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How Elementary Principals Use the Six Sources of Influence to Achieve Extraordinary Results

Monette Perez
Brandman University, pere9221@mail.brandman.edu

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How Elementary Principals Use the Six Sources of Influence to Achieve Extraordinary

Results

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Monette Perez

Brandman University

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Committee in charge:

Patricia Clark White, Ed.D., Dissertation Chair

Julie Hadden, Ed.D.

Jonathan Greenberg, Ed.D.

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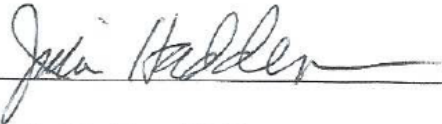Chapman University System

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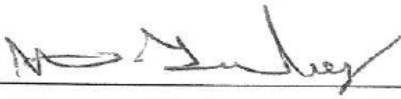The dissertation of Monette Perez is approved.

_____, Dissertation Chair

Patricia Clark White, Ed.D.

_____, Committee Member

Julia Hadden, Ed.D.

_____, Committee Member

Jonathan Greenberg, Ed.D.

_____, Associate Dean

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To my family and friends, thank you so much for always believing in me. Thank you for pushing me to achieve my dreams and goals. Thank you for never giving up on me. Without your endless support and guidance, especially during sleepless nights and tear-filled eyes, I would not have been able to do this. You have embraced me with hugs when I was feeling down, sacrificing your sleep to stay up with me, and most importantly, you celebrated all the mini-wins with me. I could not have asked for a better family.

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Most importantly, this dissertation is dedicated to my mom. Mom, I know that you are smiling down at me from Heaven. Thank you for always giving me hugs, listening to me rant, and allowing me to vent to you. Thank you for providing yummy snacks throughout this journey, going to the library with me, and also for staying up with me. Thank you for never giving up on me especially on the days that I wanted to give up on myself. I wish so badly you were here with me to celebrate, but I know that you are looking down at me, smiling and yelling "go choo-choo." This is for you my queen. I love you.

ABSTRACT

How Elementary Principals Use the Six Sources of Influence to Achieve Extraordinary

Results

by Monette Perez

Purpose: The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and explore how

elementary principals of organizations who have achieved extraordinary results influence

employees through personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability,

structural motivation, and structural ability.

Methodology: This phenomenological study identified and explored 12 Southern

California public elementary school principals and how they used the 6 sources of

influence with their stakeholders to achieve extraordinary results. An interview protocol

aligned with the study's theoretical framework was developed with a thematic team. The

respondents were purposefully chosen from principals who have led their schools to

attain National Blue Ribbon School status. The researcher collected qualitative data,

transcribed the data, coded and created themes from the data.

Findings: Exemplary elementary school principals use the following influence strategies

to produce extraordinary results: create positive and meaningful connections; create a

positive culture; provide formal and informal feedback; empower their employees; use a

variety of modalities to influence their employees towards the vision and mission of the

school; and create a safe and visually appealing environment in which employees can feel

free to immerse themselves to be engaged and productive.

Conclusions: This study concluded that elementary principals who wish to influence

their employees to achieve extraordinary results must create a positive culture and

meaningful connections with their employees through involvement in the decision-making process, genuinely caring for their employees, sharing personal experiences, and providing opportunities for engagement and planning lessons. They also provided formal and informal feedback and empowered their employees by talking about school goals, doing walk-throughs, practicing learned new skills from trainings, and recognizing the strengths of their employees. Finally, elementary principals achieved extraordinary results by modeling expectations and including community members and employees in deciding school colors and appearance.

Recommendations: Further research is recommended on influence strategies for leaders in different positions, in and outside of education, to achieve extraordinary results. Additionally, it is recommended to conduct a quantitative study to identify and rate strategies other leaders use to achieve extraordinary results.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Students of the 21st century, who continue to lag in performance on standardized tests are expected to acquire the skills and knowledge that will make America competitive on the world stage. As today's globalization continues to become more complex, school reform initiatives have often failed to meet the demands of state and federal mandates, which include the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), its revision, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Technological advancement and complexities require an educational leader who is able to influence others in creating a culture that is able to meet multifaceted demands from all of their stakeholders. Schools need principals and teachers who are able to create breakthrough results and move out of stagnated performance. The behaviors that created the current situation are not the behaviors that will take educators out of those situations. Grenny, Patterson, Maxfield, McMillan, and Switzler (2013) identified leaders as individuals who use their "own capacity to influence others to change their behavior in order to achieve extraordinary results" (p. 6).

Elementary principals face many pressures when trying to lead their followers to achieve needed breakthrough results. For example, they need to understand regulations and guidelines of NCLB, Race to the Top, Common Core, and other federal and state education reforms; additionally, they must prove they have the ability to execute and persuade others to implement said regulations and guidelines (Escalante, 2019; Loeser, 2019). School leaders must juggle a highly demanding position in which difficult decisions are made on a day-to-day basis to ensure that the school is heading in the right

direction (Escalante, 2019). Elementary principals base many of their decisions on the criterion from NCLB.

NCLB is the basis for educational policy within the United States. The purpose of NCLB is to provide quality education for all students and close the achievement gap (Diorio, 2019). Elementary principals are held accountable for providing quality education for all students in addition to collaborating with teachers to ensure that they are ready and prepared. In order for elementary principals to establish quality education for all students, they must first provide a cross-cultural environment for all through many factors such as engagement, communication, and building trust (Crowley, 2011; Denning, 2011; Kouzes & Posner, 2006). In brief, NCLB emphasizes the need for educational leaders to implement many factors into their leadership style in order to achieve breakthrough results.

One of these factors deals with how elementary principals use their influence to develop trust within their school community. According to Lasky (2020), trust is defined as "the feeling that someone or something is good, reliable, and capable of meeting expectations" (para. 1). Elementary principals use their influence to foster trust within their school community by creating a safe and productive educational environment for students, personnel, and community members through engagement and communication (Crowley, 2011; Denning, 2011; Kouzes & Posner, 2006). To elaborate, elementary principals make connections with stakeholders by encouraging trust and confidence, inspiring others, and building good communication (Damico, 2019; Escalante, 2019). In short, educational leaders develop trust within their school community through positive engagement among stakeholders.

Engagement is defined as "a force that drives human behavior" (Crowley, 2011, p. 17). Elementary principals engage their stakeholders by inspiring them to implement the needed change for future success (Crowley, 2011; Denning, 2011). More information is needed to determine how elementary principals inspire and influence their stakeholders to ensure the success of all students, using the ideas and ability of stakeholders to create and deliver a powerful vision/mission for the school.

Background

The Constitution entrusts education to the states ever since *A Nation at Risk* was published in 1983. Additionally, *A Nation at Risk* encouraged school systems to set higher expectations for performance and the success of their students (Boyd, 2019; Park, 2004). *A Nation at Risk* and federal initiatives have placed great urgency on local schools to promote higher quality instruction in the classroom. Hence, the federal initiatives were passed in order to hold principals and stakeholders accountable.

NCLB is a federal initiative that was signed into law in 2001 by President George W. Bush. According to Hayes (2008), the intent of NCLB was to ensure "that our nation's teachers are all competent to teach the classes they are assigned . . . not only are teachers covered by the law; so are teacher aides or paraprofessionals" (p. 9). NCLB held elementary principals accountable for qualified teachers in the classrooms to promote higher quality education. For example, teachers must be flexible in aligning curriculum and instructions in order to meet academic standards (Vinovskis, 2009). Thus, NCLB places greater responsibility on elementary principals to not only provide qualified teachers in the classroom but additionally to meet yearly benchmarks.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is a yardstick that NCLB uses to determine the success of a school's performance (Dziak, 2020; Hayes, 2008). AYP became a part of the federal reform and was revised in 2011. AYP criteria included goals for student population and for subgroups of students who were struggling. When a school fails to meet the benchmarks from AYP three consecutive years in a row, consequences, such as potential closure, replacement of staff, and so forth, within the school become worrisome (Dziak, 2020; Hayes, 2008). It can be said that the success of the school, the teachers, and principals depends on the test results from the students.

Views on school success range from the external demands of state regulations and guidelines. Elementary principals are under great pressure to meet internal and external demands. The school culture can be affected as principals need to influence their teachers to make changes needed to deliver positive academic success (Gentry, 2018; Schrik & Wasonga, 2019). In addition, elementary principals must evaluate teachers and oversee curriculum development that will support the success of all students. The difficult decisions elementary principals face regarding curriculum and instruction are a strong determinant in how successful the school will be (Powell, Higgins, Aram, & Freed, 2009). Then again, the role of elementary principals has been everchanging.

The role of elementary school principals is to establish an inclusive and welcoming learning environment where teachers can teach, and students feel safe to learn (Bradfield & Kraft, 1970). Over time, elementary principals have been expected to be leaders, coaches, and agents of change (Ashworth, 2013; Boone, 2017; Damico, 2019; Escalante, 2019). For instance, elementary principals are expected to lead their schools in a positive direction by closing the achievement gap, lowering chronic absenteeism, and

motivating and inspiring stakeholders through their actions. Elementary principals can also be seen as expert storytellers by inspiring and motivating teachers to implement new ideas in order to create transformational change (Denning, 2011). As explained by Ashworth (2013), a principal must use general and emotional intelligence (EI) in order to execute the responsibilities in order to meet the standards set by state and federal guidelines. In brief, elementary principals are in an everchanging position in education and must utilize different aspects of their leadership skills in order to influence others.

Educational reform strives to make it possible for students of all backgrounds and socioeconomic status to receive quality education. *A Nation at Risk* sought to ensure that classrooms received the highest quality of instruction, which left principals and stakeholders responsible (Boyd, 2019; Park, 2004). NCLB made it the principal's responsibility to hire educators who are competent in subjects to be taught in the classroom. In addition to NCLB, AYP made it the school's responsibility to guide struggling students in order to close the achievement gap. Hence, the leadership of the principal not only impacts how successful students and teachers are in the classroom but rather how engaged and meaningful interactions are between the principal and the stakeholders (Gentry, 2018; Schrik & Wasonga, 2019).

Theoretical Foundation: Leadership

Leadership involves a "complex set of interactions between an individual and group" ("Leadership: Research Starter Topic," 2018). Similarly, Cyprés (2017) and Kouzes and Posner (2006) stated that it is possible to foster leadership within organizations when stakeholders are given the opportunity to communicate, engage, and share ideas. For example, elementary principals use their leadership skills to inspire a

vision of the future (Veldsman, Johnson, & Madonsela, 2016). As a result, stakeholders are motivated to act on the ideal vision they all wish to seek. According to Kouzes and Posner (2006), leaders who motivate their stakeholders listen, coach, develop skills, provide choices, and make meaningful connections. Hence, one leadership theory that elementary principals incorporate into their leadership focuses on motivating and inspiring others to a greater future.

Transformational leadership. Many authors define a transformational leader as one who seeks to inspire others through meaningful relationships and identifying the positive work stakeholders produce (Hinson, 2018; Lyles, 2009; Maslyk, 2012; Neely, 2014). An illustration of how elementary principals motivate and inspire their stakeholders is through communication and recognizing individual needs and talents (Wisse, Sassenberg, Hamstra, & Van Yperen, 2014). For that reason, stakeholders focus their attention on the type of work that is being produced to ensure that goals are being met. Additionally, transformational leaders shift their own interests to the success of their stakeholders and have the flexibility in order to be willing to change (Kouzes & Posner, 2006; Lyles, 2009). In short, transformational leaders use their interpersonal skills to create meaningful relationships with their stakeholders, which often leads the organization to extraordinary results. On the other hand, leaders use rewards and punishments to engage stakeholders to achieve groundbreaking results.

Transactional leadership. Many authors define transactional leadership as using rewards in order for stakeholders to achieve organizational goals (Escalante, 2019; Flynn, 2019a; Lyles, 2009; Pratt, 2014; Saez, 2020). An illustration of how elementary principals use rewards or punishments in regard to work performance is through

highlighting achievements (Wisse et al., 2014). This type of leadership style can be classified as management. As identified by Flynn (2019b), transactional leadership is a common management style that has a chain of command. For this reason, stakeholders give up their own control over sharing ideas in order to receive praise for work performance. On the contrary, Biscontini (2020) highlighted that this type of leadership style decreases employee behavior and job satisfaction. Elementary principals who use transactional leadership to achieve extraordinary results rely on rewards and punishments. On the contrary, elementary principals who focus and serve their stakeholders' needs first build a stronger foundation of trust in order to achieve extraordinary results.

Servant leadership. Robert K. Greenleaf coined the term *servant leadership* in his article that was published in 1970. "Servant leadership emphasizes increased service to others, a holistic approach to work, promoting a sense of community, and the sharing of power in decision-making" (Ferch, 2015, p. 8-9). Similarly, Jeyaraj and Gandolfi (2019), Letizia (2017), and Mazzei (2018) agreed that servant leaders are leaders who serve others first before themselves. For example, elementary principals who put their stakeholders first value the emotional, physical, and social well-being for their stakeholders to have more job satisfaction, stay committed to reaching goals, and perform better (Escalante, 2019). Additionally, servant leaders strive to help their team members to perform at high-functioning levels. In short, elementary principals who serve others first focus on collecting experiences from others and develop an inclusive culture to achieve a vision of success for the school such as that which is described in the criteria for the National Blue Ribbon Schools (NBRS) Program.

Theoretical Framework: The Six Sources of Influence

The theoretical framework for this study is drawn from the six sources of influence, which comes from *The Influencer* written by Grenny et al. (2013). This study examines how the six sources of influence play a role in the leadership styles of elementary school principals to help their schools achieve extraordinary results. This study also explores the six sources of influence and how they impact the decisions elementary principals are faced with, in addition to highlighting each source of influence.

The central theme of influence is defined as "the ability to create changes in human behavior" (Grenny et al., 2013, p. 6). Elementary principals who use influence to achieve groundbreaking results, learn about their stakeholders in order to learn from them and listen to their ideas to share solutions (Kahnweiler, 2013). For example, elementary principals influence the school culture by modeling and building quality relationships that foster collaboration among all stakeholders. Additionally, the influence that elementary principals utilize within their school culture is manifested within the norms, values, and vision of the school (Cardarelli, 2014; Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012). Hence, more information is needed to determine how elementary principals use six sources of influence to transform and change the behaviors of others' motivation (personal, social, structural) and ability (personal, social, structural; Grenny et al., 2013) within their school community.

Motivation. Motivation has three subsections: personal, social and structural, which form part of the six sources of influence. Historically, Albert Bandura, who was a social psychologist, emphasized his work on analyzing processes that influenced human behavior; he was known for social learning theory and also observational learning (Clark,

2013; Grenny et al., 2013; Kretchmar, 2019; Wulfert, 2019 2018). To elaborate, social learning theory relates to motivation as it focuses on how to influence stakeholders to reach organizational goals. Manz and Sims (1980) stated that social learning theory can be seen in the workplace as an influence on employee behaviors such as modeling and encouraging self-management or self-control. Self-efficacy, as identified by Schrik and Wasonga (2019) can be perceived when an individual influences the choices that they partake in (outcomes, decisions, and behavior). The social learning theory has impacted how today's leaders influence their followers in achieving extraordinary results within their organization. Thus, social learning theory drives leaders to use motivation personally, socially, and structurally in order to influence their stakeholders.

Personal motivation. Personal motivation is the deeply embedded desire to engage in meaningful and pleasurable work created with direct experiences in an environment in which one can choose to be optimistic about progress. In today's educational realm, stakeholders want to view elementary principals as positive role models in having the capacity to model different strategies in difficult tasks (Wulfert, 2018). Escalante (2019) confirms that educational leaders must lead their stakeholders in a consistent manner to ensure credibility and reliability. In order for elementary principals to expose their stakeholders to direct experiences, they must first communicate the goals and values of the school (Damico, 2019; Denning, 2011). Thus, elementary principals must model expectations and make connections with stakeholders to achieve personal motivation.

Social motivation. Social motivation is the deeply held desire to be accepted, respected, and connected to humans. Elementary principals use social motivation to

ensure that stakeholders are praised, supported emotionally, and encouraged by those around them (Grenny et al., 2013). Effective and transformational principals use storytelling to make connections with their stakeholders by transmitting ideas, creating emotions, and making connections on how everything will work (Damico, 2019). Similarly, Denning (2011) stated that stories help stakeholders to envision a new future and create excitement. Elementary principals often use their leadership skills to guide and influence others to see that change in the school culture goes beyond just themselves; change occurs within the school when everyone works together. In order for principals to continue to make connections with their stakeholders, they must also determine factors that encourage or discourage the changed behavior.

   Structural motivation. Structural motivation consists of rewards, punishments, or incentives that can be used to encourage or discourage a person's behavior. As explained by Grenny et al. (2013), structural motivation allows the worth of behaviors to bring the majority of the motivational weight. A strengthening stipulation refers to "the environmental cues that precede employee behavior (i.e., discriminative stimuli), and to the rewards that subsequently reinforce employee behavior" (Manz & Sims, 1980). Elementary school principals use the role of "things" such as environmental aesthetics, to encourage changed behavior, mindset, and attitude among all stakeholders (staff, teachers, families, and community).

Ability

   Ability has three subsections: personal, social and structural, which form part of the six sources of influence. Ability includes structural aesthetics, the ability and desire to learn new skills, and taking risks. Elementary principals influence stakeholders in

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order to inspire them to continually improve how they work and communicate (Dunk, 2019). The use of 21st century skills is needed, especially in today's everchanging world. Twenty-first century skills, as identified by Hagler (2020), include problem-solving and critical thinking. Hagler (2020) stated that these skills are essential as leaders and stakeholders understand the risks that are needed to think outside of the box. Ability impacts educational leaders as they cultivate a school that is capable of achieving breakthrough results. Ability is personally, socially, and structurally important within today's leaders.

  Personal ability. Personal ability is defined as learning and practicing new skills while receiving frequent feedback to achieve results. In today's educational realm, stakeholders rely on elementary principals to model how to practice new skills. As explained by Dweck (2016) and Grenny et al. (2013), effective elementary principals influence their stakeholders by having a growth mindset, which ultimately leads to higher level thinking. For example, elementary principals who have higher level thinking are able to reflect, seek clarity, understand, and take action (Ungvarsky, 2020). Grenny et al. (2013) stated, "Immediate feedback, coupled with complete concentration, accelerates learning" (p. 128). Similarly, feedback is "the technique or process by which a part of the output of a system is added to the system's input" (Ashok, 2020, para. 1). By providing immediate feedback, elementary principals build self-confidence in themselves and their stakeholders. For example, as stakeholders overcome their fear of failure, they gain confidence and resiliency to continue learning. Thus, elementary principals provide and seek feedback to support the success of their school.

Social ability. Social ability is the capacity to enlist the power of human interactions and group solidarity to provide a support for taking risks and creating change. Today's educational leaders enlist in the power of social capital. Many authors define social capital as leaders who engage within networks to gain buy-in (C. D. Johnson, 2013; Lin, 2001; Sanchez, 2013; Visone, 2018; Walsh, 2019). For example, when enlisting in social capital, elementary principals engage in interactions and network in order to gain access to ideas on how to achieve groundbreaking results. Additionally, elementary principals "learn how to invest in one of the most powerful forms of social capital: solidarity" (Grenny et al., 2013, p. 211). C. D. Johnson (2013) identified solidarity as leaders who take risks in engaging in deep meaningful networks and exchange information and strategies to further transformational change within their school. Hence, not only do elementary principals use their social networks by building relationships with others (McGarry, 2019), they also analyze the environment in order to best support long-lasting and transformational change.

Structural ability. Structural ability is the elements of a person's environment such as physical space, surroundings, or atmosphere that enable or disable work performance. In today's educational environment, elementary principals are responsible for designing their organization so that it supports the organization's goals. Wienclaw (2019a) identified organizational design as facilitating productivity among stakeholders. Additionally, the environmental aesthetics can enable or disable a person's performance (Blumberg & Pringle, 1982; Grenny et al., 2013). Equally important, when elementary principals manipulate the environment of their stakeholders, they are reminding stakeholders of behaviors they are trying to influence (Grenny et al., 2013). For example,

elementary principals may enhance the physical aesthetics of the office to encourage enhanced work performance, along with sending a positive message to school community members. Thus, altering the physical space of their employees, elementary principals improve effectiveness at work by influencing the interactions of space and people (Kim & Young, 2014).

National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

The NBRS Program originated by Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell in 1982 (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). The California Department of Education (2020) defines the NBRS Program as recognizing schools for their academic excellence and their ability to close the achievement gap. Lyles (2009) identified requirements that schools needed to be recognized as a NBRS: Schools must have at least 40% of students who are from disadvantaged backgrounds, and the students have shown increased improvement in accordance with state assessments, or the school scores in the top 10% on state assessments. Schools are awarded this national recognition when their principal has the courage, determination, and grit to hold all stakeholders responsible to reach high standards (Flavin, 2016). Thus, elementary principals must create a school culture by using motivation and the ability to achieve extraordinary results.

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Statement of the Research Problem

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Although there have been many school improvement efforts to support quality in the classroom, along with legislation such as ESSA, NCLB, and ESEA, there is still a deficit in the educational system.

The role of the elementary principal is continually evolving. Elementary principals wear a multitude of hats in order to adapt to the rapidly changing laws and

circumstances in the educational sector and to also establish a warm environment where teachers can teach, and students feel safe to learn (Bradfield & Kraft, 1970). DeArmas (2015) supported this by stating that principals are continually analyzing effective practices that support their growth as educational change agents. As identified by J. P. Johnson (2020), elementary principals are in a role in which they are expected to lead their school to success through empowering their stakeholders and sharing the visions and goals of the school. Thus, elementary principals must not only be flexible in their ever-changing role of principalship but also influence their stakeholders to bring about needed change.

Leadership involves a "complex set of interactions between an individual and group" ("Leadership: Research Starter Topic," 2018, para. 1). Similarly, Kouzes and Posner (2006) identified leadership as a relationship between those who have the aspirations to lead and their followers. In order for elementary principals to develop relationships with their stakeholders, they must engage them and develop trust. Engagement is defined as concentrating on work tasks, communicating in meetings about goals and visions, and investing energy into one's work (Froiland, 2019). Elementary principals develop trust and are engaged through creating stories that are empowering to stakeholders. They provide immediate feedback, build relationships, and actively collaborate (Damico, 2019; DeArmas, 2015; Flavin, 2016). Thus, elementary principals influence stakeholders by leading them to envision a better future of the school.

One of the many visions of the future entails reaching educational goals that are demanded from the federal government. One of the educational goals that elementary principals are continually trying to meet is AYP. AYP is "a system for measuring the

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success of public schools and school districts in the United States" (Dziak, 2020, para. 1).

With the daunting stress of meeting AYP benchmarks, elementary principals face the

hurdle of measuring up to academic standards. This task requires achievement standards

that must be reached by all students (Hayes, 2008; Vinovskis, 2009). The main purpose

of AYP is to measure school success using the same criteria, which is standardized tests

in language arts and mathematics (Dziak, 2020). In addition to measuring school success

through standardized tests, officials would compare the results of the tests along with

those of previous years to determine growth or to identify problems (Dziak, 2020).

Leading their schools to achieve success on so many fronts requires principals who are

skilled at influencing their staff to bring about changes that will yield the kind of

breakthrough results that earn extraordinary recognition such as NBRS status.

Gap in the Literature

There is limited research to support how elementary principals use influence to

achieve extraordinary results. Current research on the sources of influence and

leadership supports the idea that organizational leaders must have specific characteristics

and qualities to lead their organization to success. However, the literature does not

provide further research or evidence on the combination of the six sources of influence

and leadership. There is a gap in the literature that provides insight into how principals

use influence to lead their schools to success. Exploring the behaviors within these

categories will provide a better understanding about how leaders can use influence to

achieve extraordinary results within their organization.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and explore how elementary principals of organizations who have achieved extraordinary results influence employees through personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability.

Research Questions

1. What personal motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

2. What personal ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

3. What social motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

4. What social ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

5. What structural motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

6. What structural ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

Significance of the Problem

The emphasis of this study is on how the six sources of influence are utilized within a school culture to achieve extraordinary results. Elementary principals are the change agents within their school community and use their influence to drive change in human behavior. Bandura (1986), who is known for his work in social cognitive theory,

explained that human behavior is "commonly viewed as motivated from within by various needs, drives, impulses, and instincts" (p. 37). To elaborate, elementary principals can change human behavior by using their skills to build trusting and engaging relationships with their stakeholders (Macdonald, 2020). Thus, through identifying and exploring how successful elementary principals influence their employees through motivation (personal, social, and structural) and ability (personal, social, and structural), this study provides breakthrough information to those principals who are struggling to pull their schools out of school improvement and into a new era of successful student achievement.

Elementary principals use the sources of influence to enhance their leadership skills to lead from the heart by "proactively strengthening others, teaching others and building people into their full potential and highest levels of achievement" (Crowley, 2011, p. 100). With the regulations from NCLB and ESSA, elementary principals must be able to navigate conflict and adapt to necessary changes (Drake & Roe, 1999), such as meeting AYP benchmarks. Further research needs to be conducted on how effective elementary principals implement the six sources of influence to strengthen, teach, and build their staff to meet AYP benchmarks.

Elementary principals can use the findings from this study to strengthen, teach, and influence their stakeholders by utilizing motivation (personal, structural, and social) and ability (personal, structural, and social) to create transformational change within their school community to achieve extraordinary results such as those typical of a NBRS. The U.S. Department of Education (2020) explained, "The National Blue-Ribbon Schools Program recognizes public and private elementary, middle and high schools based on

their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups" (para. 1). Under the NBRS Program, it is necessary for Title 1 schools to stay within the guidelines of ESSA, NCLB, and also AYP benchmarks. The findings from this study can be used to help principals address the ESSA, NCLB, and AYP benchmarks to make decisions for the greater good of the school.

In summary, the purpose of this research was to identify and explore how elementary principals of organizations who have achieved extraordinary results influence employees through personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability. This study will fill a gap in the research on how principal leaders can use the six sources of influence to effect breakthrough change in their organizations. The findings from this research can be used by professional organizations such as the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), which provides training and services to educational leaders. Additionally, other professional organizations may use the findings for trainings and publications, such as school district boards of education; county offices; credentialing programs; Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), which examines leading, teaching, and learning; and also the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), which advocates for elementary and middle school principals.

Definitions

The following terms are relevant to this study. These terms were defined in collaboration within the thematic dissertation team. The following terms are presented to explain their importance as they relate to this study.

Personal ability. Personal ability is learning and practicing new skills while receiving frequent feedback to achieve results.

Personal motivation. Personal motivation is the deeply embedded desire to engage in meaningful and pleasurable work created with direct experiences in an environment in which one can choose to be optimistic about progress.

Social ability. Social ability is the capacity to enlist the power of human interaction and group solidarity to provide support for taking risks and creating change.

Social motivation. Social motivation is the deeply held desire to be accepted, respected, and connected to humans.

Structural ability. Structural ability is the elements of a person's environment, such as physical space, surroundings, or atmosphere that positively affect performance.

Structural motivation. Structural motivation consists of rewards, punishment, or incentives that can be used to encourage or discourage a person's behavior.

National Blue Ribbon Schools (NBRS). The California Department of Education (2019) defines NBRS as recognizing schools for their academic excellence and their ability to close the achievement gap. Terrell H. Bell Awards recognize National Blue Ribbon School principals for their outstanding role in guiding their students and school in closing the achievement gap.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A revision of the NCLB Act of 2002, the ESSA was authorized by President Obama on December 10, 2015. The primary focus of ESSA was to provide a foundation to prepare students for college and career.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The NCLB Act was signed into law in 2001. It precedes the ESEA. The primary focus of NCLB was to decrease the achievement gap for all student subgroups so that all children are successful.

Exemplary. For the purpose of this study, the term exemplary was defined as a principal who has achieved the highest national recognition.

Extraordinary. For the purpose of this study, extraordinary was defined as guiding stakeholders and students in closing the achievement gap, achieving academic excellence, and gaining recognition as a National Blue Ribbon School.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESEA was passed in 1965 by the U.S. Congress. The sole purpose of ESEA was to provide equal and fair education to all students.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to 10 exemplary elementary school principals who have led their Southern California schools to attain extraordinary results as evidenced by the NBRS award. Principals in this study must have been at their schools for a minimum of 2 years leading up to the award application.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters, references, and appendices. Chapter I, the introduction, addresses the impact that ESEA, ESSA, and NCLB have had on school leaders: elementary principals. Chapter I also includes the research problem, purpose, research questions, and significance of the study. Chapter II contains a review of literature expanding on ESSA, ESEA, and NCLB, the theoretical foundations and frameworks. Chapter III details the study's research design and methodology. This

includes the population, sample, sample selection, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, and limitations. Chapter IV provides research methods and data collection procedures, presentation of the data, followed with a discussion of the findings. Chapter V offers a summary, conclusion, implications for action, and recommendations for further research

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Chapter II introduces, examines, and explores literature related to theories and practices used by elementary principals in National Blue Ribbon Schools (NBRS) to influence their teachers in making needed changes. The literature that is explored specifically highlights how motivation and ability are used in order to achieve NBRS status. Sources that were reviewed are included in the synthesis matrix (Appendix A). Four core areas are presented. First, the theoretical foundation, the leadership, highlights different leadership styles and provides a foundation to the framework of this research. Next, the theoretical framework presents the six sources of influence that form the basis for this study. Third, the role of the elementary principal is explored and how it impacts the school culture. Finally, core elements of the NBRS Program are presented and discussed. The chapter concludes with a summary of the literature and identifies the gap, which highlights the need for this study.

Introduction

The U.S. Constitution entrusts education to the states. In California, the state delegates this authority to the local school boards (Escalante, 2019; Loeser, 2019). The boards rely on the superintendent and school principals to deliver the quality education expected by the local communities. When the public's perception of student performance was influenced by lagging test scores, the federal government used the power of the purse to initiate national school reform programs. Some of the major reform initiatives are presented in this section.

One of the early federal initiatives was the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESEA was signed into law in 1965 by President Lyndon Baines Johnson

(Congressional Digest, 2017). The purpose of ESEA was to provide more funding for elementary and secondary schools, particularly those that serve low-income families (Caffrey, 2018). Additionally, President Johnson hoped to close the achievement gap in mathematics, reading, and writing among low-income and middle-income students (Caffrey, 2018). Heise (2017) also stated that ESEA extended federal authority to public elementary and secondary schools to distribute federal funding for those students who are disadvantaged.

Ever since *A Nation at Risk* was published in 1983, educational reforms have been a major focus for principals to follow in order to bring about educational change for the future success of their schools. *A Nation at Risk* encouraged school systems to set higher expectations for the performance and success of their students (Boyd, 2019; Park, 2004). *A Nation at Risk* and subsequent federal initiatives have placed great urgency on local schools to promote higher quality instruction in the classroom. Hare (1983) supported this by clearly stating that regardless of age, socioeconomic status, race, and gender, students deserve a fair and equitable chance at quality education. Similarly, P. E. Peterson and West (2003) agreed that the publicized report *A Nation at Risk* called for further educational reforms to move America's schools into a better and more successful future for students. Hence, further federal initiatives were passed to hold principals accountable for the success of the students and school.

A third national federal initiative that impacted the way elementary principals operate their school is the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. NCLB is a federal initiative that was signed into law in 2001 by President George W. Bush and was "developed out of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as well as the

recommendations made by the National Commission on Education Excellence during the 1980s" (Diorio, 2019, para. 1). NCLB's intent was to ensure that the nation's teachers were competent to teach the subjects they were assigned and to close the achievement gap (Hayes, 2008; Heise, 2017). For example, schools were mandated to make adequate progress on state tests in the area of mathematics (Powell et al., 2009). Additionally, NCLB held principals accountable for ensuring that their classroom teachers provided high-quality instruction in the classroom. For example, teachers must be skilled in aligning curriculum and instruction in order to meet academic standards (Vinovskis, 2009). Thus, NCLB placed greater responsibility on elementary principals not only to provide qualified teachers in the classroom but also to meet yearly benchmarks.

A fourth federal initiative is Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA was signed into law in 2015 by President Barack Obama (Adler-Greene, 2019; Baskin, 2019; Congressional Digest, 2017). ESSA, according to Adler-Greene (2019), revised the way protocols were put in place, such as standardized tests, requirements for highly qualified teachers, evaluating low-performing schools, and ensuring that every child is successful. For example, ESSA focused not only on proficiency in reading and math but also on the proficiency of English language learners and made schools responsible by meticulously placing English language learners in their accountability plan (Adler-Greene, 2019). Thus, ESSA made schools open and accessible for students of all demographic backgrounds, not only in elementary but also in secondary education.

Thus, schools have a few federal initiatives to direct and support the success of schools and their students. Finally, elementary principals not only need to abide by these federal initiatives, they also must ensure that their schools meet the needs of all students

through Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP is a yardstick that the legislation uses to determine the success of a school's performance (Dziak, 2020; Hayes, 2008; Miller, 2018). Jean (2016) and Hemelt (2011) pointed out that AYP was part of NCLB of 2001 to evaluate school performance and student success. AYP became a part of the federal reform and was revised in 2011. AYP continually presses schools to meet goals for all students, including subgroups (Brockberg, 2014; Miller, 2018). AYP criteria included goals for student population and for subgroups of students who were struggling. When a school fails to meet the benchmarks from AYP 3 consecutive years in a row, consequences, such as potential closure, replacement of staff, and so forth, within the school become worrisome (Dziak, 2020; Hayes, 2008). Additionally, Jean (2016) agreed, when a principal fails to meet benchmarks from AYP for more than 3 consecutive years, one of the first changes and recommendations is to remove the principal. Equally important, elementary principals must evaluate and understand the process to ensure that AYP goals are being met (Miller, 2018). It is apparent that elementary principals face many stressors in the role they are in. In addition to NCLB and AYP, elementary principals have other educational reforms to consider when looking at the success of their school and students.

Elementary principals are under great pressure to meet internal and external demands. Internally, they must build a school culture that will help them influence their teachers to make changes needed to deliver positive academic success (Gentry, 2018; Schrik & Wasonga, 2019). They must evaluate and develop teachers and oversee curriculum development aligned to state standards. The difficult decisions elementary principals must make regarding curriculum and instruction are a strong determinant in

how successful the school will be (Powell et al., 2009). Externally, principals face

requirements made by federal initiatives such as NCLB, AYP, ESEA, and ESSA (Alder-

Green, 2019; Boyd, 2019; Caffrey, 2018; Park 2004). These initiatives highlight the

importance of providing quality education to all students, regardless of socioeconomic

status, and providing high-quality instruction in the classrooms. Elementary principals

face many stressors, including educational reforms to make it possible for students of all

backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses to receive quality education. NCLB placed

great emphasis on principals to hire highly qualified educators who were competent in

subjects to be taught in the classroom. The ESSA demanded testing proficiency for

second language learners (Adler-Greene, 2019). The ESEA provided funding to Title I

schools coupled with the demand to close the achievement gap among minority students

and those who are disadvantaged (Caffrey, 2018). *A Nation at Risk* demanded that

classrooms received the highest quality of instruction, which left principals and

stakeholders responsible (Boyd, 2019; Park, 2004). In addition to NCLB, ESSA, ESEA,

and *A Nation at Risk*, AYP made it the schools' responsibility to guide struggling

students in order to close the achievement gap. Hence, the leadership of the principal

was in great demand, not only to ensure the success of students and teachers in the

classroom but also to ensure engaged and meaningful interactions between the principal

and stakeholders (Gentry, 2018; Schrik & Wasonga, 2019).

Theoretical Foundation: Leadership

Leadership involves a "complex set of interactions between an individual and

group" ("Leadership: Research Starters Topic," 2018, para. 1). Similarly, according to

Cyprés (2017) and Kouzes and Posner (2006), it is possible to foster leadership within

organizations when stakeholders are given the opportunity to communicate, engage, and

share ideas. For example, elementary principals use their leadership skills to inspire a

vision of the future (Veldsman et al., 2016). As a result, stakeholders are motivated to act

on the ideal vision they all wish to seek. Kouzes and Posner (2006) stated that leaders

who motivate their stakeholders will listen, coach, develop skills, provide choices, and

make meaningful connections. Similarly, George (2015) stated that authentic leaders

learn from their crucibles and setbacks and have the resilience needed to push through

daily pressures. Both George and Kouzes and Posner (2006) agreed that the best leaders

are those who are passionate about their work.

Leaders who are passionate about their work use emotional intelligence, also

known as emotional competence, to recognize the feelings, emotions, and well-being of

others (Kouzes & Posner, 2006; Shek, Ma, & Merrick, 2017). As a result, "Authentic

leaders have discovered their True North, align people around a shared purpose, and

values, and empower them to lead authentically to create value for all stakeholders"

(George, 2015, p. 8). Additionally, effective and successful leaders use cognitive

competence to apply their knowledge and experience in order to best lead their

stakeholders (Shek et al., 2017). As a result of cognitive competence, stakeholders will

perform better and use problem-solving skills. Leadership involves the ability to have

resilience when faced with difficult situations, setbacks, and confrontations (Shek et al.,

2017).

The leadership skills that are needed in today's rapidly changing world are

enabling others to act, modeling the way, encouraging others by leading from the heart,

and understanding the process and its challenges (Kouzes & Posner, 2006; McManus,

2006). Kouzes and Posner (2006) stated that the most "significant contributions leaders make are not to today's bottom line but to the long-term development of individuals and institutions that adapt, prosper, and grow" (para. 18). Similarly, Crowley (2011) stated that by bringing the mind and heart into balance, leaders can choose how they treat their stakeholders, which ultimately will lead to happy and more engaged stakeholders. Therefore, there are many leadership theories that have circulated and been implemented within elementary principals in order for them to incorporate different leadership characteristics to motivate and inspire others to a great and successful future.

Laissez-Faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leadership is when leaders are uninvolved with their stakeholders and other members of the organization (Flynn, 2019a). According to Flynn (2019a) and Saez (2020), leaders who practice laissez-faire do not work together or promote group collaborations, which leads individuals to take it upon themselves to create goals, make decisions, and problem solve. This type of leadership style can be perceived as passive because stakeholders engage in their own self-direction, and there is no influence from the leader (Breevaart & Zacher, 2019; Rassa & Emeagwali, 2020; Saez, 2020). Elementary principals who practice laissez-faire leadership tend to keep their distance from stakeholders, do not make decisions on what best practices to implement, and do not lead their school to success.

Laissez-faire leadership can be seen as an ineffective leadership style because it prevents stakeholders from receiving immediate feedback (Breevaart & Zacher, 2019). With this type of leadership style, the negative impact it plays on stakeholders is higher levels of stress, dissatisfaction with their job, and lack of trust with their leader (Breevaart

& Zacher, 2019; Rassa & Emeagwali, 2020). However, Saez (2020) challenged the idea that laissez-faire leadership negatively affects stakeholders because it promotes personal growth and development and raises levels of respect toward the leader.

Although laissez-faire leadership is perceived as passive and disconnected from stakeholders, it often shifts higher levels of responsibility and accountability to employees, which can result in higher levels of work performance. By allowing stakeholders to create their own goals and make decisions that would impact how successful or unsuccessful the school is, it creates a higher level of ownership by stakeholders (Saez, 2020). Rassa and Emeagwali (2020) agreed that laissez-faire leadership enables stakeholders to be creative thinkers. Although this type of leadership can create an environment that lacks trust, it does contribute an element of empowerment that can have positive results (Breevaart & Zacher, 2019; Flynn, 2019a; Rassa & Emeagwali, 2020; Saez, 2020).

Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership emerged from the 1960s but draws its origins to ancient Greece (Zimmer, 2019). Authentic leadership, as identified by Blekkingh (2015), is "a form of leadership that centers on an inspiring mission" (p. 150). Zimmer (2019) identified four factors in authentic leadership: self-monitoring, optimism, sense of hope, and resilience. Self-monitoring is the process of observing oneself and regulating one's own behavior in different environmental situations (Lively, Myers, & Levin, 2019). Authentic leaders who self-monitor are able to understand their own emotional state (Zimmer, 2019).

A secondary factor in authentic leadership is optimism. Optimism is the ability to evaluate and consider events in order to move toward a positive outcome, which highlights a person's sense of confidence to bring about change (Popan, 2020; Zimmer, 2019). Authentic leaders who are optimistic believe that negative or bad outcomes are not their fault but believe these outcomes are from external forces (Popan, 2020). On the other hand, Paulson (2010) stated that optimistic individuals earn a positive mindset and attitude when they embrace their challenges and overcome them. Authentic leaders who are optimistic model how to overcome challenges and instill hope to their stakeholders.

A third factor in authentic leadership is a sense of hope. According to Van Hooft (2014), Zimmer (2019), and Rydgren (2019), hope is the individual ability to attain a desired goal through personal attitudes and emotions. Luby (2018) stated, "People who have hope enjoy more positive expectations about possible outcomes in the face of adversity and are able to handle psychological problems more effectively" (p. 50). Authentic leaders use hope to develop goals and collaborate on different ways to achieve them (Zimmer, 2019). Authentic leaders use hope to build meaningful relationships with their stakeholders. Van Hooft (2014) agreed that hope is the link that brings people closer. An authentic leader not only instills hope in themselves and their stakeholders but also has the resilience to work through challenges.

A final factor in authentic leadership is resilience. Resilience is "the ability to effectively and healthily cope with the negative feelings that arise from negative experiences" (Kte'pi, 2020, para. 1). A leader's resilience is closely connected to the leader's thought process and responses to challenging situations (Turk, 2018). Some examples of challenging situations that arise within leaders are adversity, divorce, severe

illness, and stress from the job (Turk, 2018; Zimmer, 2019). Weiner-Friedman (2016) stated that a leader who can successfully overcome challenges is seen to have confidence and is perceived to have strength. Resilient leaders are viewed as individuals who embrace their challenges with positivity and use that positive energy to help guide their decisions (Weiner-Friedman, 2016).

Transformational Leadership

Many authors define a transformational leader as one who seeks to inspire others through meaningful relationships and identify the positive work stakeholders produce (Hinson, 2019; Lyles, 2009; Maslyk, 2012; Neely, 2014). Historically, transformational leadership was identified in the 1970s alongside transactional leadership (Flynn, 2019b). Transformational leadership is viewed as encouraging stakeholders to achieve higher levels of work performance and goals (Craig, 2015; Flynn, 2019b; Wisse et al., 2014). An illustration of how elementary principals encourage their stakeholders to achieve higher levels of work performance is through creating trusting relationships, motivating them, and restructuring their goals and visions for their school to be successful. Flynn (2019b) stated that transformational leaders embrace large visions for their organization while exerting effort and influence to achieve goals.

Transformational leaders focus their attention on the type of work that is being produced to ensure that organizational goals are being met. An illustration of how elementary principals ensure that their stakeholders are reaching organizational goals is by motivating and inspiring them through constant communication and recognizing individual needs and talents (Gentry, 2018; Wisse et al., 2014). Complementary to this,

elementary principals "encourage the development and achievement of each follower's full potential" (Gentry, 2018, p. 22).

Transformational leaders shift their own interests to the success of their stakeholders and have the flexibility to be willing to change (Flynn, 2019b; Kouzes & Posner, 2006; Lyles, 2009). Elementary principals who utilize transformational leadership use their interpersonal skills to create meaningful relationships with their stakeholders, which often leads the organization to extraordinary results. Conversely, transactional leaders use rewards and punishments to engage stakeholders to achieve groundbreaking results.

Transactional Leadership

Historically, transactional leadership was identified in 1970 alongside transformational leadership. Transactional leadership is the transaction or exchange that emphasizes the behaviors and attitudes between the leaders and their followers (Craig, 2015; Elimelech, Kanat-Maymon & Roth, 2020; Gentry, 2018; Hoffman-Miller, 2019; Wisse et al., 2014). Many authors define transactional leadership as using rewards in order for stakeholders to achieve organizational goals (Escalante, 2019; Flynn, 2019b; Lyles, 2009; Pratt, 2014; Saez, 2020). An illustration of how elementary principals use rewards or punishments in regard to work performance is through highlighting achievements (Wisse et al., 2014). Equally important, transactional leadership is focused more on managing employees rather than motivating and inspiring them.

Flynn (2019b) identified transactional leadership as a common management style that has a chain of command. Transactional leaders rely on authority for their followers to achieve groundbreaking results within their organization (Biscontini, 2020). For this

reason, stakeholders give up their own control over sharing ideas to receive praise for work performance. An illustration of how elementary principals use authority within their school is by relying on rewards and punishments.

Numerous authors have stated that transactional leaders exchange rewards, punishments, praise, and rewards for their followers to perform better (Biscontini, 2020; Flynn, 2019b; Hoffman-Miller, 2019; Saez, 2020; Wisse et al., 2014). The influence of transactional leadership is not to build meaningful relationships with stakeholders, rather it is to generalize compliance, and the assumption is made that stakeholders will adhere to policies and procedures (Flynn, 2019b; Hoffman-Miller, 2019; Saez, 2020). Although this is the case for transactional leadership styles, servant leaders focus on the needs of their stakeholders first to build a stronger foundation of trust in order to achieve extraordinary results.

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership was coined by Robert K. Greenleaf in his article published in 1970. Servant leadership can be thought of in two parts: lead and serve. Leadership within servant leadership is visionary and strategic while serving within servant leadership is implementational and operational (Blanchard & Broadwell, 2018). Robert Greenleaf posited 10 characteristics that arise from servant leadership: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth of people, and building community (Jeyaraj & Gandolfi, 2019). Ferch (2015) described servant leadership as the emphasis of "increased service to others, a holistic approach to work, promoting a sense of community, and the sharing of power in decision-making" (pp. 8-9). An illustration of how elementary principals use their

service to others and share their power in decision-making is by allowing stakeholders to know their vision of the school, sharing their clear purpose, and developing trust (Blanchard & Broadwell, 2018). Jeyaraj and Gandolfi (2019) stated that if servant leaders want their stakeholders to feel empowered, they must first establish trust.

Leaders who exhibit positive characteristics of servant leadership to their stakeholders value their emotional and social well-being, along with building trust and empowering their stakeholders (Escalante, 2019). Escalante (2019) stated, "Trust breeds in employee's innovation, collaboration, and empowerment, which increases the success of organizations in this global economy" (p. 25). Elementary principals build trust within their stakeholders by listening, showing empathy, being aware, building up their school community, and serving others first. Many authors have agreed that servant leaders serve others before serving themselves, which allows stakeholders to feel empowered, and they are willing to perform at higher functioning levels (Blanchard & Broadwell, 2018; Escalante, 2019; Jeyaraj & Gandolfi, 2019; Letizia, 2017; Mazzei, 2018). Elementary principals who put their stakeholders first are valuing their emotional, physical, and social well-being in order for them to have more job satisfaction, stay committed to reaching goals, and performing better (Escalante, 2019). Elementary principals who serve others first strive on the strengths of their stakeholders, share their vision of the school, and listen with intentionality, such as that which is described in the criteria for the NBRS Program.

Theoretical Foundations: Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory, according to Manz and Sims (1980), can be viewed in the workplace as an influence on employee behaviors, such as modeling and encouraging

self-management or self-control. Additionally, the goal of social learning theory is to explain how behavior is developed, how it is maintained, and what processes can modify the behavior (Wulfert, 2018). Leaders use this motivational theory to identify how the actions of their stakeholders are determined and operated.

Self-efficacy, also known as self-regulation, as identified by Schrik and Wasonga (2019) and Wulfert (2018), can be perceived as the ability to bring about change by influencing the choices in which stakeholders partake (outcomes, decisions, and behavior). Leaders with self-efficacy believe they have the ability to bring about change (Wulfert, 2018). Social learning theory has impacted how today's leaders influence their followers in achieving extraordinary results within their organization. Thus, social learning theory drives leaders to use motivation personally, socially, and structurally to influence their stakeholders.

Theoretical Framework: Six Sources of Influence

The theoretical framework for this study is drawn from the six sources of influence, which come from *The Influencer* written by Grenny et al. (2013). This study examines how the six sources of influence play a role in the leadership styles of elementary school principals to help their schools achieve extraordinary results.

The central theme of influence is defined as "the ability to create changes in human behavior" (Grenny et al., 2013, p. 6). Heath, Flynn, Holt, and Faison (2017) also defined influence as having the capacity to impact agendas and outcomes in order to bring others on board. Elementary principals who use influence to achieve groundbreaking results learn about their stakeholders in order to learn from them and listen to their ideas to share solutions (Kahnweiler, 2013).

Heath et al. (2017) coined the phrase "influence effect" as it amplifies the words and actions to attract followers. Elementary principals who use influence may display confidence, determination, passion, empathy, and trust building (Heath et al., 2017). Additionally, the influence that elementary principals utilize within their school culture is manifested within norms, values, and visions of the school (Cardarelli, 2014; Collie et al., 2012). This study provides more information to determine how elementary principals use the six sources of influence to transform and change the behaviors of their stakeholders through motivation (personal, social, and structural) and ability (personal, social, and structural; Grenny et al., 2013).

Motivation

Motivation has three of the six subsections of the sources of influence: personal, social, and structural. Historically, Albert Bandura, who was a social psychologist, emphasized his work on analyzing processes that influenced human behavior and was known for social learning theory (Clark, 2013; Grenny et al., 2013; Kretchmar, 2019; Wulfert, 2018). To elaborate, social learning theory relates to motivation as it focuses on how to influence stakeholders to reach organizational goals.

Personal motivation. Personal motivation is the deeply embedded desire to engage in meaningful and pleasurable work created with direct experiences in an environment in which one can choose to be optimistic about progress. In today's educational realm, stakeholders want to view elementary principals as positive role models in having the capacity to model different strategies in difficult tasks (Wulfert, 2018). Escalante (2019) and Cyprés (2017) agreed that educational leaders must provide a supportive environment where consistency in credibility and reliability are visible. For

example, elementary principals create a culture of support for their teachers by providing planning time, encouraging engagement in activities, creating a sense of belonging by sharing the mission and vision statement of the school, and creating professional learning communities in order for students to be successful learners (Cyprés, 2017; Habegger, 2008).

Elementary principals use their personal motivation by exposing their stakeholders to direct experiences and by first communicating the goals and values of the school (Damico, 2019; Denning, 2011). Luby (2018) and Denning (2011) agreed that in order to create a high-functioning school culture, principals must be intentional and consistent about their school goals and values. Additionally, elementary principals can transmit their organizational values through the use of storytelling (Denning, 2011). An illustration of how elementary principals communicate values and goals through storytelling is conveying values and goals that inspire their stakeholders to want to work with one another (Denning, 2011). Personal experience "can be an equally important way to remove fears that keep people from doing the right thing" (Grenny et al., 2013, p. 94).

Another aspect of personal motivation is allowing choice. Grenny et al. (2013) stated that the principle of allowing choice is understandable; however, practicing choice making does not come easy. One of the ways to help individuals align behavior with motives is not to control their thoughts and behaviors but instead to be empathetic and pose questions on how those individuals would want to create change (Grenny et al., 2013). Empathy, as identified by Segal (2018), is the ability to place oneself in another person's shoes. Another definition of empathy is "the physical act of mimicking or

mirroring the actions or reactions of another person" (Segal, 2018, p. 3). Grenny et al.

(2013) clearly stated that when asking thought-provoking questions and listening while

stakeholders talk, stakeholders will soon uncover what they must do to create change on

their own. Elementary principals who use personal motivation to make work pleasurable

have a deep desire to help their stakeholders make their own choices that impact student

learning (Luby, 2018). Stakeholders who feel they are supported will themselves support

or buy into organizational change (C. Peterson, DeSimone, Desmond, Zahn, & Morote,

2017). Elementary principals must model expectations and make connections with

stakeholders by using the principals' social motivation.

Social motivation. Social motivation is the deeply held desire to be accepted,

respected, and connected to humans. Honoring, valuing, caring for, and developing

people individually and making people feel connected to work and its mission all create

the sense of well-being that people need to thrive (Crowley, 2011). Acceptance,

according to Purdy and Popan (2020), occurs when "individuals become willing to accept

a particular situation as it actually exists" (para. 1). For instance, when leaders share

information freely with their stakeholders, they are making connections and creating a

culture of communication in which information is shared without judgement (Purdy &

Popan, 2020). In the same way, effective and transformational principals use storytelling

to make connections with their stakeholders by transmitting ideas, creating emotions, and

making connections on how everything will work (Damico, 2019).

Leaders who use social motivation are able to make connections with their

stakeholders to ensure they are praised, supported emotionally, and encouraged by those

around them (Escalante, 2019; Grenny et al., 2013). For example, when there is a sense

of connectedness in the organization, stakeholders will produce higher levels of "creativity and innovation" (Escalante, 2019). Similarly, Denning (2011) stated that stories help stakeholders to envision a new future and create excitement. Storytelling can be used as a means to influence stakeholders to make a change (Denning, 2011). Elementary principals often use their leadership skills to guide and influence others to see that change in the school culture goes beyond just themselves; change occurs within the school when everyone works together. Elementary principals also use their "social influence to support change by ensuring that the right people provide encouragement, coaching, and even accountability during crucial moments" (Grenny et al., 2013, p. 146).

Elementary principals who use social motivation include their stakeholders in creating new norms. Grenny et al. (2013) stated, "If you want to change an old norm, you have to talk about the old norm" (p. 177). Social norms are behaviors that are accepted and implemented by all members of a culture (Lundin, 2019). In order to create a new normal, effective leaders must engage their stakeholders to elicit passion and to create a positive impact on school success (Powell & Jordan, 2019). Powell and Jordan (2019) suggested that open communication between the principal and stakeholders allows conversations to be inclusive. Leaders have the responsibility of influencing their stakeholders to work together to understand the current situation of their school culture (Damico, 2019; Denning, 2011). Denning (2011) stated that leaders must use storytelling as a means for stakeholders to see a positive and changing near future of their school. By telling a simple story, leaders help their stakeholders to think about the current pressing issues and allow them to discuss ways in which they can be accountable for learning different habits to improve their behaviors (Damico, 2019; Grenny et al., 2013).

Collaboratively establishing norms and holding everyone accountable for adhering to the norms helps create a culture that is conducive to change.

In order for principals to continue to make social connections with their stakeholders, they must also determine factors that encourage or discourage changed behavior. Accountability requires obligation (Letizia, 2017). Elementary principals use accountability measures to communicate and clarify agreed-upon organizational goals, vision, and mission statements (Letizia, 2017). Leaders must "create an environment in which everyone is responsible not just to *enact* the vital behaviors—but to *hold others accountable* for them as well" (Grenny et al., 2013, p. 181). Successful and effective leaders develop trust and vulnerability within their stakeholders, which allows them to take risks to move the school to success (Escalante, 2019). Escalante (2019) suggested that leaders who administer power to their stakeholders should encourage their stakeholders to be proactive in the commitment to groundbreaking results within their school. Elementary principals hold their stakeholders accountable by keeping them aware of their responsibility and self-reflecting on their teaching practices (Coffey, Cox, Hillman, & Chan, 2015).

Structural motivation. Structural motivation consists of rewards, punishments, or incentives that can be used to encourage or discourage a person's behavior. According to Balconi (2012), rewards and punishments are known to be an effective motivator in behavior. As explained by Grenny et al. (2013), structural motivation allows the worth of rewards to bring the majority of the motivational weight. For example, when stakeholders expect to have a big reward (i.e., promotion and/or monthly recognition),

they will perform better and work harder in comparison to a smaller reward (i.e., candy or gift card; Hsiao, 2019).

B. F. Skinner coined the term "operant conditioning" as the idea that behavior is a result that is learned from consequences (Rholetter, 2019). A strengthening stipulation refers to "the environmental cues that precede employee behavior (i.e., discriminative stimuli), and to the rewards that subsequently reinforce employee behavior" (Manz & Sims, 1980, p. 361). Rholetter (2019) agreed that operant conditioning involves reinforcements and punishments that lead to associations between the behavior and the consequence. The most effective field rewards, punishment, and incentives are identified in education (Rholetter, 2019). Elementary school principals use the role of "things," such as environmental aesthetics, to encourage changed behavior (by rewarding stakeholders with stickers or monetary rewards), mindset, and attitude among all stakeholders, which include staff, teachers, families, and community.

Ability

Ability also has three subsections: personal, social, and structural, which form part of the remainder of the six sources of influence. Ability includes structural aesthetics, the ability and desire to learn new skills, and taking risks. Leaders must demonstrate that they have the ability to lead their employees if they want them to follow. They must also help their followers to develop their own ability to ensure that they have the confidence and skill to move forward. Leaders who have the ability to engage their stakeholders in learning new skills inspire them through their own actions, beliefs, and values (Dunk, 2019).

Elementary principals try to influence stakeholders to inspire them to continually improve how they work and communicate (Dunk, 2019). Both elementary principals and their stakeholders must have the ability to engage in the decision-making process. Decision-making is a cognitive process that allows individuals to make decisions (Sniezek, 2019). An illustration of how stakeholders are engaged in the decision-making process is being included in the vision of the school and creating new norms. Elementary principals can demonstrate their own ability to communicate by modeling best practices. Weitzel (2019) stated, "One of the best development actions you can take is to communicate a specific message based on observation performance" (p. 2). By modeling descriptive communication, stakeholders will be inspired and motivated to make the necessary changes that impact their work task (Weitzel, 2019).

Twenty-first century skills are needed, especially in today's ever-changing world. Hagler (2020) described these skills, such as problem-solving and critical thinking, as essential for leaders and stakeholders to understand the risks that are needed to think outside of the box. Leaders ignite risk-taking within their stakeholders through telling a story that enables stakeholders to visualize a more successful future (Damico, 2019). Ability impacts educational leaders as they cultivate a school that is capable of achieving breakthrough results. Ability is personally, socially, and structurally important within today's leaders. If followers do not perceive that the leader has the ability to solve problems and make good decisions, they will not be influenced by the leader. Additionally, the leader must help them to develop their own ability to pursue the desired goals (Damico, 2019; DeArmas, 2015; Escalante, 2019).

Personal ability. Personal ability is defined as learning and practicing new skills while receiving frequent feedback to achieve results. In today's educational realm, stakeholders rely on elementary principals to model how to practice new skills. As explained by Dweck (2016) and Grenny et al. (2013), effective elementary principals influence their stakeholders by having a growth mindset, which ultimately leads to higher level thinking. Mindset, as explained by Popan (2020), is the ability to "form points of view in order to adopt behavior, formulate lifestyles, rethink priorities, make choices, and pursue goals" (para. 1). Popan also stated that learning new skills, gaining experiences, and developing ability can help change people's mindsets. In order to gain new skills and experiences, elementary principals must provide immediate feedback to their stakeholders.

Feedback can be defined as information given to stakeholders based on the actions that were observed (Weitzel, 2019). However, effective feedback is developmental. For instance, elementary principals who give their teachers effective feedback are providing specific and direct observable actions for their teachers to understand the impact they had on others (i.e., students, colleagues, community members, and parents; Weitzel, 2019). According to Grenny et al. (2013), "Immediate feedback, coupled with complete concentration, accelerates learning" (p. 128). Similarly, feedback is the engagement of back and forth dialogue and open communication (Powell & Jordan, 2019). By providing immediate feedback, elementary principals build self-confidence in themselves and their stakeholders. For example, as stakeholders overcome their fear of failure, they gain confidence and resiliency to continue learning.

Aldrich (2018) defined resilience as the "capacity that enables people, places, and systems to survive, adapt, and thrive" (p. 1). Leaders who have resilience are able to set goals, communicate, have self-confidence, and problem solve (Kte'pi, 2020). Ruth (2020) defined confidence as having the belief that another person can be trusted to fulfill a specific purpose. Leaders who have self-confidence build up their stakeholders' confidence (Ruth, 2020). Leaders who have self-discipline are able to engage in practice of their learned new skills with their own self-confidence (Grenny et al., 2013). Elementary principals build up confidence within their stakeholders by giving positive feedback on the work they are producing and engaging in back and forth conversation (Powell & Jordan, 2019; Ruth, 2020; Weitzel, 2019).

Elementary principals use personal ability when they use deliberate practice. Deliberate practice or reflective practice is the ability to "think about what you are doing while you are doing it" (Hoffman-Miller, 2019, para. 1). Elementary principals who use reflective practices understand that their actions and responses to challenges will impact future actions and responses to challenges (Hoffman-Miller, 2019; Sherwood & Horton-Deutsch, 2012). Leaders who model practicing learned new skills concentrate on what they are doing, what works, what does not, and why (Grenny et al., 2013). Elementary principals who influence their stakeholders to practice learned new skills, provide them opportunities to reflect on their own progress. Reflection then becomes a change process, which impacts the focus of work and improvement in skills (Sherwood & Horton-Deutsch, 2012).

Elementary principals create minigoals with their stakeholders to increase the school's success. Principals who are influential know the importance of creating clear

and sensible goals (Grenny et al., 2013). Setting minigoals improves the behavior and thought process of the leader and stakeholder (Grenny et al., 2013). Goals are created through collaboration. Collaboration is "the relationship formed by individuals working together on a project or task" (Junyk, 2019, para. 1). By creating a collaborative community, or a community of practice, stakeholders and leaders share what they know and assist each other to improve curriculum, instruction, and learning (Junyk, 2019). Conversations on improvements guide principals and stakeholders in creating a strategic action plan (Junyk, 2019; Lyles, 2009). For goals to be met, stakeholders must solicit feedback from their principal on the successes and challenges of students (Junyk, 2019). This type of culture enables stakeholders to feel "responsible for achieving school goals and accept their roles in the school's accountability for student outcomes" (Junyk, 2019, para. 12). Thus, elementary principals provide and seek feedback to support the success of their school.

Social ability. Social ability is the capacity to enlist the power of human interactions and group solidarity to provide support for taking risks and creating change. Today's educational leaders enlist in the power of social capital. Many authors have defined social capital as leaders who engage within networks to gain buy-in (C. D. Johnson, 2013; Lin, 2001; Sanchez, 2013; Visone, 2018; Walsh, 2019). The basic components of social capital are social networks of individuals to exchange resources and cooperation, gaining personal resources (C. D. Johnson, 2013). An illustration of how elementary principals utilize their social capital is through engagement in interactions and networking in order to gain access to ideas on how to achieve groundbreaking results. Social capital works as it is an exertion of influence leaders use on other leaders who

make difficult decisions and have had outcomes (Lin, 2001). Elementary principals exert their influence on others through their social ties in the organization and the impact on the relationships they have to gain outside resources, such as funding (Lin, 2001). Additionally, elementary principals use human interactions and group solidarity with their teachers to provide support for taking risks and creating change (Grenny et al., 2013).

C. D. Johnson (2013) identified solidarity as leaders who take risks in engaging in deep, meaningful networks and exchange information and strategies to further the transformational change within their school. Solidarity, as identified by Paul de Beer (2017) and Komter (2005), is the feeling of working together and the willingness to take risks that benefit others. Paul de Beer (2017) identified two types of solidarity: informal/warm and formal/cold. Informal solidarity refers to direct involvement of a leader and showing empathy. Elementary principals show informal solidarity by understanding their stakeholders and helping with projects. Formal solidarity is the compassionate bond between a leader and others the leader does not know (Paul de Beer, 2017). Elementary principals use formal solidarity when they communicate to members of their community, superintendents, and so forth. Elementary principals not only use their social networks by building relationships with others (McGarry, 2019), but they also analyze the environment to best support long-lasting and transformational change.

Structural ability. Structural ability is the element of a person's environment such as physical space, surroundings, or atmosphere that enables or disables work performance. In today's educational environments, elementary principals are responsible for designing their organization so that it supports the organization's goals (Wienclaw,

2019a). Wienclaw (2019a) identified organizational design as facilitating productivity among stakeholders. Kim and Young (2014) agreed that a better organizational design can improve employee engagement and productivity. Additionally, Grenny et al. (2013) and Blumberg and Pringle (1982) agreed that the environmental aesthetics can enable or disable a person's performance.

Aesthetics, according to Giovannelli (2012) and Hartmann (2014), focus on the philosophical view of beauty and art, which impacts one's perspective. Leaders use structural aesthetics to create a warm and welcoming environment. Structural aesthetics include environmental colors in a physical space, such as earth tone green and blue, to make it warm and welcoming (Hartmann, 2014).

Equally important, when elementary principals manipulate the environment of their stakeholders, they are reminding stakeholders of behaviors they are trying to influence (Grenny et al., 2013). For example, elementary principals may enhance the physical aesthetics of the school to influence innovativeness to generate and discover creativity on how to deliver positive messages to the school community (Wojciech, 2019). Thus, altering the physical space of their employees, elementary principals improve effectiveness at work by influencing the interactions of space and people (Kim & Young, 2014; Wojciech, 2019).

National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

In the United States, there is an immense number of public schools that are failing to demonstrate academic achievement (Flavin, 2016). However, some schools have shown breakthrough results in student achievement and have been nationally recognized as NBRS (Flavin, 2016). The NBRS Program was created by Secretary of Education

Terrell H. Bell in 1982 (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). Bell's intention of

creating the NBRS Program was to provide a foundation for other schools to adapt the

strategies to increase student achievement (Flavin, 2016). The California Department of

Education (2019) defines the NBRS Program as recognizing schools for their academic

excellence and their ability to close the achievement gap.

A Nation at Risk called attention to schools in the United States that were failing

academically and also to the quality of teaching (Flavin, 2016). The NBRS was used as a

means to highlight and recognize schools that have been successful in academic

performance (Flavin, 2016). According to Neely (2014), "Many schools qualify for the

award based on data from state assessments, but not all qualifying schools actually

become National Blue Ribbon Schools" (p. 2). The NBRS Program takes great pride in

its ability to recognize schools in two categories: exemplary high performing and

exemplary improving (Neely, 2014).

Lyles (2009), Neely (2014), and Smith (2014) identified the requirements that

schools needed in order to be recognized as NBRS: schools must have at least 40% of

students who are from disadvantaged backgrounds, and the students have shown

increased improvement in accordance with state assessments, or the school scores in the

top 10% on state assessments (Lyles, 2009; U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

Schools are awarded this national recognition when their principal has the courage,

determination, and grit to hold all stakeholders responsible to reach high standards

(Flavin, 2016). NBRS have exemplary principals who are recognized for their dedication

and ambition to close the achievement gap and for developing trusting and open

relationship with their stakeholders that foster communication and collaboration (Flavin, 2016; U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

Role of the Elementary School Principal

The role of elementary principals is complex with increasing responsibilities and demands that are driven both internally and externally. Over time, elementary principals have been expected to be leaders, coaches, and agents of change (Ashworth, 2013; Boone, 2017; Damico, 2019; Escalante, 2019). For instance, elementary principals are expected to lead their schools in a positive direction by closing the achievement gap, lowering chronic absenteeism, and motivating and inspiring stakeholders through their actions. Principals are to establish an inclusive and welcoming learning environment where teachers can teach and students feel safe to learn (Bradfield & Kraft, 1970; Nhlapo, 2020). The role of a successful principal is to influence student academic success by supporting staff members and facilitating the decision-making process. For example, elementary principals influence the school culture by modeling and building quality relationships that foster collaboration among all stakeholders. In order for principals to establish an inclusive and welcoming learning environment, they need to first create a positive school culture.

Principals Create a Positive School Culture

Escalante (2019) and Damico (2019) agreed that a positive school culture enhances the possibility of students thriving academically by creating meaningful relationships with all members of the school community. Once meaningful relationships are established, principals can guide their stakeholders and model how curriculum can be taught in a classroom setting (Escalante, 2019). Thus, a positive school culture impacts

student learning when clear goals and expectations are set, and meaningful relationships are created between the leader and stakeholders (Escalante, 2019). Elementary principals can also be seen as expert storytellers by inspiring and motivating teachers to implement new ideas in order to create transformational change (Denning, 2011).

Principals as a Storyteller

Denning (2011) stated that storytelling is "a performance art, and the way a story is performed can radically change its emotional tone, and hence its impact on the listener" (p. 40). Meyer (2014) agreed that storytellers deliver powerful messages within their stories when embedded in them is truth. Grenny et al. (2013) stated that leaders who create meaningful experiences with their stakeholders use storytelling to engage their stakeholders to behave differently. Elementary principals use storytelling to motivate and create change within their stakeholders (Damico, 2019). This happens merely by creating a vision of the school while getting stakeholder input. As stated by Damico (2019), principals must know the story they want to tell about their school before embarking on a journey. Principals use stories "to influence social change" (Grenny et al., 2013, p. 106) and to also communicate with their stakeholders about a new idea and how to implement it within their school (Denning, 2011). According to Grenny et al. (2013) and Damico (2019), storytelling can be used to create change; however, storytelling should include the voices of their stakeholders, families, and also students. Effective elementary principals not only use stories to create change but also use stories to help them recognize their own emotional intelligence (EI) and utilize it to enhance their emotional regulation when faced with difficult situations (Turk, 2018).

Principals and Emotional Intelligence

Raz and Zysberg (2014) identified EI as "our capacity to effectively perceive and process emotion" (p. 3). Raz and Zysberg clearly stated that EI involves processing emotional information while regulating and using those emotions in an effective manner. A principal must use general intelligence and EI to execute responsibilities to meet the standards set by state and federal guidelines (Ashworth, 2013). Elementary principals who use their EI are able to recognize the emotions of themselves and their stakeholders (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Hamilton, 2020; Turk, 2018). Bradberry and Greaves (2009) argued that there is a challenge in dealing with emotions effectively because the human brain has the desire to let emotions win. Principals who are aware of their EI are able to manage their behaviors in stressful situations and make decisions that could affect others in a positive way (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). Principals need to coach their stakeholders to better understand the importance of high-quality instruction and interactions in the classroom.

Principals as Coaches

Coaching, as defined by Toll (2018), is identifying the strengths of individuals and building on other strengths. Toll identified several components of coaching: it is a partnership, job embedded, encourages professional learning, enhances success, and focuses on the reflection of students and curriculum. In order for elementary principals to be coaches to their stakeholders, they must connect with them, respect what their stakeholders have to say, and build trust (Toll, 2018). Elementary principals use coaching as part of their role to enhance teaching and increase student academic success (Flavin, 2016). Kimsey-House, Kimsey-House, Sandhal and Whitworth (2011) stated

that "coaching is a methodology that allows us to work with change, on a personal level, on an organizational level, on a relationship level" (p. x).

Kimsey-House et al. (2011) clearly stated that coaching focuses on a coach and a client. The objective of coaching is to enhance the interaction between the leader and their stakeholder (Flavin, 2016). Coaching entails leaders to provide feedback, ask open-ended questions, and apply new learning (DeArmas, 2015; Flavin, 2016). Some approaches to coaching are collaborating, reflecting, and mentoring (DeArmas, 2015; Flavin, 2016).

Collaborating. According to Junyk (2019), collaborating occurs when groups of people work together on a given task or assignment. Elementary principals improve their school and impact their stakeholders by creating a safe environment and communicating clear goals (Escalante, 2019). Elementary principals foster collaboration with their stakeholders by creating clear goals and instruction, which allows stakeholders to be creative in their approach to student learning and outcomes (Escalante, 2019).

Reflecting. Jacob (2020) stated that the "examination of one's own thoughts and feelings is known as introspection" (para. 1). Elementary principals encourage their stakeholders to reflect or introspect their own behaviors and actions to best serve their students (Shek et al., 2017). Shek et al. (2017) presented the idea of reflective practices within professional development for stakeholders to dig deeper into their personal values, which ultimately impact the relationships they have with their students. Principals serve as a coach when reflection is provided for stakeholders to really transform their approaches to teaching and student learning.

Mentoring. According to Lundin (2019),

Mentorship is best described as a relationship or apprenticeship between a mentor

or teacher and a protégé or learner, where the mentor devotes time, energy, and

knowledge to help the young protégé grow in either his or her abilities and

potential. (para. 1)

Elementary principals serve as a mentor as they devote their personal time and energy in

ensuring their stakeholders are providing quality instruction and immediate feedback

(Flavin, 2016). Additionally, when principals use reflective feedback and ask clarifying

questions, they encourage their stakeholders to be more intentional about their thought

processes (Flavin, 2016). Coaching supports the growth of individual and organizational

goals (DeArmas, 2015). In order for principals to be successful, they must use their

social capital to share knowledge and experiences (DeArmas, 2015).

Principals Provide Professional Development

The principal's role is to engage all members of the school community to ensure

student success. Elementary principals provide professional development to stakeholders

to improve instruction (DeArmas, 2015; Lyles, 2009; Powell & Jordan, 2019).

Professional development refers to skills and knowledge attained for both personal

development and career advancement and encompasses all types of facilitated learning

opportunities (Weidenseld & Bashevis, 2013). Shane and Rhoton (2001) identified two

dimensions to professional development: content, which is what teachers need to learn,

and pedagogy, which is how they should learn it. Using professional development

enhances the skills and strategies that leaders and their stakeholders need for academic

success of students. Powell and Jordan (2019) agreed that providing professional

development allows for continued improvement on teaching and learning. Providing professional development opportunities maximizes teacher engagement, which ultimately affects student achievement (Powell & Jordan, 2019).

Principals as Instructional Leaders

Instructional leadership became well known in the 1980s within the United States (Suh, 2019). Instructional leaders focus primarily on curriculum and instruction, instead of administration duties (Maponya, 2020; Suh, 2019). There is no clear definition on what instructional leadership is, but it can be viewed as curriculum leadership (DeArmas, 2015). Curriculum leadership and instructional leadership focus on the same idea: to provide support for student success and achievement through curriculum and instruction (DeArmas, 2015).

Although elementary principals try their best to provide instructional support, they must also adhere to the noninstructional demands of their schools' needs (Boone, 2017). For example, elementary principals must oversee the school, attend meetings, observe and evaluate teachers, and monitor the school budget (Boone, 2017; Suh, 2019). Instructional leaders also take the time to immerse themselves into the classroom in order to support the academic success of students (Boone, 2017). Instructional leaders provide support by setting high expectations for students and teachers, setting clear goals, communicating the school's vision and mission with their stakeholders, and developing relationships not only with teachers but also with the students (DeArmas, 2015; Boone, 2017; Maponya, 2020).

Elementary principals who use instructional leadership understand the impact on student learning. Maponya (2020) and Suh (2019) both agreed with instructional leaders

who focus and model up-to-date curriculum and teaching methods, creating a culture of inclusiveness with teachers. Suh also stated that instructional leaders emphasize the importance of leading others. Elementary principals give educators the tools they need to become successful and effective leaders in their classrooms. Finally, DeArmas (2015) and Suh (2019) both agreed instructional leaders support teachers by providing professional development opportunities for educators to implement strategies and ultimately provide feedback to teachers on curriculum development.

Summary

Transformational, transactional, servant, and laissez-faire leadership are theories that have established a foundation for the theory that is the focus of this study. Leadership involves a "complex set of interactions between an individual and group" ("Leadership: Research Starter Topic," 2018, para. 1). Kouzes and Posner (2006) stated that leaders help others to serve a purpose. A leader's contribution to the organization is not short-term results but rather long-term "development of individuals and institutions that adapt, prosper and grow" (Kouzes & Posner, 2006, para. 18). The social learning theory was explored as another foundation for the influence theory studied.

Influence is "the ability to create changes in human behavior" (Grenny et al., 2013, p. 6). Heath et al. (2017) defined influence as "the capacity to impact agendas and outcomes and bring other people on board" (p. 18). Exemplary leaders use influence to create change in their stakeholders through motivation and ability. Motivation is the ability to engage in deep personal desires by which all stakeholders feel respected and connected to each other. Ability is engaging stakeholders in risk-taking and learning new skills, inspiring them through their own actions, beliefs, and values (Dunk, 2019). Heath

et al. (2017) stated that those who influence others show their talents and have confidence, passion, build trust, and empathy.

Educational leaders who have achieved superior results in their schools can achieve NBRS status. The California Department of Education (2019) defines the NBRS Program as recognizing schools for their academic excellence and their ability to close the achievement gap. From the report *A Nation at Risk*, Terry H. Bell, secretary of education to President Reagan, created the NBRS Program in 1982 to bring attention to schools that have successfully closed the achievement gap and to share best practices with other school leaders (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). Recipients of the NBRS Program are exemplars who have shown great determination and ambition to close the achievement gap, in addition to developing open and trusting relationships and fostering communication with all stakeholders (Flavin, 2016; U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

The role of the principal continues to be more complex and continually changes (Schrik & Wasonoga, 2019). Principals need to have self-efficacy and accountability for students to be successful (Schrik & Wasonoga, 2019). Powell and Jordan (2019) emphasized that elementary principals are responsible for leading transformational change within their school and engaging all stakeholders in the decision-making process. Elementary principals see themselves as educational leaders who care about their students and staff members (NAESP, 1991). The elementary principals' role is to create a vision of the school they wish to create, along with collaborating with stakeholders to achieve groundbreaking results (NAESP, 1991).

The literature reviewed that a great demand is needed to investigate further research into how all six sources of influence affect elementary principals to achieve extraordinary results. This study focused on how the role of elementary principals are influenced by educational reforms and the need for the students and stakeholders to be successful. There is no known research that expands the connection between the six sources of influence and extraordinary results that have been achieved by school principals. Further exploration is needed on the impact these six sources of influence play on how elementary principals lead their school to national success and recognition. Chapter III covers the population and sample that were included in the research, along with how the data were collected and analyzed. Chapter IV provides the research methods and the data collection procedures, followed with a discussion of the findings. Chapter V offers the major findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

Chapter III describes the methods of this study and includes specific elements of the study's methodology. This chapter begins with an overview of the purpose statement and research questions followed by the research design, population, and methods used to select the sample for this study. Next, the instrumentation section identifies and defines the procedure needed to develop the data collection process. Following the instrumentation is the validity, reliability, data collection, data analysis, and limitations of the study. Chapter III then concludes with a summary of the methodology.

Throughout this study, the term *multiple researchers* is used in reference to the three Brandman University doctoral students who worked under the guidance of their chair in collaborating the design and implementation of the study. One researcher focused on exemplary superintendents, and the second researcher focused on exemplary female African American business leaders.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and explore how elementary principals of organizations who have achieved extraordinary results influence employees through personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability.

Research Questions

1. What personal motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

2. What personal ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

3. What social motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

4. What social ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

5. What structural motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

6. What structural ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

Research Design

The two most common approaches to collecting and analyzing data are qualitative methods and quantitative methods. Qualitative research explores themes and interpretations that arise through observations, interviews, artifacts, and words (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patten, 2014). Quantitative research is presented through numbers (Patten, 2014). This study focused on a qualitative research design as the lived experiences of individuals were being identified and explored.

A phenomenological design was selected as the study was aimed at exploring the phenomenon of how selected principals used their influence to bring their employees with them to achieve extraordinary results of achieving National Blue Ribbon Schools (NBRS) status (Creswell & Poth, 2018; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). According to Patton (2015), the purpose of phenomenology is exploring and understanding the "meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experiences" (p. 116). The design for this

study is geared toward qualitive methods because it was able to synthesize elementary principals' individual experiences using the six sources of influence in their schools to achieve groundbreaking results (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Winston, 2020). Additionally, qualitative research primarily focuses on the meaning of people's experiences, perspectives, and cultures (Winston, 2020). Winston (2020) explained that qualitative research allows the researcher to use more flexible methods. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010) and Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative methods allow the researcher to gather data in their natural setting.

In a phenomenological study, the experience from participants are captured using their own words (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Patton (2015) and McMillan and Schumacher (2010) explained that phenomenological research employs methods and processes for data collection that primarily focus on unraveling understanding of the participants' experiences through personal interviews. A phenomenological approach was selected because it emphasizes the phenomenon, or idea, of individuals who have directly experienced them (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Winston, 2020). Thus, this methodology provided effective means for the researcher to gather, analyze, and describe data by conducting interviews, observations, and artifacts (Patton, 2015).

Population

A population is a "group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 129). According to the California Department of Education (2019), there are approximately 5,887 elementary principals

who serve in public schools in California. Therefore, the research population for this study included 5,887 elementary principals in California.

Target Population

The population was narrowed for this study to include elementary principals in Southern California. Specifically, three counties were included: Orange, Los Angeles, and Riverside. The projected target population for this study was 792 elementary principals located in Southern California.

Sample

A sample is a group of individuals who represent the target population in which data will be collected (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Samples are used in research when the population is too large to feasibly explore. Creswell and Poth (2018) emphasized that qualitative research focuses on smaller sample sizes as a means for gathering information-rich data. Creswell and Poth recommended studying three to 10 participants in a phenomenological study. The participants for this study were selected on the basis of meeting established criteria.

Nonprobability sampling is most often used within educational research. Nonprobability does not include any type of random selection (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Purposeful sampling, which is a type of nonprobability sampling, is used to choose specific characteristics from the population that best suits the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Purposeful sampling was used in this research study because the researcher sought information from elementary principals who have successfully led their school to achieve NBRS status. Purposeful sampling is used to focus on the alignment with the purpose, research questions, and the data that are being sought (Patton, 2015). It

was important for the researcher to gather information that provided in-depth and enriching data that keyed in on the lived experiences of exemplary elementary principals within NBRS. Therefore, the sample chosen from the target population was 10 elementary school principals who were purposefully selected for this sample if they met the criteria of having achieved the NBRS Award and been at their school for a minimum of 2 years leading up to the award application.

Instrumentation

The thematic team of three researchers designed an interview protocol of semistructured interview questions, which were aligned to this study's theoretical framework of six sources of influence. In qualitative studies, the researcher collects data that are analyzed through descriptive words from the views of the participant (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patten, 2014). Qualitative research is based on three kinds of data: interviews, observations, and artifacts. According to Patton (2015), "Interviews yield direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge" (p. 14). Patton described observations as detailed experiences of an individual's actions, attitudes, and interpersonal interactions with others. Artifacts can include, but are not limited to, written communication, social media postings, records, publications, and reports. Qualitative inquiry "includes collecting quotes from people, verifying them, and contemplating what they mean" (Patton, 2015, p. 14). The purpose of phenomenological research is to describe and interpret experiences of individuals (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Interview Questions

The three Brandman doctoral students developed semistructured interview questions, in conjunction with their faculty chair, to address the research questions and purpose of this study. There are three different types of interview questions: semistructured, structured, and unstructured. Semistructured questions do not require the respondent to choose from a set of responses, rather it offers open-ended questions that target specific responses from the respondent (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Structured questions have a predetermined set of responses from which the respondent chooses (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Unstructured questions are broad and allow the interviewer to ask the questions in no particular order (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Unstructured questions also involve open-ended questions. For this study, semistructured questions were utilized. The benefit of using semistructured questions is the ability to ask open-ended questions that focus on specificity of the research study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Using semistructured questions in this study was designed to "provide a high degree of objectivity and uniformity" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 206).

Interview Protocol

The interview protocol is a guideline that is created by the researcher to allow open dialogue with the participant, which contains the interview process and interview questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The protocol was used to gather reliable data from the thematic team's participants. The participants within the study received definitions of the variables (Appendix B), the informed consent and audio recording release (Appendix C), and also the Brandman University Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Research Participant's Bill of Rights (Appendix D). Each researcher conducted 10

interviews and asked 12 interview questions, which focused on their own unique sample.

Each researcher in the thematic team used a script. The script was used to ensure

reliability throughout each interview that was conducted. In order for the researchers to

be held responsible for reliability, they used the common interview protocol for the

interviews (Appendix E). The protocol included an introduction, purpose of the study,

the informed consent and consent for audio recording, along with the 12 interview

questions and two probing questions per interview question. The interviews were video

recorded using Zoom, along with audio recording using Temi. The researcher transcribed

the data using Temi, and the data were then analyzed and coded for themes.

Field Testing

The thematic team worked together to develop semistructured questions that

allowed open-ended responses from the participants. Each researcher had their own

unique studies that focused on three different populations of exemplary leaders. The field

testing was conducted to ensure validity and reliability of the research and interview

questions. An expert in qualitative research served as an observer in the field testing.

Both the participant and the observer provided feedback on the interview questions, the

process of the interview, and the researcher's nonverbal communication using

preestablished feedback forms (Appendix F).

Researcher as an Instrument

The credibility of the researcher is essential in qualitative research because the

researcher is the instrument for collecting and analyzing the data (Patton, 2015). The

researcher facilitated each of the interviews within this study and gathered and reviewed

the data. The researcher is an integral part of data collection and interpretations. Once the interviews were conducted and completed, the researcher provided participants a transcript of their interview to review for accuracy of their thoughts. The COVID-19 pandemic caused a great strain in interviewing the participants in person and also limited the data collection to interviews and artifacts. When the researcher immersed herself into the study, the data that were collected were interviews of the participants in their natural environment and collected artifacts through school websites and other sources of public information. Biases can occur when researchers engulf themselves into the research process. Bias could be in the form of beliefs, assumptions, experiences, and interests (Nwagbo, 2019).

At the time of this study, the researcher worked in the classroom for 5 years and held a new leadership position within the same district for 1 year. Although the researcher focused on exemplary leaders, the experiences and interests of the researcher could have introduced bias in this study. In order to reduce bias, critical steps were taken, which included having an expert observer provide feedback during the field test on any behaviors that might suggest bias and diligently following a script with questions that were consistent for all participants and were constructed under the guidance of faculty members.

Validity

In qualitative research, validity is "the degree of congruence between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 330). It is the extent to which the instrument accurately measures what it is intended to measure. The survey interview protocol and questions were developed by the

three thematic members with assistance from their chair. The researchers developed criteria that were specific to their own research studies. Obtaining input from the field-test participants helped to strengthen the validity. Instrument validity in this study was enhanced through different strategies, such as multiple researchers, multimethod strategies, and participant review.

Multiple Researchers

A team of three peer researchers collaborated to develop a series of interview questions and possible probes to gather accurate data of the lived experiences of exemplary leaders within their respective studies. The three team members collaborated to define the variables of the study, drafted the interview questions and probes, conducted individual field testing, made modifications to the interview questions as needed, and implemented the study instrumentation. The team ensured that the interview questions aligned with the purpose of the study. Two Brandman University faculty guided the team in crafting the purpose statement and research questions, defining variables, and structuring the interview protocol.

Multimethod Strategies

The second strategy that enhanced the validity of the study was multimethod strategies. Multimethod strategies are used in qualitative studies to triangulate data through the use of observations, interviews, and collection of artifacts (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This strategy allows for triangulation by yielding diverse perceptions about a topic. This qualitative study used in-depth interviews as the primary data collection method, along with artifacts. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic,

observations were not able to be performed. The artifacts that were collected were memos, newsletters, reports, and vision statements.

Participant Review

The final strategy that enhanced the validity of the study was participant review. Participants received their transcript of the interview to review and ensure the accuracy of the interview and to advise if any modifications were needed. The data that were obtained were then analyzed for themes (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Reliability

Reliability, in qualitative research, "refers to the stability of responses to multiple coders of data sets" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 264). In qualitative research, reliability of obtaining results must be consistent and dependable. To ensure reliability throughout this qualitative phenomenological study, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews via Zoom. Throughout the interview, the researcher avoided vague language to limit confusion or misinterpretations from the participant response. By defining key terms, clear language was established with all participants. This process was used by all three interviewers on the thematic team with 30 subjects to ensure reliability.

Intercoder/Interrater Reliability

Intercoder/interrater reliability was used to ensure results were reliable. Interrater reliability can be used with semistructured interview questions (Patton, 2015). Patton (2015) stated that interrater reliability is appropriate when "all participants are asked the same questions, in the same order, and data are coded all at once at the end of the data collection period" (p. 667). Interrater reliability enhances the reliability within a study as determination of codes are agreed upon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, a peer

researcher reviewed 10% of the data. Creswell and Poth (2018) recommended a standard of 80% agreement among researchers coding the data and themes. The findings that emerged from the data analysis are included in Chapter IV.

Data Collection

The objective of data collection in a qualitative phenomenological study is to gather data on a specific experience or event from the viewpoint of the participant (Creswell & Poth, 2018; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Data collection, in a qualitative study, requires the researcher to gain permission from the participants, conduct good qualitative interviews, record and transcribe information, and respond to any issues that may arise (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the method of data collection for this research study was interviews and artifacts. The participants who were interviewed were 10 elementary school principals in Southern California. The counties in which the principals were interviewed were Los Angeles, Riverside, and Orange.

Interview Process

In preparation for the interview, the participants for this study received documents for their review, which included definitions of the variables (Appendix B), the informed consent and audio-recording release (Appendix C), and also the Brandman University IRB Research Participant's Bill of Rights (Appendix D). The researcher e-mailed these documents to the participants to review and check for understanding for the purpose of the research, along with their rights.

The interview process began with the researcher introducing her research, the purpose of the research, and gently reminding the participant to complete the consent

documents that were sent. Once the consent documents were obtained, the interview

proceeded. The researcher interviewed the participants for roughly 60 minutes using the

12 semistructured and open-ended interview questions, along with possible probes. The

purpose of probes is to gain clarification and depth on responses (McMillan &

Schumacher, 2010).

The interviews were conducted virtually using Zoom due to the worldwide

pandemic that was currently happening. When conducting the interview, the researcher

took notes to highlight important words or phrases that were being said; additionally, the

researcher used Temi for audio recording of the interview. After the interviews were

conducted, the researcher transcribed the interviews and looked for themes using NVivo.

NVivo is a software-based program that is used to code or find themes in data.

Artifacts

The purpose of collecting artifacts is to "describe people's experience,

knowledge, actions and values" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 361) and to assist in

triangulating the data. Different artifacts that can be collected in qualitative research are

personal documents, official documents, and objects. Personal documents can include

diaries, personal letters, lesson plans, and developmental records of children (McMillan

& Schumacher, 2010). Official documents take many different forms, which include

memos, drafts of proposals, newsletters, reports, brochures, and any news releases. The

final form of artifacts are objects, which are tangible objects that reveal meaning or value

(McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For this study, to understand how exemplary

elementary principals achieved NBRS status, the artifacts that were obtained were official

documents, including minutes of meetings, drafts of proposals, program brochures, and

memos. These documents can be found in the appendix. Official documents, as stated by McMillan and Schumacher (2010), are gathered by qualitative researchers to reveal how leaders communicate, think, and understand to create change by using data to drive decisions.

Data Analysis

Phenomenological research requires gathering qualitative data. A characteristic of qualitative analysis is inductive analysis, which is defined as "moving from specific data to general categories or patterns" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 367). It is the researchers job to identify themes, categories, and codes in order to interpret the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015). First, the researcher organized any notes that were taken during the interview. Second, the researcher used an application called Temi to transcribe the interview. Third, the researcher used another application called NVivo to code the data and create themes.

Twelve semistructured and open-ended questions were used with 10 exemplary elementary principals of NBRS; the notes that were taken during the interview revealed repeated themes. Collecting the artifacts revealed themes that were compared and counted along with the frequencies of comments from the interviews. In this study, the researcher coded for common themes related to the six sources of influence: ability (personal, social, and structural) and motivation (personal, social, and structural). The researcher was then able to establish frequencies of themes with high occurrences, which are reported in tables in Chapter IV.

Limitations

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and explore the lived experiences of exemplary elementary principals of organizations that have reached NBRS status. In order to access exemplary elementary principals as efficiently as possible, a limit on the number to be interviewed and the geographical locations had to be established. The limitations of this study were focused on the sample size, time, electronic interviews, and the researcher as an instrument of the study.

Sample Size

Sample size, in qualitative research, is dependent upon the purpose of the research, data collection method, and availability of participants. The sample size for this phenomenological study was limited to 10 exemplary elementary principals of NBRS. Although a higher number is always desirable, it was believed that the researcher could obtain reliable and rich data from the 10 participants. With the combination of the team interviewing 10 participants for their unique studies, the data collected yielded 30 exemplary leaders who have been identified to add to the body of literature and research.

Time

This phenomenological study heavily utilized in-depth interviews to collect rich data. Such methods require time from the participant and the researcher. The schedules of the exemplary elementary principals limited the researcher on the available time for interviews. The scheduled time for each interview was 60 minutes. Time was also limited as the researcher planned to ask 12 interview questions with additional probes to gather rich data. To mitigate this constraint, participants received the documents, including the questions, in advance to be prepared for the interview.

Electronic Interviews

With incredible consideration of the current pandemic, electronic interviews were conducted through Zoom. Virtual interviews yielded a vast amount of data and involved the researcher in meaningful engagement with the participants. By not being able to conduct the interviews face-to-face, observations were limited in seeing these elementary principals in action. This was mitigated by using artifacts that were collected directly or indirectly from the interviewees.

Researcher as an Instrument

The impact of having the researcher as an instrument is personal bias that is used to interpret the data. To reduce the impact that the researcher brought to the study, a field test was conducted with the guidance of an expert qualitative researcher. The field test provided the opportunity to receive expert advice on improvements, practice, and provide feedback on any body language or verbal exchanges that might influence the interviewee. The researcher kept record of notes that were made and reviewed the interview recordings to ensure that nonverbal communication did not lead the participant to respond according to the way the researcher might hope or expect.

Summary

This study utilized a phenomenological qualitative approach to gather data using interviews and the collection of artifacts. With the focus of how exemplary elementary principals use the six sources of influence to achieve NBRS status, the study was designed to obtain rich information on strategies that were used. A discussion was presented to demonstrate the alignment of the purpose statement, research questions, and research design. This chapter covered reliability, validity, and the limitations. Chapter

IV presents the data along with the findings within the study. Chapter V highlights

findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Overview

This study was based on the book *Influencer—The New Science of Leading Change,* by Grenny et al. (2013). In their book, Grenny et al. described six key sources of influence that leaders can use to support them in creating change. The six sources of influence are personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability. The phenomenological research design was selected by a group of three peer researchers and two faculty advisors.

The two faculty members provided guidance and insight as the three peer researchers collaboratively developed definitions for each source of influence and the semi-structured interview questions. Chapter IV begins with a reiteration of the purpose statement, research questions, research methods, data collection procedures, population, and sample. Following these components, an analysis of the data and a detailed report of the key findings of the research study are presented.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and explore how elementary principals who have achieved extraordinary results influence employees through personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability.

Research Questions

1. What personal motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

2. What personal ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

3. What social motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

4. What social ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

5. What structural motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

6. What structural ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

Data collection for this phenomenological research study consisted of in-depth interviews with exemplary elementary school principals and collection of artifacts. The 12 interviews were conducted with a semi-structured format to ensure consistency and accuracy across all participants. The 12 interview transcriptions were the primary source of data for this research study; artifacts served as secondary sources of data in order to increase the accuracy of data findings.

The semi-structured protocol consisted of 12 questions and optional probes to elicit more information from the participants. Each of the six sources of influence was investigated with two questions. During each interview, the participant was provided with a copy of the questions and definitions (Appendix E) of the six sources of influence: personal ability, personal motivation, social ability, social motivation, structural ability, and structural motivation. The questions were created through a collaborative process by

a team of three peer researchers, with guidance from two faculty members (Appendix E).

All 12 interviews were conducted via Zoom as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic

prevented any in-person interviews. Each interview lasted between 38 and 60 minutes,

with an average length of 45 minutes.

Artifacts were collected and analyzed. The researcher collected 30 artifacts. The

types of artifacts collected included minutes of meetings, official documents, program

brochures, drafts of proposals, memos, messages published on school websites, and

vision and mission statements. The artifacts were also coded as a method of triangulation

to increase the accuracy of findings.

Population

A population is a "group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects or

events, that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results

of the research" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 129). According to the California

Department of Education (2019), there are approximately 5,887 elementary principals

who serve in California public schools. Therefore, the research population for this study

was 5,887 elementary principals in the state of California.

Target Population

The population was narrowed for this study to include elementary principals in

Southern California. Specifically, five counties were included: Orange County, Los

Angeles, Riverside County, San Bernardino County, and San Diego County. The

projected target population for this study was 150 elementary principals located in

Southern California.

Sample

A sample is a group of individuals who represent the target population from whom data will be collected (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Samples are used in research when the population is too large to feasibly explore. Creswell and Poth (2018) emphasized that qualitative research focuses on smaller sample sizes as a means to gather information-rich data. Creswell and Poth recommended studying three to 10 participants in a phenomenological study. The participants for this study were selected on the basis of meeting established criteria.

Nonprobability sampling is most often used within educational research. Nonprobability sampling does not include any type of random selection (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Purposeful sampling, which is a type of nonprobability sampling, is used to choose specific characteristics from the population that best suit the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Purposeful sampling was used in this research study because the researcher sought information from elementary principals who had successfully led their school to achieve National Blue Ribbon School status. Purposeful sampling is used to focus on the alignment with the purpose, research questions, and the data that are being sought (Patton, 2015). It was important for the researcher to gather information that provided in-depth and enriching data that keyed in on the lived experiences of exemplary elementary principals within National Blue Ribbon Schools. From the target population, 12 National Blue Ribbon School elementary school principals were purposefully selected for this sample if they met the criteria of having been at their school for a minimum of 2 years leading up to the award application.

Demographic Data

All names of individuals and organizations were omitted, and each participant was assigned an alphabetic identifier. Specific demographic data were not shared to protect the anonymity of participants. Each participant met all criteria identified for them to be considered exemplary. Table 1 illustrates the criteria and how each participant met the criteria.

Table 1

Participants as They Met the Criteria for Exemplary Elementary Principal

Study participant	Elementary principal for a minimum of 2 years leading up to the nomination	National Blue Ribbon School Award recognition
A	X	X
B	X	X
C	X	X
D	X	X
E	X	X
F	X	X
G	X	X
H	X	X
I	X	X
J	X	X
K	X	X
L	X	X

All participants met the criteria for producing extraordinary results. All 12 elementary school principals met both of the criteria. All 12 of the elementary school principals were at their school for a minimum of 2 years leading up to the award; and they were all recipients of the National Blue Ribbon School Award.

Table 2 summarizes the demographic data collected from each participant. All participants had served as elementary school principals for more than two years prior to receiving their National Blue Ribbon School recognition.

Table 2

Study Participant Demographic Data

Study participant	Total years of service as principal	Gender
A	6 years	Female
B	17 years	Female
C	8 years	Male
D	9 years	Male
E	8 years	Male
F	10 years	Female
G	8 years	Female
H	7 years	Female
I	12 years	Male
J	7 years	Female
K	8 years	Male
L	7 years	Female

In this research study, there were seven female elementary principals and five male elementary principals that were interviewed. The average number of years females were elementary principal of their school ranged between 6-17 years. The average number of years males were elementary principal of their school ranged between 8-12 years.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

In order to answer the research questions, the researcher coded themes from the data by each participant and by each question, according to the six sources of influence needed to achieve extraordinary results, as presented in the purpose statement. Additionally, the data from the 12 interviews were synthesized into a matrix in order to

represent the most frequent themes and the number of elementary principals who noted these themes in relation to this study. The data are presented by research question, followed by a summary that synthesizes the findings of the research question.

Data Analysis

Phenomenological research requires gathering qualitative data. A characteristic of qualitative analysis is inductive analysis, which is defined as "moving from specific data to general categories or patterns" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 367). It is the researcher's job to identify themes, categories, and codes in order to interpret the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015). First, the researcher organized any notes that were taken during the interview. Second, the researcher used an application called "Temi" to transcribe the interview. Third, the researcher used another application called "NVivo" to code the data and create themes.

Twelve semistructured and open-ended questions were used with 12 exemplary elementary principals of National Blue Ribbon Schools; the notes that were taken during the interview revealed repeated themes. Collecting the artifacts revealed themes that were compared and counted along with the frequencies of comments from the interviews. In this study, the researcher coded for common themes related to the six sources of influence: ability (personal, social, structural) and motivation (personal, social, structural). The researcher was then able to establish frequencies of themes with high occurrences.

Reliability

Data collected from the in-depth interviews were triangulated with artifacts, the results of which were reported for each of the research questions. A peer reviewed 10%

of the qualitative data to compare the data coding and themes developed by the researcher to determine whether the codes were consistent. The peer researcher independently coded 10% of the data by coding one of the 12 interviews, resulting in 83% agreeance.

Research Question Results

Themes that produced eight or more frequency codes were included in the results. Results are reported in the order of the questions asked in the interview protocol (Appendix E). Frequency counts for each theme are reported in tables from transcribed interviews and collected artifacts. Figure 1 illustrates the frequency percentages for each of the six sources of influence.
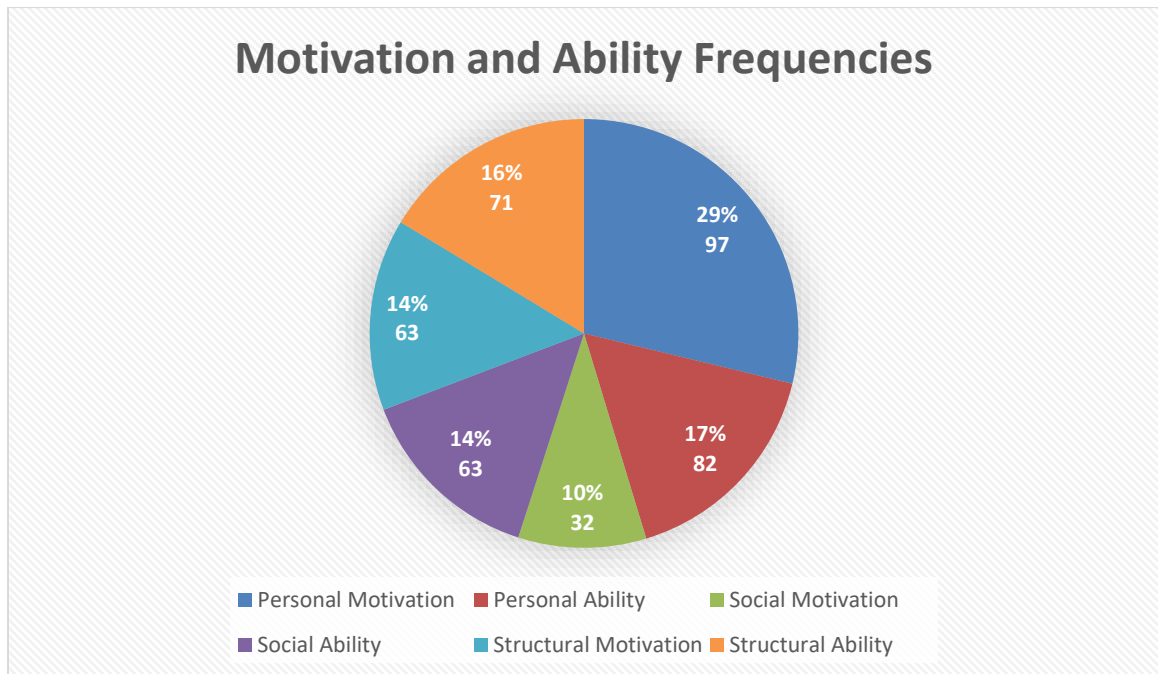
Figure 1. Number of frequencies coded in each source of influence.

Personal Motivation

The thematic team developed the following definition of personal motivation based upon the work of Grenny et al. (2013) and Bénabou and Tirole (2002): the deeply embedded desire to engage in meaningful and pleasurable work created with direct

experiences in an environment in which one can choose to be optimistic about progress. The interview protocol (Appendix E) created by the thematic team and faculty contained two interview questions that were asked of all participants about personal motivation. The two questions related directly to the fourth research question: What personal motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees? Three themes were discovered under the personal motivation category, with a frequency count of 94. Figure 2 shows the themes along with the frequency count for each of the themes.
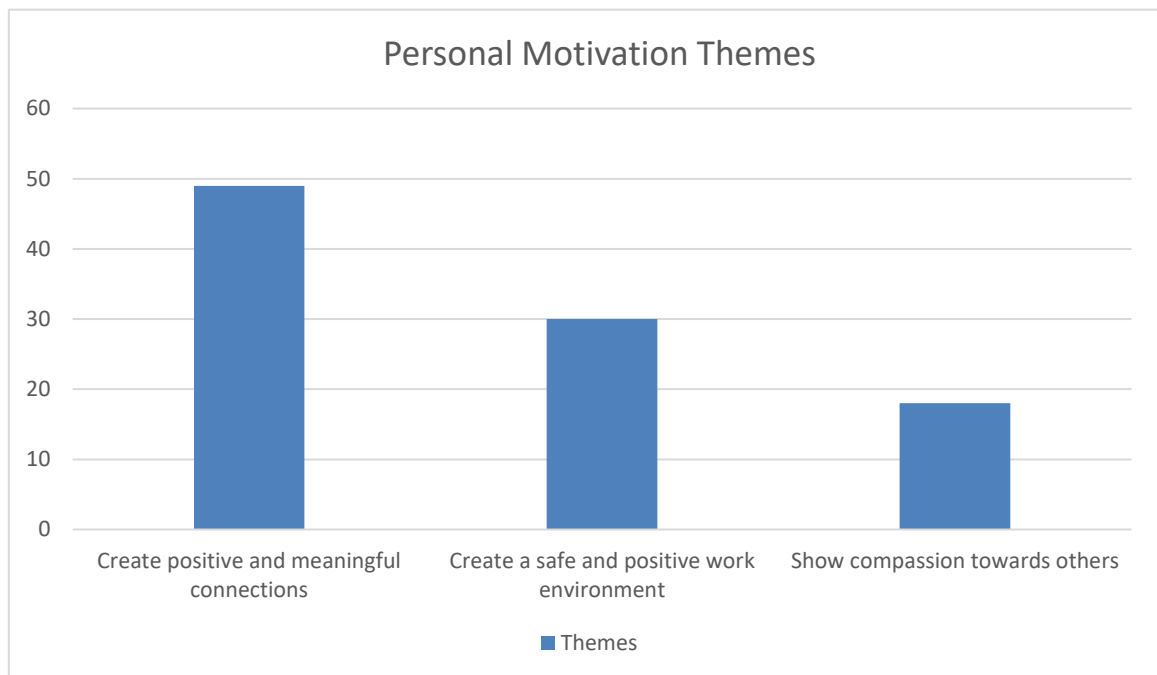
Figure 2. Personal motivation themes.

The highest number of frequencies under personal motivation came from the theme of create positive and meaningful connections, which yielded 49 frequencies. The next theme of create a safe and positive work environment yielded 30 frequencies followed by show compassion toward others, which produced 18 frequencies. Table 3 demonstrates the personal motivation themes by source and frequency of the source.

Table 3

Personal Motivation Themes

Theme	Interviews /frequency	Artifacts /frequency	Total sources	Total frequencies
Create positive and meaningful connection	10/48	1/1	10	49
Create a safe and positive work environment	10/29	1/1	11	30
Show compassion toward others	9/14	4/4	11	18

Create positive and meaningful connections. Denning (2011) and Damico (2019) clearly stated that in order for elementary principals to expose their stakeholders to direct experiences, they must first communicate the goals and values of the school. Creating positive and meaningful connections produced the highest frequency count under personal motivation. This strategy was seen in nine interviews and yielded an overall frequency count of 27. When describing this strategy in an interview, one principal said the following:

> I hear their concerns. I hear the request. I would rather always talk with somebody face to face. I'm not, I'm an e-mailer, but I, I usually would have that direct contact with them because I feel then they really know that I'm, I'm listening to them like their, their concerns are heard or heard.

Another example of this strategy can be seen when Principal D and E both stated that a strategy to make meaningful connections with their staff was to build relationships with them by making sure their staff felt that they "genuinely care about them" (Principal D). Finally, Principal L commented that meaningful connections involve understanding who their employees are, what their strengths are, and empowering them to be involved in the decision-making process.

Create a safe and positive work environment. In today's educational realm, stakeholders want to view elementary principals as positive role models in having the capacity to model different strategies in difficult tasks (Wulfert, 2018). Creating a safe and positive work environment produced the second highest frequency count under personal motivation. This strategy was seen in nine different interviews and yielded an overall frequency count of 12. When describing this strategy in an interview, Principals I and C both stated that they create a safe and supportive environment by recognizing the work that teachers are doing.

Some examples they shared were doing staff recognition shout-outs, providing a weekly bulletin, giving compliments to each after peer-to-peer observations were conducted. Principal L creates a safe and supportive work environment by being their staff members' cheerleader. This principal believes that cheering staff members on dives deep into their staff's personal motivation to achieve the school's goals.

Principals H and I provided opportunities for their staff members to collaborate with each other. These collaborations created an environment where staff members can grow from each other. Principal H stated,

> I would say people do want to feel like they're growing and they're genuinely happy when they have meaningful connections with other people [in] a safe, collegial work environment that has the right balance of support and high expectations. Then nurture and challenge everybody to push the boundaries of excellence.

Principal B commented,

> Building on the concept of trust we're able to share with you know, what I like to
>
> do. So here we go, what I like to do is have them do a self-reflection and see
>
> what kind of goals they have for themselves.

Principals E and H both develop trust and safety within their schools by creating

opportunities for colleagues to share their skills and knowledge with each other.

Principal H clearly stated, "Teachers tend to feel safe when a colleague is sharing wealth

on a new skill." When teachers feel they have a voice, they develop trust with their

principal.

Show compassion toward others. Grenny et al. (2013) stated that a way to help

individuals align their behavior with their motives is not to control their thoughts and

behaviors but instead to be empathetic and pose questions on how those individuals

would want to create change. Empathy, as identified by Segal (2018), is the ability to

place oneself in another person's shoes. Showing compassion toward others produced

the third highest frequency count in seven different interviews and four artifacts and

yielded an overall frequency count of 12. When describing this strategy in an interview,

Principal D stated,

> And I think when they feel comfortable enough to, to open up, because they know
>
> you genuinely care about their feelings and respect them, then it opens up a door
>
> to just being able to better reach kids. Because now instead of just my way of
>
> this, the way we're going to do it, we're getting feedback and kind of developing
>
> it too.

In an artifact that was collected, one principal wrote a strategy they implemented with their staff:

Teachers are doing deep work in understanding the issues of racism and the way it impacts education and we will continue to work to ensure equity and access for all our children. Many of our teachers participated in a 6-week book club, reading *How to Be An Antiracist*. I was able to facilitate meaningful discussions with our teachers as we were introduced to the difference between "not a racist" and an "anti-racist."

Personal Ability

The thematic team developed the following definition of personal ability based upon the work of Grenny et al. (2013), Ericsson et al. (1993), Nowack (2017), and Vaughn (2016): learning and practicing new skills while receiving frequent feedback to achieve results. The interview protocol (Appendix E) created by the thematic team and faculty contained two interview questions that were asked of all participants about personal ability. The two questions related directly to the first research question: What personal ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees? Four themes were discovered under the personal ability category, with a frequency count of 72. Figure 3 shows the themes along with the frequency count for each of the themes.
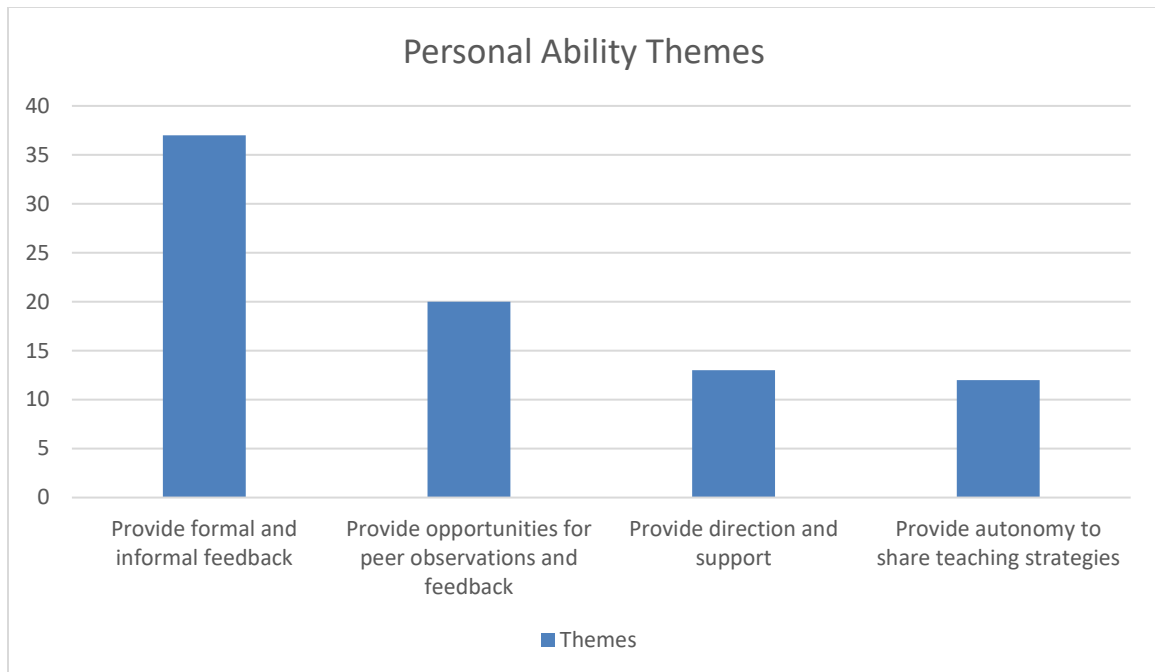
Figure 3. Personal ability themes.

The highest number of frequencies under personal ability came from the theme of provide formal and informal feedback, which yielded 37 frequencies. The next theme of provide opportunities for peer observations and feedback yielded 20 frequencies followed by provide direction and support, which produced 13 frequencies. Provide autonomy to share teaching strategies yielded 12 frequencies. Table 4 demonstrates personal ability themes by source and frequency of the source.

Table 4

Personal Ability Themes

Theme	Interviews /frequency	Artifacts /frequency	Total sources	Total frequencies
Provide formal and informal feedback	10/36	1/1	11	37
Provide opportunities for peer observations and feedback	9/18	2/2	11	20
Provide direction and support	10/13	0/0	10	13
Provide autonomy to share teaching strategies	8/11	1/1	9	12

Provide informal and formal feedback. Provide informal and formal feedback produced the highest frequency count under personal ability. This strategy was seen in 10 interviews and one artifact and yielded an overall frequency count of 37. When describing this strategy in an interview, Principal L stated that the formal feedback she provides is through curriculum-based initiatives along with professional development. Principal L shared,

> So, there's this kind of twofold. One is the curriculum-based district initiative that is part of the organizational goals, but then within our school goals. So, we have like a second layer of professional development that comes with that.

In addition to professional development, Principals D and E created professional learning communities (PLCs) within their schools. These PLCs provided an opportunity for staff members and principals to support each other and talk about effective teaching practices.

Finally, elementary principals provided formal and informal feedback by conducting walkthroughs in the classroom. Principals E, G, and H agreed that conducting walkthroughs set the stage for their staff members as they received feedback based on what was seen. These walkthroughs allowed the principals to give specific feedback, whether formal in the evaluation process or in informal conversations with their teachers. The feedback that is given to the staff revolves around specific skills that are needed.

Provide opportunities for peer observations and feedback. Popan (2020) stated that learning new skills, gaining experiences, and developing ability can help change people's mindsets. Providing opportunities for peer observations and feedback

yielded the second highest frequency count under personal ability. This strategy was

seen in nine interviews and two artifacts and yielded an overall frequency count of 20.

When describing this strategy in an interview, Principal A provided an opportunity for

the staff members to observe each other. Staff members observed each other and then

met afterwards, described what they did and saw, and made modifications based on what

was successful.

Principals D and F provided opportunities for peer observations and feedback by

allowing staff members to go into each other's classrooms. Allowing staff members to

observe each other brings the school's mission and vision statement to life. Principal D

stated, "We've kind of set the direction for our school that aligns with our district goals."

Additionally, when describing this strategy in an artifact, Principal G stated, "We

recognize the importance of educating all children by working collaboratively with

students, staff, parents, and community partners."

Provide direction and support. Leaders provide direction and support as a

means to model and practice new skills for staff to concentrate on what they are doing:

figuring out what works, what does not, and why (Grenny et al., 2013). This strategy was

seen in 10 interviews and yielded a frequency count of 13. When describing this strategy

in an interview, some principals shared that they provide direction and support by

working alongside their staff and encouraging them. Principal F stated, "We also made it

part of our evaluation or what we would call our professional growth plan. So, we add

several goals that are all school goals." Principal J shared,

> My job is to encourage them to better those little skills that they feel confident in.
>
> So sometimes what I'll do is if I find a staff member who is really good on

writing, then I would encourage them to be on one of our writing grant committees, or like when we apply for things, or to be on the ELA committee.

Provide autonomy to share teaching strategies. By creating a collaborative community, or a community of practice, stakeholders and leaders share what they know and assist each other to improve curriculum, instruction, and learning (Junyk, 2019). This strategy was seen in eight interviews and one artifact and yielded an overall frequency count of 12. When describing this strategy in an interview, some principals shared that they provide flexibility among their staff by allowing them to share resources, successes, and teaching strategies through different platforms. Principal G shared the following: "My teachers record their implementations and share out as a google drive folder. So everybody could see their lesson, so they could see how it's implemented in kindergarten, how it's implemented in fifth grade." One artifact that was collected implemented this strategy by referencing, "Our teachers employ best instructional practices which include differentiated instruction at all academic levels." A secondary artifact utilized this strategy by referencing,

> Collaboration time, combined with a solid intervention program, has played a major role in closing achievement gaps and our overall academic success. This process has strengthened first instruction, improved teachers' ability to provide intervention, built capacity among teachers, and allowed students to quickly receive needed supports in order to continue making strides. During collaboration, teachers creatively plan units together, ensure specific standards for units are appropriately taught, administer common assessments, analyze data for strengths/weaknesses, and discuss instructional strategies for future lessons.

Social Motivation

The thematic team developed the following definition of social motivation based upon the work of Grenny et al. (2013) and Weiner (2006): the deeply held desire to be accepted, respected, and connected to humans. The interview protocol (Appendix A) created by the thematic team and faculty contained two interview questions that were asked of all participants about social motivation. The two questions related directly to the fifth research question: What social motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees? Two themes were discovered under the personal motivation category, with a frequency count of 21. Figure 4 shows the themes along with the frequency count for each of the themes.
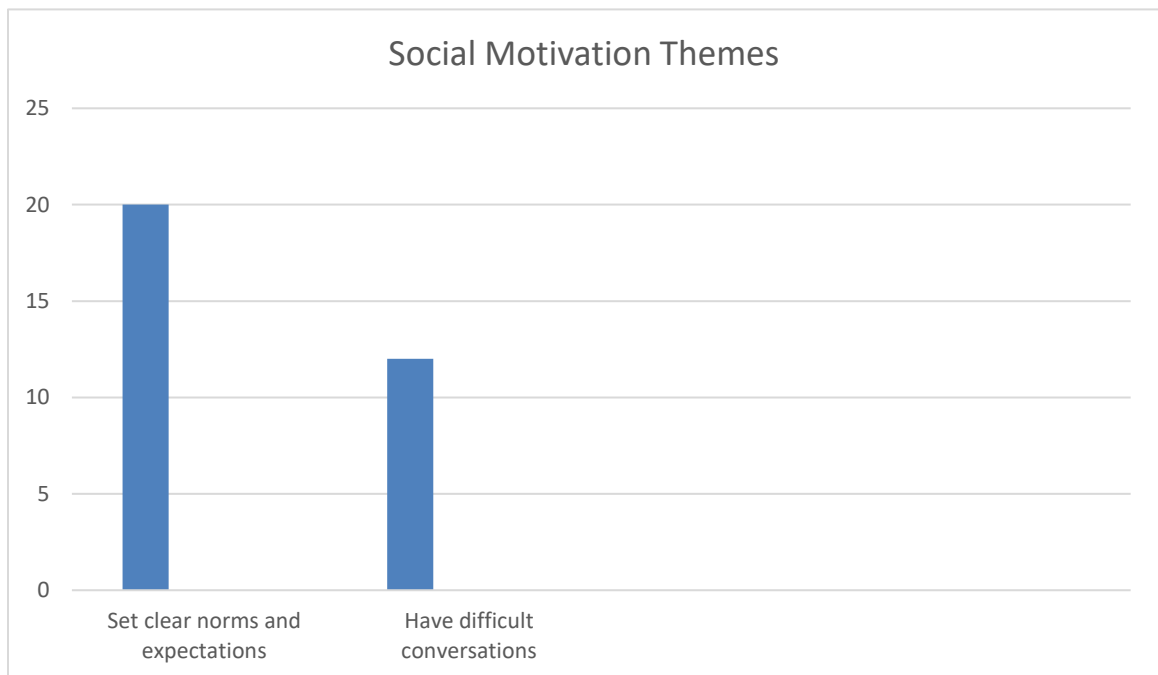
Figure 4. Themes for social motivation.

The highest number of frequencies under social motivation came from the theme of set clear norms and expectations, which yielded 20 frequencies. The next theme of

having difficult conversations yielded 12 frequencies. Table 5 demonstrates the social

motivation themes by source and frequency of the source.

Table 5

Social Motivation Themes

Theme	Interviews /frequency	Artifacts /frequency	Total sources	Total frequencies
Set clear norms and expectations	8/13	7/7	15	20
Have difficult conversations	9/12	0/0	9	12

Set clear norms and expectations. Social norms are behaviors that are accepted

and implemented by all members of a culture (Lundin, 2019). In order to create a new

normal, effective leaders must engage their stakeholders in order to elicit passion to

create a positive impact on school success (Powell & Jordan, 2019). This strategy was

seen in eight interviews and seven artifacts and yielded an overall frequency of 20. When

describing this strategy in an interview, a few principals shared that it is about modeling

the norms they wish for their employees to implement. An example of this is found in

what Principal E shared:

> You know, that's part of professional courtesy modeling, respect not as a leader,
>
> you don't put people down, you don't demean people, you treat people [with]
>
> dignity. I always say, I would never ask a staff member to do something that I
>
> wouldn't do myself. And you know, I can, I help the custodians with setups of
>
> events. I help teachers with students. So having the leader model there, you
>
> know, and walk the talk, if you will, you know, being, being the person who
>
> models, how to treat people respectfully and you know, not yelling at people and,
>
> you know, things like that, putting people down or anything like that. So I think

it's important to model what you expect and then make it clear what you expect to in your communications and you know, interactions with staff.

Artifacts that were collected show that numerous principals use their school vision and mission statements as an important aspect in setting clear norms and expectations. By using the school vision and mission statement, all stakeholders are held accountable.

Have difficult conversations. Elementary principals hold their stakeholders accountable by keeping them aware of their responsibility and self-reflecting on their teaching practices (Coffey et al., 2015). This strategy was seen in nine different interviews and yielded an overall frequency of 12. When describing this strategy in an interview, a few principals shared that they try to empower their staff to voice their opinions in a constructive and positive way. Principal B shared the following:

> So if it's a, if it's a coworker, I really try and empower the person who's complaining to me about what the colleague said or did [that] bothered them. I'm really trying to empower them to be able to use their own words, to address that. Because again, I think if they use my power to address it, it will break down what we just talked about, which is the collegiality between them.

Principal G also agreed with this strategy and shared the following:

> We had some clash with a member in a grade level, because you know, when you're coming in new from other schools and you are, you have a wealth of experience and you come to a new school with your grade-level member who might have less experience than you. So obviously you're eager to share, but there are things that's already in place for our school. So, so I see that clashing

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and I let them clash because you know, they're professionals. And I want them to

grow from that clashing because those are teamwork that needs to be hashed out.

And I did that before, and I realized, "Oh, I need to step out of this." You know,

that they need to talk. They need to understand, you know, if they need to know

worst case scenario, they have to compromise.

Social Ability

The thematic team developed the following definition of social ability based upon

the work of Grenny et al. (2013) and Kardos et al. (2017): the capacity to enlist the power

of human interactions and group solidarity to provide support for taking risks and

creating change. The interview protocol (Appendix A) created by the thematic team and

faculty contained two interview questions that were asked of all participants about social

ability. The two questions relate directly to the second research question: What social

ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees? Four

themes were discovered under the social ability category, with a frequency count of 62.

Figure 5 shows the themes along with the frequency count for each of the themes.

The highest number of frequencies under social ability came from the theme of

providing unrestricted teaching conditions, which yielded 25 frequencies. The next

theme of define objective and allow for problem-solving yielded 17 frequencies, followed

by risk taking at 11 frequencies. Finally, have representations of different groups had 10

frequencies. Table 6 demonstrates the social ability themes by source and frequency of

the source.
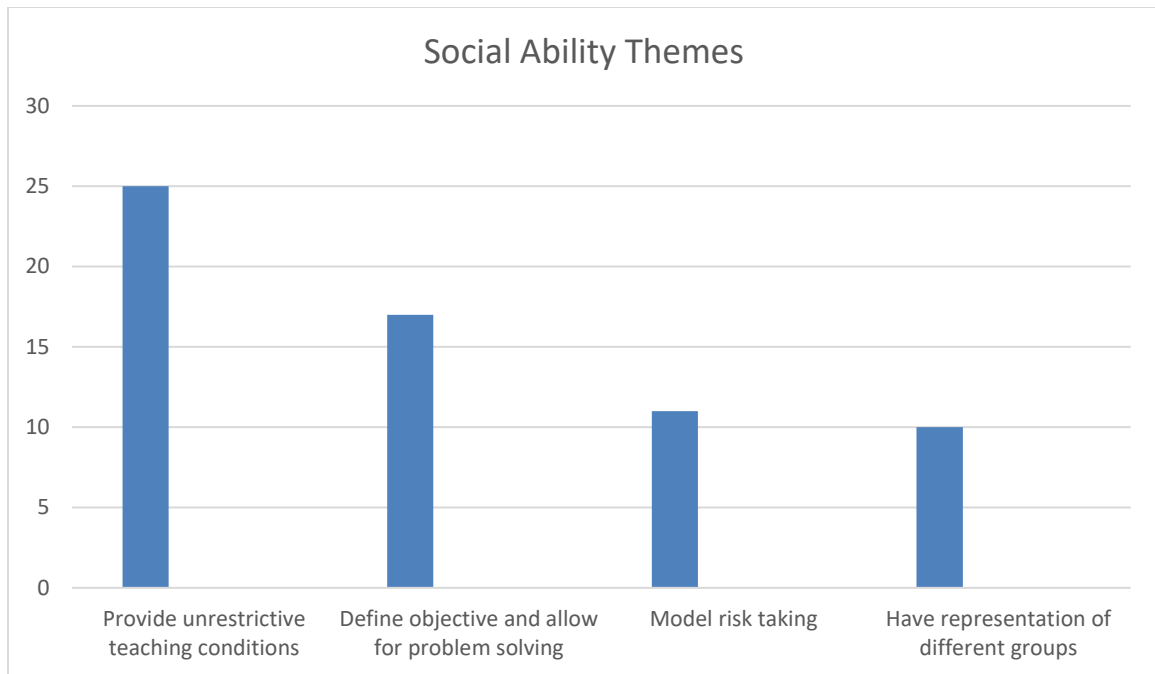
Figure 5. Social ability themes.

Table 6

Social Ability Strategies

Theme	Interviews /frequency	Artifacts /frequency	Total sources	Total frequencies
Provide unrestricted teaching conditions	11/19	6/6	17	25
Define objective and allow for problem solving	10/17	0/0	10	17
Model risk taking	5/6	5/5	10	11
Have representation of different groups	5/6	4/4	9	10

Provide unrestricted teaching conditions. This strategy was seen in 11

interviews and six artifacts and yielded an overall frequency count of 25. Elementary

principals not only use their social networks by building relationships with others

(McGarry, 2019), they also analyze the environment in order to best support long-lasting

and transformational change. When describing this strategy in an interview, some

principals shared that they tap into their staff's strengths. Principals A and D offer the least restrictive environment within their school by providing support structures where staff can come together and share challenges and successes. These principals believe in giving their staff the opportunity to work together and learn from each other.

Principal B shared a way in which they provide unrestrictive teaching conditions in their school culture by recognizing that everyone has something to bring to the table. Principal B stated, "Let's see if we can find something that is aligned with what they're really good at and assign them that; that way they feel good about their contributions." By tapping into people's individual strengths, educators are more likely to take risks, share what they know, and drive the school to reach specific goals. When describing this strategy, an artifact highlighted the importance of partnering with families: "We pride ourselves on connecting with families and partnering with them to create the best school possible."

Define objective and allow for problem-solving. This strategy was seen in 10 interviews and yielded an overall frequency count of 17. C. D. Johnson (2013) identified solidarity as leaders who take risks in engaging in deep meaningful networks and exchange information and strategies to further transformational change within their schools. When describing this strategy in an interview, Principal C defined the objective for their staff by allowing them to view a problem and brainstorm different solutions as a team. Principal C clearly stated, "I really try to bring the teams together and the staff together in discovering what the opportunity is." Principal E agreed and stated,

So I think one of the ways to get people to work together as a team is to

understand the common need or the common goal and how we all fit into reaching

that goal successfully. So you know, again, I think communication is key on that.

This is what we need to accomplish, and this is your role in accomplishing that.

Letting them do the work, not telling them what to do, and letting them do the

work is giving them confidence in their ability.

Model risk taking. This strategy was seen in five interviews and five artifacts

and yielded an overall frequency count of 11. Elementary principals use human

interactions and group solidarity with their teachers to provide support for taking risks

and creating change (Grenny et al., 2013). When describing this strategy, an artifact

highlighted the importance of students being leaders by referencing, "All voices are

valued during classroom community circles, and teachers utilize restorative practices to

encourage student responsibility." Another artifact highlighted the use of this strategy by

referencing, "Our purpose is to challenge and inspire students to make a positive and

profound impact on their world." Additionally, another artifact used this strategy by

referencing, "Ultimately, our goal is to develop a group of curious, inquisitive, and

thoughtful students, who use their questioning skills to problem solve for the world in

which they currently live and the world they will eventually lead."

Have representation of different groups. This strategy was seen in five

interviews and four artifacts and yielded an overall frequency count of 10. Elementary

principals utilize their social capital through engagement in interactions and networking in

order to gain access to ideas on how to achieve groundbreaking results. Having

representation of different groups allows for networking within different elementary

schools. This provides elementary principals an opportunity to share successful practices

and strategies with others. An artifact referenced how this strategy was utilized: "Students

have opportunities to show leadership in a multitude of ways from sharing classroom responsibilities to school-wide leadership roles including student greeters, a student assembly team, and student council." Another artifact highlighted the importance of families and school communities:

> The strength of our educational program draws from all members of the school community who share our vision. Parents lead several curriculum enrichment and academic support programs such as Hands on Art, LiveWell Nutrition & Gardening, and Science Week. Community members support and participate in our [omitted school name] Fun Run, Kids Helping Kids, Western Night and our annual Jog-A-Thon.

Structural Motivation

The thematic team developed the following definition of structural motivation based upon the work of Grenny et al. (2013) and Fisher (2015): rewards, punishment, or incentives that can be used to encourage or discourage a person's behavior. The interview protocol (Appendix E) created by the thematic team and faculty contained two interview questions that were asked of all participants about structural motivation. The two questions related directly to the sixth research question: What structural motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees? Four themes were discovered under the structural motivation category, with a frequency count of 63. Figure 6 shows the themes along with the frequency count for each of the themes.
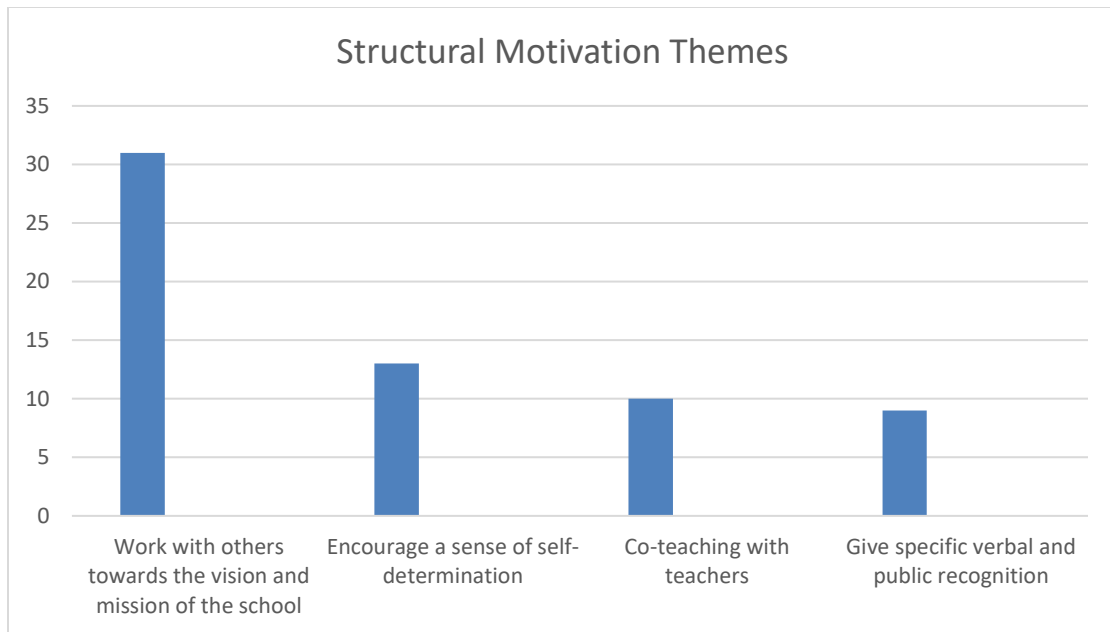
Figure 6. Themes for structural motivation.

The highest number of frequencies under structural motivation came from the theme of working with others toward the vision and mission of the school, which yielded 31 frequencies. The next theme of encouraging a sense of self-determination yielded 13 frequencies, coteaching with teachers at 10 frequencies, and finally, give specific verbal and public recognition at nine frequencies. Table 7 demonstrates the political motivation themes by source and frequency of the source.

Table 7

Structural Motivation Strategies

Theme	Interviews /frequency	Artifacts /frequency	Total sources	Total frequencies
Work with others toward the vision and mission of the school	11/24	7/7	18	31
Encourage a sense of self-determination	7/9	4/4	11	13
Coteaching with teachers	9/10	0/0	9	10
Give specific verbal and public recognition	8/9	0/0	8	9

Work with others toward the vision and mission of the school. This strategy was seen in 11 interviews and seven artifacts and yielded an overall frequency count of 31. As explained by Grenny et al. (2013), structural motivation allows the worth of behaviors to bring the majority of the motivational weight. An artifact that was collected, school mission and vision statement, presented this strategy by stating the following: "At [omitted school name] we respect ourselves and others, we take responsibility for our actions and we maintain a safe environment that encourages learning and sparks creativity."

When describing this strategy in an interview, Principals A and H enhanced their structural motivation by modeling the expectations they wish to see in their school. By modeling expectations, their staff members are encouraged to put in more effort in their work. Principal A said, "I think the process of kind of modeling your own expectations of behavior is one of the things that is very evident in your staff" while Principal H stated, "It's handholding step-by-step. So I walked them through what to anticipate in terms of the questions from students and parents." This type of modeling encouraged staff to reach important goals for their school. Principal B stated,

> It's showing them the vision as much as you can, including them in the vision and
> then updating them as you go along and then relying on them for the parts that
> they can do. So that they feel like they had a part in achieving it.

Encourage a sense of self-determination. This strategy was seen in seven interviews and four artifacts and yielded an overall frequency count of 13. Elementary school principals use the role of "things," such as environmental aesthetics, to encourage changed behavior (by rewarding stakeholders with stickers or monetary rewards),

mindset and attitude among all stakeholders, which include staff, teachers, families, and community. A school mission statement presented this strategy by stating the following: "Our intent is to motivate our children to seek and reach their maximum potential through honorable and productive behaviors, which will enable them to become responsible members of society." When describing this strategy in an interview, Principal B stated:

> It's an art project that they were going to do in class anyway, but she had them do it on this paper so that I could like, basically send them as thank-you cards to the people who donated. So yeah, it was this like, and then updates, you know, hope we've raised, you know, $2 million so far we're 10%, you know, into our goal.

Another principal described this strategy as allowing the staff to feel as if they are in charge of their own destinies.

Coteaching with teachers. This strategy was seen in nine interviews and yielded an overall frequency count of 10. Elementary principals use coaching as part of their role to enhance teaching and increase student academic success (Flavin, 2016). When describing this strategy in an interview, one principal stated the following:

> I think the process of kind of modeling your own expectations of behavior is one of the things that is very evident to your staff. So being a hard worker, being diligent, putting in long hours is received very well by all of my teachers. It models for those teachers who whose hours are slightly less than everybody else's hours. It has encouraged them to increase their hours. Conversations with those teachers about the things that they're doing well in the classroom has helped to open up additional conversations about things that I wasn't aware of, that they were doing at home.

Another principal described this strategy by sharing the following:

> So what I did was I developed lessons with them. I come from an engineering
> background from my undergraduate and I demonstrated teaching the lessons and I
> used to teach high school math and computer science. So it's handholding step-
> by-step. So I walked them through what to anticipate in terms of the questions
> from students and parents. So just getting the first five lessons done with them.
> It, and they, they saw that, "Hey, you know, [omitted principal name] is not just,
> you know, this guy with a doctoral degree in leadership and he doesn't, he taught
> high school, but he actually developed some lessons for us."

Give specific verbal and public recognition. This strategy was seen in eight
interviews and yielded an overall frequency count of nine. Principals who use reflective
feedback and ask clarifying questions encourage their stakeholders to be more intentional
about their thought processes (Flavin, 2016). When describing this strategy in an
interview, one principal stated,

> So you know, again, relying on that, PBIS aspect of things really try to encourage
> positive behaviors and recognize those making significant strides. So we'll do a
> weekly shout-out, you know, "Hey, thanks to miss [omitted staff name]. She, she
> did an optional professional learning and shared with you the awesome resources.
> And if you didn't see her e-mail here it is," you know, and so that, that
> recognition of the efforts to the greater good.

A few other principals described this strategy as calling out specific details a staff
member did. Additionally, some principals would do check-ins and provide immediate
verbal and public recognition on their check-ins.

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Structural Ability

      The thematic team developed the following definition of structural ability based upon the work of Grenny et al. (2013) and Blumberg and Pringle (1982): elements of a person's environment such as physical space, surroundings, or atmosphere that positively affect performance. The interview protocol (Appendix E) created by the thematic team and faculty contained two interview questions that were asked of all participants about structural ability. The two questions related directly to the third research question: What structural ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees? Four themes were discovered under the structural ability category, with a frequency count of 71. Figure 7 shows the themes along with the frequency count for each of the themes.
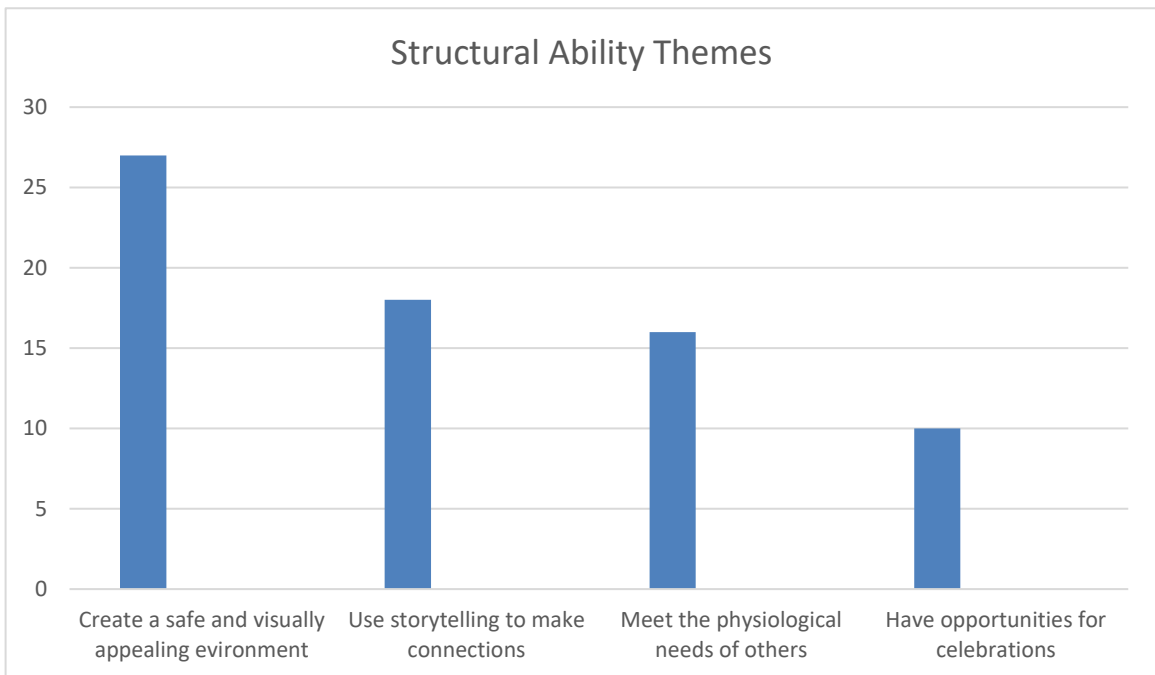
Figure 7. Themes for structural ability.

The highest number of frequencies under structural motivation came from the theme of creating a safe and visually appealing environment, which yielded 27 frequencies. The next theme of using storytelling to make connections yielded 18 frequencies, then meeting the physiological needs of others at 16 frequencies. Finally having opportunities for celebrations had 10 frequencies. Table 8 demonstrates the structural ability themes by source and frequency of the source.

Table 8

Structural Ability Strategies

Theme	Interviews /frequency	Artifacts /frequency	Total sources	Total frequencies
Create a safe and visually appealing environment	10/26	1/1	11	27
Develop a strong support system	10/13	5/5	15	18
Meet the physiological needs of others	9/16	0/0	9	16
Have opportunities for celebrations	3/7	3/3	6	10

Create a safe and visually appealing environment. This strategy was seen in 10 interviews and one artifact and yielded an overall frequency count of 27. Kim and Young (2014) agreed that a better organizational design can improve employee engagement and productivity. When describing this strategy in an interview, Principal A, Principal C, and Principal H stated that they create a safe and visually appealing environment for their staff by including members of their school community to provide assistance. Principal A shared that they involved the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to help raise funds to purchase seating arrangements for outside the classrooms while

Principals C and H both provide an organized and clean environment that reflects the developmentally appropriate learning among students on the campus. Principal E shared,

It can be safety from like right now from getting sick, you know, from illness and then safe to share and not feel like they're being judged. So number one, it's kind of those biological needs, right? Food, water, and safety are. So I think, you know, being safe, so providing a safe environment, making sure that we have like good air quality in the classrooms clean classroom spaces.

Develop a strong support system. This strategy was seen in 10 interviews and five artifacts and yielded an overall frequency count of 18. In today's educational environments, elementary principals are responsible for designing their organization that supports the organization's goals (Weinclaw, 2019). As Grenny et al. (2013) and Damico (2019) stated, storytelling can be used to create change; however, storytelling should include the voices of the stakeholders, their families, and also their students. When describing this strategy in an artifact, one vision statement implemented this strategy by making it a goal to foster and create an environment where students feel secure and safe.

Another artifact described this strategy in their vision and mission statement. The vision and mission statement was as follows:

We are committed to the following:

- Creating a safe and caring school that students enjoy going to and parents are proud to have their children attend.
- Increasing student achievement for ALL students and helping each student master the CA state standards.

- Knowing each student as a unique and special individual so that we can challenge him or her at his or her current level.

- Developing a strong school/family communication and support system.

Meet the physiological needs of others. This strategy was seen in nine interviews and yielded an overall frequency count of 16. When describing this strategy in an interview, some ways that elementary principals meet the physiological needs of others is by providing things for their employees. Principal E shared,

They want to feel safe and you want to provide a safe work environment. And that can look, that can be, you know, kind of three different things, right? It can be physical safety. It can be safety from like right now from getting sick, you know, from illness and then safe to share and not feel like they're being judged. So number one, it's kind of those biological needs, right? Food, water, and safety are. So I think, you know, being safe, so providing a safe environment, making sure that we have like good air quality in the classrooms, clean classroom spaces.

Have opportunities for celebrations. This strategy was seen in three interviews and three artifacts and yielded an overall frequency count of 10. When describing this strategy in an interview, Principal F shared the following:

We make sure we have coffee and things stocked up. We don't ask the teachers to bring any of that stuff in so that they can have the drip, enjoy the smell and the taste of coffee if they like that. We have water coolers that have, we provide that option for teachers and staff so that they can feel comfortable drinking water all day from these sources. I mean, I don't know. They seem, maybe seem like

small things, but I think they do come together to create that that tone and that space, that warm space for everybody.

Another principal described this strategy as providing frequent tours of their school to showcase their students and faculty members. Additionally, Principal L described the use of this strategy:

Every Friday I buy the office lunch and then I don't have to do that. Or sometimes I'll just buy coffee. And maybe again, I don't need to do that, but it's amazing how that $5 lunch, like, makes them want to work till six o'clock to do all that extra work. And I get lots of positive praise about that. And please knowing that there's no expectation if you want to clock out at four that's your contractual time, and I will pay you for the overtime that you have worked.

Principal H stated,

So this atmosphere is created through storytelling, through traditions and celebrations. So we have staff appreciation days. We celebrate bridal showers, baby showers. A lot of it is personal, but why not? This is like we tap into that celebration. When you have an opportunity to celebrate, when you have an opportunity to thank somebody, do it, it's free, right? If this is how you make those meaningful connections, where people feel relatedness that is like you have an opportunity to tap into people's intrinsic motivation. We have character education, assemblies, and flag assemblies.

Key Findings

All transcribed interviews and artifacts were coded into themes. From those themes, eight key findings emerged from the data. These findings support how

exemplary elementary principals use the following sources of influence to achieve extraordinary results: personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability. Key findings were identified from themes that produced at least 20 frequencies, had frequency counts from at least eight of the 12 participant interviews, and were triangulated through at least one code from artifacts. Table 9 shows the key findings along with their corresponding frequency counts.

Table 9

Key Findings

Source of influence	Key finding	Interview sources	Artifact sources	Total frequencies
Personal motivation	Create positive and meaningful connections	10	1	49
	Create a safe and positive work environment	10	1	30
Personal ability	Provide formal and informal feedback	10	1	37
	Provide opportunities for peer observations and feedback	9	2	20
Social motivation	Set clear norms and expectations	8	7	20
Social ability	Provide least restrictive environment	11	6	25
Structural motivation	Work with others towards the vision and mission of the school	11	7	31
Structural ability	Create a safe and visually appealing environment	10	1	27

Each of the six sources of influence yielded at least one key finding. The following are the key findings for this study:

Key Findings: Personal Motivation

1. *Create positive and meaningful connections* was identified in 10 interviews and one artifact and yielded an overall frequency count of 49.

2. *Create a safe and positive work environment* was identified in 10 interviews and one artifact and yielded an overall frequency count of 30.

Key Findings: Personal Ability

3. *Provide formal and informal feedback* was identified in 10 interviews and one artifact and yielded an overall frequency count of 37.

Key Findings: Social Ability

4. *Provide least restrictive environment* was identified in 11 interviews and six artifacts and yielded an overall frequency count of 25.

Key Findings: Structural Motivation

5. *Work with others towards the vision and mission of the school* was identified in 11 interviews and seven artifacts and yielded an overall frequency count of 31.

Key Findings: Structural Ability

6. *Create a safe and visually appealing environment* was identified in 10 interviews and one artifact and yielded an overall frequency count of 27.

Summary

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and explore how elementary principals who have achieved extraordinary results influence employees through personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability. Twelve interviews were conducted with elementary principals of National Blue Ribbon Schools. This chapter also provided a summary of

the 21 themes associated with the research questions regarding how elementary principals use the six sources of influence to achieve extraordinary results. Data were summarized and coded from the 12 interviews. In addition, coding and theming of artifacts was conducted, which validated the results and/or the descriptions shared by participants during the interviews by the researcher. Eight key findings were identified, which described how elementary principals use the six sources of influence to achieve extraordinary results. Chapter V of this study offers a summary of major findings, conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this phenomenological study, the researcher identified and explored how exemplary elementary principals who have achieved extraordinary results influence employees through personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability. Using data from interviews and artifacts, the researcher was able to identify eight key findings. Conclusions that are derived from the eight key findings are identified in this chapter. Chapter V is a summary of the study, which includes major findings, unexpected findings, conclusions, implications for action, recommendations for future research, and concluding remarks.

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and explore how exemplary elementary principals who have achieved extraordinary results influence employees through personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability. This study has the following six research questions:

1. What personal motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

2. What personal ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

3. What social motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

4. What social ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

5. What structural motivation strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

6. What structural ability strategies do exemplary elementary principals use to influence employees?

In this phenomenological study, interviews were conducted with 12 exemplary elementary principals meeting the criteria listed in Chapter III: I: having achieved the NBRS Award and been at their school for a minimum of 2 years leading up to the award application, to identify and explore how they use personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability to achieve extraordinary results. The data collected were sourced through 12 personal, one-on-one interviews with elementary principals and were triangulated with data points from 15 artifacts.

Major Findings

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to identify and explore how exemplary elementary principals who have achieved extraordinary results influence employees through personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability. From the eight Key Findings in Chapter IV, six major findings were identified from themes that produced at least 25 frequencies, had frequency counts from at least nine of the 12 participant interviews, and triangulated through at least one code from artifacts. The following are major findings for this study:

Major Finding: Personal Motivation

1. *Create positive and meaningful connections* was identified in 10 interviews and one artifact and yielded an overall frequency count of 49.

2. *Create a safe and positive work environment* was identified in 10 interviews and one artifact and yielded an overall frequency count of 30.

Major Findings: Personal Ability

3. *Provide formal and informal feedback* was identified in 10 interviews and one artifact and yielded an overall frequency count of 37.

Major Finding: Social Ability

4. *Provide unrestrictive teaching conditions* was identified in 11 interviews and six artifacts and yielded an overall frequency count of 25.

Major Finding: Structural Motivation

5. *Work with others toward the vision and mission of the school* was identified in 11 interviews and seven artifacts and yielded an overall frequency count of 31.

Major Finding: Structural Ability

6. *Create a safe and visually appealing environment* was identified in 10 interviews and one artifact and yielded an overall frequency count of 27.

Unexpected Findings

The most unexpected finding of this study was how often strategies fit into more than one category or source of influence. For example, although a strategy like creating a positive and safe work environment could be a personal motivation strategy, it may also align with structural ability strategies. The findings of this study were less about fitting into one specific category within the sources of influence and more about the flexibility of the sources of influence. Additionally, it was unexpected for social motivation to have the smallest number of frequencies in comparison to the other sources of influence and therefore failed to rise to the level of a major finding for this study. The definition for

social motivation is the deeply held desire to be accepted, respected, and connected to humans. Honoring, valuing, caring for, and developing people individually and making people feel connected to work and its mission all create the sense of well-being that people need to thrive (Crowley, 2011). The findings of this study yielded to show instances in which employees felt accepted, respected and connected to each other and their principal.

Conclusions

As a result of the major findings, the following conclusions were drawn about how elementary principals who want to achieve extraordinary results should use the following sources of influence with their employees: personal motivation, personal ability, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability.

Conclusion 1: Personal Motivation

If elementary principals wish to achieve extraordinary results, they must focus their attention on creating positive and meaningful connections with their employees.

Elementary principals in this study worked hard to ensure they created a positive and meaningful connections with their staff. They saw how important it was to understand their staff on a personal level. Elementary principals in this study did this by hearing the concerns of their staff, having direct contact with their staff, making their staff feel genuinely cared about, and empowering their staff to be involved in the decision-making process. By doing this, principals are signaling to their staff that they are heard and cared about.

Additionally, elementary principals create positive and meaningful connections with their employees by using storytelling. Grenny et al, (2013) and Denning (2011)

both agree, using storytelling helps leaders make meaningful connections with their employees. Story telling provides the venue for leaders to share personal experiences that helps them to relate to their people. Connecting in this way inspires their employees to believe they, too, can achieve extraordinary results.

Conclusion 2: Personal Motivation

Elementary principals trying to influence employees to achieve extraordinary results must create a positive culture.

Elementary principals in this study worked hard to ensure they created positive culture. They emphasized a positive work environment by providing weekly bulletins to the families and staff members, which wove in staff recognition shout-outs. Elementary principals also created a positive culture by supporting their employees through compliments and cheering them on. Elementary principals create a culture of support for their teachers by providing planning time, encouraging engagement in activities, creating a sense of belonging by sharing the mission and vision statement of the school, and creating professional learning communities in order for students to be successful learners (Cyprés, 2017; Habegger, 2008). Stakeholders who feel they are supported will themselves support or buy into organizational change (C. Peterson et al., 2017).

Elementary principals create a positive culture by ensuring safety throughout the campus. Elementary principals ensure safety within their employees and students by keeping the grounds clean, spiderwebs dusted, not having clutter and allowing an inclusive space for those with disabilities. Escalante (2019) and Cyprés (2017) agreed that educational leaders must provide a supportive environment where consistency in credibility and reliability are visible. Elementary principals in this study continue to be

viewed as positive role models amongst their employees by keeping everyone accountable for keeping their school safe and clean.

Conclusion 3: Personal Ability

Elementary principals trying to influence employees to achieve extraordinary results must provide formal and informal feedback.

Elementary principals in this study were clear and consistent about the importance of providing formal and informal feedback. Elementary principals did this through professional development opportunities, talking about school goals, professional learning communities, conducting classroom walkthroughs, and having informal conversations with their staff. Popan (2020) stated that learning new skills, gaining experiences, and developing ability can help change people's mindsets to embrace much needed change.

Elementary principals give their staff effective feedback by providing specific and direct observable actions to model for their staff and help them to understand the impact their actions have on others (i.e., students, colleagues, community members, and parents; Weitzel, 2019). According to Grenny et al. (2013), "Immediate feedback, coupled with complete concentration, accelerates learning" (p. 128). By providing immediate feedback, elementary principals build self-confidence in their employees' ability to achieve excellence. This strategy was used to support their staff, and they related it to achieving extraordinary results.

Conclusion 4: Social Ability

Elementary principals must empower their people in order to achieve extraordinary results.

In this study, elementary principals allowed autonomy for their staff to share ideas, teach, and implement new strategies. Elementary principals believe that by empowering teachers, the team can and will achieve extraordinary results. Elementary principals in this study tap into the strengths of their employees and recognized everyone has strengths to bring to the table. Elementary principals use human interactions and group solidarity with their teachers to provide support for taking risks and creating change (Grenny et al., 2013).

Additionally, elementary principals gave their employees opportunities to work collaboratively together, which allows employees to develop self-confidence to take risks and share what they know. Elementary principals empowered teachers to partner with families and the community to create a high-functioning and inclusive school. C. D. Johnson (2013) commented agreeance between leaders and employees are needed in order for leaders to take risks in engaging in deep, meaningful networks and exchange information and strategies to further the transformational change within their school

Conclusion 5: Structural Motivation

Elementary principals must use a variety of modalities to influence their employees towards the vision and mission of the school in order to achieve extraordinary results.

In this study, elementary principals worked with others toward the vision and mission of the school. Elementary principals in this study modeled their expectations with their employees. Through modeling, employees are able to clearly see the expectations that are expected, and are encouraged to put in more effort into their work.

Elementary principals use environmental aesthetics to encourage changed behavior, rewards such as stickers or monetary rewards, and mindset and attitude among all stakeholders, which include staff, teachers, families, and community. B. F. Skinner coined the term "operant conditioning" as the idea that behavior is a result that is learned from consequences (Rholetter, 2019).

Conclusion 6: Structural Ability

Elementary principals achieve extraordinary results by creating a safe and visually appealing environment in which employees can feel free to immerse themselves to be engaged and productive.

In this study, elementary principals were clear when describing how they believed that creating a safe and visually appealing environment motivated and influenced their staff to achieve extraordinary results. Kim and Young (2014) agreed that a better organizational design can improve employee engagement and productivity. The elementary principals in this study included members of their school community to raise funds to purchase additional seating, new colors to enhance the school's appearance, and an environment that is created for all types of learners. Structural aesthetics include environmental colors in a physical space, such as earth tone green and blue, to make it warm and welcoming (Hartmann, 2014). The elementary principals in this study were adamant about getting the input from community members and staff on what would be inclusive of all members within the school culture.

In this study, elementary principals were clear when describing how they create a safe environment for their employees and students. Elementary principals include community members and employees in raising funds to purchase flexible seating for

outdoor teaching, benches for lunch time. Elementary principals may enhance the physical aesthetics of the school to influence innovativeness to generate and discover creative solutions to existing problems (Wojciech, 2019). Additionally, principals meet the biological needs of their employees and students by providing an environment where clean air flow is presented in the classrooms, and hazardous conditions that obstruct productivity are eliminated. Elementary principals alter the physical space which improves effectiveness at work by influencing the interactions of space and people (Kim & Young, 2014; Wojciech, 2019).

Implications for Action

This study provided insights into the lived experiences of 12 elementary principals in relation to their use of six sources of influence with their employees. The findings in this study demonstrate how these elementary principals have used the six sources of influence to achieve extraordinary results in their respective schools. The findings of this study, along with the findings of the thematic team within their own populations, may provide a closer look at what influence strategies leaders use to create extraordinary results. The implications for action in this study have the potential to positively affect the results that elementary principals produce, add to the professional learning that is provided to elementary principals through various professional organizations, and offer information that recruiting firms can use to develop questions of elementary principals and aid in the selection process for school districts.

Implication 1: Professional Development Programs

Professional development programs, such as those offered by The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), should include results from this

research as part of their program content to build knowledge and confidence in aspiring elementary principals. School districts with internal professional development programs should include content from this research related to the specific strategies that exemplary elementary school principals use to influence their employees

Implication 2: Administrator Programs

University administrative credential programs should use this research as part of their course content for aspiring school principals to ensure that each participant has the skills necessary to create transformational change in their school culture. By preparing elementary school principals with the knowledge and understanding of how the six sources of influence can greatly benefit the school community, they may be able to demonstrate leadership skills that will enable and empower them to transform their schools and achieve extraordinary results.

Implication 3: Leadership Development

Elementary principals must participate in professional development opportunities to support making meaningful connections and building teams with their staff members. Developing their influencer skills will help harness the energy and talent of their employees to deliver the vision for their school. It is also recommended that elementary principals use networking opportunities to collaborate with other principals on effective and successful influence strategies that can be used in their school community.

Implication 4: Elementary Principal Search

As districts search for extraordinary principal candidates, they should also look for candidates who have used the strategies found within this study in their former or

current positions. This knowledge will also help districts to identify elementary

principals who are qualified to lead their staff to become a high performing team.

Implication 5: Youth Leadership Programs

Learning to be an influential leader should begin with young students. Youth

leadership programs should provide participants with an opportunity to practice

influential leadership skills in a warm and friendly environment. This type of opportunity

can be presented at leadership conferences where qualified principals could have the

opportunity to serve as mentors and coaches in a one week seminar for youth

participants. The seminar will include how influence is vital in leadership, following

with the importance of strengthening relationships with others.

Implication 6: Evaluation Instrument

The findings from this study could provide an excellent basis for school districts

in developing an evaluation instrument for their principals. It is recommended that

school districts use the results as a means to enhance the leadership skills of their

principals, in order to achieve groundbreaking results and meaningful connections with

others are being established and maintained.

Implication 7: Article of Publication

The findings from this research can be used in order to prepare an article for

publication on this important topic and develop a presentation for leadership conferences

to ensure that these findings get broader attention.

Recommendations for Further Research

This phenomenological study identified and explored how exemplary elementary

principals who have achieved extraordinary results influence employees through personal

motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability. The findings of this study are indicative of influence strategies that elementary principals can use to achieve extraordinary results. Based upon the results of this study, the following recommendations are made by the researcher regarding further research:

- This study focused on elementary school principals' lived experiences related to how they use the six sources of influence to achieve extraordinary results. Research should be conducted on the lived experiences of middle school principals, and high school principals, which could be compared to the findings of this study.

- All of the elementary principals identified themselves as being compassionate leaders who genuinely care about their staff members. Additional research should be conducted on the role of compassion in achieving excellence and what it looks like in the school setting.

- This study found that building meaningful relationships was an important strategy elementary principals focused on to achieve extraordinary results. Further research should be conducted on how elementary principals outside of California build meaningful relationships with their staff members.

- It is recommended that a quantitative study be conducted to identify and rate strategies principals use that have a great impact on engagement of their employees.

- The elementary principals in this study referenced the most strategies in personal motivation and personal ability. Therefore, a study should be conducted to further identify and explore the impact that added connections and feedback have on a school culture and community.

- This study's population was limited to five counties in Southern California: Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego. Future studies should be conducted with elementary principal populations in other areas outside of California and within the United States.

- It is recommended that this study be replicated in other positions such as: executive directors, directors of programs, assistant superintendents, assistant principals, director of operations, etc.

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

I close this chapter with concluding remarks and my reflections on the process of conducting this research. Toward the end of the 2nd year of this doctoral program from Brandman and in the 5th year of my teaching career, I knew that I wanted to become an elementary school principal. I had role models of how I wanted to lead a school and observed and listened intently to how leaders spoke to others and how they acted. Through the progression of my research, I learned that influence can change the mindset of stakeholders in a school as long as they feel valued and respected. The learning I gathered from this process has made me a more reflective and confident leader and has contributed to how I lead from the heart as I prepare to embark on my journey to become a principal.

The principals I interviewed for this study have ingrained in me the confidence, passion, empathy, and understanding I need to drive everlasting change into a school culture. These 12 elementary principals have demonstrated great charisma and passion in leading their schools to achieve National Blue Ribbon Schools status. I am honored to

have met each of them and will continue to take the necessary steps I need in order to

have access to successfully lead a school and others to perform at extraordinary levels.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Synthesis Matrix

Subtopics / Authors	Title 1	Principals	Ability	Motivation	NCLB	ESSA	Transformational	Transactional	NBRS	Leadership	Soc. Emo.	Horace Mann	Servant Leadership	Research Methods	Accountability	Emo. Intel.	Achievement Gap
Ashworth, S. (2013). *The relationship between the emotional intelligence of secondary public school principals and school performance*		Dissertation	Social/Personal	dissertation						dissertation						Dissertation	
Anderson, D., & Anderson, L. A. (2010). *Beyond change management* (2 ed.). San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer.							Book			Book							
Balkundi, P., Kilduff, M., & Harrison, D. A. (2011). Centrality and charisma: Comparing how leader networks and attributions affect team performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 96*(6), 1209-1222. doi:10.1037/a0024890				Social													
Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cogitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jerset: Prentice-Hall, Inc.			B (soc.)	B (pers./soc.)			Book (efficacy)			B (efficacy)							
Barbara, W., Kai, S., Melvyn, R. W. H., & Nico, W. V. Y. (2014). Transformational and transactional leadership and followers' achievement goals. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 29*(3), 413.				Journal Article			Journal Article	Journal Article		Journal Article							
Boone, B. D. (2017). *Instructional leadership practices principals use in blue ribbon awarded public elementary schools in virginia.* (Dissertation).	Dissertation	Dissertation							Dissertation	Dissertation							
Bradfield, L. E., & Kraft, L. E. (1970). *The elementary school prinicpal in action*. Scranton, Pennsylvania: International Textbook Company.		Book															
Brower, R. E., & Balch, B. V. (2005). *Transformational leadership & decision making in schools*. Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press.							Book			Book							
Cole, C. J. (2017). Exploring the predictive value of moral attentiveness and resilience for exemplary organizational leadership			Social														
Colvin, L. (2012). A Causal-Comparative Study: Determining the Diffference in Principals' Beliefs Regarding Order of Change for Closing Achievement Gaps High-Performing Schools as Compared to Low-Performing Schools		disserration															diss.
Collie, R. J., Shapka, J. D., & Perry, N. E. (2012). School climate and social–emotional learning: predicting teacher stress, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 104*(4), 1189-1204. doi:10.1037/a0029356							Journal Article(efficacy)				Journal Article						
Crowley, M. C. (2011). *Lead from the heart*.																	

Subtopics	Title 1	Principals	Ability	Motivation	NCLB	ESSA	Transformational	Transactional	NBRS	Leadership	Soc. Emo.	Horace Mann	Servant Leadership	Research Methods	Accountability	Emo. Intel.	Achievement Gap
Crowley, M. C. (2011). *Lead from the heart*. Bloomington, IN: Balboa Press.										Book							
Damico, N. (2019). *Leadership Storytelling: How elementary school principals use storytelling to lead and make transformational change*		dissertation		dissertation			dissertation										
Diorio, G. L. (2019). No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. In: Great Neck Publishing.					Encyclopedia												
Drake, T. L., & Roe, W. H. (1999). *The principalship* (5 ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc		Book								Book							
Dunk, C. (2019). How to be a successful leader: Being a leader is not about having authority over others, it is about inspiring them. *Leadership Excellence, 36*(2), 11-12.			Journal Article	Journal Article (social)			Journal Article			Journal Article							
Dutta, V. (2016). School Leadership and Its Impact on Student Achievement: The Mediating Role of School Climate and Teacher Job Satisfaction		Journal Article					Journal Article			Journal Article							J.A
Education, U. S. D. o. (2019). National Blue Ribbon Schools Program.									Web Page								
Ellis, R. P. (2018). Horace Mann. In: Salem												Encyclopedia					
Escalante, D. (2019). *A mixed-methods study of how elementary principals build trust with staff using weisman's five domains of trust model.* (Ed.D Dissertation). Brandman.				Encyclopedia (Abraham Maslow)-Social													
Flair, I. (2019). Social skills. In: Salem Press.			Social														
Flavin, C. (2016). Exploring the Lived Experiences of Exemplary National Blue Ribbon Elementary School Principals in Improving Student Learning Through Effective Coaching Conversations With Their Teachers: A		Dissertation							Dissertation	Dissertation							
Flynn, S. I. (2019). Transformational and transactional leadership. In: Great Neck Publishing.							Encyclopedia	Encyclopedia									
Gentry, D. (2018). A Phenomenological Study of the Influence of Mentoring on the Acquisition of Transformational Leadership Skills by Successful Title I Elementary Principals	Dissertation	Dissertation					Dissertation										
Gremy, J., Maxfield, D., McMillan, R., Patterson, K., & Switzler, A. (2013). *Influencer* (2 ed.): McGraw Hill Education.			Book (personal/soc/ structure)	Book (personal/soc/ structure)													
Hamilton, M. (2020). *Impact of Grit and Emotional Intelligence on Longevity on Expert Principals*		Dissertation								Dissertation					Dissertation.	Diss.	
Hayes, W. (2008). *No child left behind: past, present and future*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman																	

APPENDIX B

Definitions of the Variables

Personal ability. Learning and practicing new skills while receiving frequent feedback to achieve results.

Personal motivation. The deeply embedded desire to engage in meaningful and pleasurable work created with direct experiences in an environment in which one can choose to be optimistic about progress.

Social ability. The capacity to enlist the power of human interaction and group solidarity to provide support for taking risks and creating change.

Social motivation. The deeply held desire to be accepted, respected, and connected to humans.

Structural ability. Elements of a person's environment such as physical space, surroundings or atmosphere that positively affect performance.

Structural motivation. Consists of rewards, punishment, or incentives that can be used to encourage or discourage a person's behavior.

Informed Consent

INFORMATION ABOUT: How Exemplary female Superintendents Use Six Sources of

Influence to Achieve Extraordinary Results.

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Monette Perez

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: You are being asked to participate in a research study
conducted by Cheryl Sosa, a doctoral candidate from the School of Education at
Brandman University. The purpose of this phenomenological study is to identify and
explore how female Superintendents that have achieved extraordinary results influence
employees through personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability,
structural motivation and structural ability.
Your participation in this study is voluntary and will include an interview with the
identified student investigator. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes to
complete and will be scheduled via a Zoom conference call at a time of your
convenience. The interview questions will be confidential. Each participant will have an
identifying code, and names will not be used in the data analysis. The results of this study
will be used for scholarly purposes only.
I understand that:

A. The researcher will protect my confidentiality by keeping the identifying code

safe-guarded in a locked file drawer or password protected digital file to which

the researcher will have sole access.

B. My participation in this research is voluntary. I may decide not to participate in

the study, and I can withdraw at any time if I so choose. I can also decide not to

answer particular questions during the interview if I so choose. Also, the

investigator may stop the study at any time.

C-. If I have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to

contact Monette Perez via email at mperez@orangeusd.org or by phone at xxx-

xxx-xxxx, or Dr. Patricia White (Chair) at pwhite@brandman.edu.

D. No information that identifies me will be release without my separate consent,

and all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If

the study design or the use of data is to be changed, I will be informed and

consent re-obtained. These are minimal risks associated with participating in this

research.

E. If I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed

consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Vice Chancellor of

Academic Affairs, Brandman University, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine,

CA 92618, 949-341-7641.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form and the "Research Participant's

Bill of Rights." I have read the above and understand it and hereby consent to the

procedure(s) set forth.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant or Responsible Party   Date

_____   _____

Signature of Principal Investigator   Date

Participant's Bill of Rights

BRANDMAN
University Chapman University System

BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Research Participant's Bill of Rights

Any person who is requested to consent to participate as a subject in an experiment, or who is requested to consent on behalf of another, has the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is attempting to discover.

2. To be told what will happen in the study and whether any of the procedures, drugs or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice.

3. To be told about the risks, side effects or discomforts of the things that may happen to him/her.

4. To be told if he/she can expect any benefit from participating and, if so, what the benefits might be.

5. To be told what other choices he/she has and how they may be better or worse than being in the study.

6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study.

7. To be told what sort of medical treatment is available if any complications arise.

8. To refuse to participate at all before or after the study is started without any adverse effects.

9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form.

10. To be free of pressures when considering whether he/she wishes to agree to be in the study.

If at any time you have questions regarding a research study, you should ask the researchers to answer them. You also may contact the Brandman University Institutional Review Board, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. The Brandman University Institutional Review Board may be contacted either by telephoning the Office of Academic Affairs at (949) 341-9937 or by writing to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA, 92618.

Brandman University IRB   Adopted   November 2013

Influencer Interview Protocol Template

My name is Monette Perez and I am a Child Development Leader with the Orange Unified School District. I'm a doctoral candidate at Brandman University in the area of Organizational Leadership. I'm a part of a team conducting research to determine how exemplary leaders use influence to achieve extraordinary results. The study is based up on the book, *Influencer – The New Science of Leading Change*, by Grenny, Patterson, Maxfield, McMillan and Switzer. In their book they describe 6 key sources of influence that leaders can use to support them in creating change. The six influence sources are personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation and structural ability. This study is focused on the way that exemplary leaders use these six sources of influence to navigate and create lasting change in their organization.

Our team is conducting approximately 30 interviews with leaders like yourself. The information you give, along with the others, hopefully will provide a clear picture of the way in which exemplary leaders use these six sources of influence and will add to the body of research currently available.

Incidentally, even though it appears a bit awkward, I will be reading most of what I say. The reason for this is to guarantee, as much as possible, that my interviews with all participating exemplary leaders will be conducted pretty much in the same manner.

Informed Consent (required for Dissertation Research)

I would like to remind you any information that is obtained in connection to this study will remain confidential. All of the data will be reported without reference to any individual(s) or any institution(s). After I record and transcribe the data, I will send it to you via electronic mail so that you can check to make sure that I have accurately captured your thoughts and ideas.

Did you receive the Informed Consent and Brandman Bill of Rights I sent you via email? Do you have any questions or need clarification about either document?

We have scheduled an hour for the interview. At any point during the interview you may ask that I skip a particular question or stop the interview altogether. For ease of our discussion and accuracy I will record our conversation as indicated in the Informed Consent.

Do you have any questions before we begin? Okay, let's get started, and thank you so much for your time.

(START RECORDING)

Interview Questions

Before I ask you questions regarding each of the six influence sources, I will first give you the definition in order to ensure our mutual understanding of the source of influence. **Personal motivation** is our first source of influence and it is the deeply embedded desire to engage in meaningful and pleasurable work created with direct experiences in an environment in which one can choose to be optimistic about progress.

1. What strategies do you use to help your employees feel personally motivated to perform at high levels to achieve your organization's goals?
   Probe(s):
   a. Can you share a story of a time when employee's exhibited unusual determination and energy to get a job done? What do you think motivated them?

2. Employees often thrive when they find joy in their job. What do you do to ensure that work is meaningful and pleasurable to your employees?
   Probe(s)
   a. Why do you think those strategies help to influence them to engage in high performing activities?

We move now to our second source of influence, **personal ability.** Personal Ability is learning and practicing new skills while receiving frequent feedback to achieve results.

1. Consistently practicing and enhancing new skills is important to achieving extraordinary results in your organization. How do you provide employees with the opportunities to develop new skills?
   Probe(s):
   a. What formal professional development opportunities are offered to your employees?
   b. What informal methods do you use to help employees gain confidence in their skills?

2. How do you ensure employees who are practicing new skills receive feedback?
   Probe(s):
   a. How do you determine if the feedback process is effective?
   b. In what ways do you think this influences their commitment to achieving important company goals?

Our third source of influence is **social motivation** which is described as the deeply held desire to be accepted, respected and connected to humans.

1. Can you share some examples of strategies that you use to ensure employees feel accepted and connected to each other?
   Probe(s):
      a. In what ways do you believe these strategies help to influence your people to rise to new heights of performance to achieve the organization's goals?

2. Employees are most effective when they feel respected? How do you ensure that all of your employees are treated with respect by others within the organization?
   Probe(s):
      a. Can you tell me about a time when an employee felt that they were not respected, and what you did to remedy the situation?

Our fourth source of influence is **social ability.** Social ability is the capacity to enlist the power of human interactions and group solidarity to provide support for taking risks and creating change.

1. How do you, as the leader, get your employees to come together and work together as a team?
   Probe(s):
      a. What do you do to support the team in taking risks and creating change?
      b. In what ways have you seen teamwork influence employees to embrace high performing tasks to accomplish an important organizational goal?

2. When a team is not working effectively together, what strategies do you use to get them back aligned to achieve organizational goals?
   Probe(s):

      a. Can you tell me a story about how a team got off track and needed some intervention to restore group solidarity?

Our fifth source of influence is **structural motivation** which are rewards, punishment, or incentives that can be used to encourage or discourage a person's behavior.

1. Leaders use methods such as rewards, punishments and incentives to motivate their employees. What methods have you found to be effective in encouraging or discouraging employee behaviors?
   Probe(s):
      a. Can you give me some examples of the specific strategies you use? How do you know that they are effective?

2. Can you tell me about a time when you were trying to focus your employees on a really important goal for the organization. What did you do to motivate them to achieve extraordinary results?
   Probe(s):

a. What were the outcomes? How did they respond?

Our sixth and final source of influence is **structural ability** which are the elements of a person's environment such as physical space, surroundings or atmosphere that positively affect performance.

1. Physical work space and surroundings can contribute to positive performance. What physical features of your staff's environment make a difference in the results they are able to achieve? *Probe(s):*

    a. In what ways do these physical features influence positive performance? How do you know? What evidence do you have?

2. Work atmosphere can be described as the tone, feel or mood of the office. How do you create an atmosphere at work that encourages people to perform at an extraordinary level?

    Probe (s):

    a. What part of your work atmosphere do you feel most affects staff performance in a positive way? How have you created or supported this environment?

"Thank you very much for your time. If you like, when the results of our research are known, we will send you a copy of our findings."

_____

General Probes
May be used during the interview when you want to get more info and/or expand the conversation with them. These are not questions you share with interviewee. It is best to be very familiar with them and use in a conversational way when appropriate to extend their answers.

1. "What did you mean by …….."
2. "Do you have more to add?"
3. "Would you expand upon that a bit?"
4. "Why do think that was the case?"
5. "Could you please tell me more about…. "
6. "Can you give me an example of ….."
7. "How did you feel about that?"

APPENDIX F

Field Test Participant Feedback Questions

While conducting the interview you should take notes of their clarification request or comments about not being clear about the question. After you complete the interview ask your field test interviewee the following clarifying questions. **Try not to make it another interview; just have a friendly conversation**. Either script or record their feedback so you can compare with the other two members of your team to develop your feedback report on how to improve the interview questions.

1. How did you feel about the interview? Do you think you had ample opportunities to describe what you do as a leader when working with your team or staff?

2. Did you feel the amount of time for the interview was ok?

3. Were the questions by and large clear or were there places where you were uncertain what was being asked?

4. Can you recall any words or terms being asked about during the interview that were confusing?

5. And finally, did I appear comfortable during the interview… (I'm pretty new at this)?

APPENDIX G

Alignment Table

Research Questions	Survey Item	Analytical Technique
Research Question 1	1. abridged Job in General Scale (aJIG) . a. People on your present job. b. Job in general. c. Work on present job. d. Opportunities for promotion. e. Supervision	Data tabulated, median scores measured and analyzed, then charted and graphed. Descriptive statistics: mean, medium, mode. Information presented in tables, charts, and figures.
Research Question 2	1a. Demographic form: data input into Microsoft word.	Simple descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, and Spearman rank-order correlations displayed in tabular form.
Research Question 3	2. abridged Job in General Scale (aJIG) a. People on our present job. b. Job in general. c. Work on present job. d. Opportunities for promotion. e. Supervision	Data tabulated, median scores measured and analyzed, then charted and graphed. Descriptive statistics: mean, medium, mode. Information presented in tables, charts, and figures.
Research Question 4	2a. Demographic form: data input into Microsoft word.	Simple descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, and Spearman rank-order correlations) displayed in tabular form.

APPENDIX H

CITI Certificate of Completion

Completion Date 25-May-2019
Expiration Date N/A
Record ID 31703491

This is to certify that:

Monette Perez

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Human Subjects Research	(Curriculum Group)
Social-Behavioral-Educational Researchers	(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic	(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Brandman University

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w4576c3e3-f2e5-460a-a483-9bc6fbeb2125-31703491

APPENDIX I

Letter to Participate

Dear:

I am a doctoral candidate at Brandman University, and a Child Development Leader for Orange Unified School District. I am part of a thematic dissertation team studying how exemplary leaders use six sources of influence to achieve extraordinary results. My study is specific to exemplary elementary principals.

I am asking your assistance in the study by participating in an interview which will take approximately 60 minutes and will be set up at a time convenient for you. If you agree to participate in an interview, you may be assured that it will be completely confidential. No names will be attached to any notes or records from the interview. All information will remain in locked files accessible only to the researchers. No one from your school district will have access to the interview information. You will be free to stop the interview and withdraw from the study at any time. Further, you may be assured that the researchers are not in any way affiliated with your school district.

Your participation would be greatly appreciated. Feel free to contact me at pere9221@mail.brandman.edu or 714-363-2638. In addition, the research director, Dr. Pat White, is available at 949-842-5041 or pwhite@brandman.edu, to answer any questions you may have. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Monette Perez

Doctoral Candidate

Brandman University

APPENDIX J

Zoom Recording Release Form

RESEARCH STUDY TITLE: How Exemplary Elementary Principals Use the Six Sources of Influence to Achieve Extraordinary Results

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Monette Perez

I authorize Monette Perez, Brandman University Doctoral Candidate, to record my ZOOM interview. I give Brandman University and all persons or entities associated with this study, permission, or authority to use this recording for activities associated with this research study.

I understand that the recording will be used for transcription services, and the identifier redacted information obtained during the interview may be published in a journal or presented at meetings and/or presentations. I will be consulted about the use of the Zoom recordings for any purpose other than those listed above. Additionally, I waive any rights or royalties, or other compensation arising from or related to the use of information obtained from the recording.

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand the above release and agree to the outlined terms. I hereby release any and all claims against any person or organization utilizing this material.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant or Responsible Party   Date

_____   _____

Signature of Principal Investigator – Monette Perez   Date