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Principal Emotional Intelligence and Teacher Perceptions of School Climate in Middle Schools

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The University of Southern Mississippi

PRINCIPAL EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF
SCHOOL CLIMATE IN MIDDLE SCHOOLS

by

Ashley Dawn Meadows Allred

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

August 2014

ABSTRACT

PRINCIPAL EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE IN MIDDLE SCHOOLS

by Ashley Dawn Meadows Allred

August 2014

The purpose of this study was to determine the correlational relationship of principals' emotional intelligence on the perceptions that teachers have of a school's climate. The Organizational Health Inventory for Middle Schools (OHI-M) served as the assessment for teachers' perceptions of the school climate or the overall health of the organization. Principals' emotional intelligence competencies were assessed using the Mayer Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test version 2, hereinafter referred to as the MSCEIT V.2.0. Participants of the study included 22 principals of public middle schools in Mississippi. There was an average of 45 teachers employed at each middle school.

A Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between principals' emotional intelligence competencies and teachers' perceptions of the schools' climate, as evidenced by responses to the OHI-M. A positive, statistically insignificant relationship was determined to exist between total emotional intelligence and total school climate scores. Additionally, a statistically significant positive relationship was found to exist between the principals' ability to understand emotions and the teachers' perceptions of school climate. A preponderance of the data suggests that a positive relationship between the variables exists substantiating that as a principal's emotional intelligence increases, the school climate increases. In a rapidly

changing world of public education, emotions play a vital role in the creation of the school's environment and climate. The researcher anticipated that by exposing middle school principals to the importance of their emotional impact on the school's health, they might reflect and begin to change schools into more effective places of learning.

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A Dissertation
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the current educational climate of high accountability and high expectations, effective leadership is paramount. Schools need contagious leaders who have the ability to create and foster a following, exhibit loyalty to a vision, and who have a laser-like focus on achievement. As educators prepare to implement the new Common Core curriculum, it is more pertinent than ever that leaders are able to lead, communicate, and pursue a school's vision and mission effectively. Much research exists on the characteristics of great leaders, as well as many leadership techniques (Blumberg & Greenfield, 1986; Bolman & Deal, 2002; Burns, 1978; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Manasse, 1986; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2002) wrote that the fundamental task of leaders is to prime good feelings in those that they lead, making the primal job of leadership emotional at its root. Whitaker (2003) wrote that,

The best principals probably do not have a barrister's background, nor can they assemble a Pentium 4 computer out of an old soda can. But they do lead people to accomplish the important work of schools....They adapt to change without losing sight of what really matters. (p. 4)

Specifically concerning the middle school level, Newlin's (2009) article entitled "13 Keys to Success for the Middle School Head" discussed the pressures of leadership at the middle school level. At no other time in the PK12 education spectrum are students' needs so diverse and broad than that of the middle school years. The physical, social, and emotional development of middle school students often produces an environment of

inconsistency and unpredictability. Newlin described the importance of providing encouragement, support, and collaborative coaching to middle school teachers. Styron's (2008) article, "Key Characteristics of Middle School Performance," described such healthy relationships among the staff as a way to create a healthy school climate. Great leadership cultivates a powerful climate. A healthy climate is to Hoy and Sabo (1998) a *critical* component of effective middle schools.

What characteristics set great leaders apart from the mediocre? Maddock (2012) of Forbes.com wrote an article about *setting context*. He contributed great leadership to leaders who have the ability to set the context of a situation or to reframe the way their followers view a situation. Similarly, in *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, Goleman (1998) wrote that the new yardstick for measuring success charts personal qualities such as initiative and empathy, adaptability, and persuasiveness. Edmonds and Fredericksen (1978) also studied instructionally effective environments. They reported the following specific behaviors of effective principals: cultivating an orderly climate, monitoring student progress, emphasizing quality instruction, and providing strong leadership. Focusing on the first specific behavior, effective climates are created, cultivated, and maintained by great leaders with specific attention on achieving goals. According to Goleman (1998) and other researchers, the common element among all these great leaders lies in their *emotional intelligence*.

Much literature exists concerning the far-reaching effects of emotionally intelligent leaders and effective school climates (Lees & Barnard, 1999; McDowelle & Buckner, 2002; Whitaker, 2003). If student success is a goal of educational leadership, data must be synthesized and a determination made targeting which qualities of

leadership are specifically effective in promoting academic achievement. Likewise, there were four effective specific domains of emotional intelligence targeted in this study: perceiving emotions, facilitating thought, understanding emotions, and managing emotions.

Statement of the Problem

This study specifically aimed at uncovering the branches of middle school principals' emotional intelligence that have the greatest correlational relationship with teachers' perceptions of school climate, as assessed by the Organizational Health Inventory-Middle Level (OHI-M). McDowelle and Buckner (2002) suggested that emotional intelligence could be the missing link in effective school leadership. There is a need to further un-pack emotional intelligence and investigate its relationship between leadership and school climate. Lees and Barnard (1999) provided evidence that certain emotional intelligence competencies ultimately lead to greater job satisfaction and higher student achievement. If all school boards and superintendents consistently knew exactly which characteristics to look for within potential school leaders, today's schools might begin to become much more effective and possess a more loyal following with broader academic success. The problem is that little research exists concerning the specific characteristics of emotional intelligence that have had the greatest correlational relationship with middle school climates. The researcher hoped to lessen this gap in knowledge with this study.

Research Questions

Following Daniel Goleman's (1997, 1998) research on emotional intelligence, the researcher was mainly interested in how school leaders' emotional intelligence and

abilities affect their teachers' perceptions of a school's climate. More fully understanding *how* leaders affect teachers' perceptions seems to be the key difference in success. What specific emotional intelligence characteristics and abilities do principals possess that may lead to positive climate and achievement in schools — rich environments that motivate teachers and propel students into success?

This study sought to uncover the correlational relationship of principals' emotional intelligence and the perceptions that teachers have of a school's climate. The independent variable was the principals' emotional intelligence (EQ) score (as measured by the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test). The continuous dependent variable was the OHI-M score representing the teachers' perceptions of the school climate. This study included assenting Mississippi public school districts containing middle level schools. The sample consisted of 22 middle school principals with an average of 45 teachers per school who were asked to voluntarily take the OHI-M as a measure of school climate.

For the purpose of this study, school climate measures were on a continuum of organizational health, ranging from 200 to 600. Likewise, for the purposes of this study, EQ was examined as a leader's identification. Therefore, the deduced associated research questions for this study were:

1. Is there a relationship between principals' emotional intelligence and school climate?
2. Do specific branches of emotional intelligence positively correlate with school climate?

Null Hypotheses

H1₀ – There is no correlation between principals’ total emotional intelligence and teachers’ perception of school climate.

H2₀ – There is no correlation between principals’ ability to identify emotion, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers’ perception of school climate.

H3₀ – There is no correlation between principals’ ability to use emotion to facilitate thought, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers’ perception of school climate.

H4₀ – There is no correlation between principals’ ability to understand emotion, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers’ perception of school climate.

H5₀ – There is no correlation between principals’ ability to manage emotion, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers’ perception of school climate.

Definition of Terms

1. *Emotional intelligence* – the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotion as well in ourselves and in our relationships (Goleman, 1998).

2. *Middle school* – for the purposes of this study, a middle school serves any combination of grade levels 5 through 8.

3. *Principal* – building managers tasked with adhering to district rules and carrying out regulations; leaders of learning who can develop a team delivering effective instruction (Wallace Foundation, 2013).

4. *School climate* – reflects the physical and psychological aspects of the school that are more susceptible to change and that provide the preconditions necessary for

teaching and learning to take place (Michigan State University Board of Trustees, 2004). School climate is operationally defined in this study by teacher responses to the OHI-M, and therefore on a continuum of healthiness.

Delimitations

1. Participants were delimited to middle level public school principals and teachers employed across Mississippi. Therefore, results may not be generalized to all public schools in all of Mississippi or in the United States.
2. The study variables were limited to the emotional intelligence, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, of the school principal rather than all stakeholders in the educational environment.
3. The study was delimited to public schools in Mississippi. Magnet schools, alternative schools, private schools, and detention centers were not included in this study.
4. This study was delimited to middle level schools serving any combination of grade levels 5 through 8.

Assumptions

There were assumptions made by the researcher concerning this study. There was an assumption that the self-reported responses of participants were true and accurate. Additionally, there was an assumption that the climate of a school is influenced by a shared responsibility system with other administrators.

Justification

Success in many organizations can be directly or indirectly attributed to a vision distributed effectively by leadership. The communication and implementation of a vision

is left to be implemented by leaders, and the manner and effectiveness in which the leader disseminates the vision and related information can ultimately be paramount to the organization's overall success or failure. Leadership can be complex today.

In the field of education, the role of a building principal is becoming increasingly complex (Marzano et al., 2005). The pressure from more laser-like focused accountability is on the rise while most district budgets continue to wane (DuFour & Marzano, 2011). Nevertheless, school principals are expected to lead schools in creating globally competitive 21st century students who have a laser - like focus on academic success.

Moore (2009) wrote an article for the *American Secondary Education Journal* entitled "Emotional Intelligence for School Administrators: A Priority for School Reform?" To be successful, he suggested that school leaders need to learn, develop, and demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence. Moore posited that studying this concept equips leaders to meet the needs of a staff attempting to create a common vision for their school (Moore, 2009). Emotions can be a complex and intense aspect of leading people. Emotions may be motivating, positive, driving or de-motivating, negative, and challenging, which may affect a leader's ability to consistently and effectively lead. When someone is deemed *skillful* in dealing with emotions, he or she is typically thought of as having higher emotional intelligence. Many effective leaders are skilled at knowing their own emotions and being able to identify and deal with others' emotions as well.

As many education systems move towards Common Core State Standards, school administrators' concerns should encompass more than a change in instructional methods. They should also consider the climate and the building of relationships among

stakeholders. School climate is described as the physical and psychological aspects of the school that are more susceptible to change and that provide the preconditions necessary for teaching and learning to take place (Michigan State University Board of Trustees, 2004). Essentially, a school's climate may be thought of as how stakeholders *feel* about the school itself as a whole. Whether or not teachers feel that they are in a warm and caring environment or if students feel safe, these are emotions that may be directly related to the day-to-day activities of a school. In *A Place Called School*, Goodlad (1984) referred to schools with low teacher and student satisfaction as unhealthy organisms that are not good candidates for tackling the complex task of reform. Until school environments are healthier for both students and teachers, educators cannot expect results from reform efforts (Gordon, 2013). The following figure from Gordon (2013) exemplifies the linkages between a principal's leadership and students' achievement.

The permission to use this image can be found in Appendix A.

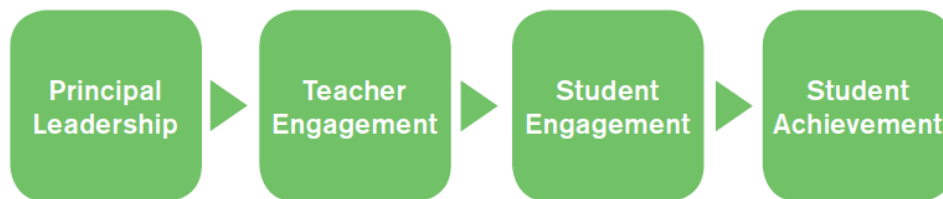


Figure 1. Linkages of principal leadership, engagement, and student achievement (Gordon, 2013). Copyright© (2013) Gallup, Inc. All rights reserved. The content is used with permission; however, Gallup retains all rights of replication.

Daniel Goleman (1997) found that not only does leadership style matter, but also the leaders' emotional intelligence significantly affects the outcome of a leader's efforts. He reported that emotional intelligence might indeed better predict potential leaders' success, as opposed to their intellectual quotient (IQ) assessment (Goleman, 1997).

Naturally, effective superintendents routinely make research-based recommendations and decisions about hiring school leaders, which has an immediate impact on schools and student learning. Goleman's research on leaders' EQ combined with research on teacher morale (Whitaker, Whitaker, & Lumpa, 2009) and school climate (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009) point to strong evidence that an emotionally intelligent leader may affect the end goal, student achievement. When the climate of a school is positive and healthy and its members possess higher than average emotional intelligence, students may achieve higher levels of success.

It starts with effective leaders and their ability to efficaciously master emotions well. The results of this research about the influence of EQ and effects on climate could effectively influence the very way school leaders are competitively groomed and selected. In today's increasingly challenging schools, litigious society, and accountability atmosphere, this is most definitely needed.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

School climate is a crucial element in student achievement (Cohen et al., 2009; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Hoy & Sabo, 1998; Styron, 2008). Leaders with high emotional intelligence (EQ) may have a prodigious impact on a school's climate. They can create a healthy environment where employee emotions are well managed and teachers are able to perform effectively, ultimately safeguarding student achievement (Blumberg & Greenfield, 1986; Goleman, 2006; Goleman et al., 2002; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008; Moore, 2009). Unfortunately, a thorough review of the literature relative to EQ and its implications with middle school principals, and specifically how teachers perceive the resulting climate, is virtually non-existent. Therefore, this warrants deeper investigation. An analysis of the EQ abilities and competencies of middle school principals and relationship to the perceptions that teachers possess regarding school climate is merited. This chapter will first explore the underlying theoretical framework on which this study is based, social behaviorism.

Social Behaviorism

Social behaviorism is a mix of situationalism and trait theory, a description of how individuals process the environment around them. The theme for this theory was set in 1900 but has gradually processed through theoretical, methodological, and institutional development (Woodward, 1982). The theory of social behaviorism can be primarily credited to Staats (1975). The central concern of the theory rests in the understanding of human learning and behaviors. With its roots in the study of Skinner's conditioning, the basic concept of the theory is that complex functional human behavior is learned. The

complexities involved with the study of human behavior have led to the creation of a theoretical framework that includes, according to Hufano (1982)

A philosophy of science, which emphasizes the importance of using concepts that are specified by observations; a basic learning theory, which interrelates the processes of classical and instrumental conditioning; a personality theory, which recognizes personality as a cause as well as an effect; and theories of emotions and motivation, language and cognition, sensory-motor skills, abnormal personality, and social interaction and attitudes. (p. 12)

The functioning of the human emotional-motivational system can be explained by the basic learning principles of social behaviorism (Hufano, 1982). The A-R-D (attitude, reinforce, discriminative) model formulated by Staats proves that the elicitation of emotional or attitudinal responses can become discriminative stimuli and reinforcers (Woodward, 1982). Based on the idea that behavior is learned, and often occurs in situations in which emotions are elicited, there becomes a need to study other theories that support the aforementioned beliefs. In order to approach those theories, an examination of the roots of psychology is necessary.

Wilhelm Wundt set up the first psychology research lab in 1879 in Germany (Weiten, 2002). Advocates of structuralism and functionalism argued over the analysis of consciousness that should be followed, but functionalism had a greater impact on psychology, fostering the emergence of behaviorism. John B. Watson, founder of behaviorism, suggested that psychology should only focus on observable behavior (Weiten, 2002). Followers of B. F. Skinner believe that personality development, where response tendencies are shaped by reinforcement, is a lifelong process (Weiten, 2002).

Albert Bandura's perspective on behavioral psychology emphasized a cognitive view, supporting the social learning theory.

Bandura believed that people's response tendencies occur because of observational learning and that self-efficacy is a major component in personality (Weiten, 2002). Walter Mischel's brand of social learning sparked debate about the relative importance of the person versus the situation. Behaviorism flourished in the 1950s under the direction of B. F. Skinner, but advocates of a humanism approach began to gain influence at that time as well (Weiten, 2002).

Researchers such as Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow took an optimistic view of the human nature, stressing humans' freedom and potential for growth. Maslow proposed that human motives are organized into a hierarchy of needs where basic needs must be met before other needs are attained. The climax of Maslow's hierarchy is self-actualization, a place where healthy personalities are marked by continued personal growth. Rogers held a person-centered theory that focused on self-concept, subjective beliefs about one's own nature (Weiten, 2002).

Other theorists also studied motivation in the 1960s. Douglas McGregor's motivation theory described two sets of propositions, X and Y, as he studied management's task. McGregor described theory X as relying on the external control of human behavior, while theory Y focuses on self-control and self-direction. This motivational task is what McGregor noted as the difference in treating people as children or as mature adults (McGregor, 2000). McGregor's work explains that leadership behavior is a reflection of the leader's assumptions concerning human behavior.

Knowles (1975) had assumptions about human behavior as well. He is linked to the term *andragogy*, a term that he used to describe the art of helping adults learn. Knowles' work and writings concerning adult learning focus on one's self-concept, experience, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation to learn. Knowles described a *pro* as someone who assumes learning to be self-directed, facilitated by a teacher, enhanced by intrinsic motivation, and occurring in a climate conducive to learning (Knowles, 1975).

Concerning learning climates, not mentioning Howard Gardner's (1999) work would be unacceptable. Gardner's work around his theory of Multiple Intelligence has had a profound impact on educationalists but has not been widely accepted among psychologists. Gardner initially proposed a list of seven intelligences. The linguistic and logical-mathematical are typically associated with school environments, while musical, bodily-kinesthetic, and spatial are associated with the arts. The final two (interpersonal and intrapersonal) are what Gardner and Goleman refer to as *personal intelligences* (Gardner, 1999; Goleman, 1998).

From Gardner's (1999) multiple intelligences to Bandura's theory of behaviorism and the social learning theory, one can conclude that much thought has gone into the study of people. Questions concerning human responses to stimuli have been posed and answered with a variety of different theories. What then can manipulate those responses, causing influence to lead others into a more desirable state? Concerning Gardner's intra- and interpersonal intelligences, Knowles' adult learning theory, McGregor's XY Theory, and the host of theorists before them, how does leadership influence human behavior?

Leadership

The volume of theory and research concerning leadership over many decades is a testimony to its prominence and individuals' efforts to understand its effect in their world (Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985). Stogdill (1974) noted, "There are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (p. 259). Lewin and Lippitt's 1938 seminal research on small group performance compared autocratic to democratic leadership, a study in the *function* of leadership during the command-control days of industry (Kaiser, McGinnis, & Overfield, 2012). Researchers at Ohio State University compared initiating structure and consideration in developing their two-factor paradigm of leader *behavior*. They took a more engaging, humanistic approach, according to Kaiser et al. (2012).

Lastly, Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) introduced the modern world to a new wave of leadership by comparing transactional and transformational styles of leadership. As seen, clearly, there are numerous definitions of leadership, but the core assumption remains that leaders affect organizational performance by inspiring, supporting, and motivating followers through influence (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Kaiser et al., 2012). The research on leadership contains trait theory, behavioral theory, power theory, situational influences on leadership, and much more. Perceptions of some of these leadership theories may be found in the following modern theories: Trait, Situational, and Transformational Leadership.

Trait Theory

The Trait Leadership theory states that leaders are born rather than made and that certain attributes of leaders are primarily the cause of their success (Northouse, 1997).

Hersey and Blanchard (1977) described traits that supposedly lead to effective leadership as transferable from one situation to another. This theory implied that one could screen leaders from non-leaders if one could discover how to measure these so-called inborn leadership traits (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). Bryman (1992) described the identified traits as physical attributes, intellectual abilities, and personality traits. The leaders' appearance (weight, height, and age) made up the physical attributes. Speech, knowledge, and intelligence were identified as intellectual abilities. Lastly, personality traits such as introversion versus extroversion, self-confidence, interpersonal relationships, and emotional control were named. In 2000, Hackman and Johnson described interpersonal, cognitive, and administrative factors as the most evident in *effective* leaders. Integrity, sensitivity, consistency, emotional stability, self-confidence, communication skills, and conflict management skills made up the interpersonal aspect to Hackman and Johnson's (2000) trait descriptor. Problem-solving, decision-making, critical thinking, and creativity are skills the cognitive factors believed to exist in the more intelligent leaders.

Finally, administrative factors include the ability to plan and organize well and the ability to perform most of the tasks described in their followers' requirements (Hackman & Johnson, 2000). Hersey and Blanchard (1977) suggested that if this theory is true, leadership training could be saved for those leaders who exhibited the inherent leadership traits and not wasted on individuals lacking these required characteristics. However, Eugene E. Jennings (1961) said, "Fifty years of study have failed to produce one personality trait or set of qualities that can be used to discriminate between leaders and non-leaders" (p. 44). Stogdill (1974) held that hundreds of studies have been

conducted using the trait theory, but little significant support of any trait that ensures a leaders' success. Hersey and Blanchard (1977) also concluded that empirical studies suggest that leadership is a dynamic process, varying from situation to situation.

Interestingly, the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, from the 1900s to the 1950s, purported that researchers moved to study the influence of *situation* on a leader's skills and behaviors when they determined that no specific trait or combination of traits fully explained the abilities of leaders (Jago, 1982; Mendez-Morse, 1992).

Situational Leadership

Northouse (1997) criticized the Trait theory for failing to consider the situation in which the leader functions, limiting its applications. Lippitt (1969) stated, "Leadership must be flexible in style to meet the need of a particular situation" (p. 2). The focal point shifted from a leader's traits to a style and behavior focus between the 1900s and 1950s. The primary focus of the shift was an attempt to better determine leadership behaviors that increased the effectiveness of followers (Yukl, 1989).

The Personnel Research Board at Ohio State University led the attempt to understand the effects of *behavior* in leadership (Stogdill, 1974). The Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) was developed by these researchers and used to survey military leaders as a way to discover the most effective officers in the military (Stogdill, 1974). The LBDQ is known for introducing two dimensions of leadership (consideration and initiation of structure or task orientation) that continue to be a constant in leadership studies. The two clusters of questions that comprise the survey measure leaders' ability to initiate structure and exhibit individualized consideration with team members (Bryman, 1992). Schimmoeller (2006) stated that high ratings for structure and

consideration are positively correlated with team member job satisfaction and organization performance. Bryman (1992) claimed that once the behaviors of effective leaders were defined, leaders could be trained in these areas, thus increasing the overall effectiveness of their roles. The idea that leaders could be mentored was a critical shift from the early trait theory of leadership, which assumed leaders were born and not made. Professional development practices were also affected by this theory (Hackman & Johnson, 2000).

In the 1960s, leadership studies shifted once again. Stogdill (1974) described this shift as one including conversations of leaders who were either task-oriented or relationship-oriented, the amount of power exhibited, and the structure of situations. Researchers during the 1960s began to see the importance of examining more than the leaders' behavior, but rather including also the setting in which their leadership behaviors are exhibited (Yukl, 1989).

After research disproved the *one* best way search for the optimal leadership style, Smith and Peterson (1988) described contingency theories to remain at the forefront of leadership study. Contingency theories deal with the leaders' behaviors *in* the situation or setting in which they function (Martin, 2010). "Contingency is used to describe this style because the leader's effectiveness is contingent on the setting" (Schimmoeller, 2006, p. 33). Fielder's theory claims that certain styles of leadership will be effective in different situations (Fielder, 1964). Fielder identified two leadership styles: task-oriented and relationship-oriented. He described task-oriented leaders as focused on the achievement of group goals and relationship-oriented leaders as more concerned with

long-term effectiveness and strong interpersonal relationships (Bass & Bass, 2008; Fielder, 1964; Stogdill, 1974; Yukl, 2006).

Fielder hypothesized that studying leaders must include studying the situation in which they function (Fielder, 1964; Schimmoeller, 2006). The best known of the contingency theories, Fiedler's Contingency Model, describes three factors that determine the influence that leaders have over followers: leader-member relations, task-structure, and position power (Northouse, 1997; Rowland, 2008). Hackman and Johnson (2000) and Fiedler (1964) insisted that the leader-member relations refer to the relationship, the level of trust and affection, loyalty, and respect that the leader and members have for each other. According to Hackman and Johnson (2000), task structure refers to the flexibility or lack of flexibility in how a follower performs a task. Structure depends upon clearly stated requirements, how the task is to be accomplished, and clear results that define the success of the efforts (Fiedler, 1964). Fiedler (1964) defined position power as a leader's ability to reward or punish team members. A leader with high position power will have greater influence over the follower (Northouse, 1997; Rowland, 2008).

It is important to note here the impact of the power theory on various other theories of leadership study. Yukl (1989) described the difference in positional power and personal power, where positional power is bestowed upon a leader with authority and personal power is won by earning trust. Bass (1985) described personal power to be very effective for charismatic leaders. He observed that effective leaders depend on personal power more than positional power, although leaders may use both in varying situations.

Fielder (1964) noted that the level of success achieved by leaders depends on the situation in which they are operating and how their style of leadership fits the situation.

House's (1971) Path-Goal theory is a contingency theory that proposes effective leadership to be contingent on the leader adopting a particular style of behavior to match the needs to the subordinate and the situation in which they are working (House, 1971, as cited in Martin, 2010). Rowland (2008) described House's theory as an intersection of the follower's needs, abilities, values, and personality, with the structure and clarity of the task. Hackman and Johnson (2000) emphasized that the leaders must take into account the follower's experience, skill, confidence, and commitment in comparison to the structure of the task in order to determine the proper communication approach in each situation.

Continuing with leader communication, Hersey and Blanchard's (1977) Situational Leadership looks at the readiness level of followers (Rowland, 2008). This theory is described as one focused on observed behavior as opposed to an inborn or acquired ability for leadership. "The emphasis is on the behavior of the leaders and their group members (followers) and various situations" (p. 89). Hersey and Blanchard (1977) described follower readiness as a combination of their skill and motivation. Unskilled or unmotivated followers (low readiness) require the leader to use the *telling* form of communication. Telling is described as providing specific instructions followed by close supervision. Given a willing but unskilled follower, leaders must use a *selling* approach to leadership, explaining and then providing an opportunity for clarification. A skilled follower with low motivation needs a leader to use the *participating* approach, getting the follower involved in the decision making in order to build motivation. Finally, high skill

coupled with high motivation calls for a *delegating* leader who provides the follower with responsibility to make and implement decisions (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Hackman & Johnson, 2000; Rowland, 2008).

Consistent with Hersey and Blanchard's (1977) claim, research shows that most people can increase their leadership effectiveness through education, training, and development (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Leslie, 2009). Furthermore, models can now be developed to help leaders make predictions about appropriate leader behavior in certain situations by measuring the frequency or infrequency of leader behaviors in the situations (Jago, 1982; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977).

Transformational Theory

In James MacGregor Burns' *Leadership* (1978), leadership is described as one of the most observed yet least understood phenomena on earth. In this work, Burns focused his efforts on two types of leadership: transactional and transformational. Burns described research by V.O. Key, Jr. in the 1940s. In Key's attempt to interpret what constitutes democracy, a missing piece of the puzzle was described as the role and behavior of leaders and activists. The key to this lies in the transactional theory of the relationship of leader and follower (Burns, 1978). It is compared to exchanging gratifications in a political marketplace. Much like the exchange theory of sociology, the transactional theory of leadership provides for a communication with followers that elicit an arousal, response, or presumed follower motivations. Transformational leadership seeks to reach the needs of the follower, but it also extends to the higher level needs through empowerment and inspiration (Rowland, 2008).

Burns (1978) defined transformational leadership as one that elevates, mobilizes, inspires, and uplifts followers. He stated that by satisfying subordinates' needs and wants, leaders exert influence on their followers. Bass (1985) described transformational leaders as important agents of change. This leadership style is defined based on its outcomes — transforming values and priorities of followers while motivating them to perform beyond their expectations (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007; Yukl, 1998). Northouse (1997) described it as a process that changes and transforms individuals.

Howell and Avolio (1993) noted that transformational leaders have a vision for the organization and they project that vision onto the members of the organization. “The overriding element of successful leadership is to involve people in the process of leading” (Horan, 1999, p. 21). Rowland (2008) wrote that transformational leadership is about getting everyone involved in the decision making. A defining factor of transformational leadership is that importance is placed on taking risks and creatively solving problems through the solicitation of group members (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003). Transformational leaders are not constrained by the boundaries or rules of an organization, but rather change or align the organization to accommodate their vision (Howell & Avolio, 1993).

Transformational Leadership theories contain the following five common leader characteristics: creative, interactive, visionary, empowering, and passionate (Hackman & Johnson, 2000). Kouzes and Posner (2002) listed five practices of exemplary leaders: model the way (interactive), inspire a shared vision (visionary), challenge the process (creative), enable others to act (empowering), and encourage the heart (passionate) (Rowland, 2008). Other researchers have paralleled those thoughts with the described

characteristics of transformational leaders: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Sivanathan & Fekken, 2002).

Idealized influence. Idealized influence includes leaders' charisma, or their ability to generate strong emotions in followers, and is considered the most important of the four characteristics of transformational leaders (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999). Charismatic leaders are confident in themselves and hold a strong conviction in their beliefs, evoking passion in their followers (Bass, 1985). They many times place the team's needs before their own, and they guide the organizational culture into the change envisioned (Bass et al., 2003). Bass (1985) suggested that charismatic leadership strongly influences followers, thus positively influencing organizational performance. This ability to influence is due largely in part to the charisma exhibited by the leader (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Ehrhart and Klein's (2001) review of literature concerning charismatic leadership found four behaviors repeatedly referred to as *charismatic*: (a) communicating high performance expectations, (b) exhibiting confidence in followers' ability to reach goals, (c) taking calculated risks, and (d) articulating a value-based vision of the future (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007). Accumulated evidence points to transformational and charismatic leadership as influential modes of leadership that are associated with high levels of individual and organizational performance (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002; Kark & Van Dijk, 2007; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

Goleman (1998) described charismatic leaders as being able to control their emotions as well as understand the emotions of the team, displaying an idea termed *emotional intelligence*. Using this knowledge, leaders have the ability to mold and

influence a team. Teams react with high self-esteem and motivation when their leaders understand and have high confidence and high expectations concerning the success of the group's goals (Bass, 1985). Research by Conger and Kanungo (1987), as well as Yukl (1989) also determined that charismatic leadership behaviors have been found to be associated with effective follower performance and positive follower attitudes. Bass (1985) also warned, however, that while charisma is a vital part of transformational leadership, it is not enough to drive the transformation process alone.

Inspirational motivation. Bass's description of inspirational leadership has evolved since his 1985 writings. Originally, he categorized inspirational motivation as a sub-component of charismatic leadership where leaders inspired organizational members through model behaviors. His description later changed to describe a situation in which a leader uses symbols to focus the subordinates, communicate a clear vision, as well as to emphasize the urgency of the situation on the members (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

Inspirational motivation can also be described as the creation and presentation of an attractive vision of the future, the use of symbols and emotional arguments, and the demonstration of optimism and enthusiasm (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007; Bass & Avolio, 1994). Bass and Avolio (1993) reported that workers are often inspired by meaningful and challenging tasks and not solely by extrinsic rewards (Schimoeller, 2006). When leaders communicate a clear vision to the organization's members, they eliminate doubt and conflicts over differing goals and expand their efforts to achieve the full vision. Workers are motivated to exceed normal levels of performance when they are given challenging tasks and a sense of higher purpose (Bass et al., 2003). Bass (1990) used inspiration to describe these techniques.

It is important to note that Bass amended the 4I's of transformational leadership in his later writings. Due to idealized influence (including charisma) and inspirational leadership not being empirically distinguishable, Bass combined the ideas (Avolio et al., 1999).

Intellectual stimulation. Burns (1978) described a transformational leader as being an intellectual. Intellectual leaders, according to Burns, deal with the analytical and normative ideas, bringing both to bear on their environment. Bass (1985) suggested that leaders use intellectual stimulation to teach followers and to attempt to improve organizational results. Bass et al. (2003) described this motivation as engaging workers' minds by soliciting their creative ideas. Bass et al. (2003) reported that this mind engagement makes a positive impact on the performance of the team, and Parry (2002) added that in supporting and encouraging innovation and creativeness, transformational leaders make opportunities out of threatening challenges. Charisma and intellectual stimulation often display similar characteristics (Bass, 1985); therefore, a leader's ability to communicate and implement a vision provides intellectual stimulation to the members and is an important characteristic of a transformational leader (Schimmoeller, 2006).

Individualized consideration. The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory shares similar characteristics of the individualized consideration component of the transformational leadership theory (Bryman, 1992). Bass (1985) described individualized consideration as acknowledging team members' differences and treating them according to those differences while the entire team is treated equitably. Team members' needs are addressed individually, providing them with the feeling as though

they have a personal relationship with the leader, which includes an element of trust (Hackman & Johnson, 2009).

Similar to the Situational Leadership techniques, which includes appropriately modifying the leadership style to fit the situation, individualized consideration requires an adjustment to the supervision component of leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). A certain level of autonomy and responsibility is given to more experienced employees, while the less skilled are given closer supervision (Bass et al., 2003). By coaching and mentoring, the leader can effectively aid in the development of skills and abilities of employees, thus increasing the organization's effectiveness. These development activities include but are not limited to delegation, informal communication, and mentoring. Individual consideration augments employees' capabilities, trust, and respect for the leader, thus enhancing the leader's influence over the organization (Bryman, 1992).

The transformational leadership characteristics of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration are heavily linked with Daniel Goleman's theory of emotional intelligence (Barling, Slater, & Kelloway, 2000). Emotional Intelligence has gained great prominence in the study of its relationship with leadership effectiveness. By understanding one's own emotions, managing and controlling these emotions, as well as understanding the emotions of others, research shows that leaders can have great influence on an organization's success (Goleman, 1997; Goleman et al., 2002).

School Leadership

The U.S. Census Bureau (2009) has provided statistical information concerning the financial success that education has the potential to provide to learners. The average annual earnings of workers increased with each chapter of their academic careers. Marzano et al. (2005) described schools as the “launch pad” to this success, and they suggested that such starting points must be effective (p. 3). The effectiveness of a school has the potential to increase or decrease a student’s chance of academic success (Marzano et al., 2005). Marzano (2003) described effective schools as having a 44% difference in their expected passage rate. For example, given a test with an expected passage rate of 50%, an *effective* school will pass 72% and fail 28% of the time. Contrarily, an *ineffective* school will only pass 28%, failing 72%. This 44% gap widens when considering the difference in *highly* effective and *highly* ineffective schools (Marzano et al., 2005).

In *School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results*, Marzano et al. (2005) explored the impact that leadership has on schools. These authors highlighted a few of the aspects of education that have been linked to school leadership:

- Whether a school has a clear mission and goals (Bamburg & Andrews, 1990; Duke, 1982).
- The overall climate of the school and the climate in individual classrooms (Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer, & Wisenbaker, 1979; Brookover et al., 1978; Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Griffith, 2000; Villani, 1996).
- The attitudes of teachers (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Oakes, 1989; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Rutter, Maughan, Morimore, & Ouston, 1979).

- The classroom practices of teachers (Brookover et al., 1978; Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; McDill, Rigsby, & Meyers, 1969; Miller & Sayre, 1986).
- The organization of curriculum and instruction (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982; Cohen & Miller, 1980; Eberts & Stone, 1988; Glasman & Binianimov, 1981; Oakes, 1989).
- Students' opportunity to learn (Duke & Canady, 1991; Dwyer, 1986; Murphy & Hallinger, 1989). (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 5)

Additionally, Marzano et al. (2005) included a 1977 U.S. Senate Committee Report on Equal Educational Opportunity (U.S. Congress, 1970) that highlighted the principal as the most influential person in a school.

In many ways the school principal is the most important and influential individual in any school. He or she is the person responsible for all activities that occur in and around the school building. The principal's leadership sets the tone of the school. The principal's leadership sets the climate for teaching, the level of professionalism and morale of teachers. The principal's leadership also plays a role in the degree of concern students have for what they may or may not become. The principal is the main link between the community and the school, and the way he or she performs in this capacity largely determines the attitudes of parents and students about the school. If a school is a vibrant, innovative, child-centered place, if it has a reputation for excellence in teaching, if students are performing to the best of their ability, one can almost always point to the principal's leadership as the key to success. (p. 56)

The idea that the principal is a powerful source of influence within a school is well-supported (Blasé & Blasé, 1999; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Marzano et al., 2005). The study by Blasé and Blasé (1999) assumed that the impact achieved by principals on school outcomes such as student achievement derives, in part, from the principals' interaction with and influence on teachers, an assumption supported by research on transformational leadership (Bass, 1985) and emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1997). Leithwood et al. (2004) examined both qualitative and quantitative research concerning school leadership and determined that classroom instruction is the only stronger influence on direct or indirect school-related student achievement, a study that supports leadership impact research by Reeves (2011), Marzano et al. (2005), and Hattie (2009).

Changing Role of the Principalship

The 2002 *No Child Left Behind Act*, signed into legislation during the administration of President George W. Bush, changed the environment of education to one of critical accountability (Pepper, 2010). The goals of this act were to close the achievement gap and raise academic proficiency levels through heightened accountability, research-based education programs, increased parental options, and expanded local control and flexibility (Pepper, 2010). Critics such as Popham (2001) suggested that the high-stakes educational environment that has manifested because of *No Child Left Behind* has created a less than favorable situation for the stakeholders of education. Pepper (2010) posited that it is in this environment that principals face the challenge of meeting the expectations set forth by *No Child Left Behind* while simultaneously maintaining high expectations for teaching and learning.

Under the accountability system introduced by *No Child Left Behind*, many states have lowered their standards in order to avoid the law's escalating punitive elements (Mathis, 2010; U. S. Department of Education, 2010). A lack of correlation in scores reported by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and states' determinations of proficient is believed to be the result of lowered standards (Mathis, 2010). As a result, the Obama administration reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, applauding, encouraging, and incentivizing the work of the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers in developing proposed common core standards in reading and math (Mathis, 2010). A joint action brief by Achieve, College Summit, NASSP, and NAESP (2013) entitled *Implementing the Common Core State Standards: The Role of the Elementary School Leader* emphasized the need for assistance for principals to understand the requirements in curricula, and the need for professional development resources in order to provide input in assessment decisions. The understanding and leadership of principals is essential to the success of the CCSS as an attempt is made to place every student on a pathway to college and career readiness. Pepper (2010) wrote, "Never before has a school principal's job been more important and never before has the job been more difficult" (p. 43).

Middle School Principals

Newlin (2009) penned an article in *Independent School* in which he described students' developmental, physical, social, and emotional needs as the broadest during the middle years. Caskey and Anfara (2007) described middle level leadership as serving a distinct population of students undergoing immense physical and physiological growth,

maturation, puberty, and brain development. This period in education is unmatched, presenting occupational challenges not experienced by elementary and high school educators.

The middle school level is crucial in that it is there that students begin to lose ground in fundamental subject areas such as mathematics and language arts (Yecke, 2005). The National Assessment of Education Progress indicated, in their comparison to elementary schools, that the middle level is where most states see a decline in proficiency. A strong predictor of high school success, achievement in the major academic areas in the middle school level, is paramount.

The middle level education has been the focus of the longest running, most extensive educational reform movement in the United States (Clark & Clark, 1994; Juvonen, Le, Kaganoff, Augustine, & Constant, 2004). On the other hand, Jackson and Davis (2000) wrote, “one of the most consistent findings in educational research is that high-achieving schools have strong, competent leaders” (p. 156). “No single individual is more important to initiating and sustaining improvement in middle grade school students’ performance than the school principal” (Jackson & Davis, 2000, p. 157).

The National Study of Leadership in Middle Level Schools by NASSP (Valentine, Clark, Hackmann, & Petzko, 2002) reported that the 21st century middle school leader must be a transformational leader, the primary change agent, an expert in teaching and learning, and an engager of collaborative leadership and decision-making (Clark & Clark, 1994; Jackson & Davis, 2000). In light of heavy educational reform, these leaders must maintain an environment conducive to continual improvement, while practicing strong commitment to the school’s vision (Clark & Clark, 2000; Leithwood &

Jantzi, 1990). Knab (2009) speculated that effective middle school principals need to promote a collaborative culture, praise and recognize staff, be effective communicators, and be focused on relationship-building. Knab's (2009) research focused on the relationship building aspect of an effective middle level principal, reporting that these leaders intentionally focus on building teacher-teacher and teacher-student relationships.

Mississippi Principals

Work began in 1994 to strengthen school leadership in hopes of improving schools and increasing the achievement of Mississippi students (Mississippi Department of Education, 2012). A publication entitled *Comprehensive Overview of Mississippi Principal Evaluation System* reported that gains in leadership quality could be achieved if more attention is given to the evaluation of school administrators (MDE, 2013). The 2013 Mississippi Principal Evaluation System Process Manual describes the Mississippi Principal Evaluation System (MPES) as designed to fulfill federal requirements as well as conform to the Mississippi Standards for School Leaders. Endorsed by the Mississippi Board of Education, the new evaluation system “requires principals to maintain high levels of academic success for every student through the fostering of school and community climates that value effective teaching and student learning” (p. 3). The guiding principles on which this evaluation system is based are clustered into three categories (MDE, 2013):

Foundational Principles

- Highlight learning-centered leadership
- Be grounded on the Mississippi Standards for School Leaders

Process Principles

- Be evidence based
- Have set benchmarks agreed upon in advance
- Be transparent
- Foster a culture of collaboration between the principal and supervisor
- Be valid and reliable
- Be comprehensive but not overly complex
- Be both formative and summative
- Include multiple measures, including student achievement
- Tap into the views of multiple constituents
- Have well-defined timelines
- Provide ongoing feedback to the principal
- Be site specific, connected to the needs of the specific school
- Be flexible enough to allow for adjustments

Outcome Principles

- Promote school improvement
- Enhance academic and social learning of students
- Motivate principals to improve
- Promote targeted professional growth opportunities
- Result in meaningful consequences (MDE, 2013)

The Mississippi Principal Evaluation System 2013 Process Manual (MDE, 2013) describes the prime directive of the new evaluation system as everyone adhering to the guiding principles set forth. In order to obtain multiple data sources in evaluating a

principal's performance, teachers, principals, and principals' supervisors will participate in the system (p. 3).

Goldring, Cravens, Murphy, Porter, Elliott, and Carson (2009) wrote, "Although the rhetoric about changing schools is hardly new, never before has the effectiveness of school been monitored so closely and measured by quantifiable standards across schools, districts, and states" (p. 20). The stakes are high in the accountability-driven environment of the American public school today, and leadership behaviors can lead to changes in school performance, which in turn leads to student success (Goldring et.al, 2009). Gordon (2013) posited, "Without a great workplace for teachers, we will never build a great learning place for students" (p. 3).

The Wallace Foundation recently released the results of a 6-year study of school leadership. The study concluded that a leader's influence on student learning came primarily by way of affecting the teachers' motivations and working conditions (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson, 2010). The authors went on to say that in comparison, the leader's influence on teachers' knowledge and skills has far less an effect on student learning (Louis et al., 2010). Pepper's (2010) article in *Planning and Changing* suggested that the "principal's influence with teachers, students, and staff members is a fundamental element in providing the school climate and quality instruction needed to reach the goals set in No Child Left Behind" (p. 45).

School Climate

Orpinas and Horne (2006) conjectured that the environment where people spend significant amounts of their time has a profound effect on their psyche and behavior. In their book *Bullying Prevention: Creating a Positive School Climate and Developing*

Social Competence, the authors described an organization's climate as being a result of the values, communication and management styles, rules and regulations, ethical practices, reinforcement of caring behaviors, support for academic excellence, and characteristics of the physical environment (Orpinas & Horne, 2006). The National School Climate Center, NSCC (2012), described school climate as the quality and character of school life. The center suggests that the development of a school's climate is based on a pattern of experiences by students, parents, and school personnel and is reflective of the schools' norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures (NSCC, 2012). According to Tagiuri (1968), "a particular configuration of enduring characteristics of ecology, milieu, social system, and culture would constitute a climate, much as a particular configuration of personal characteristics constitute a personality" (p. 23). Various researchers in a plethora of fashions have extensively described the concept, but in the current study, the focus is on teachers' *perceptions* of school climate. Turner and Patrick (2008) maintained that individuals do not interpret contexts in identical ways; therefore, it is important to attend to the participants' perception of situations. However, a brief history of the study of school climate is relevant.

The National School Climate Center claims that educators have appreciated the importance of school climate for almost 100 years, dating back to 1908 when Perry was the first educational leader to write about the effects of school climate on student learning (NSCC, 2012). Empirical research began when Haplin and Croft (1963) contributed greatly to school climate-related literature by defining the organizational climate of a school as its *personality*, suggesting that its development was a result of the interactions

among teachers and between the principal and teachers (Haplin & Croft, 1963; as cited in NSCC, 2012).

The term *total environmental quality* became a buzzword among early climate researchers such as Taguiri (1968) as referenced in Owens (1995), Moos (1974), and Anderson (1982). Moos's model differed from Taguiri's in that Moos's emphasis was placed on the human interaction dimension of the environment (Moos, 1974). In 1986, Hoy and Clover defined a school's climate based on the teachers' perceptions of their work environment, a definition supporting Turner and Patrick's (2008) perception-based description. Hoy and Clover (1986) went on to describe the principal's influence on both formal and informal aspects of the school, indicating that teachers' perceptions of the school climate are largely influenced by the principal's actions. Parsons' (1951) work focuses on the interpersonal relationships in an organization and posits that positive student, teacher, and administrator interrelationships characterize a healthy school climate (Sweetland & Hoy, 2000).

In 1986, Hoy and Forsyth teamed up to identify the principal's communication style with teachers as a key element in the school's climate. Three categories of principal-teacher interactions were identified: (a) supportive, (b) directive, and (c) restrictive. The authors described supportive behaviors as the principal displaying genuine concern for the teachers. Directive behavior is the principal showing little consideration for personal needs of teachers, and restrictive behavior is when the principal hindered rather than facilitated the work of teachers by creating barriers to goal accomplishment (Hoy & Forsyth, 1986).

In 1991, Hoy, Tarter, and Kottkamp authored a book entitled *Open Schools/Healthy Schools* based on the concept of organizational climate. These authors' views supported Moos's 1974 model by indicating interpersonal relationships between the building principals and the teachers in the school as being directly associated with the perceived climate of the organization (Hoy et al., 1991; Moos, 1974). The emphasis on the openness of interpersonal interactions may also be described in terms of the *health* of the organization, according to Hoy and Sabo (1998). These authors proposed that schools described as open are also described as healthy. While openness and health are different concepts, the necessity of positive interactions are vital to both descriptions (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). The National School Climate Center posited this thought:

Research has identified many elements, or *dimensions* that make up school climate, ranging from the size of the school to noise levels in hallways and cafeterias, from the physical structure of the building to the physical comfort levels (involving such factors as heating, cooling, and lighting) of the individuals and how safe they feel, from opportunities for student-teacher interaction, the quality of interactions in the teachers' lounge to a range of interpersonal and instructional dimensions of school life. (NSCC, 2012)

In their *Review of School Climate Research*, Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, and Higgins-D'Alessandro (2013) addressed five essential areas of focus referred to as the five dimensions of school climate. The five dimensions deemed appropriate through extensive study of past research were: (a) safety, (b) relationships, (c) teaching and learning, (d) institutional environment, and (e) school improvement process (Thapa et al., 2013). Cohen et al. (2009) cited Cohen (2006) as well as Freiberg (1999) when

describing a varied set of aspects, or dimensions, that shape and form a school's climate. The four essential elements explored by Cohen et al. (2009) varied only slightly from the five dimensions described by Thapa et al. (2013) in that the school improvement process dimension was non-existent. It must be noted that school climate effects and the conditions that create climates are highly interconnected and that one dimension may relate to other dimensions as well (Thapa et al., 2013). The scope of this study, however, focused on the *relationship* dimension of a school's perceived climate, which in turn leads to the discussion of organizational health. Organizational health, as defined by institutional integrity, collegial leadership, consideration, principal influence, resource support, teacher affiliation, and academic emphasis, is another (Hoy, 2013).

Unhealthy School Climates

Hoy and Tarter (1997) described unhealthy schools as those whose mission and goals deviate due to parental and public demands. They describe these schools as having ineffective leadership, unhappy teachers, unmotivated students, and a lack of academic achievement.

Power of Positive Climate

As cited in Thapa et al. (2013), The National School Climate Council (2007) recommends that a *positive and sustained school climate* be defined in the following way:

A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributive, and satisfying life in a democratic society. This climate includes norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe. People are engaged and

respected. Students, families and educators work together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared school vision. Educators model and nurture an attitude that emphasizes the benefits of, and satisfaction from, learning. Each person contributes to the operations of the school as well as the care of the physical environment. (p. 4)

Similarly, Hoy and Sabo (1998) defined a healthy middle school:

One in which the technical, managerial, and institutional levels are in harmony and the school is meeting its basic needs as it successfully copes with disruptive external forces and directs its energies toward its mission. In healthy schools, students, teachers, administrators, and the community work together cooperatively and constructively. (p. 56)

Healthy organizations exhibit healthy interpersonal relationships, which in turn build trust among colleagues. The opposite is also true in that trust facilitates the development of a healthy organization or climate (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). Findings by Cohen et al. (2009) showed that academic achievement, school success, effective violence prevention, students' healthy development, and teacher retention are related to and/or predicted by a positive school climate. Cohen et al. (2009) provided a brief review of literature supporting positive effects of a positive school climate:

- Students' self-esteem (Hoge, Smit, & Hanson, 1990).
- Student self-concept (Cairns, 1987; Heal, 1978; Reynolds, Jones, St. Leger, & Murgatroyd, 1980; Rutter et al., 1979).
- Significantly lower levels of absenteeism (deJung & Duckworth, 1986; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Reid, 1982; Rumberger, 1987; Sommer, 1985).

- Predictive of rate of student suspension (Wu, Pink, Crain, & Moles, 1982).
- Linked to effective risk prevention and health promotion efforts, as well as teaching and learning (Cohen, 2001; Juvonen et al., 2004; Najaka, Gottfredson, & Wilson, 2002; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1993).
- Greater attachment to school (Blum, McNeely, & Rinehart, 2002; Osterman, 2000).
- School connectedness as a predictor of adolescent health and academic outcomes (McNeely, Nonnemaker, & Blum, 2002; Shochet, Dadds, Ham, & Montague, 2006; Whitlock, 2006).
- Violence prevention (Karcher, 2002a, 2002b).
- A protective factor in risky sexual, violence, and drug use behaviors (Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterie, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004; Kirby, 2001).
- Promotes meaningful student learning and motivation to learn (Eccles et al., 1993; Goodenow & Crady, 1997). (pp. 184-185)

This list of research by Cohen et al. (2009) is supported by their claim that when “students feel safe, cared for, appropriately supported, and lovingly ‘pushed’ to learn, academic achievement should increase” (p. 186). Research by Heck (2000) and Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy (2000) further supported the notion that school climate may be the most important aspect to a successful school. Although dated, Hoyle, English, and Steffy (1985) postulated that a positive school climate is a requirement for academic achievement. “Just as with the openness of school climate, school health seems crucial for effective and productive long-term relationships” (Hoy & Sabo, 1998, p. 75).

While research is still unclear, Cohen et al. (2009) suggested that the exact effect a positive school climate has on a school may be a more laser-like focus on students' needs for development and learning as well as what teachers need to teach. There are clearly multiple forces and complex situations occurring in school buildings and therefore much more to learn concerning the effects of school climate; but it is unequivocally clear that a healthy climate matters (Cohen et al., 2009). The emergence of a positive climate in some schools and not in others leaves researchers questioning the *secret* behind the atmosphere of trust, shared vision, health, and openness. Price (2012) said that there is theoretical reason to believe that interpersonal relationships between principals and their teachers influence the attitudes that ultimately define the school climate.

Teachers and School Climate

Teachers' perceptions are critical for shaping the decisions that they make in classrooms (Perry & Rahim, 2011). Johnson, Stevens, and Zvoch (2007) conducted a 2006 study assessing the relationship between teachers' perceptions of school climate and student achievement. A positive relationship was found to be the result, supporting literature that indicates a deeper commitment to their profession when teachers feel supported by their principal and their peers (Singh & Billingsley, 1998; Thapa et al., 2013). A powerful claim by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future defined school climate in terms of a learning community, arguing that school climate can even be linked to teacher retention (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005). Collie, Shapka, and Perry (2012) conducted a study to investigate whether and how teachers' perceptions of social-emotional learning and climate in their schools influenced three variables: stress, teaching efficacy, and job satisfaction. These variables have received

much attention from researchers and other stakeholders over the past few years (Shann, 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). The findings show that teachers are highly impacted by their perceptions of their working context, a major influence on their well-being and motivation. Studies have also linked these impacts to teacher satisfaction, cohesion, and commitment levels (Price, 2012). It is clear that teachers' effectiveness in their ability to impact student achievement is inextricably linked to their perception of the school's climate (Collie et al., 2012; Cohen, et al., 2009; Price, 2012).

Leadership and School Climate

A revolving cycle of interdependence, school climate has been shown to be a result of the collaboration between teachers and administration (Cohen et al., 2009). In turn, the influence of a school's climate is broad reaching, as the aforementioned list of effects mentioned. However, according to the Wallace Foundation (2007), the most important force to shaping student learning, second only to the classroom teacher, is the building leader. Whitaker (2003) conducted a parallel study involving effective and less effective elementary school principals. In this study, Whitaker posed the following question: "Who is responsible for the climate in your school?" The more effective leaders responded, "I am," while the less effective principals placed the responsibility on the teachers or others. This study further supported findings that principals are the most decisive element in a school, and they understand that positive change is up to them (Whitaker, 2003, p. 16).

Collegial leadership describes principal behavior that is friendly, supportive, open, and guided by equality while simultaneously setting a tone for high performance and high expectations. Principal influence is the principal's ability to influence the

actions of superiors. Each of these descriptors is a subtest of the Organizational Health Inventory and therefore a major contributor to the overall health and climate of an effective middle school (Hoy & Sabo, 1998; Hoy & Tarter, 1997).

Pepper (2010) cited Lezotte and McKee (2006) in the idea that in order to produce student achievement, a leader must be able to “create and manage a process for change that inspires commitment and action from others” (p. iv). Pepper went on to describe that leadership skills coupled with management skills for maintaining an appropriate environment for learning are the keys to success (Pepper, 2010). Pepper’s research is supported by Price’s (2012) findings that claim that due to the principals’ central position, their role in the school’s environment receives much focus. Price advanced that the relationships of principals strongly and directly affect teachers’ attitudes, which in turn defines the school’s climate (Price, 2012). Research shows that principals hold an especially influential part in the organizational climate when they are able to foster a trusting, cooperative, and open environment where staff input is welcomed (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010; Hoy & Henderson, 1983; Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002). As Price (2012) wrote,

This same research identifies that the trusting, cooperative, and open characteristics in schools generate higher levels of satisfaction, cohesion around school goals, and commitment among faculty. Principal-staff relationships and interpersonal interactions are found to be central factors for these outcomes. (p. 40)

What is it about great leaders that spark motivation and inspiration among their followers? The research proves that leaders have powerful influence, but gaps exist

concerning the root of this influence. Is it a certain set of traits or a combination of traits and their reaction to various situations and environments? A heavy amount of research points to a possible answer in research by Daniel Goleman (1997, 1998, 2006) and others regarding the Emotional Intelligence theory.

Emotional Intelligence

Goleman's 1997 work entitled, *Emotional Intelligence; Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* opens with the following quote: "Anyone can become angry—that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not easy" —Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*. (p. ix)

Mayer and Salovey (1997) defined emotional intelligence as a set of abilities that account for how people's emotional perception and understanding vary in their accuracy. Goleman (1997) described emotions as the human impulse to act or to handle life. Goleman's work is the result of a springboard off of Gardner's 1983 theory of multiple intelligences in which he described both an interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence as two of his then seven types of intelligence. In 1997, Goleman gave two descriptions of the human mind in its relation to emotion. The rational mind is described by Goleman as the mode of comprehension that individuals are most conscious of — the ability to be aware, thoughtful, ponder, and reflect. The other system is described to seem illogical at times — the emotional mind is impulsive and powerful. Goleman hypothesized that the emotional mind is quick to respond and may at times take the upper hand on the rational mind. The folk distinction between *heart* and *head* is an approximate comparison between the two minds described by Goleman (1997).

In his book *Looking for Spinoza*, Damasio (2003) described emotions as the “crown jewel” of automated life regulation — from joy and sorrow and fear, to pride, shame, and sympathy (p. 34). Damasio described emotions as being present at birth with no need to teach them, but he goes on to say that as life continues, learning and determining *when* these devices are deployed will become increasingly important (Damasio, 2003). Goleman (1997) wrote that the biological propensities to act are further shaped by one’s life experiences and even one’s culture.

Goleman’s (1997) book contains a description of basic emotions. The outset of the appendix describes an emotion as, “a feeling and its distinctive thoughts, psychological and biological states, and range of propensities to act” (p. 289). Goleman listed the basic emotions:

- Anger
- Sadness
- Fear
- Enjoyment
- Love
- Surprise
- Disgust
- Shame (p. 289)

Damasio (2003) asserted the following to be considered *social emotions*: sympathy, embarrassment, shame, guilt, pride, jealousy, envy, gratitude, admiration, indignation, and contempt. While there are no clear answers on how to classify all blends, virtues, and classic vices of various emotions, these basic emotions are a

generalized list (Goleman, 1997). Damasio suggested an automated homeostatic regulation system regarding human responses to emotion. Similar to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Damasio posited that individuals react to their environment in a survival, or well-being frame of thought, with complex emotions topping the multi-faceted tree branches of his emotional model. Damasio described the range of emotional reactions as going from highly visible emotions such as fear or anger, to drives, motivations, and other behaviors associated with pain or pleasure (Damasio, 2003).

Emotions are often viewed as too personal or unquantifiable. Research in the field of neuroscience has provided new information into the brain and how to measure both the impact of the emotions as well as how people handle their own and other people's emotions. The idea of an *open-loop* limbic system is referred to by Goleman et al. (2002) as the emotional center. As opposed to the self-regulating circulatory system, the open-loop system depends primarily on external sources. Goleman et al. (2002) put it simply: "We rely on connections with other people for our own emotional stability" (p. 6). Goleman (1998) wrote that the *ancient* brain centers for emotion also harbor the skills needed for effectively managing individuals, as well as social adeptness. Grounded in survival and adaption, the emotional centers of the human brain have immense power to influence the functioning of the rest of the brain (Goleman, 1997).

Goleman suggested that success in life may be more dependent on one's emotional intelligence rather than academic intelligence (Goleman, 1997, 1998). Gardner's 1983 book *Frames of Mind* laid the foundation for the thought process that considered intelligence to be on a grander scale and not a monolithic type of thought. Gardner's description of intelligence as being multi-faceted offered a richer picture to the

world, extending it beyond the world of cognition and language. In conversations with Goleman, Gardner pointed out how crucial emotions and relationship abilities are in life. Goleman (1997) quoted Gardner:

Many people with IQs of 160 work for people with IQs of 100, if the former have poor intrapersonal intelligence and the latter have a higher one. And in the day to day world no intelligence is more important than the interpersonal. If you don't have it, you'll make poor choices about who to marry, what job to take, and so on.

We need to train children in the personal intelligences in school. (pp. 41-42)

Over two decades ago, Boyatzis (1982) found that 14 of the 16 characteristics of top performing supervisors, managers, and executives at 12 different organizations correlated with what is now referred to as emotional intelligence competencies (Goleman et al., 2002).

The majority of literature regarding emotional intelligence can be attributed to the following researchers: Goleman (1997), Bar-On (2000), and Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2000). A brief overview of the major contributions of these authors pertaining to the development of emotional intelligence follows. Most known for popularizing the idea of emotional intelligence, Goleman (1997) gave much credit to Thorndike's thoughts on social intelligence as being crucial to the ideas encompassed by emotional intelligence. Goleman quoted Thorndike (1920) in his 1997 publication of *Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter More Than IQ*, as Thorndike defined social intelligence as the ability to understand others as well as to "act wisely in human relations" (p. 42).

Inspired by the works of Wechsler (1940) and Maslow (1954), Bar-On (1997) also focused on the social aspects of intelligence as he created a model of "nonintellective

aspects of intelligence” (p. 2). After many years of research attempting to determine factors that led to success in life, Bar-On coined the term *emotional quotient* (Goleman, 1997). The competencies measured by this emotional quotient were not rooted in the traditional views of intelligence as measured by the intelligence quotient, but rather competencies that measured success in relationships with family, partners, and co-workers (Bar-On, 1997).

During the time of Bar-On’s research, Gardner (1983) introduced the theory of multiple intelligence. Consisting of logical/mathematical, verbal linguistic, visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal, Gardner suggested that these intelligences were impacted by the interaction of individuals and their environments (Gardner, 1983). Expanding on his work, Salovey and Mayer (1990) quickly made important contributions to the field of emotional intelligence including the creation of the term emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 1997). Mayer et al. (2008) emphasized emotional intelligence as a portion of personality and one that benefits from emotions. These researchers proposed a four-branch model of emotional intelligence that braids both cognition and emotion (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002):

1. Emotional Perception - emotions are perceived and expressed and begin autocratic influences of cognition.
2. Emotional integration - emotions are recognized, enter the cognitive system, and begin to alter cognition.
3. Emotional Understanding - emotions and their interactive and temporal implications are understood.

4. Emotional Management - emotions are fully understood, and one is able to cope with states of mood instability. (p. 200)

For the purposes of this study, the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso model was employed.

Fisher and Noble (2004) studied job satisfaction and found that the emotions that people feel while they work most directly affect the true quality of work life. Goleman et al. (2002) wrote, "Leaders who spread bad moods are bad for business, while those who pass along good moods help drive business success. When people feel good, they work at their best" (p. 14). A study on 62 CEOs and their top management teams found that the more positive the overall moods of people in the top management team, the more cooperatively they worked together, and the better the company's business result. Spencer (2001) was cited in Goleman et al. (2002) as authoring an actual logarithm to predict an organization's emotional effect on the bottom line: For every 1% in improvement in the service climate, there is a 2% increase in revenue.

Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

The relationship between emotional intelligence and effective leadership is described by Goleman as crucial (Goleman, 1998). Goleman's studies on leadership have resulted in the following discovery: "effective leaders are alike in one crucial way: they all have a high degree of emotional intelligence" (Goleman, 1998, p. 94). Goleman, et al. (2002) wrote that at its root the primal job of leadership is emotional. It is to prime good feelings in followers. The authors described leadership to be crucial during times of grave crisis, positing that such times cause all followers to turn eyes to the leader for emotional guidance. Leaders have a way of interpreting, making sense, and so reacting emotionally to given situations (Goleman et al., 2002). When people are asked to

describe great leaders, they many times describe strategies, leadership styles, vision, or ideas, but in reality, Goleman et al. (2002) imagined that great leaders work through emotions; “Great leaders move us. They ignite our passion and inspire the best in us” (p. 3).

Goleman et al. (2002) suggested that leaders set emotional standards, and in the “emotional soup” created by groups, it is the leader’s input or “seasoning” that has the strongest effect (p. 8). The authors provided reason as to why it is the leader’s manner, or *how* he or she does things, that matters so much in an organization. Everyone watches the boss and takes emotional cues from the top. The authors suggested that even when a leader is not highly visible, his or her attitude has an effect on the moods of the followers in a ripple effect throughout the company’s emotional climate (Goleman et al., 2002). A study at the Yale University School of Management found that moods influence how effectively people work. A leader who is skillful in transmitting emotion will elicit a contagious effect of emotion, even if through subtleties. Goleman et al. (2002) wrote that leaders with that talent are emotional magnets; people gravitate to these types of leaders. People want to work with leaders who exude upbeat feelings.

Emotional Intelligence and Educational Leadership

Specifically concerning school leadership, Stone, Parker, and Wood (2005) conducted research on the relationship between emotional intelligence and school leadership. The study included 484 principals and vice principals from nine school boards in Ontario, Canada. The above average leadership group scored higher in the four emotional intelligence dimensions, signifying that emotional intelligence is indeed a significant predictor of school administrators success. Conversely, Condren (2002)

published results of a smaller, similar study in which the relationship between principals' EQ was correlated with leadership effectiveness. Positive correlations were obtained, but none was considered statistically significant. Condren's sample size consisted of 32 principals. Similarly, a study by Henry and Hope (2013) correlated principals' EQ and its impact on adequate yearly progress. With a sample size of 200, a weak, negative effect that was not statistically significant was found by these researchers as well. Khan and Nahawat (2012) suggest that gender may also play a role in the leadership of schools, and specifically concerning the principal position. These researchers conducted a study that determined female principals to have higher emotional intelligence scores than their male colleagues (Khan & Nahawat, 2012).

If organizational health and climate drives results, what drives climate? What is the secret to a healthy school? Goleman et al. (2002) cited research by Kelner, Rivers, and O'Connell (1996) that "Roughly 53–72 percent of how employees perceive their organization's climate can be traced to the actions of one person; the leader. More than anyone else, the leader determines the conditions that directly affect people's ability to work well" (p. 18). The leader's ability to manage his or her moods and affect everyone else's moods is no longer a private matter, but a crucial factor in the success of the business (Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000; Ashkanasy, Härtel, & Zerbe, 2000).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was uncovering branches of middle school principals' emotional intelligence (EQ) that may have a correlational relationship with teachers' perceptions of school climate. Research has indicated that individuals with higher levels of EQ have a successful impact on the organizations they lead (Goleman et al., 2002; Mayer et al., 2000). This chapter presents the design of the study and includes the following components: research questions, instrumentation, procedures, limitations, and data analysis.

Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between principals' emotional intelligence and school climate?
2. Do specific branches of emotional intelligence positively correlate with school climate?

Null Hypotheses

H₁₀ – There is no correlation between principals' total emotional intelligence and teachers' perception of school climate.

H₂₀ – There is no correlation between principals' ability to identify emotion, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers' perception of school climate.

H₃₀ – There is no correlation between principals' ability to use emotion to facilitate thought, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers' perception of school climate.

H₄₀ – There is no correlation between principals’ ability to understand emotion, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers’ perception of school climate.

H₅₀ – There is no correlation between principals’ ability to manage emotion, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers’ perception of school climate.

Research Design

The research design of this study was a quantitative, correlational study using data obtained from two different survey instruments. The principals participating in the study were given the Mayer Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT V.2.0) online. The teachers’ perception of school climate data was obtained by using the Organizational Health Inventory for Middle Schools (OHI-M) by Hoy and Tarter (1997).

Participants

A convenience sample was selected to guide the selection of participants for this study. The target population was middle school principals and teachers in public schools located in Mississippi. For this study, middle schools are defined as accommodating any combination of grades 5 through 8. Respondents were over 18 years of age and employees of the selected school districts that participated in this study during the 2013-2014 school year. Due to the potential low return rate on surveys, this population was not further reduced by conducting a randomized selection and assignment. Generalizability of this study is limited to the sample and not necessarily to all middle schools in the state of Mississippi or in the United States.

Instrumentation

The data for this study were collected using surveys. Data were gathered for the assessment of emotional intelligence competencies through the application of the

MSCEIT V.2.0. Sample MSCEIT V.2.0 items are located in Appendix B. School climate scores were calculated using the OHI-M. The author's permission to use the OHI-M is located in Appendix C, and the OHI-M survey is located in Appendix D.

The Mayer Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test

The 22 principal participants of this study completed an online survey, the MSCEIT V.2.0, measured emotional intelligence. Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso's MSCEIT offers an overall score for emotional intelligence, total, and it also provides score subdivisions into area scores, branch scores, and task scores (Mayer et al., 2000, 2002). The development of this instrument was centered on the idea that emotional intelligence involves the ability to solve problems with emotions (Mayer et al., 2000, 2002). According to Wilhelm (2005), the MSCEIT represents the most appropriate assessment of emotional capabilities.

Mayer and Salovey (1997) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to 1) perceive emotions, 2) access and generate emotions to assist thought, 3) understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and 4) reflectively regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth. The MSCEIT measures these four abilities as follows:

- Perceived emotions- the ability to correctly identify how people are feeling.
- Using emotions to facilitate thought- the ability to create emotions and to integrate one's feelings into the way she or he thinks.
- Understanding emotions- the ability to understand the causes of emotions.
- Managing emotions- a person's ability to create effective strategies that use one's emotions to help one achieve a goal, rather than having one's emotions negatively affect oneself (Mayer, Roberts, & Barsade, 2008, pp. 513-514).

The MSCEIT yields several scores. Branch scores in the MSCEIT range from .76 to .90 with a full-scale emotional quotient reliability to be .91 (Mayer et al., 2002).

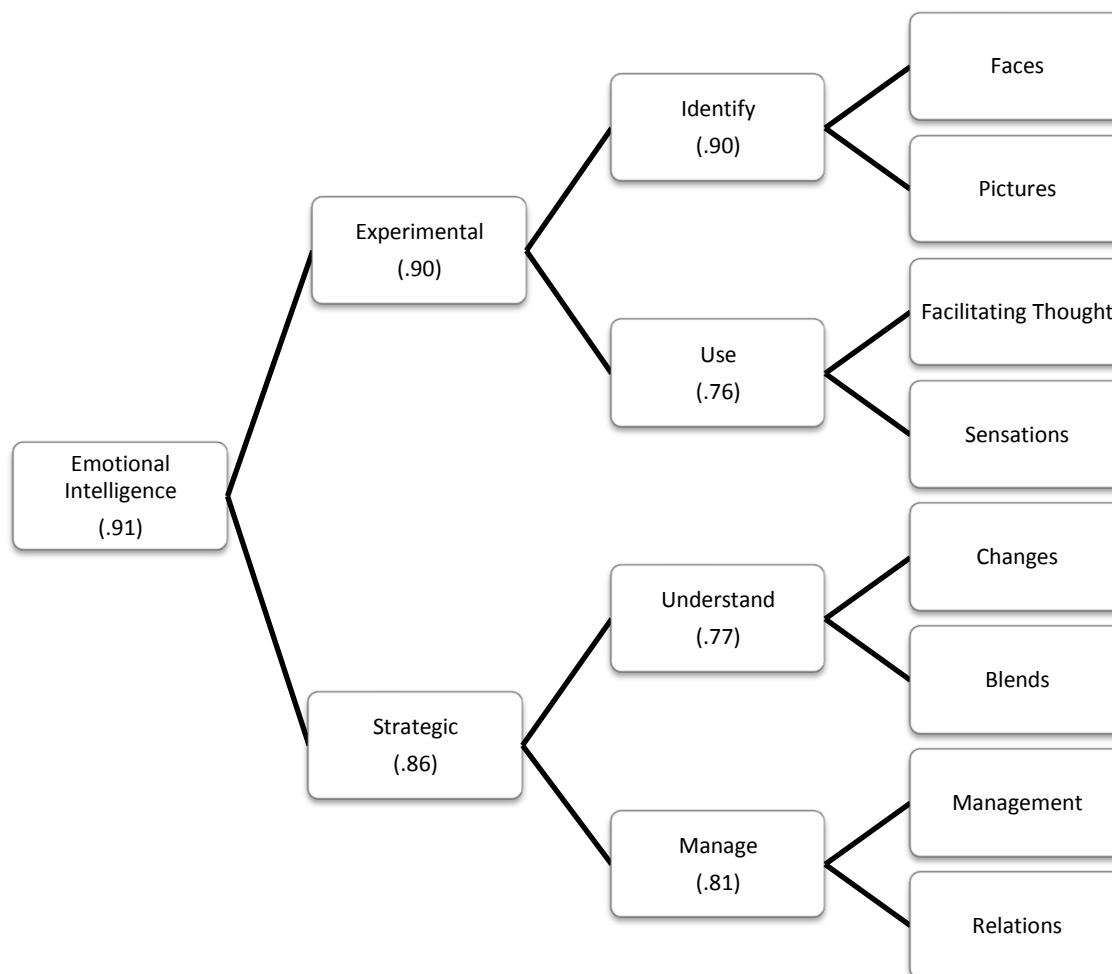


Figure 2. The MSCEIT V.2.0 scoring structure with reliability of expert scoring.

Figure 2 illustrates the MSCEIT V.2.0 scoring structure. Author permission for use of the scoring chart is located in Appendix E. Factorial validity of the assessment was established through highly acceptable goodness-of-fit indices (GFI). The GFI for the total EQ score was .96, while the indicators for the areas, branches, and subscales were 1.00, .99, and .97, respectively (Mayer et al., 2002; as cited in Hebert, 2011).

Users of the MSCEIT have an option of scoring methods—general consensus scoring and expert scoring. The expert scoring method was established by a panel of 21 experts on emotional intelligence and is considered the most reliable scoring method

(Mayer et al., 2002). MSCEIT V.2.0 raw scores were converted to a standard score, $M=100$ and $SD=15$ (Mayer et al., 2002). For the purposes of this study, the expert scoring method was utilized.

The Organizational Health Inventory-Middle School.

The Organizational Health Inventory for Middle Schools (OHI-M) was used to collect data on teachers' perceptions of school climate. A 45-item, 4-point Likert-type scaled instrument (rarely occurs, sometimes occurs, often occurs, very frequently occurs), the OHI-M measures the degree to which institutional, administrative, and teacher levels are in harmony, and that the school is meeting needs as it works toward the established mission (Hoy, 2013). Specific for the middle school level, the OHI-M scores the health of middle school organizations, based on the perception of the respondents, on a sick-healthy continuum (Hoy, 2013). According to Hoy et al. (1996), the OHI-M is a theory-driven instrument based on work by Parsons (1951) for the use of explaining organizational behavior at the middle level. Parsons described a social system as any system that generates interactions among people or groups (Hoy et al., 1996).

The dimensions of a healthy middle school climate as measured by the OHI-M are institutional integrity, collegial leadership, consideration, principal influence, resource support, teacher affiliation, and academic emphasis (Hoy & Tarter, 1997). These six dimensions of are scored individually and converted to standardized scores. Computation of an *overall index of school health* occurs by adding the standardized scores of each dimension and then dividing by six (Hoy & Sabo, 1998; Hoy & Tarter, 1997). The interpretation of the health index score is in comparison to the mean or average school:

- Above 600: very high
- 551-600: high
- 525-550: above average
- 511-524: slightly above average
- 490-510: average
- 476-489:slightly below average
- 450-475: below average
- 400-449: low
- Below 400: very low (Hoy, 2013)

The 45-item survey contains eigenvalues ranging from 1.90 to 16.07 explaining 77.20% of the variance (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). As cited in Rogers (2005), “The alpha coefficients of reliability for all six subtests were high: Academic Emphasis (.94), Teacher Affiliation (.94), Principal Influence (.94), Collegial Leadership (.94), Resource Support (.96), and Institutional Integrity (.93)” (Hoy & Sabo, 1998, p. 61). Construct validity for this instrument was established using factor analysis. The mean health index is 500, while the standard deviation is 100. The OHI-M is listed in Appendix D.

Procedures

Data were collected from two groups— principals and certified teachers. The researcher spent a considerable amount of time contacting superintendents to obtain permission letters for their districts’ participation in the study. After contacting 90 superintendents multiple times via phone, email, and personal visits, permission letters were received from 35 districts. The superintendent permission request letter is located in Appendix F. Upon receiving the Institutional Review Board Notice of Committee

Action letter (Appendix G), the researcher contacted the 66 principals of the 35 participating school districts in order to request their voluntary participation in the study. The principals were mailed a cover letter and sent an email as shown in Appendix H. The 66 principals were asked to voluntarily participate in an online offering of the MSCEIT V.2.0 as provided by Multi-Health Systems. Principals who did not respond within one week of the email/letter communication received a phone call from the researcher. If the researcher was unable to reach the principal after two phone calls, the researcher personally visited those principals within a 40-mile radius of the researcher's home. A final participation request email was sent to those outside the 40-mile radius. Upon acceptance, the researcher sent the MSCEIT V.2.0 survey via an emailed link. Each principal who completed the MSCEIT V.2.0 was entered into a drawing for a \$300 VISA gift card.

As each participating principal completed the MSCEIT V.2.0, principals were asked to identify a faculty representative at the school for dissemination of the teacher surveys, OHI-M. After phone or email contact, the researcher mailed or personally delivered survey packages to the designated faculty members of each campus. Each school's package contained 25 OHI-M teacher surveys with cover letters (Appendix I), individual envelopes, a mandatory written script to be read at a faculty meeting before dissemination of the OHI-M surveys (see Appendix J), and a large, self-addressed, stamped envelope for returning all completed surveys to the researcher.

Prior to the faculty meeting, the researcher emailed a letter to the designated faculty member. The letter introduced the study and explained the upcoming opportunity to participate in the study by completing the OHI-M. This letter also served as the cover

letter attached to the survey, and the designated faculty member was asked to forward the email to all teachers on campus prior to the faculty meeting in which they would be disseminated. The cover letter outlined the study, assured the participant's anonymity, and informed each participant of the voluntary nature of the survey and that no reprisals would befall them if they chose not to participate. The school's federal code was printed on each survey in order to correlate teachers' data with that of their building principal. The designated faculty member disseminated the cover letters, surveys, and individual envelopes, following a faculty meeting, to those voluntarily willing to participate. The designated faculty member read the provided script written by the researcher prior to survey dissemination. Participating teachers were asked to place their completed surveys in the provided envelope and seal the envelope. They recorded their name and school on a provided sheet of paper placed into an included envelope for a chance to win one of two \$100 VISA gift cards. Faculty representatives entered their name into the drawing twice. Group administration of the survey was utilized to ensure the highest response rate (Molitor, Kravitz, To, & Fink, 2001). Individual envelopes also accompanied surveys in order to provide greater anonymity to the teacher participants. One large self-addressed and stamped return envelope in which to return all of the surveys was included upon delivery. The researcher had permission to use the OHI-M at will, only for the explicit use of this study (Appendix G). Principals participated in the MSCEIT V.2.0 online, and score reports were obtained from MHS after receiving payment from the researcher. According to Baruch (1999), the field of academic studies holds an average response rate of 55.6%.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to identify if a relationship exists between a principals' EQ and their teachers' perception of the school climate or health of the organization. Furthermore, if a relationship was discovered, the researcher aimed to discover if certain branches of a principal's EQ had a greater correlation with the teachers' perception of the school's climate. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation, as well as a Pearson's r correlation were among the statistics used to analyze the data collected in this study, gaining more information concerning the relationship between the variables. The mean and standard deviation summarized immense amounts of data into understandable data values. The Pearson's r correlation tested for a linear relationship (either positive, negative, or none) among continuous variables. Strength of the relationships, if present, was not measured through the Pearson's r correlation, however. The Pearson's r was calculated by comparing each principal's EQ branch score to their school climate score.

Summary

The procedures outlined in this chapter were aimed at determining the correlational relationships of EQ competencies of middle school principals in Mississippi and their teachers' perceptions of the school's health. The continuous variables were in preexisting groupings (teachers and principals) and therefore lacked the necessity of randomization or control grouping. Moreover, the various levels in the variables necessitated a correlational study.

Collection of data was difficult. The following attempts were made to gain principal participation: E-mails; phone calls; personal visits; delivery of donuts; five

dollar McDonald's gift cards; coffee, biscuits, and apple pies to campuses within a 40-mile radius of the researcher's home. Additionally, there was support from personal contacts, teachers, and solicitation from a superintendent.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of the study was the examination of the relationship between principal EQ and teachers' perceptions of school climate. Research indicated that individuals with higher levels of EQ have a successful impact on the organizations they lead (Goleman et al., 2002; Mayer et al., 2000). The study also sought to discover which, if any, branch of a middle school principal's emotional intelligence had a correlational relationship with the teachers' perceptions of the school's climate. This chapter presents the findings of the research beginning with a brief description of the sampling methodology, followed by analyses of the participants' scores utilized to assess the research questions, and a discussion of the ancillary findings regarding the relationship of the variables among participants.

Within the state of Mississippi, there are approximately 90 public school districts containing middle level schools. All 90 districts were asked to participate in this research study, and 35 of those districts granted permission. Within these 35 districts, there were 66 middle level schools. From these 66 middle schools given permission by their superintendent to participate in the study, 22 principals chose to participate in the study for a response rate of 33%. Each principal's school was provided 25 surveys. Out of the 550 surveys mailed, 314 teachers responded to the teacher surveys, creating a teacher-survey response rate of 57%. According to Baruch (1999), academic studies hold an average return rate of 55.6%. The researcher attributes the lower than expected response rate for principals to a few possible situations. Primarily, the spring is a particularly busy

time of the year; the state adopted a new administrator appraisal system that has required heavy survey participation; districts are also undergoing budget testing.

Descriptive Analysis

The middle schools participating in the study were of various sizes, but all are considered middle level schools serving any combination of grade levels 5 through 8. The MSCEIT V.2.0 instrument collected demographic variables such as gender, age, and ethnicity. Of the 22 principals participating in the survey, 11 (50%) were females, nine (40.9%) were males, and two principals chose not to report a gender. The ages of the participating principals ranged from 35 to 65 years of age, with four principals not reporting age. Mean and median ages were 48. Three principals chose not to report their ethnicity, eight (36.4%) reported to be Black, and 11 (50%) reported being White. Demographic information was not collected from participating teachers.

Emotional Intelligence Competencies

The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT V.2.0) assessed each principal's total emotional intelligence as a subset of skill groups, or branches. The branches of EI as described by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2002) are (B1) the ability to perceive/identify emotions accurately, (B2) using emotions to facilitate thought, (B3) understanding emotion, and (B4) managing emotion.

The first branch of the MSCEIT addresses an individual's ability to recognize his or her emotions as well as the emotions of those around the individual. The participant was shown various pictures and faces and asked to determine the emotion relevant to each task. The second branch of the MSCEIT is made up of two tasks, moods and empathy. This branch, the ability to use emotions to facilitate thought, focuses on a

leader's ability to assess a mood and then support thinking and reasoning for someone experiencing that particular mood. The third branch describes understanding emotions, which is made up of the changes and blends tasks. An individual scoring high in this branch understands the development of emotions as well as the blending of emotions. This branch (B3) contained the lowest mean score and the smallest variance. The final branch of the MSCEIT refers to one's ability to manage emotions. Management and relations-type tasks are the two tasks that determine the emotional management branch score. A high score in this branch of EQ reflects an ability to regulate emotion in oneself and others, as well as to empathize with and alleviate anxieties in others.

The 22 participants in the sample had a mean total EQ score of 82 and a standard deviation of 24. According to Mayer et al. (2002), the MSCEIT V.2.0 has a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. The sample mean is greater than one standard deviation below the mean, which is lower than expected, while the sample standard deviation is slightly higher, showing greater variance in the sample scores. The researcher found that a few sample scores beyond two standard deviations below the mean contributed to the low sample mean of 82. The median score, 87, fell within the average range. Table 1 provides the branch means of the sample, as well as the standard deviation and range of scores.

Table 1

MSCEIT V.2.0 Branch Descriptives of Sample

EQ Branch	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range of Scores
Identify (B1)	88	18	56-120

Table 1 (continued).

EQ Branch	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range of Scores
Use (B2)	94	23	49-138
Understand (B3)	86	14	51-107
Manage (B4)	96	21	58-127

School Climate

The instrument used to assess the teachers' perceptions of the school climate was the Organizational Health Inventory- Middle level (OHI-M). Upon the completion of the MSCEIT V.2.0 by each participating principal, the researcher contacted the suggested faculty member on each principal's campus in order to coordinate the dissemination of the teacher surveys. A package that contained 25 OHI-M surveys, individual envelopes for increased anonymity, a script to be read at the faculty meeting, drawing slips for participating teachers to be entered into a drawing, and an addressed, pre-stamped envelope for return of the sealed OHI-M surveys was mailed or delivered to each designated faculty member. The OHI-M surveys were pre-coded with their school's state code, which consists of a four-digit district code followed by a three-digit school code. The mean number of surveys returned from each participating school was 13.6. One school created additional copies of the survey (collected a total of 34), while one school returned only four surveys total. These outliers were removed in the calculation of the mean return rate. A response rate of 57% was realized.

The normative data on the OHI-M reported a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100. The OHI-M numerical measures can be changed into categories ranging from high to low using the following continuum:

- Above 600: Very High
- 551-600: High
- 525- 550: Above Average
- 511-524: Slightly Above Average
- 490-510: Average
- 476-489: Slightly Below Average
- 450-475: Below Average
- 400-449: Low
- Below 400: Very Low (Hoy, 2013)

The sample in this study had a mean of 524 and a standard deviation of 68. While the sample mean is within normal limits, it should be mentioned that 59% of the participating schools scored at or above the Above Average category, creating a negatively skewed distribution of the data. Table 2 presents the frequencies of the OHI-M category score results, indicating a negative skew in the sample data.

Table 2

Frequencies of OHI-M Categories

OHI-M categories	Frequency	Percent
Very High (Above 600)	4	18.2
High (551-600)	4	18.2

Table 2 (continued).

OHI-M categories	Frequency	Percent
Above Average (525-550)	5	22.7
Slightly Above Average (511-524)	2	9.1
Slightly Below Average (476-489)	2	9.1
Below Average (450-475)	2	9.1
Low (400-449)	2	9.1
Very Low (Below 400)	1	4.5

N=22

The OHI-M is comprised of six subtests, which include institutional integrity, collegial leadership, principal influence, resource support, teacher affiliation, and academic emphasis. Institutional integrity is a school's ability to cope with its environment while maintaining educational integrity, as well as protecting teachers from unreasonable community and parental demands. Collegial leadership is the second subtest of the OHI-M. This subtest measures principal behavior that is friendly, supportive, open, and equitable. This subtest returned the largest standard deviation of all six subtests. The third subtest of the OHI-M is principal influence. This subtest measures the principal's ability to influence the actions of superiors. The fourth subtest of the OHI-M measured the extent to which classroom supplies and instructional materials are readily available. Teacher affiliation is the fifth subtest of the OHI-M, and it measures the sense of friendliness and affiliation within the school. Do teachers feel good about each other, their job, and their students? The final subtest of this instrument is the academic emphasis subtest. Academic emphasis is the school's drive to success in

academic excellence. A high score in academic emphasis is reflective of a school where high but achievable goals are set for students, the learning environment is orderly and serious, teachers believe in their students, and others respect students for working hard to do well academically. Table 3 lists descriptives for each subtests of the OHI-M.

Table 3

OHI-M Subtests Descriptives of Sample

OHI-M Subtests	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range of Scores
Institutional Integrity	592	80	392-751
Collegial Leadership	532	125	265-732
Principal Influence	529	90	298-671
Resource Support	520	81	400-697
Teacher Affiliation	366	72	415-765
Academic Emphasis	602	97	413-765

The subtest scores realized by the sample were within the normal range with the exception of two: teacher affiliation and academic emphasis. The normative mean for this assessment is 500. A teacher affiliation score of 366 is 2.6 standard deviations below the mean and in the Very Low category of school climates. In contrast, the academic emphasis branch mean is 602, which is slightly above one standard deviation beyond the mean. Moreover, a standard deviation of 125 in the collegial leadership category indicates a very large variance in teachers' perceptions of the principals.

Statistical Analysis

The independent variable in this study was the emotional intelligence score of the participating middle school principals. There were four levels of this variable, which include each of the branches of emotional intelligence as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0. The dependent variable was the teachers' perceptions of the school climate. The data from both the teachers and principals were entered into a Microsoft EXCEL spreadsheet and then transferred into SPSS v. 22. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to statistically investigate the relationship between the emotional intelligence scores of the principals and their teachers' perceptions of the school climate. An alpha of .05 was used to measure significance.

Hypothesis Testing

H1₀. There is no correlation between principals' total emotional intelligence and teachers' perceptions of school climate.

A Pearson correlation was calculated examining the relationship between principals' total emotional intelligence and teachers' perceptions of school climate. A weak positive correlation that was not statistically significant was found ($r(20) = .294$, $p = .185$). Principals' total emotional intelligence is not related to teachers' perceptions of school climate. There is not sufficient evidence to reject this null hypothesis.

H2₀. There is no correlation between principals' ability to identify emotions, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers' perception of school climate.

A Pearson correlation was calculated examining the relationship between principal's ability to identify emotions (Branch 1 of the MSCEIT V.2.0) and teachers' perceptions of school climate. A moderate positive correlation that was not statistically

significant was found ($r(20) = .323, p = .142$). Principals' ability to identify emotions is not related to teachers' perceptions of school climate. There is not sufficient evidence to reject this null hypothesis.

H3₀. There is no correlation between principals' ability to use emotion to facilitate thought, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers' perception of school climate.

A Pearson correlation was calculated examining the relationship between principals' ability to use emotion to facilitate thought (Branch 2 of the MSCEIT V.2.0) and teachers' perceptions of school climate. A very weak positive correlation that was not statistically significant was found ($r(20) = .052, p = .817$). Principals' ability to use emotion to facilitate thought is not related to teachers' perceptions of school climate. There is not sufficient evidence to reject this null hypothesis.

H4₀. There is no correlation between principals' ability to understand emotions, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers' perception of school climate.

A Pearson correlation was calculated examining the relationship between principals' ability to understand emotions (Branch 3 of the MSCEIT V.2.0) and teachers' perceptions of school climate. A moderate positive correlation that was statistically significant was found ($r(20) = .422, p = .05$). There is sufficient evidence to reject null hypothesis 4 and determine that principals' ability to understand emotions is indeed related to teachers' perceptions of school climate. The positive correlation of these two variables indicates that as a principal's ability to understand emotions increases, school climate increases likewise. *Understanding* emotion is described by Brackett and Salovey (2006) as the ability and capacity to analyze emotions. This branch includes an

understanding of how emotions combine, transition, and progress. A high score in this branch of EQ shows adeptness at identifying the core meaning and themes behind various emotions (Brackett & Salovey, 2006). Principals' ability to understand their own emotions, as well as others, is directly correlated with the perception teachers have of their school's climate. *Understanding* emotion has a stronger relationship with a school's climate than the other three branches and the total EQ.

H5₀. There is no correlation between principals' ability to manage emotion, as measured by the MSCEIT V.2.0, and teachers' perception of school climate.

A Pearson correlation was calculated examining the relationship between principals' ability to manage emotion (Branch 4 on the MSCEIT V.2.0) and teachers' perceptions of school climate. A weak positive correlation that was not statistically significant was found ($r(20) = .126, p = .575$). Principals' ability to manage emotion is not related to teachers' perceptions of school climate. There is not sufficient evidence to reject this null hypothesis.

All five of the correlational relationships examined were positive. As each variable increased, school climate scores increased. Two of the correlations were small and three of the relationships were moderately strong. The principals' ability to use emotion to facilitate thought ($r = .052$), and the principals' ability to manage emotion ($r = .126$) were the smallest correlations but positive nonetheless. The two small correlations were expected to return stronger relationships with an increase in sample size. The other three relationships had strong positive Pearson r values indicating relationships between the variables.

Ancillary Findings

A few interesting findings warrant further discussion of the relationships among the variables in this study. Although the correlations returned an insignificant effect size, there is strong evidence to suggest that principals' emotional intelligence does relate to a school's climate and that as a middle school principal's emotional intelligence increases, his or her school's climate score increases as well. Likewise, the lower a principal's emotional intelligence score, the lower his or her school's climate score. Tables 4 and 5 below exhibit such reasoning. The OHI-M scores categories are listed with frequencies along with the range of EQ scores realized by those schools' principals. Table 4 indicates a definite relationship between high scoring school climates and high scoring middle school principal EQ levels.

Table 4

High and Very High Climates with Principal EQ Scores

Climate Categories	Frequency	Range of EQ scores
Very High	4	88-114
High	4	81-109

Likewise, lower school climate scores are associated with lower EQ scores, as evidenced in Table 5.

Table 5

Below Average, Low, and Very Low Climates with Principal EQ Scores

Climate Categories	Frequency	Range of EQ scores
Below Average	2	86-103

Table 5 (continued).

Climate Categories	Frequency	Range of EQ scores
Low	2	73-86
Very Low	1	45

Moreover, the OHI-M scores of the sample were negatively skewed with 59% of the schools scoring at or above the Above Average category. Speculation exists that principals leading schools with obvious low school climates opted to not participate in this study. Table 6 provides the frequencies of high scoring middle schools, as measured by the OHI-M, with a cumulative percentage of the data.

Table 6

Frequencies of the School Climate Categories with Cumulative Percentage

School Climate Categories	Frequency	Percent
Very High (Above 600)	4	18.2
High (551-600)	4	18.2
Above Average (525-550)	5	22.7
Cumulative Percent:		59.1

Analysis of the EQ rank of participants indicated that the top 10 principals' schools also scored in the top 10 in school climate scores, with the exception of three schools. As indicated in Table 7, the third, fourth, and fifth ranked principals' (ranked according to total EQ score) schools scored 16th, 17th, and 19th, respectively, in the area of school climate. Upon analysis of their school climate subtests, a commonality among

these three schools was discovered. Each of the three had extremely low teacher affiliation scores, in the low and very low range. Table 7 also indicates an obvious relationship between EQ scores and high OHI-M scores, suggesting that high emotional intelligence in middle school principals may be positively correlated with healthy school climates.

Table 7

Rankings of School Climates and Emotional Intelligence Scores

EQ Rankings	EQ Score	OHI-M Score	School Climate Ranking
Principal #1	114	630	1
Principal #2	109	551	8
Principal #3	107	486	16
Principal #4	104	478	17
Principal #5	103	452	19
Principal #6	97	603	3
Principal #7	92	608	4
Principal #8	91	564	5
Principal #9	90	563	6
Principal #10	88	620	2
Principal #11	86	474	18
Principal #12	86	406	21
Principal #13	85	530	13
Principal #14	84	538	12

Table 7 (continued).

EQ Rankings	EQ Score	OHI-M Score	School Climate Ranking
Principal #15	81	516	15
Principal #16	81	553	7
Principal #17	77	538	11
Principal #18	74	520	14
Principal #19	73	418	20
Principal #20	55	546	9
Principal #21	45	381	22
Principal #22	37	541	10

Additional ancillary findings include the evidence that the collegial leadership subtest of the OHI-M returned a standard deviation much higher than the normative data for this subtest. Recall, collegial leadership measures the interactions of a principal and faculty members. Behaviors such as the friendliness, support, openness, equality, and expectations set by the principal are descriptors of the collegial leadership measure. A standard deviation of 125 exhibits a large variance in teachers' perceptions of their principal. The collegial leadership subtest scores ranged from 265 to 732. The five lowest scoring schools (according to their overall OHI-M score) also scored the lowest on collegial leadership subtest. The researcher speculated that personality and subjectivity on behalf of the rating teachers may have influence on these scores. Interestingly, two of the five lowest scoring schools (on the OHI-M collegial leadership subtest) also had the lowest principal EQ scores in the sample.

The participants of the principal survey were evenly distributed in the area of gender. Approximately half of the participants were female, and of the remaining 11, nine were males and two chose not to answer. One may assume that due to the even distribution of the gender, EQ scores would also be equal. Analysis of the mean scores indicates that the female respondents have a higher average EQ score as well as OHI-M score than the male respondents. Table 8 displays these findings.

Table 8

Mean EQ and Mean OHI-M Scores by Gender

	Male Principals	Female Principals
EQ Mean Score	77	91
OHI-M Mean Score	521	553

Schools led by female principals had a mean school climate score of 12 points higher than male principal-led schools. Furthermore, out of the eight highest performing schools, as ranked by the OHI-M, six were led by female principals. Table 9 displays these findings.

Table 9

Rankings of Top Eight School Climate Scores by Gender

School Climate Score	Gender of Principal
School #1 (675)	F
School #2 (621)	M
School #3 (609)	M

Table 9 (continued).

School Climate Score	Gender of Principal
School #4 (603)	F
School #5 (565)	F
School #6 (563)	F
School #7 (553)	F
School #8 (551)	F

Recall that research by Khan and Nahawat (2012) found that females score higher in emotional intelligence competencies. This study supports the 2012 findings of Khan and Nahawat.

While survey participation was difficult to obtain, it is worth mentioning that the majority (86%) of the principals holding doctoral degrees did participate in the study. Out of 66 principals solicited to participate, seven had doctorates, and six of the seven participated in the principal survey. Out of the 22 principal respondents, six held doctoral degrees, representing 27% of the sample. Their salutations, as listed on either their school or district's websites, determined the degree status of the principals.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study sought to examine the relationship between principal's emotional intelligence and their teachers' perceptions of school climate. The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

1. Is there a relationship between principals' emotional intelligence and school climate?
2. Do specific branches of emotional intelligence positively correlate with school climate?

Twenty-two middle school principals in the state of Mississippi voluntarily participated in an online assessment of emotional intelligence to be compared to their teachers' perceptions of the schools' climate. Sixty-six principals were asked to complete the survey, which constitutes a low response rate of 33%. However, 57% of the teachers participated in the school climate assessment.

The MSCEIT V.2.0 produced multiple scores regarding the emotional intelligence of the participating principals. The total emotional intelligence score is comprised of two area scores. The areas are experimental and strategic (also known as reasoning). The experimental score consists of the principal's ability to identify or perceive emotion, in addition to using emotion to facilitate thought. The strategic or reasoning score is comprised of the principals' ability to understand emotion and manage emotion.

The OHI-M measured the teachers' perceptions of the schools' climate based on the dimensions of a healthy middle school, which include institutional integrity, collegial leadership, consideration, principal influence, resource support, teacher affiliation, and

academic emphasis. These six dimensions were converted into standard scores and averaged to find a total health index, or climate score, for a school. In order to determine whether a relationship exists between the two variables in this study, a Pearson product moment correlation analysis was conducted using SPSS. Each of the four branches of a principals' emotional intelligence score, as well as the total EQ score, were compared to the school climate score calculated using their teachers' OHI-M scores.

Conclusions

The research that exists concerning the relationship between an emotionally intelligent leader and the climate of an organization is undeniable (Lees & Barnard, 1999; McDowelle & Buckner, 2002; Whitaker, 2003). Hoy and Sabo (1998) described a healthy school climate as a *critical* component of a middle school. Recall the study with the 62 CEOs and their top management teams. Researchers found that the more positive the overall moods of people in the top management team, the more cooperatively they worked together, and the better the company's business result. Spencer (2001) was cited in Goleman et al. (2002) as authoring an actual logarithm to predict an organization's emotional effect on the bottom line: For every 1% in improvement in the service climate, there is a 2% increase in revenue.

Lees and Barnard (1999) provided evidence that certain emotional intelligence competencies ultimately lead to greater job satisfaction and higher student achievement. "When people feel good, they work at their best" (p. 14). The Pearson's r scores of each correlation represented the existence of positive relationships; however, the results were all found to be statistically insignificant, with the exception of one relationship. The Pearson's r correlation between the principals' ability to understand emotions and the

teachers' perception of school climate was found to be a moderate, positive correlation with statistical significance.

While this branch of emotional intelligence is not suggested to cause an increase in school climate scores, it does indicate that a positive relationship exists between the two variables. As principals' ability to understand emotions increases, the teachers' perceptions of the school climate should increase as well. Specifically analyzing the statistically significant correlation of the *understanding* branch of EQ and school climate, one can determine that a positive relationship exists. With a correlation of $r = .422$ and a significance of $p = .05$, it is evident that increases in one variable is associated with increases in the other variable. Additionally, the low standard deviation of the sample in this area of EQ exhibits the strength of this branch's ability to influence a school's climate score. It is likely that a statistical significance among all levels of the independent variable might have been evident if the sample sizes were larger. Given the small size of the sample, the statistical significance of the *understanding* branch of emotional intelligence solidifies the strong relationship that does, in fact, exist between the two variables.

While positive correlations were found in the current study, there was a lack of statistical significance among the totals, as well as three other branches. The researcher believes that a larger sample size would return stronger statistical significance. Research by Condren (2002) and Henry and Hope (2013) contained similar findings. Condren's sample size of 32 returned positive, statistically insignificant results between principals' EQ and leadership effectiveness. Henry and Hope (2014) also found statistically insignificant results in the correlation of AYP status and principals' EQ. Due to the

research suggesting strong correlations, there is a need to further unpack emotional intelligence and investigate its relationship between leadership and school climate. This is especially the case because the findings of this study are not representative of the majority of data that exists. Goleman's research on leaders' EQ combined with research on teacher morale (Whitaker et al., 2009) and school climate (Cohen et al., 2009) point to strong evidence that an emotionally intelligent leader does have a profound impact on his or her followers. Goleman et al. (2002) wrote that at its root, the primal job of leadership is emotional. It is to prime good feelings in followers. The authors went on to describe leadership to be *crucial* during times of grave crisis, positing that such times cause all followers to turn eyes to the leader for emotional guidance. Leaders have a way interpreting, making sense, and so reacting emotionally to given situations (Goleman et al., 2002). When individuals are asked to describe great leaders, they often describe strategies, leadership styles, vision, or ideas. But, in reality, Goleman et al. (2002) imagined that great leaders work through emotions; "Great leaders move us. They ignite our passion and inspire the best in us" (p. 3).

Limitations

The findings of this study are limited by multiple factors. Generalizability of the findings is a major limitation of the study due to the small sample population of both middle school principals as well as teachers. Generalization of the findings with similar populations should be carefully considered. The researcher speculates that the low response rates are multi-faceted. The researcher found that the timing of this study had a tremendous impact on the low response rate. Districts in the state of Mississippi are transitioning into many newly-implemented programs such as the Mississippi Statewide

Teacher Appraisal Rubric and Common Core and Assessment, leaving the spring semester laden with additional work as principals were focused on implementing these reform efforts. Many of the principals who were asked to participate in this study declined, based on a lack of time and their focus on these required reform efforts. Additionally, it is suspected by the researcher and supported by the data that principal unwillingness to participate may be reflective of their expectations concerning their school's climate. This idea is evidenced by the fact that 59% of the participating schools (13 out of 22) obtained a school climate score at above average or higher. Moreover, 59% (13 out of 22) of the participating principals scored within one standard deviation from the mean. Eight principals (36.4%) who scored within one standard deviation of the mean also have school climate scores at above average or higher.

Furthermore, the results of the MSCEIT V.2.0 and OHI-M were contingent upon the willingness of the participants to complete the assessments in an honest and accurate manner. The researcher was met with strong unwillingness on behalf of some principals, as well as un-ability from others. Multiple avenues were taken in an effort to gain participation. The researcher began data collection by attempting to gain superintendent permission. There were multiple emails sent, phone calls attempted, and meetings scheduled. Although they were submitted in two separate submissions, 35 superintendent permission letters were collected. The first submission to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) contained 15 districts' approval letters. Those 15 districts contained 22 total schools. Eleven of those principals participated in the survey, realizing a response rate of 50%. The second submission to the IRB contained 20 districts with a total of 44 middle

schools. Eleven of the 44 principals participated after the second submission to the IRB; a response rate of 25% was realized.

The following attempts were made to gain principal participation: E-mails; phone calls; personal visits; delivery of donuts to four campuses in a neighboring county; mailing \$5 McDonald's gift cards; and delivering coffee, biscuits, and apple pies to campuses within a 40-mile radius of the researcher's home. Support from personal contacts, teachers working in the other schools, as well as soliciting help from the researcher's superintendent were utilized.

Recommendations for Policy

Teachers' perceptions of the schools' climate is impacted by their attitudes (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Oakes, 1989; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Rutter et al., 1979, as quoted in Marzano et al., 2005). If principals possess the ability to change, transition, or affect the attitude of a teacher by understanding their emotions, the climate of the school would be impacted. Districts might want to consider screening procedures that include an EQ component, as long as they are being careful not to raise legal concern regarding fair hiring practices. Training must be available for current administrators of educational programs to participate in and glean insight into their personal EQ and its relationship with the school climate. Superintendents and higher-level educational leadership professionals might want to encourage self-administered EQ tests. Understanding the effect emotionally intelligent leaders have on a school's climate should drive districts into implementing reflective programs regarding principals' EQ competencies. In *A Place Called School*, Goodlad (1984) referred to schools with low teacher and student satisfaction as unhealthy organisms not able to take on the task of reform. Until school

environments are healthier for both students and teachers, educators cannot expect results from reform efforts (Gordon, 2013). Additionally, if researchers are able to prove that emotional intelligence is related to a school's climate and a positive school climate relates to student achievement, then hiring practices should be reconsidered. Educational institutions should purposefully hire administrators who are able to foster good emotions in stakeholders, leading schools and students into successful learning situations.

Recommendations for Practitioners

“A principal who precisely recognizes a teacher or parent's slight frustration during a meeting and understands the significance of that emotion will be better able to predict the teacher's or parent's subsequent actions and respond appropriately” (Elfenbein & Ambady, 2002). This quote accurately describes the importance of a principal's ability to understand emotion. Goleman et al. (2002) cited research by Kelner et al. (1996) that 53 to 72% of how employees perceive their organization's climate can be traced to the actions of one person — the leader. More than anyone else, the leader determines the conditions that directly affect people's ability to work well. Self-administration and reflection of a leader's emotional intelligence competencies could ultimately lead to more informed hiring and stronger administrators that might be more willing to focus on self-development and continued professional awareness.

The leader's ability to manage self-moods and affect others' moods is no longer a private matter but a crucial factor in the success of an organization (Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000; Ashkanasy et al., 2000). However, there is a missing link in *how* emotional intelligence relates to the way teachers perceive a school's climate. This research provides statistically significant data concerning the importance of a leader's ability to

understand emotion. Using this information in conjunction with existing EQ and school climate data, professional development in the area of *understanding* emotion is warranted and supported. Administrators and teachers might benefit from such professional development specifically aimed at addressing this area of emotional intelligence.

Goleman (1997) quoted Gardner:

Many people with IQs of 160 work for people with IQs of 100, if the former have poor intrapersonal intelligence and the latter have a higher one. And in the day to day world no intelligence is more important than the interpersonal. If you don't have it, you'll make poor choices about who to marry, what job to take, and so on. We need to train children in the personal intelligences in school. (pp. 41-42)

Recommendations for Future Research

Due to the low response rate in this study, it is recommended that data for similar studies be collected over a broader geographical area. Furthermore, broadening the focus to include other school levels may increase the data and therefore possibly the strength of correlations and significance. One recommendation that would possibly increase data is replication of this study with a focus on teachers rather than administrators. Findings of this research indicated that teacher affiliation had a very large standard deviation.

Goleman et al. (2002) described the emotional mind to be an "open-system" influenced primarily by external forces such as interactions with others (p. 6). This current study indicates a relationship does exist between a teacher's emotional intelligence and their perception of the school's climate. Styron (2008) described such healthy relationships among the staff as a definite way to create a healthy school climate. Interactions among

teachers may, in turn, have an impact on student success as measured by test scores, another recommendation for future studies.

It was noted that a significant relationship exists among the *understanding* branch of a principal's EQ score and school climate at the middle school level. Recall that Newlin's (2009) article described the middle school level as one where students' needs are more diverse than any other time in education. Newlin described the challenge that principals face in supporting, encouraging, and coaching middle school teachers. The physical, social, and emotional development of middle school students often produces an environment of inconsistency and unpredictability. A principal's ability to understand emotion and the interactions of emotions is paramount in leading a healthy middle school. The culmination of the data presented in this study indicates undeniable relationships between principal EQ and school climate. Replicating similar studies at the high school level is recommended for future research. Examining the relationship between high school principals' emotional intelligence and graduation rates and/or high school exit exam scores may provide research for reforms that would be beneficial to educators. Furthermore, the emotional intelligence of higher-level administrators such as superintendents may influence the morale, leadership style, and climates created and exemplified by the administrators under their leadership. Moreover, replication of this research in the higher education environment may offer significant findings. For example, the emotional intelligence of education leadership professors may have a relationship with the leadership styles of the future administrators under their training.

Leaders set expectations, influence the actions, and set the context for their subordinates. This research, along with a plethora of other research, confirms the

relationship between principal emotional intelligence and teachers' perception of school climate in middle schools. If educators continue to do what has always been done, the results will be consistent with the shortcomings that have always occurred. The middle school climate is a key to student success. This level of education is when math and reading scores begin to decline and students undergo physical, emotional, and psychological changes that will propel them into their future. If hiring emotionally intelligent middle school principals could lead to more positive school climates, then implementing needed effective professional development would be an outstanding and simple educational reform. Educators have a high calling and the influence of their decisions, actions, and successes begins with competent educational leaders.

APPENDIX A

PERMISSION TO USE GALLUP IMAGE

[CORP] Contact Form --Gallup.com [Incident #2046565]

[Incident #2086711](3)

Dear Ashley,

Thank you for your quick response. We have reviewed your request and are willing to grant you permission to use the chart on page 3 of <http://www.gallup.com/strategicconsulting/163520/school-leadership-linked-engagement-student-achievement.aspx> as long as there are no modifications to it. Remember you must reprint charts and tables in their original form. The citation should read as follows:

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Thank you,
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APPENDIX B

MAYER-SALOVEY-CARUSO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TEST V.2.0

SAMPLE ITEMS

Sample MSCEIT V.2.0 Items were obtained from: <http://www.emotionaliq.org/MSCEIT-Sample.htm>

The MSCEIT has eight sub-tests and 140 individual items. These examples are meant to illustrate the type of items that this ability test of emotional intelligence consists of.

Identifying Emotions

Indicate how much of each emotion is expressed by this face:

None 1 2 3 4 5 Very Much

Happiness

Anger

Fear

Excitement

Surprise

Using/ Facilitation

What mood(s) might be helpful to feel when meeting in-laws for the very first time?

	<i>Not Useful</i>				<i>Useful</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
a) Slight Tension					
b) Surprise					
c) Joy					

Understanding Emotions

Tom felt anxious, and became a bit stressed when he thought about all the work he needed to do. When his supervisor brought him an additional project, he felt _____. (Select the best choice.)

- a) Overwhelmed
- b) Depressed
- c) Ashamed
- d) Self Conscious
- e) Jittery

Managing Emotions

Debbie just came back from vacation. She was feeling peaceful and content. How well would each action preserve her mood?

Action 1: She started to make a list of things at home that she needed to do.

Very Ineffective..1.....2.....3.....4.....5..Very Effective

Action 2: She began thinking about where and when she would go on her next vacation.

Very Ineffective..1.....2.....3.....4.....5..Very Effective

Action 3: She decided it was best to ignore the feeling since it wouldn't last anyway.

Very Ineffective..1.....2.....3.....4.....5..Very Effective

APPENDIX C

PERMISSION FROM OHI-M AUTHOR

Re: Permission to use OHI-M

Wayne Hoy [whoy@mac.com]

Sent: Friday, October 25, 2013 9:39 AM

To: MS - Allred, Ashley

Dear Ashely--

You have my permission to use the OHI-M in your research.

Best wishes.

Wayne

Wayne K. Hoy
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APPENDIX D

ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH INVENTORY-MIDDLE LEVEL SURVEY

Directions: The following are statements about your school, Please indicate the extent to which each statement characterizes your school from **rarely occurs** to **very frequently occurs**.

Rarely Occurs, Sometimes Occurs, Often Occurs, Very Frequently Occurs

1. The principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other options exist.
2. Students make provisions to acquire extra help from teachers.
3. The principal gets what he or she asks for from superiors.
4. The principal discusses classroom issues with teachers.
5. The principal accepts questions without appearing to snub or quash the teacher.
6. Extra materials are available if requested.
7. Students neglect to complete homework.
8. The school is vulnerable to outside pressures.
9. The principal is able to influence the actions of his or her superiors.
10. The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal.
11. Teachers are provided with adequate materials for their classrooms.
12. Teachers in this school like each other.
13. Community demands are accepted even when they are not consistent with the educational program.
14. The principal lets faculty know what is expected of them.
15. Teachers receive necessary classroom supplies.
16. Students respect others who get good grades.
17. Good grades are important to the students of this school.
18. Teachers feel pressure from the community.
19. The principal's recommendations are given serious consideration by his or her superiors.
20. Supplementary materials are available for classroom use.
21. Teachers exhibit friendliness to each other.
22. Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.
23. Select citizen groups are influential with the board.
24. The principal looks out for the personal welfare of faculty members.
25. The school is open to the whims of the public.
26. A few vocal parents can change school policy.
27. Students try hard to improve on previous work.
28. Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm.
29. The learning environment is orderly and serious.
30. The principal is friendly and approachable.
31. Teachers show commitment to their students.
32. Teachers are indifferent to each other.
33. Teachers are protected from unreasonable community and parental demands.

34. The principal is able to work well with the superintendent.
35. The principal is willing to make changes.
36. Teachers have access to needed instructional materials.
37. Teachers in this school are cool and aloof to each other.
38. Teachers in this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically.
39. The principal is understanding when personal concerns cause teachers to arrive late or leave early.
40. Our school gets its fair share of resources from the district.
41. The principal is rebuffed by the superintendent.
42. Teachers volunteer to help each other.
43. The principal is effective in securing the superintendent's approval for new programs or activities.
44. Academically oriented students in this school are ridiculed by their peers. □
45. Teachers do favors for each other.

APPENDIX E

PERMISSION TO USE MSCEIT V.2.0 SCORING CHART

Betty Mangos [betty.mangos@mhs.com]

Friday, March 28, 2014 12:08 PM

Hello Ashley,

Wow, your life does sound busy!!

Thank you for returning the Permissions Application.

Please accept this e-mail as confirmation that MHS has granted you permission to use the MSCEIT diagram in your dissertation.

Please let me know if there is anything else that I can help you with.

Thank you,

Betty

(Betty Mangos, Permissions Representative at Multi-Health Systems)

APPENDIX F

SUPERINTENDENT PERMISSION REQUEST LETTER

December 30, 2013

Superintendent
Name of School District
School Address
City, MS Zip Code

Dear Superintendent,

I am a doctoral student at The University of Southern Mississippi conducting research on principal emotional intelligence and middle school teacher perception of school climate. This study seeks to discover the relationship between a middle school principal's emotional intelligence and their teachers' perceptions of the school's climate. The population of my study will include 51 public middle schools in Mississippi. I respectfully request your permission to survey middle school principals and teachers in your district.

Participation in the study is voluntary. While the collective data results of this research may be shared or published, individual names and scores of administrators, teachers, and schools will remain anonymous and completely confidential. The data collected will be protected on a secured website maintained by Multi-Health Systems, Inc. The dissertation committee statistician and I will only view the raw data. Survey results will be input into a spreadsheet by myself and the statistician and stored in a locked filing cabinet for a year. After that time, all of the information will be fully destroyed. Principals and teachers who complete the surveys will be entered into a drawing for a \$300 and \$100 VISA gift cards, respectively.

Principals who agree to participate will be emailed a secure online link to the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test. A designated faculty member will assist in the dissemination and collection of teacher surveys, The Organizational Health Inventory-Middle School level. Data will be statistically analyzed to determine the relationship between middle school principals' emotional intelligence and their teachers' perceptions of the school climate.

To save your time, enclosed is a draft permission letter to ashmallred@yahoo.com. I realize that your time, as well as that of your principals and teachers, is very valuable. So, I am extremely grateful for this opportunity. Please feel free to contact me anytime if you have questions or concerns and thank you in advance.

Very Sincerely,



Ashley M. Allred
Doctoral Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
(228) 424-7768
(228) 872-9850- fax
ashmallred@yahoo.com

Enc: Draft Permission Letter

Dear Mrs. Allred,

Thank you for your interest in conducting research in our school district. Please accept this letter as permission for middle school(s) in _____ School District to participate in your research study on emotional intelligence and school climate. I understand the scope of your research and the data to be collected. All information gathered will be done professionally, appropriately, and confidentially. We are honored to be included in this research and look forward to seeing the results of your study. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX G

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

118 College Drive #5147 | Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Phone: 601.266.5997 | Fax: 601.266.4377 | www.usm.edu/research/institutional-review-board

NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months.
Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 14020501

PROJECT TITLE: **Principal Emotional Intelligence and Teacher Perceptions of School Climate in Middle Schools**

PROJECT TYPE: **New Project**

RESEARCHER(S): **Ashley Allred**

COLLEGE/DIVISION: **College of Education and Psychology**

DEPARTMENT: **Educational Leadership and School Counseling**

FUNDING AGENCY/SPONSOR: **N/A**

IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: **Exempt Review Approval**

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: **02/07/2014 to 02/06/2015**

Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX H

PRINCIPAL COVER LETTER

Dear Principal,

I am a doctoral student at The University of Southern Mississippi currently conducting a research study for my dissertation entitled: *Principal Emotional Intelligence and Teacher Perception of School Climate in Middle Schools*. The research on these two aspects of leadership is very powerful. As a Mississippi administrator, you might be aware of the circle survey component of your evaluation that constitutes the greatest portion of your score. According to the Mississippi Department of Education, this survey will collect feedback from your teachers, supervisors, and yourself. I am proposing that you prepare for this circle survey by participating in the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) online. Additionally, by completing this voluntary survey you will be entered into a drawing for a \$300 VISA gift card.

If you and your teachers decide to voluntarily participate, please send the name of one of your trusted faculty members who could professionally disseminate teacher surveys entitled Organizational Health Inventory for Middle Schools (OHI-M). The OHI-M will assess teachers' perception of the school climate. All responses will remain anonymous and neither the school, the district, nor you will be identified. There will be a school code on your survey that allows matching with the teacher surveys. This information will be protected and only used for matching analysis purposes. The University of Southern Mississippi's Institutional Review Board has approved this study.

I sincerely appreciate your time and participation in this survey. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Very Sincerely,



Ashley M. Allred
Doctoral Candidate
The University of Southern Mississippi
(228) 424-7768
ashmallred@yahoo.com

APPENDIX I

TEACHER SURVEY COVER LETTER

Dear Teacher,

I am a Mississippi teacher and a doctoral student at The University of Southern Mississippi conducting a study for my dissertation entitled: *Principal Emotional Intelligence and Teacher Perception of School Climate in Middle Schools*. During your upcoming faculty meeting, you will be given an opportunity to participate in a voluntary survey concerning school climate. Your principal has recently completed a similar survey. This study seeks to more fully understand trends of principal emotional intelligence with teacher perception of the school climate. Please consider completing this short survey entitled Organizational Health Inventory for the Middle School level (OHI-M).

Your participation is very important and sincerely appreciated. All of your responses from the survey will remain completely anonymous and neither you, your school, nor district will be identified. If you decide to participate, please refrain from writing your name anywhere on the survey response sheet. The code on your survey serves only to identify the school from which the data are taken to match with the principal's survey. A faculty member will collect completed surveys into a confidential envelope for return. Upon turning in your sealed survey, you will be given an opportunity to enter your name into a drawing for one of two \$100 VISA gift cards. The University of Southern Mississippi's Institutional Review Board has approved this study. Again, I would sincerely appreciate your valuable input with this survey.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at anytime.

Very Sincerely,



Ashley M. Allred
Doctoral Student
University of Southern Mississippi
(228) 424-7768
ashmallred@yahoo.com

APPENDIX J

OHI-M FACULTY MEETING SCRIPT

Designated Faculty Member (DFM):

”This is an opportunity to take a short survey about school climate. It will be used for dissertation research at The University of Southern Mississippi and is completely voluntary and anonymous. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.”

(DFM will hand envelopes containing surveys and cover letters to those volunteering to participate)

DFM: “This survey will ask questions about school climate. The information provided will be used to determine if a relationship exists between teachers’ perception of school climate and principals’ emotional intelligence. Please do not put your name anywhere on the survey. Be honest while answering the questions. Surveys are printed with the school’s federal code to allow statistical alignment to principal responses. You will not be asked for any identifying information to maintain complete anonymity. Once you have read the cover letter that is attached to the survey, please complete the survey then seal it inside of the envelope for the designated faculty member to return to me. Thank you sincerely in advance for your time. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me anytime.”

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