches, and other neighborhood groups as well as work with federal and state governmental agencies and the local Board. School leaders must use all of their communication and political skills to try and build agreement between these various groups and still maintain the integrity of the vision they have set for the school (Sergiovanni, 2000). Schools are like other organizations in many ways, but in addition to all the duties a leader must handle in any organization, principals also face many issues that are unique to schools (Senge, 2000). Senge (2000) stated the following in regard to leading schools:

Schools are increasingly expected to compensate for the shifts in society and family that affect children: changes in family structure, rapidly shifting trends in television and popular culture, commercialism without end, poverty (and the inadequate nutrition and health care that go with it), violence, child abuse, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, and incessant social upheaval. Struggling to

keep up with these kinds of demands, school leaders continually place their institutions on the frontier of change. (pp. 9-10)

In a meta-analysis of 70 studies that involved 2800 different schools, over a million students and more than 14,000 teachers, a substantial relationship was found between school leadership and student achievement (Marzano et al., 2005). The study produced a list of 21 leadership skills and responsibilities and practices that are associated with each responsibility. School leaders must be able to use an array of these skills and not only have them at their disposal but know when to use them. A school leader may be working extremely hard and using various leadership skills very competently and still have a negative impact on school performance by simply not using some of the skills appropriately or not using them at all. If school leaders focus their energy and efforts on the wrong practices, they can in fact do harm to student learning despite working extremely hard. Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) stated, “When leaders concentrate on the wrong school and/or classroom practices, or miscalculate the magnitude or ‘order’ of the change they are attempting to implement, they can negatively impact student achievement” (p. 5).

Effective school leaders must also be aware of the importance of involving all stakeholders as much as possible. Teachers in particular can be strong advocates to the vision and goals of a campus or staunch defenders of letting change occur (Caine & Caine, 2000). Barth (1990) discussed the need to let teachers be involved in decision-making and having more of a leadership role in many aspects of running the school with the goal being to create a community of learners as well as leaders. Sergiovanni (1990) described collaboration and including teachers in decision-making and giving them



leadership opportunities and most importantly the authority to make decisions and carry them out and thus feel as though their power is legitimate.

Others have added other skills that educational leaders need to affect change and reform. Hoyle (1983) identified six skills he said successful educational leaders needed in the twenty-first century: (a) visioning, (b) stress management, (c) personnel selection and professional growth for staff, (d) instructional leadership, (e) humanistic approaches to leadership, and (f) communication with all stakeholders. While there are certain roles a school leader must possess, there are times when different approaches may also be necessary (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Walstrom, 2004). No one particular skill or set of skills can be applied to every complex situation a school leader may face.

Leithwood et al. (2004) did a review of research on educational leadership and found that the educational leader of a school plays one of most prominent roles in student learning and that this role is oftentimes understated: “The total (direct and indirect) effects of leadership on student learning account for about a quarter of school effects” (p. 5). The only factor with more of an impact on student learning is the direct instruction of the classroom teacher. Miller (2003) also found that only the classroom teacher had more impact on student achievement than did the principal. This indirect effect can prove hard to determine and measure. Leithwood et al. (2004) pointed out that most principals spend most of their time dealing with and guiding adults instead of students directly. Therefore, they impact student learning mostly through the influence they have on others in the school organization.

However, not all researchers agree on the significance of principal influence on student achievement. There are many other factors that impact student achievement that have no relationship to the principal. As stated earlier, the classroom teacher has the most impact on student learning (Cotton, 2003). Cotton (2003) believed that most principal impact on student achievement was gained indirectly. A student's home life before they ever come to school can have a major impact on future learning (Bowman, 1994; Guerra & Schultz, 2001). The attitudes of parents on the importance of school and education in general are also factors that may influence how students perform. The amount of time and access to school personnel parents are able to devote may also influence school achievement (Kaiser & Delaney, 1996). Class size is another factor that has possible implications on student achievement that has little to do with the principal and leadership (Bennett, 1987). Poverty, of course, is another factor in how children perform in school. Economically disadvantaged students come to school less prepared and may even have slower brain development (Caine, 2000).

While many researchers point to school leadership as a primary factor in student performance, it is clear there is opposition to this line of thinking. School leadership may impact student performance (Marzano et al., 2005), but it is also clear other factors influence school performance in all students (Bowman, 1994; Caine, 2000; Cotton, 2003; Kaiser & Delaney, 1996).

#### *Impact of Principal Leadership*

Schools can be influenced by the leader of the organization, which in a school context is the principal. When school consisted of a one-classroom building, the

classroom teacher was the de facto principal and handled the duties of a manager and leader on a very small scale. However, as schools grew larger and much more complex, head or lead teachers were appointed to run certain duties in schools in addition to their teaching duties. As schools continued to grow, the official position of principal was created (Wilmore, 2002). Today's principals face a much more complex job than the simple management issues that early principals were primarily charged with performing. In addition to dealing with students and parents, principals today must deal with political factors, personnel, curriculum, accountability standards, and other issues (Kimbrough & Burkett, 1990).

For years, it has been believed that an effective principal is necessary to have a high-achieving school (Kimbrough & Burkett, 1990; Roe & Drake, 1980). Multiple studies have shown that in high achieving schools in terms of student achievement the principal is one of the most important member of the school (Jackson & Davis, as cited in Lucas, 2003). The McREL Institute published a policy brief based on a meta-analysis of studies and found the principal to be the second most influential factor on classroom student learning only behind the classroom teacher (Miller, 2003). The principal must be the leader of teaching and learning and all else that goes in a school. The principal must be able to balance the political aspects and demands of leading as well as be adept at involving others in a collaborative and meaningful way (Clark & Clark, as cited in Lucas, 2003). The overall success of the school can be greatly influenced by the insight, commitment, and ability of the principal (Valentine, Clark, Hackman, & Petzco, as cited in Lucas, 2003). Kimbrough and Burkett (1990) stated "few educators and citizens will

argue with the proposition that the principal of the school is the most important administrator in the American educational system” (p. xi). Marzano et al. (2005) conducted a meta-analysis of studies on student achievement and principal behaviors and responsibilities and found several behaviors and responsibilities that impacted student performance in a positive manner. These findings will be discussed in the next section. It should be noted that simply having constituents and stakeholders believe the principal is doing the right things, does not mean the school leader is in fact engaging in the correct strategies and practices. There have been many cases studied where teachers rated the principal as a strong leader, but the school’s academic achievement was below average (Waters & Cameron, 2006).

Effective leadership in the school context is believed by many as being an important part of school improvement and reaching high achievement in schools throughout the world (Marzano et al., 2005; Roe & Drake, 1980). The role of the principal has long been viewed as one of the most important factors in determining school effectiveness and the principal can have a major influence on instruction and learning (Gullatt & Lofton, 1996). With the knowledge that the principal may in fact influence student performance, it is important to examine characteristics that principals in high achieving schools share.

#### *Descriptors of Effective Principals*

The school principal of today must deal with an array of issues unique to schools as well as a more diverse student and parent population. They must be able to balance input from all sources and make decisions that will benefit all students. School leaders

today need to have skills that will enable them to meet the challenges of our ever-changing schools. McEwan (2003) created a list of what she considered to be traits a principal needed to transform a school from good to great:

1. Communicator – listen, empathize, and connect
2. Educator – depth of knowledge and motivate learning
3. Envisioner – focused on the vision of what the school can be
4. Facilitator – building strong relationships
5. Change Master – flexible, futuristic, realistic, and can motivate change
6. Culture Builder – communicate and model a strong vision
7. Activator – with motivation, energy, and enthusiasm to spare
8. Producer – building intellectual development and academic growth
9. Character Builder – values trustworthiness, integrity, and respect
10. Contributor – priority is making contributions to success of others

McEwan (2003) stated principals need to incorporate and be proficient in each area in order to reach their full potential as campus leaders and in turn help students meet their highest level of student achievement.

Hoyle, English, and Steffy (1998) created a list of “skills” that school leaders would need in order to create the best environment possible for students as well as staff:

1. Skills in Visionary Leadership
2. Skills in Policy and Governance
3. Skills in Communication and Community Relations
4. Skills in Organizational Management

5. Skills in Curriculum Planning and Development
6. Skills in Instructional Management
7. Skills in Staff Evaluation and Personnel Management
8. Skills in Staff Development
9. Skills in Educational Research, Evaluation, and Planning
10. Values and Ethics of Leadership

Their list of skills was created to help leaders of future schools adapt and improve their skill sets to meet the changing demands of education.

Marzano et al. (2005) created a list of principal responsibilities and behaviors that positively impacted student achievement based on a meta-analysis of numerous studies (Table 2.1). Their list consisted of 21 responsibilities/behaviors that all correlate to positive student achievement. Table 2.1 is listed in order of positive correlation with student academic achievement. This list was correlated to student achievement, and as one can see, gender, ethnicity, and experience were not factors that were examined by the researchers.

Although each of these lists of skills or attributes is different, there is evidence of definable traits and behaviors that can improve leadership. There are many similar skills and characteristics that appear in each list. When school leadership is more effective, it may in turn improve student performance in schools. The specific skills and characteristics of effective principals can be used to help all school leaders improve student performance in their schools. If school leaders can improve in the areas that have been identified by various studies and researchers, they may be able to create learning

environments that are conducive to students of all backgrounds reaching their highest levels of student performance.

Table 2.1. Principal Responsibilities and Behaviors That Positively Impact Student Achievement

Responsibility	Correlation With Academic Achievement
Situational Awareness	.33
Flexibility	.28
Discipline	.27
Outreach	.27
Monitoring/Evaluating	.27
Culture	.25
Order	.25
Resources	.25
Knowledge of Curriculum and Instruction	.25
Input	.25
Change Agent	.25
Focus	.24
Contingent Rewards	.24
Intellectual Stimulation	.24
Communication	.23
Ideals/Beliefs	.22
Involvement in Curriculum and Instruction	.20
Visibility	.20
Optimizer	.20
Affirmation	.19
Relationships	.18

### **Hispanic School Leaders**

School professionals who share and or understand the cultural needs and differences of Hispanic students can make a positive impact on their school experiences (Garcia, 1994). As the minority population grows, especially the Hispanic population,

schools are becoming majority-minority, yet only one in ten teachers is of color. Since the vast majority of school administrators come from the teaching ranks, this lack of teachers of color impacts the pool of professionals who will eventually be administrators as well. In 1990, only 11% of school administrators were minorities, and only 3% of those were Hispanic, while the Hispanic student population continued to grow at the highest rate of any demographic group (U.S. Department of Education, 1990). By 2004, the number of minority school principals had not changed much despite the drastic increase in minority children in school. In 2004, 84% of school principals were White, non-Hispanic, and only 5% were Hispanic (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The minority school principals in the field are much more likely to work in a high-minority school (more than 50% minority students) (U.S. Department of Education, 1996). Nearly 70 % of minority principals work in such schools.

There has been a significant amount of research done pertaining to Hispanic teachers on several topics including: bilingual education (Flores, 1999; Guerrero, 1998; Smith & Martinez-Leon, 2003), Hispanic/Latino views on teaching strategies for math (Telese, 1997) and reading (Jiminez, Gersten, & Rivera, 1996), recruitment of Hispanic/Latino teachers to work with growing Hispanic student population (Aguilar, MacGillivray, & Walker, 2003; Gordon, 2000; Hidalgo & Huling-Austin, 1993; Reyna, 1993), Hispanic/Latino teacher impact on Hispanic student performance (Cox, 1993; Manzo, 1993), and other topics. Most of the studies on Hispanic teachers focus on bilingual education and teacher shortages in the area, shortages of Hispanic teachers, and



how they are needed to teach the growing Hispanic student population, and studies relating experiences of Hispanic teachers in general.

In contrast to the amount of study done on Hispanic teachers, there has been a lack of research done specific to Hispanic school principals and their role in the educational landscape of the country. The studies that have been done on Hispanic principals deal primarily with personal experiences and differences between Hispanic principals and majority principals. Hispanic principals are compared to the norms of their White counterparts in these studies. Many of the qualitative studies examined Hispanic principals' struggles with racism, sexism, and other injustices they faced (Hernandez, 2005). There is little empirical research in the literature describing how Hispanic principals impact education, what they bring to the field in terms of experience and ability to identify with the growing Hispanic student population, and how Hispanic principals impact student performance.

There is a large amount of research on *minority* principals and *administrators of color*. However, these studies have almost always focused solely on African Americans and their struggles to function within the majority. Within most of the previous studies, the term "minority" is essentially synonymous with the term "Black" (Coursen, Mazarella, Jeffress, & Haddermann, 1989). There are very few studies that focus on Native Americans, Asian Americans, or Hispanic school principals. By only focusing attention on African American principals when studying "minority principals," a void has been created in regards to a very important segment of school leaders. Hispanic principals also offer important insights and experiences that are useful to all educators.

Even though there is a shortage of research studies devoted to Hispanic principals, there are some studies worth examining. Carr (1996) conducted a study on Mexican American female principals and their experiences in educational leadership. The study was conducted in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas and examined these Mexican American female principals' experiences in a male-dominated community that was predominantly Mexican American. The study focused on leadership, power, and personal qualities these principals demonstrated such as caring and collaboration. Carr (1996) concluded that the Mexican American women principals in her study did view leadership in a different manner than men do in the traditional sense of leadership. She stated the women and their views on leadership were formed by family, community and church, in particular the Catholic Church. Mexican American female principals viewed leadership in a much more collaborative and relationship-based way than male counterparts did. These Mexican American female principals viewed power more through connections with others and caring than power and domination. They also had more caring attitudes toward others and the world in general (Carr, 1996). While this study is very useful in presenting a voice to a segment of Hispanic principals, it does not represent the diversity within the overall group of Hispanic principals.

In a study examining differences between Mexican American and White principals in terms of mental frameworks, Campbell (1996) sought to identify ways in which Mexican American principals and White principals thought similarly and differently when performing their jobs and how they viewed themselves within groups. The study found that while both groups of principals thought similarly on some issues,

there were differences as well. Mexican American principals stated supervising instruction, student concerns, and paperwork were important parts of their jobs, while White principals focused more of their attention on overall instructional concerns (Campbell, 1996). Mexican American principals also identified with their racial group more than White principals and felt that they were an example and used as a standard for Mexican Americans in general. Mexican American principals were again more focused on relationships and the personal aspects of leading (Campbell, 1996). Campbell's findings support the belief that there are differences in how Mexican American principals and White principals view the same job and that each group views different aspects of the position as more important than others. This study was also done in the Southwest and with a limited number of participants. It is unclear if the same findings would hold true to Hispanic principals in other regions of the country and if the different views of leadership translate to differences in student performance.

Other studies examined racial identity and further issues with Hispanic principals working within the White majority. Romo (1998) conducted a study in the San Diego area on the numbers of administrators who were Hispanic in relation to the student population growth of Hispanic students. There was a great increase in the Hispanic student population in the 15-year period used, but the number of Hispanic administrators actually decreased during the same time period. Romo (1998) suggested this was due to racial factors as well as an insufficient number of Hispanic candidates. The study used a qualitative approach to asking Hispanic administrators their feelings on why there was a

disproportionate number of Hispanics in leadership positions, but this study did not focus on student achievement.

Armendariz (1994) explored the relationship between leadership behaviors and culture in elementary principals. This was a quantitative study that used surveys to determine if there were differences between White and Hispanic principals in their leadership characteristics and behaviors. The results found that Hispanic principals were more people sensitive and believed that relationships were more important. However, in terms of leadership behaviors, there was no significant finding of differences in behavior between White and Hispanic principals. Actual leadership behaviors and actions of day-to-day running of the campus were not drastically different, but Hispanic principals were more concerned with the needs and feelings of others (Armendariz, 1994). These referenced studies and others show that there is valuable knowledge to be learned from studying Hispanic school principals independently. There are in fact differences in the experiences and ways of thinking of Hispanic principals when compared to other school leaders. This is true when comparing Hispanic principals with White and other minority school principals.

In summary, as the Hispanic student population continues to grow at the fastest rate among students, it becomes even more important to focus attention on Hispanic school leaders. The bulk of studies on minority school principals have focused on African Americans (Coursen et al., 1989). This imbalance of studies on *minority* school principals makes it important to engage in further studies of Hispanic school principals. There is a need for varied studies on Hispanic principals that will give a more

comprehensive view of school principals of color. There is a need for studies that focus on the experiences of Hispanic principals specifically. This study has added to that body of knowledge.

### **Teacher Experience**

Teacher experience is a factor in student achievement and is one important aspect of what makes an effective teacher. There have been multiple studies on the impact of teacher experience on student achievement. Teachers do become more skilled with experience and this increased skill level in turn leads to better student achievement (Rice, 2003).

There are varying findings on which subjects teacher experience has the most impact on as well as how many years of experience impact teacher performance and ultimately student achievement (Hanushek, Kain, O'Brien, & Rivkin, 2005). Grissmer, Flanagan, Kawata, and Williamson (2000) found that teachers with at least two years of experience had positive effects on student achievement, but additional years of experience did not show additional results. In another study by Gordon, Kane, and Staiger (2006), the researchers found that there was also substantial positive impact for teachers with two years of experience and still more positive effect in year three. Murnane and Phillips (1981) found that teacher experience had a positive impact in early years, then no effect in the middle years of 8-14, but that teachers with 15 or more years of experience again showed an increase in positive impact on student achievement. Ferguson and Ladd (1996) used Alabama state data to conduct a similar study on teacher

experience and found that teachers with up to five years' experience had higher student achievement; but that after five years of experience, there was not a significant impact.

While some studies do not show a high level of positive effect on student achievement due to teacher experience, Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor (2007) found strong positive effects of teacher experience on student achievement. They used data from end-of-course exams, while many other studies used only general achievement exam scores that attributed to some difference in findings. Ferguson (1991) also found that Texas high school students who had teachers with nine years or more of experience had significantly higher achievement scores than students who had teachers with less than nine years of experience teaching. Still another study found that there were dramatic increases in teacher effectiveness and student achievement during the first ten years of teaching (Rivers & Sanders, 2002). There have even been studies suggesting that teacher experience impacts student performance as far out as 20 years or more (Clotfelter et al., 2006, 2007).

While there are very different findings on how many years of teaching experience impact student achievement, it is generally accepted that teacher experience does impact student achievement in a positive way. This is especially true in comparing first-year teachers with teachers having up to five years of experience. An experienced and skilled teaching staff will have a positive impact on student performance.

### **Community Type Classifications in Texas**

Schools in different geographic community types have different characteristics and needs. Therefore, it is important to know what type of community in which a school

is located. For instance, do inner city schools and rural school face the exact same challenges? Do students in an urban area have different daily issues to face than students in an affluent suburban area? Of course there are differences based on the environment in which students live that impact their educational experience. Therefore, it is important to identify the type of community where a school is located (Brown & Swanson, 2003).

All people including students have basic needs that must be met before they can concentrate on higher order skills such as learning. Maslow (1998) discussed the basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing along with other lower level needs that must be met before people can expect to reach their self-actualization or higher learning potential. If a student comes to school hungry, cold, or without adequate clothes, he or she will not be able to focus on learning and academic achievement at the highest level (Maruyama, 2003). Depending on the community type of a school, there can be vastly different amounts of students who are not having even the most basic needs met.

This is most likely to occur in inner city and urban schools, but all schools have students with basic needs not being met (Lee, 1999). It is up to the government and schools to realize that if students do not have these basic needs met, learning will suffer (Slavin, 2008). Schools in urban and inner city areas face many similar challenges in terms of students coming to school without having their basic needs met. The number of students attending school without having their basic needs met is much higher in inner city and urban schools. These schools have higher percentages of minority students than do suburban and rural schools. They serve great numbers of students: (a) living below the poverty line, (b) from single-parent homes, (c) having parents with more than one

job and subsequently spend less time at home, (d) exposed to violence and crime, (e) living with parents or family members who suffer from drug and alcohol abuse, and (f) who do not have their personal health needs met (Lee, 1999). These students are more likely to live in areas where there is a lack of after-school programs for students as well. They are more likely to live in high-crime areas and are faced with many distractions that other students do not have. These distractions and the need to focus on simply having their basic needs met often leads to a lack of motivation in school and ultimately poor performance (Leland, 2005).

At the other end of the environmental spectrum, students who live in rural areas often face many of the same issues. Historically, students in rural areas have not performed as well as students in urban and suburban schools. Though there has been progress made, there is still a gap in performance (Brown & Swanson, 2003). Poverty exists in rural schools at a high level and it varies by region. Rural schools have fewer resources to spend because they are smaller in student numbers and, therefore, get less funding from both state and federal governments (DeYoung, 1991). Rural schools face poor conditions as they oftentimes lack proper facilities, materials, and programs that wealthier districts have. In many rural districts, the lack of funding leads to rundown buildings, lack of Advanced Placement and Honors classes, as well as necessary remedial materials. They are also likely to have less access to technology than larger and wealthier districts (Gibbs, 2000). Rural areas are more likely to have a decreasing population and less economic development that leads to fewer jobs and economic opportunities. Rural areas are made up of aging populations and this lack of new



residents puts even more financial strain on schools. This leads to a poorer population, and students in poverty are much more likely to drop out of school before graduation (Gwaltney, 2002).

Rural schools do have some advantages in comparison to urban and inner city schools facing a student population with a high rate of poverty. Rural schools are usually less diverse, although this varies by region. Because of their smaller size, many rural schools are able to offer smaller classes and more individualized attention for students (Brown & Swanson, 2003). Rural schools usually offer a safe learning environment and healthy community and parental support that give rural schools some advantages in comparison to large urban and inner city schools (Lee & McIntire, 2000). All schools regardless of the type of community in which they are located face challenges. Student achievement is affected by the type of community a school is located in so it is important to identify and understand the community type (Brown & Swanson, 2003).

In Texas, the Texas Education Agency places school districts into nine subcategories ranging from major urban to rural. The subcategories are based on criteria such as enrollment, enrollment growth, economic status, and proximity to urban areas. The subcategories as defined by the Texas Education Agency are as follows:

1. Major Urban - A district is classified as major urban if: (a) it is located in a county with a population of at least 735,000; (b) its enrollment is the largest in the county or at least 75% of the largest district enrollment in the county; and (c) at least 35% of enrolled students are economically disadvantaged. A student is reported as economically disadvantaged if he or she is:

- eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program;
- from a family with annual income at or below the federal poverty line;
- eligible for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or other public assistance;
- a recipient of a Pell Grant or comparable state program of need-based financial assistance;
- eligible for programs assisted under Title II of the Job Training Partnership Act; or
- eligible for benefits under the Food Stamp Act of 1977.

Austin ISD (227901) is in Travis County, which has a population of 956,901. Austin ISD's enrollment of 82,181 students is the largest enrollment in the county, and at least 35% of the enrolled students are economically disadvantaged.

2. Major Suburban - A district is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is contiguous to a major urban district; and (c) its enrollment is at least 3% that of the contiguous major urban district or at least 4,500 students. A district also is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is not contiguous to a major urban district; (c) it is located in the same county as a major urban district; and (d) its enrollment is at least 15% that of the nearest major urban district in the county or at least 4,500 students.

Castleberry ISD (220917) is in Tarrant County, which has a population of 1,716,365, but it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban. Castleberry ISD is contiguous to Fort Worth ISD, a major urban district, and its enrollment of 3,413 students is greater than 3% that of Fort Worth ISD.

Goose Creek CISD (101911) is in Harris County, which has a population of 3,922,115 and contains at least one district classified as major urban. Goose Creek CISD does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban, nor is it

contiguous to a major urban district. Although Goose Creek CISD's enrollment of 20,235 students is less than 15% that of Houston ISD, the nearest major urban district in Harris County, it exceeds 4,500 students.

3. Other Central City - A district is classified as other central city if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in either of the previous subcategories; (b) it is not contiguous to a major urban district; (c) it is located in a county with a population of between 100,000 and 734,999; and (d) its enrollment is the largest in the county or at least 75% of the largest district enrollment in the county.

Brownsville ISD (031901) is in Cameron County, which has a population 391,857. Brownsville ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in either of the previous subcategories, and it is not contiguous to a major urban district. Brownsville ISD's enrollment of 48,796 students is the largest in the county.

McAllen ISD (108906) is in Hidalgo County, which has a population of 725,978. McAllen ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in either of the previous subcategories, and it is not contiguous to a major urban district. Although McAllen ISD's enrollment of 24,902 students is not the largest in the county, it is greater than 75% of the largest district enrollment in the county.

4. Other Central City Suburban - A district is classified as other central city suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories; (b) it is located in a county with a population of between 100,000 and 734,999; and (c) its enrollment is at least 15% of the largest district enrollment in the county. A district also is other central city suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories; (b) it is contiguous to an other central city district; (c) its enrollment is greater than 3% that of the contiguous other central city district; and (d) its enrollment exceeds the median district enrollment of 735 students for the state.

Harlingen CISD (031903) is in Cameron County, which has a population of 391,857. Harlingen CISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. Its enrollment of 17,838 students is greater than 15% of the largest district enrollment in the county.

Port Arthur ISD (123907) is in Jefferson County, which has a population of 245,904. Port Arthur ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. Port Arthur ISD is contiguous to Beaumont ISD, an other central city district that also is the largest district in the county. Port Arthur ISD's enrollment of 9,097 students is greater than 3% that of Beaumont ISD and exceeds the median district enrollment for the state of 735 students.

5. Independent Town - A district is classified as independent town if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories; (b) it is located in a county with a population of 25,000 to 99,999; and (c) its enrollment is the largest in the county or greater than 75% of the largest district enrollment in the county.

Victoria ISD (235902) is in Victoria County, which has a population of 86,750. Victoria ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. Its enrollment of 13,541 students is the largest in the county.

Winnsboro ISD (250907) is in Wood County, which has a population of 42,124. Winnsboro ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. Its enrollment of 1,458 students is greater than 75% of the largest district enrollment in the county.

6. Non-Metropolitan: Fast Growing - A district is classified as non-metropolitan: fast growing if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories; (b) it has an enrollment of at least 300 students; and (c) its enrollment has increased by at least 20% over the past five years.

China Spring ISD (161920) is in McLennan County, which has a population of 226,456. China Spring ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. China Spring ISD has an enrollment of 2,137 students, and its enrollment has increased by more than 20% over the past five years.

7. Non-Metropolitan: Stable - A district is classified as non-metropolitan: stable if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories and (b) its enrollment exceeds the median district enrollment for the state.

Snyder ISD (208902) is in Scurry County, which has a population of 16,362. Snyder ISD does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. Its enrollment of 2,584 students exceeds the median district enrollment for the state of 735 students.

8. Rural - A district is classified as rural if it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. A rural district has either: (a) an enrollment of between 300 and the median district enrollment for the state and an enrollment growth rate over the past five years of less than 20% or (b) an enrollment of less than 300 students.

Valley View ISD (049903) is in Cooke County, which has a population of 40,176. Valley View ISD has an enrollment of 682 students and an enrollment growth rate over the past five years of less than 20%.

Dew ISD (081906) is in Freestone County, which has a population of 19,643. Although Dew ISD has an enrollment growth rate over the past five years of more than 20%, its current enrollment is only 160 students.

9. Charter School Districts - Charter school districts are open-enrollment school districts chartered by the State Board of Education. Established by the Texas Legislature in 1995 to promote local initiative, charter school districts are subject to fewer regulations than other public school districts. Generally, charter school districts are subject to laws and rules that ensure fiscal and academic accountability but that do not unduly regulate instructional methods or pedagogical innovation. Like other public school districts, charter school districts are monitored and accredited under the statewide testing and accountability system.

George I. Sanchez Charter School (101804) is in Harris County, which has a population of 3,922,115, and the charter district has an enrollment of 633 students.

Each of the schools used in this study were classified into one of the nine subcategories as defined by TEA (TEA, 2008b). The information on district classification types was obtained from the Texas Education Agency.

### **Texas Education Agency Accountability System**

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) rates schools in Texas based on student performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) standardized exam as well as other indicators. The information in Table 2.2 shows the accountability standards for the school year of 2007-2008 for each rating category.

If a school fails to meet the academically acceptable standards, the school is rated as low performing or unacceptable by the TEA. If a school is rated low performing for several years and fails to meet required improvement, the school can be have a multitude of sanctions and eventually be taken over or shut down by the state.

Table 2.2. Texas Education Agency Accountability System for School Year 2007-2008

Base Indicators	Academically Acceptable	Recognized	Exemplary
Meets Each Standard			
<b>TAKS (2007-2008)</b>			
All students in each group with minimum size:	Reading/ELA 70% Writing 70%	Meets 75% standard for each subject or meets 70% and required improvement	Meets 90% standard for each subject
African American	Social Studies 65%		
Hispanic	Math 50%		
White	Science 45% or meets required improvement		
Economically Disadvantaged			
<b>Completion Rate (Class of 2007)</b>			
All students and each subgroup meeting size:	Meets 75% standard or meets required improvement	Meets 85% standard or meets floor of 75% and required improvement	Meets 95% standard
African American			
Hispanic			
White			
Economically Disadvantaged			
<b>Annual Dropout Rate (2006-2007)</b>			
All students and each subgroup meeting size:	Meets 2% standard or meets required improvement	Meets 2% standard or meets required improvement	Meets 2% standard or meets required improvement
African American			
Hispanic			
White			
Economically Disadvantaged			

### Summary

The demographic patterns of the United States are showing an ever-growing number of people color in the country and in our schools. Over the past 20 years, there have been over nine million legal and illegal immigrants to the country, and this has drastically changed the look and sound of the nation. This influx of immigrants has changed schools from being primarily White and African American to being

multicultural (Ogle, Alsalam, & Rogers, 1991). The fastest growing segment of the population in the United States is Hispanic. Hispanics are also the fastest-growing group of students entering public schools (Fullerton, 1991; Murdock, 2002). In Texas, minority students make up 56% of the population and Hispanic students already make up 59% of this number (Texas Education Agency, 2000, 2008c).

School leaders and principals must be equipped to work with the different types of students entering schools. The review of literature indicates that there are many useable definitions of leadership. One useable definition given by Kouzes and Posner (1995) is that leadership is the ability to mobilize others to work toward shared goals and aspirations. Another is leadership involves influencing others in guiding, structuring, and facilitating activity within an organization (Yukl, 1998). Regardless of which definition of leadership one chooses to subscribe to, school leadership requires vision and a leadership style based on collaboration and relationships to help students reach their highest potential.

There are identifiable principal traits that improve student achievement in schools with various student demographics. If principals can develop these skills and behaviors, student achievement can be improved (Marzano et al., 2005; McEwan, 2003). By studying the relationship the principal's ethnicity has on student achievement in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas, the researcher will add to the body of knowledge related to improving student performance in this fastest-growing segment of schools in Texas. This research will assist in making decisions on hiring leaders for such campuses that are rapidly growing in number in the state of Texas.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between principal ethnicity and student achievement as measured by the accountability rating system in Texas in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. Additionally, this study sought to identify other factors that influence accountability rating in predominantly Hispanic high schools in Texas in relation to principal ethnicity. These other factors included community type where the school was located, teacher experience, and percent of students qualifying as low socioeconomic status. The relationships were represented in the following research questions:

1. What relationship does the principal's ethnicity have on student achievement as measured by the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
2. What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity in terms of student achievement as measured by TEA's school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas in relation to community type?
  - 2a. What is the relationship between accountability rating and community type in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
  - 2b. What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and community type in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

3. What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA's school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by average teacher experience?
  - 3a. What is the relationship between accountability rating and average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
  - 3b. What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
4. What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA's accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by percent of students qualifying as low socioeconomic status/economically disadvantaged?
  - 4a. What is the relationship between accountability rating and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
  - 4b. What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

In exploring these constructs, a quantitative research method was used. Methods used in the study included both descriptive and inferential statistics. This chapter discusses the research design, population, instrumentation, procedures, and data analysis related to this study.

## **Research Procedures**

As previously stated, this research study was conducted using quantitative methods. Data were collected from the Texas Education Agency in regards to school accountability ratings in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in the state of Texas. All data used in the study were provided by the Texas Education Agency for the 2007-2008 school year. The researcher contacted TEA with a request for the data and the parameters of the data search and TEA was able to provide all data requested.

## **Population**

In research, a population is referred to as the overall group about which a researcher wants to learn something (McClave, Benson, & Sincich, 2010). Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) stated that a researcher can learn about a larger group by studying a smaller portion (sample). For this study, the Texas Education Agency was able to provide the researcher data on the entire population that met the set criteria in the state of Texas. There were approximately 430 public high schools that met the criteria set by the researcher. The sample population of this study for the purposes of both school and student performance analysis included 335 public high schools in Texas with an enrollment of at least 49% Hispanic students who were part of an independent school system governed by the Texas Education Agency and met all of the criteria set forth by the researcher.

The final sample population used for data analysis consisted of 335 campuses. This sample population did not include alternative schools or county juvenile justice schools. Campuses that had more than one principal within the school year were not

used in the study. Academies and charter schools were also eliminated from consideration for the study. The schools used for analysis were regular or standard public high schools in Texas serving some combination of students in grades 9-12 with a population of at least 49% Hispanic students.

All students in these high schools were included in the data analysis of performance for this project. Performance data from subgroups of these campuses was analyzed. When campuses were eliminated from consideration for the above mentioned reasons, the sample size for this study was ultimately 335 public high schools that were at least 49+% Hispanic in student population.

### **Data Collection Processes**

The data collected for the purposes of this study were derived in whole from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) (TEA, 2008d) and Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) (2008a). PEIMS encompasses all data requested and received by TEA about public education, including student demographic and academic performance, personnel, financial, and organizational information. The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test is a statewide administered assessment of student performance in academic areas. PEIMS (TEA, 2008d) contains information on student and staff demographics, special program participation data, and student attendance as well.

Test reliability measures such as the Kuder-Richardson Formula (KR-20) indicate that the internal consistency of the TAKS test for multiple choice and short answer questions are in the high .80s to low .90s. The validity of the TAKS test, or the

degree to which the TAKS offers an aligned evaluation of the state curriculum (TEKS) and student performance, is reported by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as very high. Multiple committees of educators have attempted to ensure extensive alignment between the TEKS and TAKS exam to ensure effective levels of validity. The level of validity has been measured as effective for all student sub-populations. Student performance outcomes of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and data reported by the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) (TEA, 2008d) were forwarded to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) following the respective school and district testing dates in the Spring of 2008. The TEA (2008a) made this information publicly accessible through their website in August of 2008.

The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) (TEA, 2008a) reports on information including, but not limited to TAKS. Information utilized outside of TAKS will come from the PEIMS (TEA, 2008d). Among the data maintained in PEIMS are student demographic information, staff demographics, student attendance, course completion records, retention, graduation rates, and dropout rates. School districts in Texas submit their respective data in a standardized electronic format each year. This data were provided from TEA and used by the researcher for the purpose of analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

The examination of student performance in public secondary schools with a predominantly Hispanic enrollment (49+%), as reported by the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) database, was conducted using the accepted quantitative measures that have been identified by Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996). Analysis was

performed on the collected data from the AEIS database by the *Statistical Package for Social Sciences* (SPSS). SPSS is an electronic driven statistical software program. The instruments used in this study produced quantitative data for the independent and dependent variables.

The performance of students as a whole enrolled in these high schools was analyzed to address the research questions 1, 2, 3, and 4. Performance of students enrolled in these high schools was analyzed by campus principal ethnicity, average teacher experience, school community type, and the student demographic of low socioeconomic status/economically disadvantaged. Descriptive statistics of *mean scores, standard deviations, frequencies, and correlation measures* were utilized to define and summarize the populations in a concise manner.

*Standard discriminant function analysis, multiple regression, and chi-square analyses* were run to analyze and determine which variables were the most explanatory of differing student achievement in order to infer the degree of significant difference present between student performance measures in regard to the campus principal's ethnicity in relation to other principal, student, school, and teacher variables on predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. The significance level for testing the hypothesis of this research was set at .05 ( $p=.05$  or 5%). Descriptive and inferential statistics were displayed in both *chart and table* format. Definitions of each test run follow as well as Table 3.1, showing which tests were run for each research question.

Table 3.1. Research Questions and Statistical Procedures Employed

Research Question	Statistical Test Employed	Rationale
<u>Section I</u>		
1. What is the relationship between the principals' ethnicity and the TEA's accountability rating of predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?	Chi-Square of Independence	Relationship and both variables were measured on the nominal level
2. <u>2a)</u> What is the relationship between the accountability rating and the community type in public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population?	Chi-Square of Independence	Relationship and both variables were measured on the nominal level
<u>2b)</u> What is the relationship between the community type and the ethnicity of the principals in public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population?	Chi-Square of Independence	Relationship and both variables were measured on the nominal level
3. <u>3a)</u> What is the relationship between accountability rating and the average years of teaching experience in public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population?	Chi-Square of Independence	Relationship and both variables were categorical (nominal)
<u>3b)</u> What is the relationship between the ethnicity of the principals and the average years of teaching experience in public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population?	Chi-Square of Independence	Relationship and both variables were categorical (nominal)
4. <u>4a)</u> What is the relationship between the accountability rating and the percent of students qualifying as low income in public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population?	Chi-Square of Independence	Relationship and both variables were categorical (nominal) in nature
<u>4b)</u> What is the relationship between the ethnicity of the principal and the percent of students qualifying as low income in public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population?	Chi-Square of Independence	Relationship and both variables were categorical (nominal) in nature
<u>Section II</u>		
2. What is the relationship between the principals' ethnicity, TEA's accountability rating and the community type of predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?	Standard Discriminant Analysis	Relationship between principal ethnicity and accountability rating and community type
3. What is the relationship between the principals' ethnicity, TEA's accountability rating and the average years of teaching experience of predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?	Standard Multiple Regression	Relationship with the variables ethnicity and accountability dummy coded
4. What is the relationship between the principals' ethnicity, TEA's accountability rating and the percent of students qualifying as low SES of predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?	Standard Multiple Regression	Relationship with the variables ethnicity and Accountability rating dummy coded and percent of students qualifying measures a quantitative variable

### *Chi-Square of Independent Samples*

The chi-square ( $X^2$ ) test of independence is used to examine the relationship between two discrete variables. It examines two variables from a single population to determine if there is a significant association between the variables. In the chi-square analysis, the null hypothesis generates expected frequencies against which observed frequencies are tested. If the observed frequencies are similar to the expected frequencies, then the value of  $X^2$  is small and the null hypothesis is retained; if they are sufficiently different, then the value of  $X^2$  is large and the null hypothesis is rejected (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

### *Discriminant Function Analysis*

The goal of discriminant function analysis is to predict group membership from a set of predictors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). It is a regression equation with a dependent variable that represents group membership. This analysis tells you to which group each value probably belongs (Kerlinger, 1999).

### *Multiple Regression*

Regression analyses are a set of statistical techniques that allow one to assess the relationship between one dependent variable (DV) and several independent variables (IVs). Regression techniques can be applied to a data set in which the IVs are correlated with one another and with the DV to varying degrees. The goal of regression is to arrive at the set of  $B$  values, called regression coefficients, for the IVs that bring the  $Y$  values predicted from the equation as close as possible to the  $Y$  values obtained by measurement (Kerlinger, 1999; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS**

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between principal ethnicity and student achievement as measured by the accountability rating system in Texas in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. Additionally, this study sought to identify other factors that influence accountability rating in predominantly Hispanic high schools in Texas in relation to principal ethnicity. These other factors included community type where the school was located, teacher experience, and percent of students qualifying as low socioeconomic status/economically disadvantaged. The relationships were represented in the following research questions:

1. What relationship does the principal's ethnicity have on student achievement as measured by the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
2. What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity in terms of student achievement as measured by TEA's school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas in relation to community type?
  - 2a. What is the relationship between accountability rating and community type in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
  - 2b. What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and community type in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

3. What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA's school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by average teacher experience?
  - 3a. What is the relationship between accountability rating and average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
  - 3b. What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
4. What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA's accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by percent of students qualifying as low socioeconomic status/economically disadvantaged?
  - 4a. What is the relationship between accountability rating and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?
  - 4b. What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

The sample population of this study consisted of 335 predominantly Hispanic public high schools in the state of Texas. The Chi-Square of Independence was used to treat the data. This data analysis was divided into two major sections. The first section dealt with the demographic profile of the participants in the study. Section two addressed the four major research questions formulated for this study.

### **Demographics Profile of the Participants in the Study**

The participants in the study were described descriptively by principal gender, principal ethnicity, average years of teaching experience, percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged, school accountability rating, and community type of school.

#### *Principal Gender*

There were 335 high schools in the state of Texas that had a predominantly Hispanic student clientele. There were 218 male principals and 117 female principals identified for the study. See Table 4.1 for these results.

Table 4.1. Frequency Distribution of Participants by Principal Gender

Principal Gender	Number	Percent
Male	218	65.1
Female	117	34.9
Total	335	100.0

#### *Principal Ethnicity*

The ethnicity of the principals of the predominantly Hispanic public high schools used for the study was categorized into three groups. There were 15 (4.5%) principals identified as African American and 175 (52.2%) identified as White. Additionally, 145 (43.3%) high school principals were identified as Hispanic. See Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Frequency Distribution of Participants by Principal Ethnicity

Principal Ethnicity	Number	Percent
African American	15	4.5
Hispanic	145	43.3
White	175	52.2
Total	335	100.0

*Average Years of Teaching Experience*

The variable average years of teaching experience was categorized into three groups for this investigation. The three ranges of average teacher experience were less than 10 years, 10-15 years, and more than 15 years. There were 82 (24.5%) high schools whose teachers had an average of 10 years or less of teaching experience and 219 (65.4%) whose teachers had an average between 10 to 15 years of teaching experience. Finally, 34 (10.1%) high schools had an average of 15 or more years of teaching experience. See Table 4.3 for these findings.

Table 4.3. Frequency Distribution of Participants by Average Years of Teacher Experience

Average Years of Teaching	Number	Percent
Less than 20 years	82	24.5
10-15 years	219	65.4
More than 15 years	34	10.1
Total	335	100.0

*Percent of Students Qualifying as Economically Disadvantaged*

The variable of percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged was broken into three ranges. The ranges created were less than 50%, 50-75%, and more than 75% qualifying as economically disadvantaged. Sixty-six (19.7%) high schools reported that less than 50% of their students qualified as economically disadvantaged, while 140 (41.8%) indicated that between 50 and 75% of their students qualified as economically disadvantaged. Finally, 129 (38.5%) high schools had more than 75% of their students qualified as economically disadvantaged. See Table 4.4 for these results.

Table 4.4. Frequency Distribution of Participants by Percent of Students Qualifying as Economically Disadvantaged

Percent of Economically Disadvantaged	Number	Percent
Less than 50%	66	19.7
50-75%	140	41.8
More than 75%	129	38.5
Total	335	100.0

#### *Accountability Rating*

The accountability rating for the high schools was divided into four groups. The four possible accountability ratings were: low performing, acceptable, recognized, and exemplary. There were 28 (8.4%) schools rated with low performance and 22 (6.6%) high schools were rated as recognized. There were 283 schools (84.4%) rated as acceptable and 2 (0.6%) high schools rated as exemplary. See Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Frequency Distribution of Participants by Accountability Rating

Accountability Rating	Number	Percent
Low Performance	28	8.4
Hispanic	22	6.6
White	283	84.4
Exemplary	2	.6
Total	335	100.0

*Community Types*

The variable community type was categorized into eight geographic areas for this study. There were 15 (4.5%) located in an ‘independent town,’ 44 (13.1%) in a ‘major suburban’ area, and 68 (20.3%) in a ‘major urban’ area. In addition, 5 (1.5%) schools were located in a ‘non-metro: fast growing’ area and 54 (16.2%) in a ‘non-metro: stable’ area. There were 43 (12.8%) high schools identified as being located in an ‘other central city’ and 41 (12.2%) in an ‘other central city suburban’ area. Finally, 65 (19.4%) high schools were located in a ‘rural’ area. See Table 4.6 for these findings.

Table 4.6. Frequency Distribution of Participants by Community Type

Community Type	Number	Percent
Independent Town	15	4.5
Major Suburban	44	13.1
Major Urban	68	20.3
Non-Metro: Fast Growing	5	1.5
Non-Metro: Stable	54	16.2
Other Central City	43	12.8
Other Central City Suburban	41	12.2
Rural	65	19.4
Total	335	100.0

## Examination of Research Questions

### *Research Question 1*

What relationship does the principal's ethnicity have on student achievement as measured by the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

A chi-square test of independence was computed to examine the relationship between the ethnicity of the principal and student achievement as measured by TEA's accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. As shown in Table 4.7, a statistically significant relationship was not found between principal ethnicity and accountability rating in predominantly Hispanic public high schools ( $X^2=11.086$ ,  $df=6$ ,  $p>.05$ ) in the state of Texas at the .05 level.

Table 4.7. Chi-Square Results Regarding the Difference Between the Accountability Ratings of High Schools by the Ethnicity of the Principal

Ethnicity	Accountability Rating				Total
	Acceptable	Low Performance	Recognized	Exemplary	
Number African American	11.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
Percent	73.3	26.7	0.0	0.0	100.0
Number Hispanic	125.0	10.0	8.0	2.0	145.0
Percent	86.2	6.9	5.5	1.4	100.0
Number White	147.0	14.0	14.0	0.0	175.0
Percent	84.0	8.0	8.0	0.0	100.0
Number Total	283.0	28.0	22.0	2.0	335.0
Percent	84.4	8.4	6.6	.6	100.0

$X^2=11.086$ ,  $df=6$ ,  $p=.086$ .



*Research Question 2*

What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity in terms of student achievement as measured by TEA's school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas in relation to community type?

A standard discriminant analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between principal ethnicity, TEA's accountability rating, and the community type of predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. As shown in Table 4.8, significant group differences were found for the predictors' ethnicity of the principals and the TEA's accountability rating of the school (see Table 4.9). Two functions were generated and both were found to be significant with a Wilk's  $\Lambda = .776$ ,  $X^2(14, N=335) = 83.432$  for the principals' ethnicity and Wilk's  $\Lambda = .926$ ,  $X^2(6, N=335) = 24.799$  for the schools' accountability rating.

Table 4.8. Group Statistics Results Regarding Independent and Dependent Variables

Community	Mean	SD
Independent Town		
Ethnicity	2.40	.63
Accountability	1.07	.26
Major Suburban		
Ethnicity	2.41	.73
Accountability	1.11	.44
Major Urban		
Ethnicity	2.40	.62
Accountability	1.19	.40
Non-Metro: Fast Growing		
Ethnicity	2.40	.55
Accountability	2.80	1.09

Table 4.8 (continued)

Community	Mean	SD
Non-Metro: Stable		
Ethnicity	2.63	.52
Accountability	1.11	.42
Other Central City		
Ethnicity	2.35	.53
Accountability	1.12	.39
Other Central City-Suburban		
Ethnicity	2.24	.49
Accountability	1.24	.70
Rural		
Ethnicity	2.74	.44
Accountability	1.45	.77
Total		
Ethnicity	2.48	.58
Accountability	1.23	.59

Table 4.9. Test of Equality of Group Means and Eigenvalues Results

Independent Variable	Wilks' Lambda	F	df	dfz	P
Ethnicity	0.254	138.400	7	329	.000
Accountability Rating	0.327	77.624	7	329	.000
Function	Eigenvalue	Percentage of Variance	Cumulative Percentage	Canonical Correlation	
1	.195	71.4	71.4	.404	
2	.078	28.6	100.0	.269	

Both of the functions indicated that the predictors significantly differentiated between community types (see Table 4.10) Additionally, the eigenvalues revealed that two functions were generated with community type accounting for 71.4% of the variance in function 1 and 28.6% in function 2 (see Table 4.9). The evaluation of the standardized discriminant function coefficients revealed that accountability rating (.95) had the highest loading, followed by race (.34) for function 1.

Table 4.10. Overall Wilks' Lambda Results Regarding the Functions

Test of Functions	Wilks' Lambda	Chi Alpha	df	P
1 through 2	.776	83.432	14	.000
2	.926	24.799	6	.000

On the other hand, for function 2, race had the highest rating (.94), followed by accountability rating (-.32). Variables correlating with function 1 indicated that race ( $r=.94$ ) had the strongest relationship followed by accountability rating ( $r=.32$ ). Regarding function 2, accountability rating ( $r=.95$ ) had the strongest relationship followed by race ( $r=-.34$ ) (See Table 4.11). The similarities between the functions make it somewhat easier to name the functions. Function 1 was named racial status and function 2 was named accountability status.

Table 4.11. Correlation Coefficients and Standardized Function Coefficients Regarding the Independent Variables

Variables	Correlation Coefficients Discriminant Functions		Standardized Function Coefficients	
	Function 1	Function 2	Function 1	Function 2
Ethnicity	.939	-.343	.343	.940
Accountability Rating	.318	.948	.948	-.319

The classification results revealed that the original grouped cases were classified with only 43.3% overall accuracy: Accuracy by each group was 73.3% for *independent town*, 100% for *major suburban*, 100% for *major urban*, 100% for *non-metro: fast growing*, 3.7% for *non-metro: stable*, 0% for *other central city*, 0% for *other central city suburban*, and 3.1% for *rural*. Cross validation derived 43.3% accuracy for the total sample (see Table 4.12). In addition, the group means for function 1 (see Table 4.13) indicated that those public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic population located in *non-metro: stable* had a function mean of 2.667, and those located in *major suburban*, *major urban*, and *non-metro: fast growing* had a mean of -1.895.

Table 4.12. Classification Results Regarding Predicted Group Membership

Community	Number		Predicted Group Membership					R
	IT	MS	MU	N-M: FG	N-M: S	OCC	OCC- S	
IT	73.3	26.7	0	0	0	0	0	0
MS	0	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MU	0	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N-M: FG	0	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
N-M: S	0	3.7	0	0	0	52	0	0
OCC	0	0	0	0	0	43	0	0
OCC-S	0	0	0	0	0	41	0	0
R	6.2	3.1	0	0	0	11	0	48

*Note.* IT=Independent Town; MS=Major Suburban; MU=Major Urban; N-M:FG=Non-Metro: Fast Growing; N-M:S=Non-Metro: Stable; OCC=Other Central City; OCC-S=Other Central City – Suburban; R=Rural.

Table 4.13. Functions at Group Mean Results

Communities	Function 1	Function 2
Independent Town	-.335	-.033
Major Suburban	-.248	-.045
Major Urban	-.121	-.110
Non-Metro: Fast Growing	2.667	-1.041
Non-Metro: Stable	-.118	.324
Other Central City	-.280	-.147
Other Central City Suburban	-.123	-.396
Rural	.528	.310

These results suggested that public high schools with predominantly Hispanic population located in an *independent town*, a *major suburban*, *major urban*, or *non-metro: stable* most likely had a Hispanic or White principal with an accountability rating of acceptable. Finally, the group means for function 2 (see Table 4.13) revealed that those public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic population located in *non-metro: fast growing* areas had a function mean -1.041. These results suggested that public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic population located in *non-metro: fast*

*growing* area most likely had an accountability rating of recognized or exemplary with a Hispanic or White principal.

### *Research Question 3*

What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA's school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by average teacher experience?

Reported in Table 4.14 were the inter-correlations between the independent variables principal ethnicity and TEA's accountability rating and the dependent variable average years of teacher experience. The variable ethnicity was recoded into three 'ness' variables for this investigation. All three variables were dummy coded using 1 and 0. The first variable 'African Americanness' (African American 1, Non-African American 0), the second variable 'Whiteness' (White 1, Non-White 0) and the third variable 'Hispanicness' (Hispanic 1, Non-Hispanic 0). The variable accountability rating was recoded into five dummy variables. The first variable 'Rated' was coded (1) Rated and (0) Not Rated. The second variable 'Performance' was coded (1) Low Performance and (0) Non Low Performance. The third variable 'Recognized' was coded (1) Recognized and (0) Not Recognized. The fourth variable 'Acceptable' was coded (1) Acceptable and (0) Not Acceptable. The fifth and final variable 'Exemplary' was coded (1) Exemplary and (0) Not Exemplary.

Table 4.14. Correlation Matrix Regarding the Relationship Between the Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable: Average Years of Teacher Experience

Predictors	Criterion Average Years of Teacher Experience
Low Performance	.220***
Recognized	-.013
Acceptable	.166***
Exemplary	.049
African Americanness	-.127
Whiteness	.076
Hispanicness	.024

\*\*\*p<.001.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (Table 4.14) was used to determine the inter-correlations between ethnicity and average years of teacher experience and accountability rating and average years of teacher experience. A statistically significant positive relationship was found between average years of teacher experience and acceptable (.166) and performance (.220) ratings. However, statistically significant negative relationships were found between average years of teacher experience and Blackness (-.127). Therefore, a public high school that has a predominantly Hispanic student clientele with an average less than ten years of teaching experience with a White or Hispanic principal is more likely to be rated acceptable or low performance.

Shown in Table 4.15, when the Pearson Product Moment Correlation was computed to examine the inter-correlations between ethnicity and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged and accountability rating and percent of students qualifying for low income status, a statistically significant positive relationship was found between percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged and Hispanicness ( $r = .331$ ). A statistically significant negative relationship was found between percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged and Whiteness ( $r = -.334$ ). Thus, public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student clientele and a large percent (75% or more) of its students qualify as economically disadvantaged were more likely to have a Hispanic principal.

Table 4.15. Correlation Matrix Regarding the Relationship Between the Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable: Percent of Students Qualifying for Low Income Status

Predictors	Criterion Percent of Students Qualifying for Low Income Status
Low Performance	-.069
Recognized	-.004
Acceptable	.046
Exemplary	-.009
African Americanness	.014
Whiteness	-.334***
Hispanicness	.331***

\*\*\* $p < .001$ .



The standard multiple regression (see Table 4.16) procedure was used to investigate the relationship between principal ethnicity, TEA's accountability rating, and the average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic public schools in Texas. Regression results indicated an overall model of five predictors (African Americanness, Whiteness, Low Performance, Recognized, and Exemplary) significantly predicted average years of teacher experience  $F(5,329) = 4.493, p < .001$ . This model accounted for 6% (adjusted 5%) of the variance in the average years of teacher experience.

Furthermore, the variable low performance ( $t=3.857, p < .01$ ) was found to contribute significantly to the average years of teacher experience in public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population.

Table 4.16. Standard Multiple Regression Results Regarding the Relationship Between Ethnicity, Accountability Rating, and Average Years of Teacher Experience

Model	$\beta$	SE	Beta	$t$	P
Constant	10.117	0.492			
Performance	1.86	.484	.209	3.887	.000***
Recognized	-0.371	0.536	-0.037	0.693	.489
Exemplary	1.515	1.722	0.047	0.881	.379
AA ness	-1.012	0.663	-0.085	-1.526	.128
Whiteness	.299	.273	.060	1.097	.273

*Note.*  $R=.253$ ;  $R\ square=.064$ ;  $Adjusted\ R\ Square=.050$ ;  $SE=2.41$ ;  $F=4.493$ ;  $df=5/329$ ;  $P=.000***$ .

The variables acceptable and Hispanicness were excluded from the model.

\*\*\* $p < .001$ .

*Research Question 4*

What is the relationship of the principal's ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA's accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by percent of students qualifying as low socioeconomic status/economically disadvantaged?

Presented in Table 4.17 were the standard multiple regression results pertaining to principal ethnicity, TEA's accountability rating, and the percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged. The variables principal ethnicity and TEA's accountability rating resulted in a multiple correlation of .350. These variables together accounted for 12% (adjusted 11%) of the variance in the criterion variable (percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged). The five remaining independent variables were found to have a linear relationship with students qualifying as low socioeconomic status ( $F(5/329) = 9.211, p < .000$ ). The variable Whiteness ( $t = -6.653, p < .001$ ) had a significant independent effect on the percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged. Thus, public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student clientele and a large percent (75% or more) of its students qualifying as economically disadvantaged were more likely to have a Hispanic principal.

Table 4.17. Standard Multiple Regression Results Regarding the Relationship Between Ethnicity, Accountability Rating, and Percent of Students Qualifying for Low Income Status

Model	$\beta$	SE	Beta	<i>t</i>	P
Constant	0.786	0.035			
Low Performance	-0.050	0.035	-0.076	1.445	.149
Recognized	0.014	0.039	0.019	0.361	.719
Exemplary	-0.087	0.124	-0.036	-0.703	.483
AA ness	-0.069	0.048	-0.077	-1.436	.152
Whiteness	-0.131	0.020	-0.355	-6.653	.000***

Note. R=.350; R square=.123; Adjusted R Square=.109; SE=.174; F=9.211; df=5/329; P=.000\*\*\*.

The variables acceptable and Hispanicness were excluded from the model.

\*\*\*p<.001.

### *Research Sub-Questions*

Research questions 2-4 were then broken into sub-questions in order to run chi-square tests of independence and further examine the relationships between variables.

#### **Research Question 2a**

What is the relationship between accountability rating and community type in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

Shown in Table 18 are the two sample chi-square results pertaining to the relationship between accountability rating and community type. Fourteen (93.3%) of the public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population were rated acceptable in *independent town* with 1 (6.7%) low performance; 41 (93.2%) of the *major*

*suburban* were rated acceptable, while 1 (2.3%) was rated low performance and 2 (4.5%) were rated recognized; 55 (80.9%) of the *major urban* were rated acceptable with 13 (19.1%) rated as low performance; 1 (20.0%) of the *non-metro: fast growing* was rated as acceptable, while 3 (60.0%) were rated as recognized and 1 (20.0%) school rated as exemplary; 50 (92.6%) of the *non-metro stable* schools were rated as acceptable, while 2 (3.7%) were rated low performance and 2 (3.7%) were labeled as recognized; and 39 (90.7%) of the schools in communities labeled *other central city* were rated as acceptable with 3 (7.0%) rated as low performance and 1 (2.3%) rated as recognized. Finally, the data revealed that 36 (87.9%) of the schools labeled *other central city suburban* were rated acceptable, while 1 (2.4%) was rated low performance, 3 (7.3%) were rated as recognized and 1 (2.4%) was rated exemplary; and 47 (72.3%) of the schools in *rural* communities were rated as acceptable, 7 (10.8%) rated low performance and 11 (16.9%) rated recognized. A statistically significant relationship was found ( $X^2=95.965$ ,  $df=21$ ,  $p<.001$ ) between accountability rating and the community type of public high schools with predominantly Hispanic populations at the .001 alpha level. A moderate relationship existed between community type and accountability ( $C = .472$ ). Thus, public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic population in a *rural* area were less likely to receive an acceptable accountability rating than their counterparts in *independent town, major suburban, major urban, non-metro: stable, other central city, and other central city suburban* areas. *Major urban* schools were most likely to be rated as low performing, and *non-metro: fast growing schools* were more likely to be recognized or exemplary, although there were only five schools in the population.

Table 4.18. Chi-Square Results Regarding the Relationships Between Accountability Ratings and Community Types

Community	Acceptable	Accountability Rating			Total
		Low Performance	Recognized	Exemplary	
Number Independent Town	14	1	0	0	15
Percent	93.3	6.7	0.0	0.0	100.0
Number Major Suburban	41	1	2	0	44
Percent	93.2	2.3	4.5	0.0	100.0
Number Major Urban	55	13	0	0	68
Percent	80.9	19.1	0.0	0.0	100.0
Number Non-Metro Fast Growing	1	0	3	1	5
Percent	20.0	0.0	60.0	20.0	100.0
Number Non-Metro Stable	50	2	2	0	54
Percent	92.6	3.7	3.7	0.0	100.0
Number Other Central City	39	3	1	0	43
Percent	90.7	7.0	2.3	0.0	100.0
Number Other Central City Suburban	36	1	3	1	41
Percent	87.9	2.4	7.3	2.4	100.0
Number Rural	47	7	11	0	65
Percent	72.3	10.8	16.9	0.0	100.0
Number Total	283	28	22	2	335
Percent	84.4	8.4	6.6	.6	100.0

$X^2=95.965$ ,  $df=21$ ,  $c=.472$ ,  $p=.000^{***}$   $^{***}p<.001$ .

### Research Question 2b

What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and community type in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

Illustrated in Table 19 are the independent chi-square results with regard to the relationship between principal ethnicity and community type a school is located in Texas public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population. Seven (46.7%) of the public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic population located in *independent towns* had Hispanic school principals, and 7 (46.7%) had White principals, while only 1 (6.6%) had an African American school principal. Six (13.6%) of the schools labeled *major suburban* had African American school principals, 14 (31.8%) had Hispanic principals, and 24 (54.6%) had White principals. Of the schools defined as *major urban* 5 (7.4%) had an African American school principal, 31 (45.6%) had Hispanic principals, and 32 (47.0%) had White principals. *Non-metro: fast growing* schools had 3 (60.0%) Hispanic principals and 2 (40.0%) White principals. Comparatively, 1 (2.3 %) of the predominantly Hispanic public high schools located in *other central city* had an African American principal, 26 (60.5%) had Hispanic principals, and 16 had White principals. Of the schools classified as *other central city suburban* 1 (2.4%) had an African American principal, 29 (70.8%) had Hispanic principals, and 11 (21.4%) had White principals. Finally, predominantly Hispanic public high schools in *rural* areas had 17 (26.2%) Hispanic principals and 48 (73.8%) White principals. A significant relationship was found between ethnicity and community type ( $X^2=46.941$ ,  $df=14$ ,  $p<.001$ ) at the .001 alpha level. A mild relationship existed between ethnicity of the principals and the

community type ( $C = .351$ ). Principals in *non-metro fast growing* schools were more likely to be Hispanic as were principals in *other central city, and other central city suburban* schools. *Non-metro stable* and *rural* schools were more likely to have a White principal.

Table 4.19. Chi-Square Results Regarding Relationship Between Ethnicity and Community Type

	Race			
	African American	Hispanic	White	Total
Number	1	7	7	15
Independent Town				
Percent	6.6	46.7	46.7	100.0
Number	6	14	24	44
Major Suburban				
Percent	13.6	31.8	54.6	100.0
Number	5	31	32	68
Major Urban				
Percent	7.4	45.6	47.0	100.0
Number	0	3	2	5
Non-Metro: Fast Growing				
Percent	0.0	60.0	40.0	100.0
Number	1	18	35	54
Non-Metro: Stable				
Percent	1.9	33.3	64.8	100.0
Number	1	26	16	43
Other Central City				
Percent	2.3	60.5	37.2	100.0
Number	1	29	11	41
Other Central City Suburban				
Percent	2.4	70.8	26.8	100.0
Number	0	17	48	65
Rural				
Percent	0.0	26.2	73.8	100.0
Number	15	145	175	335
Total				
Percent	4.5	43.3	52.2	100.0

$X^2=46.941$ ,  $df=14$ ,  $c=.351$ ,  $p=.000***$ .

**Research Question 3a**

What is the relationship between accountability rating and average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

Reported in Table 4.20 were the independent chi-square results relative to the relationship between accountability rating and the average years of teaching experience in public high schools in Texas with a predominantly Hispanic student population. Predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas with average years of teaching experience less than 10 had the following data: 16 (19.5%) had an accountability rating of low performance, 6 (7.3%) were rated recognized, 59 (72.0%) as acceptable, and 1 (1.2%) as exemplary. In addition, schools with an average years of teaching experience between 10 to 15 years had 9 (4.1%) schools rated low performance, 13 (5.9%) recognized, and 197 (90.0%) acceptable.

Finally, predominantly Hispanic public high schools with an average years of teaching experiences greater than 15 years had the following: 3 (8.8%) were rated low performance, 3 (8.8%) recognized, 27 (79.5%) acceptable, and 1 (2.9%) as exemplary. A statistically significant relationship was found between accountability rating and the average number of years teaching experience ( $X^2=24.784$ ,  $df=6$ ,  $p<001$ ) at the .001 level. A moderate relationship was found between these two variables ( $C= .262$ ). Therefore, public high schools in Texas with predominantly Hispanic student populations with an average teaching experience between 10 and 15 years were more likely to have an acceptable accountability rating than those with less than an average of



10 years or more than 15 years of teaching experience. Schools with an average years of teaching experience below 10 were more likely to receive a low performing rating.

Table 4.20. Chi-Square Results Regarding the Relationship Between Accountability Rating and Average Years of Teaching Experience

	Accountability Rating				Total
	Acceptable	Low Performance	Recognized	Exemplary	
Number < 10 years	59	16	6	1	82
Percent	72.0	19.5	7.3	1.2	100.0
Number 10 – 15 years	197	9	13	0	219
Percent	90.0	4.1	5.9	0.0	100.0
Number >15 years	27	3	3	1	34
Percent	79.5	8.8	8.8	2.9	100.0
Number Total	283	28	22	2	335
Percent	84.4	8.4	6.6	.6	100.0

$X^2=24.784$ ,  $df=6$ ,  $c=.262$ ,  $p=.001^{***}$ .

### Research Question 3b

What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

Revealed in Table 4.21 were the chi-square results with regard to the relationship between the ethnicity of the principals and the average years of teaching experience in public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population. Predominantly Hispanic public high schools with average years of teaching experience that was less than 10 years had 6 (7.3%) African American principals, 35 (42.7%) Hispanic principals, and 41 (50.0%) White principals. Predominantly Hispanic public high schools with an average years of teaching experience between 10 and 15 years had 9

(4.1%) African American principals, 100 (45.7%) Hispanic principals, and 110 (50.2%) White principals. Finally, predominantly Hispanic public high schools with average years of teaching experience over 15 years included 10 (29.4%) Hispanic principals, 24 (70.6%) White principals, and no African American principals. No statistically significant relationship was found between the ethnicity of the principals and the average years of teaching experience at the .05 level ( $X^2=7.309$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p>.05$ ).

Table 4.21. Chi-Square Results Regarding the Relationship Between Ethnicity and Average Years of Teaching Experience

	Race			
	African American	Hispanic	White	Total
Number	6	35	41	82
<10 years				
Percent	7.3	42.7	50.0	100.0
Number	9	100	110	219
10-15 years				
Percent	4.1	45.7	50.2	100.0
Number	0	10	24	34
>15 years				
Percent	0.0	29.4	70.6	100.0
Number	15	145	175	335
Total				
Percent	4.5	43.3	52.2	100.0

$X^2=7.309$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p=.120$ .

**Research Question 4a**

What is the relationship between accountability rating and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

The chi-square test of independence results regarding the relationship between the accountability rating and the percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population were presented in Table 4.22. Of those public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population where less than 50% of their students qualifying as low income, 3 (4.6% ) had an accountability rating of low performance, 2 (3.0%) had a rating of recognized, 60 (90.9%) were rated acceptable, and 1 (1.4) had an exemplary rating. In addition, those predominantly Hispanic high schools with 50 to 75% of their students qualifying as economically disadvantaged showed the following: 12 (8.6%) had an accountability rating of low performance, 11 (7.9%) were recognized, and 117 (83.5%) rated as acceptable. Finally, predominantly Hispanic public high schools with more than 75% of their students qualifying as low income had 13 (10.1%) schools with an accountability rating of low performance, 9 (7.0%) rated as recognized, 106 (82.1%) were acceptable, and 1 (.8%) school was rated exemplary. Consequently, no significant relationship was found between the accountability rating and the percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population ( $X^2=5.511$ ,  $df=6$ ,  $p>.05$ ) at the .05 level.

Table 4.22. Chi-Square Results Regarding the Relationship Between Accountability Rating and the Percent of Students Qualifying as Economically Disadvantaged

	Accountability Rating				Total
	Acceptable	Low Performance	Recognized	Exemplary	
Number < 50%	60	3	2	1	66
Percent	90.9	4.6	3.0	1.5	100.0
Number 50-75%	117	12	11	0	140
Percent	83.5	8.6	7.9	0.0	100.0
Number >75%	106	13	9	1	129
Percent	82.1	10.1	7.0	.8	100.0
Number Total	283	28	22	2	335
Percent	84.4	8.4	6.6	.6	100.0

$X^2=5.511$ ,  $df=6$ ,  $p=.480$ .

#### Research Question 4b

What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?

Presented in Table 4.23 were the chi-square findings with respect to the relationship between the ethnicity of the principals and the percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged. The predominantly Hispanic schools where less than 50% of their population qualified as low income comprised of 2 (3.0%) African American principals, 18 (27.3%) Hispanic principals, and 46 (69.7%) White principals. In comparison, predominantly Hispanic public high schools with 50 to 75% of their students qualifying as low income consisted of 8 (5.7%) African American principals, 46 (32.9%) Hispanic principals, and 86 (61.4%) White principals.

Table 4.23. Chi-Square Results Regarding the Relationship Between Ethnicity and the Percent of Students Qualifying as Low Income

	Race			Total
	African American	Hispanic	White	
Number <50%	2	18	46	66
Percent	3.0	27.3	69.7	100.0
Number 50-75%	8	46	86	140
Percent	5.7	32.9	61.4	100.0
Number >75%	5	81	43	129
Percent	3.9	62.8	33.3	100.0
Number Total	15	145	175	335
Percent	4.5	43.3	52.2	100.0

$X^2 = 34.598$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $C=.306$ ,  $p=.000***$ .

Finally, predominantly Hispanic public high schools with over 75% of their students qualifying as low income included 5 (3.9%) African American principals, 81 (62.8%) Hispanic principals, and 43 (33.3%) White principals. A statistically significant relationship was found between the ethnicity of the principals and the percent of students qualifying as low income ( $X^2=34.598$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p<.001$ ) at the .001 level. A moderate relationship was found between these two variables ( $C = .306$ ). Thus, predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas with less than 50% and those with 50-75% of their students qualifying as economically disadvantaged were more likely to have a White principal than an African American or Hispanic principal. However, predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas that have 75% or more of their students qualifying as economically disadvantaged are most likely to have a Hispanic principal.

### Summary of Findings

The following is a summary of the findings discussed in this chapter. A more detailed discussion of each question will follow in Chapter V. The first research question, “What relationship does the principal’s ethnicity have on student achievement as measured by the Texas Education Agency’s (TEA) school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?” showed no significant relationship.

Research question 2 was “What is the relationship of the principal’s ethnicity in terms of student achievement as measured by TEA’s school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public schools in Texas in relation to community type?” The discriminant analysis of this question showed that predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas located in an *independent town, major suburban, major urban, or non-metro: stable* community most likely had a Hispanic or White principal with an accountability rating of acceptable, while schools in a *non-metro: fast growing* community were most likely to have a rating of recognized or exemplary and a White or Hispanic principal. The question was then examined in the following two questions. Question 2A “What is the relationship between accountability rating and community type in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?” and 2B “What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and community type in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?”

Question 2A yielded the following findings. There was a moderate relationship found between community type and accountability rating in predominantly Hispanic

high schools. Public high schools in Texas with a predominantly Hispanic population located in a *rural* area were more likely to have a rating of acceptable than schools in an *independent town, major suburban, major urban, non-metro stable, other central city, or other central city suburban* areas. These schools were most likely to have a rating of acceptable. *Major urban* schools were the most likely to have a rating of low performing and *non-metro fast growing* schools had a population of only five, but of those five schools 80% were rated above acceptable.

There was a mild relationship found between the variables in Question 2B. The findings showed that schools in *major suburban* were more likely to have a White principal as were schools in a *non-metro stable or rural community*. Schools that were located in *non-metro fast growing, other central city, and other central city suburban* were more likely to have a Hispanic principal.

Research question 3, “What is the relationship of the principal’s ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA’s school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by average teacher experience?” was then explored with a multiple regression analysis as well as being broken into two sub questions. A multiple regression analysis of question 3 found that predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas with an average teacher experience of less than ten years were more likely to be rated acceptable or low performing and have a White or Hispanic principal.

The sub questions were then analyzed. Question 3A was “What is the relationship between accountability rating and average years of teacher experience in

predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?” There was a statistically significant moderate relationship between accountability rating and average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic high schools. While all schools were most likely to be rated as acceptable, public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population with an average teaching experience of between 10-15 years were even more likely (90%) to have an acceptable rating than schools with less than 10 years (73%) or more than 15 years (81%) of teaching experience. Schools with an average teaching experience of less than 10 years were more likely to be rated as low performing (20%) than those with between 10-15 years experience (4%) and more than 15 years average years of teacher experience (9%).

Question 3B was “What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?” There was no statistically significant relationship between principal ethnicity and average years of teaching experience in predominantly Hispanic high schools in Texas. It is noted, however, that schools with 15 years average teacher experience or more were more likely to have a White principal (73%) than either a Hispanic (27%) or African American (0%).

Finally, research question 4, “What is the relationship of the principal’s ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA’s accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by percent of students qualifying as low socioeconomic status/economically disadvantaged?” was examined. The multiple regression analysis of this research question found that a predominantly Hispanic public



high school in Texas with 75% or more students qualifying as economically disadvantaged was most likely to have a Hispanic principal and be rated as acceptable.

Research question 4 was also broken into two questions in order to examine the relationship between principal ethnicity, accountability rating, and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged. Question 4A “What is the relationship between accountability rating and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?” There was no significant relationship found between accountability rating and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas.

Question 4B was “What is the relationship between principal ethnicity and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?” There was a moderate finding of significance in the relationship between principal ethnicity and percent of student qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. Schools with less than 50% of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged were most likely to have a White principal. These schools had a White principal 71% of the time. This was also the case with schools having 50-75% of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged as 61% of these campuses had a White principal. In contrast, schools having 75% or more of their students qualifying as economically disadvantaged were most likely to have a Hispanic principal. These campuses had a Hispanic principal 62% of the time and a White principal only 34% of the time.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Summary**

This study looked at the relationship of school leadership and ethnicity of the leader in relation to student achievement on state assessments in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. The study examined leadership and characteristics and traits of effective principals in terms of student achievement. The number of majority minority campuses is rapidly growing especially in Texas (Murdock, 2002). In Texas, 55.9% of all students are minorities, and this number is increasing, but only 25% of teachers are minorities (TEA, 2000). Whites make up less than half of the Texas population and by the year 2040, it is projected that Hispanics will make up 59% of the state's population. It is projected that by 2030, Hispanic students will make up 54% of all elementary and secondary school students in Texas (Murdock, 2002).

The focus of this research was on the relationship between the principal's ethnicity and other student demographics and student achievement as measured by the accountability rating given by the state in predominantly Hispanic high schools in Texas. The study compared accountability ratings at predominantly Hispanic high schools by ethnicity of the principal in an effort to determine if students performed better academically with a principal of White, African American, or Hispanic ethnicity. Further analysis was done by looking at the indicators of community type of the school, average years of teaching experience of the staff, and percent of students qualifying as

economically disadvantaged in relation to accountability rating of these schools. These criteria were also examined in relation to the principal's ethnicity as well.

The sample population of this study was Texas public high schools with an enrollment of 49% or greater Hispanic students. After filtering the total population based on defined criteria, there were 335 schools that were used for the study. Other demographics were used to make further evaluations on the student achievement rating of these campuses. These included the community type where the school was located, the average years of teaching experience on each campus, and the number of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged. All of these criteria were examined in relation to the accountability rating of each of these predominantly Hispanic high schools and the principal's ethnicity.

The intention of this study was to determine if schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population will attain a higher accountability rating dependent upon the ethnicity of the campus principal. In essence, it meant to determine if Hispanic students performed better if they had a Hispanic, African American, or White principal. The study was not meant as a commentary on Affirmative Action, but meant to find useful information that can be helpful when hiring school principals for predominantly Hispanic schools, which are growing in Texas at a high rate.

### **Conclusions**

This study found that there was no significant relationship between the principal's ethnicity and student performance as measured by accountability rating in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. The study did identify some

trends in terms of principal ethnicity and student performance in relation to community type, teacher experience, and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged, but there was no relationship based on accountability rating in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. The study reiterates that hiring administrators should focus on the research-based criteria of effective school leadership that positively impacts student performance of all students (Hoyle et al., 1998; Marzano et al., 2005; McEwan, 2003) that have already been established and not focus on race or ethnicity as a primary indicator when making hiring decisions. The following discussion links the findings of this study to the theoretical framework located in Chapter II.

### **Research Question 1**

The first research question was, “What relationship does the principal’s ethnicity have on student achievement as measured by the Texas Education Agency’s (TEA) school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?”

The data collected and analyzed on the first research question showed there was not a statistically significant relationship between principal ethnicity and accountability rating in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. Previous research has shown that as the teaching population on a campus is more reflective of the student population, the numbers of minority students in special education and other remedial programs becomes more aligned to the overall campus population. Discipline referrals for minority students and their representation in advanced curriculum courses becomes more aligned to the overall minority population percentage of the campus as well

(Farrell, 1990; Henze, Katz, Norte, Sather & Walker, 2002; Pine & Hilliard, 1990).

However, the data from this study does not support the idea that ethnicity of the principal alone can positively impact student achievement. This study emphasized the need for hiring administrators to focus on attributes, skills, and characteristics of leaders that have been shown through research to have a positive impact on student achievement (Hoyle et al., 1998; Marzano et al., 2005; McEwan, 2003).

### **Research Question 2**

The second research question was “What is the relationship of the principal’s ethnicity in terms of student achievement as measured by TEA’s school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public schools in Texas in relation to community type?”

The findings of the discriminant analysis for question 2 suggested that predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas located in an *independent town*, *major suburban*, *major urban*, or *non-metro: stable* community most likely had a Hispanic or White principal with an accountability rating of acceptable, while schools in a *non-metro: fast growing* community were most likely to have a rating of recognized or exemplary and a White or Hispanic principal.

The question was then further examined in order to get a better analysis of the data. The questions and findings of each question are as follows: Question 2A was “What is the relationship between the accountability rating and the community type in public high schools in Texas with a predominantly Hispanic student population?” There was a moderate relationship found between community type and accountability rating in

predominantly Hispanic high schools. Public high schools in Texas with a predominantly Hispanic population located in a *rural* area were more likely to have a rating of low performing or recognized than schools in an *independent town, major suburban, major urban, non-metro stable, other central city, or other central city suburban* areas. These schools were most likely to have a rating of acceptable. *Major urban* schools were the most likely to have a rating of low performing and *non-metro fast growing* schools had a population of only five; but of those five schools, 80% were rated above acceptable.

The findings would support the notion that schools have some varying needs regardless of their location (Brown & Swanson, 2003). Rural schools were found to be more likely to have a rating other than acceptable which would mesh with previous research stating rural schools have both positive and negative aspects in comparison to larger metropolitan schools. While rural schools may not have the same funding as larger schools, they also often do not face the same problems with violence and crime (DeYoung, 1991). Rural schools often have more stable and positive community environments (Lee & McIntire, 2000).

The findings of this study indicate that an inner city or major urban school is most likely to be rated as acceptable but is also more likely to be rated as low performing than schools in any other community type. This is supportive to findings that inner city schools have lower academic performance based on location (Lee, 1999; Leland, 2005; Maruyama, 2003). It is noted, however, that although major urban schools in this study

were the most likely to be rated as low performing, these schools were rated as acceptable 80.9% of the time.

Question 2B was “What is the relationship between the community type and the ethnicity of the principal in public high schools in Texas with a predominantly Hispanic student population?” There was a significant relationship found between principal ethnicity and community type in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. There was a mild relationship between these variables and the following were found: Schools in *major suburban* were more likely to have a White principal as were schools in a *non-metro stable or rural community*. Schools that were located in *non-metro fast growing, other central city, and other central city suburban* were more likely to have a Hispanic principal. The findings of the study supported previous work in that schools with large percentages of minority students are often led by a principal of minority background (Coursen et al., 1989; U.S. Department of Education, 1996).

### **Research Question 3**

The third research question for the study was “What is the relationship of the principal’s ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA’s school accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by average teacher experience?”

A multiple regression analysis of question 3 found that predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas with an average teacher experience of less than ten years were more likely to be rated acceptable or low performing and have a White or Hispanic principal. Question 3 was also divided into two questions so that an additional view of

the data could be obtained in terms of variables being analyzed. Research question 3 was examined in terms of the following questions.

Question 3A “What is the relationship between accountability rating and average years of teaching experience in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?” There was a statistically significant moderate relationship between accountability rating and average years of teacher experience in predominantly Hispanic high schools. While all schools were most likely to be rated as acceptable, public high schools with a predominantly Hispanic student population with an average teaching experience of between 10-15 years were even more likely (90%) to have an acceptable rating than schools with less than 10 years (73%) or more than 15 years (81%) of teaching experience. Schools with an average teaching experience of less than 10 years were more likely to be rated as low performing (20%) than those with between 10-15 years of experience (4%) and more than 15 years average years of teacher experience (9%). The findings support the previous research on teacher experience having a positive impact on student achievement (Gordon et al., 2006; Grissmer et al., 2000; Murnane & Phillips, 1981; Rice, 2003).

Question 3B was “What is the relationship between the ethnicity of the principal and the average years of teaching experience in public high schools in Texas with a predominantly Hispanic student population?” There was no statistically significant relationship between principal ethnicity and average years of teaching experience in predominantly Hispanic high schools in Texas. It is noted, however, that schools with 15 years average teacher experience or more were more likely to have a White principal



(73%) than either a Hispanic (27%) or African American (0%). There was not a significant amount of study found on this topic, but the findings would support what Coursen et al. (1989) found in regard to the less stable a school is the more likely it is to have a minority principal.

#### **Research Question 4**

Research question 4 was “What is the relationship of the principal’s ethnicity on student achievement as measured by TEA’s accountability rating system in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas by percent of students qualifying as low socioeconomic status/economically disadvantaged?”

The regression analysis of this research question found that a predominantly Hispanic public high school in Texas with 75% or more students qualifying as economically disadvantaged was most likely to have a Hispanic principal. Finally, research question 4 was also broken into two questions in order to examine the relationship between principal ethnicity, accountability rating, and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged.

Question 4A was: “What is the relationship between the accountability rating and the percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in public high schools in Texas with a predominantly Hispanic student population?” There was no significant relationship found between accountability rating and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic high schools in Texas. In each category measured, the majority of campuses were rated as acceptable. Campuses with less than 50% of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged had 92% rated as

acceptable, while campuses having 50-75% of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged had 84% rated as acceptable. Finally, predominantly Hispanic high schools with 75% or more of their students qualifying as economically disadvantaged were rated acceptable 83% of the time. The findings of the study are not supportive of previous literature findings that the more economically disadvantaged students a campus, has the lower the academic performance (Haycock, 2001; Johnson, 2000; Lee, 1999; Slavin, 2008).

Question 4B was “What is the relationship between the ethnicity of the principal and the percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas?” There was a moderate finding of significance in the relationship between principal ethnicity and percent of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. Schools with less than 50% of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged were most likely to have a White principal. These schools had a White principal 71% of the time. This was also the case with schools having 50-75% of students qualifying as economically disadvantaged as 61% of these campuses had a White principal. In contrast, schools having 75% or more of their students qualifying as economically disadvantaged were most likely to have a Hispanic principal. These campuses had a Hispanic principal 62% of the time and a White principal only 34% of the time. This finding again would support previous findings and data (Coursen et al., 1989; U.S. Department of Education, 1996) in that the campuses with the neediest students were most likely to have a minority principal.

This study showed that ethnicity alone is not an indicator that can predict positive student achievement in relation to the principal of the campus in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas. Previous research has shown that as the teaching population on a campus is more reflective of the student population, the number of minority students in special education and other remedial programs becomes more aligned to the population of the campus as a whole. Discipline referrals for minority students and their representation in advanced curriculum courses also becomes more aligned to the overall minority population percentage of the campus (Farrell, 1990; Henze et al., 2002; Pine & Hilliard, 1990). However, simply having a principal who is reflective of the majority on campus does not ensure an increase in student achievement as measured by accountability rating. More and more campuses are becoming predominantly Hispanic (Murdock, 2002). Schools that have very high percentages of minority students need effective leadership and in some cases even more so than schools with high percentages of White students. Leadership effect may be magnified in such schools (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Schools with high percentages of economically disadvantaged students may also have special needs and leadership on these campuses and can have a heightened impact on student performance (Andrews & Soder, 1987). Hiring administrators should focus on the overall needs of the campus when making decisions. There are identifiable research-based skills that administrators can possess that will positively impact student achievement (Marzano et al., 2005). Hiring administrators should focus on hiring principals who possess those skills.

### **Recommendations Based on This Study**

In order to create a more balanced playing field where students in predominantly Hispanic schools can achieve on a level equal to their White counterparts, schools must have effective leadership in place that can positively impact student achievement in all students. School district leaders charged with hiring campus administrators need to be aware of the skills, characteristics, and attributes of principals who have been proven to positively impact student achievement. Identifying leaders who possess these skills and attributes should be the focus of hiring decisions. While it may seem that students in predominantly Hispanic high school will perform better academically when the principal is also Hispanic, this study did not validate this idea. While there may be some benefits to having a leader who is reflective of the majority of students, it did not translate to an increase in student achievement as measured by the accountability rating system used by TEA. Therefore, while it can be beneficial to have the goal of building a reflective staff including the principal, the primary focus must be on having instructional leaders who possess proven skills that positively impact student achievement. Hiring decisions should not be made based solely on race or ethnicity or to meet political goals, but principals should be hired who possess the experience and skills needed to help all students.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

During the analysis of this data, there were questions that arose and the following are recommendations for further study:

1. Conduct a similar study looking at predominantly Hispanic elementary public schools in Texas.
2. Conduct the study using predominantly Hispanic public middle school in Texas.
3. Conduct the study by using predominantly African American public high, middle, and elementary schools in Texas.
4. Examine if there is a relationship between principal ethnicity and school size in terms of accountability ratings in predominantly minority schools in Texas.
5. Examine specific areas of TAKS scores (ELA, math, science, social studies) for a relationship between principal ethnicity and student performance in predominantly Hispanic schools in Texas.

When hiring principals to work with predominantly Hispanic campuses, the focus should be on the overall skill set the individual possesses. Hiring decisions should not be made based on race or ethnicity for political reasons. This study has shown that there is not a positive relationship between principal ethnicity and student achievement in predominantly Hispanic public high schools in Texas.

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This dissertation was typed and edited by Marilyn M. Oliva at Action Ink, Inc.