

**A CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS OF THREE EARLY-CAREER FEMALE ELEMENTARY
PRINCIPALS LEADING TITLE I SCHOOLS: THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE
SYNERGISTIC LEADERSHIP THEORY TO MENTORING AND THEIR
LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES**

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative cross-case study was to apply the synergistic leadership theory to the leadership experiences of three early-career female principals leading Title I elementary schools. The synergistic leadership theory is an interactive theory that includes female experiences while applying to both men and women. It provides a framework for leaders to align four factors that impact leadership: (a) leadership behaviors; (b) organizational structure; (c) external forces; and (d) attitudes, values, and beliefs. Five research questions guided my study: (a) What are the leadership behaviors of the early-career female principals who lead Title I schools? (b) How does the organizational structure of each campus align with the principal's leadership behaviors? (c) How do the leadership behaviors of the early-career female principals who lead Title I schools align with the external forces? (d) Are the attitudes, values, and beliefs of each principal aligned with others' perceptions of the principal's perceived attitudes, values, and beliefs? (e) What is the impact of mentoring on the four factors of the Synergistic Leadership Theory in context to each early-career principal as perceived by her?

The sample for this study included three early-career female principals leading Title I elementary schools, as well as two assigned mentors (one internal and one external), a campus assistant principal, a campus teacher, and a campus parent for each. The participants were interviewed and completed the Organizational Effectiveness and Leadership Inventory.

Through analysis of interview transcripts and inventory responses, I determined two of the case study principals were aligned with all four factors of the synergistic leadership theory. The other case study aligned with three factors and misaligned with one factor. The experiences of the three early-career principals reflect alignment of the four factors of the synergistic

leadership theory. The case studies represent examples of the four factors of the synergistic leadership theory, and the early-career principals' leadership behaviors fell within the range of leadership behaviors identified by the synergistic leadership theory. The four factors of the synergistic leadership theory can be applied to females in all leadership preparation programs.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family members, who have encouraged me always on this journey: my loving mother Norma, my supportive siblings Jeff and Jennifer, my comical husband Mark, my two beautiful children Magnificent Max and Magical Megan, and my spirited late grandma Inga. These individuals have been great role models for me, and they have taught me more than they will ever know about determination, love, humor, God, and—the most important thing—family. I am forever grateful.

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Thanks also go to my friends, colleagues, and the department faculty and staff for making my time at Texas A&M University valuable.

My parents instilled in me the importance of education, and it has stayed with me throughout my journey. I would like to acknowledge my mother, Norma, who always has been a loving and caring mother to me. She always has encouraged me to follow my dreams and to work hard to achieve all the things I want in life. She is my inspiration because she has stood by me every day of my life. She was beside me when I rode the school bus on my first day of kindergarten, she assisted me with countless school projects and events throughout the years, she attended all of my graduation ceremonies to cheer me on, she walked me down the aisle on my wedding day, and she was at the birth of my two children. I have enormous admiration and respect for her. I hope to stand by my children throughout their lives like she has stood by me. I am who I am today because of her.

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party. I miss her dearly, but I know she is near me more ways than one as I see her every day in my daughter's sparkling eyes and my son's curious mind.

Finally, I am thankful to God, who gave me the strength to never give up, who gave me my family and friends, and for the learning along this long journey. I am eager to start down another path, and I truly believe that the best is yet to come! This Chinese proverb sums up the philosophy instilled in me by family, friends, and life experiences: "Be not afraid of going slow, be afraid only of standing still!"

CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES

Contributors

This work was supervised by a dissertation committee consisting of Professor Beverly Irby of the Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development (chair), Professor Musoba of the Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development, Professor Webb-Hasan of the Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development, and Professor Tong of the Department of Educational Psychology. All other work conducted for the dissertation was completed by the student independently.

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NOMENCLATURE

AP	Assistant Principalship
CPOC	Campus Performance Objective Council
ELL	English Language Learner
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act
LEA	Local Educational Agency
L.I.F.E.	Learning in Functional Environments
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
OLEI	Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory
PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
PLC	Professional Learning Community
PPCD	Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities
PTO	Parent-Teacher Organization
SLT	Synergistic Leadership Theory
US	United States

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first year of a principalship is an important time. The building principal is one of the primary forces behind improving student achievement and to prepare for this leadership challenge, many aspiring principals complete state-approved, rigorous, competency-based, internship-culminating licensure programs prior to their first position. Nevertheless, when NAESP polled a panel group of new principals, a troubling 40% of new principals felt fairly prepared or not prepared for their first day on the job (Superville, 2015). This led to NAESP allocating a million dollar grant to support early-career principals (Superville, 2015). Whether a principal left a school for retirement, career advancement, or even lack of support, leadership stability is essential for school improvement, and new principals need to feel supported in their first years on the job.

New principals also must learn to lead the entire school's personnel to serve the students; this is done, in part, through sharing their own attitudes, beliefs, and values. Staff and students observe whether their principal upholds his or her attitudes, beliefs, and values consistently or waivers from them. A consistent principal may build trust in the former way, and the staff and students can follow and look for guidance from their principal. How principals empower and encourage their staff and students is pivotal. Their influence permeates through the school building; it can be felt when one enters the building and walks the halls. Truly, the role of principal is a complex one.

Purpose and Significance of the Problem

The purpose of my study was to apply the synergistic leadership theory (SLT) (Irby, Brown, Duffy, & Trautman, 2002) to the leadership behaviors of three early-career female principals and assess the impact of mentoring on their leadership skills. A female-perspective leadership theory proved appropriate for this study, as all subjects are female. The four key factors of the SLT are leadership behavior; organizational structure; external forces; and attitudes, beliefs, and values (Irby et al., 2002). These four factors are critical to a new principal's success and were evaluated throughout the study. The SLT has not been examined among early-career female principals to date. This investigation has provided a need for more information, specifically for the types of early-career principals included in my study on how to approach and lead Title I schools.

The SLT serves three purposes. The first purpose is to add to existing leadership theory by including a postmodern perspective; female leadership experiences, male and female applications; and gender, cultural, and political issues. The second purpose of the SLT is to enhance the relevance of current theory in leadership programs. The third purpose of the SLT is to create a framework for describing interactions and dynamic tensions among leadership behaviors; organizational structure; external forces; and attitudes, beliefs, and values (Irby et al., 2002). The SLT has been examined for validity with the following groups: (a) males and females (Trautman, 2000), (b) female superintendents leading successful school districts (Bamberg, 2004), and (c) four female principals from Title I schools (Kaspar, 2006).

In his 2015 report, titled, *Developing Excellent School Principals to Advance Teaching and Learning: Considerations for State Policy*, Paul Manna suggests that today's school principal serves in an exceedingly demanding role. Manna attributes this, in part, to an

expanding set of responsibilities. In particular, he cites technology advancement and diverse student populations as sources of challenge for many new principals. Manna (2015) also notes that both new and experienced principals are struggling to offer truly equitable opportunities for every learner. These complex issues, in addition to many other challenges, plague both new and veteran principals.

According to the Institute for Education Statistics, one in five principals working in schools in the 2011–2012 school year left their school by the 2012–2013 school year. Additional research has shown that one of every two principals is not retained beyond their third year of leading a school. School leaders are retiring, transferring schools, or pursuing new opportunities within the education sector and are not being replaced by enough qualified candidates. As a result, many school districts across the country have reported principal vacancies and a serious lack of qualified applicants to replace them. The demand for employment of elementary, middle, and high school principals will grow 6% nationwide by the year 2022 because of population increases. My intent is to contribute a deeper understanding of early-career principals' experiences related to how principals address external forces, operate with the organizational structure, and align leadership behaviors with their attitudes, values, and beliefs within Title I schools. In the case studies of each early-career principal, I reviewed their leadership behaviors and determined if alignment existed of those behaviors with their campus organizational structure; attitudes, values, and beliefs; and external forces.

My case studies describe three early-career female principals at Title I schools in a suburban school district. These case studies of the three early-career female principals at Title I schools will contribute to the literature related to females in leadership roles. The case studies also will provide examples of the interconnectedness of the four factors of the SLT among early-

career female principals. Ultimately, the three early-career female principal case studies will contribute to the literature related to the SLT by providing applications for the theory to a set of early-career principals. This particular aspect of the SLT has not been studied to date.

Definition of Terms

Synergistic Leadership Theory

Irby et al. (2002) developed a model for a leadership theory, using the concept of a tetrahedron promoted by Buckminster Fuller's (1979). The theory is multi-relational and gender-inclusive and that includes a feminine perspective in its development. The tetrahedron has four sides and the SLT has four factors: (a) organizational structure; (b) leadership behaviors; (c) attitudes, beliefs, and values; and (d) external forces (Irby et al., 2002; Holtkamp, 2001). The six relationships, or interaction points, in the theory can interact with the four factors: (a) organizational structure with leadership behaviors, (b) organizational structure with attitudes, beliefs, and values, (c) organizational structure with external forces, (d) leadership behaviors with attitudes, beliefs, and values, (e) leadership behaviors with external forces, and (f) attitudes, beliefs, and values with external forces.

Organizational Structure

Organizational structure involves the characteristics of an organization and how the organization operates. The SLT model illustrates organizational structures ranging from open, feminist organizations to closed, bureaucratic ones. Closed, bureaucratic organizations include rules, division of labor, hierarchy of authority, impersonality, and competence (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). Open organizational structures include practices such as collaborative decision making, systems of rotating leadership, power sharing, and promotion of community and cooperation (Irby et al., 2002).

Leadership Behaviors

Leadership behaviors describe the actions and characteristics of a leader. There are those leadership behaviors that typically have been used to describe males, such as self-assertion, separation, independence, control, and competition; and there are others that typically have been used to describe female leaders, such as interdependence, cooperation, receptivity, and awareness of patterns, wholes, and context (Marshall, 1994).

Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

Attitudes, values, and beliefs form the foundation of principles that surface in the form of values, norms, ideas, and teachings (Irby et al., 2002). Attitudes and values remain constant, but beliefs may change as new information is processed. Examples of this factor included in the SLT are openness to change and diversity, importance of professional growth, adherence to traditions, the role of teachers and administrators, and the purpose of school (Irby et al., 2002).

External Forces

External forces are influences on an organization from the outside. External forces include unions, government regulations, parents, community wealth, laws, etc. A leader has no control over external forces, but is required to work within their boundaries and under their influence (Irby et al., 2002).

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory

The Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory (OLEI) is a 96-item survey divided into four parts that correspond to the four factors of the SLT: (a) leadership behaviors; (b) external forces; (c) organizational structure; and (d) attitudes, beliefs, and values.

Title I School

Title I legislation provides federal funding to schools with high poverty levels. The funding is meant to help students who are at risk of falling behind academically. It provides supplemental instruction for students who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds or who are at risk for failing to meet state standards. Students are expected to show academic growth at a faster rate with the support of Title I instruction.

The Title I program originated as Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and now is associated with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which passed into US law in December 2015 and governs the US K–12 public education policy. The law replaced its predecessor, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, and modified but did not eliminate provisions relating to periodic standardized tests given to students. The primary purpose of this legislation is to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to be provided with high-quality education.

Title I is the largest federally funded education program for elementary and secondary schools. It also is designed to focus on special-needs populations and to reduce the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students.

States must meet requirements to maintain funding for Title I schools. To operate a school-wide Title I program, a school must have a child poverty rate of at least 40%. A school-wide Title I program can provide benefits to all students and is not limited to those students who are considered economically disadvantaged.

Early-Career Principal

Educators who have been working for fewer than five years as a principal are considered “early-career.”

Internal Mentor

An active, working principal within an early-career principal's district can be assigned as an internal mentor. This individual mentors the early-career principal for their first three years of principalship.

External Mentor

A retired principal within the early-career principal's school district can be assigned as an external mentor. This individual mentors the early-career principal for their first three years of principalship.

Theoretical Framework

A theory is defined as “an explanation of a certain set of observed phenomena in terms of a system of constructs and laws that relate these constructs to each other” (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996, p. 8). Stated simply, a theory is a statement that explains some phenomenon in a systematic way (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). Theories also provide “a guiding framework for understanding, predicting, and controlling behavior in organizations” (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). Thus, theories help everyone understand other people, what is going on, and how to take action (Bolman & Deal, 1997). For its theory, my study focused on the SLT.

I applied the SLT to the leadership styles of three early-career female principals. The SLT identifies four factors or constraints to apply to leadership style. The organizational structure identifies the characteristics of an organization and how it operates (Irby et al., 2002). Leadership behaviors include traditionally male and bureaucratic descriptors such as intuitive, task-oriented, and autocratic (Irby et al., 2002). Leaders' values, attitudes, and beliefs reveal how they view the importance of elements such as professional growth, openness to change and diversity, adherence to tradition, the role of teachers and administrators, and the purpose of

school (Irby et al., 2002). External forces are forces outside the organization that are beyond the control of the leader. They include perceptions of the community, supervisor and colleagues, language and ethnic groups, and socioeconomic levels in the community (Irby et al., 2002). The SLT is an appropriate theory for my study because the developmental process for establishing the theory was gender-inclusive. Chapter 2 further discusses and reviews the SLT.

Research Questions

The following five research questions guided my study on three early-career female principals:

1. What are the leadership behaviors of the early-career female principals who lead Title I schools?
2. How does the organizational structure of each campus align with the principal's leadership behaviors?
3. How do the leadership behaviors of the early-career female principals who lead Title I schools align with the external forces?
4. Are the attitudes, values, and beliefs of each principal aligned with others' perceptions of the principal's perceived attitudes, values, and beliefs?
5. What is the impact of mentoring on the four factors of the SLT in context to each early-career principal as perceived by her?

Assumptions

My study assumed one thing—there is a relationship between the success of Title I schools and the leadership of early-career principals.

Boundaries

I studied three school principals working in the same district.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I presents the introduction of the study, statement of the problem, purpose and significance of the study, theoretical framework, definition of terms, limitations, assumptions, research questions, and summary. Chapter II contains a review of literature related to the SLT, the OLEI, and factor analysis. The review of literature relates to new principals, mentoring new principals, and new principals leading Title I schools. In Chapter III, I outline the methodology of the study including the population and sample, instrumentation, and methods of data collection and analysis. Chapter IV includes the data analysis and discussion of the data from Case Study: Blue Elementary School/Principal A. In Chapter V, I present the data analysis and discussion of data from Case Study: Red Elementary School/Principal B. Chapter VI contains the data analysis and discussion of data from Case Study: Yellow Elementary School/Principal C. Chapter VII includes a cross-case analysis summary of findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research, with an epilogue that follows.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of literature includes a description of the SLT and of the four factors in the theory: (a) leadership behaviors; (b) organizational structure; (c) values, beliefs, and attitudes; and (d) external forces. The development, revision, and content of the OLEI also is addressed in the review of literature. A review of mentoring principals in the early stages of their career is presented, along with a discussion of Title I schools.

Synergistic Leadership Theory

Brown and Irby (2003) studied 24 leadership theories commonly taught in leadership courses. They reviewed theory development and outlined the theories themselves. Nine generalizations emerged from their study affirming the need to include a feminine-inclusive theory in the study of leadership. A feminine-inclusive leadership theory can be defined as a leadership model that takes into consideration the female perspective and experiences, yet can be relevant for both males and females (Irby et al., 2002).

Developed by Irby et al. (2002), the SLT uses a systems theory approach inclusive of female perspectives and applicable to both male and female leaders. The SLT was developed qualitatively and, based on the principles of the postmodern theory, advocates the existence of new theory alongside established theories (Irby et al., 2002). Based on this definition of postmodern theory (or postmodernism), the researchers proposed adding the SLT to existing theories (Irby et al., 2002). “The SLT is relational and interactive, rather than linear, with four factors interacting in substantial ways: (a) leadership behavior; (b) organizational structure; (c) external forces; and (d) attitudes, beliefs, and values” (Irby et al., 2002, p. 312).

The SLT is based on the work of Buckminster Fuller (1979), who used the word “synergy” to describe interactions of systems. The SLT also is based on a tetrahedron to illustrate the four factors in the theory with six interaction points. The model of the SLT is a four-sided figure with four equilateral triangular faces (Irby et al., 2002). The four factors of the SLT are identified in the four points of the model, which can be rotated and still retain its shape. No structural hierarchy exists among the four factors in the model because each is considered equal and interactive (Irby et al., 2002).

Because the model has multiple vantage points and takes a macro-perspective of the interaction of the four factors, it creates a complete picture of the reality faced by educational leaders (Irby et al., 2002). Buckminster Fuller’s (1979) work established that to qualify as a system, a group of elements needs four events and six relationships. An assumption of the SLT is that when all four factors are in alignment, the leader will be perceived effective. If there is a misalignment among the four factors, it is assumed that tension or disharmony will result, which can impact the perception of the leader’s effectiveness negatively (Irby et al., 2002). The SLT calls attention to a number of interconnected behaviors, beliefs, values, structures, and forces that impact the leader, the structure of the organization, and the people within the organization. It can be used, therefore, to analyze and describe particular interactions that may account for tension, conflict, or harmony at specific points in time or over time (Irby et al., 2002).

There are also six aspects of the SLT that make it unique: (a) female leaders were included in the development of the theory; (b) female leaders may be impacted by organizational structure; external forces; or attitudes, values, and beliefs in ways different from male leaders, and vice versa; (c) female leadership behaviors may interact with the factors of the SLT in ways different from the leadership behaviors of males; (d) the SLT acknowledges a range of behaviors

and organizational structures inclusive of those considered “feminine;” (e) leaders at various positions or management levels may impacted by the factors of the theory in different ways; and (f) interaction of the factors can cause harmony or tension for the leader (Irby et al., 2002).

There are three purposes of the SLT. The first purpose is to add to existing leadership theory by including a postmodern perspective; female leadership experiences; male and female applications; and gender, cultural, and political issues. The second purpose of the SLT is to enhance the relevance of current theory in leadership programs. The third purpose of the SLT is to create a framework for describing interactions and dynamic tensions among leadership behaviors; organizational structure; external forces; and attitudes, values, and beliefs (Irby et al., 2002).

Factors of the Synergistic Leadership Theory

Factor 1: Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

The first factor of the SLT includes the attitudes, values, and beliefs of school leaders and is the foundation of the principles for the organization, the leader, and the workers in the organization. A person’s beliefs, attitudes, and values influence his or her personal community and organizational perceptions and decisions (Wolff & Ball, 1999). As leaders encounter new information and ideas, their beliefs may change, and members of the organization will recognize these new beliefs. Attitudes and values are more stable, while beliefs can change as new information is processed.

Attitudes and beliefs often are depicted as a separation into two divisions that contradict each other, as an individual or group would either adhere or not adhere to specific attitudes and beliefs at a certain point in time. Examples of attitudes and beliefs include the following: (a) one believes in the importance of professional growth for all individuals including self or one does

not believe that professional growth is important; (b) one has an openness to change; one does not have an openness to change; (c) one values diversity; one does not value diversity; and (d) one believes that integrity is important for all involved in schooling; one does not value integrity (Irby et al., 2002). It is important for leaders to know their beliefs, attitudes, and values.

Factor 2: Leadership Behaviors

The second factor in the SLT is leadership behaviors and describes the actions and characteristics of the leader. The SLT acknowledges leadership behaviors that apply to both men and women (Holtkamp, 2001) and is based on prominent leadership theories and leadership research. Leadership behaviors are based on specific models of leadership styles, ranging from bureaucratic leadership to interactive and caring leadership models (Holtkamp, 2001). Ten leadership styles in which specific leadership occurs are incorporated into the SLT (Holtkamp, 2001). These leadership styles are bureaucratic leadership, humanistic leadership, value-added leadership, instructional leadership, transformational leadership, “power-to” leadership, interactive leadership, caring leadership, principle-centered leadership, and feminist leadership (Holtkamp, 2001).

Factor 3: Organizational Structure

The third factor in the SLT is organizational structure, which refers to the characteristics of organizations and how they operate (Irby et al., 2002). Organizational structure impacts a leader’s behaviors. Organizational structure types can range from a focus on the company or organization to a humanistic focus or a focus on individuals (Holtkamp, 2001).

Factor 4: External Forces

The fourth and final factor in the SLT is external forces. External forces are outside influences on an organization that also have their own set of values, attitudes, and beliefs (Irby et

al., 2002). Irby et al. (2002) explained external forces as powers outside the organization that interact with and affect the organization. External forces are unpredictable and uncontrolled by the organization (or principal) and vary from organization to organization. Weather, laws, location, politics of the community, and economics are examples of external forces (Irby et al., 2002). External forces impacting a campus administrator may include parents, students, staff, district offices, state and federal mandates, accountability systems, political climate, cultural climate, and the professional community. The campus principal or leader has no control over external forces, but is required to work within their boundaries and under their influence (Irby et al., 2002).

Contributions to Leadership Theory

The SLT contributes to leadership theory in the following ways: (a) by adding a theory reflective of female leadership experiences and voice to existing male-biased leadership theories; (b) by enhancing relevancy of theory presented in leadership training programs; and (c) by creating a framework for describing interactions and dynamic tensions among attitudes, values, and beliefs; leadership behaviors; external forces; and organizational structure (Brown & Irby, 2003).

Validity of the Synergistic Leadership Theory

The SLT has been validated in dissertations by Bamberg (2004), Hernandez (2004), Holtkamp (2001), Kaspar (2006), Schlosberg (2003), Trautman (2000), and Truslow (2004). These researchers employed the OLEI (Irby, Brown, & Duffy, 2000) to measure the perceptions of the four factors of the SLT by female and male leaders at different levels of management. In the study by Schlosberg (2003), the four factors of the SLT were found to have cross-cultural applicability to educational leaders in Mexico.

The SLT meets the criteria for a good theory. According to Daresh (2001), a good theory should (a) be tested in a reality that is shared by many at a time, (b) hold up when in different settings, (c) communicate much in a simple graphic model, and (d) provide an accurate description of regularities/irregularities in educational organization.

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory

The current OLEI is a revised version of the original OLEI developed by Irby et al. (2000) to validate the four factors of the SLT. The instrument consists of five sections that ask for agreement or disagreement with certain statements about leadership and organization on a Likert-type rating scale of one to four for each statement, with a rating of one indicating strong disagreement and a rating of four indicating strong agreement (Hernandez, 2004; Holtkamp, 2001; Trautman, 2000). The OLEI includes a total of 96 items with four subscales that address (a) leadership behaviors, with management behavior and interpersonal behavior as sub-factors; (b) external forces; (c) organizational structure; and (d) attitudes, beliefs, and values. A demographic section including gender, ethnicity, and years of experience also is included at the end of the instrument.

Revision and Testing of the Instrument

In 2003, all 96 items on the OLEI were reviewed, and some were reworded into positive statements to for further clarification. The revision also provided the opportunity to create a scale for optimal scores for each factor of the SLT measured by the instrument. Low subscale scores on the instrument indicate overall disagreement with the items for each factor, while high subscale scores indicate overall agreement with the items for each factor. The optimal scores for each factor and sub-factor are shown in Table 1 (Hernandez, 2004).

Table 1

Optimal Scores for Each Factor/Sub-factor of the SLT in the OLEI

SLT Factor	Range			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Leadership Behaviors				
Management	30	60	90	120
Interpersonal	24	48	72	96
External Forces	17	24	51	68
Organizational Structure	12	24	36	48
Attitudes, Beliefs, and Values	13	26	39	52

Source: Hernandez (2004)

Previous Studies Utilizing the Synergistic Leadership Theory

Trautman (2000) conducted a quantitative and qualitative study to validate the SLT with male and female participants. The quantitative portion of the study revealed that males and females acknowledge using a wide range of male and female leadership behaviors. The qualitative portion of the study revealed that although males and females see the four factors of the SLT interacting in different ways, they acknowledge that all four factors of the SLT are interactive (Trautman, 2000).

Holtkamp (2001) examined the psychometric properties of the OLEI. The purpose was to determine if data from the OLEI are a valid measure of the SLT. Results showed the OLEI data aligning with the four constructs of the SLT, suggesting that the SLT is inclusive of gender, ethnicity, management level, and years of experience (Holtkamp, 2001).

Schlosberg (2003) examined the extent of applicability of the SLT as a gender-inclusive leadership theory for selected educational leaders in the Mexican culture. Examination was accomplished by identifying each of the four components of the SLT and, through qualitative methodology, determining the extent of their applicability. Results revealed national and organization cultural differences in the way people perceive and think of leadership; perceptions of such concepts may differ drastically between national and the organizational cultures within the same culture (Schlosberg, 2003).

Bamberg (2004) applied the SLT to the leadership experiences of five female superintendents leading successful school districts. The qualitative study revealed three of the five superintendents to have aligned factors in their districts. One superintendent did not show alignment with her external forces; however, she was able to use her leadership behaviors to minimize the misalignment. Another superintendent also showed misalignment with her external forces, she did not take corrective action, and the district remained misaligned (Bamberg, 2004).

Hernandez (2004) used a study to revalidate the revised OLEI as a measure of the SLT and to examine the perceptions of superintendents and school boards with regard to the four factors of the SLT. Analysis found the perceptions of the superintendents and school boards to be congruent with regard to the four factors of the SLT. Subcategories within leadership behaviors, such as risk taker and change agent, showed disagreement between the superintendent and school board members (Hernandez, 2004).

Truslow (2004) identified the differences in conflict management modes of male and female public school superintendents and examined the relationship between superintendent conflict management modes and the SLT. Analysis revealed male and female superintendents to have significantly different conflict management modes as illustrated by gender distribution. A

relationship was identified between the four factors of the SLT and each conflict management mode. No difference was found between gender and the SLT within each conflict management mode. Both male and female superintendents in the study identified the same factors as sources of incongruence within each conflict mode. This result suggests that gender is related to each conflict management mode; however, gender is not related to perceived incongruence among the factors of the SLT or to conflict within each conflict management mode (Truslow, 2004).

Kaspar (2006) examined the relationship between experiences of four elementary principals and alignment of the SLT and its practical applications for current and future leaders. Analysis revealed all four factors of the SLT to be aligned with the four elementary principals from exemplary schools. The study showed how critical it is to the effectiveness of the leader and the success of the campus that all four factors of the SLT are in alignment (Kaspar, 2006).

Orji (2007) explored the impact of US presidents on global security. The study initially looked at the current president at the time, G.W. Bush, but added former President Jimmy Carter, not in a mere compare-and-contrast exercise, but in an effort to underscore the historical characterization of global terrorism. Archival data were collected for a content analysis of security decisions and showed that although both presidents were concerned about global security, they displayed two different leadership styles: transactional and transformational. Analysis was performed by a triangulation approach and considered how the various arms of the presidents' leadership consortia interacted; it was concluded that the two presidents impacted global security (Orji, 2007).

Glenn (2008) examined superintendent search consultant perceptions of a school board's expectations of superintendent candidates in relation to the SLT. He then sought to determine the perceptions of superintendent search consultants in Texas related to (a) the characteristics in

superintendent candidates sought by school boards, (b) the most beneficial position held prior to becoming a superintendent, and (c) the most significant barriers encountered by superintendent candidates in their quest for a superintendent position. Analysis revealed superintendent search consultants to perceive that school boards hold communication skills and relationship skills as the most important characteristics of aspiring superintendents. Search consultants indicated the high school principalship as the most beneficial preparatory position for aspiring superintendents. Barriers for aspiring superintendents were found to be limited experience, district politics, gender and ethnic bias, poor communication, and lack of networking (Glenn, 2008).

Manuel (2010) performed a two-fold narrative study. First, the researcher, an African-American male principal in a rural, high-minority, intermediate school, reflected on strategies implemented to enhance the learning environment that subsequently increased student achievement. Second, he determined how personal leadership behaviors align with the other three factors (external forces; attitudes, values, and beliefs; and organizational structure) of the SLT, the theoretical framework, and, upon reflection, the impact of that alignment on experiences of the researcher on the campus. Analysis revealed the SLT to be appropriate for identifying the factors affecting overall leadership. Also, with respect to the factors of the SLT, the author found himself successful in aligning the other three factors with his behavior (Manuel, 2010).

Yang (2010) investigated the applicability of the SLT to Chinese and American educational leaders in 50 higher-ranking public Chinese universities and 50 higher-ranking US universities. The similarities and differences in Chinese and American educational leaders' responses to the OLEI items suggested that some values, attitudes, beliefs, and leadership

behaviors are specific to Chinese or US society and culture, reflecting their respective cultural values and traditions. Other values, attitudes, beliefs, leadership behaviors, and characteristics of a learning organization structure were shown to be shared by Chinese and American educational leaders. These shared values, attitudes, beliefs, leadership behaviors, and characteristics of a learning organization structure are universal across Chinese and American cultural boundaries and, thus, are applicable to Chinese and American educational leaders in the 100 sampled Chinese and US public universities (Yang, 2010).

Martin (2013) organized a select group of teacher-leaders into a professional learning community (PLC) to engage in a series of readings through a book club. The purpose of the book club was to develop this teacher-leader group's leadership awareness and practices based on the SLT. The club group read about and discussed four central concepts of the SLT: leadership behaviors; organizational structure; attitudes, beliefs, and values; and external forces. The study concluded this group of teacher-leaders to have specific roles and obstacles constricting their leadership behaviors through restrictions encountered in their abilities to make decisions; similarly, trust was shown to be problematic to establish because of staff competition, lack of direction, and confusion. Such problems were shown to lead the teacher-leaders to confirm their beliefs and desires for more shared decision making and collaboration. They also were shown to regard organizational structure as flawed, and they expressed the need for school stakeholders to engage in strategies to increase harmony and cooperation to create a better learning environment. The analysis also reflected on the many problematic external forces that influence schools, teaching, and learning, making it difficult to establish a positive academic environment and school culture for urban school reform (Martin, 2013).

Oliveira (2015) examined administrator perceptions of the SLT within the context of higher-education institutions in Brazil. Study objectives included (a) exploring participant perceptions of the SLT relative to the context of leadership in higher education in Brazil; (b) comparing Brazilian leadership styles, as described in the literature and related to the domains of the SLT; and (c) examining participant perceptions of the potential utility of the OLEI in Brazilian higher-education contexts. Oliveira revealed four main themes: (a) participants reported believing that the OLEI instrument could be utilized by Brazilian higher-education leaders as a valuable leadership reflection tool to assist in their professional growth; (b) participants generally expressed that the SLT would not be applicable to the Brazilian context or to higher-education environments without undergoing extensive cultural adaptations to reflect key elements of Brazilian culture; (c) Brazilian higher-education leaders reported not believing in the notion of leadership styles because skills and knowledge develop as a result of one's own experiences and from the extent of the family support received for formal training; (d) socioeconomic status was shown to play a large role in the participants' perceptions of leadership in Brazilian higher education because of the importance of social class distinction (Oliveira, 2015).

For four suburban high schools in the state of Texas, Arterbury (2016) applied the SLT as a framework to identify specific leadership behaviors of four female principals related to the collective efficacy of their teachers. Common leadership behaviors and themes identified through this case study were (a) a belief system guiding the principal's leadership; (b) evidence of a system of distributive leadership on the campus; and (c) collaboration by the principal's beliefs (Arterbury, 2016).

Guerrero (2016) framed her study through the theoretical frameworks of the SLT and Hispanic academic achievement theory, providing an analysis of the frameworks merged and working collectively to promote success for English language learners (ELLs). The study culminated with the essentials for school leadership success with ELLs—strong leadership cultivates a school community of academic access, acceptance, and affinity with all stakeholders (Guerrero, 2016).

Mentoring Early-Career Principals

In educational settings, mentoring relationships play an important role in the leadership development of aspiring school leaders (Daresh, 2004). The knowledge and experiences of seasoned school leaders can benefit a novice principal greatly in the first years. When a new principal is appointed, school staff and community members share common feelings of anxiety, curiosity, and excitement (Villani, 2006).

Likewise, a new principal may be eager yet uncertain, and in reality, often faces complex demands very early in the job. New principals encounter particular challenges moving between and prioritizing the many tasks at hand. Staff resignations, unfinished construction, lack of essential classroom resources, and technology challenges can exacerbate the first few months of the position. A mentor can play a pivotal role in assisting the new principal to acquire experience and confidence.

Although the definition of a mentor varies in the literature, the term typically emphasizes an experienced individual working with a protégé to assist the person on their career path and provide professional development and insight as needed (Mertz, 2004). An interesting element of mentoring is that it can benefit both the mentee and the mentor (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004). Although both parties can be involved in benefits of the mentor relationship, the first and

most important priority is student success. According to Daresh (2004), collaboration between veteran and new or aspiring leaders can promote an environment that is conducive to high levels of student achievement.

Through incorporating continuous professional development targeted at understanding local contexts and embedded, responsive activities, mentoring programs strengthen leadership capacity and increase success during the first few years of a new role. Killion (2012) stated, "Balancing multiple priorities is a typical challenge principals face, and in this era of so many significant changes, principals are feeling more overwhelmed than ever" (p. 26). Furthermore, Killion (2012) shared that principals lack guidance on effective approaches to build coherence and implement multiple change initiatives simultaneously. An experienced principal mentor is a critical link for new school leaders as they bridge theory to practice and apply acquired knowledge and individual beliefs to daily performance and decision making to positively impact the school environment.

Principals must possess strong leadership skills in the area of instruction and must foster high expectations for teaching and learning within a supportive culture (Wood, Finch, & Mirecki, 2013). The Wallace Foundation (2006) highlighted the link between instructional leadership and a climate focused on shared learning, stating, "behind excellent teaching and excellent schools is excellent leadership—the kind that ensures that effective teaching practices don't remain isolated and unshared in single classrooms" (p. 3). Moreover, the University Council for Educational Administration confirmed that states and other educational agencies must strive to design programs for new leaders in order to shape leadership behaviors and attitudes that support needed change in school culture and a focus on quality instruction (Browne-Ferrigno, 2014).

Mentoring, both formal and informal, has been associated with effective succession planning. In Georgia, four school systems of varying size and in various locations were studied concerning their management of principal succession. Findings suggested that size and growth rate of a system might play a role in the degree of the sense of urgency to have succession planning (Bengtson, Zepeda, & Parylo 2013).

In educational literature, mentoring represents one model for helping novice school leaders grow to higher levels of effectiveness. Specifically, the mentoring process supports increased conceptual development through a balance of reflection and experience (Reiman & Theis-Sprintball, 1993). In Title I schools, which have a high poverty rate, reflection and experience are important traits for a leader to hold to be able to grow their school culture. Thus, for early-career principals, mentoring relationships can assist with developing leadership skills that foster the atmosphere and behaviors that effective schools are known to possess in their school climate.

The federal Title I program provides funding to schools that serve high-poverty areas (United States Department of Education, 1999). Title I schools have been required to meet the same outcomes as their non-Title I counterparts in spite of the socioeconomic status of the community.

Today more than ever, early-career principals need guidance to lead Title I schools and need support to handle the many facets of their demanding profession. With an overwhelming workload, there are many enriching elements of the job, not the least of which is the chance to make a difference for so many students who need to close the achievement gap and who need socio-emotional support to grow in the ever-changing environment of a Title I school.

Title I Schools

Title I, Part A of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and to schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. Federal funds currently are allocated through four statutory formulas that are based primarily on census poverty estimates and the cost of education in each state. Student success is a top priority for all stakeholders in a community, and it tends to correlate to a school being effective and high-performing.

The ESSA serves as the latest reauthorization of the ESEA of 1965, which was reauthorized in 2002 as NCLB. Since its inception, the law's intent has been to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, as well as to close educational achievement gaps. Parent and family engagement and consultation have always been a key element in the legislation.

Title I of the ESEA is the largest compensatory federal education program—currently about \$12 billion annually—aimed at improving the educational opportunities of disadvantaged students. It provides resources to schools to improve learning for students at risk of educational failure, especially in districts with the highest concentrations of poverty. More than 15 million students in public and private schools participate in Title I, two-thirds of whom are in elementary schools. A large majority—96%—of the nation's highest-poverty schools (defined as those with more than 75% of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch) receive nearly half of the Title I funds provided to schools.

Several studies have suggested that successful schools have several consistent traits (Edmonds, 1984; Lezotte, 1991). Edmonds researched and developed a list of seven traits that he

saw in place at high-poverty and high-performing schools (Edmonds, 1984; Lezotte, 1991). Over the years, more research at high-performing Title I schools has expanded the list of traits that are present at effective schools. Researchers have continued to stress three beliefs for schools to be effective: (a) all students can learn; (b) individual schools have enough control over the variables to ensure learning; and (c) schools are held accountable (Lezotte, 1991).

Studies have been conducted about high-performing Title I schools. Carter (2000) conducted a study for the Heritage Foundation in Washington, DC of 21 high-performing, high-poverty schools that had been projected as not having a chance at success. The study revealed the success of these 21 schools to be the result of hard work, common-sense teaching beliefs, and strong instructional leadership. The effective strategies making these high-poverty schools successful were shown to be parental accountability, teacher quality, effective assessment, emphasis on basic skills, and effective use of school resources (Carter, 2000).

For the Charles A. Dana Center, Johnson and Asera (1999) completed a study of nine high-performing, high-poverty urban elementary schools across the country. Case studies were written for each of the nine schools based on the researchers' visits to the campus and interviews with the campus and district administrators, teachers, parents, and other school personnel, as well as observations and achievement data. At the end of the case study, eight recommendations were made: (a) provide support to principals to understand their importance in improving student achievement; (b) use resources to increase the quantity and quality of instructional leadership on the campus; (c) establish clear, measurable, and rigorous accountability measures; (d) provide strong support at the district level for schools to meet accountability measures; (e) provide sufficient resources and the ability to be flexible with resources; (f) create regular opportunities

for focused professional development; (g) increase the amount of instructional time available to students; and (h) increase the level of parental involvement (Johnson & Asera, 1999).

CHAPTER III

METHODS

In this chapter, I present the methods of the study including an introduction, research questions, research design, selection of participants, instruments, data analysis, credibility, and trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

The purpose of my study was to examine the relationship of the four factors of the SLT to the experiences of three early-career female elementary principals leading Title I schools. In the Houston-area school district of study, every new principal receives an internal mentor who is presently a principal in the district. Mentors and mentees attend monthly rookie-principal meetings with other mentors and mentees, at which district personnel from a variety of departments present on relevant topics. New principals also receive an external mentor who is a retired principal; this mentoring continues for the first three years of the principalship. The external mentor meets with the new principal every week for two hours during their first semester and every other week in the second semester. During the second and third years, the mentoring continues with meetings once a month.

The school district realizes the importance of mentoring and has created this program to assist each new principal. The presented case studies of the three principals examined the principals' experiences as related to leadership behaviors; organizational structure; external forces; and attitudes, values, and beliefs. The SLT was used to analyze these interactions. The four factors of the SLT guided the case studies of the three early-career principals. The four factors of the SLT are leadership behaviors; organizational structure; external forces; and attitudes, values, and beliefs.

Research Questions

The five research questions that guided my study are as follows:

1. What are the leadership behaviors of the early-career female principals who lead Title I schools?
2. How does the organizational structure of each campus align with the principal's leadership behaviors?
3. How do the leadership behaviors of the early-career female principals who lead Title I schools align with the external forces?
4. Are the attitudes, values, and beliefs of each principal aligned with others' perceptions of the principal's perceived attitudes, values, and beliefs?
5. What is the impact of mentoring on the four factors of the SLT in context to each early-career principal as perceived by her?

Research Design

Multiple case studies with a cross-case analysis (Yin, 2003) were employed in my study. The purpose of each case study was to gather information and perspectives through inductive methods such as interviews, discussions, and participant observations and to present the case from the perspective of the researcher (Lester, 1999). The case study approach was used to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon of principal leadership for three cases by testing the generalizability of constructs, themes, and patterns that emerged from case to case (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003).

Six categories of participants were interviewed to examine the relationship between the principal and her leadership experiences using the SLT: the principal, her assigned external mentor, her assigned internal mentor, her assistant principal, one teacher on campus, and one

parent volunteer on campus. Data were collected and analyzed to make subjective judgments based on my personal interpretation of the data (Gay, 1996; Lancy, 1993; Merriam, 1998). Data interpretation included seeking out themes and patterns as related to the SLT. Because the work studied three campuses with three early-career principals, replication logic in order was used to strengthen the findings (Yin, 2003). I reviewed the leadership experiences of the three early-career principals by the four factors of the SLT in research questions one to four to report literal replication in the similarities in the principals' leadership behaviors. Ultimately, a cross-case analysis was conducted for synthesizing the findings.

Selection of Participants

Participants were selected from three different elementary schools in one school district (identified in the study as Purple School District) that are identified as Title I schools, including three early-career female principals, their assigned external mentors, their assigned internal mentors, their assistant principals, one teacher on campus, and one parent volunteer on campus. I chose each assistant principal and teacher participant based on seniority (the individuals working at that campus for the longest amount of time). I chose the parent volunteer based on level of involvement (the parent with the most volunteer hours for the 2014–2015 school year). For Case C (Yellow Elementary School), the parent volunteer chose to refrain from study participation. Thus, the purposive sample for my study included 17 participants. Each campus description is outlined under each case study.

Instrumentation

The primary instruments for data collection (Gall et al., 2003) were interviews and a survey. Two qualitative instruments were used, the first being semi-structured, open-ended interview questions and the other being the survey instrument. The semi-structured, open-ended

interview was used with each of the 17 participants from the three elementary schools (i.e., principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent). The semi-structured, open-ended interview questions can be found in Appendices C to H. Merriam (1998) defined a semi-structured interview as an interview that evolves from inquiry comprising a mix of both structured and unstructured questions. The unstructured questions were open-ended to allow respondents more freedom and creativity in answering the questions (Sowell & Casey, 1982). The semi-structured interview approach provided me the opportunity to gain reasonably standard data from the participants while allowing the flexibility to probe answers more deeply to gather more information (Gall et al., 2003).

Validity of the Interview Questions

To ensure the validity of my interview questions, I asked three principals and a former principal to review my questions to provide face validity. Gall et al. (2003) suggested that all interview questions be piloted with local participants before actual research and data collection take place, as interviews are subject to bias.

Kaspar (2006) completed a similar study with principals who serve on high needs campuses as well. I modeled my semi-structured, open-ended interview questions after the questions utilized by Kaspar (2006), who modeled her questions after Bamberg (2004), whose study involved superintendents. In developing my questions, I reviewed all the questions in Kaspar's (2006) study and rephrased them for the participants interviewed in my study. All of the interview questions directly correlated to my research questions and were based upon the four factors of the SLT (Bamberg, 2004). The questions were designed to allow non-principal participants in the study the opportunity to reflect upon the principals' leadership behaviors and how they relate the principals' leadership to the SLT (Bamberg, 2004).

My study was a semi-replication of Kaspar's and Bamberg's studies. My study was similar to Kaspar's study, because her participants were elementary school principals; we both used the OLEI; we each used the semi-structured open-ended interview questions, and we analyzed the data to see if the four factors in SLT were aligned for each elementary school. Then my study was similar to Bamberg's (2004) study, because she also used the OLEI, open-ended interview questions and she applied the SLT to the leadership experiences of five female superintendents leading successful school districts. My study was different from both of their studies, because I reviewed the relationship of the synergistic leadership theory to mentoring and their leadership experiences. Also, I focused on three early-career female elementary school principals and analyzed if there was alignment with the four factors in the SLT.

The second instrument in my study was the OLEI developed by Irby et al. (2000). The OLEI consists of five sections that ask for agreement or disagreement with certain statements about leadership and organizations on a Likert-type rating scale of one to four for each statement, with a rating of one indicating strong disagreement and a rating of four indicating strong agreement (Hernandez, 2004; Holtkamp, 2001; Trautman, 2000). The OLEI includes a total of 96 items with four subscales that address (a) leadership behaviors, with management behavior and interpersonal behavior as sub-factors; (b) external forces; (c) organizational structure; and (d) attitudes, beliefs, and values. A demographic section also exists at the end of the instrument including gender, ethnicity, and years of experience.

Reliability and Validity of the Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory

The reliability of a test refers to how much measurement error exists in scores of the test (Gall et al., 2003). The reliability of OLEI scores has been confirmed by Hernandez (2004), Holtkamp (2001), and Trautman (2000). Trautman (2000) used Cronbach's analysis for the

entire instrument to establish reliability of the OLEI and yielded $\alpha = 0.928$ for internal consistency. Holtkamp (2001) also used Cronbach's analysis for the entire instrument and yielded $\alpha = 0.9045$ for internal consistency.

In order to test the reliability of the OLEI (2003 revised version), a pilot study using the instrument was conducted, the data from which were analyzed for reliability of the instrument utilizing a Cronbach's alpha coefficient reliability test (Table 2). Cronbach's alpha for the entire instrument was measured at $\alpha = 0.9369$, indicating a high level of internal consistency of the instrument. Additional alpha coefficient reliability tests were conducted for each of the SLT factors/subfactors measured by the revised OLEI. Cronbach's alpha coefficient reliability tests indicate internal consistency of the revised OLEI and meet the criteria for reliability (Hernandez, 2004; Truslow, 2004). Reliability was strengthened further through similar treatment of participants and like instruments. Therefore, the rewording modifications to the items on the revised OLEI were accepted, and the use of the SLT factor subscale scores was considered appropriate for making group comparisons.

Table 2

Cronbach's Alpha Results for the OLEI from the Pilot Study

Factor	Alpha	No. of Items
Leadership Behavior	.969	54
Management	.938	30
Interpersonal	.947	24
External Forces	.890	17
Organizational Structure	.833	12
Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs	.889	13

Source: Hernandez (2004)

Construct validity is defined as the extent to which a particular test assesses the construct that it is designed to measure (Gall et al., 2003). In order to determine construct validity, several types of evidence are needed to strengthen the case that the test being used measures the construct claimed by the test developer (Gall et al., 2003). When Holtkamp (2001) validated the OLEI, it was noted that construct validity can be established by proving interactive relationships between the constructs, by performing a confirmatory factor analysis on the original instrument and an additional factor analysis of the proposed instrument, by analyzing the items on the instrument to determine if they are a valid measure, and by comparing the instrument to other similar instruments measuring constructs. Holtkamp (2001) examined the properties of the OLEI with the SLT model to determine psychometrical alignment and concluded the OLEI to measure the constructs of the SLT.

Data Collection

Seventeen onsite interviews were the initial method of data collection in my qualitative study. First, I contacted Purple School District and completed the needed documentation to perform my case study in the district. Once approval was granted at the district level to conduct the research, I scheduled campus visits with each principal. Then, I scheduled meetings and interviews with all the other participants when convenient for them.

I followed the guidelines presented by Gall et al. (1996) in order to ensure participant confidentiality before beginning the interviews. I conducted all the interviews in person, established rapport with the participants, and framed the interview questions. In addition, I developed questions containing one idea per question and did not include leading or suggestive comments. The semi-structured interview format allowed me to ask follow-up questions to clarify participant responses and gather more information. Nonverbal communication also was considered in the face-to-face interviews.

After the interviews, the participants completed the OLEI while I waited. With some participants, I posed additional questions by phone conference if they were unable to meet in person for a second or third time. I recorded all interviews, and the interviews were transcribed.

Data Analysis

For research questions one through four, I analyzed the data from all the interviews to answer these questions for each case study. Data analysis for the first four research questions included an analysis for similarities and differences, as well as constant comparison method (Gall et al., 1996). The 17 interviews were recorded and transcribed. Transcripts were compared using the constant comparative method. I compared segments within and across categories to identify and clarify the meaning of each category satisfactorily (Gall et al., 1996). The categories

were aligned with the factors of SLT. Again, the constant comparative method was used as the interviews were collected and then again as the transcripts were compared. I observed themes and patterns as related to the SLT. I reviewed the leadership experiences and practices mentioned for each principal on her respective campus and analyzed them using the four factors of the SLT.

For research question one, the interview transcripts were color-coded into the *Leadership Behaviors* category of the SLT. After color-coding, I numbered each separate idea shared by the participants. The color-coding and numbering system helped align and organize the participants' answers. The system also allowed me to align ideas and common issues.

I also color-coded each interview transcript using the numbers of my research questions as a code to align the data further to the actual research questions. Data from the OLEI responses for *Part I: Leadership Behaviors—Management Behavior and Interpersonal Behavior* were compared within the individual elementary schools. I compared the responses from each school's principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent to identify alignment or discrepancies among the principal and the other participants. I listed the participant responses in a table to exhibit the alignment or lack of alignment for each inventory item. The OLEI responses were analyzed as qualitative data. No quantitative tests were completed on the survey responses. I compared the interview transcripts to the responses on the OLEI to determine alignment of participant interviews with the inventory items. I used the final comparison to answer research question one.

For research question two, I reviewed the leadership experiences and practices and the *Organizational Structure* category for each principal on her respective campus and analyzed them using the four factors of the SLT. The interview transcripts were color-coded into the *Leadership Behaviors* category and *Organizational Structure* category of the SLT. After color-

coding, I numbered each separate idea shared by the participants. The color-coding and numbering system helped align and organize the participants' answers. The system also allowed me to align ideas and common issues.

I also color-coded each interview transcript using the numbers of my second research question as a code to align the data further to the actual research questions. I coded the transcripts for my second research question using data from interview question two. Data from the OLEI responses for *Part III: Organizational Structure* and *Part I: Leadership Behaviors—Management Behavior and Interpersonal Behavior* were compared within each individual elementary school. I compared the responses from each school's principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent to identify alignment or discrepancies among the principal and the other participants. I listed the responses for the participants in a table to exhibit the alignment or lack of alignment for each inventory item. The OLEI responses were analyzed as qualitative data. No quantitative tests were completed on the survey responses. I compared the interview transcripts to the responses on the OLEI to determine alignment of the participant interviews with the inventory items. I used the final comparison to answer research question two.

For research question three, I analyzed the data from all the interviews for each case study. I reviewed the leadership experiences and practices and the *External Forces* category for each principal on her respective campus and analyzed them using the four factors of SLT. The interview transcripts were color-coded into the *Leadership Behaviors* category and *External Forces* category of the SLT. After color-coding, I numbered each separate idea shared by the participants. The color-coding and numbering system helped align and organize the participants' answers. The system also allowed me to align ideas and common issues. I also color-coded each

interview transcript using the numbers of my third research question as a code to align the data further to the actual research questions. I coded the transcripts for my third research question using data from interview question three. Data from the OLEI responses for *Part II: External Forces* and *Part I: Leadership Behaviors—Management Behavior and Interpersonal Behavior* were compared within each individual elementary school. I compared the responses from each school's principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent to identify alignment or discrepancies among the principal and the other participants. I listed the responses for the participants in a table to exhibit the alignment or lack of alignment for each inventory item. The OLEI responses were analyzed as qualitative data. No quantitative tests were completed on the survey responses. I compared the interview transcripts to the responses on the OLEI to determine alignment of the participant interviews with the inventory items. I used the final comparison to answer research question three.

For research question four, I analyzed the data from all the interviews for each case study. Data analysis for research question four included an analysis for similarities and differences, as well as constant comparison method (Gall et al., 1996). I reviewed the *Attitudes, Beliefs, and Values* category for each principal on her respective campus and analyzed them using the four factors of SLT. The interview transcripts were color-coded into the leadership behaviors category and external forces category of the SLT. After color-coding, I numbered each separate idea shared by the participants. The color-coding and numbering system helped align and organize the participants' answers. The system also allowed me to align ideas and common issues. I also color-coded each interview transcript using the numbers of my fourth research question as a code to align the data further to the actual research questions. Data from the OLEI responses for *Part IV: Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs* were compared within each individual

elementary school. Again, I compared the responses from each school's principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent to identify alignment or discrepancies among the principal and the other participants. I listed the responses for the participants in a table to exhibit the alignment or lack of alignment for each inventory item. The OLEI responses were analyzed as qualitative data. No quantitative tests were completed on the survey responses. I compared the interview transcripts to the responses on the OLEI to determine alignment of the participant interviews with the inventory items to answer research question four.

For research question five, I analyzed the data from all the interviews. The three interviews were recorded and transcribed. Transcripts were compared using the constant comparative method. I compared segments within and across categories to identify and clarify the meaning of each category satisfactorily (Gall et al., 1996). The categories then were aligned with the factors of SLT. The constant comparative method was used as the interviews were collected and then again as the transcripts were compared. I sought out themes and patterns as related to the SLT.

CHAPTER IV

CASE STUDY: BLUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL A

This chapter details the first case in this multiple-case study and is organized into five sections. The first section presents the demographics of Blue Elementary. The second section includes the school's statewide assessment rating for the 2014–2015 school year. The third section presents descriptive data about the principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent. The fourth section of the case study includes data addressing each of the five research questions from my study. The data include (a) individual interviews of the principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent and (b) the responses from the OLEI. The fifth section analyzes the relationship between the leadership experiences of the early-career principal and the alignment of the four factors of the SLT. This chapter does not include conclusions drawn from the data; these are presented in Chapter VII.

Demographic Information

Blue Elementary School is located in the southeast part of Texas. The school opened over 30 years. Based on 2014–2015 data, more than 1,000 students attend Blue Elementary, and more than 100,000 students attend Purple School District. Blue Elementary has students aged preschool through fifth grade.

The student population breaks down as follows: more than 60% identified as economically disadvantaged, more than 60% Hispanic, just over 10% White, just over 10% Black, and less than 10% Asian/Pacific Islander. Additionally, the campus serves more than 30% ELL students, just over 10% GT students, and less than 10% special education students. The school's mobility rate is just over 18%. Blue Elementary students are serviced with several

programs: bilingual/ESL education, the GT program, and special education. Blue Elementary School also houses a Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD), as well as Learning in Functional Environments (L.I.F.E.) Skills and the Adaptive Behavior program.

Statewide Assessment Rating

Blue Elementary was assigned the rating of “Met Standards” as its state rating for the 2014–2015 school year. For that school year, the state ratings were either “Met Standards” or “Improvement Required.”

Case Study Participants at Blue Elementary School

Six individuals participated in the Blue Elementary case study. Principal A has been at Blue Elementary for almost 15 years. Principal A began her educational career as an ACP certified teacher in 2000 as a fifth-grade math/science teacher in another district than the district she is currently employed in. Then she moved into her current district and taught 3 years as a third-grade math/science teacher and one year as a third-grade reading/language arts teacher. She became the at risk specialist at the same campus for one year then she became an assistant principal at her current campus. She was an assistant principal for over six years then was promoted at that same campus as the principal, representing her first position as a school principal.

The external mentor and internal mentor were selected based on the principal’s assigned external mentor and assigned internal mentor. Purple School District personnel assign a retired principal to mentor each new principal for the first three years of principalship. The external mentor meets with the new principal every week for two hours during their first semester and every other week in the second semester. During the second and third years, the mentoring continues with meetings once a month.

Purple School District personnel also assign an acting principal to be a mentor for the first three years of every new principal's principalship. Mentor and mentee both attend monthly rookie-principal meetings with other mentors and mentees. District personnel from a variety of departments present on relevant topics at the meetings.

The assistant principal for this case study was selected based on who had worked at Blue Elementary the longest. This campus has two assistant principals, with the selected assistant principal having been there for three years. The participating teacher was selected based on who had the most experience at Blue Elementary; the teacher has since retired. The parent volunteer was selected based on who had the most volunteer hours for the 2014–2015 school year.

Analysis of Data

The following section analyzes each of the five research questions through the interview transcripts of the participants, as well as through the information obtained from the OLEI. Conclusions based on the data are not included here; data are used to present conclusions in Chapter VII.

Research Question One: What Are the Leadership Behaviors of the Early-Career Female Principals Who Lead Title I Schools?

The SLT acknowledges leadership behaviors that apply to both men and women (Holtkamp, 2001) and is based on prominent leadership theories and leadership research. Leadership behaviors are reflective of specific models of leadership styles, ranging from bureaucratic leadership to interactive and caring leadership models (Holtkamp, 2001).

Each Blue Elementary participant described Principal A's leadership behaviors in her early-career years. Participant 1 mentioned the inclusivity of Principal A, as well as her desire

for input from her staff and administrative team. She was described as open to hearing what others think.

I believe her leadership style to be collaborative, and she definitely relied on members of her administrative team. She was always sharing and willing to listen others. She was modeling that behavior to everyone. She was not someone who was very autocratic in her style. She was constantly modeling and growing other leaders on her campus. (Blue Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 12, 2018)

Participant 2 shared the experience of Principal A as a caring and reflective leader from the start of her principalship. She mentioned noticing these characteristics immediately during their initial mentorship meetings and discussions.

She was incredibly reflective, and I remember that she was constantly going out talking to people. She was getting their viewpoints and then helping them move forward. She has grown as a principal and has established herself as a principal. I think she's been able to do a lot of shared decision making, too. (Blue Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 13, 2018)

When I interviewed Principal A, she mentioned working hard to create an open-door policy by being present and by communicating with all the stakeholders at her school. She acknowledged wanting to be out in the areas talking with students and teachers so they could see her and she could see them.

I would say the primary leadership behavior I focused on through the years is strong communication with clarity. I want to make sure that all communication I have with our staff members includes our campus goals with regards to social-emotional

behaviors, as well as academics. Every time I address our staff, whether it be in writing or in person through staff meetings, we always focus on these two things. I want to ensure that I work to communicate our campus goals and everything that we do. Staying focused—I believe in education there are so many things that we are asked to do with our students and with our staff members. It's keeping that focus on our exact campus goals and working on communicating that in multiple ways and consistently throughout the year. Keeping everybody involved—whether it's students, parents, or staff members. Communication is what has contributed to the growth of our students. (Principal A, personal communications, November 8, 2018)

Participant 3 discussed how he has learned from Principal A's leadership style. He discussed her amazing ability to include people, make them feel valued, and keep them focused. He described feeling valued and enjoying being a part of her team.

She's focused on what the school needs, and she makes sure that we, the assistant principals and instructional specialists and coaches, know where the focus is. We meet with her individually. She trusts us and the decisions we make. There is trust and a friendship. We can talk to her about anything that is going on in the school. She is growing leaders in the school. She is focused, very open-minded, and there is a trustworthiness about her. (Blue Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

When I interviewed Participant 4 from Blue Elementary, she shared her thoughts on Principal A being a dynamic leader, caring for her staff, and always being there to support them in both their professional careers and their personal lives.

She is a very dynamic leader, very open-minded, very willing to listen if you have any questions or concerns about anything that's being done on the campus. She's very open to listening to you. She leads by example. She's very interactive with the kids, very hands-on. She is very visible, always in the hallways, in the cafeteria. It's amazing—some years we had up to 1,300 children, and it was almost like she knew every child's name. She would greet them in the mornings, lunchtime. She's in there helping them get trays and loading buses, very hands-on. As far as the relationship with the teachers, she was very personable. She was very understanding. She was right there with you the whole time. (Blue Elementary Participant 4, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

From Participant 5's perspective, Principal A was always listening to parents and getting things accomplished at the school. She acknowledged it being meaningful that Principal A had served as the assistant principal at Blue Elementary before becoming the principal. For Participant 5, this meant that Principal A knew the issues, challenges, and what the school needed immediately, so there was no waiting or learning time for someone else who did not know the school as well. She said she was glad when Principal A was named the new school principal.

She was always very involved, and she always listened to parents. She listened to the teachers, and she was very inclusive. She took lots of people's ideas into her considerations, but she also knew what she wanted and knew how to get things done.

(Blue Elementary Participant 5, personal communication, November 15, 2018)

As I interviewed each of the six Blue Elementary participants, Principal A's involvement with her faculty, staff, students, and parents was revealed as one of collaboration, constant

communication, caring, open-mindedness, and focus. She was reported as being dedicated to modeling strong, positive leadership behaviors for others to see and implement.

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—Leadership Behaviors

In addition to the interviews, each Blue Elementary participant completed the OLEI. The principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent completed the form for the inventory, consisting of 96 items divided into five parts. Four sections relate to the four factors of the SLT. The fifth section is a demographic section.

There are 54 items in the *Leadership Behaviors* section of the OLEI. The inventory responses for this section of the OLEI showed alignment with 34 items. Principal A marked “strongly agree” for all 34, and the other five participants marked either “strongly agree” or “agree” for all 34: leads by example, communicator, lifelong learner, high expectations of self and others, strong academic self-concept, communicates vision, “can-do” philosophy (resourceful), dependable, efficient, utilizes participatory management, decision maker, task-oriented, analyzes situations, achievement-oriented, emotionally stable, self-sufficient, effective time manager, organized, persuasive, cooperative, people-oriented, compassionate, team player, strong interpersonal skills, consensus builder, uses affiliate language such as “we”/“our,” participate, inclusive, democratic, emotionally expressive, receptive to new ideas/change, alert to social environment, responsive to needs of faculty/staff, and reflective.

The following seven items showed alignment because Principal A marked “agree,” and the other five participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree” on the inventory: motivational, assertive, delegates, risk taker, effective, collegial, and networker. Thirteen items did not show alignment because one or more respondents marked “disagree” or chose to leave one or more blank.

Tables 3 and 4 list the responses of Principal A and of Blue Elementary’s Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, Participant 4, and Participant 5 participants according to the leadership behaviors of the OLEI.

Table 3

OLEI Part I: Leadership Behaviors—Management Behavior (Blue Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal A	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
1. Leads by example	4	3	4	4	3	4
2. Ability to juggle	4	3		4	4	4
3. Communicator	4	3	4	4	4	4
4. Lifelong learner	4	3	3	4	4	4
5. High expectations of self and others	4	3	4	4	4	4
6. Strong academic self-concept	4	3	4	4	3	4
7. Motivational	3	3	3	4	3	4
8. Communicates vision	4	3	4	4	4	4
9. “Can-do” philosophy (resourceful)	4	4	3	4	3	4
10. Persistent	4	4	2	4	4	4
11. Shares power	3	3	2	3	4	4
12. Dependable	4	3	4	4	3	4
13. Efficient	4	3	3	4	4	4
14. Assertive	3	3	3	4	3	4
15. Delegates	3	3	3	3	3	4
16. Utilizes participatory management	4	3	4	3	3	4

(continued)

Table 3 Continued

Inventory Item	Principal A	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
17. Decision maker	4	3	3	3	3	4
18. Risk taker	3	3	3	4	3	4
19. Task-oriented	4	3	3	4	4	4
20. Change agent	4		3	3	3	4
21. Influencer	4		3	4	3	4
22. Analyzes situations	4	3	3	4	3	4
23. High-energy	4	3	2	4	4	4
24. Achievement-oriented	4	3	4	4	4	4
25. Emotionally stable	4	3	3	4	3	4
26. Self-sufficient	4	3	3	4	3	4
27. Effective time manager	4	3	4	3	3	4
28. Organized	4	3	4	4	3	4
29. Persuasive	4	3	3	3	3	4
30. Effective	3	3	3	4	3	4

Table 4

OLEI Part I: Leadership Behaviors—Interpersonal Behavior (Blue Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal A	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
31. Cooperative	4	3	3	4	4	4
32. Empathetic	4	3	2	4	4	4
33. People-oriented	4	4	3	4	4	4
34. Compassionate	4	3	3	4	4	4
35. Collegial	3	3	4	4	3	4
36. Team player	4	3	4	4	4	4
37. Strong interpersonal skills	4	3	4	4	4	4
38. Consensus builder	4	3	3	4	3	4
39. Empowers others	3	3	2	3	4	4
40. Networker	3	3	3	3	3	4
41. Transformational	4		2	3	3	4
42. Combines social talk with administrative talk	4	3	2	4	4	4
43. Uses affiliate language such as “we”/“our”	4	3	3	4	4	4
44. Participate	4	3	3	4	4	4
45. Inclusive	4	3	3	3	4	4
46. Nurturing	4	3	2	4	3	4
47. Democratic	4	3	3	4	3	4
48. Intuitive	4	3	2	3	3	4
49. Flexible/adaptable	4	3	2	4	3	4
50. Emotionally expressive	4	3	3	4	4	4

(continued)

Table 4 Continued

Inventory Item	Principal A	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
51. Receptive to new ideas/change	4	3	3	3	4	4
52. Alert to social environment	4	3	4	3	4	4
53. Responsive to needs of faculty/staff	4	3	3	3	4	4
54. Reflective	4	3	4	4	4	4

To answer the research question “What are the leadership behaviors of the early-career female principals who lead Title I schools?” I compared the leadership behaviors described in the six interviews and the responses on the OLEI and listed the corresponding leadership behaviors (Table 5). The left column lists the leadership skills identified by participants in the interviews. The right column lists the OLEI leadership behaviors identified by the participants as “strongly agree” or “agree” in the OLEI.

Table 5

Comparison of Identified Leadership Behaviors (Blue Elementary)

Interviews	OLEI Leadership Behavior Responses
Growing leaders Modeling Leads by example	Leads by example
Open to listening	Communicator
Collaborative Right there beside you Guide Hands-on	Cooperative
Inclusive	Team Player
Caring Visible	Compassionate
Talks to people to get input	People-oriented
Building consensus Reflective	Inclusive
Focused	Organized
Trustworthiness	Dependable

Sixteen leadership behaviors were identified for Principal A in the interviews. Forty-three of the leadership behaviors showed alignment to items on the OLEI for which participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree.” Principal A holds a variety of leadership behaviors identified by the participants as being modeled and displayed by her daily.

Research Question Two: How Does the Organizational Structure of Each Campus Align with the Principal's Leadership Behaviors?

Organizational structure is defined as the characteristics of an organization or campus and how the campus operates or functions (Irby et al., 2002). This study looked at campus structures to identify how the sample principals have structured their campuses.

When I interviewed Principal A, she acknowledged not having any written organization chart of the school, but instead following what had been in place when she was an assistant principal. However, she did discuss the formation and change of the mission statement.

My second year as principal, we did not have a mission statement at that point, so I met with our building leadership team committee, and we decided upon a mission statement. When we made a revision, the staff members wanted to make sure that it did not only include academics, but it also included the social-emotional part. So that's the portion of the mission statement that brought in building strong character. The second part of it was that staff members just did not want it to be about the students themselves. They wanted the mission statement to involve everybody who worked with our students, so that's why we revised it to state, "All students and staff will develop strong character and become lifelong learners" because, as educators, we wanted to make sure that we were modeling for our students what we expected of them, Also, I need to communicate that each day. (Principal A, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

Participant 1 for Blue Elementary mentioned the inclusivity of Principal A in her decision making with the variety of committees on her campus. Participant 1 discussed the formation of the committees and the importance of everyone having a voice.

The principal had different structures in place for communication and decision making. I think that she allowed decision making with her administrative team, with her CPOC [Campus Performance Objective Council] committee. Then, other committees were focused on particular subject areas, and I think that she did a lot of setting those up and then checking back to see how they were functioning and tweaking those as necessary. (Blue Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 12, 2018)

Participant 2 remembered how Principal A had to interview for a new assistant principal and how excited she was in getting to hire a new person for her administrative team.

I remember her interviewing because we needed to hire a new assistant principal at the beginning of her principalship. She was very nervous, but she was very excited about it, too. She had an idea of what she wanted in that role and knew it would strengthen her team. She encouraged her teachers to grow and take classes or get advance degrees. (Blue Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

The idea of change was reported as not hindering Principal A because she turns change into a positive element. Participants acknowledged everything appearing to flow smoothly and orderly, even in the first years of her principalship. Principal A was discussed as taking time to talk with the staff and students, listening to their ideas, and getting a pulse of the school.

Participant 5 mentioned everyone seeming to know what to do and when to do it—and it working.

The organizational structure of the campus . . . everyone seemed to know their jobs. Everyone seemed to know where they belonged, and I don't know that there was a

hierarchy. It was never shown as like a dictatorship. [Principal A] was always open and inviting to parents, and I felt welcomed in the school and to offer my opinions to her, and she was out in the areas visible. (Blue Elementary Participant 5, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

Blue Elementary follows a hierarchy for its organizational structure including the principal, two assistant principals, three instructional specialists, a primary coach, and a counselor. Principal A was reported as developing and encouraging future leaders to develop their leadership skills and grow professionally.

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—Organizational Structure

The principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent completed the form for the inventory. The inventory consists of 96 items divided into five parts. Four sections relate to the four factors of the SLT. The fifth section is a demographic section.

The six participants completed the 12 items on the *Organizational Structure* section of the OLEI. Eleven of the items showed alignment because Principal A marked “strongly agree” for all 11, and the other five participants selected “strongly agree” or “agree” for all 11: recognizes ability or expertise, arrives at goals through consensual process, values faculty/staff as individual human beings, commitment to employee growth, power sharing, promotes community and cooperation, promotes nurturing and caring, promotes subordinate empowerment, has clear norms and values, encourages professional training, and has well-defined goals. The item “utilizes systems of rotating leadership” did not show alignment because Principal A, Participant 1, Participant 3, Participant 4, and Participant 5 marked “agree,” while Participant 2 marked “disagree.” Listed in Table 6, the participants’ answers to the *Organizational Structure* section of the OLEI support the interview responses.

Table 6

OLEI Part III: Organizational Structure (Blue Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal A	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
72. Utilizes systems of rotating leadership	3	3	2	3	3	3
73. Recognizes ability or expertise	4	3	3	3	4	4
74. Arrives at goal through consensual process	4	3	3	4	3	4
75. Values faculty/staff as individual human beings	4	3	3	4	4	4
76. Commitment to employee growth	4	3	3	4	4	4
77. Power sharing	4	3	3	4	4	4
78. Promotes community and cooperation	4	3	3	4	4	4
79. Promotes nurturing and caring	4	3	4	4	4	4
80. Promotes subordinate empowerment	4	3	3	3	3	4
81. Has clear norms and values	4	3	4	4	4	4
82. Encourages professional training	4	3	4	4	4	4
83. Has well-defined goals	4	3	4	4	4	4

The participants' responses to the *Leadership Behaviors* section of the OLEI are listed in Tables 3 and 4; to answer the second research question "How does the organizational structure of each campus align with the principal's leadership behaviors?" I compared the responses on the leadership behaviors items from the inventory that showed similarity or related to the items in the *Organizational Structure* section.

Table 7 compares the leadership behaviors from the interviews, the responses to the *Leadership Behaviors* section of the OLEI, and the responses to the *Organizational Structure* section of the OLEI.

Table 7

Comparison of Leadership Behaviors from Interviews and Leadership Behaviors and Organizational Structure of the OLEI (Blue Elementary)

Interviews	OLEI Leadership	OLEI Organizational
Always visible and present	Leads by example	Recognizes ability or Expertise
Good communication with staff Positive	Communicator	Arrives at goals through consensual process
Everyone has a voice	Team player	Commitment to employee growth
Collaborative Right there beside you	Inclusive	Power sharing
Guide	People-oriented	Promotes community and cooperation
Involved Shared decision making		
Caring	Compassionate	Promotes nurturing and caring
Talks to people to get input Visible Focused	Organized	Promotes subordinate empowerment Has well-defined goals
Promotes staff development		Encourages professional training
Focused		Has clear norms and values
Trustworthiness	Dependable	

Sixteen items were identified for Principal A in the interviews; 43 leadership behaviors showed alignment in the OLEI, and 11 of the organizational structure items showed alignment. The data in the interviews and responses on the OLEI indicate that the organizational structure of Blue Elementary is aligned with Principal A's leadership behaviors. Principal A is inclusive and organized in her decision making when making plans, and she values the faculty/staff as individual human beings.

Research Question Three: How Do the Leadership Behaviors of the Early-Career Female Principals Who Lead Title I Schools Align with the External Forces?

External forces are the outside influences on an organization that also have their own set of values, attitudes, and beliefs over which the campus principal has no control (Irby et al., 2002). External forces impacting a campus administrator may include parents, students, staff, district offices, state and federal mandates, accountability systems, political climate, cultural climate, and the professional community.

In the interviews, participants described challenges involved in working with different external forces and how the principal has handled those challenges. Participant 2 described how Principal A handled some external factors when she became principal.

I don't remember her having any difficulty or challenges with the central office staff. She had some challenges with parents then, and it continues to this day. I believe she wanted the parents more involved. In her community, she has a high economically disadvantaged one. Some of the parents' top priorities are making ends meet and getting food on the table. So she created events that invited the parents onto the campus. Then discipline was an issue, so she implemented PBIS [positive behavioral interventions and supports] and made sure it was implemented schoolwide to help

with the discipline issues. (Blue Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Participant 3 shared in his interview the needs of the students being a top priority.

One of the greatest challenges that we have is meeting the needs of our students. We have a high percentage of students in poverty, so meeting those needs is our focus. Also, making sure we hire staff able to meet the needs of those students is vital. They need to know how to work with the students and how to understand where they are coming. It does not mean that we have to lower expectations for the students, but to make sure that we give them the strategies they need so they can grow. (Blue Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

Participant 4 explained some external forces interfering with the school on a daily basis and Principal A's handling of it.

I think the only challenges that we faced were being a highly at-risk campus and a Title I school. I think some people don't really know how to relate to what it was like on a day-to-day basis. We had a high absent rate. We would have kids miss school, and when they came back to school, they literally had one pair of shoes, and if they couldn't find their shoes, then they did not come to school. Another challenge would be getting the parents involved. It was not because they did not want to come to school, but some of the parents worked two and three jobs, and many of our parents did not have a car. Then some of our parents in their own childhood had negative experiences with school, so they were reluctant to come to the school. In their mind, school was not a safe place, and I don't mean safe as far as physical harm. I mean safe emotionally. They did not have really fun memories of being at school

themselves, and so they would be reluctant to come to the school. They just weren't comfortable in the school environment due to their own childhood. Then some of the students had trust issues, and it can take awhile to build a relationship with a child who had some adults in their life come and go. Adults that were supposed to be their safety and their rock, but had let them down. We worked hard each day on relationship building, and our principal worked on communication and trust daily with the staff and kids. (Blue Elementary Participant 4, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

Principal A was noted as having a way of creating a challenge into an opportunity. She is known for her positive way of handling opportunities. Participant 1 discussed this characteristic in her interview.

I think that the principal has a good relationship with our central office staff. Within our district, she's well-respected, and she is seen as someone who's open to being coached and to make changes. I think her role with parents is one of being open. She is a mom of six children and with different learning styles and different academic abilities and ages, so she definitely empathizes with parents. She comes across as believable and a good listener. I think students see her out and about in classrooms, so they know who she is and that she's very approachable. She is very kid-friendly. She is the same with the staff. I think she has good people skills and she's a good listener. She's someone that is able, and perhaps reluctantly, but she can have hard conversations with folks. She is clear about what those expectations are, and she does a good job with keeping good communication. She is well-respected within both her

home campus and the central office staff. (Blue Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 12, 2018)

Participant 5 commented on Principal A handling external factors with ease and confidence. She expressed confidence in Principal A's abilities with things not in her control.

Some challenges would be testing, and I am not a big fan of the test. Then a lot of our parents have different languages, so we had a lot of cultural issues. Then you have a new principal, but she met those challenges one-step at a time. She would listen to people as they brought things to her attention, and she would try and be proactive.

(Blue Elementary Participant 5, personal communication, November 15, 2018)

Principal A commented on her challenges and put it in a comprehensive framework stated by the other participants as well.

I can say that I really have not had many challenges at all working with central office. I feel as if we're all working toward the same goal: student success. They've been very supportive, so I haven't had any challenges there. In regards to parents, I would say when we receive new parents that are not familiar with us, then they have to get to know us. They've had negative experiences at previous schools or they don't understand how much we do work as a team here. So those challenges are typically short-lived once the parents get to know us and how much we care about their children and their child's success.

As a brand-new principal, it was challenging for me to understand why not everybody had the same core beliefs about children and students and about their education. So I would say in my first three years as principal, I had more turn over than typical because there was a direct way that I was asking the staff to work with children. We

need to teach them and guide them in all areas of their life, whether it's academic or social. Now everybody's working toward a common goal. We have a common goal, and clearly communicating the exact steps and processes that we need to take in order to reach those goals with our students is important. (Principal A, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—External Forces

Blue Elementary's principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent completed the 17 items in the *External Forces* section of the OLEI. Twelve items showed alignment because Principal A marked "strongly agree" for all 12, and the other five participants marked "strongly agree" or "agree" for all 12: emphasis on collegiality, views teachers as leaders, emphasis on reflective practice, recognizes ability or expertise, arrives at goals through consensual process, values faculty/staff as individual human beings, promotes community and cooperation, promotes nurturing and caring, supports my philosophy, my leadership is affected by the expectations of the community, socioeconomic levels in the community affect my leadership, and language groups in the community impact my leadership. Five items did not show alignment. Table 8 presents participant answers to the *External Forces* section of the OLEI.

Table 8

OLEI Part II: External Forces (Blue Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal A	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
55. Emphasis on collegiality	4	3	4	4	4	3
56. Views teachers as leaders	4	3	3	4	4	3
57. Emphasis on reflective practice	4	3	4	4	3	3
58. Participative decision making	4	3	3	4	3	2
59. Utilizes system of rotating leadership	4	3	2	4	3	2
60. Recognizes ability or expertise	4	3	3	4	4	3
61. Arrives at goals through consensual process	4	3	3	4	3	3
62. Values faculty/staff as individual human beings	4	3	4	4	4	3
63. Commitment to employee growth	4	3	3	4	4	2
64. Power sharing	4	3	3	3	3	2
65. Promotes community and cooperation	4	4	3	4	3	3
66. Promotes nurturing and caring	4	3	3	4	3	3
67. Promotes subordinate empowerment	4	3	2	3	3	2
68. Supports my philosophy	4	3	3	4	3	3
69. My leadership is affected by the expectations of the community	4	3	3	4	4	4
70. Socioeconomic levels in the community affect my leadership	4	3	4	4	4	4

(continued)

Table 8 Continued

Inventory Item	Principal A	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
71. Language groups in the community impact my leadership	4	3	4	4	4	4

To answer the research question “How do the leadership behaviors of the early-career female principals who lead Title I schools align with the external forces?” I compared the leadership behaviors identified in the interviews to the leadership behaviors identified in the *External Forces* section of the OLEI by Principal A and the other five participants. The responses are listed in Table 9.

Table 9

Comparison of Interviews and the OLEI External Forces (Blue Elementary)

Leadership Behaviors from Interviews	OLEI Responses
Open to listening Growing leaders Open to coaching Invites parents to events	Arrives at goals through consensual process
Empathetic Approachable Positive way to handle things Good listener	Values faculty/staff as individual human beings
Talks to people to get input Visible	Emphasis on collegiality
Reflective Turns challenges into opportunities	Emphasis on reflective practice
Trustworthiness	Views teachers as leaders

The data provided in the interviews and the OLEI responses indicate that Principal A's leadership behaviors positively impact the relationship between the campus and the external forces impacting Blue Elementary, and alignment was shown with the external forces.

Research Question Four: Are the Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs of Each Principal Aligned with Others' Perceptions of the Principal's Perceived Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs?

Attitudes, values, and beliefs are the foundation of principles for an organization, its leader, and the workers in the organization. Attitudes and values are more stable, while beliefs can change as new information is processed (Irby et al., 2002). Values become more permanent realizations of beliefs and attitudes (Irby et al., 2002).

Each participant described the values, attitudes, and beliefs of the campus principal, and they all talked about student success. Principal A discussed how she wants all people to grow and learn from all aspects of her life.

I believe that every single individual we serve, whether it be through our personal lives within our family or within our schools, deserves to have every opportunity to better themselves and reach their highest goals, whether that be academic or socially. As an instructional leader, I believe that every student should have the opportunity, and everybody we serve should have the opportunity, to become the best person they possibly can be. I try to focus here as a leader for my staff, as well as my students, on both their personal goals as well as their academic goals. I believe that our families feel the same, and they are very excited or happy that we focus on the whole child versus only academics or only testing. I keep saying "whole child" and making sure that our students are healthy and have good-quality mental health, as well as academics, that we are able to serve our families in our community. It's really brought

our school together and made it to everybody. We trust each other, and parents know that we're looking out for their child. (Principal A, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

Participant 3 discussed the belief system at the school similarly.

Our campus belief is based on student growth. We believe that all the students are going to be successful in all subjects. We believe that our students have the capacity to grow and be lifelong learners. Most of our students live in poverty, and we want to equip them with the tools they need to be successful in life. We are thinking about high school, we are thinking about the university, and they don't have to all go to college, but we want to make sure they have the vocational skills to be successful in life. I think all of us have that belief, and we need the students to know. They need to learn everything to be successful and to get out of poverty right now. (Blue Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

Participant 1 reflected on the beliefs and values of Principal A, stating similar beliefs.

Participant 4 commented on the same beliefs that she felt Principal A had developed.

The cliché—all kids can learn—is what I believe the principal truly believes and would guide the staff accordingly. She would set goals accordingly, and so I think the principal clearly communicated to the staff and to the community. She used the goals to schedule staff development where they even spent their time and money. I would say that she was mindful of that when she would hire new staff members to make sure that she had strong professionals and paraprofessionals that would help achieve those goals. (Blue Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 12, 2018).

The values and beliefs that guided the school were all centered on the students. The core beliefs are that whatever is best for students is what we do. All students can learn, and we are educating the whole child; academic achievement is very important, but we also focused on physical development and socio-emotional development. We also worked on behavior management, teaching them to be self-disciplined and manage their own behavior. (Blue Elementary Participant 4, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

Participant 5 stated what she thought about the school beliefs and Principal A: “I believe the campus was guided by the fact all the kids are really important, and she values all the children. I felt she was very fair and she believed in the kids” (Blue Elementary Participant 5, personal communication, November 15, 2018).

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

In addition to the interviews, each participant completed the OLEI, which has eight items in the Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs section. All eight items showed alignment. Table 10 lists the responses of the six participants for attitudes, values, and beliefs.

Table 10

OLEI Part IV: Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs (Blue Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal A	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
84. Emphasis on professional growth for self/staff/faculty	4	3	3	4	4	4
85. Openness to change	4	3	3	3	4	4
86. Emphasis on collegiality	4	3	3	3	4	4
87. Emphasis on character, ethics and integrity	4	4	3	3	3	4
88. Emphasis on programs for special students	4	4	3	3	4	4
89. Emphasis on innovation	4	3	3	4	4	4
90. Emphasis on reflective process	4	3	3	4	3	4
91. Openness to diversity	4	3	4	4	4	4

To answer the research question “Are the attitudes, values, and beliefs of each principal aligned with others’ perceptions of the principal’s perceived attitudes, values, and beliefs?” I compared the answers from the interview questions about attitudes, values, and beliefs with the responses on the *Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs* section of the OLEI compiled by the six participants. Table 11 presents a comparison of the information.

Table 11

Comparison of Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs from the Interviews and OLEI Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs (Blue Elementary)

Interviews	OLEI Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs Responses
Training	Emphasis on professional growth for self/staff/faculty
Changing climate and culture of school	Openness to change
Wants a team approach Everyone can succeed	Emphasis on collegiality
Committed Core belief in student growth Educate whole child Trust each other	Emphasis on character, ethics, and integrity
Transformation	Emphasis on innovation
Mindfulness	Emphasis on reflective process
Everyone's opinion encouraged Inclusive Core belief for all students to succeed	Openness to diversity

The interview responses and the OLEI responses indicate that the attitudes, values, and beliefs of Principal A align closely with the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the other five participants. There is a common belief at Blue Elementary that every child counts and can achieve success; this belief was mentioned by all the participants and by Principal A. Principal A mentioned how she looks to add positive and motivated individuals to her staff so that her students have the best of the best. She values her staff, students, and community. The data indicate that the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the principal align with the attitudes, values, and beliefs of her staff and community.

Research Question Five: What Is the Impact of Mentoring on the Four Factors of the SLT in Context to Each Early-Career Principal as Perceived by Her?

Principal A noted embracing her mentor and how her mentor guided her to see. Her mentor assisted her in developing the leadership skills that she already had, and the time they spent together strengthened those leadership skills. The mentor/mentee relationship grew in terms of respect and constant feedback. Participant 1 even mentioned Principal A always being open to coaching and feedback. In continuing to collaborate with and support her teachers, Principal A reported referring back to her mentor at times when she feels it is needed. Their mentoring relationship continues to this day.

Mentoring, I think, is actually something that is very powerful, and I think it needs to happen on a consistent basis. I believe having mentors my first three years as a new principal helped me to approach different situations or work through challenges that I had never faced before as an assistant principal. It helps you walk through different scenarios with more guidance. I don't think that you can ever be 100% prepared for the principal job, and one of the most challenging things about it is the fact that there is no one else on campus with your same level of responsibilities.

I kind of think of it in the same respect when I started teaching—I had a mentor who came in, and she would model for me what to do, and then I would copy what she had modeled in the afternoon. It helped me become stronger so much faster because I had someone with experience who I was able to mimic. Having a mentor to help guide, lead, and someone you can bounce ideas off—I think it's very powerful, and it just helps to strengthen your decision-making skills and build confidence.

Mentoring has helped develop my leadership style. I learned how to be more reflective, collaborative, and understanding. It was a special time that I will always remember. She assisted me in becoming a lifelong learner because I make an effort to sign up for conferences and workshops that are for principals. (Principal A, personal communication, November 26, 2018)

Relationship Between the Experience of Principal A and the Alignment of the Four Factors of the Synergistic Leadership Theory

A positive relationship was shown to exist between the experiences of Principal A and the alignment of the four factors. The four factors—leadership behaviors; organizational structure; external forces; and attitudes, values, and beliefs—showed alignment.

Having been at Blue Elementary since 2005, serving first as an assistant principal for seven years, Principal A knows the environment of the school well. She has invested her time and energy into the culture and climate of the school. The community knows her well, and she continues to grow as a leader on her campus. Her main goal is for her students to be successful and to grow into healthy, well-rounded individuals.

Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

Principal A is dedicated to filling her faculty with positive and energetic individuals. She knows that it takes a lot each day to engage and to uplift students, and she aims for that environment in her school. She is touched by her staff daily by what she sees in the classrooms and hallways. She sees dedicated individuals, which motivates her to be her best and to model that kind of behavior as well.

The other participants emphasized her commitment to being a model of how to be positive and accepting to everyone. They mentioned how she always listens with an open mind

and heart. She is always in the hallways and talking with students and teachers daily. Principal A's attitudes, values, and beliefs align with the campus's attitudes, values, and beliefs.

Leadership Behaviors

The data in the Blue Elementary School/Principal A case study indicate that Principal A employs leadership behaviors associated with the range of leadership styles and behaviors modeled by the SLT. Principal A uses a humanistic leadership style. She wants to get input from everyone, she cares for her students and her staff, she listens to what they have to say, and has an open-door policy in her building. Principal A tries to meet all the needs of her students and staff (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). She treats everyone with dignity and respect.

When I reviewed Principal A's leadership behaviors, she was revealed as taking a proactive approach in working with staff, students, and the community by being visible and having clear expectations of the campus goals. She is always in the classrooms and at all parent-night events. She focuses on doing what is right for the students and then hiring people with the same value. She is a collaborator, motivator, and cheerleader for her students, parents, and teachers. She is a dedicated leader who wants the best for everyone, which was found to be her number one belief.

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of Blue Elementary is different from when the previous principal led the school. It was once a top-down model and has evolved into a power-sharing model. When I examined the case study of Principal A, she proved to be inclusive and desiring of input from everyone. Principal's A's interpersonal behaviors indicate that her leadership behaviors are also related to those described in a participatory structure (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). A participatory structure is related closely to a bureaucratic structure (Lunenburg &

Ornstein, 2012), but it values interpersonal relations among all people within the organization. The organizational structure of Blue Elementary aligns with Principal A's leadership behaviors.

External Forces

Principal A develops and maintains positive relationships with her students, faculty, and community. Principal A discussed how parent involvement can be low at times because most of her parents are working parents, perhaps working two to three jobs at a time. They are working on keeping their families together, they are working to pay the rent, and they rely on the school for assistance for their child's needs.

Principal A and her staff have concentrated on building relationships with their parents through clear and constant communication and dedication to their students. Principal A has a good rapport with many of her external forces because she plans ahead and creates strong bonds. She is very personable. Principal A's leadership behaviors align with her external forces.

Mentoring

Principal A referred to her mentoring time as a special time. She reflected on how she developed areas that she did not know needed development. She became more reflective and thought-provoking through the mentoring process because she began doing things iteratively throughout the day.

Principal A worked on relationships and being visible during the mentoring time. She stills keeps in contact with her mentor in case something happens and she wants some feedback. Mentoring had a positive effect on her experiences as an early-career principal and how she dealt with issues during that time as well. Her mentoring relationship continues to this day.

Alignment Summary

Principal A's experiences reflect alignment of the four factors of the SLT. Principal A's leadership decisions are influenced by her understanding of the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the campus; the organizational structure of the campus; and the external forces outside the campus. Her leadership behaviors reflect an understanding of her campus. Principal A's interpersonal skills support everyone building a common vision for every child.

The SLT uses a tetrahedron to illustrate the four factors and six interaction points. The tetrahedron representing Blue Elementary is congruent because of alignment of the factors. According to the theory, because the factors align, Principal A has read the context of her leadership at Blue Elementary accurately and has used the appropriate leadership behaviors within the organization to produce results.

The four factors are aligned completely in this case study. The harmony of the factors at Blue Elementary represents a congruent tetrahedron in the SLT. Figure 1 exhibits alignment of the four factors at Blue Elementary.



Figure 1. Alignment of the four factors at Blue Elementary.

CHAPTER V

CASE STUDY: RED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL B

This chapter presents the second case in the multiple-case study and is organized into five sections. The first section presents demographics of Red Elementary School. The second section includes the school's statewide assessment rating for the 2014–2015 school year. The third section includes descriptive data about the principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent. The fourth section presents data addressing each of the five research questions from my study. Data include (a) individual interviews of the principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent and (b) the responses from the OLEI. The fifth section analyzes the relationship between the leadership experiences of the principal and the alignment of the four factors of the SLT. This chapter does not include conclusions drawn from the data, however. Conclusions are presented in Chapter VII.

Demographic Information

Red Elementary School is located in the southeast part of Texas. Based on 2014–2015 school data, more than 1,000 students attend Red Elementary, and more than 100,000 students attend Purple School District. Red Elementary has students aged preschool through fifth grade.

The student population breaks down as follows: more than 70% identified as economically disadvantaged, more than 60% Hispanic, just over 20% Black, just under 10% White, and less than 5% Asian/Pacific Islander. Additionally, the campus has just under 40% ELL students, just over 10% GT students, and less than 10% special education students. The school mobility rate is just over 13%. Red Elementary students have a variety of programs

available to them: Bilingual/ESL education, the GT program, and special education. The school also has PPCD, L.I.F.E. Skills, and Adaptive Behavior offerings.

Statewide Assessment Rating

Red Elementary was assigned the rating of “Met Standards” by the state for the 2014–2015 school year. For that school year, the state ratings were either “Met Standards” or “Improvement Required.”

Case Study Participants at Red Elementary School

Six individuals participated in the case study of Red Elementary. Principal B has been at Red Elementary since 2011. She began her work experience as a second-grade bilingual teacher for one year in a district in central Texas. Then she moved to be a kindergarten bilingual teacher in another district for five years and became an assistant principal for one year in that same district. She moved into Purple School District and served as an assistant principal for three years before becoming a principal. Principal B became the principal at Red Elementary in 2011, representing her first position as a school principal. She since has moved into a director role for the district.

The external mentor and internal mentor were selected as those assigned to Principal B. Purple School District personnel assign a retired principal as an external mentor for new principals for the first three years of their principalship. The external mentor meets with the new principal every week for two hours during their first semester and every other week in the second semester. During the second and third years, the mentoring continues with meetings once a month.

Purple School District personnel also assign an acting principal as an internal mentor for the first three years of a new principal’s principalship. They attend monthly rookie-principal

meetings together with other mentors and mentees. District personnel from a variety of departments present at the monthly meetings on relevant topics.

The assistant principal for the study was selected as the one employed at Red Elementary the longest. Of the two assistant principals at the school, the selected individual has been there for five years. The selected teacher was the one with the most experience on the campus. The parent volunteer was selected as the one with the most volunteer hours for the 2014–2015 school year.

Analysis of Data

This section analyzes each of the five research questions using the interview transcripts of the participants, as well as with the information obtained from the OLEI. Conclusions based on the data are not included, however; conclusions from the data are presented in Chapter VII.

Research Question One: What Are the Leadership Behaviors of the Early-Career Female Principals Who Lead Title I Schools?

The SLT acknowledges leadership behaviors that apply to both men and women (Holtkamp, 2001) and is based on prominent leadership theories and leadership research. Leadership behaviors are reflective of specific models of leadership styles, ranging from bureaucratic leadership to interactive and caring leadership models (Holtkamp, 2001).

All of the Red Elementary participants described Principal B's leadership behaviors in her early-career years. The external mentor described Principal B as sincere, with a strong, caring, and logical foundation enjoyed by her staff and community.

She has a very strong ability to combine well-grounded common sense with all of her learning about leadership. In making decisions the first year she was principal, she faced a number of very difficult decisions and always demonstrated the ability to think on her

feet. She relied on policy, and she relied on her previous experiences. Bottom line—what was going to be best for students was always kept at the forefront. Another outstanding element of her leadership was in the way she went about developing relationships with people. She was very calm, not flamboyant in any way. She was very sincere, and people knew they were cared for a little extra.

A plus for her in her community was her being bilingual. So I think that was greatly appreciated by parents, and it increased her ability to communicate with them in a way that they best understood and felt most comfortable. So that was just terrific. From the very beginning of her leadership, she was inclusive, and that was greatly appreciated.

(Red Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Participant 3 and Participant 4 commented on Principal B's ability to empower others and build trust with the staff.

When you think of empowering others and inspiring others to do their best work, you think of a leader who really trusted her staff and her faculty to do their part and to do their job. She was that leader. Good leaders have a vision, and they utilize their administrative team and their teachers to problem-solve, to collaborate, to get their input—which she did all the time—empowering others to help you make decisions.

And so if you want your staff to be on board and to do what's best for students, then you include them in the decision making. "I trust you, I believe in you, and I have

faith in you" is what she believed. (Red Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

One major leadership behavior that was different than my previous principal was she was very collaborative. That was the first time I saw a principal send out Google

surveys. She wanted feedback on everything, so even just small things like the way we did our holiday parties, and she wanted us to give feedback about what works and what doesn't. I did feel comfortable, you know, going in and being able to talk to her and share my feelings. I feel like she was very collaborative and kind of open to our concerns. That was one thing that I really noticed about her. (Red Elementary Participant 4, personal communication, November 26, 2018)

Principal B was noted as assisting and giving ideas to others during her first years of principalship. Participant 2 discussed getting ideas from her during their mentor meetings. She reported feeling that Principal B had a good handle on leading her school with innovative ideas and solutions to issues and noted that her leadership style developed into inclusive.

When I first met her, I knew right away that she was emotionally and behaviorally strong. She presented herself as being self-confident, and she presented herself as being self-aware of her needs. She knew the things that she was strong with and the things that she probably needed a little bit more help. [Principal B] was a little bit difficult to coach because she did always know what to say, and she had all the answers. She was such a go-getter in the kind of person that “I'm going to do this myself.”

So one of the things that I really encouraged her early on is to really put other people in a position so that they could help her. They could be part of the decision making, and they can be part of the actual leadership of the school. What I mean by that is when someone is new to the job, you almost want to do everything so that you can learn everything. I felt like [Principal B] felt that way. If you try to do every single thing, you're going to burn yourself out. So she was the kind of person that can easily

probably do most everything, but giving some of that leadership away was a little bit more difficult for her. She is that kind of leader, and I saw her grow into the leader that is very inclusive; as a matter of fact, one of her assistant principals was already named as a new principal. So I know that she brought her along, and she helped prepare her to be a principal. She is a very inclusive-type principal. (Red Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Participant 5 mentioned noticing Principal B's openness and inclusiveness.

She was a very positive role model. She was always walking around and talking to the teachers and talking to the students. She talked to the parents, and I am part of the PTO [parent-teacher organization]. If we had any questions, then we felt we could talk to her. And she would talk to you in her office if she needed to just to talk to you as a parent. (Red Elementary Participant 5, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

Principal B discussed her thoughts on her own leadership styles during the interview.

I believe just having an open mind. Having the willingness to listen to feedback and input from the staff members and from the parents. I think in itself we were able to come up with solutions together and as a team. (Principal B, personal communication, November 9, 2018)

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—Leadership Behaviors

In addition to the interviews, each participant completed the OLEI. The principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, teacher, and parent completed the form for the inventory. The inventory consists of 96 items divided into five parts. Four sections relate to the four factors of the SLT. The fifth section is a demographic section.

The first section of the OLEI has 54 items describing leadership behaviors. Of these, 21 items showed alignment because Principal A marked “strongly agree” for all 21, and the other five participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree” for all 21: lifelong learner, high expectations of self and others, shares power, dependable, utilizes participatory management, achievement-oriented, cooperative, empathetic, people-oriented, compassionate, collegial, team player, combines social talk with administrative talk, uses affiliate language such as “we”/“our,” participate, inclusive, nurturing, democratic, alert to social environment, responsive to needs of faculty/staff, and reflective.

There were also 20 items that showed alignment because Principal A marked “agree” for all 20, and the other five participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree” for all 20: leads by example, ability to juggle, communicator, strong academic self-concept, motivational, persistent, assertive, delegates, decision maker, influencer, high-energy, emotionally stable, self-sufficient, effective time manager, persuasive, effective, strong interpersonal skills, consensus builder, intuitive, and emotionally expressive. There were 13 items that did not show alignment.

Tables 12 and 13 show the participants responses according to the leadership behaviors of the OLEI.

Table 12

OLEI Part I: Leadership Behaviors—Management Behavior (Red Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal B	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
1. Leads by example	3	4	3	4	4	3
2. Ability to juggle	3	4	4	4	3	3
3. Communicator	3	4	4	4	3	3
4. Lifelong learner	4	3	3	4	3	3
5. High expectations of self and others	4	4	4	4	4	4
6. Strong academic self-concept	3	4	3	4	3	4
7. Motivational	3	4	4	4	4	3
8. Communicates vision	3	4	4	4	3	2
9. "Can-do" philosophy (resourceful)	4	4	4	4	3	2
10. Persistent	3	4	4	4	3	3
11. Shares power	4	4	4	4	3	3
12. Dependable	4	4	4	4	4	3
13. Efficient	3	4	4	4	3	2
14. Assertive	3	4	4	4	2	3
15. Delegates	3	3	3	3	3	3
16. Utilizes anticipatory management	4	3	3	4	3	3
17. Decision maker	3	4	4	4	3	3
18. Risk taker	3	4	3	4	3	2
19. Task-oriented	3	4	4	3	3	2
20. Change agent	3	4	4	4	3	2
21. Influencer	3	4	4	4	3	3
22. Analyzes situations	4	4	3	4	3	2
23. High-energy	3	4	4	4	4	3
24. Achievement-oriented	4	4	4	4	3	3
25. Emotionally stable	3	4	4	4	4	3
26. Self-sufficient	3	4	4	4	3	3
27. Effective time manager	3	4	3	4	3	3

(continued)

Table 12 Continued

Inventory Item	Principal B	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
28. Organized	3	4	4	4	3	2
29. Persuasive	3	4	3	4	3	3
30. Effective	3	4	4	4	3	3

Table 13

OLEI Part I: Leadership Behaviors—Interpersonal Behavior (Red Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal B	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
31. Cooperative	4	4	4	4	3	3
32. Empathetic	4	4	3	4	3	3
33. People-oriented	4	4	4	4	3	3
34. Compassionate	4	4	4	4	3	3
35. Collegial	4	4	4	4	3	3
36. Team player	4	4	4	4	3	3
37. Strong interpersonal skills	3	4	3	4	3	3
38. Consensus builder	3	4	3	4	3	3
39. Empowers others	4	3	4	4	3	2
40. Networker	3	4	3	4	4	2
41. Transformational	3	4	4	4	3	2
42. Combines social talk with administrative talk	4	4	3	4	3	3
43. Uses affiliate language such as “we”/“our”	4	4	3	4	3	3
44. Participate	4	4	3	4	3	3
45. Inclusive	4	3	4	4	2	3
46. Nurturing	4	4	3	4	3	3
47. Democratic	4	4	4	4	3	3
48. Intuitive	3	4	4	4	3	3
49. Flexible/adaptable	4	4	3	4	3	2
50. Emotionally expressive	3	3	3	4	3	3
51. Receptive to new ideas/change	4	4	4	4	3	2
52. Alert to social environment	4	4	4	4	3	3
53. Responsive to needs of faculty/staff	4	4	4	4	3	3
54. Reflective	4	4	4	4	3	3

To answer the research question “What are the leadership behaviors of the early-career female principals who lead Title I schools?” I compared the leadership behaviors described in the interviews with the responses on the OLEI. The left column in Table 14 lists the leadership skills identified in the interviews. The right column in Table 14 lists the OLEI leadership responses by participants of “agree” or “strongly agree.”

Table 14

Comparison of Identified Leadership Behaviors (Red Elementary)

Interviews	OLEI Leadership Behavior Responses
Vision-oriented	Lifelong learner
Forward-thinking	High expectations for self/others
Always there	Dependable
Organized	Efficient
Structured	
Inclusive	Cooperative
Open	
Calm	
Kind	Empathetic
Easy to talk to	
Sincere	
Caring	
In the hallways	People-oriented
Empowers others	
Builds relationships	
Collaborative	Team player
Positive	
Takes care of her staff	Nurturing

The interviews revealed 18 leadership behaviors for Principal B. Of these, 11 leadership behaviors showed alignment with the OLEI items marked by participants as “strongly agree” or “agree.” Principal B has displayed a variety of leadership behaviors that have assisted her in leading a Title I school.

Research Question Two: How Does the Organizational Structure of Each Campus Align with the Principal’s Leadership Behaviors?

Organizational structure is defined as characteristics of an organization or campus and how the campus operates or functions (Irby et al., 2002). In this study, campus structure data are discussed to identify how the sample principals have structured their campuses.

When I interviewed Principal B, she admitted to not having have any written organization chart of the school, but discussed the school’s mission statement because it started with her.

Our campus mission statement really revolves around No Excuses University. Our focus is really to send a message of getting our kids prepared for the university. I know we think they are just in elementary, but we felt like if we really bombard them with all these messages about going to college and every classroom represents a university, then they will learn all about the university. I think it's been really exciting to see the kids get excited about going to college and wearing their college shirts and their college colors, talking about college games on the weekends, and I think it really has made an impact on the kids—setting those goals from the time they are in elementary and them having a good understanding of everything. (Principal B, personal communication, November 9, 2018)

Participant 4 discussed the importance of the No Excuses University program brought in by Principal B and how she created an inclusive environment.

One big thing she brought in was the No Excuses University. She was really focused on college for the kids or careers after high school, so that was a big committee that she formed. She also added things of getting the parents more involved. It seemed more inviting because our campus is highly bilingual, and so I think when she came in, those parents felt more comfortable. They felt more welcomed at school, and it was kind of more inclusive of them because she spoke Spanish. So that was really a nice change. We added a garden committee, and that was fun for our kids. (Red Elementary Participant 4, personal communication, November 26, 2018)

Participant 1 discussed how Principal B implemented an organizational upgrade in communication at the school.

She is highly organized and very sensitive to the need for efficiency for a campus to run smoothly. There were a number of systems at the campus when she arrived that were outdated. So she brought those up to speed to include technology for efficiency and better communication. She had a smooth transition with the new efficiency of information that the campus implemented because she was very knowledgeable herself in that area, so that was helpful. It helped get information out to the community in a more efficient and effective way. (Red Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Participant 3 further discussed Principal B focusing on communication for her school and how it has helped the organization of the school.

It was very important for us to effectively communicate with our staff. Consistently things that we could articulate and give to the staff well in advance only made the staff feel more comfortable and more at ease. Everything was planned. We met every Monday

weekly for an admin meeting, where we were very forward-thinking, and we always looked and planned months out at those meetings. We would have tasks. We would follow up and come back the following week to give information, and we would seek information from our teams as well. Our instructional specialists consistently planned, and we had achievement meetings. In our data digs, we really are looking at students and other ways we can support them in the classroom. We were looking at different timelines, and we were constantly going back to interventions. We looked at how long students had received some interventions and if they were being effective. If they weren't, then we went back to the drawing board to work on other things that could help them be successful in the classroom. She communicated effectively with parents and with our PTO. Our PTO was small but wonderful. It was important to her that our parents felt connected and involved and a part of our culture and our climate. We wanted them on campus whenever they could visit, and we wanted it to be comfortable for them. We had translators as well. (Red Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

Participant 2 reported on the organization of Principal B's administrative team and their discussion about meetings.

The organizational structure of the campus—she has a campus set up very much like mine. Ours at the socioeconomic levels were very similar, and we had some discussions about how we spend Title I money and how she would organize the campus. Of course, there's the principal, then two assistant principals, and she had two instructional specialists at the time. I can't remember if there was a behavior interventionist or not on her team, but I know that we talked a lot about how to organize meetings and how to

organize the CPOC. (Red Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—Organizational Structure

The six participants from Red Elementary completed the 12 items on the *Organizational Structure* section of the OLEI. Nine items showed alignment because Principal B marked “strongly agree” on all nine, and the other five participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree” on all nine: arrives at goals through consensual process, values faculty/staff as individual human beings, commitment to employee growth, power sharing, promotes community and cooperation, promotes nurturing and caring, promotes subordinate empowerment, has clear norms and values, and encourages professional training. There were three other items aligned because Principal B marked “agree” for all three, and the other five participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree” for all three: utilizes systems of rotating leadership, recognizes ability or expertise, and has well-defined goals. Table 15 lists the responses from Principal B and the other five participants to the *Organizational Structure* section of the OLEI.

Table 15

OLEI Part III: Organizational Structure (Red Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal B	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
72. Utilizes systems of rotating leadership	3	4	4	4	4	3
73. Recognizes ability or expertise	3	4	4	4	3	3
74. Arrives at goals through consensual process	4	3	4	4	3	3
75. Values faculty/staff as individual human beings	4	4	4	4	3	3
76. Commitment to employee growth	4	4	4	4	3	3
77. Power sharing	4	3	3	4	3	3
78. Promotes community and cooperation	4	4	3	4	4	3
79. Promotes nurturing and caring	4	4	4	4	3	3
80. Promotes subordinate empowerment	4	4	4	4	3	3
81. Has clear norms and values	4	4	4	4	3	2
82. Encourages professional training	4	4	4	4	3	3
83. Has well-defined goals	3	4	4	4	3	3

Participant responses to the *Leadership Behaviors* sections of the OLEI are listed in Tables 12 and 13; to answer the research question “How does the organizational structure of

each campus align with the principal’s leadership behaviors?” I compared the responses from the interviews to the leadership behavior items from the inventory that are similar or related to the items in the *Organizational Structure* section. Table 16 compares the leadership behaviors from the interviews with the leadership behaviors identified in the *Leadership Behaviors* section and *Organizational Structure* section of the OLEI.

Table 16

Comparison of Leadership Behaviors from Interviews and the Leadership Behaviors and Organizational Structure of the OLEI (Red Elementary)

Interviews	OLEI Leadership	OLEI Organization
Innovative with technology	Lifelong learner	Encourages professional training
Encourages college		
Sets goals	High expectations for self/others	Commitment to employee growth
Forward-thinking		
Always there	Dependable	
Organized	Efficient	Has well-defined goals
Planned		
Structured		
Communication	Cooperative	
Sensitive to needs	Nurturing	Promotes nurturing and caring
Welcoming		
Caring	Empathetic	
Wants everyone’s input	People-oriented	Values faculty/staff as individual human beings
Inclusive		
Collaborative	Team player	Power sharing

The data in the interviews and responses from the OLEI indicate that Principal B's leadership behaviors are aligned with the organizational structure. Principal B was described as collaborative yet structured and organized. Principal B was described as sensitive to her staff and students needs while being efficient and dependable.

Research Question Three: How Do the Leadership Behaviors of the Early-Career Female Principals Who Lead Title I Schools Align with the External Forces?

External forces are the outside influences on an organization that also have their own set of values, attitudes, and beliefs over which the campus principal has no control (Irby et al., 2002). External forces impacting a campus administrator may include parents, students, staff, district offices, state and federal mandates, accountability systems, political climate, cultural climate, and the professional community.

Participant 3 at Red Elementary discussed Principal B's way of helping calm and smooth any conflicts, both external and internal.

We have a very supportive central office. As a whole, we have a phenomenal curriculum department and behavioral department. They are so strong. They have helping teachers that come out and support us. So as far as challenges when we had needs on the campus and needed to reach out to central office, they were there to support us.

Our parents were amazing, you know, the ones that could support and help us in the classroom and read to their kiddos and follow through with homework. We would encourage them to continue doing that, but those parents that couldn't because they worked two jobs, then they couldn't help with that. It was okay. Even with our own staff, when you have challenges on a team or conflict on a team, it's all about open communication and bringing that to the table and really discussing it and being

professionals. So anytime we have challenges, I think being open, honest, and transparent is vital. The principal just walked the walk and talked the talk. She carries herself that way, and it starts at the top. She has an openness, trust, and transparency that we're all here for kids. We were making decisions based on what's best for kids and not what's best or a little easier for adults. So if there was an issue, then we all would talk about it and come up with a solution as a team. (Red Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

Participant 1 mentioned Principal B not having many negative external forces when she arrived at the school. She described what Principal B's arrival was like to the campus in many areas and how she included the entire community.

She came like a breath of fresh air. She almost took the campus by storm with an innocence. She was so personable, and she was no-nonsense, but at the same time was very sincere, and her decisions she made quick were well-founded, well-grounded decisions, and she developed respect from that very quickly.

It also developed a level of trust from the community and from the staff about new programs that she brought to the campus. They were embraced pretty quickly because they were common sense; it made sense that the campus would be doing these particular things. One that comes to mind is an international program that she had that brought parents and students back to the campus in the evening and asked the teachers to be part of that, but they very quickly saw how important it was to bring that community together and that that was the way to do it, and food was part of it because of her style of leadership that was so warmly embraced. (Red Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 14, 2018).

Participant 4 commented on the change in feel for the community, especially being invited to many events from the start.

I think before [Principal B] arrived, the parents didn't necessarily always feel welcome here. So when she came in, that really changed, especially for the bilingual parents. A lot of times, the parents, you know, are working multiple jobs or they're taking care of other babies at home, so they're not able to come up. Parent involvement—I definitely think that's one of the greatest challenges, so that's why she created things like movie night or multicultural night—just so they would come. (Red Elementary Participant 4, personal communication, November 26, 2018)

Participant 5 reflected on an issue that came up during the middle of the year and the thoughtfulness of Principal B regarding the issue.

One of the greatest challenges was when a teacher had to leave because we had more teachers than needed, so she had to go to another campus. They had to move the students around, and they had to be placed in different classes in the middle of the school year. I think when that happened, the principal handled it in a way that really tried not to affect the kids. She had kids in groups, so they were not alone and had friends in the new classes. I think it was a challenge, but it was handled in a good way. (Red Elementary Participant 5, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—External Forces

The six participants at Red Elementary completed the 17 items in the *External Forces* section of the OLEI. Thirteen items aligned because Principal B marked “strongly agree” on all 13, and the other five participants selected “strongly agree” or “agree” on all 13: emphasis on collegiality, views teachers as leaders, emphasis on reflective practice, participative

decision making, recognizes ability or expertise, arrives at goals through consensual process, values faculty/staff as individual human beings, commitment to employee growth, power sharing, promotes community and cooperation, promotes nurturing and caring, promotes subordinate empowerment, and the socioeconomic levels in the community affect my leadership. One more item was aligned because Principal B marked “agree,” and the other five participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree”: utilizes system of rotating leadership.

Three items did not show alignment because Participant 5 marked “disagree” and the other five marked either “strongly agree” or “agree.” Table 17 lists the participants’ answers for the *External Forces* section of the OLEI.

Table 17

OLEI Part II: External Forces (Red Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal B	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
55. Emphasis on collegiality	4	4	4	4	4	3
56. Views teachers as leaders	4	4	4	4	3	4
57. Emphasis on reflective practice	4	4	4	4	3	3
58. Participative decision making	4	4	3	4	3	3
59. Utilizes system of rotating leadership	3	3	3	4	4	3
60. Recognizes ability or expertise	4	3	4	4	3	3

(continued)

Table 17 Continued

Inventory Item	Principal B	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
61. Arrives at goals through consensual process	4	4	3	4	3	3
62. Values faculty/staff as individual human beings	4	4	4	4	3	3
63. Commitment to employee growth	4	4	4	4	3	4
64. Power sharing	4	3	3	4	3	3
65. Promotes community and cooperation	4	4	4	4	4	3
66. Promotes nurturing and caring	4	4	4	4	4	3
67. Promotes subordinate empowerment	4	4	4	4	3	3
68. Supports my philosophy	4	4	3	4	3	2
69. My leadership is affected by the expectations of the community	4	4	4	4	3	2
70. The socioeconomic levels in the community affect my leadership	4	4	4	4	3	3
71. Language groups in the community impact my leadership	4	4	4	4	3	2

To answer the research question “How do the leadership behaviors of the early-career female principals who lead Title I schools align with the external forces?” I compared the leadership behaviors identified in the interviews to the leadership behaviors identified in the *External Forces* section of the OLEI by the six participants (Table 18).

Table 18

Comparison of Interviews and OLEI External Forces (Red Elementary)

Interviews	OLEI Responses
Walks the walk and talks the talk	Views teachers as leaders
Structured Organized	Commitment to employee growth
Inclusive Transparent Open	Promotes community and cooperation
Easy to talk to Trust	Emphasis on collegiality
Empowers others Personable	Promotes community and cooperation
Collaborative	Power sharing
Takes care of her staff	Promotes nurturing and caring

The data provided by the interviews and OLEI responses indicate that Principal B’s leadership behaviors have impacted the relationship between Red Elementary and its external forces positively.

Research Question Four: Are the Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs of Each Principal Aligned with Others' Perceptions of the Principal's Perceived Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs?

Attitudes, values, and beliefs are the foundation of principles for an organization, its leader, and the workers in the organization. Attitudes and values are more stable, while beliefs can change as new information is processed (Irby et al., 2002). Values become more permanent realizations of beliefs and attitudes (Irby et al., 2002).

Each participant described the attitudes, values, and beliefs of Principal B, and they all talked about student success. Participant 4 reflected on what it was like when Principal B came to the school, her values, and how she felt about her. Participant 1 added her thoughts about what the staff felt as well. These responses were remarkably similar in nature.

She's very positive, and so her coming in as a new principal, she brought a lot of enthusiasm with her. To me, her mission was about the kids. She focused on how can we motivate the kids, how can we have fun with the kids, so that was kind of a change coming from the previous principal. I feel like she had a big influence. I liked her values and beliefs because she's very motivating, and her energy kind of brought, like, new life into the school. (Red Elementary Participant 4, personal communication, November 26, 2018)

She came to her campus as a brand-new principal with well-defined values and beliefs. She began from the very beginning communicating expectations and her specific beliefs and values with others on the campus. So there really was no question from the very beginning about that in her. There was no question that she believed in a teacher's ability to influence students. They influenced their learning, and they were the primary person in that child's life. All children could learn, and the staff felt the

same way. (Red Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Participant 2 discussed Principal B's belief of including the community and parents in the school, as well as her value of being with and seeing the kids.

It was very clear early on the community was a big part of what the influences would be on the campus. She made sure the community felt involved and engaged on the campus. That was a big goal and making sure that they felt comfortable.

Building those relationships as a new principal was a true value of hers. Making sure that the staff knew that she was there for them and that she was there to get to know them. They had a place of comfort and safety in her office to make sure that they knew that she was there as a resource and listening ear.

She felt it was very important to let the community know she was there for them, too. She wanted to build those relationships on both ends. It was important to make sure that the students obviously recognized and knew her as a principal. She would do things to be out more in the classrooms, which is always important as a new principal.

(Red Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Participant 3 discussed the values and beliefs of Principal B seen on a daily basis.

She set the tone for the campus and guided the campus. She explained her vision/beliefs and let the staff know the vision/beliefs of the campus. She wanted all students to be successful, regardless of their need or where they come from. She wanted everyone to do what's best for students in the classroom so they could be successful. The majority of our staff had the same goal. (Red Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

Principal B reflected on what she wanted for her campus during her early years of being a principal.

When thinking about the values and beliefs that guided my leadership behaviors, I think a lot of that really depends on the people that you're serving. You really need to take a look at your staff, the students, and the parents, and the community as a whole. I am going to approach any situation with an open mind to really value and empathize with anything that that might be going on.

I really tried to collaborate. Collaboration is a huge piece of making any school, I think, feel that everybody has a voice—from the kids, from parents, and from staff members. The second part of that, I think, in my first year I really just took a lot of time just to kind of learn a lot about the climate and culture of the campus and of the community.

So in the first year, it was just really kind of building those relationships. I felt once we were able to build those relationships with staff, students, and with parents, then they really were a lot more willing to express their concerns. I think they felt comfortable coming into the school and feeling like they were going to be listened to.

(Principal B, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

In addition to the interviews, the six participants at Red Elementary completed the OLEI. There are eight items in the attitudes, values, and beliefs section. Five items aligned because Principal B marked “strongly agree” on all five, and the other five participants selected “strongly agree” or “agree” on all five: emphasis on professional growth for self/staff/faculty; emphasis on collegiality; emphasis on character, ethics, and integrity; emphasis on programs for special

students; and openness to diversity. Two additional items aligned because Principal B marked “agree,” and the other five participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree”: emphasis on innovation and emphasis on reflective process. One item did not align because Principal B, Participant 1, and Participant 3 marked “strongly agree,” then Participant 2 and Participant 4 marked “agree,” and Participant 5 marked “disagree.” Table 19 presents the six participants’ responses in the Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs section of the OLEI.

Table 19

OLEI Part IV: Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs (Red Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal B	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5
84. Emphasis on professional growth for self/staff/faculty	4	4	3	4	3	3
85. Openness to change	4	4	3	4	4	2
86. Emphasis on collegiality	4	4	4	4	4	3
87. Emphasis on character, ethics, and integrity	4	4	4	4	3	3
88. Emphasis on programs for special students	4	4	4	4	3	3
89. Emphasis on innovation	3	4	4	4	4	3
90. Emphasis on reflective process	3	4	4	4	3	3
91. Openness to diversity	4	4	4	4	4	3

To answer the research question “Are the attitudes, values, and beliefs of each principal aligned with others’ perceptions of the principal’s perceived attitudes, values, and beliefs?” I

compared the answers from the interview questions about Principal B’s attitudes, values, and beliefs with the responses on the *Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs* section of the OLEI completed by the six participants (Table 20).

Table 20

Comparison of Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs from Interviews and OLEI Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs (Red Elementary)

Interviews	OLEI Attitudes, Values, and Belief Responses
Open mind	Openness to change
Value Empathizes All children can learn Collaboration Community feel Enthusiastic Positive Energy Motivates	Emphasis on character, ethics, and integrity
Building relationships Communication	Emphasis on collegiality
Engaged	
Values staff members	
Belief in every child	Openness to diversity

The data in the interviews and the responses on the OLEI indicate that Principal B’s attitudes, values, and beliefs align with the campus attitudes, values, and beliefs. Building positive relationships with students, staff, and parents is a vital part of Principal B’s belief

system. The other five participants shared Principal B going above and beyond to build relationships as soon as she arrived on campus. She has continued to build and maintain positive relationships with everyone. One participant even commented that her arrival to their campus was like a breath of fresh air.

Research Question Five: What Is the Impact of Mentoring on the Four Factors of the SLT in Context to Each Early-Career Principal as Perceived by Her?

Principal B spoke highly of her mentoring experience with her external mentor and with her internal mentor. Both proved to be valuable resources for her then and today. She noted that mentoring gave her added affirmation that she needed.

I believe the mentoring process I was able to receive through my external mentor, who was a retired principal, and from my mentor, a sitting experienced principal, was incredible. A lot of things you just can't study for, and it is not things that you learned, you know, when you're in grad school or that you learned when you were in AP [assistant principalship].

It was so beneficial to have my external mentor and my internal mentor to kind of help me through the thought process of each situation because it's just another resource. I kind of felt like my internal mentor stayed my internal mentor because we had ongoing communication with each other. My external mentor came out frequently weekly during my first year, and then, little by little, she came out less frequently. I think it was good timing, a three-year time span, to be able to kind of wean yourself off from your external mentor. I still call her and bounce a few things off of her, and then of course there's just that relationship of just being able to reconnect again. She taught me that relationship building is vital to a new principal.

The importance of valuing your staff and being visible are my true beliefs, and being open to change and new ideas. The valuable mentoring experience has been priceless. I could not have done it without the feedback and constant communication I had with both my mentors.

My leadership skills improved after talking with my mentor over a couple of months. We discussed making sure communication was a top priority, not only with my community and with my staff. Then we discussed building relationships and keeping in touch with the students and staff. I would meet with her and then reflect about our topics. I found myself really busy during the day, but at night I would think about what I did during the day. I noticed that if I didn't plan time in my day to talk or walk around, then the day took me to figure out daily problems and not see the teachers or talk with them daily. It was a moment for me, so I made a plan of action because of our talks and meetings. (Principal B, personal communication, November 27, 2018)

Relationship Between the Experience of Principal B and the Alignment of the Four Factors of the Synergistic Leadership Theory

A positive relationship exists between the experiences of Principal B and the alignment of the four factors. The four factors—attitudes, values, and beliefs; leadership behaviors; organizational structure; and external factors—are aligned for Red Elementary School/Principal B.

Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

Principal B made her mission to get to know people and listen to their needs. During her principalship, she attended every family event, made sure to invite all families to all school events, and implemented the use of social media for her families. She was comfortable with the

social media platform and felt her families were, too. After using it for a few months, the administrative team realized that more families were attending school events.

Principal B continued to build relationships with her students, their families, and her staff. One thing that assisted her in reaching her community was being bilingual, so many families enjoyed talking to her and felt more comfortable coming to school events. She noticed that right away. She grew up speaking Spanish, and she wanted to make sure all her families knew she was there for them and could speak to them in English or Spanish.

Principal B has firm attitudes, values, and beliefs, and she modeled these attitudes, values, and beliefs on a daily basis while at Red Elementary. The other participants noticed and commented on Principal B's energy, constant commitment to building relationships, care for them, and willingness to invite all families to school events. They saw her leading the way, and she did what she said she was going to do. Principal B's attitudes, values, and beliefs align with Red Elementary's attitudes, values, and beliefs.

Leadership Behaviors

The data in Principal B's case study indicate that Principal B employed leadership behaviors associated with the range of leadership styles and behaviors consistent with the SLT. Principal B values collaboration, getting to know families, building relationships, and compassion, and she is people-oriented. During her tenure, she was always at school events greeting and talking with families. The staff and parents commented on her welcoming nature.

An examination of Principal B's leadership style reveals a proactive approach taken when working with her staff, students, and parents by being visible and building relationships. She prioritized getting to know her community and maintaining those relationships and did the same

with her staff and students. She walked the area multiple times during the day, greeting the staff and students or talking with them about their day.

Principal B's involvement with Red Elementary staff, students, and their parents was characterized by collaboration, support, and strong relationships. The staff acknowledged knowing that she would be there for them and that she cared about them. She built trusting relationships quickly. As principal of Red Elementary, she was dedicated to her school and wanted the best for everyone.

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of Red Elementary has bureaucratic characteristics. Principal B acknowledged not having a written organizational chart, but the unwritten organizational structure was shared by all participants. The unwritten organizational chart is a top-down model beginning with the principal, assistant principal, instructional specialists, behavioral specialist, and counselor, and then moving down to the campus staff and paraprofessionals.

When examining the case study of Principal B, it is clear that she worked to include all of her community. She emphasized promoting community and cooperation by including everyone she could to events at her school. She nurtured and cared for her staff, students, and parents on a daily basis. She made sure to talk to her teachers, staff, and students in the morning and afternoon each day. She also valued her faculty/staff as individual human beings. Principal B also included all input from her staff when making decisions. The organizational structure of Red Elementary at the time of Principal B's tenure aligns with her leadership behaviors, as well as her attitudes, values, and beliefs.

External Forces

When reviewing the case study of Principal B, it is clear that she worked hard to make her families feel welcomed and invited at Red Elementary. Many participants mentioned how parents did not come to the school until Principal B became the principal at the campus. The parents felt more at ease to come to the school, and the participants have seen more parent volunteers in recent years.

The faculty and staff at Red Elementary have concentrated on building relationships with parents through communication and dedication to their children. Principal B modeled that behavior every day during her principalship. Principal B's leadership behaviors developed over her time as principal, and she maintained positive relationships with parents, students, and the community. Principal B's leadership behaviors align with her external forces.

Mentoring

Principal B expressed much appreciation for her external mentor. She saw her mentor every other week during her first semester and enjoyed the visits. She looked forward to the visits and would make a list of questions or concerns about situations that happened so she could ask her mentor when she visited.

Principal B's leadership skills were developed strongly with her mentor. Her mentor focused on communication with her community and her staff. She agreed with her mentor and knew right away that developing a daily plan of action would assist her in being visible in the area for her students and her staff. She also knew that being at every parent event would help her get to know the parents and make them feel welcome. Her leadership skills strengthened during this time.

Alignment Summary

Principal B's experiences reflect alignment of the four factors of the SLT. Principal B's leadership decisions at Red Elementary were influenced by her understanding of the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the campus, the organizational structure of the campus, and the external forces. Her leadership behaviors reflect an understanding of her environment. Principal B's interpersonal skills supported the organization, the staff, and families of Red Elementary.

The SLT uses a tetrahedron model to illustrate the four factors and six interaction points. The tetrahedron representing Red Elementary is congruent because of the alignment of the factors. According to the theory, because the factors align, Principal B accurately read the context of her leadership at Red Elementary and used the appropriate leadership behaviors within the organization to produce results.

The four factors are aligned completely in this case study. The harmony of the factors at Red Elementary represents a congruent tetrahedron in the SLT. Figure 2 exhibits alignment of the four factors at Red Elementary.



Figure 2. Alignment of the four factors at Red Elementary.

CHAPTER VI

CASE STUDY: YELLOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL C

This chapter presents the third case in the multiple-case study and is organized into five sections. The first section presents demographics of Yellow Elementary School. The second section includes the school's statewide assessment rating for the 2014–2015 school year. The third section includes descriptive data about the principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, and teacher.

The fourth section presents data addressing each of the five research questions from my study. The data include (a) individual interviews of the principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, and teacher and (b) the responses from the OLEI. The fifth section analyzes the relationship between the leadership experiences of the principal and the alignment of the four factors of the SLT. The chapter does not, however, present conclusions drawn from the data. Conclusions are presented in Chapter VII.

Demographic Information

Yellow Elementary School is located in the southeast part of Texas. The school has been in operation for over 30 years. Based on 2014–2015 school data, just under 900 students attend Yellow Elementary, and more than 100,000 students attend Purple School District. Yellow Elementary serves students aged preschool through fifth grade.

The student population breaks down as follows: more than 60% identified as economically disadvantaged, about 60% Hispanic, just under 20% White, just over 10% Black, and less than 10% Asian/Pacific Islander. Additionally, the student population includes just under 30% ELLs, just under 20% GT students, and about 10% special education students. The

school's mobility rate is just under 13%. Yellow Elementary students have a variety of programs available to them including bilingual/ESL education, the GT program, and special education.

The campus also holds PPCD and L.I.F.E. Skills programs.

Statewide Assessment Rating

Yellow Elementary was assigned the state rating of “Met Standards” for the 2014–2015 school year. For that year, the state ratings were either “Met Standards” or “Improvement Required.”

Case Study Participants at Yellow Elementary School

Five individuals from Yellow Elementary participated in this study. Principal C has been at Yellow Elementary since 2011. She began her career in education as a first-grade bilingual teacher for five years. Then, she was an instructional specialist for two years, assisting teachers with curricula and planning lessons at one campus. She then became a bilingual district curriculum coach for two years, assisting many campuses with curricula. Principal C then became an assistant principal for eight years. She became the principal at Yellow Elementary in 2011, representing her first position as a school principal. All of her work experience has been in Purple School District.

The external mentor and internal mentor were selected as those assigned to Principal C by the district. Purple School District personnel assign a retired principal to mentor a new principal for the first three years of their principalship. This external mentor meets with the new principal every week for two hours during their first semester and every other week in the second semester. During the second and third years, the mentoring continues with meetings once a month.

Purple School District personnel also assign an acting principal to be an internal mentor for the first three years of a new principal's principalship. Mentor and mentee both attend monthly rookie-principal meetings with other mentors and mentees, at which district personnel from a variety of departments present relevant information.

The assistant principal for the study was selected as the one with the longest amount of time employed at Yellow Elementary. Of the two assistant principals on this campus, the selected individual has been there for three years. The chosen teacher was the one with the most experience at Yellow Elementary, more than 25 years in this case. The selected parent volunteer was the one with the most volunteer hours for the 2014–2015 school year, but she never returned the consent form and, thus, did not participate in the study.

Analysis of Data

This section analyzed each of the five research questions using the interview transcripts of the participants, as well as the information obtained from the OLEI. Conclusions based on the data are not included, however; conclusions based on the data are presented in Chapter VII.

Research Question One: What Are the Leadership Behaviors of the Early-Career Female Principals Who Lead Title I Schools?

The SLT acknowledges leadership behaviors that apply to both men and women (Holtkamp, 2001) and is based on prominent leadership theories and leadership research. Leadership behaviors are reflective of specific models of leadership styles, ranging from bureaucratic leadership to interactive and caring leadership models (Holtkamp, 2001).

Principal C entered her new school as an established campus with many traditions and norms. The external mentor discussed some of Principal C's leadership behaviors at the start of her principalship.

From my perspective, she started with a lot of confidence for a brand-new principal, but at the same time being a little green transferring from the role of an assistant principal to the role of principal. As an assistant principal, I find that you are such a doer, and as a principal you are in a position where your perspective has to be one where there's more guidance and delegation, and that's difficult. I find that to be a struggle for most new principals because it's something that's not as familiar to them even though they've studied. They've been well prepared in the actual doing of that, so that's one of the areas of leadership that I think [Principal C] had some the most difficulty. She really worked on building relationships. I think she really blossomed and excelled. She cared for others and made sure that she was present. She wanted to be very visible with students, staff, and the community. Her leadership went very well also because of her foundation of the bilingual program and that she was bilingual. (Yellow Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Principal C discussed what she believed helped her when she entered her principalship, and Participant 1 outlined her thoughts—they both mentioned being focused and data-driven.

Some of the leadership behaviors are being very focused, being very clear. Also, reviewing and knowing the data and then following up. Celebrating success . . . celebrating success, whether it's growth or whether it's as a group or individual. I believe that those are some of the behaviors. (Principal C, personal communication, November 26, 2018)

Some of her leadership behaviors are she was very collaborative and focused when she first started. Then she was very organized about her data and her events. She

maintained focus on how to improve programs and her campus. (Yellow Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

Participant 3 covered Principal C's expectations and leadership style.

Some of her leadership qualities . . . she has high expectations for her staff, and she makes sure that they are doing what they need to be doing at all times. She also is a role model for her staff, and she makes sure that you know she's there. She's present, and she also holds the students and the parents accountable for their actions. She is supportive when there's any behavior concerns or if there's any academic concern.

She wants to make sure that you know policies are being followed and procedures are being followed. In that aspect, you know her leadership skills are very important to her. (Yellow Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 15, 2018)

Participant 4 discussed his feelings about her leadership styles.

I would say she just definitely has her visions, and that's what she pushes for. If somebody else has other ideas that might be better or easier, then that's usually not a choice or an option. She has her vision, and that's the vision. (Yellow Elementary

Participant 4, personal communication, November 27, 2018)

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—Leadership Behaviors

In addition to the interviews, each participant completed the OLEI. The principal, external mentor, internal mentor, assistant principal, and teacher completed the form for the inventory. The inventory consists of 96 items and is divided into five parts. Four sections relate to the four factors of the SLT. The fifth section is a demographic section.

The first section of the OLEI has 54 items describing leadership behaviors. Results from the OLEI indicate alignment in two items—lifelong learner and high expectations—because

Principal C marked “strongly agree” for these, and the other four participants selected “strongly agree” or “agree.” Alignment also was shown for two more items—strong academic self-concept and persistent—because Principal B marked “agree,” and the other four participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree.”

Tables 21 and 22 list the responses of Principal C, Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, and Participant 4 to the *Leadership Behaviors—Interpersonal Behavior and Management Behavior* section on the OLEI.

Table 21

OLEI Part I: Leadership Behaviors—Management Behavior (Yellow Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal C	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
1. Leads by example	3	3	4	2	2
2. Ability to juggle	3	3	4	2	2
3. Communicator	2	3	4	2	2
4. Lifelong learner	4	3	4	3	3
5. High expectations of self and others	4	4	4	3	3
6. Strong academic self-concept	3	4	4	3	3
7. Motivational	2	3	3	2	1
8. Communicates vision	2	3	4	2	1
9. "Can-do" philosophy (resourceful)	3	4	4	2	2
10. Persistent	3	4	4	3	3
11. Shares power	3	3	3	3	1
12. Dependable	3	4	4	2	2
13. Efficient	3	3	4	2	2
14. Assertive	2	3	3	3	2
15. Delegates	2	3	3	3	3
16. Utilizes participatory management	2	3	4	3	2
17. Decision maker	3	4	4	2	3
18. Risk taker	2	3	3	2	1
19. Task-oriented	3	3	4	2	3
20. Change agent	2	3	3	2	2
21. Influencer	3	3	4	2	2
22. Analyzes situations	3	4	4	3	2
23. High-energy	2	4	3	2	2
24. Achievement-oriented	3	4	4	3	4
25. Emotionally stable	3	4	4	2	1
26. Self-sufficient	3	3	4	2	3
27. Effective time manager	3	3	4	2	2
28. Organized	3	4	4	2	2
29. Persuasive	2	3	3	3	2
30. Effective	3	3	4	2	2

Table 22

OLEI Part I: Leadership Behaviors—Interpersonal Behavior (Yellow Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal C	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
31. Cooperative	2	4	4	2	1
32. Empathetic	3	3	4	2	1
33. People-oriented	2	4	4	2	1
34. Compassionate	3	4	4	2	1
35. Collegial	3	4	4	3	1
36. Team player	3	4	4	2	1
37. Strong interpersonal skills	3	4	4	2	1
38. Consensus builder	3	3	4	2	1
39. Empowers others	3	3	4	3	2
40. Networker	2	3	3	3	3
41. Transformational	3	3	3	2	3
42. Combines social talk with administrative talk	2	4	4	2	2
43. Uses affiliate language such as “we”/“our”	3	4	4	3	2
44. Participate	3	4	4	2	2
45. Inclusive	3	3	4	3	2
46. Nurturing	2	3	3	2	2
47. Democratic	2	4	3	2	2
48. Intuitive	4	3	4	2	2
49. Flexible/adaptable	3	3	4	2	2
50. Emotionally expressive	2	3	3	2	2
51. Receptive to new ideas/change	3	3	4	3	2
52. Alert to social environment	3	4	4	2	3
53. Responsive to needs of faculty/staff	3	4	4	2	1
54. Reflective	3	4	4	2	2

To answer the research question “What are the leadership behaviors of the female early-career principals who lead Title I schools?” I compared the leadership behaviors described in the five interviews and the responses on the OLEI and listed the corresponding leadership behaviors in Table 23. The left column lists the leadership skills identified by participants in the interviews. The right column lists the OLEI leadership behaviors identified by participants in the OLEI as “strongly agree” or “agree.”

Table 23

Comparison of Identified Leadership Behaviors (Yellow Elementary)

Interviews	Responses
Role model	Lifelong learner
High expectations for all Vision	High expectations
Focused Clear on goals	Persistent
Rule follower	
Goals for school Celebrates successes	Achievement-oriented

Eight leadership behaviors were identified for Principal C in the interviews. All eight aligned to items marked by participants on the OLEI as “strongly agree” or “agree.” Principal C displayed these leadership behaviors while in the first few years of her principalship.

Research Question Two: How Does the Organizational Structure of Each Campus Align with the Principal's Leadership Behaviors?

Organizational structure is defined as characteristics of an organization or campus, as well as how the campus operates or functions (Irby et al., 2002). This study uses campus structure data to identify how the sample principals have structured their campuses.

Principal C discussed the organization of her campus and explaining it to the staff.

I have to say we don't have an organizational chart. However, what we do have is a roles-and-responsibilities chart that is given to all the staff. We as the admin revise and review it every year, and it says who's responsible for what, and it's very clear.

We're always a team, and I always just restate the roles-and-responsibilities chart, and that is one thing that I brought to my campus. I wanted the staff to know who to go to or who the go-to person was. It helps me also give the administrative team different roles and responsibilities as they grow as leaders. (Principal C, personal communication, November 26, 2018)

Participant 2 discussed the framework of the campus and the positioning of staff by Principal C.

I believe the campus probably has approximately 1,000 students, with two assistant principals and the principal, counselor, behavior interventionist, and instructional specialists. They are [a preschool] through fifth-grade campus with several special programs. They have PPCD and the L.I.F.E. Skills program. So the structure is definitely the principal being the instructional leader over the whole campus, but being able to give some specialty and assignments by grade level to the assistant principals or to the instructional specialist by content. The instructional specialists specialize in a content

area, and then they have a counselor for counseling support and a behavior interventionist working on that side of working with students and parents. [Principal C] has made sure all areas have some kind of support so the teachers have someone to go to if they have questions. (Yellow Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

The Participant 3 discussed her understanding of Principal C's priorities.

Organization is very important, and I would say the first part of the organization is the safety of the students. Our check-in and check-out system was very important, and [Principal C] made sure it was followed daily. Then in the classroom, all the teachers had their schedules posted so we could see what they were doing if we came in to do a walk-through. I think she made that clear, and everyone followed it. (Yellow Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 15, 2018)

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—Organizational Structure

The *Organizational Structure* section of the OLEI has 12 items. There was alignment on four items, with Principal C marking “strongly agree” and the other four participants marking “strongly agree” or “agree”—commitment to employee growth, power sharing, promotes community and cooperation, and encourages professional training. There was also alignment on arrives at goals through consensual process because Principal C marked “agree,” and the other four participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree.”

Table 24 lists the participants' responses on the *Organizational Structure* section in the OLEI.

Table 24

OLEI Part III: Organizational Structure (Yellow Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal C	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
72. Utilizes systems of rotating leadership	3	3	3	2	2
73. Recognizes ability or expertise	4	3	4	3	2
74. Arrives at goals through consensual process	3	3	4	3	3
75. Values faculty/staff as individual human beings	3	4	4	2	2
76. Commitment to employee growth	4	4	4	3	3
77. Power sharing	4	3	4	3	3
78. Promotes community and cooperation	4	4	4	3	3
79. Promotes nurturing and caring	3	4	4	2	3
80. Promotes subordinate empowerment	3	3	4	3	2
81. Has clear norms and values	3	3	4	2	2
82. Encourages professional training	4	3	4	3	3
83. Has well-defined goals	3	3	4	2	2

Participant responses to the *Leadership Behaviors* section of the OLEI are listed in Tables 21 and 22; to answer the research question “How does the organizational structure of each campus align with the principal’s leadership behaviors?” I compared the responses from the interviews and the leadership behavior items from the inventory that were similar or related to the items in the *Organizational Structure* section. The participants marked the following items

from *Leadership Behaviors—Management Behaviors* as “strongly agree” or “agree”: lifelong learner, high expectations, strong academic self-concept, and persistent. These items are related to items on the *Organizational Structure* section of the OLEI: commitment to employee growth, power sharing, promotes community and cooperation, encourages professional training, and arrives at goals through consensual process. Table 25 compares the leadership behaviors from the interviews and the leadership behaviors identified in the *Leadership Behaviors* and *Organizational Structure* sections of the OLEI.

Table 25

Comparison of Leadership Behaviors from Interviews and Leadership Behaviors and Organizational Structure of the OLEI (Yellow Elementary)

Interviews	OLEI Leadership Responses	OLEI Organization Structure Responses
Growth as teachers	Lifelong learner	Commitment to employee growth Encourages professional training
Encourages goal setting	High expectations	Arrives at goals through consensual process
Student achievement– focused Safety of students	Strong academic self-concept	Promotes community and cooperation
Consistent with meetings Organized Follows schedule	Persistent	
Inclusive decision making		Power sharing

The data in the interviews and the responses on the OLEI indicate that the organizational structure of the campus aligns with Principal C's leadership behaviors. The participants described the organizational structure as "encourages professional training" and "promotes community and cooperation." Principal C's leadership behaviors are structured and goal-focused, which participants' described as the atmosphere of the campus and the way it is routinely run each day.

Research Question Three: How Do the Leadership Behaviors of the Early-Career Female Principals Who Lead Title I Schools Align with the External Forces?

External forces are the outside influences on an organization that also have their own set of values, attitudes, and beliefs over which the campus principal has no control (Irby et al., 2002). External forces impacting a campus administrator may include parents, students, staff, district offices, state and federal mandates, accountability systems, political climate, cultural climate, and the professional community.

Participant 1 at Yellow Elementary explained some of the external forces that proved challenging at the beginning of Principal C's principalship.

I don't recall there were specific challenges with the community. [Yellow Elementary] is a very well-established school and had enjoyed parental support for a number of years. The incoming principal was very personable and approachable. She started working on relationships right off the bat. The greatest challenge was with the staff because she was following a principal that was well-respected and was well-loved at the campus. It was a difficult transition for an established staff. Change is always hard for people, and it doesn't matter how smoothly it goes or how great the new person is because, bottom line, it is change. So making sure the staff could trust

her and that she was going to make decisions that were in the best interest of students, which would take a little time—I think that was her greatest challenge when she first arrived as the new principal. (Yellow Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Principal C discussed some external forces she faced when she became a principal. Working with the central staff has been good. They have been helpful. Staffing is the biggest challenge. You get a certain number of teachers for this grade level or for this grade level, and you have the autonomy of moving a teacher to another grade level if need be. The importance of being fully staffed and advocating that you need an additional teacher or additional staff member would be the greatest challenge. As far as being a principal on the campus, with staff and parents I feel like if you always tell them why you make a decision or we're not going to do it that way then they understand. (Principal C, personal communication, November 26, 2018)

Both the Participant 3 and Participant 2 discussed the high number of ESL students at Yellow Elementary School.

There are a high number of ESL students on our campus, and just making sure we're continuing to monitor all the students as well as getting early exits out. With the teachers, I know that it's difficult for them, so just continuing to give them the professional development they need is something we would do. For our parents, I would say a challenge would be the language barrier. Myself and the other assistant principal did not speak Spanish. [Principal C] did speak Spanish, so that was good. The challenge of making sure the communication from school to home was translated was important. For the staff, the greatest challenge, and I know it happens in and out,

would probably be morale. You can't make everybody happy. For myself, it was always, you know, what we are going to do that's best for the kids, and it's not always the best for you. I felt like at times morale was down more than it was up. She always encouraged us, and I felt like everything I said, you know, she was definitely on board. (Yellow Elementary Assistant Principal, personal communication, November 15, 2018)

I think one of her strengths is being bilingual, so she's able to communicate well with all of her parents and all of her students being at a bilingual campus. They have a significant number of students and parents that have a language barrier. So that can definitely be a challenge, but it wasn't for [Principal C] because she's a Spanish speaker. She has that background, and I think the parents have been very supportive, but that hasn't been a significant issue; I think she's done a good job with some special education students and special-needs students. I know we've discussed some students with some behaviors, so I would say it is something that isn't necessarily a certain group, but they know she is thinking and helping out. (Yellow Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—External Forces

The five participants at Yellow Elementary completed the 17 items in the *External Forces* section of the OLEI. Commitment to employee growth aligned because Principal C marked “strongly agree,” and the other four participants marked “agree.” Emphasis on collegiality, participative decision making, utilizes system of rotating leadership, recognizes ability or expertise, arrives at goals through consensual process, and promotes community and

cooperation aligned because Principal C marked “agree,” and the other four participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree.”

Table 26 lists participants’ answers for the *External Forces* section of the OLEI.

Table 26

OLEI Part II: External Forces (Yellow Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal C	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
55. Emphasis on collegiality	3	3	4	3	3
56. Views teachers as leaders	3	3	4	3	2
57. Emphasis on reflective practice	3	3	4	2	2
58. Participative decision making	3	4	4	3	3
59. Utilizes system of rotating leadership	3	3	3	3	3
60. Recognizes ability or expertise	3	4	4	3	3
61. Arrives at goals through consensual process	3	3	4	3	3
62. Values faculty/staff as individual human beings	3	4	4	2	3
63. Commitment to employee growth	4	4	4	3	3
64. Power sharing	3	3	4	2	2
65. Promotes community and cooperation	3	4	4	3	3
66. Promotes nurturing and caring	3	4	4	2	3
67. Promotes subordinate empowerment	3	4	4	3	2

(continued)

Table 26 Continued

Inventory Item	Principal C	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
68. Supports my philosophy	3	4	4	2	2
69. My leadership is affected by the expectations of the community	3	4	4	2	2
70. The socioeconomic levels in the community affect my leadership	3	3	4	2	2
71. Language groups in the community impact my leadership	3	4	4	3	2

To answer the research question “How do the leadership behaviors of the early-career female principals who lead Title I schools align with the external forces?” I compared the leadership behaviors identified in the interviews to the leadership behaviors identified in the *External Forces* section of the OLEI by Principal C, Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, and Participant 4 (Table 27).

Table 27

Comparison of Interviews and OLEI External Forces (Yellow Elementary)

Interviews	OLEI Responses
Approachable Personable	Emphasis on collegiality
High expectations for all Relationships Organized	Participative decision making
Clear on goals	Utilizes system of rotating leadership
Goals for school	Recognizes ability or expertise
Encourages	Commitment to employee growth
Invites families into school	Promotes community and cooperation

The data in the interviews and the responses on the OLEI indicate that the external factors of the campus align with Principal C’s leadership behaviors. The external factors have been supportive and understanding of Principal C, and the parents have enjoyed meeting and getting to know Principal C. Her ability to communicate with the parents has been a strong alliance with the community and parents.

Research Question Four: Are the Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs of Each Principal Aligned with Others’ Perceptions of the Principal’s Perceived Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs?

Attitudes, values, and beliefs are the foundation of principles for an organization, its leader, and the workers in the organization. Attitudes and values are more stable, while beliefs can change as new information is processed (Irby et al., 2002). Values become more permanent realizations of beliefs and attitudes (Irby et al., 2002). Each participant described the values, attitudes, and beliefs of Principal C, and they all talked about student success.

Participant 2 discussed the values seen in Principal C.

I would say [Principal C's] biggest beliefs and values are that the campus is there for every student. I know she also believes in parent involvement and having great teachers there to support every student. She has also really worked on the culture of the campus. She had an opportunity to come into a campus that was established already, and they had a positive culture established. So she wanted to be able to continue with that as she made the transition into the campus. She wanted to be able to bring her own values and beliefs, and she definitely believes in making decisions based on what's best for the students. Her staff was positive and seemed to want the best for students, too. (Yellow Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

Participant 1 discussed some challenges of Principal C's transition into the new role at Yellow Elementary.

When I think about [Principal C] as she came to a Title I campus as a brand-new principal, she was incoming to a campus that was well-established and had several principals before her. So there were some very established values, beliefs, and systems at the campus; not all of those aligned well with what [Principal C] was bringing to the position. There lies a little struggle for a brand-new principal because it was important to her that her goals and direction for the campus be communicated. As a brand-new principal, I think you want others to embrace that and how you communicate and how you kind of get people on board. What she brought was a very strong belief in providing opportunity and the best that she could imagine educational opportunities for every single child at that campus. [Yellow Elementary School] is

both socioeconomically and ethnically diverse, so she did not ever want to leave one child behind. In thinking, the other struggle that she faced was that the leadership at the campus was also pretty well-established, and in order for her to come in as the new leader, there was a lot of trust building that had to take place. That was very important to her, and she spent a great deal of time and effort and energy in building trusting relationships, both with the administrative team and with the teaching staff and the community. (Yellow Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Participant 3 discussed some of the beliefs and values of the campus and Principal C during her interview.

The values and beliefs of the campus are definitely that students are successful. The values of the teachers are doing the best they can all the time and making sure the students' needs are met on a daily basis. Then safety was a big one for us, and we focused on the needs of all different types of students because we are a Title I campus. Our principal—I believe she was very supportive, and she was making sure her staff was taken care of, and she wanted to make sure they knew that family came first. Which I think went a long way for the teachers. They appreciated that, and they were more apt to go with her values and her beliefs. She definitely is a strong leadership for the ESL part of it as well. (Yellow Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 15, 2018)

Principal C gave her thoughts about her beliefs and values.

My beliefs and values are to set high expectations. Also, knowing we have to provide the students with safety and rigor in the academic area. I believe I would never ask

anyone to do something that I would not do. Like I said, having high expectations and knowing that everyone comes to school and work, and they try to do the best they can do each day. I am here to advocate for all students, and when they're here I am the person they know that would be on their side. I believe it has influenced me.

(Principal C, personal communication, November 26, 2018).

Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory—Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

In addition to the interviews, each participant completed the OLEI, with eight items in the *Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs* section. Two items showed alignment—emphasis on professional growth for self/staff/faculty and emphasis on programs for special students—because Principal C marked “strongly agree,” and the other four participants marked “strongly agree” or “agree.”

Table 28 lists the participant responses.

Table 28

OLEI Part IV: Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs (Yellow Elementary)

Inventory Item	Principal C	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
84. Emphasis on professional growth for self/staff/faculty	4	3	4	3	3
85. Openness to change	2	3	4	3	2
86. Emphasis on collegiality	3	3	4	3	2
87. Emphasis on character, ethics, and integrity	4	4	4	3	2
88. Emphasis on programs for special students	4	4	4	3	3
89. Emphasis on innovation	2	4	4	3	2
90. Emphasis on reflective process	3	4	4	3	2
91. Openness to diversity	4	4	4	3	2

To answer the research question “Are the attitudes, values, and beliefs of each principal aligned with others’ perceptions of the principal’s perceived attitudes, values, and beliefs?” I compared the answers from the interview questions about Principal C’s attitudes, values, and beliefs with the responses on the *Attitude, Values, and Beliefs* section of the OLEI completed by Principal C, Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, and Participant 4 (Table 29).

Table 29

Comparison of Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs from Interviews and OLEI Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs (Yellow Elementary)

Interviews	OLEI Attitudes, Values, And Beliefs Responses
Supportive Markets professional development High expectations for all	Emphasis on professional growth for self/staff/faculty
Strong knowledge of ELLs Advocates for all programs and students	Emphasis on programs for special students

Principal C works at meeting her students’ needs and spreading her beliefs across her campus. Principal C is aware of what is needed and knows to work on innovation and perhaps being open to change. There seems to be a misalignment of Principal C’s attitudes, values, and beliefs with those of her staff.

Research Question Five: What Is the Impact of Mentoring on the Four Factors of the SLT in Context to Each Early-Career Principal as Perceived by Her?

Principal C valued the experience of having a mentor. She grew as a leader by having a person who could help guide her. It assisted her in developing as a leader. She continues to grow in her leadership behaviors: “Mentoring was a good experience and thought-provoking; I learned a lot from my mentors, they guided me through many situations, and I felt like I could talk to them at any time” (Principal C, personal communication, November 26, 2018).

Relationship Between the Experience of Principal C and the Alignment of the Four Factors of the Synergistic Leadership Theory

A positive relationship exists between the experiences of Principal C and the alignment of three out of the four factors. The three factors showing alignment are leadership behaviors, organizational structure, and external forces, while attitudes, values, and beliefs are misaligned.

Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

Principal C came into a well-established building with many staff members who had been there for decades. Principal C came in with a passion for taking care of others, supporting staff, making sure to take care of her staff, and making it clear that family comes first. Her staff appreciated this support in the beginning, making them more apt to move toward her values and beliefs.

One participant marked several items as “disagree,” which caused many of the items to be misaligned, but the other interviewees felt strongly that Principal C works with a positive viewpoint and values the staff, students, and community.

Leadership Behaviors

The data in Principal C’s case study indicate that Principal C employs leadership behaviors that are associated with the range of the leadership styles and behaviors consistent with the SLT. Principal C works at building relationships, being visible in the building, and taking care of her staff. Principal C has high expectations for all her students and her staff.

Principal C has a strong academic self-concept and is persistent with her routines and structures. Principal C’s leadership behaviors reveal a proactive approach in working with her staff, students, and parents. Principal C collaborates with, supports, and encourages her staff. Principal C has worked hard at developing her leadership style during her principalship.

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of Yellow Elementary has bureaucratic characteristics. There is not a written organizational chart, but the unwritten organizational chart was explained by all of the participants. The unwritten organizational chart is a top-down model beginning with the principal and assistant principal and then moving down to teachers.

When reviewing the case study, it was found that Principal C believes in power sharing, commitment to employee growth, and being visible at school and in the community. She sets clear goals with teams and listens to their feedback. The organizational structure of Yellow Elementary aligns with Principal C's leadership behaviors.

External Forces

The participants mentioned parent involvement being a challenge at the school. Parents work or otherwise don't come to the school for events or conferences. Principal C has tried to encourage parents to come to the school, and being bilingual has assisted with talking with the families. Principal C and the staff have worked on building positive relationships with the parents and community. Even though there is not a lot of parent involvement, the participants commented on the friendliness and politeness of the families.

Staff morale has been an issue. The assistant principal commented on how she thought it was the biggest issue because it's impossible to make everyone happy. She knows that Principal C is making the best choices for the students, but sometimes it isn't the easiest for teachers, and their attitudes may not be initially reflective of this understanding (Yellow Elementary Assistant Principal, personal communication, November 15, 2018).

Although it may appear that the external forces factor does not align narratively, according to the data, Principal C has read her external forces accurately. She has utilized her

leadership behaviors to address the challenges and expectations of the external forces and to develop and maintain positive relationships with the parents and teachers. Based on the interviews, Principal C should continue to use her leadership behaviors with her staff.

Mentoring

Principal C valued the experience of having a mentor. She grew as a leader by having a person who could help guide her. It assisted her in developing as a leader, and she continues to grow in her leadership behaviors: “Mentoring was a good experience and thought-provoking; I learned a lot from my external mentor and internal mentor they guided me through many situations, and I felt like I could talk to them at any time” (Principal C, personal communication, November 26, 2018).

Alignment Summary

Principal C’s experiences reflect alignment of three of the factors of the SLT. Principal C aligns with leadership behaviors, organizational structure, and external forces. She is misaligned with attitudes, values, and beliefs when compared to the staff’s attitudes, values, and beliefs.

The SLT uses a tetrahedron model to illustrate the four factors and six interaction points. The tetrahedron representing Yellow Elementary bulges because of the misalignment of attitudes, values, and beliefs. According to the theory, because one factor is misaligned, the factors are not in harmony. Figure 3 exhibits the misalignment of the four factors at Yellow Elementary.



Figure 3. Misalignment of the four factors at Yellow Elementary.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In my study, I examined the experiences of three early-career female principals as related to the four factors of the SLT (Irby et al., 2002). The case studies of the three elementary principals were presented in Chapters IV, V, and VI. For each case study, data were presented from interviews and responses to the OLEI (Hernandez, 2004; Irby et al., 2002; Truslow, 2004) to address the five research questions in my study.

My study is a methodological replication of Bamberg's (2004) study of the application of the SLT to the mentoring and leadership experiences of three early-career female elementary principals leading Title I schools. My study of early-career principals corroborates the conclusions and implications of Bamberg's (2004) superintendent study. Two of the cases in my study represent the relationship between the experiences of an early-career principal and alignment of the four factors of the SLT: attitudes, values, and beliefs; leadership behaviors; organizational structure; and external forces. The other case in my study represents the relationship between the experiences of an early-career principal and alignment with three of the four factors of the SLT.

In this chapter, I present a summary of the early-career principals' leadership experiences related to alignment of the four factors of the SLT on their respective campuses, I offer conclusions on the leadership of early-career principals leading Title I elementary schools, and I outline the importance of mentoring early-career principals and implications for practice. I make conclusions and explain why my study was unique from other studies. Recommendations for further research also are included.

Summary of the Three Early-Career Principals

For each case, I examined the relationship between the early-career principal's leadership experiences and the four factors of the SLT. The SLT provided a meaningful framework for describing the interactions among attitudes, values, and beliefs; leadership behaviors; organizational structure; and external forces in the principal's actions and experiences on their own campuses.

Factor 1: Leadership Behaviors

The leadership behaviors of all three early-career principals align with the other factors of the SLT. Nine overarching leadership behaviors shared by each of the three early-career principals emerged during the face-to-face interviews: (a) focus on vision/goals, (b) inclusive to all students staff and families, (c) being supportive and nurturing, (d) collaborative approach, (e) modeling a listening ear, (f) communicating openness, (g) understanding nature, (h) building trust, and (i) conveying high expectations. Twenty specific leadership behaviors emerged from the responses on the OLEI. Table 30 illustrates the connectedness between the overarching leadership behaviors that emerged during the face-to-face interviews with the specific leadership behaviors that emerged from the responses on the OLEI.

Table 30

Common Leadership Behaviors

Overarching Leadership Behaviors Based on Face-To-Face Interviews	Specific Leadership Behaviors Based on OLEI Response
Focus on vision/goals	Lifelong learner, task-oriented, achievement-oriented
Inclusive to all students, staff, and families	Inclusive, shares power, delegates, cooperative
Being supportive and nurturing	Nurturing, dependable, empathetic, compassionate
Collaborative approach	Flexible/adaptable, inclusive
Modeling a listening ear	Compassionate, leads by example
Communicating openness	Combines social talk with administrative talk, emotionally stable
Understanding nature	Empathetic, reflective
Building trust	Compassionate, cooperative
Conveying high expectations	High expectations of self and others, leads by example, strong academic self-concept

One of the most evident leadership behaviors shared by all the early-career principals was inclusiveness. Every participant from each elementary school mentioned each principal wanting to encompass everyone and hear their feedback. The following is a common response to illustrate inclusiveness:

. . . She was always very involved, and she always listened to parents. She listened to the teachers, and she was very inclusive. She took lots of people's ideas into her

considerations, but she also knew what she wanted and knew how to get things done.

(Blue Elementary Participant 5, personal communication, November 15, 2018)

At Blue Elementary, Red Elementary, and Yellow Elementary, participants discussed their new early-career principal wanting feedback from everyone. They mentioned the principals using surveys to get information about staff thoughts on certain events and traditions that had been there before their arrival. Some participants felt that parent involvement had increased with their principal's presence on campus.

Another leadership behavior utilized by all three early-career principals was being nurturing. The following are examples of common responses:

[Principal A] was a very caring leader to her staff and students, but also she was concerned about deficit areas that she had seen, so she knew to build the relationships to help improve those deficits and let people know she cared. (Blue Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 13, 2018)

We knew she trusted us and that she had faith in us. She knew people would work harder for you if you took care of them and supported them every day. They felt she had faith in them and that they would do the best things for kids all day. (Red Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

All three early-career principals talked about listening to their students, staff, and communities to find out their needs. Participants discussed ways in which the principals worked to include their staffs and to collaborate with them when working (Principal B, personal communication, November 9, 2018; Red Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 16, 2018; Red Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 14, 2018).

Collaboration also emerged as a common theme among interviews. Many participants mentioned seeing their new principals collaborate with students, staff, and parents. They all were reported as wanting to share and hear ideas from all stakeholders. The following represents a common response:

[Principal B] was very collaborative; she not only depended on the administrative team, but she formed various teacher groups for projects that were happening or if issues needed to be resolved. She would bring teachers in and work with them directly. (Red Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

Out of collaboration comes communicating with openness. Each of the early-career principals had participants comment on their ability to foster an openness feeling around the building. The principals' willingness to communicate with everyone was reported as being seen daily. The following represents a common response:

[Principal A] is a dynamic leader because she is open to suggestions and very willing to listen to you if you have questions or concerns about anything that's being done on the campus. She is open to listening to you. She leads by example. (Blue Elementary Participant 4, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

Leading a school takes a lot of time, effort, and focus from a global perspective. One must have viewpoints on a variety of issues surrounding the school. One important issue is making sure everyone knows the goals and the expectations for the campus. Participants mentioned high expectations coming from each principal and the principals focusing on goals. The following represent common responses: “[Principal C] has high expectations for her staff,

and she makes sure that everyone knows what the expectations are and what they should be doing” (Yellow Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 15, 2018).

Staying focused—I believe in education there are so many things that we are asked to do with our students and with our staff members. It’s keeping that focus on our exact campus goals and working on communicating that in multiple ways and consistently throughout the year. Keeping everybody involved—whether it's students, parents, or staff members. Communication is what has contributed to the growth of our students.

(Blue Elementary Principal A, personal communications, November 8, 2018)

All three principals were reported as using their interpersonal skills by being supportive in motivating and encouraging their staff to do the right things for students and to keep them motivated. The three principals built strong relationships during their first years as a principal, which also built trust. The following represents a common response:

She felt it was very important to let the community know she was there for them, too. She wanted to build those relationships on both ends. It was important to make sure that the students obviously recognized and knew her as a principal. She would do things to be out more in the classrooms, which is always important as a new principal.

(Red Elementary Participant 2, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

The early-career principals noted seeing relationships form as trust was built throughout their buildings. A key component of building strong relationships is trust. Each of the early-career principals had participants comment on their ability to be understanding as well. The following represents a common response:

[Principal A] was focused on what the school needed and what the staff needed. She met with the APs and instructional specialists individually so she could hear and see

what we thought and listened to what we needed. She wanted us all to help the teachers with the students. She understood it took time and it was a process. Her understanding built more trust and relationships throughout the building. (Blue Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

All three early-career principals were reported as having high expectations for their campuses, being able to communicate their goals/vision, and building trusting relationships with their skills of understanding and collaboration, which assisted in strengthening their leadership behaviors. Their leadership behaviors align with their organizational structures.

Factor 2: Organizational Structure

The leadership behaviors of all three early-career principals align with the SLT and with their organizational structures. Three overarching leadership behaviors related to organizational structure shared by each of the three early-career principals emerged during the face-to-face interviews: (a) collaboration in decision making (b) communication with all stakeholders, and (c) organization/structure. Ten specific leadership behaviors related to organizational structure emerged from the responses on the OLEI. Table 31 illustrates the connectedness between the overarching leadership behaviors as related to the organizational structure that emerged during the face-to-face interviews with the specific leadership behaviors as related to the organizational structure that emerged from the responses on the OLEI.

Table 31

Common Leadership Behaviors Related to Organizational Structure

Overarching Leadership Behaviors Based on Face-To-Face Interviews	Specific Leadership Behaviors Based on OLEI Responses
Collaborates in decision making	Arrives at goals through consensual process, power sharing, promotes community and cooperation, has clear norms and values, has well-defined goals
Communication with all stakeholders	Values faculty/staff as individual human beings, recognizes ability or expertise, promotes nurturing and caring
Organization/structure	Encourages professional training, commitment to employee growth

These early-career principals have aligned their leadership behaviors to their organizational structures. They have used their understanding of how campus structures work in their decision-making and improvement processes. All of the early-career principals reported their campuses being organized by a typical hierarchical system with the principal at the top, followed by two assistant principals, then instructional specialists, primary coaches, and a counselor, and finally the grade-level teachers. However, all of the early-career principals were noted as sharing responsibilities with others in the organization. Although the schools hold a hierarchical system, power equalization has been evident in day-to-day operations.

The structure of a day can start out one way and end up another way. A principal may start the day doing announcements and can by noon be a classroom teacher because a teacher has to go home sick with the flu. The principal may end the day as a counselor because a student has a suicidal thought while the counselor is in a meeting. This example resonates with many, if not

all, principals, who would certainly count themselves lucky to have a team that works together to get through days like this.

The early-career principals in the study have created a culture of capacity building by empowering their faculty, staff, and students. They have developed a climate and culture of mutual trust. The participants mentioned trust in the interviews and have seen it develop. The early-career principals have worked on building trust, which has united their relationships with their staff. Strong relationships assist with encouraging individuals to attend workshops, conferences, and furthering their degrees. The following represents a common response:

[Principal A] clearly communicated to her staff and community the goals for the year while scheduling staff development that was aligned to the goals so they could accomplish the goals. She was also mindful when it came to hiring. She hired strong paraprofessionals and teachers who could achieve those goals while attending the appropriate staff development. (Blue Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 12, 2018)

Planning ahead and organizing the year as much as possible assisted principals' staff in becoming knowledgeable about their goals and expectations as a campus. Another vital part of organization is being able to communicate it. Communication to all stakeholders was revealed as a priority for each of the three early-career principals. The following represents a common response:

She is a very dynamic leader, very open-minded, very willing to listen if you have any questions or concerns about anything that's being done on the campus. She's very open to listening to you. She leads by example. She's very interactive with the kids, very hands-on. She is very visible, always in the hallways, in the cafeteria. It's

amazing—some years we had up to 1,300 children, and it was almost like she knew every child's name. She would greet them in the mornings, lunchtime. She's in there helping them get trays and loading buses, very hands-on. As far as the relationship with the teachers, she was very personable. She was very understanding. She was right there with you the whole time. (Blue Elementary Participant 4, personal communication, November 16, 2018)

Good communication is a true asset for any campus and principal. It keeps the stakeholders aware of what is going on and prevents misconceptions. Just like communication, collaboration on a campus assists with daily structure. All three early-career principals elaborated on collaboration. They noted having teams or committees in place to make sure everyone has a voice. The following represents a common response:

My campus is very collaborative because we have committees for just about everything; like we have a PBIS committee, which makes decisions on how we are going to reinforce positive choices and behavior. And at our administrative meeting, we really come together, and everybody brings different strengths to the meeting . . . someone is creative, and then we have an organized person, and they each help make decisions, which is why collaboration is important and that we model it. (Principal B, personal communication, November 9, 2018)

Factor 3: External Forces

The SLT identifies external forces as a critical component in a principal's understanding of the true context of a campus and of success in that particular context. If principals are not aware of the external forces and their influences on themselves and their campuses, they cannot be completely prepared for the challenges and expectations that external forces will initiate.

These three early-career principals were shown to have strategies for dealing with these challenges and expectations, thus aligning their leadership behaviors and organizational structures with the external forces.

Each of the three early-career principals were shown to use the following four leadership behaviors as strategies to positively interact with challenges and expectations from external forces: (a) communication, (b) inclusiveness, (c) visibility, and (d) supportiveness. Three specific leadership behaviors were identified from the OLEI responses as important to their external forces: (a) emphasizes collegiality, (b) promotes community and cooperation, and (c) promotes nurturing and caring.

All three early-career principals identified parents as a critical external force to their campus. The participants at Blue, Red, and Yellow Elementary Schools discussed the impact had by parents on the campus and how their early-career principals have worked with the parents and invited them to the schools.

The level of parent involvement seemed to represent the biggest issue at all three schools. The parents have not been volunteering or coming to school events. Principal B and her staff have concentrated on building relationships with the parents through constant communication with their students. When Principal B arrived at Red Elementary, she created a social media account to send out flyers and reminders to the families. She felt that busy families would benefit from quick reminders and notices to help them remember when events were happening at school. Principal B and some of the participants stated that since the creation of the account, the parents have seemed more comfortable and have started to come to the school for events.

Also, Principal B and Principal C are bilingual, and they are able to speak to their Spanish-speaking parents. The following represent common responses: “[Principal B] is

bilingual, and her community greatly appreciated it because now they could speak directly to her, and they felt more comfortable speaking to her” (Red Elementary Participant 1, personal communication, November 14, 2018).

[Principal A] worked hard at communicating with parents the importance of coming up for parent conferences or for school events. Her staff and her knew that many of her families were working multiple jobs to make the rent or they were helping other family members, so the number of families in a home might be many, and it may be crowded. Thus, she created events at different times in the day and at nights.

(Principal A, personal communication, November 8, 2018; Blue Elementary Participant 3, personal communication, November 8, 2018)

Principal A also taped events and then invited the parents to access it online and get the same training or workshop. In this way, if the parents missed a workshop on how to help their children read, they could see it at home at their own availability. Principal A has tried to be innovative and accommodating to meet the needs of her students and their parents.

At Yellow Elementary, Principal C has been met with the same parental issues. She wanted more of them to come to school and assist their students who were having academic or behavioral issues. She is also bilingual, so that has assisted her in getting to know and building strong relationships with the families. Principal C also has held parent events, with multiple opportunities for parents to come to the school for important meetings and for sharing information. She has made sure to hold the meetings in English and in Spanish to make the families feel comfortable (Principal C, personal communication, November 26, 2018).

All three early-career principals discussed challenges in specifically dealing with the external force of parent involvement. The three early-career principals all discussed feeling that

their district has been supportive and has sent assistance when needed. They reported feeling fortunate to have been assigned an external mentor and internal mentor for the first three years of their principalship.

Factor 4: Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

The attitudes, values, and beliefs of two of the early-career principals align with the other factors of the SLT. Four overarching attitudes, values, and beliefs shared by each of the two early-career principals emerged during the face-to-face interviews: (a) believing every child can be successful, (b) assisting their families, (c) developing supportive relationships, and (d) educating the whole child. The following specific attitudes, values, and beliefs emerged from the responses on the OLEI: (a) emphasis on professional growth, (b) emphasis on collegiality, (c) emphasis on character, ethics, and integrity, and (d) emphasis on reflective practice,

The SLT proposes that alignment between a leader's attitudes, values, and beliefs and those of the organization is important to the success of the leader and the organization. Without this alignment, change necessary for continued improvement may be met with resistance by those who do not share similar attitudes, values, and beliefs. Two of the early-career principals in my study were shown to have attitudes, values, and beliefs aligned to their staff's attitudes, values, and beliefs.

Principal A and Principal B were shown to share beliefs with their staff and have worked hard at being visible in the building and with the staff, students, and parents. They know the importance of being visible every day and seeing if the students are being successful and seeing what the teachers need. During her time as principal of Red Elementary School, Principal B put walking around the building on her calendar every day because she knew the day would take her away to deal with all the concerns that came up, and then she would have not been in the area. So

each day she put it on her calendar, and she would walk the building for that time frame, and she never missed it (Principal B, personal communication, November 9, 2018).

Principal A reported believing that all students can succeed, and she aims to make sure her staff is equipped with the right staff development courses and that same belief. She commented on how she has had to hire strong individuals, and if she hasn't been able to find the right person, she has continued to interview. She learned that the first step to having a positive campus is hiring capable and willing individuals (Principal A, personal communication, November 8, 2018).

The data reviewed from the OLEI responses revealed misalignment with Principal C's attitudes, values, and beliefs. However, many of the participants reported on Principal C's belief that all students can learn (with the staff having the same belief) and her dedication to the staff being seen daily. One participant responded with disagreement several times, which caused each item be misaligned in this section. Principal C has a passion for her staff, students, and parents. She is dedicated to them.

Mentoring

All three of the early-career principals spoke highly of their mentoring experience. The external mentors and internal mentors interviewed were the principals' assigned external mentors and internal mentors. Purple School District personnel assign a retired principal to externally mentor the principal for the first three years of a principalship. The external mentor meets with the new principal every week for two hours during their first semester and every other week in the second semester. During the second and third years, the mentoring continues with meetings once a month.

Purple School District personnel also assign an acting principal as an internal mentor for the first three years of a principalship. Every new principal receives an internal mentor who is presently a principal in the district. They both attend monthly rookie-principal meetings with other mentors and mentees, at which district personnel from a variety of departments present on relevant topics.

Principal A discussed how her weekly meeting with her external mentor were so beneficial for her. She remembered talking about things that happened during the week and letting her external mentor know how she handled it. Then she would ask for advice about a situation that came up that she wasn't sure how to deal with. It was invaluable time spent to help her grow as a leader.

Principal B stated the following:

My leadership skills improved after talking with my mentor over a couple of months. We discussed making sure communication was a top priority, not only with my community and with my staff. Then we discussed building relationships and keeping in touch with the students and staff. (Principal B, personal communication, November 27, 2018)

Those two skills are important behaviors to have and to maintain.

Principal C noted appreciating her mentor and the chance to have time to sit and talk with her. It was a time of reflection and planning ahead as well. The mentorship was seen as valued time together as leaders (Principal C, personal communication, November 26, 2018).

Alignment Summary

In my study, I determined that in the cases of the three early-career female principals leading Title I schools, two showed alignment with all four factors of the SLT. One case did not

show alignment; it was aligned in three factors and was misaligned in only one of the factors. The three principals' leadership decisions have been influenced by their understanding of the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the campus, the organizational structure of the campus, and the external forces. These early-career principals have used their interpersonal skills to support the organization, the teachers, and the students to create a common vision and to build relationships with all stakeholders. The principals have read the context of their leadership accurately and have used the appropriate leadership behaviors within their organization to build relationships.

The cases of Principal A and Principal B represent examples of a leader's alignment with the four factors of the SLT. The case of Principal C represents an example of one misaligned factor, with the other three factors aligning. Each case illustrates the SLT as a viable theory for application in practice by educational leaders.

Implications

In my case studies, I examined the relationship of the experiences of three early-career female principals as related to alignment of the SLT; it has practical application for current and future leaders. The early-career principals in my study have acted purposefully and proactively through the use of their leadership behaviors to positively impact their campuses.

Two of the cases represent examples of leadership behaviors and strategies utilized to obtain alignment of the SLT factors in Title I schools. Alignment of the four factors of the SLT positively impacts the perception of a leader. If a leader does not have alignment of the four factors of the SLT, then leadership behaviors and strategies need to be utilized and implemented to bring about alignment.

Leadership Behaviors

All three early-career principals have utilized the following leadership behaviors to maintain their campuses: (a) focus on vision/goals, (b) inclusiveness to all students, staff, and families, (c) being supportive and nurturing, (d) collaborative approach, (e) modeling a listening ear, (f) communicating openness, (g) understanding nature, (h) building trust, and (i) conveying high expectations. There are many other leadership behaviors that each principal has exhibited; however, these nine leadership behaviors have been used by all of the three early-career principals and have proved imperative to their daily routines.

The leadership behaviors factor can be useful to early-career or seasoned principals, as well as other school leaders. The OLEI (Irby et al., 2002) can help leaders identify their own leadership behaviors and apply them appropriately to decisions and daily activities in their district. A leader's awareness of their own leadership behaviors can help them be reflective and intentional toward others and themselves. Understanding one's own leadership behaviors also can help leaders focus more on communication when staff members, students, or parents do not understand the campus vision or expectations. When informed leaders experience misalignment in one of the four factors of the SLT, purposefully adjusting their own leadership behavior or any of the other three factors can counteract the negative impact of the misalignment.

Organizational Structure

Each of the three early-career principals has acted purposefully to align her leadership behaviors to her organizational structure to maintain the campus culture and climate. All three early-career principals have utilized the following leadership behaviors related to organizational structure to maintain their campus: (a) collaboration in decision making, (b) communication with all stakeholders, and (c) organization/structure. The three early-career principals have used these

leadership behaviors to create a culture of mutual trust, which enables these campuses to meet the needs of their staff, students, and parents more effectively and accurately. Principals who are aware of the importance of organizational structure can rearrange, create, or use existing structures to bring about alignment with the other factors in the SLT.

Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

Two of the three early-career principals showed alignment of the following attitudes, values, and beliefs with their campus attitudes, values, and beliefs: (a) believing every child can be successful, (b) assisting their families, (c) developing supportive relationships, and (d) educating the whole child. Principals can use the attitudes, values, and beliefs factor of the SLT to analyze their alignment to the campus's and community's attitudes, values, and beliefs.

External Forces

All three early-career principals have utilized the following behaviors related to external forces: (a) communication, (b) inclusiveness (c) visibility, and (d) supportiveness. Each of these leadership behaviors has been used to interact positively with parents. These leadership behaviors are also strategies that should be used when a leader perceives a misalignment that could interfere with success.

Current and future leaders can utilize the SLT and OLEI to increase their awareness of the challenges and expectations they face from external forces. Once principals have an increased awareness of the importance of alignment, they can utilize their leadership behaviors; organizational structure; and attitudes, values, and beliefs to communicate and work with their external forces better.

Conclusion

In my study, I have found out the alignment of the four factors in the Synergistic Learning Theory is critical to the success of a principal and a campus. While reviewing the findings of each case study, there was a common theme when the four factors were in harmony. The first two case studies were aligned and all the factors were congruent and many of the participants commented on the principal's leadership behaviors. The participants said the principals attitudes, values and beliefs were aligned with the campus and then they referred to how the families felt invited and welcomed into the campus. The participants mentioned how the principals understood the importance of the families and community.

The third case study had alignment with three of the four factors. Thus, there was misalignment with one of the factors. With the misalignment, the principal needs to be reflective and review the misalignment and lean on her leadership behavior skills to bring alignment back to her campus. This is possible and very doable when taking the appropriate steps and actions.

My study confirmed the importance of the four factors alignment and touched on the significance of mentoring early-career principals. Each principal had mentors during their early years of principalship and each of them stated how their mentor relationship strengthened their leadership skills while giving them continued feedback, support and guidance throughout the process. They commented on the valuable experience and how the mentoring relationship continues to this day.

My study was unique because I studied and reviewed three early-career principals who were all female and who were either European descent or Latina early-career principals and their relationship with the synergistic learning theory. Also, unique to my study was that I examined

their mentor experience during their first years of being principal. All their mentors were female, of European descent and were former or current principals in the same district.

Each early-career principal was assigned two mentors for the first three years of their principalships. Even with the mentors being assigned each early-career principal mentioned how profound their mentor experience was during that time frame. They felt their mentorship was meaningful to them and impactful for their development as principals.

Mentoring is a term that defines a relationship between a less experienced mentee or protégé, and a more experienced mentor. The mentoring relationship is between two people, typically face-to-face, for a long-term period that endeavors to grow a mentee's professional, academic, or personal development. The purpose of mentoring is that the more senior mentor passes on knowledge and guidance as a mentee acclimates in his or her newly acquired position (A. Jones, 2014). The relationship between a mentor and a mentee are forged through time and experiences, and although a mentor aims at individual development, that role is supportive, not evaluative. The relationship between the mentor and mentee is one of "guide on the side." Mentors train and instruct novice leaders in self-identified areas of growth through listening, questioning, providing consultation, planning, supporting problem solving, offering positive and nonevaluative feedback, and giving emotional support (NHASP, 2014).

New principals, according to Mitgang and Gill (2012), could certainly benefit from mentoring, especially in their first years on the job, principals need high quality mentoring, tailored to their individual and district needs.

My study shared new knowledge to research by confirming the importance of the alignment of the four factors in the synergistic learning theory by reviewing the conclusions of

each case study. Then it showed how the mentorship relationship for a new principal is so vital in this day and age. Even with the mentors being assigned, each early-career principal was thankful for the mentor and spoke highly of what they learned from each mentor and reflected on how their leadership skills development during the time frame of the mentorship. The mentoring proved to be beneficial for the principal's confidence level and leadership development.

Replication

My study was a replication of Kaspar and Bamberg's studies. My study was similar to Kaspar's study because her participants were elementary school principals, we both used the OLEI, we each used the semi-structured open-ended interview questions and we analyzed the data to see if the four factors in SLT were aligned for each elementary school. Then my study was similar to Bamberg's (2004) study because she also used the OLEI, open-ended interview questions and she applied the SLT to the leadership experiences of five female superintendents leading successful school districts. Then my study was different from both of their studies because I reviewed the relationship of the synergistic leadership theory to mentoring and their leadership experiences. Also, I focused on three early-career female elementary school principals and analyzed if there was alignment with the four factors in the SLT.

Recommendations for Further Research

A further study could compare principals leading high-performing schools, principals leading average-performing schools, and principals leading low-performing schools. The research could evaluate alignment of the SLT, with each of the principals representing each of the campuses.

Another recommendation is to study an entire district of elementary schools to see if the campus leaders align with the four factors of the SLT and to see if the district scores align with the leader's alignment. These results would be a great asset of information for district personnel.

Epilogue

This study was informative for me as a leader and as an early-career female Latina principal leading a Title I elementary campus. At the beginning of the study, I wanted to know more about being an effective early-career principal. I also wanted to look into how mentoring could assist a new principal because, at the time, I happened to be an early-career principal being mentored. Through interviewing, observing, and analyzing all the information from the individuals interviewed and their OLEI responses, I gained a better understanding of the importance of aligning the four factors in the SLT. Also, each principal in the study revealed the importance of her mentor and how that relationship affected her. I completely agree with their words about the mentoring experience because I went through the same process.

When I heard the answers to many of the interview questions, I could relate to challenges and joys at the different campuses because all of my jobs have been at Title I campuses. I taught as a teacher in a Title I elementary school and then moved into another district once I received my master's degree, and I became a school counselor. As a counselor at a Title I elementary school, I was faced with delicate stories from students and parents. I worked endlessly to get resources to the families to help them academically, financially, and emotionally. I do believe that this was one of the most pivotal points in my career. I feel that I utilize my counseling skills on a daily basis as a principal, and I have found that training ground to be the most beneficial for daily use. In a few years, I became an assistant principal at another Title I campus in the same district and was excited for the opportunity to make a difference at another

school. At this Title I campus, I had a chance to develop my leadership skills and work with a wonderful group of leaders and students and families. It was a very emotional day when I was named principal at another Title I campus. I was excited about the huge honor and opportunity, but sad to leave the family that had helped me grow as a leader for the past eight years.

As I entered the principalship for the first year, I was excited and overwhelmed at the same time. I wanted to do everything and do it well. Words cannot express the gratitude I have for my internal mentor and external mentor. They were priceless because they assisted me on daily issues, helped me look forward and plan ahead, and were wonderful in discussing dilemmas—and they became eternal friends. Their genuine care and honest feedback was exactly what I needed at the time, and I will always treasure that time when I think of the development of my leadership skills connected to the four factors, a connection I did not know at the time.

As I began my study, I selected three Title I schools in the same district; the three early-career principals leading those campuses were my colleagues. I had known them when we were assistant principals together and as rookie principals as well. It was a delight to be able to interview colleagues at schools similar to the one in which I was working. The first colleague, of European descent, was working at a bilingual school where she had been the assistant principal, so she knew the school very well. The other two early-career principals, both Latina and able to speak Spanish fluently, were at bilingual campuses. They all were assigned an internal mentor and external mentor, all of whom were female and of European descent.

In meeting with and interviewing the early-career principals, I was touched by what they said about their campus, their staff, themselves, their experiences with their principalship and the four factors, and their mentors. I could relate to their struggles, their challenges, their celebrations, and their journeys so well. I reflected on my own experiences at my own campus

while learning about their stories and their campuses. During interviews, it was amazing to hear what they thought about their principal and how they felt she thought about the students and staff. I left many interviews wondering if my staff would have said the same thing when answering the same questions. It has weighed heavily on my mind since the start of the study.

As I look ahead and think about my future, I now understand the importance of alignment of the four factors of the SLT. I see the importance of knowing my own attitudes, values, and beliefs and being able to model them to my staff daily, as well as to all my external factors. I always have known the importance of building strong relationships with my families, my community members, and my staff, but since the study I feel like I have made an extra effort to extend an open arm to them and to be mindful of them always when making decisions. Also, I am being more reflective when looking at the organizational structure of my team, school, and meetings, as well as when I make decisions that affect the entire building. Then my leadership behaviors connect to every aspect of my position. Being able to define and continue to develop my leadership skills is a must for not only me, but for every principal. My study was so relevant for my own development; it was the perfect time for me to examine, apply, and complete the study. Every principal should have the opportunity to learn about the SLT and to see the importance of alignment. Also, I believe that mentoring early-career principals is beneficial not only for the early-career principal, but also for the staff, students, and families. It not only impacts the principal, it reaches out even further to assist the entire school community.

Since completing my study, I have been more conscious and reflective of my practices and leadership skills. I want the four factors to be aligned on my campus, and I want to mentor future leaders at my school. I want to continue to grow as a female Latina principal, and I want to give back and assist future administrators so they can make a positive impact on all students

from all areas of life. The importance of making a difference to all students is a major belief I have now and forever.

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APPENDIX A
INSTRUMENTS

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Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory (OLEI) for Principal Participants

Part I LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS-Management Behavior

To what extent do you agree the following behaviors reflect your personal leadership style.

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

<i>1. Leads by example</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>2. Ability to “juggle”</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>3. Communicator</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>4. Lifelong Learner</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>5. High expectations of self and others</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>6. Strong academic self-concept</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>7. Motivational</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>8. Communicates vision</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>9. “Can do” philosophy (resourceful)</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>10. Persistent</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>11. Shares Power</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>12. Dependable</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>13. Efficient</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>14. Assertive</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>15. Delegates</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>

<i>16. Utilizes participatory management</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>17. Decision maker</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)				
<i>18. Risk taker</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>19. Task oriented</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>20. Change agent</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>21. Influencer</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>22. Analyzes situations</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>23. High energy</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>24. Achievement oriented</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>25. Emotionally stable</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>26. Self sufficient</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>27. Effective time manager</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>28. Organized</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>29. Persuasive</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>30. Effective</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>

Part I LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS-Interpersonal Behavior

To what extent do you agree the following behaviors reflect your personal leadership style.

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

31. <i>Cooperative</i>	1	2	3	4
32. <i>Empathetic</i>	1	2	3	4
33. <i>People oriented</i>	1	2	3	4
34. <i>Compassionate</i>	1	2	3	4
35. <i>Collegial</i>	1	2	3	4
36. <i>Team player</i>	1	2	3	4
37. <i>Strong interpersonal skills</i>	1	2	3	4
38. <i>Consensus builder</i>	1	2	3	4
39. <i>Empowers others</i>	1	2	3	4
40. <i>Networker</i>	1	2	3	4
41. <i>Transformational</i>	1	2	3	4
42. <i>Combines social talk with administrative talk</i>	1	2	3	4
43. <i>Uses affiliate language, such as "we", "our"</i>	1	2	3	4
44. <i>Participate</i>	1	2	3	4
45. <i>Inclusive</i>	1	2	3	4
46. <i>Nurturing</i>	1	2	3	4
47. <i>Democratic</i>	1	2	3	4
48. <i>Intuitive</i>	1	2	3	4
49. <i>Flexible/adaptable</i>	1	2	3	4

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

<i>50. Emotionally expressive</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>51. Receptive to new ideas/change</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>52. Alert to social environment</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>53. Responsive to needs of faculty/staff</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>54. Reflective</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>

Part II EXTERNAL FORCES

Respond to what extent do you believe your school community (central office, parents, school board) agrees to the importance of the following.

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

55. Emphasis on collegiality	1	2	3	4
56. Views teachers as leaders	1	2	3	4
57. Emphasis on reflective practice	1	2	3	4
58. Participative decision making	1	2	3	4
59. Utilizes system of rotating leadership	1	2	3	4
60. Recognizes ability or expertise	1	2	3	4
61. Arrives at goals through consensual process	1	2	3	4
62. Values faculty/staff as individual human beings	1	2	3	4
63. Commitment to employee growth	1	2	3	4
64. Power sharing	1	2	3	4
65. Promotes community and cooperation	1	2	3	4
66. Promotes nurturing and caring	1	2	3	4
67. Promotes subordinate empowerment	1	2	3	4
68. Supports my philosophy	1	2	3	4
69. My leadership is affected by the expectations of the community	1	2	3	4

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

70. The socio-economic levels in the community affect my leadership. 1 2 3 4

71. Language groups in the community impact my leadership. 1 2 3 4

Part III ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

Respond to what extent you agree the following characteristics apply to your campus.

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

72. Utilizes system of rotating leadership	1	2	3	4
73. Recognizes ability or expertise	1	2	3	4
74. Arrives at goals through consensual process	1	2	3	4
75. Values faculty/staff as individual human beings	1	2	3	4
76. Commitment to employee growth	1	2	3	4
77. Power sharing	1	2	3	4
78. Promotes community and cooperation	1	2	3	4
79. Promotes nurturing and caring	1	2	3	4
80. Promotes subordinate empowerment	1	2	3	4
81. Has clear norms and values	1	2	3	4
82. Encourages professional training	1	2	3	4
83. Has well-defined goals	1	2	3	4
84. Emphasis on professional growth for self/staff/faculty	1	2	3	4
85. Openness to change	1	2	3	4
86. Emphasis on collegiality	1	2	3	4
87. Emphasis on character, ethics and integrity	1	2	3	4
88. Emphasis on programs for special students	1	2	3	4

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

- | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 89. Emphasis on innovation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 90. Emphasis on reflective process | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 91. Openness to diversity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Respond to what extent you agree the following apply to your school community (central office, parents, school board).

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 92. Emphasis on professional growth
for self/staff/faculty | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 93. Emphasis on innovation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 94. Importance of programs for
special students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 95. Openness to change | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 96. Openness to diversity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Part V DEMOGRAPHICS

Please check the information that applies to you.

Ethnicity:

_____ Anglo

_____ African American

_____ Hispanic

_____ Asian/Pacific Islander

_____ Native American

Gender:

_____ Male

_____ Female

Years of experience in present position:

_____ 1-3

_____ 4-6

_____ 7-9

_____ 10-12

_____ 13-15

_____ 16-18 plus

Additional comments regarding organizational structure, external forces, attitudes, beliefs and values, and leadership behaviors.

APPENDIX B
INSTRUMENTS

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Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory (OLEI) for Other Participants

Part I LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS-Management Behavior

To what extent do you agree the following behaviors reflect the principal's leadership style.

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

<i>1. Leads by example</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>2. Ability to "juggle"</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>3. Communicator</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>4. Lifelong Learner</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>5. High expectations of self and others</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>6. Strong academic self-concept</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>7. Motivational</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>8. Communicates vision</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>9. "Can do" philosophy (resourceful)</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>10. Persistent</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>11. Shares Power</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>12. Dependable</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>13. Efficient</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>14. Assertive</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>15. Delegates</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>

<i>16. Utilizes participatory management</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>17. Decision maker</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>18. Risk taker</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)				
<i>19. Task oriented</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>20. Change agent</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>21. Influencer</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>22. Analyzes situations</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>23. High energy</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>24. Achievement oriented</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>25. Emotionally stable</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>26. Self sufficient</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>27. Effective time manager</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>28. Organized</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>29. Persuasive</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>30. Effective</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>

Part I LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS-Interpersonal Behavior

To what extent do you agree the following behaviors reflect the principal's leadership style.

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

31. <i>Cooperative</i>	1	2	3	4
32. <i>Empathetic</i>	1	2	3	4
33. <i>People oriented</i>	1	2	3	4
34. <i>Compassionate</i>	1	2	3	4
35. <i>Collegial</i>	1	2	3	4
36. <i>Team player</i>	1	2	3	4
37. <i>Strong interpersonal skills</i>	1	2	3	4
38. <i>Consensus builder</i>	1	2	3	4
39. <i>Empowers others</i>	1	2	3	4
40. <i>Networker</i>	1	2	3	4
41. <i>Transformational</i>	1	2	3	4
42. <i>Combines social talk with administrative talk</i>	1	2	3	4
43. <i>Uses affiliate language, such as "we", "our"</i>	1	2	3	4
44. <i>Participate</i>	1	2	3	4
45. <i>Inclusive</i>	1	2	3	4
46. <i>Nurturing</i>	1	2	3	4
47. <i>Democratic</i>	1	2	3	4
48. <i>Intuitive</i>	1	2	3	4
49. <i>Flexible/adaptable</i>	1	2	3	4

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

<i>50. Emotionally expressive</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>51. Receptive to new ideas/change</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>52. Alert to social environment</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>53. Responsive to needs of faculty/staff</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>54. Reflective</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>

Part II EXTERNAL FORCES

Respond to what extent do you believe your school community (central office, parents, school board) agrees to the importance of the following.

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

55. Emphasis on collegiality	1	2	3	4
56. Views teachers as leaders	1	2	3	4
57. Emphasis on reflective practice	1	2	3	4
58. Participative decision making	1	2	3	4
59. Utilizes system of rotating leadership	1	2	3	4
60. Recognizes ability or expertise	1	2	3	4
61. Arrives at goals through consensual process	1	2	3	4
62. Values faculty/staff as individual human beings	1	2	3	4
63. Commitment to employee growth	1	2	3	4
64. Power sharing	1	2	3	4
65. Promotes community and cooperation	1	2	3	4
66. Promotes nurturing and caring	1	2	3	4
67. Promotes subordinate empowerment	1	2	3	4
68. Supports my philosophy	1	2	3	4
69. My leadership is affected by the expectations of the community	1	2	3	4
70. The socio-economic levels in the community affect my leadership.	1	2	3	4
71. Language groups in the community impact my leadership.	1	2	3	4

Part III ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

Respond to what extent you agree the following characteristics apply to your campus.

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

72. Utilizes system of rotating leadership	1	2	3	4
73. Recognizes ability or expertise	1	2	3	4
74. Arrives at goals through consensual process	1	2	3	4
75. Values faculty/staff as individual human beings	1	2	3	4
76. Commitment to employee growth	1	2	3	4
77. Power sharing	1	2	3	4
78. Promotes community and cooperation	1	2	3	4
79. Promotes nurturing and caring	1	2	3	4
80. Promotes subordinate empowerment	1	2	3	4
81. Has clear norms and values	1	2	3	4
82. Encourages professional training	1	2	3	4
83. Has well-defined goals	1	2	3	4
84. Emphasis on professional growth for self/staff/faculty	1	2	3	4
85. Openness to change	1	2	3	4
86. Emphasis on collegiality	1	2	3	4
87. Emphasis on character, ethics and integrity	1	2	3	4
88. Emphasis on programs for special students	1	2	3	4

(1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree)

89. Emphasis on innovation	1	2	3	4
90. Emphasis on reflective process	1	2	3	4
91. Openness to diversity	1	2	3	4

Respond to what extent you agree the following apply to your school community (central office, parents, school board).

92. Emphasis on professional growth for self/staff/faculty	1	2	3	4
93. Emphasis on innovation	1	2	3	4
94. Importance of programs for special students	1	2	3	4
95. Openness to change	1	2	3	4
96. Openness to diversity	1	2	3	4

Part V DEMOGRAPHICS

Please check the information that applies to you.

Ethnicity:

_____ Anglo

_____ African American

_____ Hispanic

_____ Asian/Pacific Islander

_____ Native American

Gender:

_____ Male

_____ Female

Years of experience in present position:

_____ 1-3

_____ 4-6

_____ 7-9

_____ 10-12

_____ 13-15

_____ 16-18 plus

Additional comments regarding organizational structure, external forces, attitudes, beliefs and values, and leadership behaviors.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PRINCIPALS

1. Describe the values and beliefs that guide your leadership behaviors. Describe the perceived values and beliefs of your mentor, staff and parents. In what ways have their values and beliefs influenced you?
2. Describe the leadership behaviors you believe have contributed to the success of your campus.
3. Look at your campus' mission statement. When was it last reviewed and how did you influence the revision? (I will ask additional questions if needed-do you plan to revise if you haven't, etc.)
4. Describe the decision-making process on your campus to improve student achievement.
5. How have you sustained the momentum of success on your campus? (Or how was the success sustained?) What causes you to stay as the principal of this campus?
6. Look at the organizational chart for your campus. (If there is not an organizational chart for the campus, then I will ask the principal to explain the organization of their campus). How has the organization of your campus changed under your leadership, and how you may have influenced that change?
7. What are the greatest challenges that you have encountered in working with the following groups: central office staff parents, students, staff: How have you met those challenges?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR INTERNAL MENTORS

1. What values and beliefs guide the campus? How has the principal influenced those values and beliefs?
2. Describe the leadership behaviors of the principal.
3. Describe the organizational structure of the campus.
4. Describe the decision-making process for making changes to improve student's achievement.
5. What are the greatest challenges that the campus faces with the following groups: central office staff, parents, students, staff? How has the principal met those challenges?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR EXTERNAL MENTORS

1. What values and beliefs guide the campus? How has the principal influenced those values and beliefs?
2. Describe the leadership behaviors of the principal.
3. Describe the organizational structure of the campus.
4. Describe the decision-making process for making changes to improve student's achievement.
5. What are the greatest challenges that the campus faces with the following groups:
central office staff, parents, students, staff? How has the principal met those challenges?

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

1. What values and beliefs guide the campus? How has the principal influenced those values and beliefs?
2. Describe the leadership behaviors of the principal.
3. Describe the organizational structure of the campus.
4. Describe the decision-making process for making changes to improve student's achievement.
5. What are the greatest challenges that the campus faces with the following groups: central office staff, parents, students, staff? How has the principal met those challenges?

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. What values and beliefs guide the campus? How has the principal influenced those values and beliefs?
2. Describe the leadership behaviors of the principal.
3. Describe the organizational structure of the campus.
4. Describe the decision-making process for making changes to improve student's achievement.
5. What are the greatest challenges that the campus faces with the following groups: central office staff, parents, students, staff? How has the principal met those challenges?

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS

1. What values and beliefs guide the campus? How has the principal influenced those values and beliefs?
2. Describe the leadership behaviors of the principal.
3. Describe the organizational structure of the campus.
4. Describe the decision-making process for making changes to improve student's achievement.
5. What are the greatest challenges that the campus faces with the following groups: central office staff, parents, students, staff? How has the principal met those challenges?