PRINCIPALS AS ROLE MAKERS: A STUDY OF ILLINOIS PRINCIPALS'

PERCEPTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

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Michael P. Smith

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The purpose of this two-phase mixed methods study was to better understand how Illinois principals perceive and manage the many role expectations placed on them. Within the context of their approach to instructional leadership, follow up interviews were used to further explore the role making dimensions of their leadership practices.

Phase 1 of the study utilized a web-based survey designed to identify principals who perceive themselves to be role makers. In Phase 2, the researcher followed-up with selected individuals to determine which lived experiences best match the definitions of role making behavior that contribute to success as an instructional leader. The emerging themes from this research will result in a better understanding of how principals who perceive themselves as role makers approach instructional leadership.

From the findings of this research, several benefits were identified for building principals who successfully model role making behaviors. These benefits include: reduced role stress, increased delegation of traditional leadership tasks, improved communication with staff, students, and their families, shared leadership, and better time management.

This study provided meaningful data that leads to recommendations for practice and further study. Recommendations for practice focus on including role making

strategies and knowledge for principal preparation programs; in providing workshops to enhance communication with staff, delegate more shared leadership roles and promoting improved relationship skills for building principals; and encouraging best practices to assist in the principal in their leadership role. Some recommendations for further research are also suggested.

APPROVED:

Date	Linda Lyman, Co-Chair

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Date	Joseph Pacha

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Above all, this dissertation is dedicated to the memory of all my many teachers. It is especially important that I recognize my very first teacher for all she has done to support me all my life. I love you Mom! I want to thank my mother for her devotion to her family and to helping all her children grow to become everything their potential had to offer and more. By example, she gave me a passion for reading and learning that will never die. I pray I can continue to express my love for learning as well as she did. I will never forget you Va!

It is also important that I thank my whole family for teaching and guiding me all the way. All my grandparents attended college and lit the way for us by example and by teaching us the value of education. My parents always taught us that learning is a life long pursuit that must be cherished and nurtured. My wife and children have also helped me keep learning and growing in ways I never could have imagined. Each one of them has made it possible for me to get this far and my love and appreciation for all they have done will never be forgotten. Of course, many other individuals have helped me throughout this process. I would like to briefly acknowledge them and express my sincere gratitude for what they have meant to me.

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<div align="right">M. P. S.</div>

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The principal is the focal point of our schools. People look to the principal to provide vision, leadership, and efficiency to all the systems in the building. This job is a demanding challenge. The principal's job description is continually evolving to meet new demands. The principal is expected to manage the physical operations and maintenance, food services, safety, transportation, and to oversee all the educational programs in the school. The principal is also accountable to a broad constituency that includes the parents, teachers, students, and the central administration. What is the role of the principal as an instructional leader? Can a principal manage all these systems and yet still provide the instructional leadership the school needs?

The traditional principal's operation and maintenance role in the school can work to constrain instructional leadership efforts. The job description typically focuses on managerial duties; however, legislative directives, such as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), the continuing achievement gap, and the challenges faced by today's families demand a focus on instructional leadership. Legislative mandates like NCLB, Illinois' Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE), and other testing regimens add to the demands on the principal's time and energy. These testing programs require that principals directly engage in developing the school's achievement goals and in providing instructional leadership. The struggle to fulfill all of these demands contributes to role stress. Widespread understanding of the difficulty of the contemporary principalship has

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created a perception of a shortage of applicants for available principalships in spite of a large number of qualified candidates (Mulhall, Hartter, & Camp, 2003). Balancing the competing interests of the principalship requires that our school leaders be prepared to handle and adapt to change. Change is an important facet of today's schools as organizational cultures. Fullan (1997) illustrates that building relationships ultimately changes perspectives and promotes growth in our schools. He writes, "Focusing on the clients, parents, and children, and connecting with others in the organization to formulate an image of what we want for the future, begins the process of transcending the present" (p. 35). The principal is in a unique position to influence the process of schooling.

Statement of the Problem

Many studies have examined how principals perform their work (Barth, 1990a, 1990b; Fullan, 1997; Hart & Bredeson, 1996; Murphy & Seashore Louis, 1994; Reck, 2001; Ubben, Hughes, & Norris, 2004; Weiss & Cambone, 1994). Other studies have described how the role of the principal has evolved and adapted to our changing society (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Bredeson, 1985; Flores, 2002; Fullan 1998; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Hart & Bredeson, 1996; Marsh, 1997; Murphy & Seashore Louis, 1994; Portin, 2004; Reck, 2001; Ubben, Hughes, & Norris, 2004; Weiss & Cambone, 1994; Zimmerman, 2006). Several studies have also described how the role of the principal has evolved in relation to instructional leadership (De Bevoise, 1984; Hallinger, Leithwood & Murphy, 1993; Heck & Marcoulides, 1993; Hogg, 1995; Lashway, 2002; Little, 1999; Marsh, 1997; Murphy & Beck, 1994; Murphy & Seashore Louis, 1994; Reyes & Wagstaff, 2003; Shields, 2004; Ubben, Hughes, & Norris, 2004). Much of the literature on the history of America's schools, the role of the principal, and school leadership

speaks of the dynamic forces of change in our culture, and change in our sense of community (Bolman & Deal, 2002; Burns, 1978; Covey, 1989, 1992; Collins, 2001; Crowson, 1992a, 1992b, 1992c; Darling-Hammond, 2000b, 2002; Delpit, 1995; Furman & Shields, 2003; Fullan, 2003a, 2003b; Goodlad, 1984, 1994; Grant, 1988; Heck, 1988; Hogg, 1995; Leithwood & Duke, 1998; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999; Marsh, 1997; Mathews, 1998; Peterson & Deal, 1998; Schlechty, 2001; Shields, 2003; Zepeda, 2004; Zimmerman, 2006). The forces of changing roles, accountability measures, and emerging new role expectations have placed many new demands on our schools and on school leadership in particular.

School principals must be able to cope with as well as implement change in order to affect student achievement. Waters, Marzano and McNulty (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of 30 years of research on the effect of principal leadership on student achievement. The resulting "differential impact of leadership" suggests that the most effective school leadership has a significant positive effect on student achievement (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). This difference is often understood by the extent to which school leaders understand the "balanced leadership" framework developed by the McREL study (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). The McREL meta-analysis of 21 specific leadership responsibilities can be articulated across four general categories of leadership practices: experiential, declarative, procedural and contextual knowledge (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). In applying these four categories to the needs of schools, the balanced leader can have a positive impact on the learning environment. The McREL study provides an important contribution to our understanding of how principals can best manage the many changes and differentiated roles they fulfill.

Approximately every 10 years the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) conducts a survey of practicing principals. These studies are designed to examine trends in the practices of the current principals working in America's schools. The results of these studies are designed to provide a description of the profession and the issues that impact daily practices (Byrne, Hines, & McCleary, 1978; Hemphill, Richards, Peterson, 1965; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; NASSP, 2001; Pellicer, Anderson, Keefe, Keelly, & McCleary, 1988). The most recent NASSP (2001) study concluded that the necessary skills to provide good instructional leadership are not always part of the preparation that today's principals receive. "It is possible that on-the-job training, mentoring, or coaching has helped many principals develop those skills, but a lack of time and excessive paperwork prevent many from practicing instructional leadership" (NASSP, 2001, p. 30).

Another recent study was conducted using 45 role descriptors identified by both expert and practicing principals. This study supports the view that the "principalship has increased in complexity and there is substantial conflict in the principals' perceptions of the requirements for their positions" (Goodwin, Cunningham, & Childress, 2003, p. 27). A primary concern with the principals in the study was the increasing burden of the political and organizational demands of the job and how these demands can weaken the important strategic and instructional roles of the principal (Goodwin, Cunningham, & Childress, 2003).

The role of the principal as an instructional leader is explicitly stated in the Illinois School Code: "A majority of the principal's time must be spent on curriculum and staff development through both formal and informal activities, establishing clear lines of

communication regarding school goals, accomplishments, practices, policies with parents and teachers" (Braun, 2000, p. 398). Schools need leadership that makes the role of the instructional leader a priority. When role making is part of the organizational culture, instructional leadership can be made a priority over the principal's more traditional operational functions. Role making liberates the freedom, creativity, and moral purpose of a principal to change the traditional roles of the principalship. Fullan (2003a) writes, "There is no greater moral imperative than revamping the principal's role as part and parcel of changing the context within which teachers and students learn. This is an exciting proposition and represents the moral imperative in its highest form" (p. 10). Studies have addressed the importance of the principal's role as an instructional leader, but few studies have explored successful principals who are *role makers* as opposed to *role takers* in their approach to instructional leadership.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this two-phase, mixed methods study was to explore the leadership practices of principals in Illinois schools who are changing the role of the principal (role makers), to allow a greater focus on instructional leadership. Role makers are generally defined as principals who create a role that permits them to focus on instructional leadership, in contrast to principals who allow the demands of their job to dictate the roles they fulfill in their schools (role takers).

Research Questions

This mixed methods study addressed the following research questions:

1. How do principals describe their perceptions of role making in contrast to role taking?

2. How do principals describe their motivation for role making in contrast to role taking?

3. How do principals describe their successes as instructional leaders?

4. How does role making make any difference in the success of a given principalship?

5. What skills, abilities and resources do principals perceive as being essential to their success as role makers?

Design

A phenomenological perspective was used to explore the lived experiences of principals as role makers who focus their practices on instructional leadership. In this mixed methods study, the collection and analysis of data was conducted in two phases. Phase I of the study utilized a web-based survey designed to identify principals who perceive themselves to be role makers. After studying the responses to the Phase I online survey, the researcher used the data to create a list of potential Phase II participants. Follow-up phone interviews with principals who perceive themselves to be role makers were done for Phase II of the study. This helped the researcher to understand how their role making behaviors affected their instructional leadership practices. The emerging themes from this research will result in a better understanding of how principals who perceive themselves as role makers approach instructional leadership.

Definition of Terms

To facilitate understanding and interpretation of this study, the following definitions of the terms have been applied:

Role takers—These are principals who function in their managerial capacity to deal with situations that are defined by the specific demands and role expectations (Hart

& Bredeson, 1996). These principals operate within the traditional roles of building level administrators whose work is limited to the roles defined by the demands of their work environment.

Role makers — These are principals who function in their managerial capacity to deal with situations that are defined by their own behaviors, preferences and how they act out the role demands (Hart & Bredeson, 1996). These are principals who create a leadership role that focuses on learning and instruction. Taking cues from the needs of the students and staff, these principals move beyond the traditional operational maintenance role. They delegate the traditional roles to others so that they can focus on improving learning and instruction.

Instructional leadership — Maintaining an active role in supporting, guiding, evaluating, and nurturing teaching practices is a common definition of instructional leadership throughout the research literature (Blase & Blase, 2004; Lashway, 2002).

Principals — For the purposes of this study, we will accept a conceptual definition of principals that "…must not only be head teachers, headmasters or instructional leaders. They must, above all, be *head learners*" (Barth, 1990b, p. 72). Sergiovanni (2001) agrees that, "the principal will provide leadership in the high school community by building and maintaining a vision, direction, and focus for student learning" (p. 10). This definition focuses more clearly on the role making aspect of each principal as the instructional leader who engages all stakeholders in the learning process (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

Delimitations and Limitations

Principals were selected from those registered as members of the Illinois Principals Association (IPA). The researcher accessed the email database necessary to

conduct the online survey in Phase I. The IPA email registry provides access to approximately 4,000 practicing principals, assistant principals, and deans. The IPA also provided assistance with the sampling required to complete the online survey. The results may not apply to states other than Illinois.

Another potential limitation of this study is that it focused only on IPA members. The Illinois State Board of Education lists over 5,000 practicing building administrators on their online mailing list. Given the low response to the Phase I survey, sampling of the smaller IPA population may have been insufficient to produce valid results in terms of the Phase I data.

<div align="center">Significance of the Study</div>

Theoretically, this study contributes to understanding of practices of role making principals who focus on instructional leadership. Such practices may include promoting teacher leadership, engaging the teaching staff, and advocating best instructional practices. The study contributes to a broader understanding of what motivates role making behavior and how this impacts learning. Also from the perspective of theory and practice, this study is relevant to aspiring and practicing building principals, as well as anyone interested in educational leadership. Common experiences of practicing role making principals that emerge from this study contribute to better understanding of how successful principals create roles that move their schools forward.

Also on a level of practice, this study may encourage those who might avoid pursuing the principalship to consider how the principal's role can be redefined to build better learning communities. Does the perceived dominance between role taking over role making impact an individual's decisions not to pursue the principalship as a career path?

This study may provide insights into how these choices are made. These perspectives of role making principals could serve to inspire reluctant qualified individuals who might not consider the principalship as a valid career path. This could ultimately contribute to alleviating shortages in the number of qualified principal applicants. Boards of education and community leaders may also use this study to understand how promoting innovative, dynamic building level leadership may better meet the needs of the teaching staff, students and the community.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In the early days of American public schools, one room often housed the entire organization. A single person, typically called the head teacher, was responsible for instruction, maintenance, and discipline in the school. In today's accountability-focused, reformist climate, people now look to the principal to provide vision and leadership, as well as efficiency to all the systems in the building. The principal's job is seen as lonely and isolated because of its many demands (Alvy & Robbins, 1998). Beck (1999) connects feelings of isolation among school leaders with perceptions of the desperation in many local communities. Much of the sense of desperation for the principal stems from the ever-expanding roles that the job demands. The principal is expected to manage the physical operations and maintenance, food services, safety, transportation, and to oversee all the educational programs in the school. Principals are also accountable to a broad constituency that includes the parents, students, teachers, the school board, and the central administration.

The forces of changing roles, accountability measures, and emerging new role expectations have placed many new demands on our schools and on school leadership in particular. Riordan (2003) makes the following observation about school leadership:

> The early organization of public schools was characterized by centralized local bureaucracies, governance by elected boards, teachers who were isolated from one another and a primarily male supervisory body who handled administrative, rather than pedagogical, concerns and development. In many ways, these elements have remained in place for over a century. (p. 3)

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This statement implies the importance of redefining and changing the role of the principal. This is a recurring theme in the literature on school leadership. Many scholars have observed that the administration of our schools has undergone many changes in how we approach leading, teaching, and learning in our schools (Hart & Bredeson, 1996; Murphy, 1994; Murphy & Seashore Louis, 1994; Sergiovanni, 2001; Ubben, Hughes, & Norris, 2004; Wilmore, 2002).

Across the history of public education in America, the principalship has evolved in a dramatic fashion. The demands of each period have altered our understanding of how principals work. How has the role of the principal evolved to adapt to our changing society? What roles do principals create that allow them to manage all these systems and yet still provide the necessary instructional leadership the school needs? The purpose of this section of the dissertation is to examine how the role expectations of the principal and our changing culture impact learning in America's schools. This chapter will address three primary issues: first, the evolution of the principalship; second, the changing concepts of instructional leadership in the research literature; and third, the combined effects of the perceived role expectations of the principal and his/her formal leadership practice, also known as role taking versus role making.

Historical Overview of the Principalship

The history of our public schools is as old as the American republic itself. The Old Deluder Satan Act was passed in colonial Massachusetts in 1647 to provide for the creation of publicly funded schools. For the next 150 years, these schools remained relatively small and the quality of them varied from place to place. McCluskey, Harris and Dewey (1958) note that American schools began to change and grow in size and

importance after 1647:

> At the opening of the nineteenth century, the growing industrial development and consequent demand for cheap labor put pressure upon parents to divert their children from schoolhouse to factory or mill. The first great step toward ordering the school chaos was the 1837 law creating the State Board of Education and providing for a secretary. (p. 12)

The notion of using these common schools to promote democratic ideals and opportunity was seen as fundamental to building the American way of life (Cubberley, 1920). Apple and Beane (1995) also describe a vision of democratic schooling: "If people are to maintain a democratic way of life, they must have opportunities to learn what that way of life means and how it might be led" (p. 7).

Initially, the role of principal was seen as that of the principal teacher in the school, who also filled a leadership role among the faculty; but this role began to change and grow as the schools became larger and more complex (Beck & Murphy, 1993). "The single word *principal* referring to this controlling head, appeared in the Common School Report of Cincinnati in 1835 and in the writings of Horace Mann in 1841" (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 1). The role of the school principal began to take its modern form as it evolved from its origins as the head teacher or schoolmaster.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, early management and organizational theorists, notably Max Weber and Frederick Taylor, brought new ideas about bureaucratic management routines, scientific management, and efficiency to help business and industry produce better products (Hart & Bredeson, 1996). Soon these same theories were being put to use in public school settings to help district and building level school administrators to manage the larger, more complex schools in America's growing urban centers. In 1924, Mary Parker Follett developed theories about human relationships in

large organizations. Her work produced important ideas about the mutual influences between leaders and followers in organizations. Follett's work was considered visionary in that it described the ways in which mutually supportive relationships develop and accomplish the goals of the organization (Hart & Bredeson, 1996). Studies of changing metaphors have been used to describe the evolution of the principalship. The next section will explore how these studies have contributed to our understanding of the principalship.

<u>Changing Metaphors in 20th Century Leadership</u>

Metaphors have been used by many scholars to describe the work that principals do (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Beck, 1999; Beckerleg, 2002; Bolman & Deal, 2002; Bredeson, 1985; Connors, 2000; Deal & Peterson, 1999; Drury, 2003; Jaworski, 1998; Kelley, 1992; Murphy & Seashore Louis, 1994; Portin, 1994; Senge, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1992). Beck and Murphy's (1993) work on the changing metaphors of the principalship spans most of the 20th century. This was the period in which the role of the principalship grew, expanded and became the multidimensional role that we see today. It is possible to trace the evolution of the principalship by examining metaphorical themes (Beck & Murphy, 1993). These authors divide the 20th century by decades to trace the roots of the principal's job in American schools. The account opens understanding of the many social, political, and economic forces that have influenced how public schools are operated. Beck and Murphy (1993) used the following metaphorical phrases to describe the primary emphasis of the principalship for each decade of the 20th century: "The 1920s, Values Broker; The 1930s, Scientific Manager; The 1940s, Democratic Leader; The 1950s, Theory-Guided Administrator; The 1960s, Bureaucratic Executive; The 1970s, Humanistic Facilitator; The 1980s, Instructional Leader" (p. 202).

The 1920s and 1930s

The literature of the 1920s described the principal as primarily responsible for "promoting traditional spiritual and civic values in schools and communities" (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 13). There was a quasi-religious tone in this period that defined the principal as a revealer of all that is good, true, and beautiful. By the 1930s the emphasis had shifted to the importance of efficiency and principles of scientific management dominated the scene. Leaving behind the spiritual rhetoric of the 20s, this decade focused on the administrative and executive roles of the "bureaucratic organizer and supervisor" (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 25).

The 1940s

By the 1940s the focus had shifted towards descriptions of the principal as the democratic leader. This image of the "homefront" leader was increasingly apparent through the war years and the role of the principal continued to develop into a curriculum developer, group coordinator, and supervisor (Beck & Murphy, 1993). The 1940s was a period of expanding roles and leadership capacities for principals. This expanding role of the school principal occurred as America was beginning to assert its role as a world leader.

The 1950s and 1960s

As the 1950s arrived, the language used for describing school principals took on an institutional tone. The term *administrator* became the dominant image of the principal and was used to describe the professional, technical and empirical skills required of the office. This period appears to offer a transition between the image of the principal as the efficient manager of earlier decades and the new image shaped by restructuring,

theoretical, and social science perspectives (Beck & Murphy, 1993). Of course, the era following the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* also placed new demands on the principal. The turmoil of the decades that follow the 1950s builds on the administrative and managerial importance work of the principal.

The 1960s emerges with the principal seen as the guardian of a professional educational bureaucracy. This period experienced a notable resurgence of Max Weber's imagery of bureaucratic symbols, rules, and organizational management structures (Beck & Murphy, 1993). It is interesting to note that the literature of the 1960s on the principal-ship is devoid of the social and political turmoil that consumed the times. Beck and Murphy (1993) observe candidly that, "Administration in the sixties is portrayed as a highly impersonal activity. Feelings and beliefs are not discussed; concrete ways to improve quality and level of production are" (p. 114). The decade that follows attempted to remedy some of these inconsistencies.

The 1970s and 1980s

By the 1970s the principal's role was expanded to include acting as the leader both in the school and also in the community at large. Beck and Murphy (1993) contend that this period saw schools opening themselves more and more to "outside scrutiny and governance" (p. 115). The principal was assuming a broader role that included multiple tasks and responsibilities designed to meet the holistic and human needs of students, staff, and the community. This development meets the condition of the classic stereotype of a leader who is capable of being all things to all people. It is important to note that this humanistic tone invokes traits that were demanded of the more spiritual, values-oriented descriptors of the 1920s. The 1980s continued to be times of great change and

redefinition of the role of the principal. The metaphor of the principal as instructional

leader emerged strongly, in part as a response to the April 1983 *Nation at Risk* report on

the failures of the nation's schools.

<u>Other Metaphors of the Principalship</u>

Each decade of the 20th century developed particular traits, practices and

philosophies that propelled the principal from the primary role of spiritual leader, to

professional bureaucrat, to academician and instructional leader. Developing his own

overview, Bredeson (1985) notes that the "images associated with the principal's role

definition have primarily been dominated by a functionalist view that has prescribed sets

of administrative responsibilities" (p. 33). This role grew during the turn of the century to

encompass three primary areas of responsibility that have remained over the years: "the

organization and general management of the school, the supervision of instruction and

staff development, and the interpretation of work of the school to the immediate school

community" (Bredeson, 1985, p. 33). Bredeson (1985) generalizes about the principal-

ship using the metaphorical descriptors of "maintenance, survival and vision" to describe

the daily lives of principals (p. 45). This is consistent with the three areas previously

described.

Scholars have developed many ways to symbolize the work of the school

principal, but the three themes of maintenance, survival, and vision appear to be the most

enduring because they are consistent with our common perceptions about the job

(Bredeson, 1985; Wilmore, 2002). However, Bredeson (1985) also warns that the first

two metaphors of maintenance and survival seem reactionary, and problematic. In spite

of the hope that principals can aspire to a visionary mission to help all their students

learn, many of them are frustrated by frantic organizational demands and competing political interests that often destroy their creative spirits (Bredeson, 1985). Principals must challenge themselves every day to balance the many roles they assume. This requires a fair amount of genuine vision, creativity, flexibility and patience.

Mintzberg's taxonomy of managerial roles. Hart and Bredeson (1996) and Yukl (2002) apply Mintzberg's taxonomy of 10 managerial roles to examine other metaphors that can be applied to the evolution of the principalship. These descriptors include meta-phorical tasks that are often assumed by school principals. Yukl (2002) points out that these roles can be applied to a broad range of leadership positions and tasks, and these 10 roles involve different dimensions of leadership activity: "Three roles involve inter-personal behavior (*figurehead, leader, liaison*), three roles involve information processing behavior (*monitor, disseminator, spokesperson*), and four roles involve decision-making behavior (*entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, negotiator*)" (pp. 28-29 [italics added]). Each of these 10 roles can be applied to the many dimensions of the daily tasks of principals.

Greenleaf's servant leadership. Of the myriad symbolic descriptions for the roles that principals aspire to, Greenleaf's (1977) metaphorical language of servant leadership is relevant. Greenleaf (1977) writes:

> To be a lone chief atop a pyramid is *abnormal* and *corrupting*. None of us are perfect by ourselves, and all of us need the help and correcting influence of close colleagues. When someone is moved atop a pyramid, that person no longer has colleagues, only subordinates. (p. 63)

This view is consistent with the ethical view that Northouse (2001) describes: "attending to others is the primary building block of moral leadership" (p. 260). The principal's job

is an awesome responsibility. Being successful at the many demands and roles involved requires that the principal be a multidimensional chameleon. There must be a willingness to serve the needs of others while striving to become a better person. In many ways, the servant leader has achieved what Senge (2000b) calls "personal mastery," or the ability to develop, "a set of practices that support people—children and adults—in keeping their dreams whole while cultivating an awareness of the current reality around them" (p. 59). This is the essence of the ideal principalship. Of course, it applies to leadership in many other contexts as well. These emerging metaphors of the principalship are described by Beckerleg's (2002) and Reck's (2001) images of the principal who leads by following. "Followers, empowered by the leader, have an opportunity to be self-managed, work well without close supervision, assess what needs to be done, when and how, and make decisions on their own" (Beckerleg, 2002, p. 3).

<u>Primary Roles of Contemporary Principals</u>

Flores (2002) contends that the principalship evolved from one that involved direct teaching duties to a professionally licensed administrative position between the late 19th and early 20th century. Primary roles of contemporary principals can be viewed from several perspectives. For example, a recent study was conducted using 45 role descriptors identified by both expert and practicing principals. This study supports the view that the "principalship has increased in complexity and there is substantial conflict in the principals' perceptions of the requirements for their positions" (Goodwin, Cunningham, & Childress, 2003, p. 27). The results of the study report on four types of conflict that arise from the principalship: "role conflict, accountability conflict, autonomy conflict and responsibility conflict" (Goodwin, Cunningham, & Childress, 2003, pp. 27-28).

Among the role descriptors of the principalship from the National Policy Board for Educational Administration, are these: "instructional leadership, organizational leadership, strategic leadership, and community and political leadership" (Goodwin, Cunningham, & Childress, 2003, p. 28). A primary concern with the principals in the study was the increasing demands of the political and organizational demands of the job and the capacity of these demands to weaken the important strategic and instructional roles of the principal.

The contemporary principal has also suffered from "role ambiguity and overload" (Marsh, 1997, p. 127). Indeed, Marsh (1997) agrees with Stigler and Hiebert (1999) and Stevenson and Stigler (1992) that teacher collaboration and teacher-led innovation and professionalism are key elements in creating a culture of continuous learning and improvement. Louis (1995) also points out that in many ways that this type of collaborative, integrated, social learning can be extended to the students as well. It seems logical that a teacher-centered professional culture would focus on producing a student-centered curriculum. This has obvious consequences for the contemporary role of the principal: the teacher of teachers.

Barth (1990a) contends that, "adult learning is not only legitimate but essential" (p. 146). Teachers need to develop the analytical and observational skills necessary to critically evaluate each other's best classroom practices, and principals should offer opportunities for continual improvement and collaboration (Barth, 1990b). Principals control the resources necessary to assist teachers and build a culture where "teachers become students of their own and each other's teaching" (Barth, 1990b, p. 59).

Connors (2000) metaphorically uses the role of administrator as that of a master chef, using a broad array of talents and personality traits that promote genuine human interactions with students, staff, parents, and the community at large. This is suggestive of how the role of instructional leader continues to evolve in the principalship. For example, Furman (2003) asks two absolutely essential questions about the direction of scholarship on the role of instructional leadership within our schools: "If leadership is constructed and distributed within school communities, why are we focusing only on the leadership skills of individuals in administrative roles? Don't we need to address leadership collaboratively with teacher education?" (p. 5). If we intend to really understand the important roles that principals can play in developing what Furman (2003) describes as the "ethic of community" (p. 4) within each school, then we need to examine how each principal can best serve the human needs and the learning needs of both the teaching staff and in turn, the students.

There are also many political dimensions of the principal's leadership. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2004) notes that the activities of principals vary by the type of school (i.e., elementary or secondary), and also by the "level of control" (public or private) (p. 75). It is also interesting to note the different roles in which secondary public school principals report a "high level of influence over specific school governance functions" (NCES, 2004, p. 75). There are important contrasts between the control that principals exert over governance issues, particularly in the areas of learning standards, curriculum, finance and discipline. This level of control and the time devoted to these administrative tasks also influence role making behavior.

Much of the research literature from the past quarter of the century suggests that high school principals need to be acutely aware of the political context in which they work and be able to flourish in their political surroundings (Flores, 2002). In contrast, Senge (1990) proposes other metaphorical roles for leaders such as: "designer, teacher, steward (servant)" (p. 7). Sergiovanni (1992) agrees that stewardship accurately defines how principals as community servants should behave: "The leadership that counts, in the end is the kind that touches people differently. It taps their emotions, appeals to their values, and responds to their connections with other people. It is morally-based leadership—a form of stewardship" (p. 270).

Role Conflict and Stress

Fullan (1998) asserts that role stress and conflict due to demanding roles are products of the past decade's reform movement and that the work of school principals is growing increasingly complex and overwhelming. In attempting to alter the relationships between schools and the communities they serve, many groups are working to advance their vision of how to educate our children: ". . . government policy, parent and community demands, corporate interests, and ubiquitous technology have all stormed the walls of the school. The relentless pressures of today's complex environments have intensified overload" (Fullan, 1998, p. 6). If principals are to succeed at dealing with these conflicting interests, a clear vision of how these competing interests can be trans-formed into a common direction should be a priority. Setting these priorities will require managing competing interests.

Hart and Bredeson (1996) agree with Fullan's (1998) assertions that three types of role stress can work against any principal: role conflict, ambiguity, and role overload.

Goodwin, Michael and Childress (2003) report that these competing interests are a constant source of difficulty: "Contemporary principals report growing concern about the barriers of stress and time as well as about changes in the principalship including increased responsibility and decreased autonomy and authority" (p. 1). In light of these complaints and the shortage of qualified applicants for vacant principalships, "it seems logical to infer that the shortage is an unintended consequence of changes in the principalship" (Goodwin, Michael, & Childress, 2003, p. 1).

Overload, stress and role conflict are the bane of many leadership positions. Fullan (1997) recognizes that this obstacle can be overcome, but it must be done in a rational manner that centers on prioritizing what your core values are and how you can best work to achieve them. This is consistent with Collins' (2001) "hedgehog concept": focusing on your core business by first making sure you can clearly identify what that core is. You must also be clear that this core represents something you are capable of creating and something you can then focus on doing exceptionally well. For school principals, Fullan (1997) states that overload and role conflict can best be overcome by understanding that:

> . . . we are going to implement a few things especially well, and implement other priorities as well as we would have anyway, which is to keep them from getting out of hand. We will look for ways of integrating or aligning components that might otherwise be fragmented. (p. 29)

Instructional Leadership

The term instructional leader has existed for as long as the concept of the principal as lead teacher. However, the role of instructional leader took on new meaning during the 1980s. *The Nation at Risk* report ushered in a new era demanding reform and more

accountability in America's schools. Principals were now expected to serve in broader roles that were described by such metaphors as "problem solver, visionary, resource provider and change agent" (Beck & Murphy, 1993, pp. 151-158). This period is also associated with more desperate words like "survival" (Bredeson, 1985), and the urgent need to make the principal more responsive to the outcomes of the schools they lead. In many ways, it was expected that principals would return to their role as lead teacher: "Now principals are admonished to re-enter the classrooms, not necessarily as teachers of children, but as teachers of teachers and as overseers and directors of the teaching/learning enterprise. In this conception we see an expansion of an old expectation" (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 177). It is clear from this decade on that the expectations for the principalship are linked with ever growing expectations for the future success of our schools.

The 1990s saw the evolution of the instructional leadership roles of principals to include moral leadership, and a growing ethic of the principal as leader and steward of community or family. In many ways, the role of the principal had come full circle from the expectations of the 1920s, which included the values and morals of virtue.

Ebmeier's (2003) study showed that valuing teaching can have a profound impact on instructional leadership:

> When principals demonstrate an interest in the instructional process (the core business of teachers), it is predictable that teachers respond by developing more respect for and confidence in the principal. Indeed, 65 percent of the variance in confidence in the principal could be explained by the degree to which a principal supported good teaching. (p. 135)

Maintaining an active role in supporting, guiding, evaluating, and nurturing teaching practices is a common definition of instructional leadership throughout the research literature (Blase & Blase, 2004; Lashway, 2002; Smith & Andrews, 1989). Pierce (2001)

describes the need for each principal to assert what the "core values" of the school will be, and how these values can focus the entire school on a shared set of goals: "When the vision is supported by the core values, decisions about curricula and pedagogy become the foundation for school norms. The core values are reflected in every classroom, ensuring vigilance to the vision" (p. 3). The discussion that follows will address important topics from the research on instructional leadership. These topics include conceptual definitions and approaches to instructional leadership; balancing managing and leading; supportive, caring, and moral leadership; adaptive leadership and empowerment; transformational leadership approaches; accountability measures and their impact on the principalship; creating a vision that engages the community; the principal's impact on student achievement; and finally, other challenges to changes in principals' role demands.

An Overview of the Research on Instructional Leadership

When did the term "instructional leadership" become the focus of research about the principalship? While the term did not originate with their study, Beck and Murphy (1993) used the metaphor of instructional leader to describe the principalship of the 1980s. The *Nation at Risk* report of 1982 brought perceived failures of the school system into sharp focus. It was evident that from this point on, intense scrutiny was going to be placed on schools and how they performed. These accountability measures have continued to add to the stress on principals and school administration as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) puts punitive constraints on schools that don't improve their academic performance. To better understand the dynamic forces that compete for the principal's attention, the discussion that follows will examine various dimensions of instructional leadership, beginning with various approaches to instructional leadership.

Approaches to Instructional Leadership

The exact nature of effective instructional leadership roles for principals has often been researched, and certain characteristics are commonly reported: a clear vision, the recognition of maintaining learning standards, continued evaluation of teachers and student performance, the rewarding of achievement gains, and providing continuous professional teacher development (De Bevoise, 1984). However, each school's situation is unique and efforts to develop a perfect list of universal role descriptors has been illusive. One cannot discuss instructional leadership without putting it in the larger frame of approaches to leadership generally. Conceptual definitions and approaches range from a listing of common characteristics to descriptions of how effective principals work to meet the demands of accountability and community engagement in schools. It is often necessary to consider multiple perspectives on how the leader's role can impact the direction of the organization.

The instructional leadership role for a new principal is also not an easy one to assume. So many demands are made of the principal on a daily basis. To better understand these demands, a beginning principal might choose to study the four frames model of leadership proposed by Bolman and Deal (1997). These four frames include the structural, political, human resource, and symbolic domains of leadership. In order to be effective in a new school, one must first consider the history of the school, its cultural heritage, the human needs of the students and staff, the politics and the symbolic and cultural aspects of the school. Each situation is unique and these four frames often overlap and intersect one another. To more effectively handle the daily demands on their time, new principals can understand these multiple perspectives of leadership and its demands.

Managing from within the four frames can allow principals to explore and create new roles as instructional leaders. This requires the ability to balance the management tasks required to run the school with the necessary leadership needed to drive improved instruction. For new principals, this is especially difficult. Balancing managing and leading is a challenge that can make improving instruction even harder.

   Balancing managing and leading. With all the stresses and conflicts confronting the school principal, how does one attempt to balance both managing and leading the school? This dilemma has generated much interest in the research literature (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; NAESP, 2002; NASSP, 2001). Managing competes with leading on many fronts. It is an ongoing challenge each day for a principal committed to instructional leadership to avoid being trapped in managerial functions.

   The competition between managing and leading requires that the principal be able to juggle multiple tasks on multiple levels. This brings to mind another perspective from Bolman and Deal's (1997) four frames model; particularly the ability of the principal to work within the existing climate and school culture. The principal inherits the climate of the school and works hard to identify priorities for managing daily tasks and planning for a school's academic improvement. Alvy and Robbins (1998) point out that new principals must exercise caution when developing their new vision for the school by first working to develop a deeper understanding of the climate and the culture that already exists.

   Of all the roles the principal assumes, the role of instructional leader embodies the ideals of what a principal is there to do: lead the teaching community to better serve the needs of the students, their families and the community. This is an enormous undertaking. "The work of developing leadership capacity brings clarity to the changing role of the

principal as instructional leader. A principal who goes it alone or who dominates will find

that the school becomes overly dependent on his or her leadership" (Lambert, 2002, p. 40).

Duke (1988) also warns that the struggle of the principal to balance managing and

leadership can lead to micromanagement. This can destroy an individual's spirit and eventually drive the principal from the job, in spite of his or her devotion to helping others. "The same drive that leads to success in the school's programs can drive principals to feel frustrated when they don't meet everyone's needs" (Duke, 1988, p. 310). These are frustrations that principals must work to hold at bay. This is not an easy task. Some alternatives to micromanaging and going it alone have a more human, spiritual dimension, as described in the next section.

Supportive, caring, and moral leadership. One way of moving beyond the "go it alone" (Lambert, 2002) approach is to work to develop a more sensitive, caring approach to leadership. Lyman (2000) contends that an ethic of caring develops a different set of priorities that result in a more supportive learning environment for teachers, students, and their families. This is the essence of moral leadership. In describing a particular caring principal, Lyman's interview respondents consistently said, "His use of time reveals his priorities" (p. 91). This illustrates the point that managing and leading are very different objectives. When a principal is only committed to managing the minute operational details of the school, it becomes more difficult to develop the human relationships most associated with caring leaders. Finding a balance between the two is a time management issue that must be addressed. In contrast, Alvy and Robbins (1998) recognize that management and leadership are both necessary functions, but principals must stay visible and focused on the classroom as the center for learning.

There is also an important spiritual side to principal leadership, which can be used to elevate any organization to a higher moral purpose. The principal is determined to do what is right and just. This concept places the leader in the role of steward and servant (Covey, 1992, De Pree, 1989; Greenleaf, 1977; Sergiovanni, 1992), as well as the role of visionary, transformational and moral agent (Burns, 1978, 2003; Heifetz, 1994; Fullan, 2003a; Furman & Shields, 2003; Northouse, 2001; Yukl, 2002). In order for school leadership to transcend traditional roles that merely *manage* school operations, we must work to *cultivate the vision and human relationships* that inspire others to follow. In order to foster these caring, supportive and human relationships, it is also important to consider the instructional leader's commitment to empowering others in the change process. The next section will consider how empowering the teaching staff can help the school solve problems collaboratively.

Adaptive leadership and empowerment. Heifetz (1994) warns that, "The strategic challenge is to give the work back to people without abandoning them. Overload them and they will avoid learning. Underload them and they will grow too dependent, or com-placent" (p. 251). This is certainly true in the case of the principals who take on the entire burden of managing the entire operational and instructional functions of the school. They must instead strive to balance the necessary managerial tasks with the essential leadership role of instruction. By empowering others to take a personal stake in both the managerial and instructional tasks, they can begin to disperse the heavy burden of all these important tasks.

School reform is also a complex issue. Heifetz (1994) describes the difficulties of leading others to difficult solutions by describing adaptive problems. Adaptive problems

are considered too complex to permit for a single, simple treatment that will resolve the situation. Adaptive problems require that leaders and followers work and learn how to overcome a given obstacle. Mobilizing change in school settings is a good example of an adaptive situation. School leaders must find ways to engage all stakeholders in seeking out appropriate measures that can solve problems. Put simply, there are no quick or easy fixes. Heifetz (1994) gives an interesting example of how these complex problems and their solutions are played out:

> In situations that call for adaptive work, however, systems must learn their way forward. Even when an authority has some clear ideas about what needs to be done, implementing change often requires adjustments in people's lives. Hence, with adaptive problems, authority must look beyond authoritative solutions. Authoritative action may usefully provoke debate, rethinking, and other processes of social learning, but then it becomes a tool in a strategy to mobilize adaptive work toward a solution, rather than a direct means to institute one. (p. 87)

It is important to note the social learning aspect of Heifetz's example. Complex problems require social interaction and learning on the part of the organization in searching for viable solutions. Schools are very much involved in seeking adaptive work to solve complex problems. Principals must engage teachers, students, families and the community to find answers to the many challenges that they face. This is a good example of the essential difference between *managing* the school with naked authority versus *leading* the school with engagement and adaptive work. Another important aspect of engaging the school and community to solve problems is the potential of transformational leadership approaches.

Transformational leadership approaches. Certain behaviors are considered important to successful leadership. Among them are the efforts of the transformational leader who "engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of

motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower" (Northouse, 2001, p. 132). For successful instructional leaders, these behaviors also include visibility, protecting time, supporting professional development, relationships with teacher commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness (Sheppard, 1996). In other words, transformational leaders frequently raise the perceived importance and values of the group's efforts to succeed. This means that they often motivate followers to transcend their own self-interests and expend energy on behalf of the group or organization (Koh, Steers, & Terborg, 1995). Using transformational leadership can create the type of teacher-led school improvement that in turn helps the principal balance the many demands placed on them.

Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999) report that transformational leadership approaches have been shown across many empirical studies to have a modest, yet essential impact on student outcomes. However, teacher satisfaction and effectiveness are very much connected to this style of leadership and additional study of this interaction is needed (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999). What is clear in most current conceptualizations of the role of the principal is the contingent and situational nature of leadership. Principals work with a variety of stakeholders: students, teachers, parents, community members, and central office staff. Each group, and at times individual members within a group, have different understandings of the roles and responsibilities of the principal. A useful conceptualization of the role of the principal must take into account these varied expectations and as well as the contextual challenges he or she will face. School leadership is also contingent on the fact that power, size, culture and environment affect the behavior of leaders, and thus the organization. Hallinger and Heck (1996) have suggested

that the principal's role might best be conceived as part of a web of environmental, personal and in-school relationships that combine to influence organizational outcomes. This captures the essence of the transformational model of leadership championed by Burns (1978) and others (Reck, 2001).

Another area of instructional leadership that has been of interest in many principal preparation and development programs is the creation and implementation of a vision for the school and community (Wilmore, 2002). Among the biggest challenges to crafting a vision and making sure that comes to fruition is what Wilmore (2002) refers to as the "stewardship" of the vision (p. 23). The next section will explore how stewardship of the vision by the principal can impact the entire community.

Creating a vision that engages the community. Lambert (2002) asserts that building a common vision for the community, engaging stakeholders in the conversation of successful schooling, and a "student learning focus" can make a difference (p. 40). The most successful principal is able to promote ". . . leadership in others, models and participates in collaborative practices, helps pose the questions, and facilitates dialogue that addresses the confounding issues of practice" (Lambert, 2002, p. 40). However, it is also important to remember that managing these issues is only part of the solution. It is equally important to work hard to put the vision into practice. This means for school principals that "we must communicate to everyone—parents, community members, civic clubs, churches, strangers on the street—who we are, what we are there for. . . . We need everyone involved and empowered. People support what they help to build" (Wilmore, 2002, p. 21). Finding ways to get everyone involved in realizing the principal's vision creates a culture of mutual support and cooperation that can eventually sustain its own momentum.

Fullan (2001b) also points out that the most effective strategy for today's school reform is to change the way that principals direct school improvement initiatives. This is to say that it is not enough to have bold new initiatives for improving achievement if there is no program coherence uniting all these efforts. Fullan (2001b) is also correct in stating that, "If the district does not foster professional learning communities by design, it undermines them by default" (p. 165). Principals who find new ways to channel and direct school improvement efforts are trying to unite the community in a common purpose. Fullan (2001a) asserts that this change is inevitable because:

> . . . leaders will increase their effectiveness if they continually work on the five components of leadership—if they pursue moral purpose, understand the change process, develop relationships, foster knowledge building, and strive for coherence—with energy, enthusiasm, and hopefulness. If leaders do so, the rewards and benefits will be enormous. It is an exciting proposition. The culture of change beckons. (p. 11)

Finally, Covey (1989, 1992) describes the creation, mapping and execution of vision as essential to leadership and self actualization. In an educational setting, achieving a democratic vision of schooling ensures that all children acquire the necessary tools to participate in a democratic and civil society. This is what Senge refers to as personal mastery (2000a; 2000b). Covey (1989) also stresses the importance of giving everyone the ability to develop his or her own personal vision of how they should build a life that can make a difference to everyone around them. Achieving the democratic vision of schooling can also allow the principal to lead in ways that can impact student achievement. In addition, there are other external pressures on the principal to meet the challenge of improving the quality of education offered by schools. The discussion that follows will explore how these accountability measures affect the roles that principals must assume.

Accountability Measures and Their Impact on the Principalship

The principal's role of leading schools to fulfill the potential of every student is a complicated task. There are many issues driving the popular notion that accountability and tougher learning standards will improve educational programs. Stigler and Hiebert (1999) warn that many schools lack the technical capacity to conduct the necessary analysis for solving problems and improving learning:

> The learning potential of external reviews also rests on the internal capacities and habits of the staff: the degree to which the collection, analysis and use of data on teaching and learning constitute central routines of school life. Establishing such capacities and habits presents three kinds of challenges: building the technical knowledge necessary for systematic assessment . . . creating a structure and process for effectively conducting the work of self-study; and reinforcing a school culture that values such assessment and can weather conflict and uncertainty over its interpretation or implications. (p. 253)

This statement underlines the challenges that face tomorrow's teachers and the administrative personnel that will guide the improvement of our schools. The notion of self-reinforcing and research-driven teaching provides teachers with ownership of the organization's core technology. The organizational capacity to run schools in this fashion is not in place now. However, the right types of shared leadership and transformational vision could make important contributions to school improvement.

Legislative efforts are also driving school reform efforts. This ultimately impacts the roles that principals play out in helping the school achieve its mission. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) is yet another example of external efforts to generically promote national educational standards. While the standards element of NCLB has some merit it is clear that awards and sanctions are also part of the mix. This in turn influences the political climate of America's school system. The perception and reality of NCLB as

an unfunded, draconian mandate that burdens school leadership will continue generating controversy and in some cases, law suits (Zirkel, 2004). NCLB has become a thorn in the side of principals and school administration in those districts where challenges and stakes are very high and incomes are low.

Kohn (2000) and Darling-Hammond (2004) insist that the high stakes testing regimen is cheating low-income and minority students who have been poorly served by the public school system for years. Principals are expected to pursue testing benchmarks that can demonstrate that learning in their schools is improving every year. The reality of what has happened with NCLB is that many schools that were already struggling to meet the needs of all students are falling further behind precisely because the schools that are best equipped, and staffed also have the resources to best prepare for the tests. As a result the principal has to continuously assess how staff development and resources can best be applied to help keep test scores rising.

Instead of closing the achievement gap, in many cases it is widening. Principals are under siege in schools that are being labeled as failures by an unjust testing regimen designed to force the issue of school choice. Kohn (2000) quotes the late Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota in a speech he delivered before his death in 2002:

> Making students accountable for test scores works well on a bumper sticker and it allows many politicians to look good by saying that they will not tolerate failure. But it represents a hollow promise. Far from improving education, high stakes testing marks a major retreat from fairness, from accuracy, from quality and from equity. (p. 36)

Improving the quality of instruction for all students will require further study of how teachers are trained, hired, and utilized. Principals clearly have an important role to play in this process as well, because they are the ones who do the hiring. Schools must

overcome these obstacles in order to achieve the espoused mission of the NCLB initiative to improve the educational opportunities of *all* students. The sanctions in place under the current system do not serve the needs of poor minority students in urban schools. The cards are stacked against the leadership in these schools because the federal government insists that the states have the resources to implement the necessary changes in equity.

In other recent studies, Darling-Hammond (2000a; 2000b) examines the impact of teacher quality measures and student achievement. Using the NCES' Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress scores from a national sample of states, Darling-Hammond (2000a) asserts that efforts to measure and improve the quality of teaching staff have a significant positive impact on student achievement. In fact, efforts to improve achievement via higher standards for teachers is preferable to current accountability schemes that are more dependent on high-stakes testing and sanctions for schools (Darling-Hamond, 2000b). The NCLB initiative favors holding failing schools accountable by high stakes testing instead of focusing on teacher-quality measures and instructional leadership issues. Without a more coherently focused effort to address the cultural issues that impact the learning environment in our schools, NCLB will ultimately fail to produce anything more than additional lists of schools that have failed to meet arbitrary measures of student achievement. Successful principals can overcome these challenges by working to build a vision that belongs to the whole school: the teachers, students, and their families. The positive impact of the principal on student achievement is the focus of the next section.

The Principal's Impact on Student Achievement

Empirical studies of principals reveal higher levels of student achievement occur in the schools where principals engage and immerse themselves in the delivery of instruction in their schools, as compared to those principals who chiefly work on only operations and maintenance issues. Principals who take on the role of instructional leader are most likely to improve learning outcomes. Cotton (2003) summarizes these leadership roles and activities as described by many studies:

> Continually pursuing high levels of student learning; establishing a norm of continuous improvement; facilitating discussion of instructional issues; observing classrooms frequently and providing feedback to teachers; respecting teacher autonomy; protecting instructional time; supporting teachers' risk taking; providing staff development opportunities and activities; supplying other resources, such as time and materials; monitoring student progress and reporting findings; using student achievement data to improve programs; recognizing student and teacher achievement; role modeling. (p. 26)

Cotton's review suggests that principals who continually strive to support best teaching practices, innovation, data-driven curriculum development, and decision making by groups of collaborative teacher leaders are more effective than those who merely manage the non-curricular aspects of schools.

Fullan, Bertani, and Quinn (2004) use Collins' (2001) analogy of putting the right people in the right seats on the bus in order to make your organization function more efficiently and justly. Additionally, "Equally important, we argue, is making sure that the organization has the right bus in the first place—that is, the right structure for getting the job done" (Fullan, Bertani, & Quinn, 2004, p. 43). They conclude that in order to put system-wide changes in place effectively and to improve school outcomes, school leadership must focus on building the professional capacity, a culture of ongoing learning by

both teachers and students, organizational strength, and the financial stability of the entire district. Transforming a school's organizational culture involves making changes to the learning environment on many levels. In order for such collaborative and reflective capacity to evolve within the teaching community, principals can impact the collaborative culture and staff development opportunities for their teaching staff. There is also a moral imperative at work that improving teacher learning can improve student learning. Fullan (2003b) asserts: "Focusing on gap reduction is the moral responsibility of all educators. They must then understand the bigger picture and reach out beyond themselves to work with others" (p. 18).

Principals' Perceptions of Leadership: Role Making vs. Role Taking

The principalship has undergone a great range of changes in role expectations over the years, especially in the period following the 1980s and new reforms (Murphy & Seashore Louis, 1994). Teachers also have a leadership role that can be realized by principals who dare to engage their staff in creative ways. Transformational leadership by principals that empowers teachers to achieve and maintain best practices holds a lot of promise. Principals who work to transform their schools must "understand that teachers need to be empowered to act, to be given the necessary responsibility that releases their potential and makes their actions and decisions count" (Sergiovanni, 1999, p. 87). Ultimately, promoting teachers as educational leaders offers solutions (Darling-Hammond, 1994). As we struggle to understand the complex nature of educational institutions, we must examine the organizational frames of educational organizations and where transformational principals and their teacher-leaders fit within those frames. This next section

will explore changes in principals' role demands and how these changes impact leadership roles in schools.

<div align="center">Changes in Principals' Role Demands</div>

As accountability measures have placed new expectations on schools and their principals, there has been a growing sense of urgency among practicing principals about the process of reform. The principal and their schools are going to be held to new standards that involve shared decision making. Many principals feel that if they are compelled to empower others to help bring needed reform to the educational programs in their schools, then the accountability for those reforms should also be shared more equally (Murphy & Seashore-Louis, 1994). Principals feel caught in the middle of this accountability dilemma. Many states also use alternative certification programs to add to the dwindling ranks of available labor. This also raises many issues related to both the quantity and the quality of new teachers hired to fill vacant classrooms. Principals are expected to attract, hire, induct and retain good teachers for each classroom.

Many social, cultural and political variables external to the principalship and beyond the control of the principal also impact learning. However, it is helpful to study the many different approaches that principals use to enhance and improve the learning environment. "Understanding the routes by which principals can improve school out-comes through working with others is itself a worthy goal for research" (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, p. 38). There is an internal dimension to leadership that drives the com-munity forward: "Leadership exists when people are no longer victims of circumstances but participate in creating new circumstances" (Jaworski, 1998, p. 3). This is consistent with Greenleaf's (1977) concept of servant leadership and it illustrates how principals in

schools must strive to bring members of their school community into an active

partnership of learning.

Many observational studies have been done that attempt to document the work

that principals do. This research supports the perception that:

> . . . the principal's job is characterized by the brevity and variety of daily
> activities, fragmentation, uncertainty, discontinuity of work routines, long hours, a
> preference for verbal communication, high levels of interpersonal interaction, a
> high volume of activities (which are rapidly paced and frequently interrupted),
> role overload, and extensive responsibilities with limited control and authority.
> (Hart & Bredeson, 1996, p. 111)

This chaotic view of the principal's all-encompassing daily role is a common one. It

highlights the importance of working toward a greater balance between managing and

leading, role taking versus role making.

As defined in Chapter I, role takers are principals who function in their mana-

gerial capacity to deal with situations that are defined by the specific demands and role

expectations (Hart & Bredeson, 1996). These principals operate within the traditional

roles of building level administrators whose work is limited to the roles defined by the

demands of their work environment. In contrast, role makers are principals who function

in their managerial capacity to deal with situations that are defined by their own

behaviors, preferences and how they act out the role demands (Hart & Bredeson, 1996).

These are principals who create a leadership role that focuses on learning and instruction.

Taking cues from the needs of the students and staff, these principals move beyond the

traditional operational maintenance role. They delegate the traditional roles to others so

that they can focus on improving learning and instruction.

The discussion that follows focuses on principal's perceptions of leadership and how role making and role taking are a part of what they do every day. Implications for how role making and role taking can impact the entire learning community are considered. This discussion will include the principals' perceptions and practices in meeting the needs of their school community; and voices for social justice and their impact on the principalship.

Principals' Perceptions and Practices in Meeting
the Needs of Their School Community

There are many contemporary factors that influence the leadership practices of any given principal, and these practices vary based on the circumstances, needs, and available resources in the school community. How can principals initiate role making versus role taking? Assuming new roles will involve finding new ways to unite all the stakeholders in the school and the community.

Senge (1996) illustrates how good leadership is willing to assume risks that drive innovation and forge new roles that can be appropriate for role making in the principalship:

> . . . we are coming to believe that leaders are those people who "walk ahead," people who are genuinely committed to deep change in themselves and in their organizations. They lead through developing new skills, capabilities, and under-standings. And they come from many places within an organization. (pp. 3-4)

This view is consistent with Ubben, Hughes, and Norris' (2004) idea that principals can take an active part in creating their own role that challenges everyone to take part in building a better school. Role taking involves simply carrying out the duties of managing people, calendars, and operations. Role making involves transforming the self as well as other people.

Another unconventional perception of role making is the idea of the servant leader. For example, Collins (2001) describes five levels of leadership that can promote

sustained growth in any organization. These five levels represent a hierarchy of executive

leadership abilities. The five levels are "level 1, the highly capable individual; level 2, the

contributing team member; level 3, the competent manager; level 4, the effective leader;

and level 5, the level 5 executive" (Collins, 2001, p. 20). Each of the five levels repre-

sents competent, responsive leaders, but the fifth and highest level is considered the most

effective because it combines "a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional

will" (Collins, 2001, p. 20). To reach the most effective leadership role, Level 5 leaders

must be willing to serve the interests of the organization to build sustainable success that

will endure beyond their own tenure.

Effective principals must be totally committed to driving their building to meet

the needs of every child and every family in the school community. Collins (2001) also

asserts that a Level 5 leader is not driven to lead for his or her own benefit or enrichment,

but rather for the good of the entire organization: "It's not that Level 5 leaders have no

ego or self interest. Indeed, they are incredibly ambitious—but their ambition is first and

foremost for the institution, not themselves" (p. 22). This is also consistent with

Greenleaf's (1977) and Sergiovanni's (1992) image of the servant leader committed to

building a followership that will sustain the organization perpetually.

Becoming a better school system involves working with every stakeholder to

promote a sense of excellence, ownership, and leadership. Fullan (2003a) describes what

a Level 5 leader can do to promote excellence in schools:

> The principals we need are Level 5 leaders more like chief operating officers than
> managers. The teachers we need are immersed in disciplined, informed profes-
> sional inquiry and action that results in raising the bar and closing the gap by
> engaging all students in learning. There is no greater moral imperative than
> revamping the principal's role as part and parcel of changing the context within

which teachers and students learn. This is an exciting proposition and represents the moral imperative in its highest form. (p. 10)

Fullan's vision illustrates how the principal serves as the focal point of our schools. Principals create the circumstances that permit followership to develop by serving the needs of everyone around them. This requires a level of commitment that transcends the self.

Many scholars emphasize the importance of the ability of principals to adapt and manage change (Fullan, 2001a; Murphy & Seashore Louis, 1994; Senge, 1996). Murphy (1994) speaks of the competing demands on principals for developing alternative and transformational leadership strategies. Transformational leaders rely on the relationships they build within the school and the community to achieve success. However, in today's society this can be a great challenge. Single parent households, rising poverty, the demands of programs like NCLB, the impact of technology in our daily lives are just a few examples of how the many changes in our society and culture exert pressure on our schools. This pressure impacts public perceptions as many people look to schools for leadership to find answers to increasingly complex problems. Nevertheless, these alternative images of the principal's leadership show great potential for resolving many complex problems.

> None of today's most pressing societal issues—deterioration of our natural environment, the international arms race, erosion of the public education system, or the breakdown of the family and increasing social anomie and fragmentation—will be resolved through hierarchical authority. In all these issues, there are no simple causes, no simple "fixes." There is no one villain to blame. There will be no magic pill. Significant change will require imagination, perseverance, dialogue, deep caring, and a willingness to change on the part of millions of people. (Senge, 1996, p. 11)

Team builder, caring individual, promoter of dialogue, and a willing agent of change are good descriptors for the types of role making behavior that principals can use to meet the challenges they face. There are other ways in which principals can change their role to promote better instructional leadership, democratic values and social justice. The discussion that follows will examine these roles.

Voices for Social Justice and Their Impact on the Principalship

Darling-Hammond (2002), Delpit (1995), Mathews (1998), Larson and Murtadha (2002), Meier and Wood (2004) and Valenzuela (1999) all warn of how social injustice and the inequities of the school system can work against democratic ideals. Equity issues and access to quality educational opportunity lie at the core of the debate on school reform in America. Defining democracy in education requires that we understand how the current state of affairs reduces the opportunities of disadvantaged youth. Delpit (1995) has described the harshest elements of the school system that can stifle poor children's access to opportunity. She writes, "To provide schooling for everyone's children that reflects liberal, middle-class values and aspirations is to ensure the maintenance of the status quo, to ensure that power, the culture of power, remains in the hands of those who already have it" (p. 28). To really bridge these gaps of opportunity, changes in the composition of the national curriculum must be considered.

The values of Middle America dominate the scene in most public school settings. Larson and Murtadha (2002) assert that Freire's (2000) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* most accurately describes the plight of poor students in American schools: "He contends that the adoption of a predefined knowledge bank that all children ought to possess (the *banking approach*) is typically designed to meet the needs of privileged children;

therefore, it badly serves poor and disenfranchised populations" (Larson & Murtadha, 2002, p. 146 [italics added]). Freire's (2000) precise definition of this condition states that the knowledge passed to students is sending conflicting images:

> In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as a process of inquiry. (p. 72)

This is one of the greatest challenges to principals serving children in poor and ethnically diverse communities. We currently try to meet the needs of these students while attempting to meet a homogenized set of learning standards that are designed to promote mainstream values. This contradiction competes with our mission to create equitable, more democratic schools. This also makes it less likely that people in our more affluent society really understand the plight of poor people. "Many educators, too, have come to believe that injustice in society, as well as in public institutions like schools, is natural, inevitable, and entirely unalterable" (Larson & Murtadha, 2002, p. 134). We cannot permit this to cloud our vision of what is needed to lead our schools.

Role making behavior by dedicated principals has the potential to restore some of the community fabric lost in poor urban districts. It seems easy to make excuses for why academic achievement in economically and socially disadvantaged schools results in failing schools. Lyman and Villani (2004) point out that this type of "deficit thinking" is more often used to blame the children in these schools for their poor achievement (p. 117). Indeed, the principal, the staff and the community must all work together to overcome the devastating impact of deficit thinking. Lyman and Villani (2004) state that "The challenge for a principal is to influence faculty and staff to abandon deficit thinking and embrace the

belief that all children can learn at high levels, that all children have enormous potential and promise" (p. 126). This challenge demands that principals strive to re-make their traditional role to tackle the most intractable problems facing our schools and communities.

Lyman and Villani (2004) also note that combating deficit thinking requires changing accepted stereotypes and value systems. Principals, therefore, must understand that ". . . leading is about asking the tough questions that might, for example, reveal to individuals the gaps between their espoused beliefs in the ability of every child to learn and their teaching practices" (Lyman & Villani, 2004, pp. 126-127). In other words, it is essential that principals strive to change attitudes and help teachers treat children of poverty with the necessary caring, respect and dignity that will permit them to reach their true human potential. Honoring the value of each and every child helps us defeat deficit thinking and develop more ethical values systems. This is a big challenge for any leader and it takes time to produce results. Moving poor schools and their communities forward expands the non-traditional approaches to effective school leadership. Principals can bring about needed social change through role making that includes promoting more equitable, ethical, and morally sound teaching practices.

The social and cultural pressures on today's principals have changed their role in the school and community in other ways. Leadership for social justice in our schools will require new ways of thinking about how schools are connected to the communities they serve. As future leaders, we are faced with ever increasing demands on our attention to learning standards and testing regimens. Creating a truly democratic system of schooling places big demands on the school leaders at the elementary and secondary levels. Darling-Hammond (2002) articulates the challenges of these demands on our increasingly

diverse communities:

> Teachers do not have to be members of the same racial/ethnic community as their students to learn to teach them well. The fundamental idea of the common school was to create a public space within which diverse people could communicate and forge a joint experience that would allow them to build a broader community. (p. 203)

Building a community in which all members feel accepted and well cared for applies to families just as it applies to classrooms, schools, and school districts. The dynamics of today's cultural climate makes community building a challenge regardless of whether that community occupies a house, a neighborhood or a school. This adds another layer of role making that challenges principals and their staff on a daily basis.

Valenzuela (1999) illustrates how many Latino students perceive their situation in America's public school system as overtly negative, unfeeling, and hopeless. Too often the school system subtracts from the identity of the students under their care. Valenzuela (1999) states that the subtractive nature of ESL programs is at the root of why so many students fail and are never connected to the larger American school system:

> The very rationale of English as a Second Language (ESL), the predominant language program at the high school level, is subtractive. As ESL programs are designed to transition youth into an English-only curriculum, they neither reinforce their native language skills nor their cultural identities. Although there are many other aspects of schooling that are subtractive... it is important to emphasize how the organization of schooling has been historically implicated in the devaluation of the Spanish language, Mexico, Mexican culture, and things Mexican. (p. 26)

In many instances, the school system manages to achieve the opposite of a democratic ideal that reaches all students. It removes incentives to strive for the norms and values that will permit graduates to become successful citizens.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed the evolution of the role of principals and how these changes have interacted with social and cultural issues over time. One can effectively view the changing roles of the principal through the lens of Beck and Murphy's (1993) metaphors of 20th century school principals: "The 1920s, Values Broker; The 1930s, Scientific Manager; The 1940s, Democratic Leader; The 1950s, Theory-Guided Administrator; The 1960s, Bureaucratic Executive; The 1970s, Humanistic Facilitator; The 1980s, Instructional Leader" (p. 202). In the evolution of the principalship, American schools have also evolved into highly complex organizations.

In an effort to better understand the impact of change in schools and in school leadership, this chapter has also examined other metaphors of the principal. These have included the principal in the role of servant leader, and primary roles of contemporary principals. The demands of leading a school have been viewed in this chapter through the lens of many different approaches to instructional leadership. These approaches have included balancing managing and leading; supportive, caring and moral leadership; adaptive leadership and empowerment; transformational leadership approaches; and creating a vision that engages the community.

In addition to these approaches to instructional leadership, we have also discussed other areas that can impact the roles that principals assume in their daily work. These include role conflict and stress, accountability measures and their impact on the principal-ship, and principals' impact on student achievement. Finally, the chapter provided a discussion of principals' perceptions of leadership by defining leadership behaviors that are the focus of this study: role making and role taking.

Instructional leaders teach and lead both students and teaching staff. As defined in Chapter I, role takers are principals who function in their managerial capacity to deal with situations that are defined by the specific demands and role expectations (Hart & Bredeson, 1996). These principals operate within the traditional roles of building level administrators whose work is limited to the roles defined by the demands of their work environment. In contrast, role makers are principals who function in their managerial capacity to deal with situations that are defined by their own behaviors, preferences and how they act out the role demands (Hart & Bredeson, 1996). These are principals who create a leadership role that focuses on learning and instruction. Taking cues from the needs of the students and staff, these principals move beyond the traditional operational maintenance role. They delegate the traditional roles to others so that they can focus on improving learning and instruction.

Role makers strive to create their own identity and use all their talents to meet these challenges, but further research is needed to explore how successful principals fill these increasingly demanding roles. This study will help to fill a gap in the instructional leadership literature by documenting how role making can improve the quantity and quality of instructional leadership in our schools.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

This chapter focuses on the research design and data collection and analysis procedures that support this mixed methods dissertation. As identified in Chapter I, the purpose of this two-phase, mixed methods study was to explore the leadership practices of principals in Illinois schools who are changing the role of the principal (role makers) to allow a greater focus on instructional leadership.

Research Design

This study used a two-phase mixed methods design that incorporated a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. To gather quantitative data for Phase I of this study, an email invitation to participate in an online survey was sent out to 3,076 principals in the Illinois Principals Association (IPA) membership database. The information from the 317 completed online surveys was then collected in a database and analyzed. The online survey was designed to assess individual perceptions of role making and role taking behavior. The online survey was used to identify respondents who most closely identified role making as an important component of their own leadership practices. These principals who expressed a willingness to participate in phone interviews were then contacted for Phase II. The purpose of the Phase II phone interviews was to explore the role making practices of the principals in more depth. In this qualitative phase, the

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researcher explored from a phenomenological perspective principals' lived experiences as role makers who successfully focus their practices on instructional leadership.

The following research questions were addressed:

1. How do principals describe their perceptions of role making in contrast to role taking?

2. How do principals describe their motivation for role making in contrast to role taking?

3. How do principals describe their successes as instructional leaders?

4. How does role making make any difference in the success of a given principalship?

5. What skills, abilities and resources do principals perceive as being essential to their success as role makers?

Rationale for a Mixed Methods Design

Mixed method study has been growing in acceptance and use over the past 50 years as more and more researchers find the need for collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, particularly in the areas of psychology and the social sciences. "The concept of mixing different methods probably originated in 1959, when Campbell and Fiske used multiple methods to study validity of psychological traits" (Creswell, 2003, p. 15). Such a research design enriches the quality of the results because the qualitative descriptions build on the quantitative data. Campbell and Fiske (1959) "encouraged others to employ their 'multimethod matrix' to examine multiple approaches to data collection and study" (Creswell, 2003, p. 15). Borrowing from both quantitative and qualitative methods strengthens the researcher's confidence in how the data fit together to explain the outcomes of the study. "Triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods. This can mean using several kinds of methods or data, including

both quantitative and qualitative approaches" (Patton, 2002, p. 247). Mixed methods study also permits the researcher to look at phenomena from multiple perspectives and with more flexibility (Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

By using more than one source of information, including survey data, interview transcripts, documents, or observation, mixed method design enhances the researcher's understanding of complex phenomena. This gives a richer combination of sources that can be combined to describe the findings of the study. Indeed, the rationale for mixed method design "developed in part to meet the need to help researchers create understandable designs out of complex data and analyses" (Creswell, 2003, p. 208). However, it should also be noted that mixed methods study presents particular challenges to the researcher precisely because of the complex level of data collection and analysis that mixed methods require. The mixed methods approach was well suited to carrying out this two-phase study. The two-phase approach used for this study is enhanced by using the mixed methods approach precisely because it permits the researcher to collect, analyze and report the findings using both types of data.

Patton (2002) agrees that using both quantitative and qualitative methods together can provide a deeper understanding of how initial survey results play out in the individual practices of the interview participants. It was necessary to use the quantitative Phase I data to create a generic profile of a sample of Illinois principals. This information was useful in detailing the types of role making behaviors that allow principals to focus on instructional leadership. The Phase II phone interviews allowed the researcher to compare the results profiled in the Phase I data with the perceptions and experiences of principals who practice role making. This comparison, approached from a phenomenological

perspective, sheds light on the nature of role making behavior and its relationship to instructional leadership efforts.

<p style="text-align:center">Characteristics of the Phenomenological Approach</p>

A phenomenological approach helped the researcher explore and better understand the lived experiences of Illinois principals in their daily practice of instructional leadership. A phenomenological perspective provided an in depth approach for expanding on the results of the online survey using follow-up phone interviews. The Phase I online survey provided information about the larger population of respondents while the Phase II follow-up phone interviews provided the researcher with a deeper understanding of their real lived experiences. The original definition of phenomenological research developed by Husserl (1964) conceives of describing the essence of an experience (or phenomena) being studied. This approach allows the researcher to explore the phenomena from the perspective of the subjects and arrive at what Creswell (2003) describes as the "essence" of these experiences (p. 15). Creswell (2003) also points out that phenomenology "involves studying a small number of subjects through extensive and prolonged engagement to develop patterns and relationships of meaning" (p. 15). This approach is consistent with Stake's (1995) concept of establishing "an emphatic understanding for the reader, through description, sometimes *thick description*, conveying to the reader what that experience itself would convey" (p. 39). It is important to use this approach in order to better understand the experiences of Illinois principals as they live and work each day. Providing thick, rich description gives the reader a better understanding of how role making affects leadership practices. Patton (2002) points out that "thick evaluation descriptions take those

who need to use the evaluation finding *into* the experience outcomes" and that this experience "takes the reader into the setting being described" (pp. 437-438).

In the case of this study, the initial on-line surveys resulted in preliminary descriptive statistics, whereas the phone interviews provided more detail, clarifying the experiences of each principal's leadership practices. Follow-up interviews with a sub-sample of respondents can provide meaningful detail to help make sense out of and interpret survey results. The phenomenological approach was best suited for this phase of the study because it allowed the researcher to explore each principal's leadership practices on a more personal level, and to better understand the dynamics between the many leadership roles that they undertake in daily practice.

Merriam (1998) points out that phenomenological analysis can involve "imaginative variation" by which the researcher works to derive several different angles or perspectives on the phenomena being studied (p. 158). This approach is consistent with this two-phase study because the Phase I online survey was used to screen a large population on various perspectives of the principalship. The Phase II interview further examined role making's impact on instructional leadership among Illinois principals. Upon completing interviews with participants from different genders, school sizes, and school populations, the researcher developed a descriptive analysis of how role making takes place and how it impacts the quality of instruction in our schools. Using these varied perspectives and role analyses develops a deeper understanding of the phenomena. "The aim is to arrive at structural descriptions of an experience, the underlying and precipitating factors that account for what is being experienced" (Merriam, 1998, p. 159).

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

The collection and analysis of data was conducted in two-phases. A rich description of role making behavior was developed from both the Phase I quantitative and Phase II qualitative data. The emerging themes from this data collection and analysis result in a better understanding of how principals who perceive themselves as role makers approach instructional leadership.

Phase I

Participant Selection

The participants in the Phase I online survey were purposefully selected Illinois principals from the Illinois Principals Association (IPA) membership registry. The IPA email database contains over 4,000 practicing principals, assistant principals, and deans. The researcher sampled the principals at the elementary, middle and high school levels. This yielded a sample of 3,076 practicing building level administrators. Each received an initial email invitation that invited them to participate and provided a link to the Phase 1 online survey. The online survey created for Phase I determined how each participant perceives role making and its impact on their approach to instructional leadership. A pilot of this survey was conducted before it was administered to further refine the process and the survey questions for Phase I. The Phase I online survey consisted of two parts. Questions 1-9 yielded demographic information that described the sample population, and questions 10-16 (see Appendix A for the complete survey) were used to identify suitable interview participants. The data from these survey questions also helped to confirm the findings of the Phase II interview questions. The survey instrument was posted to:

http://peoria.k12.il.us/msmith/isu_cohort/dissertation/phase_1_online_survey_form.htm.

Identifying information of respondents was kept securely in the online survey and no

individual names appear in this final report. It was possible to secure the web site where

the Phase I data was collected and insure the privacy and confidentiality of all

participants.

Data Collection

Table 1 summarizes the responses to the online survey based on the original

dataset of 317 respondents. A total of 3, 076 emails went out from the IPA's database of

email addresses; however, 330 emails bounced back producing error messages indicating

that those addresses were either not active or were invalid. This left a total of 2,746

potential respondents to the online survey. Of these 2,746 potential participants in the

online survey, a total of 317 valid responses were completed. This gave the online survey

a total response rate of 1.54%. The online survey yielded some basic descriptive statistics

about the sample population of IPA members. The descriptive statistics from Phase I

generated a generic profile of the sample population and their perceptions of role taking,

role making, and instructional leadership practices. All the relevant data is reviewed in

Table 1.

Data Analysis

The Phase I online survey (Appendix A) had two parts. Questions 1-9 were

designed to probe each principal's general perceptions of their role in the school. The

data from questions 10-16 were used to identify each respondent's perceptions of role

making in contrast to role taking. Responses to questions 1-9 appear in Chapter IV and

questions 10-16 appear in the discussion that follows on the Phase I data analysis

procedures.

Table 1

Response Rates of Email Online Surveys

Descriptive Statistics on Phase I Survey	Total #	Total %
Total emails sent	3,076	
Bounced back (email address was invalid)	330	
Potential valid email responses	2,746	
Total responses (online survey submitted)	317	
Response return rate		11.54%
Total number Female returned surveys	155	48.90%
Total number Male returned surveys	162	51.10%
Total per grade level (315 Cases)		
Elementary (PreK-8)	110	34.70%
Elementary (K-4)	73	23.00%
Middle School	65	20.50%
High school (9-12)	67	21.10%
Average years as principal (286 cases)	8.26	

The data from questions 10-16 (7 questions in all) helped to determine each respondent's status as a role maker or role taker. These seven questions contrast instructional leadership behaviors with role taking and role making. The researcher used these seven questions to divide the respondents originally into three different groups: role takers, role makers, and behaviors associated with common instructional leadership practices. Each respondent could then be further identified as more inclined to practice

either role making or role taking based on the number of questions 10-16 that they believed constituted either role taking or role making. Once respondents had completed the online survey, the researcher used a program called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software and Microsoft Excel to generate descriptive statistics, tables and bar graphs. Using SPSS and Microsoft Excel software to examine their answers, the responses to questions 10-16 were coded, and then participants were ranked into identifiable groups. This allowed the researcher to determine which respondents most often identified with role making and role taking on these last seven questions from the online survey. This process involved first using Excel to rank the responses into the four groups shown in Table 2. After ranking all the responses using Excel, the transfer re-code function in SPSS allowed the researcher to refine the selection process. This analysis gave the researcher an idea how many of each group were represented in the original dataset of 317 respondents.

<div align="center">Phase II</div>

Follow-Up Participant Selection

Phase I was designed to be used as a screening tool to identify the role making principals the researcher would interview in Phase II. To determine which of the Phase I respondents to interview, the researcher studied all the responses to the online survey. A total of 388 responses were originally recorded from the online survey form. It was necessary to then review these responses to eliminate duplicates, incomplete or erroneous submissions. Seven respondents had also faxed printed copies of the survey via the 800 number. Another five respondents mailed the researcher their surveys and their responses were keyed in by hand. This left a total of 317 responses. As shown in Table 2, of these

original 317 respondents, 123 (38.8%) identified with role making behavior based on questions 10-16 of the survey (these questions appear in Appendix A and below). Also shown in Table 2 are 114 respondents who had little or no experience with the behaviors described in questions 10-16; 57 respondents who identified more with role taking; and 23 respondents who more often identified these questions as common practices of instructional leadership.

Table 2

Distribution of Responses to Phase I Questions 10-16

Response Category	N	Percent
Role Makers	123	38.80%
No Experience	114	35.96%
Role Takers	57	17.98%
Instructional Leadership	23	7.26%
Total	317	100.00%

To further refine the selection process, the transfer re-code function in SPSS revealed how many respondents had only selected role making or role taking for questions 10-16. This analysis excluded respondents who had no experience or identified instructional leadership with these seven questions. The results of this process were as follows: of the original 317 respondents, the original 123 role makers shown in Table 2 were reduced to 58. These 58 respondents had between 1-7 role making responses to questions 10-16. By limiting the role making responses to a higher range of 4-7 role making responses, this narrowed the field of potential interview participants to 19. This second part of the online

survey was designed to probe each respondent's perceptions of their own leadership behaviors as described by questions 10-16 below. Based on those responses, the participants who most strongly associated with role making were sent invitations by mail for interviews. The seven questions for this section of the online survey were:

10. For a principal to allow more time for instructional leadership, he or she must work to change the traditional roles stated in the job description.

11. My approach to the principal's role permits me to facilitate the collection, organization and analysis of a variety of information, including student performance data, to assess progress toward the district's vision of educational excellence.

12. My approach to the principal's role permits me to promote the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

13. My approach to the principal's role permits me to systematically support staff growth and development to enhance the learning environment and the instructional program.

14. My approach to the principal's role permits me to promote the appropriate use of technology to enhance student learning and professional growth.

15. My approach to the principal's role permits me to connect best practices, sound educational research, and educational standards to changes in instructional practices and curricular materials.

16. It is impossible to change the traditional roles from my job description in order to allow more time for instructional leadership.

Respondents who stated they had practical experience with these last seven questions, then had to identify that behavior as an example of role taking, role making, or common instructional leadership practices. Since role making was the focus of this study, the researcher looked for respondents who identified most often with role making leadership practices. Only respondents with a total role making score of 4, 5, 6, or 7 were invited to conduct a phone interview. To allow the researcher to explore role making

phenomena in depth, the Phase II interviews focused on the 19 role makers who ranked 4,

5, 6, or 7. Of the 19 respondents who identified with role making, 9 consented to do the

phone interview, a response rate of 47%.

Data Collection

Phase II was designed to refine the description of role making behaviors identified

by the Phase I online survey. Data collection was done via participant interviews. Thirty

to 40-minute phone interviews were conducted to further define and explore the lived

experiences of principals who perceive themselves to be role makers. A complete copy of

the phone survey protocol is located in Appendix C. The researcher tape recorded the

nine interviews, transcribed them, and presented them to the participants for verification.

The outcomes of these follow-up interviews strengthen the validity of the study. This

style of in-depth interview is also recommended to refine and enrich the description of

the participants' experiences (Seidman, 1998). Working with the data collected from the

first phase of online survey data, and later recording personal interpretations from the

follow up interviews provided useful descriptions of how principals approach their daily

work. Recording these reflections from each interview is an important component of

qualitative research methods (Creswell, 2003; Stake, 1995).

Data Analysis

Creswell (2003) points out that, "The qualitative researcher uses complex

reasoning that is multifaceted, iterative, and simultaneous" (p. 182). This means that as

the study progresses, the researcher is continually reviewing, revising and exploring the

best available strategies to uncover meaning from the collected data. As this study

progressed to Phase II, it was the intent of the researcher to provide what Stake (1995)

calls a "thick description" that gives the reader an empathetic, cathartic understanding of

the participants' experiences with role making-behavior (p. 39). "Qualitative data can put

flesh on the bones of quantitative results, bringing the results to life through in-depth case

elaboration" (Patton, 2002, p. 193). A phenomenological approach to the qualitative data

allowed the researcher to study each principal individually and identify patterns and

commonalities among each participant. Transcript data was examined to identify the

emerging themes. Entering the transcriptions into a Microsoft Access database allowed

the researcher to examine responses to each question. The transcripts were coded and

analyzed using a combination of constant comparative and content analysis methodology

(Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Merriam, 1998). Reviewing the transcript data question by

question, the researcher coded key words and phrases that connected the experiences

being described by participants. This data was used to identify the themes.

<center>Role of the Researcher</center>

Because the researcher plays a central role in conducting any qualitative study,

there are many ways that the researcher can influence or skew the outcomes. A researcher

must acknowledge and examine any biases and explore ways to avoid any negative effects

these biases may cause (Patton, 2002). The researcher in this study is a practicing high

school teacher with an interest in transitioning to an administrative position in the near

future. In his role as the instrument of the qualitative Phase II, this researcher has biases,

personal opinions, and preconceptions that should be acknowledged (Merriam, 1998;

Patton, 2003; Stake, 1995). My 15 years experience as a classroom teacher have clearly

influenced my own perceptions of building principals and how they manage their schools.

For example, as an advocate for using new learning technology in the classroom I have

frequently interacted with our building administration as well as administrators at the District level. I have been challenged to assume a leadership role among our faculty, particularly in helping inform them about the benefits of using technology as a learning tool.

It has not always been easy to convince my colleagues or our school district leadership that new methods are better than old ones. I know that this frustration has made it difficult for me to be objective in my dealings with staff who are resistant to change. However, my work with learning technologies has also led to many opportunities to network with teachers and administrators from all over Illinois. I eventually became involved in technology consulting and staff development projects throughout the school district and across the State of Illinois. I know that these experiences helped me grow professionally and fueled my passion for learning and self improvement.

I have biases about the ways in which role expectations are managed by principals in today's schools. One of my biggest concerns about assuming any principalship is how I would function myself as an instructional leader. I strongly feel that the best administrators are the ones who never forget what it is like to work with students every day. I hope to find a way to make it possible to stay actively engaged in teaching students. My ideal principalship would provide me the opportunity to teach an hour every day. This sounds good on the surface, but putting it in practice would be extremely challenging, perhaps impossible. In compensating for these biases, I have approached my research fully aware of these concerns. I have been committed to objectively observing and reporting the perceptions of each participant. By carefully working to manage these biases, I hope to bring the real life experiences of my participants to the reader.

Patton (2002) provides an interesting example of how to manage potential bias: "Epoche is a Greek word meaning to refrain from judgment, to abstain or stay away from the everyday, ordinary way of perceiving things" (p. 484). Every effort has been made to employ this concept of non-judgmental, unbiased reporting of the facts.

<div align="center">Strategies for Validating Findings</div>

Qualitative researchers use various methods and criteria to validate findings. The data collected from both the initial online survey and the follow-up phone interviews strengthen the validity of the study's findings. Patton (2002) refers to how this process allows a mixed methods study to "be designed to cut across inquiry approaches and achieve triangulation by combining qualitative and quantitative methods. . ." (p. 248). Using this two-phase mixed methods process provided a blend of both quantitative and qualitative data to analyze.

This mixed methods two-phase study used multiple forms of data for its findings. Collection and analysis of multiple forms of data contribute to validating findings. By reporting themes derived from this data, use of participant quotations further strengthens the validity of the findings in this study. This method of direct quotation from the interview phase is a common form of triangulating and validating research findings (Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995). Using extensive quotations offer rich detailed descriptions of the participant's lived experiences. This approach to triangulating the findings further supports the emerging themes and ideas of the study.

<div align="center">Ethical Issues in the Study</div>

To secure participant confidentiality, the names of participants and their schools were changed to pseudonyms profiles were developed for each of them. The researcher

also followed the Illinois State University institutional review board (IRB) procedures

and regulations. Each participant consented during the online survey (Phase I) to be con-

tacted by email for a possible follow-up interview. With IRB approval, the participants

identified for Phase II interviews received the required consent forms (see Appendix E).

Participants returned the consent forms, in the postage paid envelopes provided as soon

as the date and time for each Phase II interview was agreed upon. If required by each

school district's policy, prior consent from central administration was also obtained. The

appendix of this dissertation includes copies of the Phase I survey instrument; the

invitation email, the informed consent form for Phase II, and the interview protocol used

for the Phase II follow up interviews. In addition, final copies of the permission letter for

IRB approval, and any other required documentation are included in the appendix.

Besides following required procedures, it was also important to address any poten-

tial ethical and confidentiality issues. Creswell (2003) points out that protecting the rights

and confidentiality of participants is among the primary responsibilities of the researcher.

Components of Creswell's model helped the researcher handle ethical issues. These safety

measures include the following:

> (1) the research objectives will be articulated verbally and in writing so that they
> are clearly understood by the informant (including a description of how data will
> be used), (2) written permission to proceed with the study as articulated will be
> received from the informant, (3) a research exemption form will be filed with the
> Institutional Review Board... (4) the informant will be informed of all data collec-
> tion devices and activities, (5) verbatim transcriptions and written interpretations
> and reports will be made available to the informant, (6) the informant's rights,
> interests and wishes will be considered first when choices are made regarding
> reporting the data, and (7) the final decision regarding informant anonymity will
> rest with the informant. (2003, p. 202)

These safeguards provided the necessary protection of both the participants' rights while insuring the integrity of this researcher's ethical responsibilities.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the research findings of this two-phase mixed methods study organized according to the five research questions. Specifically this research sought to explore the leadership practices of principals in Illinois schools who are changing the role of the principal (role makers) to allow a greater focus on instructional leadership. As stated in Chapter I, role makers were generally defined as principals who create a role that permits them to focus on instructional leadership, in contrast to principals who allow the demands of their job to dictate the roles they fulfill in their schools (role takers).

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do principals describe their perceptions of role making in contrast to role taking?

2. How do principals describe their motivation for role making in contrast to role taking?

3. How do principals describe their successes as instructional leaders?

4. How does role making make any difference in the success of a given principalship?

5. What skills, abilities and resources do principals perceive as being essential to their success as role makers?

Chapter IV is organized into the following sections: Perceptions of Illinois Principals about Instructional Leadership, Profiles of Interview Participants, Research Questions, and Summary of Major Findings. Data used to answer the research questions come from both the Phase I online survey and the Phase II phone interviews.

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Perceptions of Illinois Principals about Instructional Leadership

Questions 1-9 of the Phase I on-line survey address general components of the perceptions of Illinois principals on instructional leadership and their role in schools. Responses to these questions create a profile of perceptions from principals across the state about the principal's role and instructional leadership. This profile serves as a backdrop for considering the research questions and the perceptions about role making and instructional leadership of the nine principals interviewed. A copy of the Phase I survey appears in Appendix A of this dissertation, and the graphical charts referred to here are included in Appendix E.

Table 3 gives an overview of how participants in the on-line survey responded to each survey question about dimensions of leadership for Illinois principals. In examining all 317 responses to the questions, the researcher found that questions 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9 elicited negative responses, question 8 responses were neutral (no opinion), and questions 2, 4, and 6 elicited more positive responses.

Table 3

Average Responses to Phase I Survey Questions 1-9

Question	N	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard Deviation
Question 1	316	1	5	2.61	1.11
Question 2	315	1	5	3.83	0.97
Question 3	317	1	5	1.48	0.62
Question 4	317	1	5	3.93	0.92
Question 5	317	1	5	2.00	1.02
Question 6	313	1	5	4.58	0.69
Question 7	313	1	5	1.38	0.64
Question 8	316	1	5	3.08	1.13
Question 9	317	1	5	1.94	0.84

The section that follows examines the answers from the 317 respondents to each of the survey questions 1-9. Each discussion includes the survey question, reference to a chart located in Appendix E providing a detailed graphical summary of the responses to the question, and a discussion of the findings on each survey question. This portion of the survey asked them to respond to each question on a Likert scale of 1-5: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = No Opinion, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

<div align="center">Online Survey Question Responses</div>

Online Survey Question 1

"I am most inclined to stick to the traditional roles defined by my job description, or the local demands imposed by the community." Table 3 shows that this question had an average response of 2.61 with a standard deviation of 1.11 (see Figure E-1 in Appendix E for details). There is a dichotomy of opinion on this first question. Fifty percent of the respondents to the question disagreed, and 30% agreed. The resulting average of 2.61 on the Likert scale suggests that 316 respondents do not have an opinion (a Likert scale score of 3 suggests no opinion). However, roughly a third of the population feels that the traditional managerial roles of the principalship are a necessary function of what they do on the job, while half of the respondents feel that they are not inclined to stick to traditional role taking behavior. This attitude is also reflected in the responses of the participants in the Phase II interviews.

Online Survey Question 2

"I put instructional leadership at the top of my leadership priorities and delegate other more traditional roles or duties to my office staff." Table 3 shows that this question had an average response of 3.83 with a standard deviation of .97 (see Figure E-2 in

Appendix E for details). This question clearly shows that all 315 respondents agree that instructional leadership is a priority. Delegating more traditional leadership duties is also considered important. This is also a consistent theme in the findings from Phase II of this study. The most difficult aspect of this dimension of leadership is the way in which each individual manages to delegate the more traditional roles in order to provide more time and resources for instructional leadership.

Online Survey Question 3

"Improving learning and instruction are duties best left to the teaching staff alone." Table 3 shows that this question had an average response of 1.48 with a standard deviation of .62 (see Figure E-3 in Appendix E for details). Responses to this question were clearly negative. Teachers cannot conduct all the learning and instruction duties on their own. A more coherent team approach is more likely to be advocated by most administrators. The lower standard deviation on this question also shows that there is no great variance of opinion on this issue. The majority of the population agrees that school improvement is best done by working together.

Online Survey Question 4

"As a principal, my role is often defined by the learning needs of students as opposed to the operational maintenance of the school." Table 3 shows that this question had an average response of 3.93 with a standard deviation of .92 (see Figure E-4 in Appendix E for details). This question had a more positive reaction by the respondents to the Phase I survey. Principals perceive their roles as largely defined by the needs of the students, and not the more traditional managerial roles. This question was repeated in the Phase II interviews to gain a more clear understanding of how principals achieve role

making in contrast to role taking. Since they are mandated by the school code to spend a majority of their time on instructional leadership, this ideal is considered of high value to practicing principals (Braun, 2000, p. 398). Instructional leadership must be responsive to the needs of the learning community.

Online Survey Question 5

"The importance of the principal's role as an instructional leader is determined by the grade level of the school (i.e., elementary, middle, high school)." Table 3 shows that this question had an average response of 2.00 with a standard deviation of 1.02 (see Figure E-5 in Appendix E for details). The negative responses to this question suggest that grade level makes little or no difference in the way each principal views his or her role as an instructional leader; other factors must contribute to role making behavior. However, the higher standard deviation on this question does show that there is more variance of perspective on this issue. The four grade levels indicated in Figure E-6 (see Appendix E) represent the following school configurations: 1 Elementary (Pre-K-8), 2 Elementary (Pre-K-4), 3 Middle (5-8), and 4 Secondary (9-12). This shows that the Phase I respondents were 35% Elementary, and roughly 20% of the other three school configurations.

Online Survey Question 6

"It is important that the principal asks for and seems to seriously consider the input of teachers when making instructional decisions." Table 3 shows that this question had an average response of 4.58 with a standard deviation of .69 (see Figure E-8 in Appendix E for details). This question clearly demonstrates the importance of a team approach to school leadership. A strong majority of respondents to the online survey felt

that instructional decisions must be made by consulting and engaging the teaching

faculty. This is consistent with Heifetz's (1994) contention about shared responsibility:

"The authority structure establishes places and roles for group members, including the

role of chairperson, and by doing so creates a coordinating and problem-solving

mechanism" (p. 57).

Online Survey Question 7

"Gender is a key factor in determining if a principal is more effective as an

instructional leader." Table 3 shows that this question had an average response of 1.38

with a standard deviation of .64 (see Figure E-9 in Appendix E for details). The lower

standard deviation and the overwhelmingly negative response to this question leave no

room for interpretation on this question. Gender is not a relevant issue when it comes to

how principals perceive instructional leadership. It is also interesting to note how gender

is distributed among the different levels of the schools in the population and the level of

experience. To demonstrate how gender was represented by this population, Figure E-6

(see Appendix E) illustrates the different type of school configurations where these princi-

pals work and Figure E-7 (see Appendix E) shows the distribution of gender from the 317

respondents to the Phase I survey. Figure E-7 shows the same data as Figure 6, but broken

down by gender across all four grade level configurations. The four grade levels indicated

for Figure E-7 represent the following school configurations: 1. Elementary (Pre-K - 8), 2.

Elementary (Pre-K - 4), 3. Middle (5-8), and 4. Secondary (9-12). It was interesting to

then view how gender was represented by the entire sample of 317 respondents. Figure E-

10 (see Appendix E) shows that the 317 respondents to Phase I were 51% male and 49%

female. This provided the researcher with a balanced sample of responses and lends

credibility to responses to questions 5 and 7 of the Phase I survey. Since a virtually equal number of males and females made up the 317 respondents, grade level and gender are not considered factors by an equally distributed population of male and female principals. While males are fairly equally distributed across all four grade levels, females are more heavily distributed at the elementary levels. In spite of the fact that more females occupy principalships at elementary schools, grade level and gender are not considered key factors in how a given principal approaches the role of instructional leader. A final interesting contrast between genders is shown in Figure E-14 (see Appendix E). The average years of experience of all 317 respondents was roughly 7.5 years for females and just over 9 years experience for males. Since gender and experience are so equally distributed among all the principals, it is interesting how these factors are perceived by the respondents. The next question on the survey explores this dimension of leadership a bit further.

Online Survey Question 8

"More years of experience as a principal make a significant difference in success as an instructional leader." Table 3 shows that this question had an average response of 3.08 with a standard deviation of 1.13 (see Figure E-11 in Appendix E for details). This is another example of a question with a dichotomy of perspectives. In spite of having an average response of 3.08 (a reportedly neutral outcome), the higher standard deviation of 1.13 shows a greater variance of perspectives on this question. A slightly larger percentage of respondents agreed that the number of years of experience can impact a principal's success as an instructional leader. Only 286 respondents provided information on how long they had been working as principals. The years of experience in 286 of the original sample of principals ranged from first year principals to a principal with 31 years

experience. Figure E-12 (see Appendix E) shows a graphical representation of how these 286 principals varied by years of experience. Most of the principals had 15 or fewer years on the job, yet a proportionately even number of this population split on the perception that the number of years on the job can have an impact on success as an instructional leader. This issue was also addressed in the Phase II interviews by asking each principal to discuss their experiences, perceptions, and successes as instructional leaders.

Online Survey Question 9

"The longer I work as a principal, the more removed I become from teaching practices." Table 3 shows that this question had an average response of 1.94 with a standard deviation of .84 (see Figure E-13 in Appendix E for details). This question was designed to probe whether each principal viewed the traditional managerial tasks as over-whelming their efforts to practice instructional leadership. Response to this question was negative and suggests that years on the job do not impact a principal's efforts to work to improve teaching practices. The divided opinion over question 8 and the negative reaction to this question suggest that principals can grow and develop their instructional leadership strategies over time. This theme was further developed and probed in the Phase II interviews as well.

Summary

This section reviews answers to the first nine questions of the Phase I online survey. What percentage of Illinois principals perceive themselves to be role makers as opposed to role takers? Question 1 of the survey showed that 50% did not prefer the traditional, role taking approach. However, approximately a third of the population felt that the traditional managerial roles of the principalship are a necessary function of what

they do on the job. Based on the responses to questions 2, 4 and 6 of the online survey, a majority of the 317 respondents to the survey prefer to avoid the more traditional roles of the principalship in favor of a more active approach to instructional leadership. These three questions probed the respondents' perceptions of taking a more participative, active role in leadership processes while delegating more traditional tasks. As shown in Table 3, questions 2, 4 and 6 each received a response of 3.83 or higher. This shows that all 317 respondents favored a role making approach over role taking. Instructional leadership ranks as a high priority with over 70% of the respondents as well. Role making appears to be preferred to the more traditional managerial (role taking) approach for these 317 respondents. Based on the responses to question 5 of the Phase I survey, grade level has no bearing on how this group perceives their own role making or role taking behavior. Response to question 7 of the Phase I survey was overwhelmingly negative. While gender is not equally represented at the different grade levels, gender is not viewed as a major factor on any given principal's potential success as a role maker. The sample of 317 respondents was almost exactly divided by gender. Of the 317 respondents, 286 provided information on how long they had been working as principals. Responses to questions 8 and 9 reveal that this group of principals feels that experience can be a factor in determining how they approach their roles as instructional leaders.

Finally, it should be noted that 317 respondents is too small a sample to generalize these findings. The low response rate of Phase I of this study, 11.54%, makes this an unrepresentative sample and it is not a robust enough sample to accurately generalize to all Illinois principals. However, the information from these 317 responses provided the necessary baseline data for screening the potential Phase II participants.

Profiles of Interview Participants

How success shapes approaches to role making provides insights into how each

of the nine interview participants approaches his or her principalship. When asked which

success they were most proud of and why, the respondents focused on people and the

school climate. Success is often defined by how much an impact our decisions have on

our future behavior. Most of the nine principals interviewed for Phase II of this study

described the different ways that they impacted the school's climate for the better. Phase

II was conducted during August, 2005, through phone interviews with the nine

respondents, identified through Phase I, who ranged in role making scores of 4, 5, and 6.

Demographics for each of the nine principals selected for the Phase II phone interviews

varied. The actual names of the principals have been purposefully excluded for confiden-

tiality, and the principals are referred to by pseudonym throughout the dissertation. The

information included in the profiles was self-reported by the principals in the Phase I on-

line survey and from responses in the follow-up phone interviews in Phase II of the study.

Demographic Information

Table 4 presents a summary of basic demographic information for each of the

nine principals interviewed. This information includes their positions, gender, and years

of experience as a principal, or in the case of one participant as an assistant principal.

Table 5 summarizes information about the phone interviews conducted with the

nine participants. Two of the three final categories require some elaboration. The length

of interview is shown in minutes. In Table 5, note that the Total Role Maker Score is on a

scale of 1-7 to indicate the level at which each participant identified with the role making

behaviors described in the online survey (Appendix A).

Table 4

Basic Demographic Information for Phase II Interview Participants

Principal Interview Name	Position	Gender	Years Experience
Interview 1 "Gary"	Junior High Principal (Middle)	Male	8
Interview 2 "Pete"	Assistant Junior High Principal (Pre-K-8)	Male	0 (First Year)
Interview 3 "Miranda"	Elementary Principal (Pre-K-8)	Female	10
Interview 4 "Margaret"	Elementary Principal (Pre-K-4)	Female	11
Interview 5 "Juanita"	Elementary Principal (Pre-K-8)	Female	11
Interview 6 "Joe"	Elementary Principal (Pre-K-8)	Male	19
Interview 7 "Beverly"	Junior High Principal (Pre-K-8)	Female	7
Interview 8 "Jim"	Elementary Principal (Pre-K-8)	Male	17
Interview 9 "Gloria"	Elementary Principal (Pre-K-8)	Female	6

Table 5

Phase II Phone Interview Data

Date of Interview	Length of Interview in Minutes	Total Role Maker Score
Interview 1 "Gary": 8/15/2005	40	4
Interview 2 "Pete": 8/16/2005	47	6
Interview 3 "Miranda": 8/16/2005	37	5
Interview 4 "Margaret": 8/18/2005	32	4
Interview 5 "Juanita": 8/19/2005	50	5
Interview 6 "Joe": 8/16/2005	45	4
Interview 7 "Beverly": 8/15/2005	40	5
Interview 8 "Jim": 8/16/2005	42	6
Interview 9 "Gloria": 8/15/2005	37	6

The Profiles

These brief profiles introduce each participant.

Principal 1

"Gary" is a male principal who has 8 years of principal experience and is currently serving in a Middle (grade 5-8) school in suburban Chicago. Gary thinks his best work as a principal grows from solutions that bring together all stakeholders. In bringing new ESL programs to his school, he had to help the building meet the needs of larger numbers of students with limited proficiency in English. When describing how this was done, Gary said,

> I'm most pleased because it involved students, staff and parents. I had three very distinct groups of people that it needed to work for. The staff, that's one group. The students are really two groups. The students in our building, in our normal attendance area, but then also with the students that were transferring. And it was the same with the parents. The parents were in the normal attendance area, but then also the parents that are coming from outside the area that are part of our school. It had to work for all three groups.

Principal 2

"Pete" is a male who was in his first year as an assistant principal when he was interviewed. He is currently serving in an Elementary (Pre-K-8) school in east central Illinois. Pete gives an interesting contrast to how his role as a principal is much like that of teachers and their students. He emphasizes the importance of building rela-tionships, and being able to "see and feel" the positive climate he promotes in the school. "I need to build positive relationships with these people just like I was a teacher in a classroom . . . people want initially for other people to like them or to enjoy their personality."

Principal 3

"Miranda" is a female principal who has 10 years of principal experience and is currently serving in an Elementary (Pre-K-8) school in northern Illinois. Like Pete, Miranda also thinks her best work as a principal grows from creating a positive climate in the school where she works: "I'm able to create a really nice climate in the school." This is not always easy to achieve without the input of everyone involved. That is why Miranda works hard at "being able to establish a positive relationship with the kids, parents, and everybody."

Principal 4

"Margaret" is a female principal who has 11 years of principal experience and is currently serving in an Elementary (Pre-K-4) school in central Illinois. Margaret is proudest of her work to help her teachers improve their efforts to teach reading. She feels strongly that her teachers can use best practices to reach each student at their own level of ability. "Because one kid is reading third grade level, three kids can't even read it, they are just following along, and the rest of them are all over the board." Margaret feels strongly that it takes time to build a team of teachers committed to making this work. "I just kept teaching guiding, supporting, and hiring people that did it, so that helps; hiring people that believed in it. . . . I didn't tell them that they had to do it, and eventually all of my staff bought into it."

Principal 5

"Juanita" is a female principal who has 11 years of principal experience and is currently serving in an Elementary (Pre-K-8) school in southwestern Illinois. Juanita achieves great success in building a cooperative climate in the school and the community

where she works. Daily she relies on her teaching staff, maintenance workers, and secretaries to run the school operations, maintenance and academic programs. However, she has also had impressive success engaging the parents, and other community participants to meet the challenges facing the school. Similar to Gary, Pete, and Miranda, Juanita works very hard to bring everyone together to actively manage solutions.

Principal 6

"Joe" is a male principal who has 19 years of principal experience and is currently serving in an Elementary (Pre-K-8) school in northwest suburban Chicago. In his many years of experience as a principal, Joe has worked hard to build a sense of community within the school. This is something he calls "the villages concept." It involves using multiple age levels and groupings of students to help the school better reflect the community where these families live. Joe believes this best represents, "... the idea that we have the opportunity here at an elementary school building to model what these kids have in their neighborhoods, what the one room schoolhouse used to be like." The "villages" concept allows Joe to help promote responsibility, citizenship, and mutual support. "Some of the essence of what (John) Dewey and everybody talked about that many years ago was the idea that kids need each other." Joe thinks that a greater sense of understanding and cooperation grows from the multi-age approach. "Why can't we just emulate some of what goes on in your neighborhood, right here at the school."

Principal 7

"Beverly" is a female principal who has 7 years of principal experience and is currently serving in an Elementary (Pre-K-8) school in south-central Illinois. Having become a principal later in her teaching career, she felt fortunate to work with building a

new school that was badly needed in the community. She drew her greatest satisfaction as a principal in helping the staff to grow and demonstrate the need for the new facility. This helped to bring the community together to make the new school a reality. She feels that all of these achievements were interdependent. "If we hadn't built the new school we would not have done some of the projects we are doing now." Working with her staff and the community to build a new school helped to make everyone feel like an important part of the process.

Principal 8

"Jim" is a male principal who has 17 years of principal experience and is currently serving in an Elementary (Pre-K-8) school in central Illinois. In his long career as a building principal, Jim has stressed the importance of recognizing excellence among the staff and students alike. "They trust me, I trust them. The reason why, I think, is that I praise them when I can praise them. I don't say anything negative." Jim also feels it is important to provide the necessary resources the staff needs to improve professionally. "I get them as many school improvement days as I can to work on alignment." It is also important to provide them with "fun" ways to interact socially. "We like to have fun. They appreciate things like that. I also buy them pizza once in a while."

Principal 9

"Gloria" is a female principal who has 6 years of principal experience and is currently serving in an Elementary (Pre-K-8) school in southeastern Illinois. During these 6 years, Gloria has overcome many difficult challenges, especially in the area of staff morale and climate. In the first building she served as a principal, the morale had deteriorated to a very low level. Over time, she was able to turn things around using a

combination of praise, careful hiring, and hard work. This made it even harder when she was asked to move to another school in the same district. "It was quite the place to be and by the time I left to take this position, you know, I felt really bad leaving because we had come so far, and it was just such a different place to be."

Summary

Each of these nine principals brings unique gifts to bear on the many tasks and leadership challenges he or she face. The ability to improve families, climate, to give praise, support collaboration, and build a sense of community—these are all ways that principals measure their success. As he or she reaches out to the staff, students, and families, each principal creates leadership roles that permit him or her to drive the mission of the school. Leadership roles are shared in ways that improve the learning environment for all and give everyone ownership of the process. For example, the multi-age approach used by Joe and the multi-level approach described by Margaret also high-light that the traditional approach to grouping and tracking students are not the only ways to organize your school. The discussion of the research questions helps clarify principals' successes with these and other non-traditional approaches and how their success changed the way these principals view their role in their schools and in the community.

Research Questions

Each of the five research questions were directly asked in the Phase II interview questions. In the discussion to follow, each major research/interview question will serve as a heading, followed by details and an analysis of the major themes in participant responses to the major question and selected follow-up probes. Responses to the online-survey are incorporated when they also provide relevant data.

Question 1: How Do Principals Describe Their Perceptions

of Role Making in Contrast to Role Taking?

Principals fill a wide variety of roles in the daily life of the school. Depending on the level of the school building, they can serve on any given day as substitute teacher, hall monitor, counselor, nurse, disciplinarian, test proctor, coach, cheerleader and even substitute parent. To better understand their efforts to fill these roles along with the role of instructional leader, Research Question 1 examines how each principal perceives his or her own role making behavior, in addition to asking how principals contrast role making and role taking. Table 6 summarizes the four major themes in response to the first research question and the follow-up interview probes. The first three major themes presented in Table 6, in order of their frequency, are: Role makers rely on teacher and parent leaders; Role makers proactively delegate traditional operational roles; Role makers communicate and know people and their strengths. These themes address how principals perceived their own role making leadership behaviors. The fourth theme expresses the variation in how principals contrasted role making and role taking.

Of the four major themes presented in Table 6, the two most frequently mentioned are that role makers rely on teacher and parent leaders and role makers proactively delegate traditional operational roles. Both of these themes were mentioned by all nine participants in response to Question 1. On many different levels and in many different situations all nine participants stated that they needed to regularly engage the help of their teaching staff, the office and maintenance staff, parents, and members of the community to accomplish the work of the school. Engaging teacher and parent leaders often required that they proactively delegate traditional tasks or roles to others. These two themes were linked by

the fact that in order to effectively use teacher and parent leadership, traditional roles and tasks were frequently delegated to office staff, maintenance, or other members of the community.

Table 6

Question 1—Themes in Participants' Perceptions of Role Making in Contrast to Role Taking

| | Themes in Participants' Responses | | | |
Participants	Theme 1.1 Role makers rely on teacher and parent leaders	Theme 1.2 Role makers proactively delegate traditional operational roles	Theme 1.3 Role makers communicate and know people and their strengths	Theme 1.4 Role makers' perceptions of contrasts between role making and role taking vary
Gary	X	X	X	X
Pete	X	X	X	X
Miranda	X	X	X	
Margaret	X	X	X	X
Juanita	X	X	X	X
Joe	X	X	X	X
Beverly	X	X		X
Jim	X	X	X	X
Gloria	X	X	X	X
Total Identified	9	9	8	8

A third theme in Table 6 shows that role makers communicate and know people and their strengths. This was reported by eight of the nine participants from the Phase II interviews. It is interesting to note how this theme also connects to the first two in the sense that all three of these themes involve building and maintaining human relationships,

an overarching theme that recurs as an ongoing aspect of role making behavior. The final

theme expresses the variation in how participants contrasted role making and role taking.

Theme 1.1: Role Makers Rely on Teacher and Parent Leaders — 9 Respondents

Promoting teacher and community leadership to help run the school was reported

by all nine participants. They describe leadership that emphasizes team building and caring

for individual needs. Using teacher leadership and engaging the community is a behavior

consistent with many of the experiences described throughout the Phase II interviews.

Promoting and utilizing teacher leadership and parent and community leadership are also

reported to be very common to role making practices. The nine principals reported that

they directly engage their staff and community to make important decisions about curricu-

lum, building programs, and learning standards. Excerpts from Juanita's interview provide

the best illustration of this theme. For example, Juanita has had a lot of success in this area.

"I think a lot has to do with what I was leading to; I've developed a lot of teacher leaders

and parents who help the school system for kids." This has included developing leadership

roles for her teachers as well. "I have a teacher who leads, who works with our enriched

program. I started it; I ran it for a year. A teacher took over and really has brought the

program farther than I would with everything else I do." It is interesting to note that

helping her staff to assume these leadership positions required that Juanita first model the

type of teacher leadership she needed from her staff. After they had time to make it work,

the teacher then developed the enriched program to the next level. Juanita is working to

provide moral leadership for a more democratic, equitable school environment.

Juanita's success at promoting leadership is not just limited to her teaching staff.

"I have a parent leader with the PTO who has helped renovating the courtyard area. They

have put in a new marquee, lighting, flag pole trash bins, etc., and we are also using a

local community college to coordinate about 4 different programs." This has dramatically

improved her ability to communicate with all stakeholders and make improvements to the

physical plant and all of the school's programs. This has also given students new

opportunities: "I will continue with federal work study because the students are paid to

coordinate that through the teachers." This clearly establishes the trust, cooperation, and

communication that Juanita says are important components of role making. "I'm

redefining leadership by empowering others to allow others to take on responsibility for

leadership roles." Juanita focuses on her need to develop curriculum and her staff as a

team-centered process, which puts Juanita in the role of head teacher.

Bringing parents in to assist with the building renovations was part of Juanita's

school improvement plan. Obviously, working with parents at this level requires a great

deal of skill and more importantly, trust. Here is how Juanita describes working with this

particular parent: "She has keys to the building for the weekends, so she can get in and

out and get access to what she needs. So there is a high level of trust that goes along with

that role maker model of administration." This type of collaboration has other benefits as

well. The principal can use this trust and cooperation to improve her own performance as

a leader. "If you can get into that role making, then you can save yourself sometimes and

have what you need to be an instructional leader, which I think is a really key role for an

administrator." However, Juanita admits that this is not as easy as it sounds. She says that

many principals ". . . say they don't have time for it. The only way to make time is to get

other people, find out what they are really good at, and let them soar."

Relying on the leadership and assistance of teachers and parents allowed Juanita to discover and unlock the potential of her staff and the families in her school. Another way that principals can create new roles for themselves as instructional leaders is by proactively delegating traditional operational roles to others. This frees them to more actively pursue instructional leadership tasks that can have a broader impact on improving learning.

Theme 1.2: Role Makers Proactively Delegate Traditional
Operational Roles—9 Respondents

All nine principals also described varying levels of delegating operational duties. Joe and Jim both described how this allows them to bring more participation into their schools' daily tasks. Jim says that he depends on delegating traditional tasks to allow for spending more time in classrooms and throughout the building. He says that he is in every classroom "almost every day." Even if it is just for a brief visit, it allows him to establish a visible presence in the classroom. "I have a first year teacher who I won't actually evaluate until October, but by the second week of school I went in and sat down for 10 minutes, observed a math lesson...." This allows him to quickly establish what is expected and focus on reflection and improvement of instruction in each classroom. Jim insists that this enhances understanding and communication with this new teacher, "...and then I gave her input on what she had done correctly and had some suggestions for her already."

By making frequent visits to the classroom, Jim has to find other ways to get important daily work completed. "On the role making, I try to delegate what I can to teacher assistants and for the secretary and custodian to take care of every day operational things." This requires that Jim carefully balances the many tasks required by

his job and delegates tasks to the individuals best suited to fill the necessary leadership roles. All nine principals regularly delegate a variety of tasks to their staff on a regular basis. Delegating authority to teachers, especially on issues relating to curriculum was consistently supported by the Phase II interviews and in the Phase I online survey.

Joe emphasizes the importance of delegating as a means of getting traditional operational maintenance done each year. He credits much of his success at this delegation to the staff he works with. "In terms of custodial things, certainly I know what's going on, but with each head custodian, I've said, 'Here's a list of things to do', and they've never failed me." This work includes frequent trips through the building and oversight, but not micromanagement. "And you take those walks in the building in June and ask yourself 'How is this building ever going to come back together again.' But I've learned just to back off, and they know what they need to do." In other words, Joe has learned to practice letting go of the minute details and trust his staff to make important decisions. "The school always opens with things looking in great shape, with very little of me having to monitor, or set up schedules, etc., with very little in the way of timelines or deadlines. That is just something that I've had to let go of. Each task that needs to be done gets done by the staff delegated to manage it." Role makers resist the urge to micro-manage, whereas role takers may use role expectations as a reason to spend time fulfilling purely administrative tasks. Joe's comments illustrate how the competing interests between role taking and balancing managing and leading can be handled.

Miranda was the only respondent who stated that role making was more reactive than proactive. Being reactive and proactive can mean different things to different people. Miranda distinguishes the reactive nature of the environment you inherit as you enter the

job when she described her own experiences with role making in her current position:

> Role making is certainly more appealing than role taking. However, I do think you are sometimes limited by the situation that you work in. The staff you inherit. The building you inherit and all the school culture and climate stuff. I think it takes a while to become a role maker. It's nice if you do become a role maker that you have people that, as you said (in your definitions), you can delegate things to. It's good to do that I think and it's just kind of sometimes hard to find people to do that with.

Ideally, you can proactively choose your staff and work to become a role maker over time. However, you may also have to react to the situation you are handed at the beginning. Becoming a role maker over time was typically how many respondents viewed their own experience. To succeed at role making, these first two themes of relying on teacher and parent leadership and proactively delegating traditional roles are interdependent. Dependence on others to assume leadership roles often results in finding ways to creatively use the human resources in your school to get important operational tasks accomplished at the same time. The ability to network, communicate, build relationships and look for people's strengths and how to use them appear to be essential parts of what successful role makers do every day.

Theme 1.3: Role Makers Communicate and Know
People and Their Strengths — 8 Respondents

Eight of the nine principals pointed out how building trust and communication with staff, parents and students is essential to successful role making. This theme calls to mind Senge's (2000b) "personal mastery," described in Chapter II as "a set of practices that support people—children and adults—in keeping their dreams whole while cultivating an awareness of the current reality around them" (p. 59). These metaphors and practices reoccur in excerpts from the Phase II interviews.

For example, Gary points out that it is important for his staff to feel like they have a stake in the direction of the school and its programs. "Flexibility is a huge one. The idea of ownership by others is a big one and the shared leadership view." The willingness to share leadership roles and duties allows the principal to find the best people for each task. "There are a whole lot of people who are a whole lot brighter than I am. Seek out others who are brighter than you. I'm not always top-down, you know, come to me I have all the answers." This level of awareness and personal responsibility frees Gary to find what works best. The process of shared leadership also allows the principal to better understand what his best people are capable of handling. Gary relies on their expertise to get things done. "I rely on people that are really good and knowledgeable about what they do. It's that input that helps make some of the decisions."

Pete has another important observation about getting input from others to help direct the school. He encourages his teachers to help guide classroom procedures. He directs his teachers to "Listen to your kids, listen to their needs, listen to their wants, let them have a say in how their classroom is developed. Being a principal is no different. We have a staff, the staff teaches the kids." The listening process is an essential part of sharing our experiences and understanding of reality. Pete also points out that listening is part of the learning process between everyone in the school. "We want our staff to do that, if we don't model that for our staff, then we are asking them to do something that we ourselves are not going to do. You understand in order to get to the next level we must do this, build relationships with those people." Building relationships allows the principal to put all the necessary components together. "We know where we need to get, it's getting people on board in order to move change in the right direction." Pete's comment is

reminiscent of Collins' (2002) notion of getting the "right people on the bus" (p. 56) and

making sure you build relationships that best serve the direction you want to take your

organization. To build the necessary relationships to move the school in a desirable

direction principals must also work to focus intensely on the needs of their staff and

students and work with teachers to identify what best can help students succeed.

Theme 1.4: Role Makers Perceptions of Contrasts Between
Role Making and Role Taking Vary—8 Respondents

The final theme captures responses to Question 1 from a different angle with the

focus on how the respondents contrasted role making and role taking behavior. Principals

interviewed had different perceptions of how role making and role taking contrast with

each other. These perceptions ranged from the perspective of a principal who actively

promotes best teaching practices by delivering lessons in the classroom directly to a

principal who maintains the traditional role taking daily tasks of building operation and

maintenance in addition to role making.

For example, Gary had an interesting perspective on how role taking can define a

principal's leadership style. "Role taking is more of management. Dealing with issues

that come up and expectations that people have of you to answer their questions." In

contrast, Gary feels that role making requires a more reflective approach to what needs to

be done to improve the school. "Role making is more of looking out and reaching into

different aspects, approaching topics that other people haven't raised, so research and a

little background, of what maybe other people are seeing in different places. Maybe your

building hasn't seen yet so it's not in their radar scope." The ability to anticipate the needs

of your staff and your school are implied in Gary's perspective.

Margaret also discusses the ability to anticipate problems and work to delegate management tasks. "Role taking to me is people who tend put to out fires instead of preventing them. They spend too much time managing instead of leading. They really don't delegate well." In comparison to role taking, role making requires that you learn to seek out competent people who can help you manage the tasks that need to be managed and work together to find your way forward. Margaret elaborates that, "I think role makers tend to develop the role as the needs exist and do what the staff and the students need, more than just what the building needs, or what (the building) thinks it needs. I guess that is kind of a big difference between the two." Margaret's metaphor of "putting out fires instead of preventing them" seems aptly applied to role taking in contrast to role making.

Juanita illustrates how role making creates new roles for her teachers that allow everyone to grow professionally: "An example of myself would be . . . we have a lot of teacher leaders and parent volunteer leaders who take on some of the traditional busy work things I do which gives me the opportunity to focus on new programs, innovation and instructional leader." Joe also highlights how important it is to be able to delegate operational tasks to provide more focus on learning and instruction. "I have a great office staff and teachers that are willing to do a lot of things, and parents and support staff. So I do a lot of delegating so I can focus on instruction more, so I know that I'm really more of a role maker as opposed to a taker."

In contrast, Jim provides a very good description of how role making and role taking can define a principal's approach to leadership. Jim relies on the expertise of his faculty to help him prepare the curriculum: "I like to get a lot of faculty input as we do a team effort, especially with curriculum development. ISAT, NCLB we are really hitting

hard on language and math areas." Teacher leadership and development are important factors Jim uses on a regular basis. "We get a lot of input from staff. We send staff to conferences throughout the year. Sometimes I pick what I want them to go to but sometimes they do, but they know these have to be tied into the reading and math areas. These are role making." Clearly role making is something Jim defines as essential to the thought processes in his school.

In contrast, Jim describes role taking in much the same terms that Margaret uses when she describes people who manage instead of leading. "Role takers in our District are regular administrators who don't do much with curriculum, who does more with discipline and building concerns and work in administrative tasks." This requires that Jim work with his staff and maintain a visible presence throughout the building on a daily basis. "I think I do a lot with curriculum in trying to meet the NCLB parameters that the government puts in place. I visit classrooms more, and get to evaluate teachers. We work a lot on alignment and assessment."

These responses indicate that each principal has his/her own level of comfort and experience with role making behaviors. Table 7 displays the full range of descriptors from participants' varying perspectives on role making and role taking. For each phrase or term, the names of the individuals who used the descriptor are indicated in parentheses. An important point is that these respondents were more interested in describing role making than role taking. They generated a longer list of role making behaviors in a larger variety of areas than role taking behaviors. The experiences they described were consistent with the respondents' descriptions of their own role making. Table 7 illustrates how respondents described their perceptions of role making versus role taking. Only Miranda did not directly address this.

Table 7

Participants' Varying Perspectives on Role Making and Role Taking

Perceptions of Role Making	Perceptions of Role Taking
Approaching new topics others haven't raised (Gary)	Management, handling what comes (Gary)
Research (Gary)	Wearing many different hats (Pete)
Guiding self-discovery (Pete)	Guiding classroom management (Pete)
Know everyone's strengths and weaknesses (Pete)	Putting out fires instead of preventing them (Margaret)
Being a teacher of teachers (Pete)	Managing instead of leading (Margaret)
Being a finder of information (Pete)	Do not delegate well (Margaret)
Being proactive, moving forward (Pete)	Busy work (Juanita)
Develop their role as defined by the needs of staff and students (Margaret)	Managing what is needed when it is needed (Beverly)
More traditional administrative roles (Juanita)	Regular administrators (Jim)
Creates roles that are responsive to needs (Juanita)	Don't do much with curriculum (Jim)
Leadership focused on learning and instruction (Joe)	Handle discipline (Jim)
Walking around the building, observing (Joe)	Work on administrative and building tasks (Jim)
New programs and innovations (Juanita)	Old school (Gloria)
Willing parents and support staff (Joe)	Not progressive (Gloria)
Parent volunteer leaders (Joe)	Handle day to day operations (Gloria)
Delegating maintenance and other administrative tasks (Joe, Beverly)	
Teacher leaders (Beverly, Jim)	
Encouraging staff participation in curricular decisions and processes (Beverly)	
Team effort (Jim)	
Staff input (Jim)	
Ongoing staff development, conferences (Jim)	
Visiting classrooms (Jim)	
More involved in teacher evaluation (Jim)	
Work on alignment and assessment (Jim)	
Engage teachers to participate in alignment and assessment, updates to curriculum (Jim)	
Stretch yourself in the role (Gloria)	
Look into different aspects of school administration (Gloria)	

Only two descriptors were used by more than one principal: (a) the importance of delegating some administrative tasks (Joe and Beverly) and (b) the use of teacher leaders and a team approach to curricular alignment and development (Beverly and Jim). Role taking, according to seven of the nine principals, involves the management of traditional roles. Six of the nine also agree that role takers manage tasks instead of people, by doing the traditional tasks themselves instead of delegating traditional administrative tasks to staff. Perceptions of what constitutes role making in contrast to role taking appear to vary greatly. However, the themes summarized in Table 6 and the descriptors in Table 7 show that both role making and role taking are important features of what each principal does every day.

Question 2: How Do Principals Describe Their Motivation

for Role Making in Contrast to Role Taking?

To better understand the behavioral factors that contribute to role making, one needs to ask principals what motivates their role making behavior. A large part of what motivates role makers is their desire to build human relationships. These relationships create a culture of cooperation, collaboration, and partnership. Responses to Research Question 2 also suggest that role makers establish trust and ownership of the school's leadership process. This ultimately leads to empowerment. Each principal brings different talents to the job and is motivated in different ways to move the school forward. Moving the school forward to the desired results and outcomes is a primary motivation.

The following discussion will also respond to Research Question 2 by presenting and interpreting themes in the interview responses. Table 8 summarizes the five major themes in response to the second research question and the follow-up interview probes. These themes reveal how the nine participants perceive their motivations for role making in

contrast to role taking. Of the five major themes presented in Table 8, the most frequently mentioned is that role makers are motivated by desired results and outcomes, mentioned or implied by all nine participants. The second most frequently mentioned was being motivated to focus on the diverse needs of students and staff. This was mentioned by seven of the nine participants in response to Question 2. Six of the nine participants also indicated the last three major themes presented in Table 9, stating that their motivation for role making includes promoting collaborative or participative leadership, building trust by seeking staff or family input, and working to use all resources by promoting delegation and empowerment. The discussion of the responses that follows will show how each of these themes was addressed in the participant's responses.

Table 8

Question 2—Themes in Participants' Motivations for Role Making

Participants	Themes in Participants' Responses				
	Theme 2.1 Role makers are motivated by desired results and outcomes	Theme 2.2 Role making motivates principals to focus on the diverse needs of students and staff	Theme 2.3 Role making motivates principals to promote collaborative and participative leadership	Theme 2.4 Role makers are motivated to build trust by seeking staff or family input	Theme 2.5 Role makers are motivated to use all resources by promoting delegation and empowerment
Gary	X		X		X
Pete	X		X	X	X
Miranda	X	X	X	X	X
Margaret	X	X		X	X
Juanita	X	X	X	X	
Joe	X	X	X		
Beverly	X	X	X	X	X
Jim	X	X			
Gloria	X	X		X	X
Total Identified	9	7	6	6	6

Theme 2.1: Role Makers are Motivated by Desired
Results and Outcomes—9 Respondents

Margaret, Juanita, Joe and Gloria each share similar motivations for role making.

Their common motivation grows out of the results or outcomes they desire. These

motivations represent a common theme that building human relationships is essential to

success as a principal. This is evident in the following two excerpts from responses to

Question 2:

> I know each child in my school and almost all their parents, and I know them
> well. And I know what type of kid they are, and my motivation is to make them
> successful in life. My motivation is to challenge the smart ones. Get those slow
> ones caught up. Basically, they become my kids, and that is incredibly
> motivating. And I can't do it if I just sit in my office, it won't happen. If I just do
> the busy work, and handle the fire drills, it's not going to get things done. Even to
> model for my teachers how important it is, to get to know your kids and be there
> for them. (Margaret)

> My motivation is to make education a good experience for kids. It is purely
> coming from wanting to change the system. I wasn't impressed with some of the
> schools I've taught in. I wanted to make school a safe, fun place to be. I could
> impact not just a classroom of kids, but the whole education system by becoming
> and administrator and by developing that relationship with parents, with teachers,
> you know, that reciprocity of trust, that we are all working for kids. I realize that
> we have them only, you know, seven hours a day. The rest of the time the parents
> have them, so we have to work together to raise these children and prepare them.
> (Juanita)

Finding new pathways to learning is important to how Joe approaches his

principalship. Just as Juanita is motivated to find new ways to make the school better, Joe

is always searching for better ways to help his teachers teach and his students learn.

"When I see the word traditional, I've never considered myself a very traditional person. I

don't mean that negatively, but my motivation is thinking, 'Isn't there another way of

teaching this'?" Joe always found it necessary to keep searching for ways to improve, and

this often required self reflection. "Even though I had some excellent mentors when I

started teaching, I would always think, maybe there is another way this can be done. Maybe there is a way to play off my teaching strengths and my enjoyment of being in the classroom." His approach to teaching gave Joe important perspectives in how to be a more collaborative leader as well. He describes how important it was to share in the learning process with everyone he works with: "How to be a co-teacher, co-learner with people, and I can still fit that into the principal's role. And so when I started, I thought one of the ways I can connect with teachers, and build relationships with them, be in their classrooms more and offer my time to co-teach." Building relationships and collaborating in the teaching process are important to role makers because it helps them share experiences and connections with teachers and students alike.

Joe found that collaborating with his staff gave him opportunities to be a more visible presence in the classroom. "I can model lessons, or when we need release teachers for special education, when each teacher has to be gone for 20 or 30 minutes at a time, and the sub floats around the building. I would say to them, 'Don't worry about making a lesson plan.' I will substitute." These opportunities to teach allow Joe to both assert him-self as a head teacher while providing a resource for his teaching staff. "I will come from place to place, and I will do the lesson. So (I function) as that role maker, having people see me more as a learner and a teacher, and somebody that can plan a lesson, too." This also allows him to be more empathetic and illustrates Greenleaf's (1977) concept of a servant leader. "I try to put myself in those teacher's positions. I think the more traditional role is one that intentionally stays more in the office and handle managerial stuff."

Joe points out that it is not always easy to be connected to what is going on in classrooms. This has required that he work extra hard to balance his priorities. "My

motivation from the start of doing this was to be in the classrooms. And there have been times in my career when I haven't been able to get there as much as I wanted or could, but my motivation always has come back to that." It is important to Joe to be able to "get in the classrooms, be there, work with teachers, and work with kids. That would be my motivation." As he works to make a more visible presence in the classroom, Joe is modeling for his staff and his students the value of teaching and learning. This is a good example of servant leadership in action.

In contrast, Gloria stresses how motivating others can inspire her to give her best:

> I think if you give people more than they expect they will work extra hard for you. They see you going that extra mile. And a lot of times, people still see administrators in that role taking position, and really don't think there's an interest in some of the other things that are classified as the role maker. I think it gives you a chance to move beyond what is traditional and you can also get into more areas that honestly need your attention, and that motivates me because I think you know, even if it's building morale, student discipline, respect, there are so many aspects that I want to give people more than they bargained for in a positive way.

As excerpts from interviews with these four principals have illustrated, motivating people is directly tied to the expected response or result. To better understand the inter-action between each principal's motivations for role making, Table 9 illustrates how each motivation produces certain results. These were taken from all the responses given to this question. Delegating, collaboration, being proactive, knowing your students, staff, and parents, promoting best practices and serving the needs of your community all contribute to successful schools. Table 9 shows how these behaviors reveal the motivations of the nine participants and how their motivations for role making achieve desirable results. The next section describes how these motives can redefine the more traditional roles in ways that provide more time for instructional leadership.

Table 9

Summary of Motivations for Role Making Behaviors and their Outcomes

Motivation	Outcome
Make people part of the process	Get the most out of available personnel and resources
Delegating roles and tasks based on people's individual strengths	Makes them part of the mission, the vision, the process of the school
Being proactive, promoting change, looking for different ways to do things	Promotes collaboration and communication among teachers and staff
Personally get to know your students, their families, the community	You develop a personal stake in helping them succeed
Challenge students to help them be successful	Creates a climate and culture built on learning
Develop a reciprocity of trust with staff and parents	Make school a fun, safe experience for students
Building a role for the principal in the classroom as co-teacher, co-learner	Creates new perceptions of the principal as a teacher, learner, participant, doer
Establish a regular presence in classrooms	Create a visible role of the principal actively working with teachers and students as part of the learning process
Using all the available human potential at your disposal	Provides principals with more options and flexible solutions to the school's challenges
Promote best practices and when necessary, non-traditional solutions	Helps staff target problem areas and work for the best solutions
Give your people more than they expect	They work extra hard for you

Theme 2.2: Role Making Motivates Principals to Focus on
the Diverse Needs of Students and Staff—7 Respondents

This second theme from Table 8 illustrates that seven of the nine principals

interviewed found role making motivates them to focus on the diverse needs of their

students and staff. Meeting these diverse needs can be a major challenge, particularly

when material resources are scarce. Productive use of time is another critical factor in the lives of principals and teachers. Can role making improve how a principal manages his or her efforts at being an instructional leader? These excerpts describe how this dimension of role making operates in their daily practice.

Gary feels that evaluating his staff is a task that requires multiple levels of information that can often be a big challenge. He has found alternative ways to get the information he needs and help improve instruction. "We have a new position called a curriculum intern, and each building is allowed to use that person as they would like, and what I've done is I've had that person be sure they are in the classroom doing observations from a curriculum standpoint." This indirect method of observation provides Gary with another layer of information that is very valuable to him. However, Gary is also conscious of the fact that these observations can also produce anxiety and must be handled carefully.

To make the curriculum intern position work in his school, Gary tries hard to make sure that the observations are done in a way that allows teachers to feel like they are not just being observed, "and acting as a mentor not just for new teachers but for all, but making sure that it never feels evaluative, and I've never talked about evaluation or asked for any input from the person in that role." Getting the information he needs has required more finesse on his part, "But I've given that person a much wider, what they're defined to do is much more narrow than that, but I wanted to expand that for our own benefit, to squeeze what I could out of that person, and to just get them to start having conversations with other teachers, because most teachers don't have conversations about how their lesson went." Opening a new line of communication has allowed the

curriculum intern to provide Gary with valuable information about how teachers approach learning and this has benefited everyone involved.

Particularly when resources are scarce, Gary relies on the communication his curriculum intern generates. "Most of them don't have anybody to bounce that off of because they were the only ones there. This is another person in the room who has nothing to do with evaluation, and it's just to talk about what they saw going on and what was great about it." In a sense, Gary is able to delegate some of the communication with his teachers, and yet still benefit from the information it reveals about his classrooms. This can benefit both Gary and his teachers, "and for some teachers who are not growing the way you want, it makes them get some input." This input is especially valuable when Gary's time and resources are stretched thin. He points out that it isn't always possible to be everywhere at once, "and I have a parent who says 'Well my daughter says you are never in her room, and how are you going to. . . ' Well, there are 40 sections of that same class running at the same time, and only so many hours in a week they can be somewhere. So it's another set of eyes." Using his resources creatively provides Gary with options that didn't seem obvious when he started. However, by recognizing his time and resources were limited, he found a way to make his situation work to his advantage. This is the type of creative leadership that role making can help develop.

Gary gives a good illustration of how additional human resources can help build relationships and new roles. These new roles enhance the time that the principal can spend working with teachers and staff in new ways or untested ways. These new roles also allow the principal to stay focused on the diverse needs of students and teachers. Meeting the needs of all students and all teachers is a demanding task. As the discussion

that follows illustrates, there are other ways that principals can work to meet those

diverse needs in ways that also promote cooperation.

Theme 2.3: Role Making Motivates Principals to Promote
Collaborative and Participative Leadership—6 Respondents

Role making can make it possible to do more with the human resources you have.

For example, by modeling best teaching practices and involving teachers in the training

process, reciprocity is built in. According to Margaret:

> That's just another step in the process of support. We just wrote a writing
> curriculum and I spent 2 years on a committee with nine other teachers. We
> developed a writing curriculum and after we did that we went a step farther in
> how we want to train the teachers to use the resources we have, so I'm going to
> teach a writing class and model it for them. I mean, 10 years ago I didn't do this.
> Now we want to train our teachers on how to use it.

Promoting this type of collaborative spirit allows Margaret to help her teachers train

themselves in new ways to improve learning. However, she also warns that a

collaborative, participative approach is actually a balancing act.

> Traditionally many principals spend a lot of time in the office, doing paperwork,
> answering phone calls, writing reports, etc., and those things have to be done. But
> I definitely believe that the state requires 50% or more time of instructional
> leadership and I believe that really needs to be done if you are going to meet all
> the needs of your kids. Even in the 12 years I've been a principal the children
> have changed dramatically. We hardly have any middle kids any more. We have
> lots of kids with high experiences, and kids with very few. It takes change, we
> have to change, and we have to teach to the middle. We have to look at best
> practices. We have to differentiate. And I think I promote this and demonstrate it.
> That is what an instructional leader does. Just say, "OK, you guys differentiate, I
> want it done tomorrow." You have to make sure they know how to do it, they
> understand it.

It is not easy to balance between the traditional work principals are expected to do and the

real work of meeting the needs of an ever-changing student population. Finding new ways

to connect teaching and doing is how Margaret was able to create a more collaborative

atmosphere at her school. As Gloria illustrates in the example below, is it also important to use the energy in your teaching staff and your community to get things done.

Gloria gives additional examples of how role making can provide more time for instructional leadership. She uses opportunities to model teaching as a way of providing resources, new research, and information to improve teaching practices and improve student outcomes. Teaching character education in her school provided Gloria with an opportunity she had not anticipated. "Teachers had the option of sitting in or taking a break. Every teacher sat in to listen. I think that gave me a chance to show my preparation for the class. It gave me a chance to model the things that I want to be strong and consistent with." Gloria contrasts this type of hands-on teaching experience to the traditional role she feels that many principals prefer.

"There are a lot of administrators who don't have the opportunity to get in and teach anything in the classroom. And some don't want to." This is a good example of the affection role makers have for their own teaching experiences. "I, for one, I love teaching. I miss that contact with kids. It is an outlet. It is still a very positive thing. It is not where I'm trying to go in and take over the classroom." Gloria says it does not require a great deal of time or effort to have an impact on her relationships with her teachers. "It's a short period of time, but it also gives my teachers a chance to see me do my thing and know that when I come in to do evaluations it really strengthens my case whenever I talk to a teacher about improving their instruction." In the end, she feels that this strengthens her position as a head teacher in the school. "They know what I'm talking about because they've seen me teach firsthand."

Gary was also asked how role making might improve his approach to instructional leadership. He describes here how allowing others to lead the school can work, but you must be careful how you approach it:

> Yes, but only if instructional leadership is defined with a real wide paint brush. It's more having other school people be leaders within the school. In that sense, it allows for more time, but if you're in the traditional role, "This is how we are going to do it, this is when we're going to do it" that can be fast for you, but it also is limiting. So I think that with a wide view of instructional leadership I think the role making is better.

Collaboration is a part of the change process that Miranda also feels is important. Providing teachers with opportunities to work together and observe each other makes change a part of the culture within the school. Stigler and Hiebert (1999) describe creating a "teacher-as-researcher" environment "to encourage teachers to engage in research, thereby creating a teacher temperament oriented to inquiry and a disposition towards investigating one's own practice" (p. 151).

Miranda comments how this level of growth and collaboration takes time and patience to develop. "I think if you're willing to, you know, I guess, step outside the box a little bit, and to want to look at ways to do things different." The theme of doing things differently is often used to describe how role makers develop opportunities for teachers to grow.

> For example, you can provide opportunities. You can provide subs to allow teachers to observe in another school in another District so that they can bring back information and they can dialog about it and then somebody else can go there and we can, you know, if you don't put a limit on change, or let fear guide you, I think you can be a lot more open and people are a whole lot more open to the change process.

Change is rarely easy, especially when people feel comfortable in their positions. Miranda points out that veteran teachers are the key to building teacher leaders, but this

takes time and is challenging. "We have many veteran teachers who have been doing the same thing for a long time. It takes years though, I do believe, to foster that culture where you can't um, have people feel comfortable with taking risks and making change." Building a team and developing a culture that permits risk taking are important to Miranda and she stresses this when she describes her own role making efforts. She also values the ability to be flexible and willing to laugh. "It is a really good quality to be easy going and have a sense of humor; I think those are two really important things, too."

Juanita agrees with Miranda that collaboration is an essential part of the change process. This also taps into the strengths of the individuals within the group who can help to create and promote multiple ideas. Here is how Juanita describes role making and its influence on collaboration:

> Role making is critical to administration in that it gives everybody that sense of authority and working together for a common goal for the betterment of the educational system. Everybody buys into it. Everybody is working together, which in turn, gives me more of an opportunity to be an instructional leader.

Using the creative energy of the staff and the security of a supportive learning community builds on the idea that role making can motivate participative leadership. This is also consistent with Juanita's approach to her staff. "A group of brand new first year teachers generated a list of 50 to 100 ideas for how to assist them in growing. You need to decide what will make you the better teacher and use the better ideas you want." Brainstorming works because Juanita takes the initiative to see that new ideas are going to be put into practice.

Juanita started with the collaborative approach from the beginning with her newest teachers and it worked well for her. "These are my three first year teachers. I met

with them and I talked about the role of their teaching methods, the role I have. I hope that I will assist them in growing." By working together to define what roles are most important, Juanita is also promoting a more democratic ideal that also allows her teachers to discover what will work best for everyone. Of course, this can also become part of the ritual that comes with doing both formal and informal evaluations. "I will do informal observations, but that is for their growth, that is not a part of evaluation. That is where we can sit down if you have an issue that you want to talk about."

Conducting evaluations is often a source of stress for both the observer and the observed. Juanita's more democratic approach can help to alleviate some of this stress. She tells her new teachers, "I can observe, and we can sit down and talk about it. I'll have ideas. You have to choose what of those ideas are best for you." Juanita says that this can also include collaboration with veteran mentor teachers: "If you need to sit down with your mentor teacher, we will brainstorm ideas, but it is up to you to find what you need to do the best you can for these kids." In the end, this process leads Juanita to conclude that role making is an essential component to how she provides instructional leadership. "I guess I come back to that role making situation in administration and I think it is really a key to getting into that instructional leadership." When everyone has a sense of owner- ship of the creative process, the solutions the group generates are more successful. Juanita's approach in this example is a good example of creating and maintaining a vision of learning community. This helps her provide the type of support that will help her teachers work together and be more successful.

Other scholars agree with this approach to instructional leadership. "Research on learning communities suggests that emotional security also develops most effectively

when individuals feel that they have a support group. Learning communities seem to promote this sense of emotional security so necessary for empowerment to occur" (Ubben, Hughes & Norris, 2004, p. 28). Gloria also feels that creative discovery leads to more productive solutions. Here is how she describes role making and its influence on participative leadership: "I think that any good administrator knows that change from the bottom up is more successful than top down. I think too, it's a trick of the trade, if you can help people come up with an idea they think is their own, it has a lot more weight." This implies that Gloria values the idea that her teachers have ownership of ideas and can help make the decisions that will make the school successful.

Leadership that works to be teacher-centered can lead to solutions that give your staff the ability to manage problems for you. "You can sometimes lead people to discovering those types of things and that really, you asked about empowering them, well, there is a difference between delegating and empowering." Gloria also feels that this can make her school more democratic and equitable. She feels this process works no matter what the task at hand is, "and so if you can help them get to the discovery phase of that and they come up with kind of what you were hoping they would come up with, that's almost magical."

Gloria's supportive role is getting her staff to create solutions consistent with Juanita's brainstorming approach. Miranda, Juanita and Gloria each use role making in ways that successfully promote collaboration and support for creative solutions. This approach can also generate another useful leadership tool: Trust. An important by-product of trading leadership roles and management tasks with your staff is the trust that you can build. The next section explores how seeking out the help of your staff and community can also produce good results.

Theme 2.4: Role Makers Are Motivated to Build Trust
by Seeking Staff or Family Input—6 Respondents

The same inclusive approach that Margaret used with her teachers to write

curriculum and train staff can be applied to the wider community, according to Juanita.

The results can move role making into not only a higher level of instructional leadership,

but also community engagement in the school's mission. This results in what Marzano,

Waters, and McNulty (2005) refer to as "governance," or "the extent to which the school

has established structures that allow parents and the community to be involved in decision

making relative to school policy" (p. 87). In addition to the resources a principal might

have on their teaching staff, there are also important resources within the community.

Juanita creatively found ways to bring the community into the school in ways that directly

impacted her efforts to improve the learning climate. Juanita explains by example how this

dynamic of using role making to build trust and obtain input can be played out to the

benefit of all. This has been particularly true in her work with the DARE program in her

District. "We also work with our local DARE officer who is going to become (new to

building), we are trying to foster more connections to the school with the community. I

could extend that further to the community." This has required an approach that depends

more heavily on communicating with members of law enforcement who directly support

programs at her school.

An excellent example of this principle in action is with an effort to help the local

police prepare their own drug enforcement programs with the help of the school. Juanita

worked to directly support this program in her community:

> With community involvement, your building is open. Our tie to the police
> department is very important. They have to find somewhere to train their K-9

units and our junior high school is air conditioned. He brought his dog Max down to our school so that he could train. He brought all kinds of paraphernalia into the school and had Max go out and find them. Our local DARE officer trained with his K-9 units (9 in all) from around the county, looking for drugs! (Laughs) I was present when they counted out all the drug items they were hiding, and of course at the end, I stood there as they counted them back. They put them in a locked case and removed them from the building. I guess when you have that community involvement and your building is open, you find different ways of expressing that and they value what we are all doing.

Working directly with the police department also has benefits for Juanita's management of discipline issues. Building ties with community resources resulted in a change in the tone of her school:

> This relationship is extremely important. If I ever had a student who was going completely off, I just have to call the police department, and I have an officer here in anywhere from a few seconds to two minutes at the most. They value what I do with kids in the discipline program, what the teachers do with the kids implementing our discipline program, and in turn, they are there for us. So when we call, they know we need them. It's a very collegial relationship, they value us.

These ties to local law enforcement have helped Juanita achieve success in managing discipline while also helping her create opportunities for teaching her students responsible behavior.

> We've had a couple of random drug searches, we've never found anything, we are very lucky. The kids know and understand that because of that relationship with the police department, they are not bringing drugs to school. They also know that when we say we are calling the police, they know we mean it. That has reduced some of the major discipline problems we've had. My first year here, we had 1500 discipline actions for 450 kids. We now average 650 to 750 a year.

Juanita demonstrates how building relationships with the community can improve other important areas, in particular, discipline. She achieves results that help to improve the climate inside the school and invest the community in the school's mission at the same time. Juanita is successful at bringing together a variety of resources to help her improve the climate of the school. Efficient use of available resources is a major challenge for

principals. The next section will explore how these types of role making activities can create a more positive environment that is also more adaptive and open to change.

<u>Theme 2.5: Role Makers Are Motivated to Use All Resources</u>
<u>by Promoting Delegation and Empowerment—6 Respondents</u>

Role making empowers others in change processes. Delegating and empowerment are two critical elements of the change process. First, delegating identifies important tasks that need to be accomplished to achieve the school's mission. "For principals to decrease their time as managers and increase their time in instructional leadership, the following must be available: relevant preparation and preservice and inservice professional development; organizational structures and personnel to assist with school management tasks; and resources to support staff professional development" (NASSP, 2001, p. 31). This view is consistent with how these nine principals have described their own efforts to make time and resources available for staff development, while delegating some of their daily management tasks. Second, across the research literature on change leadership and empowerment there are many examples of how to engage your staff to improve outcomes (Collins, 2001; Goodwin, Cunningham, & Childress, 2003; Fullan, 2001b; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Heifetz, 1994; NAESP, 2002; NASSP, 2001; Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005). The discussion that follows presents some excerpts illustrating how role making allows the principal to empower others in the change process. These excerpts provide additional insight into how creating these new roles impact every member of the learning community.

Of all the precious resources that principals have to master, time is a critical component for success. Joe highlights how time management is critical to success as a role maker:

Whether we are a role maker, or role taker, or instructional leader, we still have the same amount of time. Time is a constant here. I think it is not a question of making the time, but how you use the time I do have. So when I think of myself as a role maker, when I look at the words you've got here in these definitions: learning and instruction, focus on improving learning and instruction, etc. Those things are pretty key to me. That's how I find I'm being the most successful, using my strengths in leadership.

In contrast, Beverly repeats the need for delegating the more traditional tasks of the principalship:

As a role taker, you know, I think that a lot of those things can be delegated. The building is getting cleaned, meals are served, etc. You need to tend to those visible things, but those are things you can delegate, and you can just check. They are not nearly as important as checking on learning progress. The role making provides more time to address instructional needs. The other thing I like to bring up to my teachers is the latest in brain research, and the strategies that help, and ADHD, and how to keep kids motivated and on task.

Pete feels that empowering others in the change process is very important, but he really feels that in turn, teachers should engage students in setting the direction of the class as well. "We talked to teachers at the beginning of the year how important kids should be involved in the classroom rules." The same approach can be applied by the principal in their efforts to direct the teachers. "We want our staff to have a say in the school, in the vision of what we're doing, where we're going, the mission....If we don't listen to people, you know, I will tell the staff I'm not a big one on wasted meeting time." The give and take of staff meetings generates consensus while building a sense of owner-ship of the decision making process. Pete works hard to be fair. "We're not royalty; we're not a king, making all the decisions from the office....I think that destructs the school environment and what we are trying to accomplish as an organization."

Pete stresses the importance of both role making and role taking in the process of improving the learning environment:

> You can't have Role Making without Role Taking, and it kind of goes back to the whole delegation process, of, you know I don't think it flies that you delegate everything out. I think that accountability piece is there, what is best for kids, what are they going to learn the most? Are they going to be able to differentiate what we are trying to do with spelling and what we are trying to do with reading, or do we need to bring some cohesiveness to both? We're here to adapt and modify what we're doing with our curriculum and not every kid learns the same way.

This suggests that delegation is not a cure-all for making instructional leadership happen. Miranda also finds that role making doesn't necessarily make more time available to pursue instructional leadership: "No. I don't think so. I am trying to think of new ways to get to be an instructional leader, actually. I mean, you think it would, but it really doesn't, just in my experience, though." Juanita also feels that delegation is beneficial to her efforts to empower her staff and even herself:

> I think role making is to provide more instructional leadership. You really do have to find ways to delegate, while not giving up on those other roles, the management roles. All of those are important, but find other ways of accommodating them to find time for instructional leadership. Like I said, this is my 8th year in this building and my 12th year in administration. I think I have more time for instructional leadership now because of the growth we have had in this area. You have to define those roles in order provide time for instructional leadership. With teachers as leaders, and feeling valued as leaders, both parents and teachers. And with parents feeling the same way, that is a real strength for educational leadership.

Question 3: How Do Principals Describe Their

Successes as Instructional Leaders?

The researcher developed this question to better understand the lived experiences of the principals and how they felt about particular successes they have had. Role making and instructional leadership focus on self-awareness, reflection, and also examining the needs of your school. Respondents were asked to describe two or three successes they have had in their principalships. The following discussion will answer Research Question 3 by presenting and interpreting themes in the interview responses. This discussion includes

examples of the lived experiences from the nine principals' interviews. Table 10

summarizes the major themes in response to the third research question and the follow-up

interview probes. There are five major themes in Table 10 related to research Question 3.

These themes reveal how the nine participants describe their successes as instructional

leaders.

Table 10

Question 3—Descriptions of Successful Instructional Leadership

| Participants | Themes in Participants' Responses | | | | |
	Theme 3.1 Successful instructional leaders have proactive energy for teacher team building	Theme 3.2 Successful instructional leaders have an ethic of caring	Theme 3.3 Successful instructional leaders use staff mentoring	Theme 3.4 Successful instructional leaders use multi-age and ability grouping	Theme 3.5 Successful instructional leaders view themselves as the lead learner
Gary	X			X	
Pete	X	X			
Miranda	X			X	X
Margaret	X	X	X	X	X
Juanita	X		X		X
Joe	X	X	X	X	X
Beverly	X	X	X	X	
Jim	X	X	X		X
Gloria	X	X	X		
Total Identified	9	6	6	5	5

Of the five major themes presented in Table 10, the most frequently mentioned is

that successful instructional leaders have proactive energy for teacher team building. This

was mentioned by all nine participants in response to Question 3. Six of the nine

participants, as shown in Table 10, stated that successful instructional leaders have an ethic of caring, and six of the nine principals feel that successful instructional leaders use staff mentoring to improve the working climate of their schools. Five of the nine principals contend that successful instructional leaders use multi-age and ability grouping, and five of the nine principals put the principal as the lead learner.

Theme 3.1: Successful Instructional Leaders Have Proactive
Energy for Teacher Team Building—9 Respondents

Teacher team building is pursued unanimously by all nine of the principals interviewed for this study. Each individual depends on teams of teacher leaders and special committees designed to assist them in improving the quality of instruction. Gary, Pete and Miranda each describe the impact of teacher empowerment and collaboration in these excerpts. Gary feels that changes in the school population have had a big impact on the learning environment. "I would say that the transition from not having the limited English speaking students (LEP) in our building to having them. I'm talking about out of 900 students over 100 students are in that program. So it's a significant number, you know, one in nine." This new population of students presented a challenge to his approach to leadership. "That obviously had a pretty big impact on the school. So, for me, that transition to that program and continuing to have that program grow, and I think in really positive ways." It is important to note how Gary prefers to focus on the positive nature of this challenge and how he faced it.

The LEP program at Gary's school was brand new and this was seen as a plus because everyone had to work together to make it work. Gary says it was possible to succeed because of these challenges, "So, I'm pretty pleased that our empowering

teachers as part of decision making because we totally have done that from day one. In fact, it's not just in teams but it's also in committees, because we do that thing, and I probably have done that more than the previous principal." A feeling of accomplishment has made it possible for everyone to feel good about the outcomes. "We've empowered committees to make a lot of decisions that affect whole building and their long term work." Bringing teachers together to solve problems has worked well for Gary.

Pete emphasizes the importance of a positive climate to build proactive energy in the staff. "The greatest feeling you can have when you walk into the school is that they can both feel it and they can see it. You notice it's, pardon the phrase, "cookin' with gas", you know that the school is moving in the right way." Pete says he depends on his own observations as he walks through the building every day. "When you feel that there is a certain positive, proactive energy, in helping kids, and there are people walking down the hallway, and the staff is smiling, greeting you and positive feedback when you go to the office, all those are things that help the climate." This principal works hard to build teams and promote a caring and supportive climate.

Another important resource Pete depends on daily is the input he receives from members of his staff. "Just listening to some of the feedback through my assistant principal, he said, 'People are feeling it, you notice that there is something about this year and the way you talk to people, and what has been done in the past that is very different and change is happening but it's good change.'" Bringing change can often require a lot of energy and effort on the part of the school's leadership. Pete works hard to make this energy sustain itself and work in his favor.

Both Pete and Gary talk of empowering and encouraging their staff in ways that promote a climate that is proactive, conducive to learning, and open to change. These behaviors are consistent with Covey's (1989) vision of leadership that is "proactive" and "begins with the ending in mind" (pp. 71, 101). These practices allow you the freedom of expression and the ability to involve everyone in sharing in crafting and realizing the mission of the school together.

Building teams, training, conducting research, are all part of this process, as Miranda points out. The multi-age approach was a major challenge to Miranda's efforts over the past 2 years. Very few resources were provided to get the program started, and her teachers feared that they would be stuck teaching two or more curriculums in a single class. Ultimately, a team centered approach made it possible for everyone to create a working solution. "Most of us really weren't familiar with multi-age schools, so I did some research. We started visiting different schools that were doing that (multi-age classes), we teamed up with another school and worked with their teachers." Miranda was able to create a flexible schedule during the work day that created new opportunities for teachers to work and plan together. Collaboration and flexible scheduling allow teachers to grow and improve instruction across the entire school system (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999).

One of the more exciting aspects of the effort to bring multi-age classes to her school were the bigger changes that took place as the program developed. Miranda stated that it was really a fun and exciting time at her school, "and our teachers worked a lot together, and we totally changed the ways that we did things. In our schedule I had to put time every day for them to get together and plan as a team." Teachers came to really value this time they spent together and this became the new role expectation that

represented the new norm at the school. "The school had to get really creative in order to come up with that. And I think that's a real successful thing that's happened, to the benefit of the kids, actually. It really ended up being a nice thing for everybody." Clearly Miranda and her teachers felt that the positives far outweighed any obstacles they had to overcome precisely because they overcame them together.

This approach of doing research, building teams of teachers and encouraging collaboration, creates an environment that allows the organization to grow. Joe also illustrates how bringing staff together and teaming their efforts produces results:

> The District is working a lot with co-teaching, letting teachers have collaboration time built into their schedules so that they can train at their grade level or across grade levels. Giving teachers the opportunity to write and reflect, and share their ideas with about things that are going on in the classroom. Working with them to increase their trust for each other, don't have a closed door so that people do go in and out of their rooms. There is rarely a time at our school now where I walk into the room and there is only one adult alone in a room. Between our special education support staff and other people, aids and things, often times there is more than one adult in the room. There is a comfort level with that. There is not a "What is *he* doing here? He's watching me," or anything like that. It is a very collaborative model.

This is a powerful example of how a principal can continuously work with the staff to foster a true sense of community, caring, and interdependent relationships within the school. Joe's experience and his success as an instructional leader is not limited to any one of the categories listed in Table 10. Using his knowledge of alternative grouping, multi-age learning, and communications, he built an environment that promotes the idea of keeping everyone working together toward a common goal: improving learning for all age groups and ability levels. This approach is also very much consistent with the notion that collaboration among teaching staff is an essential component of successful schools in school leadership. Maintaining a culture of collaboration, continuous learning, adult

education and school improvement were all elements examined in Chapter II (Barth, 1990a, 1990b; Lewis, 1995; Marsh, 1997; Stevenson & Stigler, 1992; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Teachers working together, learning together and building better lessons are at the heart of the role making process that principals must actively work to create. The following discussion of caring will consider how building relationships among students and staff can be successful in a variety of settings.

Theme 3.2: Successful Instructional Leaders
Have an Ethic of Caring—6 Respondents

Building a positive atmosphere within the school allows the children to build new and meaningful relationships with each other. Joe talks about how students find new ways to learn and care about each other's needs. "There's a lot of in and out of classroom, like they have at a lot of schools, learning buddies, where older kids go into the younger kids rooms, or vice versa. And we still have some elements of hallways that have mixed ages." Joe has created a climate that is caring, and shows a clear moral purpose by getting children of all ages to support each other's learning and well being. This caring is infused throughout the entire building, its staff, its students, everyone.

Using groups of students working and learning together promotes a common purpose that is powerful, "and in those hallways during coming in times, or going home times, or in the hall, there are just a lot of kids who care about each other." It all relates back to caring." Joe has succeeded in creating a much more open, democratic, equitable, and caring learning environment and he does not feel it could work any other way. However, he recognizes that the multi-age approach may not be a perfect fit for everyone. "I don't think that is as possible in a building where you put the first graders in one wing

and the second graders in another; I just don't think that's real possible. It's not as possible. You have to be much more conscious." This vision of a school where all age levels are mixed and work together on a regular basis was unique. It requires leadership that is willing to try things from a different perspective and be flexible and creative.

Joe evokes the importance of caring for each other in ways that create a culture of mutual support and responsibility. Caring is seen as an essential component to successful learning environments (Lyman, 2000; Shields, 2003). There are other ways that principals can promote supportive, caring and nurturing relationships among staff, as illustrated in the next discussion of staff mentoring.

Theme 3.3: Successful Instructional Leaders
Use Staff Mentoring—6 Respondents

Using mentorship is another way to build teams of teacher leaders. As described in Chapter II, this is also consistent with Fullan's (2003b) notion of "gap reduction" to help bring together all the organizational resources available to address needs that aren't being met. This type of "gap reduction" team building is critically important to a school's success.

Gloria also expanded on the importance of mentorship for the teaching staff:

Mentorship is an important value. That's something I should have mentioned before. The last District I was at and the one where I am now had no type of mentoring program whatsoever. That's another thing I should have mentioned because that's a good thing that I was able to develop when I was over there and now here as well. The teachers are very appreciative of that. It's a different dimension. This includes mentoring at the building level for teachers, and then we also have this mentoring program for new administrators in this part of the state. The teachers have absolutely enjoyed it, we have different activities throughout the year. Obviously they meet on a weekly basis as well.

Joe agrees with Gloria that mentoring relationships create opportunities to build a culture

of collaboration and continuous support. Joe's priorities have centered on getting teachers together, he says. "From start of my career I've been very involved in getting staff working together; to get special education teachers and regular education teachers working together in the same classrooms." Joe works to develop curriculum and teacher-centered solutions and a team atmosphere: "We've developed training programs over the year, which doesn't necessarily have to be special education and regular education teachers in and out of each other's rooms coaching each other. It has now become our model for mentoring with first, second, and third year teachers." Making room for all his teachers to work together has become an important part of the leadership in his school.

Joe thinks that this is why putting teachers together works to benefit all of them in ways that could not be accomplished with traditional means. This helps to reduce the isolation many teachers work in on a daily basis. He says, "That whole idea of breaking down the tradition of teachers being isolated in the classroom, being in a room by them-selves, often times the door closed working with their group of whatever grade level kids they have. We've done this school wide and district wide." Putting different groups of teachers together is only one way successful instructional leaders can impact the climate of the school in positive ways. The discussion that follows examines how many principals use diverse groupings of students to improve the climate and the performance of the school.

Theme 3.4: Successful Instructional Leaders Use
Multi-Age and Ability Grouping — 5 Respondents

Margaret expands on the theme of "putting the right people on the bus" (Collins, 2001) and addressing the needs of all learners. Margaret describes a recent success that illustrates her efforts at instructional leadership and ability grouping:

My really exciting one lately has definitely been guided reading. I think that every principal knows that even though every 3rd grader should be reading, some of them really aren't. So now I've got 3rd and 4th grade to buy into grouping by abilities, within the classroom, for different things. If the kid doesn't have the phonics they need, we are going to give it to them. We are going to fill in those gaps right away. We've been doing this now for two years at K-2, and it has been a huge improvement.

There are other benefits to "filling the gaps" for students who don't learn at the same pace. "I don't think we have anyone in special education not reading at grade level in second grade because they've been doing individualized instruction, so that's really awesome." Another area that grouping by ability has benefited is what Margaret describes as differentiation:

When I first came here we really didn't have any type of gifted challenge program at all or lower level ones. So we started a lot of regrouping for ability levels by giving pretests. We use a lot of pretests for spelling skills. If you already know how to spell orange, you don't need to write it ten times. We have done a lot more individualized instruction, book groups, literature circles. That has been highly successful. I think the kids love it. I think the teachers love it because they know how to do it.

Joe is another interesting example of how a collaborative leadership dynamic plays out. He believes that multi-age classrooms, the fourth theme from Table 10, and team building, the first and most popular theme on Table 10, are both important to the success of his school. This experience has defined Joe's perception of successful instructional leadership. "Although we don't have the program anymore, I think one of the successes I had was to implement the option of multi-age classrooms in our building and other District buildings. We started that about 10 or 12 years ago. It had a whole committee of parents and teachers that was developed." Putting the curriculum together and preparing the staff to teach multi-age classrooms was a huge task.

Joe says, "We did workshops, seminars, etc. and we worked with teachers who wanted to do it. And then we worked with staff who maybe didn't want to do it, but how do you work with those people? You put together the person who is doing multi-age and the person who isn't doing multi-age. We did all that, based on teacher and parent preferences." This also required that Joe create and maintain a clear vision of where he wanted to take the school. This had to be communicated to the District and the community in ways that allowed the program to move forward. Joe says this was possible because "We had a very clear philosophy that we had to present to the Board, and it was adopted by the Board." Joe's success with this program is also consistent with the creation and implementation of a vision for the school and community that is required by many educational administrative certification programs (Wilmore, 2002).

Joe also feels that part of why multi-age grouping was successful was because they were able to "show more ways to instruct kids." This has had other benefits beyond the multi-age program they originally started with. "It probably provided a base for a lot of the work we are doing now with differentiation." The original success with multi-age grouping built momentum for getting his staff to work together to find new ways to help students succeed.

Joe elaborates that the initial success with multi-age gave his staff a sense of accomplishment. This proactive energy paid off in other areas as well because the staff was able to participate directly in making the program successful. Many of the same teaching staff carried over to these efforts at the new program of differentiation. "Some of the leaders in the differentiation committees and groups are those people that did do multi-age. They saw it first hand in their classrooms. It did help staff to see how to do

things differently."

After making multi-age grouping and ability differentiation a priority for school improvement, Joe's school met with success in creating families of learners as well. Here, Joe describes how his school's "village" approach to grouping students demonstrates the theme of the multi-age approach: "You don't have to design a school building with all the first graders in one hall and all the second graders in another hall. We've worked hard to downplay that whole aspect of pecking orders, or territories." Different design and building groupings allows Joe to experiment with what system works best for the most students and their teachers. He says it has worked well overall, "and although sometimes, you know, I think right now all our second graders are in the same hall, I think over the years we've never made grade levels, the place a classroom is never completely depended on being where the other same grade levels or teachers from that grade level are located."

Alternative age groupings have provided flexibility. "Location of a classroom has not been dependent on age levels. About 7 years ago we did a thing where we purposely re-organize the building into what we call villages. And so every village would have a 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6th grade classroom in their particular wing or hallway." The village concept allowed students to interact in ways that were not possible in a traditional setting. "The idea was to promote understanding between the ages, and also build in some natural nurturing, and also some care-giving, in and out of classrooms. And also it promoted communication among teachers so they would continue to learn cross-grade levels." Joe admits this was not perfect, but it did help in some areas, "and it worked to a degree. I think we had some community." Joe's experience ties together several themes in response to Question 3: team building and communication, creating an ethic of caring and

mutual support, multi-age and multi-ability grouping, and ultimately, creating the sense that students and staff are families of learners.

Creating a school that relies on villages to organize multiple groups of students is not new. A profile of another school that used a similar approach to learning celebrates both the school's diversity and the school's sense of community. "The village plan recognizes the African American folk wisdom of the school's motto: 'It takes a whole village to raise a child.' Colorful accents for each village wing are the appropriate primary color and serve to further identify the child's home area" (Lyman, 2000, p. 56). Bringing diverse groups of students, teachers and learning abilities together creates a reflection of the community these children live in outside of the school. This type of arrangement requires a commitment from the principal and the District leadership to look for non-traditional approaches to creating a learning community inside the school that represents the larger community. This does not fit the traditional, more familiar school arrangement where classrooms sequentially reflect each grade level from kindergarten through eighth grade. This non-traditional approach is apparent in the following excerpt from Joe's description:

> Because, again, when I think of the word traditional, I think of getting out of the traditional way of doing a school. And what's happened since that time, really the atmosphere of our school, is really oriented more towards kids understanding of each other. And we really don't have a lot of problems, like, with the fourth graders picking on the second graders, that kind of pecking order, that kind of in-bred competition. It's more of a real family atmosphere.

In another way, Beverly also seeks out ways to help all age groups learn together. Here is how she describes her own efforts to create multi-age groups and improve learning at her school: "We have high test scores. I don't consider it my success I consider it our success. The teachers are the ones who are really doing it. We've moved to

engaged learning, thematic development; since I've been here we've built a new school."

Beverly considers this academic success to be a result of getting groups of teachers and

students together. "The teachers have interdisciplinary units across grade levels. We have

families (groups of students), the 3rd through 5th graders do an activity together, they get

to know each other and can relate with multi-age." The multi-age concept has been part

of the regular routine at her school. For example, Beverly explained:

> We do the multi-age learning approach once a month across grade levels. We
> have thematic days with the whole school. Harvest Day is coming up next month,
> I think. The teachers in November, when the Secretary of State has the reading
> night, we have a night where the teachers have said "We'd like to have celebrity
> readers, authors." So we have local celebrities. TV radio personalities read their
> favorite stories. We have lots of different days like that, and we have the
> Accelerated Reading program. Lots of kids participate. I offer the kids a party at
> the end of each quarter for a student that's made their goal. We have parties,
> incentives; sometimes we take them bowling for meeting their reading goals. And
> like I said, we have high test scores; I think that is one of our successes.

Using multiple age and ability groupings is perceived by Joe and Beverly as an important

measure of successful instructional leadership. It has provided their students and their

staff with powerful tools for building collaboration and support.

Building the types of supportive relationships required for multi-age groupings

naturally shares the view that the school is a family. The next section examines how the

principal can also assume an important role in his/her pursuit of professional develop-

ment and school improvement. This casts the principal in the role of lead learner.

Theme 3.5: Successful Instructional Leaders View
Themselves as the Lead Learner—5 Respondents

Margaret points out that her teachers did not learn how to do multi-age grouping or

ability grouping overnight. Margaret has had to assume the role of teacher trainer to get

this program started: "It has required a lot of training and guidance. I am a trainer of gifted

teachers. But that was something I went back to get after I realized that the need was so great." This has included continuing education for Margaret and she has had an ongoing commitment to helping her teachers stay up to date on the best teaching methods.

Margaret clearly values teamwork. She talks proudly of how she has "pushed all grade levels to coordinate together so that all my kids get a consistent education." Encouraging collaboration has a dynamic effect on how teachers carry out improving the curriculum. "I'm not going to tell them what they have to do, but I want them working together because three brains is better then one, and they are starting to realize it." This process takes time to catch on, but Margaret also feels that selective hiring practices can also help build a culture of collaboration. "I have one grade level left that is not teaming, and that's my next challenge!" she laughs. "I only hire people that are interested in teaming, so that helps."

Once again, the themes of research, continuing education, and team building are important components of instructional success as principals define it. Even for those principals who have yet to try these leadership strategies, Juanita still considers becoming a good instructional leader a priority. This also draws our attention to the fact that role makers evolve over time; the principal doesn't just graduate from university as a great instructional leader. He/she aspires to become a great leader along with the staff. Juanita points out that an important starting point is communication and building relationships:

> The first success I feel as an administrator is the change in climate in my building relative to where we are today. I do feel very successful in fostering relationships with people. 'm hoping one day to be more successful as an instructional leadership. (Laughs) I have two areas for growth for myself, one is to do more with budget and finance, and be more creative with grants, my other goal is to increase my ability to be an instructional leader. And that is just to be more aware of current trends. I think for myself since I graduated, my goal is to do more

professional reading and become more aware of current trends. That will allow
me to be more of a leader for my teachers.

Personal reflection and professional growth planning are important components of being

responsive to the needs of your staff and students. To stay abreast of current trends, one

must strive to become a model of life long learning. This puts the principal in the role of

not only lead teacher, but also lead learner. Each individual brings different talents, skills

and abilities to their job. This is why it is so important to be proficient at communicating

and building teams. Each principal brings his/her own experiences and knowledge base

and the key is using that knowledge in new and constructive ways.

Question 4: How Does Role Making Make Any Difference
in the Success of a Given Principalship?

Is role making an essential component for the success of a principalship? All nine

principals felt that role making has made an important contribution to their success. The

commitment to teaching teachers and improving learning is common to all the responses

to Question 4. This level of devotion to improving learning is similar to Collins' (2001)

concept of Level 5 leadership. Level 5 leaders are those who "…want to see the company

even more successful in the next generation, comfortable with the idea that most people

won't even know that the roots of that success can be traced back to their efforts" (p. 26).

Collins (2001) also asserts that in order for a Level 5 leader to truly succeed in carrying

the organization forward, he/she must be able to put sustainable improvements in place

that will remain even after they have left.

Has role making had any lasting impact on the principalship as experienced by the

nine principals the researcher interviewed? What evidence is there that the improvements

they have achieved can be sustained? Role making often promotes a culture of change and renewal. The school staff actively works to maintain this culture in which the principal acts as a promoter of fresh ideas and a role model of teacher improvement. The researcher asked each respondent if he/she felt role making makes a difference in the success of a principalship. The excerpts that follow show how these principals view the overall success of their own role making efforts.

The following discussion will answer Research Question 4 by presenting and interpreting themes in the interview responses. Table 11 summarizes the major themes in response to the fourth research question and the follow-up interview probes. These three major themes reveal how the nine participants perceive the impact of their role making on the success of their principalship.

Table 11

Question 4—How Does Role Making Make a Difference?

| Participants | Themes in Participants' Responses | | |
	Theme 4.1 Role makers do leadership differently through interaction and caring	Theme 4.2 Role makers proactively focus on instruction	Theme 4.3 Role makers are perceived as instructional leaders who build relationships
Gary	X		
Pete	X	X	
Miranda	X	X	
Margaret	X	X	X
Juanita	X	X	X
Joe	X	X	X
Beverly	X		X
Jim	X	X	X
Gloria	X	X	X
Total Identified	9	7	6

Of the three major themes presented in Table 11, the most frequently mentioned is

that role making impacts the success of their principalship because they are doing leader-

ship differently through interaction and caring. This was mentioned by all nine partici-

pants in response to Question 4. Seven of the nine participants in Table 11 stated that role

making contributes to their success by causing them to proactively focus on instruction,

and six of the nine participants commented that role making allows them to build impor-

tant relationships by being perceived an instructional leader, or to be perceived as lead

teachers to say it another way. The discussion of the responses that follows will show

how each of these themes was addressed in the participants' responses. These sections

will each appear in the same order as they are presented in Table 11.

Theme 4.1: Role Makers Do Leadership Differently
Through Interaction and Caring—9 Respondents

As shown in Table 11, all nine principals felt that their role making made them

successful principals by allowing them to do leadership differently through their inter-

action and caring. Each of the nine principals succeeded in creating opportunities to

develop caring leadership and help teachers improve instruction. The discussion that

follows will examine how role making contributed to the principals doing leadership in

different, meaningful, interactive, and caring ways.

To better understand the dynamic of how each principal creates roles that allow

them to meet challenges, each respondent was asked what he/she finds most satisfying,

interesting, or compelling about the job. Most of their responses involve interaction with

people. Working with people to find common solutions provides them with energy and a

dynamic that promotes creativity, caring, and learning. Mentorship takes place on many

levels, principal to teacher, teacher to teacher, principal to parents. Keeping this going is challenging, and at the same time very rewarding. The examples below show how these challenges led to doing leadership differently. First, Joe discovered role making satisfied his need to be more positive and supportive.

Joe still felt that he could do more to help the staff he was working with when he was still a teacher, "and yet, even some of the principals I had as supportive as they were, I could say that's not the kind of principal I want to be. I want to be something a little different than what they are." Doing things differently has helped him feel like he is keeping the job new and interesting. This is evident in his responses to Question 4 when he said, "So, how has role making helped me? Well, it's helped me last 20 years, and I don't say that negatively because I really enjoy my job. I love what I do." Joe feels that his love of teaching has made it easier for him to stay in his job over the years. "The reason that I like what I do so much is because I get a tremendous amount of energy from doing this delegation, from seeing other people, whether it be adults or kids, seeing them change and grow, seeing them having fun, seeing them feed off not only my enthusiasm but theirs as well." This positive energy has sustained Joe's interest and passion for his work for 20 years.

Joe also states that traditional role taking does not appeal to his leadership style. "I think if I had made myself take on a traditional role, where I would be sitting in this office, trying to do all this stuff that I delegated, I wouldn't have enjoyed my job." The dynamic nature of Joe's work has helped him stay focused on the best aspects of his work each day. Joe insists that staying positive is important to him. Without his attitude toward working with his teachers Joe fears that, "I would have come across in a negative way in

my work, and I might have done a good job, and I probably would have been able to maintain my career as a 20 year principal, but I wouldn't have been able to have the positive spirit, and the energy, to work right along side teachers and have them being able to trust me and say 'Hey come on in here. Do this with me'." This has helped Joe establish and maintain his role as the head teacher and build a caring atmosphere for his students and their teachers.

Role making has given Joe the ability to interact with everyone in the school in ways that not only make him successful, but also empathetic: "I think that role making helped me get out of a traditional role, and put my feet in a teacher's feet, and put my feet in a kid's feet, or put my feet in a parent's feet, to help me be successful." Joe has succeeded in finding ways to illustrate how much he cares and encouraging his staff to grow, much like Margaret and Juanita describe. This is the empathetic dimension of caring leadership. For example, Margaret and Juanita both share an enthusiasm for facilitating everyone's growth and learning. It is important for Margaret to feel like she plays an active part in helping students and her staff grow. "You know, I think it is when a child makes that breakthrough. I can tell a parent when a child isn't reading yet, but I can tell them that they are going to get it, and the teacher realizes that a particular technique really works for that kid, that combination is just awesome. There is no better feeling."

Role making gives Margaret the opportunity to actively partner with her teachers in the service of students' needs. "If I was just sitting in the office I wouldn't be part of that. We have flexible service delivery here, and I'm a big part of that team." Getting to know what students really need helps Margaret better understand what is going on with each individual. "We know all the kids who are at risk, and what we are planning to do

before they end up in special education. So that's where I get a lot of that information."
This allows her to stay focused on the needs of her school.

Juanita has also had much success as a role maker, but she stresses how important it is not to think you have all the answers. "As a principal you think you are totally responsible for school improvement, or where your building is going, but when you empower others it isn't all your decision." This was evident when she began working with parent leaders to help handle some improvement projects for the school. "Our courtyard renovation emerged through the PTO and the parent volunteers. It is really critical to allow others to make decisions and it is tough to do because we think as administrators we have to know all the answers." At times, this means you are giving up control of how things are going to turn out, and this is not easy. "This group did the entire courtyard renovation and it was done their way, not my way." Even if these building improvements did not turn out as she would have directed them, Juanita still feels comfortable that they reflect the input of the people who volunteered their time to make it happen. As the next selection of responses shows, the intended results of non-traditional roles further supports the belief that role making allows principals to do leadership differently.

Each principal was asked if the non-traditional roles they have created have achieved their intended results. These responses also indicate that collaboration, support and building relationships are considered keys to success. Pete feels that creating connections with people is one of his most important leadership tools. "You start with the human factor, and you continue with the human factor, I don't think you ever end with it, but maybe in terms of one specific change process...." Working with people to improve

on what you have is an ongoing process. This is another good example of the type of

human interaction consistent with the first theme of doing leadership differently.

Juanita, Joe, and Beverly provide three more good examples of the type of shared

leadership that works for them, for their teachers, and for the students. Here are some

excerpts of how this has worked for each of them:

> With more people taking leadership roles, I feel like as a group we can do a better job with academics. Our test scores have improved quite a bit. I think it goes back to everyone feeling good about what they are doing. Two years ago we were on the academic watch list in 3rd grade writing, we were below adequate yearly progress, and now we are totally within expectations. Yes, it does work, with people taking on those roles, and leadership in those areas, we can focus more on instruction, and we have improved, and our test scores say that. (Juanita)

> It would have been easier to be a more traditional person. And, not to say that I haven't had my name in the paper, and people saying, "Why are you doing things this way"? But I've learned that when I have an idea, I have to get others to buy into it. I can't be a person who just says "This is how we are going to do this." I have to get an idea out there. And people might say, "That sounds a bit crazy to me," but I'll just say, "OK, let's just talk about it some more." And often what happens is, if I hadn't planted the seed, then we wouldn't have ended up with what we did, which may have been different than what I intended, but we are always at a different spot than we would have been if I hadn't put the idea out there in the first place. So, I think that is part of what has made me successful. (Joe)

> I think we are getting the results. I keep encouraging my teachers to take risks. For example, one of my more reluctant teachers is always one of the last ones to change. She is sometimes really passionate about one student or how to change and, I'm encouraging her to take risks to get her out of her shell. We collected over 500 books for underprivileged children in the Bahamas. It was all her doing and she volunteered to do it. We encouraged volunteerism, and helping others for our students. She led the drive and that was a big step forward for her. It was a good project. (Beverly)

In each of these cases, non-traditional roles have achieved their intended results.

This helps us to better understand what individual role expectations are and how they are

to be met. The role expectations of leadership, its impact on the needs of those who follow,

and the morale of the organization, all interact to define the tone of social behaviors.

Proactively focusing on instruction is another example of the types of behaviors that principals must work to promote.

Theme 4.2: Role Makers Proactively Focus
on Instruction—7 Respondents

Proactively focusing on instruction and improvement of the learning environment was a theme in the responses of seven of the nine participants. Some excerpts from these responses illustrate this point. Joe draws on 19 years of experiences as a principal who actively pursues new leadership roles for himself and for his staff. He also feels that role making has had a lasting impact on his leadership. His own comfort with the role of principal and his confidence as a classroom teacher helped him become a successful leader. He points out that "what drew me to being a principal was knowing I had the confidence. I felt I was a very good teacher. And I really liked working with other teachers, and when I was doing teacher training even as a third or fourth year teacher." Collaborating with teachers when he was still working as a teacher made him feel sure that he could become a good principal one day.

Like Joe, Jim has also had a lot of experience as a principal. He thinks that role making has helped him focus on what is most important: learning. "I think with learning, instruction, some principals are just brought in to some districts to deal with discipline. They don't have anything to do with instruction, or improving teacher performance." Moving beyond the traditional roles has helped him move the staff and students on a path to continuous growth. Jim feels this is an important contrast from more traditional principals who don't work more directly with what is going on in classrooms. "I've heard principals say that their whole day is spent on discipline. That's all they are doing is

disciplining kids all day. You've got to get by that to get to the instruction part of it." For Jim, this has been an important part of his success as an instructional leader. "There are no major discipline issues, and the kids know that they are here to learn. I guess that is why I consider myself a role maker."

Pete also finds satisfaction in helping others assume leadership roles. Here he gives a description that illustrates well the major theme of keeping himself and his staff proactively focused on instruction:

> We can all be leaders, and typically we've got leaders in every classroom, we want them to lead. And that helps the change process, and that's what we are after. In terms of other strengths of my role making process, I have to include listening, communicating, understanding your people and understanding their strengths and weaknesses. There is a lot of common sense to being a principal. You know the strengths and the weaknesses of people, and you focus more on their strengths than their weaknesses and you utilize that to help the success of your organization.

Pete demonstrates the necessary leadership skills that drive principals to improve their school. These skills are sought out by successful principals as they attempt to keep the staff focused on improving instruction. Pete finds that these same skills make a difference: "listening, communicating, understanding your people and understanding their strengths and weaknesses." These are also skills associated with all five research questions in relation to successful role making and successful leadership. Pete's proactive focus on instruction involves seeking out teachers who are capable teachers and leaders as well.

Miranda feels that progress is measured over a number of years, and the process of improving is ongoing:

> We had a meeting at the end of last year, it was our first year of doing it (multi-aged classes), and we discussed what do we want to do, do we want to go back to

the way we used to do it, or do we want to keep doing this, and it was over-whelmingly "This is great, let's keep doing this"; because it's not necessarily easy for everybody to do. It wasn't the easy way out, you know, and it really did create a lot more work for people, but people really felt that they enjoyed their work more and the quality of their work was better. I had done a lot of research on multi-age and all that, and everything I had read said "Don't do it quickly", you can't like it takes years to develop, and we did it in like, four months and made it work, and I think it worked really well.

In contrast, Margaret is sure that her staff can also use non-traditional leadership strategies to achieve intended results precisely because her staff is so willing to be included in the leadership process. "I've got this unbelievably advanced staff that's willing to work incredibly hard to meet the needs of all their kids, write curriculum and teach others how to use it." Pete, Miranda and Margaret are each describing the type of focused energy that keeps improving instruction at the top of their priorities. This is another good example of how principals can proactively focus on instruction. Discussion of the next theme will examine the ways in which principals work to build relationships and create the perception that they are successful instructional leaders.

Theme 4.3: Role Makers Are Perceived as Instructional
Leaders Who Build Relationships—6 Respondents

Six of the nine principals felt that role making can make a difference in how they are perceived as instructional leaders. Margaret is sure the role making has helped her succeed as a principal. "I mean, I can't even imagine what it would be like; I would be bored silly without it. I like the kids, and I love being out there with the kids and out in the classrooms, and I like teaching." A love of teachers and teaching is a common image that role making principals use to describe their success as instructional leaders. This grows from Margaret's deep respect for what the school's teachers do for their own students ever day. "So if I teach my staff something, then I'm still teaching. And I think

the community knows how much, my parents, my teachers, they all know how much these kids mean to me." Margaret is also successful at promoting the ethic of caring that inspires her staff to care as well.

Margaret also finds that success is dependent on building trust, relationships, and respect. "I think that if I just sat in my office handling problems, if I spend all my time putting out fires, like I said before, because it is what I've seen happen, I wouldn't have all those relationships. I think I have that high level of respect from them because I do get in the trenches." This includes taking the time to interact with children directly. For example, "I had a kindergartner in here all morning crying you know how it is those first few days. I'm willing to sit and talk with them and get them through it, and some people don't do that." Taking an active role in building relationships has also helped Margaret convince others that she cares. This has made a big difference in her success as a principal. As Miranda points out in the next excerpt, being perceived as an instructional leader is an important part of how she relates to her teachers' growth.

Miranda is most inspired by watching others grow. She gets a lot of energy and inspiration from helping them achieve their goals. This is all part of the learning process:

> What I really like about my job, is that I enjoy watching it all happen. And I'm talking about the whole learning process, and making opportunities happen for students and teachers, and being able to provide that, or ways to provide that, and taking cues from them. . . . Something I'm seeing going on and thinking "That's a neat direction, should we look into that?" And then, pointing teachers in those directions where they like to learn more. I like being able to make it all work for everybody else. And so you have to know what's going on in the whole school as well.

Observing the growth of others gives Miranda opportunities to point her staff in new directions. In contrast, Gloria points out that role making is also a result of all the

demands placed on today's principals "because I think people see you as a more complete administrator." This promotes an image of success, "and if you can be in that role making situation it really puts you out there at a different level of leadership, and in so many different areas." The many demands on the principal's time make these different levels of leadership more and more diverse. Gloria says, "I think we are all going to have to wear a lot of hats."

Wearing many hats requires flexibility. Joe pointed out that role making also allows the principal to relate to their students, their teachers and their parents in ways that help them better understand and serve their interests. It is interesting that most of these principals feel that role making is teaching. Becoming a role maker takes them back to what they love about school: being, doing, helping teachers teach. Responses to Question 4 shows that the role making experiences of the respondents have made important contributions to their success as principals.

Question 5: What Skills, Abilities and Resources Do Principals Perceive as Being Essential to Their Success as Role Makers?

The following discussion will answer Research Question 5 by presenting and interpreting themes in the interview responses. Table 12 summarizes the major themes in response to the fifth research question and the follow-up probes. The five major themes in Table 12 reveal the nine participants' perceptions of essential role making skills.

Table 12

Question 5—Five Essential Role Making Skills

Participants	Themes in Participants' Responses				
	Theme 5.1 Using people skills, networking	Theme 5.2 Using listening, communication, caring and praise	Theme 5.3 Using organizational skills, balance, and flexibility for resource management and multi-tasking	Theme 5.4 Using research and demonstrating good teaching skills	Theme 5.5 Using delegation of roles to promote participation by all
Gary		X			
Pete	X	X	X	X	
Miranda	X		X		X
Margaret	X	X	X	X	X
Juanita	X	X	X		X
Joe	X	X	X	X	
Beverly	X	X		X	
Jim	X	X		X	X
Gloria	X		X		X
Total Identified	8	7	6	5	5

Of the five major themes presented in Table 12, the most frequently mentioned is that role makers have good people and networking skills. This was mentioned by eight of the nine participants in response to Question 5. Seven of the nine participants described the second major themes presented in Table 12, stating that listening, communication, caring and praise are essential role making skills. Six of the nine reported that organizational skills, balance, flexibility and multi-tasking were essential role making skills. Five of the nine described the last two themes from Table 12, identifying the importance of good research and teaching skills, as well as the importance of delegating roles to promote

participation by all in the leadership of the school. The discussion of the responses that follows will show how each of these themes was addressed in the participants' responses.

Theme 5.1: Using People Skills, Networking—8 Respondents

The most frequently identified skill that the nine principals associated with successful role making were people skills and the ability to network with staff, students and the community. Here are some examples of how Pete, Juanita, Jim and Gloria view the importance of people skills. Pete sees delegating leadership roles as a component of the people and networking skills he uses. "I guess that goes back to understanding people. That's my skill. It's understanding people. How I as a leader delegate the roles. We need a specific type of person to fill a particular job." The delegation process requires that he study his staff carefully to determine what skills they bring to his team. "How do we fill each role? You need to be good at looking at individual abilities, weaknesses, etc. Where can each individual best fill a particular task, matching the right type of person for each job?" Answering these questions makes it easier for Pete to find what he needs to get important tasks done. "Considering resources: What kind of training is needed? Does the job that I'm delegating require more information, what can I do to help that person accomplish their mission?" These factors help Pete accomplish his goals while he gets the best out of the people he works with.

Juanita says networking skills make it possible to operate with more credibility. "I suppose having people skills plays along with it, too. I get along well with people. I think you have to be honest. People respect that. People know I'm on the level." Working with others is a process that requires that we are all aware of our own potential to grow. Jim says this is how he works to overcome the challenges he faces: "I think that networking

with other administrators is important. I can call another administrator up when I'm having problems in a given area and ask their advice." Seeking out advice and working to grow professionally are an ongoing process. Jim also feels that, "Networking, in-services and workshops all contribute to my own professional growth. I think I've talked about teacher's professional growth but I think my own professional growth is important." Being self-aware and willing to work with others are qualities these role makers have developed over time.

Gloria also feels that in order to surpass the traditional roles and become a role maker, you must first work to develop and support a clear vision of where your leadership values will take you. "I think you have to be a people person. You have to have support from the administrative team and your board. Knowing that they don't want you to do the traditional stuff, they want you to go beyond that. You know, I think you have to have a vision." Gloria perceives this aspect of her own networking skills as linked to the ability to craft a vision. "If your people skills can't help you with your vision, then you might as well forget about it."

In contrast to the types of people skills described here as necessary to role making, Juanita points out another aspect to leadership that reaches beyond the principal's efforts to share leadership tasks. Sharing leadership responsibilities is a great ideal, but she also describes moments when you must lead with clear authority. "At that moment in time when there is a crisis in the building, absolutely no one questions who is in charge. That is the one time I expect people to just follow directions. The rest of the time, we talk together we plan together, we move together." Circumstances can dictate when it is time for quick, clear, concise action. "We had a bomb threat a few years ago, and I was barking orders,

but we came out of it OK, really well. I thanked everybody. There was only room for one leader. I had to take over everything. You can rise to that occasion."

Juanita recognizes that it is important to be able to balance managing and leading, sharing responsibility and yet being prepared to take charge. This is not always apparent, she says, "but I also realized that at that moment, they wanted me to lead. The rest of the time they all want to be walking with me, side by side." In other words, there are times when people look to the principal to provide leadership, period. At a time of crisis, it is essential to establish who is in charge and carefully communicate what must be done. Juanita's example clearly illustrates the type of situational awareness that principals deal with. The next discussion of the importance of listening, communication, caring and praise provides further contrast to Juanita's example.

Theme 5.2: Using Listening, Communication, Caring and Praise—7 Respondents

Determining what skills are most important to role makers can also involve using many of the same skills described in leadership standards (Wilmore, 2002). First, Gary notes the importance of being flexible enough to consider everyone's ideas. "I would say the willingness to listen, and to weigh different ideas and opinions. Because I definitely have ideas about the ways things ought to be, but I think it's important to keep my mouth shut and listen." In contrast, Margaret sees her role as one of cheering on her staff to do the best they can. "It helps to have fun. If you don't have fun at work you shouldn't be there. So I just try to really make the atmosphere special. Little things, little hand written notes, positive praise, the other day we ordered in Subway sandwiches, or we've cooked out, had picnics." Positive reinforcement and praise are consistently used to permit role makers to reach out to their staff and compliment good work. Margaret also sees this as

part of how you can show that you care. "To me that's the type of thing that shows you care too about them. My role is to make them better teachers in any way I can."

Margaret is not the only one who sees praise as an essential part of how role making works. Beverly also uses praise and other forms of special recognition to show her staff she cares. This is also considered a component of caring and servant leadership identified by many scholars (Connors, 2000; Covey, 1992; De Pree, 1989; Drury, 2003; Greenleaf, 1977; Lyman, 2000). Beverly speaks of the importance of, "Giving praise where needed. I also think it is important to be social enough with your teachers, and not just your teachers, but also janitors, secretaries, the teacher's aids, etc. I give everybody a birthday card, Christmas gifts." Not everyone might feel comfortable with this, but Beverly feels it promotes a connection to all her staff, particularly "If I know of a problem in their families, etc. For example, I have a teacher who has a daughter with MS, and I just heard the other day on TV about some new research, and so I immediately went and talked to her about it, and she hadn't heard about it." This gives Beverly a feeling of connectedness that she relies on to show she cares. "Getting involved with your people and letting them know that you care about what is going on in their lives, that all helps."

In contrast Jim feels that maintaining connections to the community and providing stability are important. "I think trustworthiness, respect, they know that I'm caring, honesty with your staff. Caring—I look at caring as being a good listener, and when people have problems, building a relationship with staff." This requires that he know the names and faces of the people he is in contact with. "I know their husbands, wives, children; I ask them how their weekend went. I think there is just this mutual respect." This familiarity extends to the families of all the students. "The same with parents, I've

been here 26 years in all in the community. The parents know me. I know the families. I know their strengths and weaknesses and they know my strengths and weaknesses." Jim knows that the caring aspect of his leadership has provided him stability and sustainability as a leader. These are measures of his leadership that go beyond tangible things. "I think I've been stable to this District and they know I'm caring, with each and every student. It's not just the top notch students, it's the special education kids, the title kids, I want them each to be successful."

Connections to the community and growing the human relationships he needs to communicate as a leader give Jim the ability to succeed as a role maker. He states that this extends far beyond the walls of the school. "It isn't just with staff, but with parents and students. It extends to the community. I am a member of the Lion's club, booster club, vice president of the park. I think that makes it easier, once you are in the community and you are stable, and people know who you are." His work in the community has made him a better leader precisely because of the relationships he has cultivated both in and outside school. "Throughout the conference, in the region, the principal's association has given me experiences with relationship building." Gary, Margaret, Beverly and Jim have each found ways to communicate and demonstrate that they care about the schools and the communities they serve. All these skills are excellent examples of role making in progress.

Theme 5.3: Using Organizational Skills, Balance, and Flexibility
for Resource Management and Multi-Tasking—6 Respondents

Time and resources are preciously scarce. Good role makers are masters of managing their limited time, resources, and energy. First, Miranda describes how multi-tasking and an open mind can help you succeed as a role maker. "You have to be able to

get several things going at once. I guess the common phrase is multi-task. I think that's really important. You have to be open and not set in your ways." Keeping an open mind and multi-tasking are a form of flexibility that Miranda depends on to succeed as a role maker. She also advocates studying hard, "and you certainly have to be a student yourself, that you can learn from anybody. Have the ability to see things from different points of view in order to come up with something different." This type of flexibility makes it possible to see the big picture. Juanita agrees that this bigger perspective requires particular skills. "Creativity, being able to see things in a unique way is an asset. Being highly organized and strong at analysis. It comes easy for me to see the little pieces and how they fit together. I think that is essential to doing what I am doing. It is like putting the pieces of a puzzle in place." Based on the observations of these principals, the skills of successful role makers are quite varied.

Other perspectives on the organizational skills necessary for successful role making include Joe and Gloria's perspectives on the ability to work hard, be flexible, and resourceful. "Being able to get around to do things, being able to be in and out. Be very flexible time; be able to juggle many things at a time." Clearly juggling so many things at once means you must work very hard. Gloria says, "I think you have to have a work ethic that's out of this world. You are going to have to spend a lot of time, not just any kind of 7:30 to 2:30 kind of job." A willingness to sacrifice your time and to be resourceful are also apparent in Gloria's perspective. "I think that financially, there has to be a little bit of wiggle room there. I don't know that you can expect to have a lot of that. A lot of times you have to be very resourceful and finding ways to get it done with other sources of money, community contacts are very important and community support." Flexibility, a

willingness to work hard, and resourcefulness represent the values these role makers depend on to succeed.

"What do you perceive to be the greatest challenges to being a successful role making principal as opposed to a role taking principal?" Of all the questions in the Phase II interviews, this had the most consistent response from all nine principals. Time and time management are the biggest challenges. Six of the nine respondents spoke of the impact of time and how role making takes time to develop. It doesn't just happen over-night. It must be crafted and nurtured over time. Some principals also spoke of the dynamic among people and the challenges of managing people while promoting a caring atmosphere. It is important to show empathy. Again, this is consistent with Northouse's (2001) three key ingredients that define what leaders must provide in order for this moral purpose to be sustained: "trust, nurturance, and empathy" (p. 255).

The text that follows includes excerpts from the respondents' perceptions of the challenges of role making. Pete feels that there are often more demands on his time than he has to meet all the demands of his job. He says that his biggest challenge is, "Time. The 24-hour challenge. (Chuckles) The balance, the "chi". Of having the equal balance of both professional time and personal time." Pete feels that it is also important to keep a balance between work and home. "We all need time away to charge the batteries, and I am no different. I have the family at home, too, and I need to provide the time factor there." In making it work, he says, "There are so many things we can accomplish if we had the additional time whether we had the time to think, to study, to delegate. I think being organized by having timelines is good. That is, school improvement is on a 5-year plan." These are organizational management issues that all principals face.

On the other hand, Pete also feels there are many things that are outside his control that must also be considered. "We never know as principals what is going to occur at a given time, in terms of the managerial part." Especially in times of crisis, you must simply accept the circumstances you are dealt and take care of what must be done in the short term for the safety of your staff and students. "I don't mean to be dark here, but somebody calling in a bomb threat, an intruder on the grounds, and unexpected death of a student or a faculty member, and when those things happen, we lose that time. You have to be prepared to manage these." Miranda also agrees that time management and creativity are part of the same process Pete is describing. She says it is often a competition of "Time and resources. The more creative with your resources, the more time that takes, you know. To seek that out, or figure that through, or whatever. So I do think time is hard. And, I do think balancing your work and your home."

Like Miranda, Margaret agrees that role making is often challenged by time management: "It takes a lot more planning. If I am doing a PowerPoint presentation on differentiation, I have to take the time to do that." Margaret also commented that financial resources are a major challenge to role makers:

> You need money to go to workshops. You need cooperation. I have a very strong PTA that gives us lots of support and resources. I've been able to get alternative funding grants from a bank, and the teachers have done some things that are just phenomenal. We have a kinder garden that the Kindergarten planted, and it's just awesome. And now this fall they came back as first graders and they have tomatoes and beans, all these things. These are resources you need to be successful. Our PTA landscaping chairman helped, too.

Juanita finds it challenging to manage consistently and keep everyone motivated: "There are times it can be difficult for people to remain consistent with the school improvement plan, and move in their own direction. We still all have to stay focused on

moving in the same direction for the good of the education system." Time management is

a multi-faceted skill that obviously impacts these successful role making principals.

Setting priorities is among the big challenges. Joe says that these issues of time

management can be a major challenge to role making principals:

> Reminding myself I won't get everything done in a day or a week. There are
> going to be projects that I have to put on the shelf. And in letting go and trying to
> do a lot of things, I also have to say no to things. I had an idea to start a teacher/
> student mentoring program this year based on something from another District,
> that my sister in law had told me about. She asked me "Did you get that started"?
> And I really had to just say no to that, I could consider delegating, but sometimes
> I just have to say no to things. And the challenge is to say "OK, I only have 16
> hours." What can I do in the time I have and still have a personal life? I only have
> so much time. The challenge to me is to feel OK about not making the job all
> consuming. I could be so compulsive about it. And be thinking, "I'm not doing
> enough" and there is always more to do.

Joe's sense of feeling like it can never all be done is familiar to most professionals who

are dedicated to their work. The secret is maintaining a realistic perspective on what is

possible.

Finally, Gloria agrees that managing time presents a big challenge to her efforts to

be a role maker. She says, "I think the biggest thing; the single biggest thing is time."

Time and time management impacts every aspect of her efforts to do a good job. "Because

of time constraints, with so many other types of things, when you get down to the nitty-

gritty of having to improve your ISATs, you know, do you do that because you have time

to do data analysis, or curriculum alignment, or do you go back to that role taker of

delegating and telling the teachers that they need to find out how to get this done." The

danger of micromanaging things must be balanced with taking on the roles that you can

handle. This is not easy, but Gloria also thinks it requires a certain amount of luck. "I just

think it's incredibly difficult, but it depends, too, you know, you may have the support of a

dean or an assistant principal, in that position, and you are lucky enough to be able to truly have the time to really get role making." In other words, your ability to role make can depend in direct measure on how successful you are at delegating enough time to take on those role making behaviors. Gloria, says this can be done, "But so many times, when you've got bus referrals, and you've got everything that you're handling by yourself, it's easy, I think that time is the one thing that knocks you back into that role taker."

Clearly a major factor that challenges most principals is time. Managing people and limited resources also occupy other major concerns. The consistency of these responses helps to better shape our conclusions about role making. In contrast with the traditional managerial tasks, role making demands that the principal master the ability to get those managerial tasks taken care of while managing time and people more effectively. Mastering teaching skills well and sharing those skills by modeling them and promoting them also provide a culture within the school that perpetuates learning; learning by adults as well as the learning of students. In essence, the teachers who used to be followers are assuming leadership roles that the principal guides and promotes.

Theme 5.4: Using Research and Demonstrating
Good Teaching Skills—5 Respondents

Role makers frequently demonstrate that they like teaching and like teachers. The respondents to this theme all demonstrate that an important feature of role making is connected to teaching. Margaret says, "It helps to be a good teacher yourself. To be able to explain things in a way that staff can learn." Joe thinks that this ability to teach must also include the ability to communicate your expectations. "You have to have the ability to share my skills and train other people. I also have to have an ability to let other people

know what my expectations are. And to say 'Here's what we want,' or to have them want the vision, or what do we want this to look like when we are all done?" Once you have articulated your expectations, be ready to set your priorities, "and then to work with them to strive for that. Whether it's how clean the building is going to be or what we want a reading curriculum to look like." Jim also thinks that research and continuing education are also important parts of this process. "I would say that I myself have to attend conferences which I do quite a bit. So that I know how to keep up on best practices are out there and the best strategies." Learning and sharing best teaching practices allow Jim to grow and more importantly, share what he has learned.

It is always helpful to have the support of others as one attempts to grow professionally. Jim says he feels fortunate to have access to professional conferences: "Our superintendent is really good about letting us go to the IPA conferences. I attend the IPA conference every year." Setting goals is another important part of Jim's efforts to improve. "We have the administrator's academy that we have to go to every year. I try picking something out of the curriculum area that needs improvement for myself and the staff. There are many seminars, in-services that I am able to go throughout the year." This theme and the responses to this interview question demonstrate that teaching and continuous improvement are an important part of the role making efforts of these principals.

Theme 5.5: Using Delegation of Roles to Promote
Participation by All—5 Respondents

Joe and Gloria both described how role making can be limited if one is unwilling to let others help them plan and accomplish what they want to get done. This can't always work unless you succeed in creating roles that work for everyone. Joe explains:

"The ability to let go. To be a role maker you can't think you can do it all. I perceive that what you are doing as a role maker is to get others to assume roles themselves. So, you have to have an ability to let go and you have to have an ability to trust."

In contrast, Gloria finds that the help she receives makes it possible to get a lot more done. "I think having a lot of parent involvement, parent buy in as well as the staff, I think that is important as well." In addition, parent and community support can make a huge difference. Gloria says, "You know, if you can get a PTO started if you don't already have one, get them involved or and organization like that really, you know, build that up and have good leadership with that can be a really strong asset for you." She thinks it is helpful to use the help she receives from parents and the PTO to handle duties that she can't accomplish on her own. "It's filling in a lot of gaps. Both financially, and with bringing in some parent contact." Making decisions accessible to those who agree to help her make it possible for Gloria do more. In the end, it all benefits the school.

Distinguishing role making behavior from role taking requires the ability to manage time and people more effectively. In this final follow-up question, the researcher attempted to get one last perspective on how role making differs from role taking. Gary feels role making has to do with who shows up to help and ultimately gaining ownership of the decision making process. In differentiating what constitutes role making as opposed to role taking he says, "I would say that the idea of being more collaborative, of getting more input, requires more time, but part of it depends on who you get around the table [chuckles] and even though you let people sign up for committees that they choose." Gary tries to be more pragmatic by allowing teachers to determine what committees they will attend. "I guess that's another thing I do, I let people tell me what committee they want to

be on rather than me go out and pick my favorite five for everything. And the expectation is that everyone is going to be on a committee. And so now you've got some ownership immediately." In an effort to make this seem voluntary, Gary only requires one thing: "Every one participates in at least one. By having open participation in committees, the expectation is set for participation."

Juanita has a little different perspective on role making versus role taking. As time has passed she has felt more and more comfortable in assuming a role making posture that allows the more traditional roles to be filled by others. "I think the traditional administrator feels responsible for all those different areas. Management, scheduling, budget, finance, maintenance, and I think if you can empower others to take care of those things you can move into that role making, but we all have a shared responsibility." Role making frees her to be more creative, "and the burden is off your shoulders because we all work together and share in it. As a new administrator I felt like everything was on my shoulders, and if I didn't do it, it wouldn't get done." With the passage of time, Juanita has learned to be more relaxed. "You get over yourself real fast and learn that other folks need to share. If you are marching along and leading, and there isn't a contract of principal's role descriptions, it really makes you feel like you are standing alone, and in charge of all these things." For Juanita, it is not about having total control all the time. She says, "I think for some folks the power goes to their head. I realized that you are only leading if they follow you, and you can lead from behind."

Clearly the ability to differentiate between role taking and role making tasks is essential to delegating tasks effectively. Juanita does an excellent job of describing "leading from behind." This is very consistent with the notion of the servant leader who

puts himself or herself in the same place as those who follow. As observed in Chapter II, this is also consistent with Greenleaf's (1977) and Sergiovanni's (1992) image of the servant leader committed to building a followership that will sustain the organization perpetually.

Summary and Discussion of Major Findings

Principals bring important leadership roles to bear in dealing with the many issues facing their schools. In spite of the broad variety of challenges they each face, there are several common threads to the experiences they share, whether they approach leadership as role makers or role takers. Participants' dominant view of role making, however, is that it is participative and focused on the needs of the school, the staff, the students, and the parents.

The leadership values that each of the nine principals describes in response to Research Question 1 reveal a deeper understanding of how they move beyond the traditional tasks that can dominate their day and pull them away from focusing on learning and instruction.

Research Question 1 and Major Themes: How do principals describe their perceptions of role making in contrast to role taking?

1.1. Role makers rely on teacher and parent leaders.

1.2. Role makers proactively delegate traditional operational roles.

1.3. Role makers communicate and know people and their strengths

1.4. Role makers' perceptions of contrasts between role making and role taking vary.

All nine participants stressed the importance of using teacher and parent leaders and proactively delegating traditional operational roles. Delegation of traditional operational roles makes possible the time for collaboration that will move the curriculum and learning forward. This practice of collaborating with staff and parents is totally consistent with descriptions of team building and shared leadership values. "The principal as facilitator must give voice to all stakeholders, identify common values, and resolve conflict while building the team, its unity and its vision" (Wilmore, 2002, p. 67). Role making must also include the proactive effort to engage the staff in leading instruction, and curricular decision making processes. Giving teachers the opportunity to provide input, form committees and own the learning process paves the way for successful schools. This is also consistent with the idea that successful role makers "arrange resources necessary to help teachers and other members of the learning community reach their goals and set new ones for continuous growth and opportunity" (Wilmore, 2002, p. 50). Getting all stakeholders actively engaged in leading the school is not always an easy process. Humility is one of the values required to permit role making to succeed, humility in the sense that role making principals recognize that they are not the only ones who can solve problems. Communicating flexibility and a willingness to reach out to others for solutions are at the heart of this process.

Research Question 2 and Major Themes: How do principals describe their motivation for role making in contrast to role taking?

    2.1. Role makers are motivated by desired results and outcomes.

    2.2. Role making motivates principals to focus on the diverse needs of students and staff.

2.3. Role making motivates principals to promote collaborative and participative leadership.

2.4. Role makers are motivated to build trust by seeking staff and family input.

2.5. Role makers are motivated to use all resources by promoting delegation and empowerment.

All nine principals provide strong testament to the power that role making has in their daily practice. Each is motivated by the desire to help each teacher and each student achieve their best results, often with limited time and human resources. A major motivation for each of the principals is getting the desired results and learning outcomes for students. All nine principals articulate that in addition to efficiently using their resources of time and people, they must also strive to build trust, communication, and a collaborative environment. Six of the nine principals described various ways that delegating more traditional management tasks, as well as the creative use of time and resources can make a difference in their approaches to instructional leadership. Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005) point out that there are "four dimensions, or roles, of an instructional leader: resource provider, instructional resource, communicator and visible presence" (p. 18). This quotation echoes the language by which the principals interviewed described the various roles they create as role making instructional leaders.

Research Question 3 and Major Themes: How do principals describe their successes as instructional leaders?

3.1. Successful instructional leaders have proactive energy for teacher team building.

3.2. Successful instructional leaders have an ethic of caring.

3.3. Successful instructional leaders use staff mentoring.

3.4. Successful instructional leaders use multi-age and ability grouping.

3.5. Successful instructional leaders view themselves as the lead learner.

As reflected in the five themes, principals reported multiple and varying successes and strategies as instructional leaders. Successes have reinforced their inclination to role making. When asked if their success has changed their approach to the principal's role, principals reported that they found new ways to interact, collaborate and communicate their own vision of a better school. Sergiovanni (1999) explains how the role makers find symbolic ways to reshape their leadership roles to serve their staff, students and the community better:

> The symbolic leader assumes the role of 'chief' and by emphasizing selective attention (the modeling of important goals and behaviors) signals to others what is of importance and value. Touring the school; visiting classrooms; seeking out and visibly spending time with students; downplaying management concerns in favor of educational ones; presiding over ceremonies, rituals and other important occasions, and providing a unified vision of the school through proper use of works and actions are examples of leader activities. (p. 9)

To reshape their roles, these principals first seem to look to themselves in an effort to understand how to best use their own gifts as teachers. Each principal reflects on how he/she evolved from being a teacher of students into a leader of teachers. For example, Miranda describes the importance of creating proactive, positive energy to promote a better climate in her school:

> Once people have a level of satisfaction with their job, and with their workplace environment, and that type of thing, then they can move on and begin to want to change. When working conditions aren't good, they get too focused on that. I think that turning that around, making the workplace a positive place makes people actually able to accept change and to work for change better.

Jim spoke specifically about how teacher team building takes time and commitment. Creating new roles for himself and his teachers changed as he grew into the job:

"The principal before me didn't have much correspondence and had not done much with curriculum. They were just worried about that the kids got in the school and the teachers taught. Very little input was passed. Some teachers were never evaluated." Jim took on new role expectations and then, "I think that just everything changed. When I came over here there wasn't even a person in the K-3 building. We didn't even have a full time administrator in the building every day. A secretary basically ran the building back in the 84-85 period." His daily presence began to have an impact, and "I think just having someone that's always here. Like I said earlier, the stability, I've been here since 85 now. There is a trust. When I sit and talk to them about curriculum and alignment. We have built trust." Sustainability and the ability to build and maintain credibility as a leader has been documented by various scholars on school leadership (Fullan, 2005, 2006; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

In contrast, Margaret talks about the importance of her role as lead learner in helping the school improve over time:

> I've learned even when I was still a teacher that you don't want to tell someone to do something, because they won't do it well. They may do it, but they won't do it well unless they believe in it. So I think it has driven me to understand that I have to be much more patient than I would have been. You know, change takes time. The first guided reading class took five years to develop. So I've told my teachers "You've got to give yourself time, try it a little bit this year, try a little more next year." You will get it over time it will get easier. It's like anything. It's just a different skill. The patient aspect of it, I don't think I was ever a very patient person, but now I've learned in this role, I've become a more patient person. I've learned in this role, even teachers learn in different ways, some are visual, some are auditory. I have one that is neither, so you have to kind of do it with her, so I guess that is another thing I've learned.

Taking the necessary time to grow into the role of lead learner is important to Margaret's perception of how her own growth can impact the school in positive ways. As a principal

evolves and gains experience, perceptions and priorities change. Becoming successful as a role making principal is a process that evolves over time. Responses to Question 3 suggest that one grows into the role making style as one grows and matures as a principal and as a leader of teachers. It is a process that evolves over time. As one grows more comfortable in the principal's job, the role taking aspects of the work become less burdensome and more time is available to focus on making roles that permit the principal to serve as a role model and lead learner.

Research Question 4 and Major Themes: How does role making make any difference in the success of a given principalship?

4.1. Role makers do leadership differently through interaction and caring.

4.2. Role makers focus proactively on instruction.

4.3. Role makers are perceived as instructional leaders who build relationships.

On one level or another, all nine principals described some type of interaction with people as the most compelling part of their job in their responses to Question 4 and the follow up probes. Role making often allows these principals to connect with people on many different levels and involve people in providing solutions to the challenges their schools face. Much of this activity is about building relationships with the school's teachers, students and the community. This is what Furman (2003) considers an important component to school leadership. These principals are engaging in building the "ethic of community" (p. 4) that Furman (2003) equates with schools that use collaborative processes that meet the needs of all stakeholders. Academic programs can be affected in many ways when principals allow teachers the freedom they require to make important decisions. For example, Juanita says that: "The teachers have decided on the Art program

based on their state standards, but the teachers have decided how they are doing it. While I'm involved in it, I'm not the leader; they are doing it their way." The state provides standards for the teachers to follow, "but I sat back and let the program emerge through them. It is their program, but I didn't dictate it. I'm aware of what they are doing, and I'm amazed at what they are doing." Juanita demonstrates that successful role making can involve allowing others to take leadership roles. This appears to require particular leadership skills as well as patience. Juanita proactively focuses on instruction, and succeeds at "doing leadership differently" through her interaction with her staff.

All three themes in response to Question 4 appear to work together in helping principals move the entire organization forward. A commitment to "doing leadership differently," working to connect with others and create a sense of caring and trust, maintaining an active focus on instruction, and building the perception of instructional leadership are all ways that principals succeed. Role making exhibiting these three themes demonstrates important ways that principals connect with their staff, their students, and the larger school community.

Research Question 5 & Themes: What skills, abilities, and resources do principals perceive as being essential to their success as role makers?

5.1. Using people skills and networking.

5.2. Using listening, communication, caring, and praise.

5.3. Using organizational skills, balance, flexibility for resource management and multi-tasking.

5.4. Using research and demonstrating good teaching skills.

5.5. Using delegation of roles to promote participation by all.

A variety of skills are thought to be essential to success as a role maker. Clearly, role making is a multi-faceted skill that requires good communication, creativity, vision, and a willingness to experiment. Eight of the nine principals stressed networking and people skills. This was the highest frequency of any role making skills identified by the group. Seven out of the nine principals emphasized communication skills. Principals believe strong teaching skills are important to successful role making. Ultimately, the perception of the successful role maker is closely tied to the skills and abilities of good teaching and good teachers.

Conclusion

Except for one, major themes in response to the five research questions can be synthesized into four thematic categories. Themes from multiple research questions cluster in each category:

I. Role makers are communicators who have strong people skills, believe in networking and collaboration, and build trust through caring relationships (incorporates themes in responses to all five research questions—1.3, 2.4, 3.2, 4.1, 5.1, and 5.2).

II. Motivated by desired results and outcomes, role makers focus proactively on instructional leadership using a variety of strategies (incorporates themes in responses to four of the five research questions—2.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.2, 4.3, and 5.4).

III. Role makers practice participative team building leadership through broad inclusion of staff and parents (incorporates themes in responses to three of the five research questions—1.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 3.1).

IV. Through organizational skills and flexibility, role makers create time for instructional leadership through delegation of operational tasks and roles to promote

participation and full utilization of human and fiscal resources (incorporates themes in responses to three of the five research questions — 1.2, 2.5, 5.3, and 5.5).

The theme that did not fit into a category was 1.4: Role makers' perceptions of contrasts between role making and role taking vary.

In Chapter V these thematic categories will be reworded as conclusions and elaborated in the context of how role making benefits instructional leadership. Also addressed will be implications of the findings and conclusions, as well as recommendations for practice and further research. Concluding remarks will address how role making leaders contribute to the critical issue of the sustainability of educational change.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The role of the principal as an instructional leader is explicitly stated in the

Illinois School Code: "A majority of the principal's time must be spent on curriculum and

staff development through both formal and informal activities, establishing clear lines of

communication regarding school goals, accomplishments, practices, policies with parents

and teachers" (Braun, 2000, p. 398). This chapter will present four conclusions about role

making in the principalship. Implications of role making for instructional leadership will

be discussed. The chapter will conclude with recommendations for practice and future

research.

What Has Been Attempted

This study examined the lived experiences of Illinois principals who identified

most strongly with role making behavior. The forces of changing roles, accountability

measures, and emerging new role expectations have placed many new demands on our

schools and on school leadership in particular. School principals must be able to cope

with as well as implement change in order to affect student achievement. Waters,

Marzano and McNulty (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of 30 years of research on the

effect of principal leadership on student achievement. The resulting "differential impact

of leadership" suggests that the most effective school leadership has a significant positive

effect on student achievement (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003, p. 5). Their study

provides an important contribution to our understanding of how effective principals can best manage the many changes and differentiated roles they fulfill.

Schools need leaders who are capable of making the role of instructional leader a priority over more traditional operational functions. Role making provides the principal with the freedom, creativity, and moral purpose to change the traditional roles of the principalship. Fullan (2003a) writes, "There is no greater moral imperative than revamping the principal's role as part and parcel of changing the context within which teachers and students learn. This is an exciting proposition and represents the moral imperative in its highest form" (p. 10). Studies have addressed the importance of the principal's role as an instructional leader, but few studies have explored successful principals who are *role makers* as opposed to *role takers* in their approach to instructional leadership.

This study addressed five research questions to explore how role making impacts efforts at instructional leadership:

1. How do principals describe their perceptions of role making in contrast to role taking?

2. How do principals describe their motivation for role making in contrast to role taking?

3. How do principals describe their successes as instructional leaders?

4. How does role making make any difference in the success of a given principalship?

5. What skills, abilities and resources do principals perceive as being essential to their success as role makers?

What Has Been Learned

One theme in the interview data was that role makers' perceptions of contrasts between role making and role taking vary. The other 20 themes in responses to the

research questions can be synthesized into four thematic categories, each of which is framed as a conclusion. It is important to note that the findings in this study relate specifically to elementary and middle schools because the Phase II interviews were with leaders at those levels. No high school principals agreed to participate in the Phase II interviews. For this reason the findings may or may not pertain to high school principals. To develop understanding of role making as an effective instructional leadership strategy, the discussion that follows presents four conclusions. Although these are specific conclusions from this study about role making and its relationship with successful instructional leadership, the conclusions echo ideas presented in the review of literature.

The four conclusions of the study are:

1. Role making is focused on collaboration and caring.

2. Role making is a multi-faceted ability generated by motivated proactive leadership.

3. Role making relies on building teams of parent and teacher leaders to achieve results.

4. Role making requires flexibility and the ability to delegate.

A cliché that many teachers use to describe good administrators applies perfectly to role making principals: The best principals are the ones who never forget what it is like to stand in front of a classroom and teach. How principals lead their schools is dependent on many factors. Ubben, Hughes, and Norris (2004) provide this description of leadership functions for principals: "Leadership is the way principals *use themselves* to create a school climate characterized by student productivity, staff productivity, and creative

thought" (p. 15). This study has provided important conclusions about how role making

principals do their work.

Conclusion 1—Role Making is Focused on Collaboration and Caring

Thematic Category I, "Role makers are communicators who have strong people

skills, believe in networking and collaboration, and build trust through caring relation-

ships," is reflected in this conclusion. Conclusion 1 incorporates the following major

themes: 1.3 (communicating and knowing strengths); 2.4 (build trust by seeking staff and

family input); 3.2 (have an ethic of caring); 4.1 (lead through interaction and caring); 5.1

(use people skills and networking); and 5.2 (listen, communicate, care, and praise). Addi-

tional evidence from the scholarly literature on effective leadership supports Conclusion

1, that caring and collaboration are essential to effective instructional leadership.

The ability to communicate and collaborate is essential. In addition to these efforts,

successful role makers are able to convey a sense that they care. Role makers depend on

strong people skills, and they believe in networking and collaboration, and ultimately they

build trust through caring relationships. Building trust and caring relationships involves

creating human connections within the school and the community. Instructional leaders

are often perceived to serve a distinct moral purpose by building a learning community:

> Whatever the reason, the mid to late 1980s and 1990s have born witness to a
> growing body of theoretical and empirical work concerned with understanding
> schools that function as communities; discovering ways to foster this phenomenon
> in those that do not; and exploring strategies, policies, and programs to connect
> educational organizations with their environments. (Beck, 1999, p. 17)

As instructional leaders, teachers and administrators share an enormous burden,

and in many ways American diversity is a mixed blessing. It requires that we work extra

hard to see that every child is valued, well cared for, and educated. In addition to building

caring relationships, role makers are participative and work to encourage cooperation and collaboration. The dominant view of role making is that it is participative and focused on the needs of the school, the staff, the students, and the parents. This practice of collaborating with staff and parents is totally consistent with Wilmore's (2002) description of team building and shared leadership values. "The principal as facilitator must give voice to all stakeholders, identify common values, and resolve conflict while building the team, its unity and its vision" (Wilmore, 2002, p. 67).

Lyman (2000) contends that an ethic of caring grows from the ways in which principals refuse to limit their roles or the roles of those around them. This inspires caring throughout the entire staff and promotes a culture of acceptance that gives everyone a vested stake in the outcome. In profiling a caring principal, Lyman (2000) describes the "ripple effect" this has on the teaching staff: "He does not say, 'That's not my job'. He's done everything. When you see someone that high up doing anything and everything, it inspires the rest of the staff to follow suit" (p. 100). This level of interaction and involvement on the part of the principal is precisely what Conclusion 1 of this study has revealed from the data.

Collaboration is another area that many scholars agree has a place in successful role making. Bredeson (1989) speaks of role making as a way of "blurring the lines" of traditional hierarchies within the school structure (p. 11). In this way, "Teachers don't think about principals as 'the boss'" (p. 11). Bredeson interviewed school principals to discover how collaboration best helps them help their teachers. Their responses echoed the results of this study in that cooperation and collaboration give everyone an opportunity to lead. One of the respondents in Bredeson's study clarified how traditional

roles become blurred: "I see a blend so that one could not distinguish teachers from principals in schools. If a person walked into the building and watched us for an hour and then said, 'I still can't see who's the principal and who're the teachers'. That would be great!" (1989, p. 11). Bredeson's principals also emphasized the amount of "communication, interplay and peer to peer interaction" that allowed for improved decision making and leadership processes (p. 11).

Conclusion 2—Role Making is a Multi-faceted Ability Generated by

Motivated Proactive Leadership

Thematic Category II, "Motivated by desired results and outcomes, role makers focus proactively on instructional leadership using a variety of strategies," is reflected in this conclusion. Many skills and leadership strategies are needed to create a role maker. Conclusion 2 incorporates the following major themes: 2.1 (motivated by results and outcomes); 3.3 (use staff mentoring); 3.4 (use multi-age and ability grouping); 3.5 (view themselves as the lead learner); 4.2 (focus proactively on instruction); 4.3 (perceived as instructional leaders who build relationships); 5.4 (uses research and demonstrates good teaching skills). Additional evidence from the scholarly literature on effective leadership supports Conclusion 2, that motivated proactive leadership is essential to effective instructional leadership.

Role makers must engage their staff and their school to energize and achieve an environment of continuous success. Role makers focus proactively on instructional leadership using a variety of strategies. It is important to recognize how role makers focus on needs and these needs are fluid and changing. Many families live in difficult circumstances that require additional intervention by the teaching staff. In the process of

meeting the needs of their staff and students, principals must be able to initiate the participation of everyone involved. Role making can effectively transform the learning and working environment of the school. Northouse (2001) describes the transformational leader as one who successfully engages with others and builds relationships that "raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower" (p. 132). This type of leadership allows for the principal to be more visible, available, interactive, supportive, and ultimately, connected to the entire school and community (Sheppard, 1996). As a result, their behavior can raise the bar for the entire school. Role making leadership promotes a deeper sense of mission and moral purpose to everything the principal does to move the school forward.

The ability to be proactive is clearly articulated by Covey's (1989) core principles of effective leadership. "The ability to subordinate an impulse to a value is the essence of the proactive person. Reactive people are driven by feelings, by circumstances, by conditions, by their environment. Proactive people are driven by values—carefully thought about, selected and internalized values" (Covey, 1989, p. 72). This notion of carefully crafted values speaks to motivation and echoes the leadership standards relative to building and maintaining a vision of good leadership and then working to put that vision into practice. The proactive and reactive also reflect the contrast between role making and role taking promoted by other scholars (Hart & Bredeson, 1996; Yukl, 2002).

Conclusion 3—Role Making Relies on Building Teams of Parent and Teacher Leaders to Achieve Results

Thematic Category III, "Role makers practice participative team building leadership through broad inclusion of staff and parents," is reflected in this conclusion.

Conclusion 3 incorporates the following major themes: 1.1 (rely on teacher and parent leaders); 2.2 (focus on diverse needs of students and staff); 2.3 (promote collaborative and participative leadership); and 3.1 (have proactive energy for teacher team building). Additional evidence from the scholarly literature on effective leadership supports Conclusion 3, that shared leadership is essential to effective instructional leadership.

Team building, teacher, and parent leadership are all recognized as important components of role making leadership. This shows how successful instructional leaders view students and staff as families of learners. Some of the principals interviewed spoke directly of how this dynamic of leadership helped them build working relationships. Teacher team building, creating an ethic of caring and respect, staff mentoring, and multi-age grouping all grow from the view that schools are families of learners who depend on each other for support. The themes of teacher team building, communication, continuous reflection, staff development, mentorship and multi-age grouping strategies all are components of successful instructional leadership.

The combination of team building, mentorship, improving morale, and an ethic of caring, create a school where everyone feels they have a stake in the outcome. Providing mentorship opportunities and supporting collaborative teacher leadership are the most important ways in which principals can achieve success as role makers. This aspect of the respondents' perceptions allows us to consider how they are successful. Role makers rely on teacher and parent leaders. The review of the literature in Chapter II noted that successful role makers work to create "...leadership in others, models and participates in collaborative practices, helps pose the questions, and facilitates dialogue that addresses the confounding issues of practice" (Lambert, 2002, p. 40). Second, role makers build

trust by seeking out staff and family input. Wilmore (2002) notes that "we must communicate to everyone—parents, community members, civic clubs, churches, strangers on the street—who we are, what we are there for….We need everyone involved and empowered. People support what they help to build" (p. 21). Using these human resources to share leadership can create opportunities for sustainable self perpetuating improvement.

Finally, role makers depend on proactive energy for building teams of teachers that can collaborate to improve instruction. Several scholars agree that teacher collaboration and teacher-led innovation and professionalism are essential to creating a culture of continuous learning and improvement (Marsh, 1997; Stevenson & Stigler, 1992; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Zimmerman (2006) also asserts that teachers can work together to create a self-sustaining commitment to excellence: "By providing opportunities for teacher collaboration and participation in decision making, principals and other school leaders can also develop a supportive culture of change" (p. 241). Various scholars have explored this notion that building teams of teachers will improve the prospects for change and improvement (Barth, 1990a, 1990b; Lewis, 1995; Marsh, 1997; Stevenson & Stigler, 1992; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999).

Conclusion 4—Role Making Requires Flexibility

and the Ability to Delegate

Thematic Category IV, "Through organizational skills and flexibility, role makers create time for instructional leadership through delegation of operational tasks and roles to promote participation and full utilization of human and fiscal resources," is reflected in this conclusion. Conclusion 4 incorporates the following major themes: 1.2 (proactively

delegate traditional operational roles); 2.5 (use all resources by promoting delegation and empowerment): 5.3 (use organizational skills, balance, flexibility, and multi-tasking): and 5.5 (use delegation of roles to promote participation by all). Additional evidence from the scholarly literature on effective leadership supports Conclusion 4, that flexibility and the ability to delegate are essential to effective instructional leadership.

Among the more difficult demands on principals is the ability to effectively manage limited time and resources and directing those resources to effectively manage. This includes managing both the physical environment and the learning environment in the school itself. Getting all stakeholders actively engaged in leading the school is not always an easy process. Humility in the sense that role making principals recognize that they are not the only ones who can solve problems. Flexibility and a willingness to reach out to others for solutions are at the heart of this process.

Wilmore (2002) agrees with the importance of applying leadership standards that promote a culture of collaboration, support, and continuous improvement within the school and the community. Giving teachers the opportunity to provide input, form committees and own the learning process paves the way for successful schools. This is also consistent with the idea that successful role makers "arrange resources necessary to help teachers and other members of the learning community reach their goals and set new ones for continuous growth and opportunity" (Wilmore, 2002, p. 50).

Another area considered essential to being flexible and resourceful is a willingness to keep learning how to teach teachers. Principals interviewed for this study also spoke of the importance of conducting research, and facilitating staff development and curriculum development via staff engagement. It requires time, persistence and

collaboration with all the staff to make it work. In each case these nine principals described how important it is to continue studying and learning about how your students are performing and how your teachers are performing. You then have to look for ways to get everyone involved in improving how the learning gets done.

Delegation, flexibility and multi-tasking resemble the characteristics Fullan (2005) describes as "energy creators" who maintain a positive, proactive focus designed to help others lead the school (p. 37). This is also part of the strategy Heifetz (1994) calls the ability to manage adaptive problem solving. This is a multi-faceted type of problem solving that role makers appear to possess as well. "The goal of would-be individual leaders, of course, is to become more and more like 'energy creators' and especially to be aware of how they can cultivate energy creation in other leaders they are in a position to mentor" (Fullan, 2005, p. 38). The ability to delegate and mentor others can perpetuate a self-sustaining ability to solve real challenges.

Fullan (2005) also speaks of the same type of positive energy associated with the role makers observed in this researcher's study: "We know the sources of energy creation: moral purpose, emotional intelligence, quality relationships, quality knowledge, physical well-being—all mobilized to engage the mind and heart in attempting to solve complex adaptive challenges" (p. 38). The same dynamic forces that drive energy creation are the resources and multifaceted skill sets that permit role makers to succeed.

Implications

To fully understand how role making intersects with leadership practices requires raising questions. Role making requires time and time management. Finding the necessary time and resources is a challenge for any leader. In schools that are dependent

on public sources of financing, this can be a very difficult, at times impossible challenge. Four implications that can be drawn from this study clarify how role making intersects with leadership practices. These four implications are: role making is a courageous act, role making involves redefining leadership, movement from role taking to role making leadership happens over time, and finally, role making requires knowing oneself.

Implication 1 – Have Courage

Something critical to leadership that the interview participants did not discuss was the importance of having the courage to become a role maker. It is often expected that a new principal will work to preserve the norms and practices that are most familiar and accepted from previous leaders. It is possible that the final interview question regarding the necessary skills, resources and practices of role makers did not call forth comment on courage as a component of leadership. Putting the interests of the organization ahead of ones own is the very essence of Greenleaf's (1977) concept of servant leadership. This type of leadership requires the principal to leave the comfort of the familiar, expected, or traditional role and proactively become a role maker. The principal makes a conscious, brave decision to control his or her own time and use that time and energy to do the real work of teaching and learning.

Implication 2 – Redefine Leadership

Maintaining the status quo and following established roles is comfortable. By having the courage to create new roles that permit them to lead the learning process, principals redefine leadership. Conforming to the expected norms ultimately confines role takers to the familiar scripts and defined role expectations. Role making requires principals to change their perceptions of leadership and then live the new roles created by

changed definitions. This is consistent with many of Fullan's (1997, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003b, 2006) ideas about changing the way things are done in an organization. One must be able to look at current reality from multiple perspectives. Indeed, Fullan points out that "An understanding of what reality is *from the point of view of people within the role* is an essential starting point for constructing a practical theory of the meaning and results of change attempts" (2001b, p. 137). This ability to understand reality and change one's own role in it makes it possible to create more successful roles. Principals who succeed at redefining their role as lead learner and teacher can have a positive impact on the learning environment.

Role taking involves merely accepting the established roles. The ability to move from role taker to role maker is not necessarily easy or automatic. Principals must be flexible and willing to explore the essence of who they are and how they can best help others improve their performance. An acute sense of what priorities are and how to make those priorities happen will allow a principal to move from being a traditional role taker to the more dynamic role maker.

<u>Implication 3 – Move From Role Taking to Role Making Over Time</u>

In addition to redefining how leadership gets done, becoming a role maker involves moving from *I do,* to *I lead.* This means the principal no longer micromanages all the details that traditionally consume a day devoted to maintaining building operations. The principal is able to create and sustain a role that allows him or her to focus on another level of leadership. During this process of moving from role taking to role making, one must redefine old roles and create new ones. This requires a very clear

vision of where you want to lead the school, starting from where you are and moving toward a vision of where you want the school to be.

Collins (2001) describes five levels of leadership that can result in sustainable excellence. Echoing Collins' model, Table 13 presents a three-tiered researcher created rubric that principals can use to facilitate and assess their movement from role taking to role making. In Table 13, role making behavior is divided into three distinct levels. Ideally, during the course of the principalship, principals would progress from one level of role making behavior to the next. Such progress will not happen overnight and will require self reflection and effort on behalf of the individual leader. Using the dynamic energy of the role maker to develop the ability to delegate traditional management roles allows the principal to re-focus energy on improving the learning environment.

Reaching for the highest level of cooperation with the staff and the learning community as described in Level 3 of Table 13 is an important goal. Other scholars have spoken of how creating these conditions within the school can benefit everyone. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) agree that, "At their best, professional learning communities embody the most positive features of distributed leadership, bringing the energy and ability of the whole community forward to serve the best interests of all students" (p. 128).

Table 13

Assessment Tool for Moving from Role Taking to Role Making

Level of Role Making Behavior	Descriptors of Leadership Behavior
Level 1	Relies modestly on teacher and parent leaders and focuses most often on traditional management tasks. Provides very few opportunities for delegating traditional roles to others. Need experience and development to allow higher levels of role making behavior.
Level 2	Relies frequently on teacher and parent leaders, but focuses on traditional management tasks when necessary. Provides frequent opportunities for delegating traditional roles to others.
Level 3	Relies heavily on teacher and parent leaders. Provides continuous, self-sustaining opportunities for delegating traditional roles to others.

Role making takes time. Role makers evolve over time and you first have to identify what your values are before you can get to where you want to go. You must take time to come to know yourself and know your staff. Use your strengths and theirs as you follow Collins' (2001) suggestion to "put the right people on the bus" and then use Covey's (1989) suggestion of committing to your own values and priorities. Time management and the ability to master the time and resources you have must become a driving force behind setting your goals. You must commit to "the important idea of prioritization, of clarifying values, and of comparing the relative worth of activities based on those values" (Covey, 1989, pp. 149-150).

How long will it take to make the full transition from behaviors in Level 1 to Level 3 as presented in Table 13? This study did not identify a specific length of time

needed, but other scholars have proposed general guidelines. Fullan (2005) asserts that, "I recon it takes 10 years of cumulative development to become a highly effective school leader. If such development occurs, the job becomes more doable and more exciting because of what can be accomplished" (p. 34). It is not clear if ten years is how long it takes to become a successful role maker, but the participants in this study felt it was part of a larger ongoing process of reflection, renewal, and continuing education.

Implication 4 – Knowing Oneself

Self awareness can be difficult to achieve and even more difficult to maintain when one works and lives in an ever changing environment that places so many demands on one's attention. This is especially true when attempting to use our own self awareness to inspire others to follow our example. Cervantes wrote in 1615, "…you must look at who you are and make an effort to know yourself, which is the most difficult knowledge one can imagine" (Grossman, 2003, p. 730). Role making is about coming to know the better part of ourselves and learning how to share it with others. This requires knowing our strengths and weaknesses and how to adapt them to meet the demands of the job.

Covey (1989) asserts that proactive leadership produces results that promote using our human potential to the benefit of all. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty, (2005) extend Covey's concept of proactive leadership:

> Seek first to understand and then to be understood involves establishing strong lines of communication by listening to and understanding the needs of those within the organization. Synergize refers to the principle that cooperation and collaboration will produce more than can be expected from isolated efforts or individuals. (p. 21)

These skills are not acquired overnight, but begin with self awareness and must be nurtured and cultivated over time.

Recommendations

<u>Recommendations for Practice</u>

Results of this study suggest that practicing principals and principal preparation programs should work to develop role making skills. Three recommendations for practice are offered,

Principals should use role making skills to become more effective leaders of student achievement. Role makers rely on the same methods to achieve their success as the school leaders identified in other recent studies of successful school leadership. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) identify 21 responsibilities for the school leader that closely match the descriptors used in this study to define role making and its impact on the principalship. The results of their meta-analysis of school leadership suggest that there is a statistically significant positive effect between good school leadership and student achievement. Based on these findings, they develop a 5-step plan for improving school leadership: "Develop a strong leadership team, distribute some responsibilities throughout the leadership team, select the right work, identify the order of magnitude implied by the selected work, match the management style to the order of magnitude of the change initiative" (p. 98). These are the same processes described by the Illinois principals who were interviewed for this study. Role making requires energy, creativity, and the ability to manage time, people, and most importantly, relationships. Finding the right combinations of teacher leadership, parent teams, and student support systems is an all consuming task. Role makers who succeed at delegating their role taking tasks to competent support staff can make a big difference in the success of the entire school.

Principals should use role making skills to manage change. The social, political, and academic challenges are greater than ever. In the current climate of increased public sensitivity to school issues, accountability is also a major source of concern and stress. "I believe that all reforms which rest simply upon the enactment of law, or the threatening of certain penalties, or upon changes in mechanical or outward arrangements, are transitory and futile" (Dewey, 1897, p. 80). These words reflect John Dewey's perspective on external "quick fixes" that have been recommended to reform American education. If this is the case, then what would Dewey make of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) initiative? It does not appear that lists of schools that failed to generate mandated benchmarks on standardized exams would be viewed as "the democratic conception in education" as Dewey first proposed it (1916, p. 81). We must prepare our future administrators to manage ongoing change and adaptive problem solving as a part of our daily organizational planning (Heifetz, 1994). Fullan (2001b) reminds us that, "If the district does not foster professional learning communities by design, it undermines them by default" (p. 165). In preparing our schools to adapt to mandated changes, educational administrators have a wide variety of choices in terms of leadership styles, models and options.

The final recommendation for practice is addressed to providers of preparation programs. Preparation programs should promote role making as a way to implement vision. Current educational administration preparation programs focus on developing leadership according to national standards developed by the ELCC (Educational Leadership Constitutent Council). Including role making as an aspect of creating and maintaining a vision (Standard One) could help improve leadership preparation programs.

Recommendations for Further Research

Future quantitative and qualitative studies of this important and little-studied phenomenon are recommended. Because only elementary and middle school principals were interviewed during Phase II of this study, it would be important to include secondary level principals in future studies to explore how and/or whether the findings from this study apply at that level.

Quantitative

A well-designed survey to overcome the limitation of the present study could result in survey findings that could be generalized. The largest obstacle this researcher had to overcome was working with the design of the online survey instrument and interpreting the results of the online survey. In particular, questions 10 through 16 of the online survey were too complex to assure accurate responses. This made it harder for the researcher to work with the data obtained. Once the number of strong role makers was determined and the 19 invitations to interview were sent, the study progressed more smoothly. However, the inability to generalize the findings of the quantitative Phase I data was a limitation.

Even though the sample for the Phase I online survey was too small to be considered representative, the responses to the Phase II interview do provide important insights into how principals interact with their staff. Further study of these insights, either quantitative or qualitative, can provide better understanding of how leadership is shared and how change and continuous school improvement are achieved and sustained. Additional study of the impact of these types of shared leadership can also strengthen those

studies that show a significant improvement in student performance from shared

leadership.

Qualitative

Additional studies using qualitative methodology, such as case studies including

observation of role makers at work, would help further understanding of how this

behavior can enhance the learning environment. Difficulties with the creation of the

quantitative survey instrument may be overcome by using more extensive qualitative

observation of role makers at work. Another potential area that would merit further study

could be to study role making and shared leadership at the District or regional level.

Some Districts might be better suited to this type of study, but there are a variety of ways

in which role making could be studied on a broader scale.

School consolidation has attracted a great deal of attention in Illinois and

combining smaller, rural Districts into larger combined Districts involve determining who

will share leadership responsibilities. A new study examining how role making might

contribute to the consolidation process could reveal new pathways to improving the

delivery of services in schools of different sizes, demographic groups, communities or

grade configurations. Such study might also impact how finances, athletic, staff, training,

facilities and other resources might be combined or improved. Zimmerman (2006)

describes this type of shared leadership on a broader scale as using a "systems

perspective" to help drive the improvement of schools at the building level and across the

District....Furthermore, principals must be skilled in analyzing the alignment among their

schools' systems, strategies, structures, and culture in order to identify areas for

improvement" (p. 240). Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) also found that finding

areas to improve or change schools requires careful consideration of how their own leadership behaviors impact the school system as a whole. Expanded study of the dynamic between role making at the building level and across school Districts or regions could provide new understanding of how principals meet the many role expectations demanded of them.

Concluding Remarks

Importance of the ability to grow and sustain effective leadership is supported in the literature on school leadership by a variety of authors (e.g., Collins, 2001; Fullan, 2005; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). To make role making a priority, principals need to focus on their own efforts to delegate the necessary leadership roles in their building to match the needs of their staff, students and their families.

In an era where the public is demanding more accountability from schools, there exists a moral imperative to leadership. This imperative calls on each principal to leave behind a school that can sustain improvement over time. It is essential that education serve the needs of all children, period. For this to happen, all stakeholders in the school must share this same vision for all children in a way that sustains these values. Fullan (2002) points out that a principal who is committed to these changes "works to develop other leaders in the school to prepare the school to sustain and even advance reform after he or she departs. In short, the cultural change principal displays explicit, deep, comprehensive moral purpose" (p. 17). Three key ingredients define what leaders must provide in order for this moral purpose to be sustained: "trust, nurturance, and empathy" (Northouse, 2001, p. 255). These are the values that define what we must do for our

children ". . . for only by attending to students as whole people can we achieve education that is truly empathetic" (Furman & Shields, 2002, p. 14).

Sustainability is also an issue that has gained the attention of scholars as a means of extending the improvements brought by one administration to future leaders (Fullan, 2005, 2006; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Fullan (2005) agrees with Collins' (2001) assertion that charismatic leadership is not enough. To truly impact school improvement, leadership must strive to put sustainable improvement into action. Fullan (2005) describes how this dynamic works to build the legacy of successful principals:

> Sustainability is very much linked to continuity of deepening direction over time. We can describe Collin's Level 5 leaders in these terms: The main mark of an effective principal is not just his or her impact on the bottom line of student achievement, but also on *how many leaders he or she leaves behind who can go even further*. (p. 30)

The ability to build and sustain a legacy of excellence is a big challenge. Fullan also agrees with Hargreaves and Fink (2006) that, "Leaders developing other leaders is at the heart of sustainability" (p. 62).

Each principal and each leader leaves behind a legacy. How that legacy weathers over time depends in large part on the amounts of trust, collaboration, and shared leadership responsibility the principal has successfully transferred to the staff, parents, and community. As teachers become accustomed to the leadership roles they acquire from the principal, and the principal develops a culture of collaboration, support, and vision, the expectations that drive continuous improvement are in place.

We must commit to building a system that will be able to sustain educational excellence for our entire community well into the future. This study has taught me a great deal about the type of leader I hope to become. Thanks to this study, I am now very

aware that becoming a role maker is a journey that each leader takes as he/she evolves over time. A wide range of characteristics and values contribute to becoming a successful role maker. With the help of the principals who participated in this study, I have received great advice from the very people who fill the demanding role of principal every day.

Lyman, Ashby and Tripses (2005) assert that authentic caring and sharing yourself are essential components of leadership. Their words suggest that integrating doing and being is at the heart of becoming a successful role maker. "Pushing the boundaries in bureaucracies integrates doing and being when leaders refuse to have their doing artificially constrained by bureaucratic rules and choose instead to do what they believe" (Lyman, Ashby & Tripses, 2005, p. 157). There is an important moral component to this type of leadership that allows each of us to put our own genuine stamp on our work. "Bringing one's being into leadership is about authenticity, bringing the whole of who you are to your work, not leaving any aspect of yourself at the door" (Lyman, Ashby & Tripses, 2005, p. 157). This is the very essence of what role making can achieve when we trust ourselves enough to lead with our hearts and souls.

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APPENDIX A

PHASE I ONLINE SURVEY

PHASE I ONLINE SURVEY

PRINCIPALS AS ROLE MAKERS: A STUDY OF ILLINOIS PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

A printed copy of this survey and the definitions below will be mailed to participants who consent to a follow up phone interview. We will refer to these definitions several times during the course of this online survey and any follow up interviews. These definitions are also hyperlinked throughout the online version to allow you to easily refer to them, and then return to your question. Thank you for your time!

If you prefer not to complete this online version, or the form doesn't work properly from your computer, you can also <u>click here to print a copy of this form in Adobe .PDF format</u>.

<u>Or, Click Here to Print this Page for Faxing or Mailing</u>

Please fax the completed form TOLL FREE to: 1 (800) 286-1870
or mail it to:
Michael Smith

Definitions – these definitions are designed to identify different dimensions of leadership behavior:

> <u>Role makers</u> – Principals who are role makers create a leadership role focused on learning and instruction. Taking cues from the needs of the students and staff, these principals move beyond the traditional operational maintenance role. They delegate the more traditional roles to others so that they can focus on improving learning and instruction. These principals function in their managerial capacity to deal with situations that are defined by their own behaviors, preferences and how they act out the role demands (Hart & Bredeson, 1996, p. 134).

> <u>Role takers</u> – Principals who are role takers tend to operate within the traditional role of building level administrators. These principals work within the roles defined by the demands of their work environment. Principals function in their managerial capacity to deal with situations that are defined by the specific demands and role expectations (Hart & Bredeson, 1996, p. 134).

> <u>Instructional leadership</u> – Principals who are instructional leaders strive to define and promote innovation and improvement of the instructional program. This includes curriculum development, instruction, assessment, and data analysis. These are principals who are very much engaged in promoting new teaching methods and working to improve teaching, learning and instruction across the

curriculum. Maintaining an active role in supporting, guiding, evaluating, and nurturing teaching practices is a common definition of instructional leadership throughout the research literature (e.g., Lashway, 2002; Blase & Blase, 2004).

Click the link to return to <u>Part III – Dimensions of Leadership Practices</u>

Part I - Contact Information

	Full Name	
	School	
	School RCDS Number	
	School Zip Code	
	E-mail	
	Gender	☐ Male ☐ Female
	Years in Principalship	
	Grade Level	*Elementary (Pre-K - 8)* ☐ *Elementary (Pre-K - 4)* ☐ *Middle* ☐ *Secondary* ☐
I am willing to participate in follow up interviews by phone: *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐		

Part II – Perceptions of the Principal's Roles and Instructional Leadership

1. I am most inclined to stick to the traditional roles defined by my job description, or the local demands imposed by the community.

   ☐ Strongly Disagree

   ☐ Disagree

   ☐ No Opinion

   ☐ Agree

   ☐ Strongly Agree

2. I put instructional leadership at the top of my leadership priorities and delegate other more traditional roles or duties to my office staff.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

3. Improving learning and instruction are duties best left to the teaching staff alone.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

4. As a principal, my role is often defined by the learning needs of students as opposed to the operational maintenance of the school.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

5. The importance of the principal's role as an instructional leader is determined by the grade level of the school (i.e. elementary, middle, high school).

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ No Opinion
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

6. It is important that the principal asks for and seems to seriously consider the input of teachers when making instructional decisions.

☐ Strongly Disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ No Opinion

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly Agree

7. Gender is a key factor in determining if a principal is more effective as an instructional leader.

☐ Strongly Disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ No Opinion

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly Agree

8. More years of experience as a principal make a significant difference in success as an instructional leader.

☐ Strongly Disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ No Opinion

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly Agree

9. The longer I work as a principal, the more removed I become from teaching practices.

☐ Strongly Disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ No Opinion

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly Agree

Part III – Dimensions of Leadership Practices

Please assess your perceptions and experiences for the items below honestly. Please mark the response that most nearly describes your perceptions of each item based on the following four criteria:

A. I have little understanding of this dimension of the principalship and little or no practical experience.

B. I have some understanding of this dimension of the principalship but have little or no practical experience.

C. I have a good understanding of this dimension of the principalship but have little or no practical experience.

D. I have some practical experience and a good understanding of this dimension of the principalship.

In the following questions after you have made your choice of the four answers above, for any question which you choose "D. Practical Experience," indicate if you perceive this dimension to be an important component of 1. role making, 2. role taking or if it is more likely to be part of 3. common instructional leadership practices.

10. For a principal to allow more time for instructional leadership, he or she must work to change the traditional roles stated in the job description.			
☐ A. little understanding	☐ B. some understanding	☐ C. good understanding	☐ D. practical experience
If you chose D for this question, is this dimension of leadership an important component of:			
☐ role making - innovative leadership that goes beyond traditional role expectations,			
☐ role taking - assuming a more traditional leadership role, or			
☐ common instructional leadership practices - striving to improve teaching, learning and instruction?			

11. My approach to the principal's role permits me to facilitate the collection, organization and analysis of a variety of information, including student performance data, to assess progress toward the district's vision of educational excellence.

☐ A. little understanding | ☐ B. some understanding | ☐ C. good understanding | ☐ D. practical experience

If you chose D for this question, is this dimension of leadership an important component of:

☐ role making, - innovative leadership that goes beyond traditional role expectations,

☐ role taking - assuming a more traditional leadership role, or

☐ common instructional leadership practices - striving to improve teaching, learning and instruction?

---

12. My approach to the principal's role permits me to promote the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

☐ A. little understanding | ☐ B. some understanding | ☐ C. good understanding | ☐ D. practical experience

If you chose D for this question, is this dimension of leadership an important component of:

☐ role making - innovative leadership that goes beyond traditional role expectations,

☐ role taking - assuming a more traditional leadership role, or

☐ common instructional leadership practices - striving to improve teaching, learning and instruction?

---

13. My approach to the principal's role permits me to systematically support staff growth and development to enhance the learning environment and the instructional program.

☐ A. little understanding | ☐ B. some understanding | ☐ C. good understanding | ☐ D. practical experience

If you chose D for this question, is this dimension of leadership an important component of:

☐ role making - innovative leadership that goes beyond traditional role expectations,

☐ role taking - assuming a more traditional leadership role, or

☐ common instructional leadership practices - striving to improve teaching, learning and instruction?

14. My approach to the principal's role permits me to promote the appropriate use of technology to enhance student learning and professional growth.

☐ A. little understanding	☐ B. some understanding	☐ C. good understanding	☐ D. practical experience

If you chose D for this question, is this dimension of leadership an important component of:

☐ role making - innovative leadership that goes beyond traditional role expectations,

☐ role taking - assuming a more traditional leadership role, or

☐ common instructional leadership practices - striving to improve teaching, learning and instruction?

15. My approach to the principal's role permits me to connect best practices, sound educational research, and educational standards to changes in instructional practices and curricular materials.

☐ A. little understanding	☐ B. some understanding	☐ C. good understanding	☐ D. practical experience

If you chose D for this question, is this dimension of leadership an important component of:

☐ role making - innovative leadership that goes beyond traditional role expectations,

☐ role taking - assuming a more traditional leadership role, or

☐ common instructional leadership practices - striving to improve teaching, learning and instruction?

16. It is impossible to change the traditional roles from my job description in order to allow more time for instructional leadership.

☐ A. little understanding	☐ B. some understanding	☐ C. good understanding	☐ D. practical experience

If you chose D for this question, is this dimension of leadership an important component of:

☐ role making - innovative leadership that goes beyond traditional role expectations,

☐ role taking - assuming a more traditional leadership role, or

☐ common instructional leadership practices - striving to improve teaching, learning and instruction?

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTORY EMAIL INVITATION TO PARTICIPANTS

AND CONSENT LETTER

November 23, 2004

Dear [name of individual]:

My name is Michael P. Smith. I am a student at Illinois State University and am writing my doctoral dissertation in Educational Administration Foundations. I am conducting a mixed methods research project in order to gain an understanding of principals' perceptions of role making and its impact on instructional leadership. The Illinois Principals Association (IPA) is assisting me with the sampling and the IPA may publish an abstract with the results of this study. This research project will be conducted during parts of February, March, April, and May 2005. I will finish my dissertation and report the results of this research during the summer and fall of 2005.

I would like you to participate in this research. Your participation would include completing this online survey. Based on the data from this online survey, I will select candidates for follow up phone interviews. Follow up candidates will be interviewed possibly one or two times for approximately 40 minutes. I'll ask you questions about your individual perspectives and approaches to the principal's role, your job description, and how your approach to role making or role taking impacts your approaches to instructional leadership. I would like to tape record these interviews, and I may take notes at the computer as we conduct the interview. Prior to the interview, you will receive a consent form and printed copies of your responses to the online interview. This information should be used as a reference before and during the interview process. A self-addressed, stamped envelope will also be sent for you to mail the necessary consent form.

I will keep whatever information you provide confidential. No one other than me will have access to the information, and the information you provide will not be identified by your name. Additionally, you will not be identified by your real name (I'll use a pseudonym) in the final report I construct.

Your participation is voluntary. There is no penalty for deciding not to participate. Also, you are free to withdraw from participation at any time, for any reason, with no penalties of any sort.

If you have any questions about this research or your rights as a participant, please contact me, my professor, or the Illinois State University Office of Academic Research Services. The contact information is as follows:

Michael P. Smith email: ███████████ Cell: ████████
Dr. Linda Lyman, Educational Administration Foundations office email: llyman@ilstu.edu ISU Office of Academic Research Services: 309-438-8451

Please, click the link below to the online survey if you understand what we are asking and if you are willing to participate. Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Smith

I understand and am willing to participate by completing this online survey:
http://ipasurvey.cjb.net/

APPENDIX C

PHASE II INTERVIEW GUIDE

PHASE II INTERVIEW GUIDE

<u>Phone Interview Introductory Protocol Adapted from Rose (2002)</u>

January 1, 2005

Good Day / Afternoon Mr. / Ms. [name of individual],

I am a doctoral candidate at Illinois State University in the department of Educational Administration Foundations. You recently completed an online survey of Illinois principals regarding role making behavior and its impact on instructional leadership. When it is completed, my study will further examine the relationship between the role of the principal and specific characteristics of leadership that result in successful and sustained instructional leadership efforts. General questions were written to provide data for profiling the role of the principal as the leader of change.

Each individual school principal will remain completely confidential and the data analysis will remain confidential. Although unlikely, the risk of breach of confidentiality does exist. Because the interview is voluntary, you will be free to discontinue it at any point in time. In addition, I do anticipate that the data analysis of the research will benefit all Illinois principals by providing a rich description of role making behavior and its impact on successful instructional leadership. The interview will be tape recorded to insure accuracy and will take approximately 30 to 40 minutes. The audio tapes will then be transcribed. As the principal, your name will not be identified in the dissertation study and the tape will be destroyed after this research project is completed.

Your online survey response indicated that you would participate in this phone interview after I had contacted you by phone or by email for an appointment. If you have

any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact me or my

faculty advisor Dr. Linda Lyman at any time. We will now proceed with the interview

questions.

Interview Format

This interview will be conducted in two parts. Part I will include a series of questions
designed to assess your perceptions of seven different dimensions of principals'
leadership practices. Part II will follow with five sets of open-ended questions and
probing subquestions. These questions and subquestions are designed to record your
perceptions of role making, role taking, and instructional leadership. The discussion will
be tape-recorded and then transcribed to ensure accuracy. Your participation in this study
is voluntary. You may withdraw from participation at any time. In addition, all of your
responses will be anonymous and confidential and the results will be represented as
aggregated summaries.

Definitions – these definitions were provided in the online survey to identify different
dimensions of leadership behavior:

> Role makers – Principals function in their managerial capacity to deal with
> situations that are defined by their own behaviors, preferences and how they act
> out the role demands (Hart & Bredeson, 1996, p. 134). These are principals who
> create a leadership role focused on learning and instruction. Taking cues from the
> needs of the students and staff, these principals move beyond the traditional
> operational maintenance role. They delegate the other traditional roles to others
> so that they can focus on improving learning and instruction.

> Role takers – Principals function in their managerial capacity to deal with
> situations that are defined by the specific demands and role expectations (Hart &
> Bredeson, 1996, p. 134). These principals operate within the traditional role of
> building level administrators who work within the roles defined by the demands of
> their work environment.

> Instructional leadership – Maintaining an active role in supporting, guiding,
> evaluating, and nurturing teaching practices is a common definition of
> instructional leadership throughout the research literature (e.g., Lashway, 2002;
> Blase & Blase, 2004).

> Interview Questions – Your Perceptions and Experiences as a School Principal

Phase II interview questions

1. How do principals describe their perceptions of role making in contrast to role taking?

    Probes:

    (a) Please describe your experiences with role making in your current position?

    (b) Describe specific changes to the traditional roles in your job description?

    (c) What leadership values do you model?

    (d) Can you tell me more about. . .

    (e) Can you give me an example of...

2. How do principals describe their motivation for role making in contrast to role taking?

    Probes:

    (a) Please describe what motivates you to change the traditional role of your principalship?

    (b) Do you believe that role making provides more time for instructional leadership? Can you give some examples?

    (c) How do you feel that role making helps you empower others and/or involve everyone in the change process?

    (d) Can you tell me more about. . .

    (e) Can you give me an example of...

3. How do principals describe themselves as instructional leaders? Describe 2 or 3 successes you have had as a principal.

    Probes:

    (a) Which success are you most proud of and why?

    (b) How have your successes changed your approach to the principal's role in your school? Can you give me examples of these changes?

    (c) Can you tell me more about. . .

    (d) Can you give me an example of...

4. Does role making make any difference in the success of a given principalship?

> Probes:

> (a) Which new roles do you find most interesting / satisfying / challenging?

> Clarifying the more personal side of role making behavior—What about those non-traditional approaches do you find. . . . On a more personal level, what about that do you find the most interesting, satisfying, rewarding?

> (b) Have your attempts to create more non-traditional roles achieved the intended results (and if so, how)?

> (c) If you were to leave tomorrow, how do you know that the changes that you began will be sustained?

> (d) Can you tell me more about. . .

> (e) Can you give me an example of...

5. What skills, abilities and resources do principals perceive as being essential to their success as role makers?

> Probes:

> (a) How do you perceive the new roles you have made in becoming a successful principal?

> (b) How are these roles different from the traditional roles in your job description? Can you give specific examples?

> (c) What to you perceive to be the greatest challenges to being a successful role making principal as opposed to a role taking principal?

> (d) Can you tell me more about. . .

> (e) Can you give me an example of...

> (f) Are there any questions you expected to discuss that have not been asked?

> (g) What concluding remarks would you like to make?

<u>End of interview comments</u>

If you have any specific questions for Dr. Lyman about this dissertation, she can be reached by her office email at llyman@ilstu.edu. If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me by using any of the media listed below.

Thank you for taking part in this research project.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Smith

Home: XXX-XXX-XXXX

Work: XXX-XXX-XXXX

Fax: XXX-XXX-XXXX

e-mail: ███████████████

ISU Office of Academic Research Services: 309-438-8451

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

PRINCIPALS AS ROLE MAKERS: A STUDY OF ILLINOIS PRINCIPALS'
PERCEPTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Principal Investigators:
Mr. Michael P. Smith, Doctoral Candidate (Illinois State University)
Dr. Linda Lyman, Dissertation Committee Chair (Illinois State University)

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Purpose of this Form
The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about your participation in
this research study and to provide the interviewer and principal investigator with written
permission from you to interview you and use information from the interview in research
reports, papers, and the final draft of a doctoral dissertation.

Purpose of the Study
This research is being conducted in order to complete a doctoral dissertation in
Educational Administration and Foundations at Illinois State University. The purpose of
this research is to explore the leadership practices of principals who are changing the role
of the principal (role makers), with a focus on instructional leadership in Illinois schools.
At this stage in the research, role makers will generally be defined as principals who
create a role that permits them to focus on instructional leadership, in contrast to
principals who allow the demands of their job to dictate the roles they fulfill in their
schools (role takers). We are seeking stories from the lived experiences of Illinois school
principals that provide concrete examples of role makers and how they approach their
work. Approximately 24 school leaders will be included in the interview phase of the
study.

Description of our Request of Your Time and Effort
We anticipate that your participation will involve the following effort and time:
• You will participate in an initial online survey. This survey can be completed in 10 to
  15 minutes.
• Based on the responses to the online survey, you may be asked to participate in a
  follow-up telephone interview of approximately 30 minutes.
• You will be provided an opportunity to review a written record of your interview.
  You may submit clarifications or make corrections to that record. This will take
  approximately 20 minutes of your time.

The Interview
Mr. Smith, the doctoral candidate, will interview you. You will be asked a series of
questions. We ask that you address these questions, though you should feel free to
provide relevant information and examples that may not be directly asked of you. The
interviewer will work from an interview guide, but the interview is intended to be
unstructured and the interviewer may ask you follow-up questions to the answers you
provide. The interview will be tape-recorded. The interviewer will also take notes. Prior

to the interview, you will receive this consent form and printed copies of your responses to the online interview. This information should be used as a reference before and during the interview process.

<u>Use of Subject Names and Confidentiality of Others</u>
You have been selected because of your professional reputation as an educational leader. Your actual record as a whole will be confidential. Your identity in the dissertation and quotes selected (if used) for publication will only be attributed to you by a pseudonym. The confidentiality of others whose names you use in responding to the interview questions will be protected also. If names must be used in any quotes from the interview, we will assign pseudonyms to those named.

<u>How to Get More Information</u>
If you have questions about this research, feel free to contact the principal investigators:
Linda Lyman, Illinois State University, llyman@ilstu.edu 309/438-5238
Michael Smith, Illinois State University, 309/█████, ██████████████

<u>Your Rights as a Research Subject</u>
Your participation in this study is purely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty or loss to you. It is possible that the principal researchers will not select all or part of your interview for inclusion in the final report.

You may learn more about your rights as a research subject by calling the Illinois State University Research Office at 309/438-2528.

You will be provided with a copy of this document for your records. Please fax this signed form to my toll-free number: 1/800-286-1870 or return your signed copy in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope provided, and retain the second copy for your own records. Signing this document signifies your understanding of this research and your current willingness to participate.

_____   _____
Signature of Interviewee   Date

_____
Phone Number

      As soon as I receive this signed form, I will contact you by phone or email to

schedule a convenient time for the interview. Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX E

GRAPHICAL SUMMARY OF PHASE I RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS 1-9

Graphical Summary of Phase I Responses to Questions 1-9

The charts below indicate the original 317 respondent's answers to questions 1-9

of the Phase I online survey. This portion of the survey asked them to rank each question

on a Likert scale of 1-5: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = No Opinion, 4 = Agree,
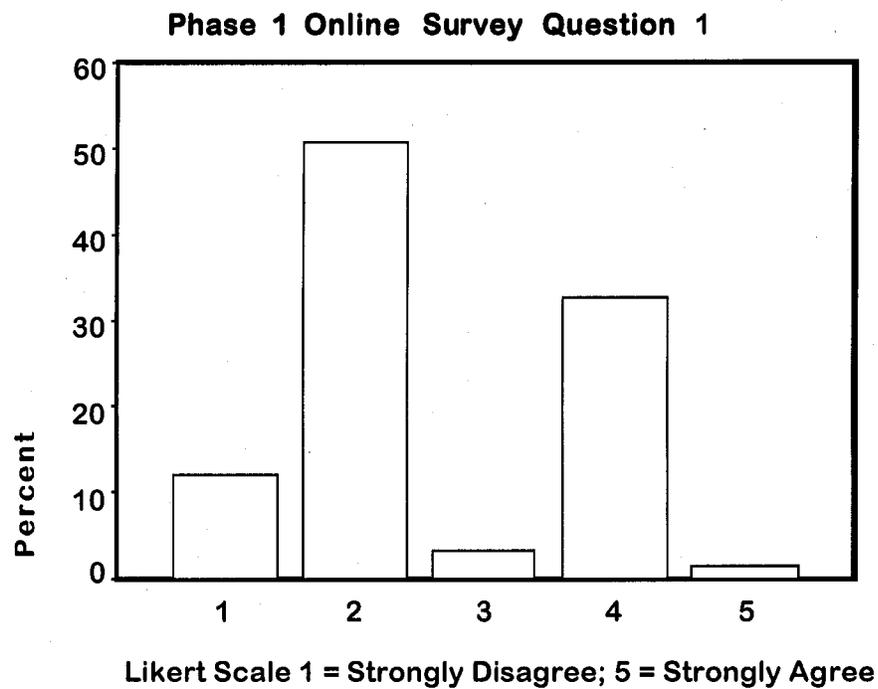
5 = Strongly Agree

Phase 1 Online Survey Question 1

Likert Scale 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree

Figure E-1. Percentage of Illinois principals most inclined to stick to the traditional roles defined by their job description, or the local demands imposed by the community—316 respondents.

Phase 1 Online Survey Question 2

Bar chart with y-axis labeled "Percent" ranging from 0 to 70, and x-axis labeled "Likert Scale 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree" with categories 1 through 5. Bar heights approximately: 1 ≈ 3%, 2 ≈ 11%, 3 ≈ 3%, 4 ≈ 64%, 5 ≈ 18%.
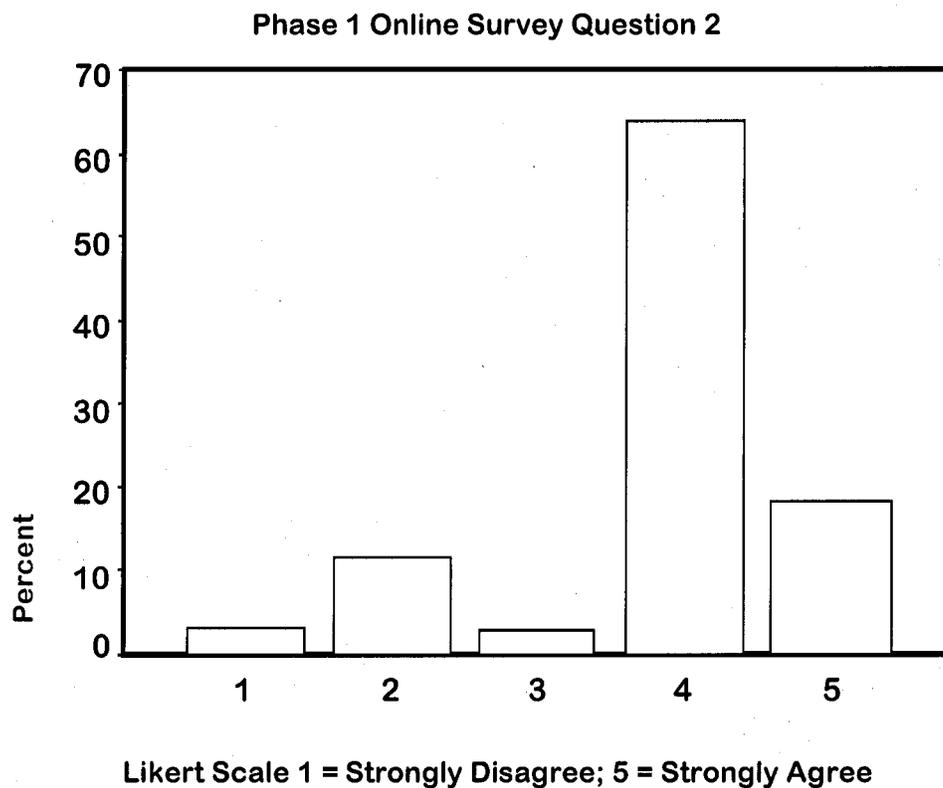
Figure E-2. Percentage of Illinois Principals who put instructional leadership at the top of their leadership priorities and delegate other more traditional roles or duties to office staff—315 respondents.

Phase 1 Online Survey Question 3

Likert Scale 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree
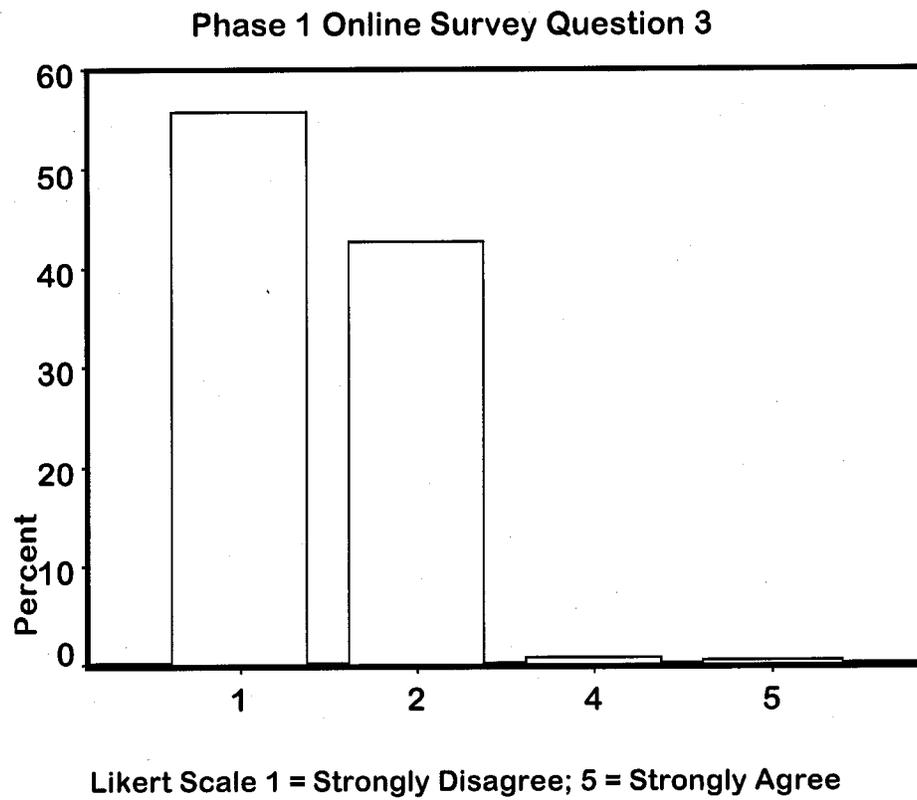
Figure E-3. Percentage of Illinois principals who feel that improving learning and instruction are duties best left to the teaching staff alone.

Phase 1 Online Survey Question 4

Likert Scale 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree
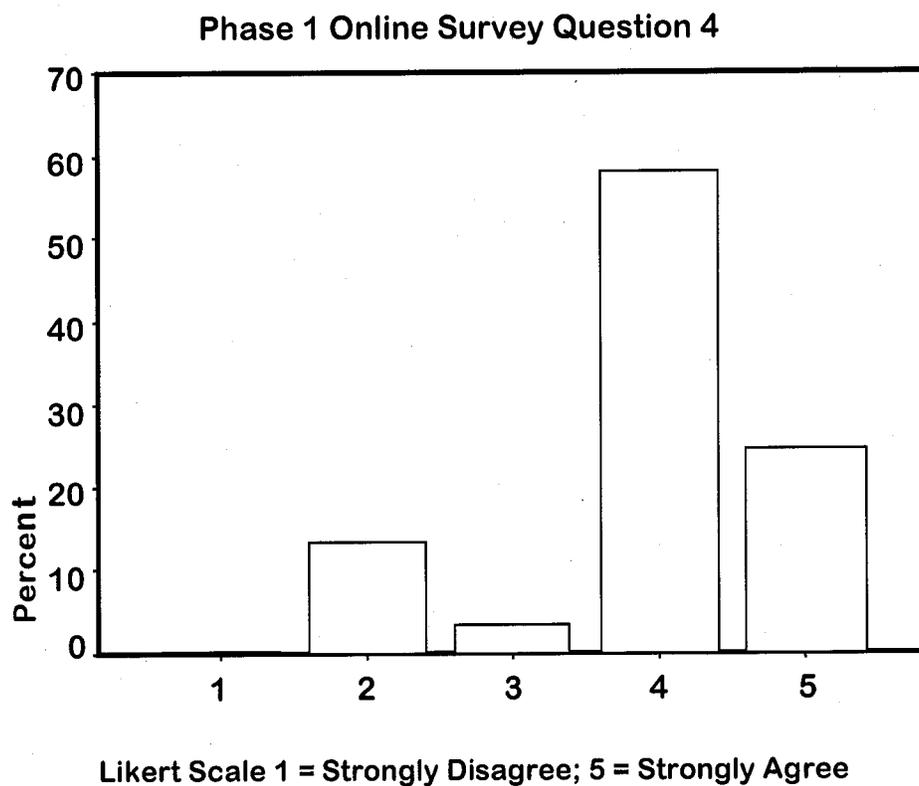
Figure E-4. Percentage of Illinois principals who feel that their role is often defined by the learning needs of students as opposed to the operational maintenance of the school.

Phase 1 Online Survey Question 5

Likert Scale 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree
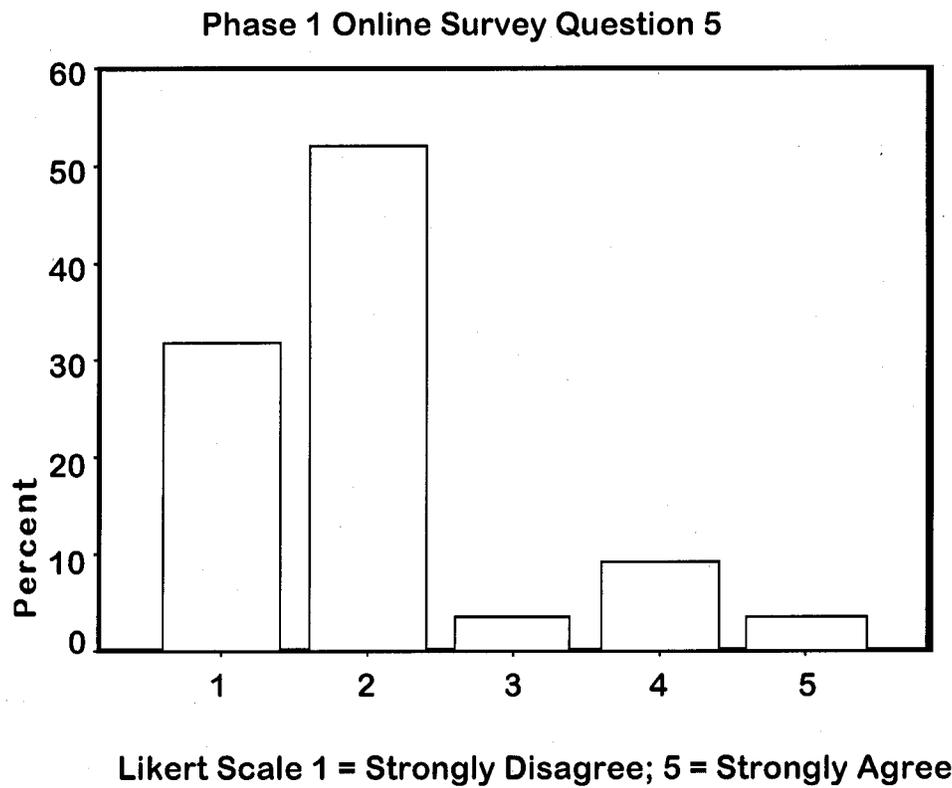
Figure E-5. Percentage of Illinois principals who feel that the importance of the principal's role as an instructional leader is determined by the grade level of the school (i.e., elementary, middle, high school).
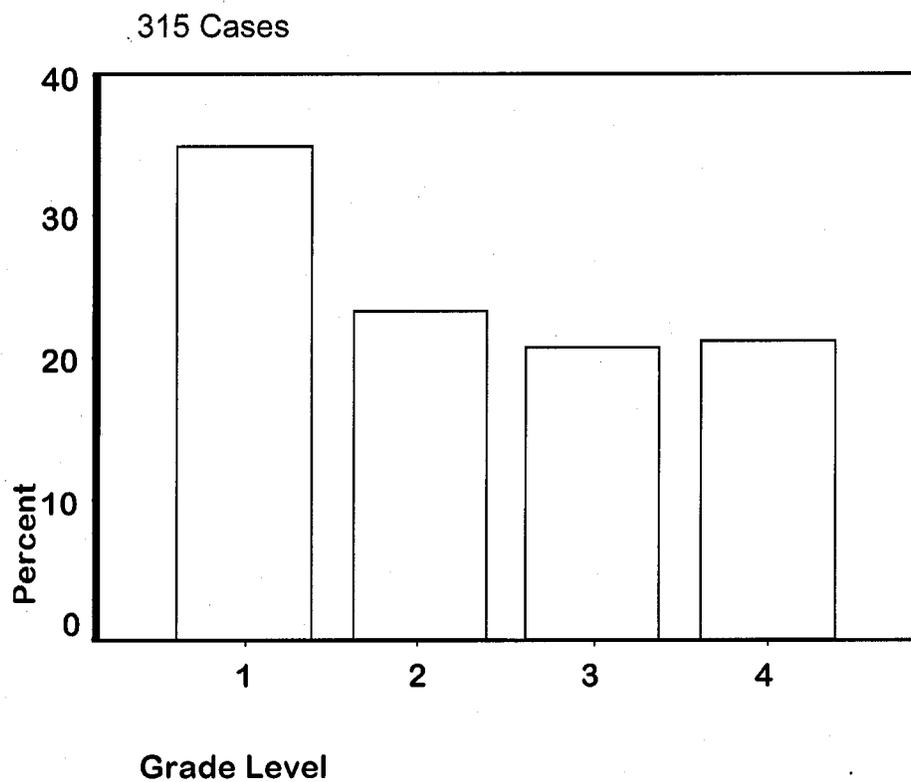
Figure E-6. Distribution of Principals Across Grade Levels

Gender v Grade Level Comparison
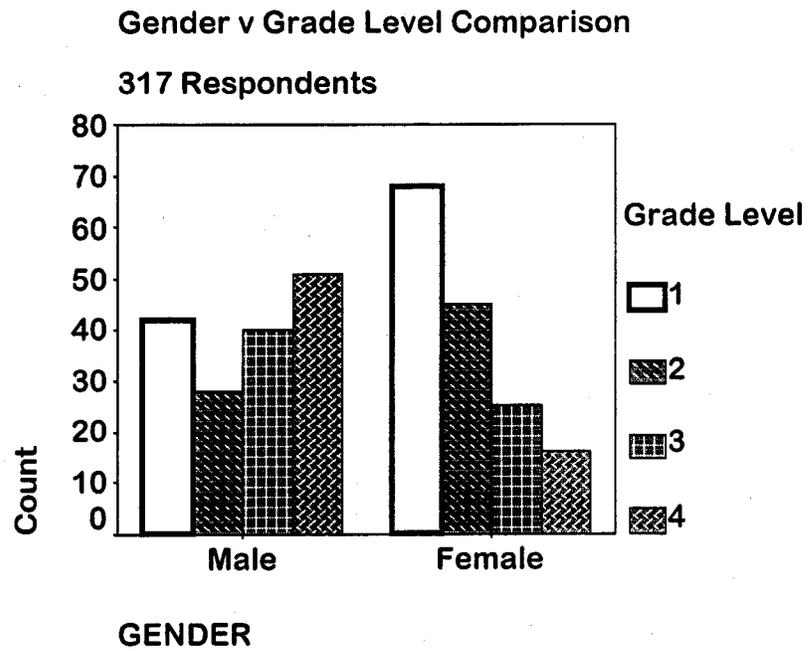
Figure E-7. Distribution of Genders Across Grade Levels

Phase 1 Online Survey Question 6

Likert Scale 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree
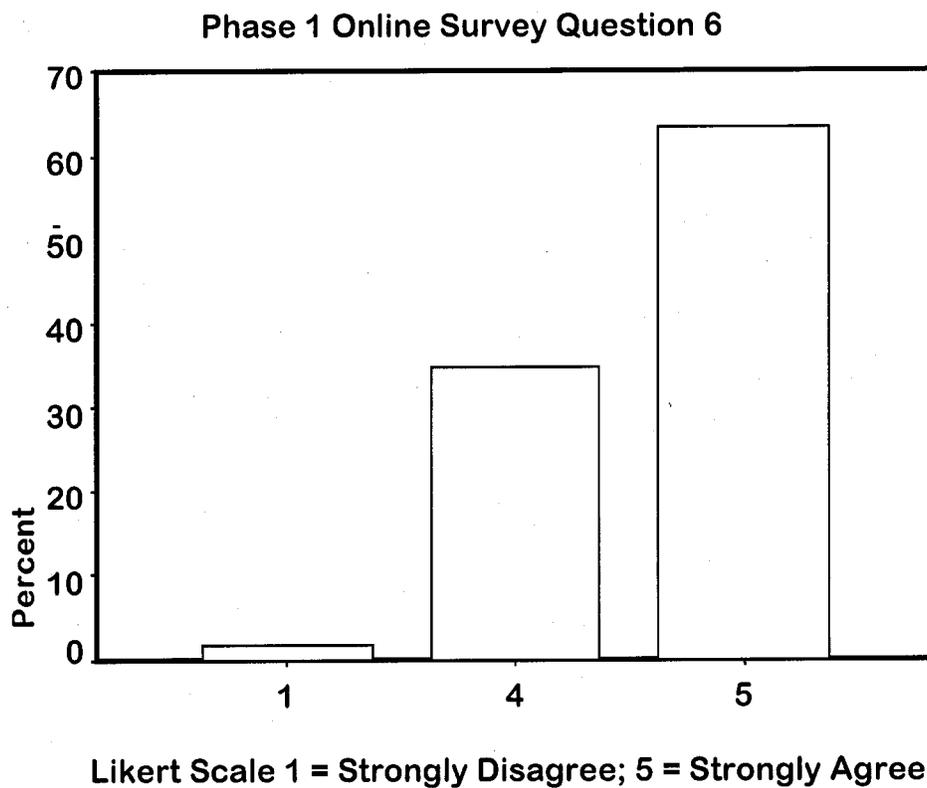
<u>Figure E-8</u>. Percentage of Illinois principals who feel that it is important that the principal asks for and seems to seriously consider the input of teachers when making instructional decisions.
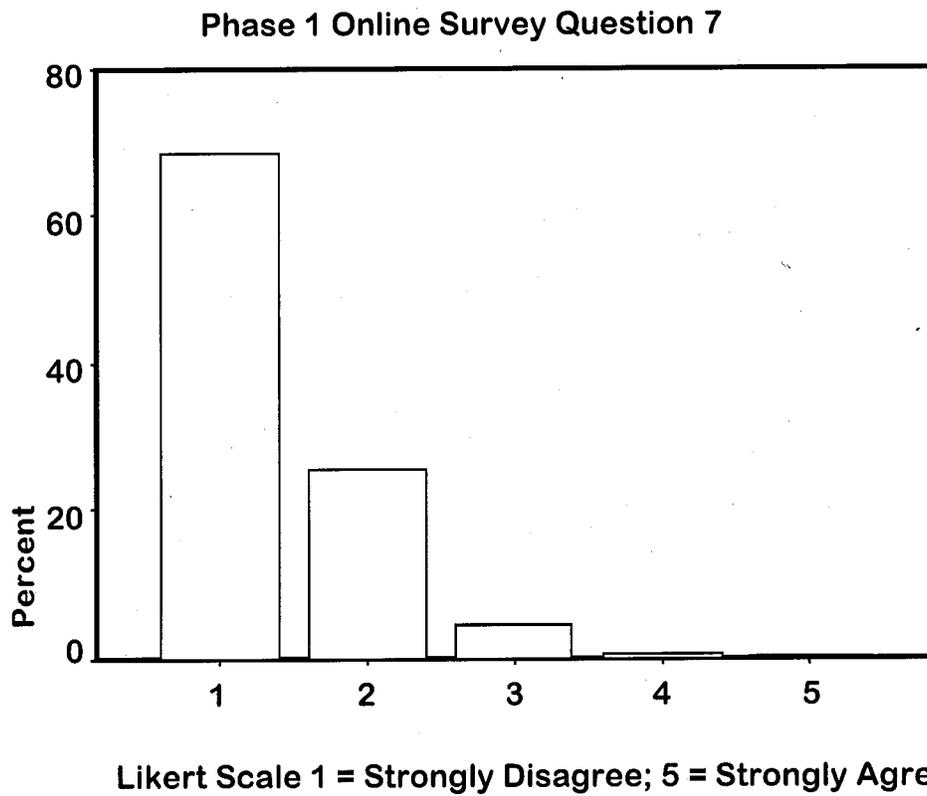
Phase 1 Online Survey Question 7

Likert Scale 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree

Figure E-9. Percentage of Illinois principals who feel that gender is a key factor in determining if a principal is more effective as an instructional leader.

Total Percent Gender Phase 1
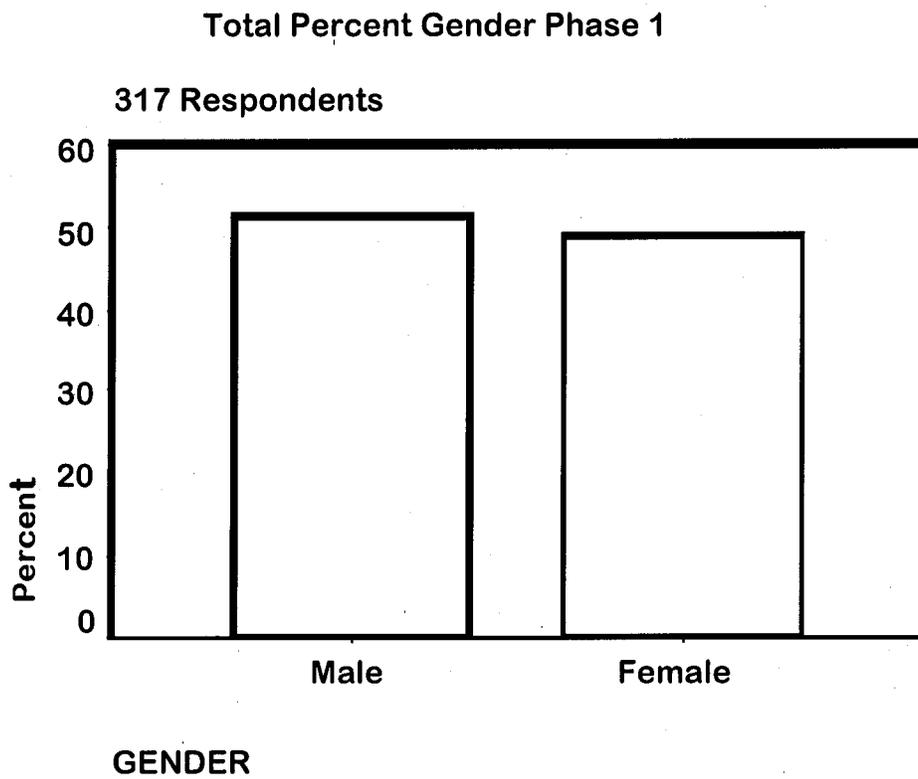
Figure E-10. Distributions of Genders in Phase I Survey Population.

Phase 1 Online Survey Question 8

Likert Scale 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree
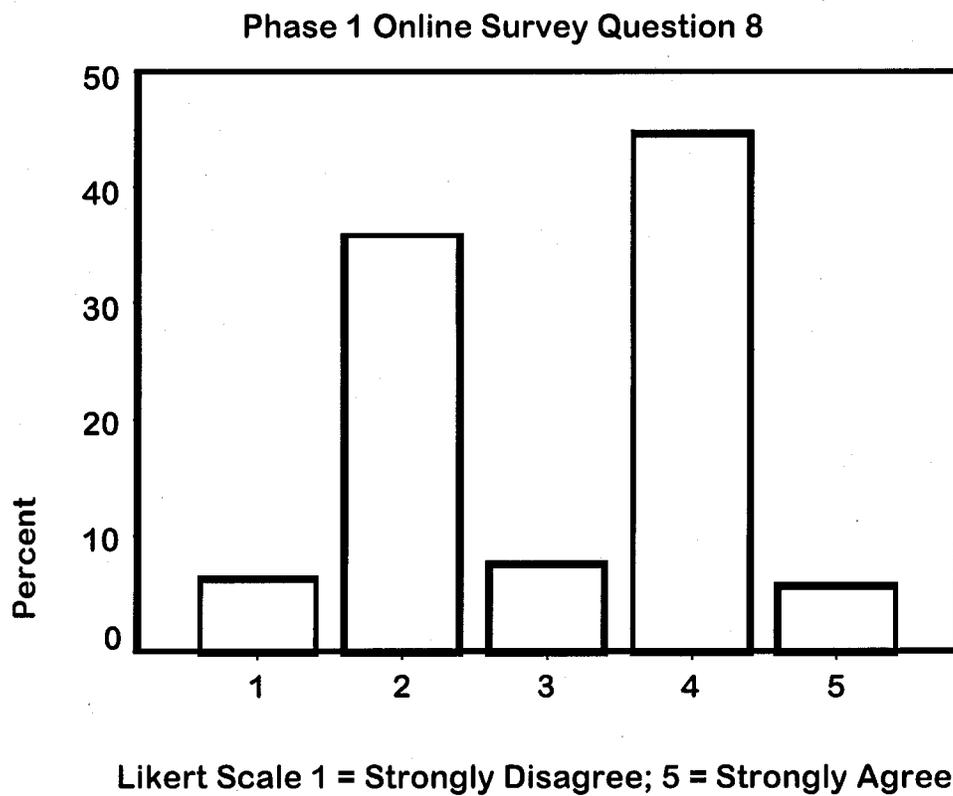
Figure E-11. Percentage of Illinois principals who feel that more years of experience as a principal make a significant difference in success as an instructional leader.
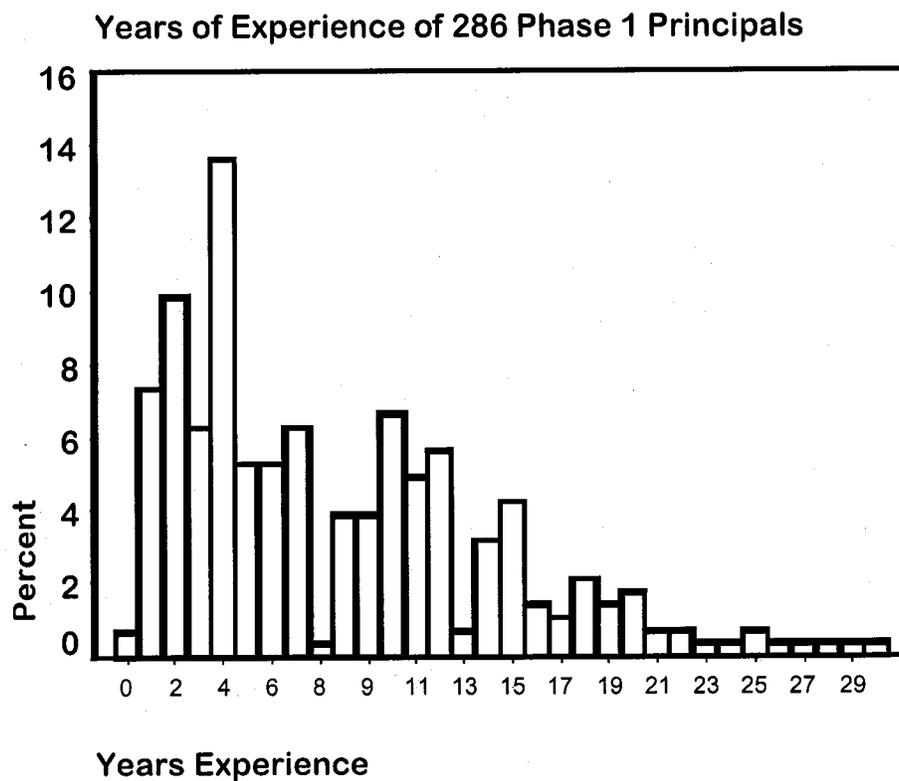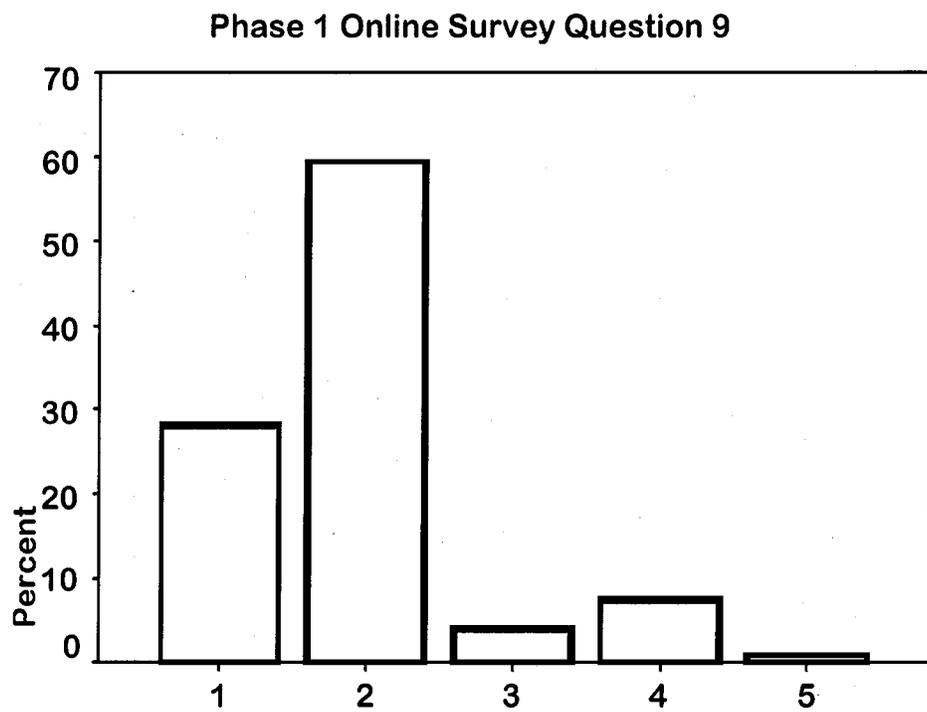
Years of Experience of 286 Phase 1 Principals

Figure E-12. Phase I principals by years of experience, from 286 Respondents.

Phase 1 Online Survey Question 9

Likert Scale 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree

Figure 13. Percentage of Illinois principals who feel that the longer they work as a principal, the more removed they become from teaching practices.
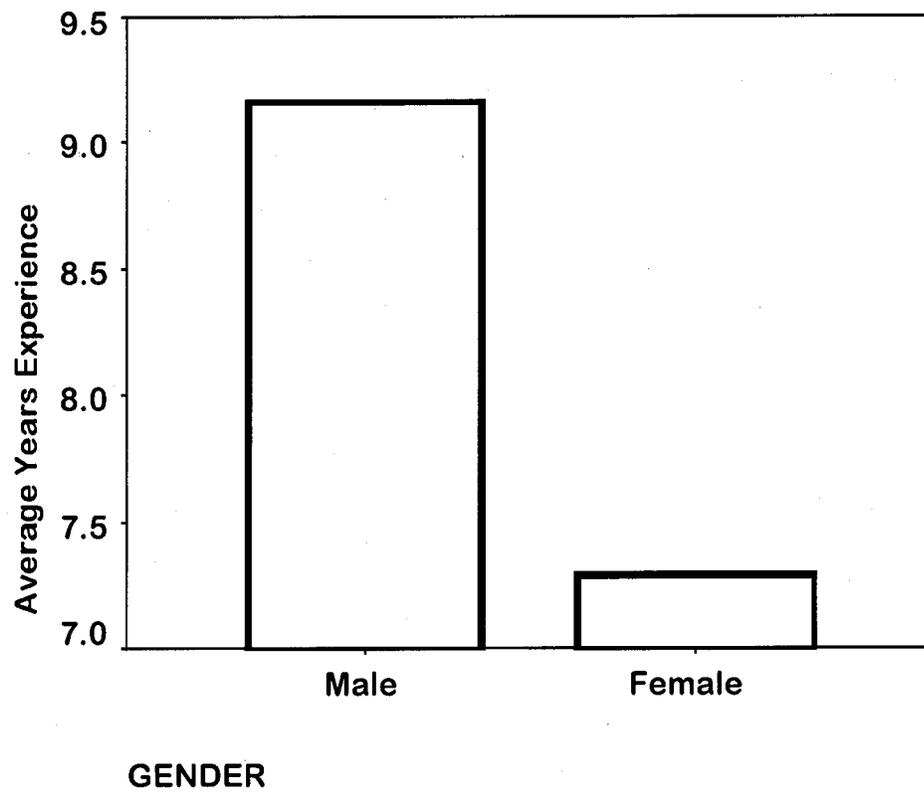
Figure E-14. Gender versus Average Years Experience, from 317 Respondents.