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Teacher Perception of School Culture and School Climate in the Leader In Me Schools and Non Leader In Me Schools

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TEACHER PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL CULTURE AND SCHOOL CLIMATE IN

THE LEADER IN ME SCHOOLS AND NON LEADER IN ME SCHOOLS

by

Brian Patrick Barkley

Abstract of a Dissertation
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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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ABSTRACT

TEACHER PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL CULTURE AND

SCHOOL CLIMATE IN THE LEADER IN ME SCHOOLS

AND NON LEADER IN ME SCHOOLS

by Brian Patrick Barkley

May 2013

In 1989 Dr. Stephen Covey wrote *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* which revealed seven habits that people should integrate into their lives that would help them on the two levels of relationships. First, it would help people to establish a better relationship personally. Secondly, it would help people to improve their relationships with other people. The book was originally written for adults; later Sean Covey, son of Dr. Covey, wrote a version of *The Seven Habits* that was geared toward teenagers. But the question of whether these adult lessons can be taught to five year olds was taken on by an elementary school principal, Muriel Summers, as a way to change her struggling school that was in danger of losing its charter. What was found was a school that improved greatly in not only the academic areas, but also in social areas, as the school had respectful students, an engaged staff, and minimal discipline issues.

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a relationship between *Leader in Me* school teachers' perceptions of the school's culture and school climate, as compared to non Leader in Me teachers' perceptions, and, to determine if there is a difference in the schools' discipline referrals in a two year period. The primary data for this study were obtained from 172 teacher-reported surveys from three school districts, one in Florida and two in Mississippi. Nine schools participated in the study,

whichexamined teacher perception of school culture and school climate and its effect on discipline referrals. A MANOVA analysis was used to determine whether relationships exist between the dependent variable of discipline referrals over a two year period and the independent variables of the School Culture Survey and the School Level Environment Questionnaire.

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v

May 2013

DEDICATION

My dissertation is written in dedication to the memory of Dr. Stephen Covey who passed away during the process of my writing, but his influence on my dissertation and how I handle everyday life is invaluable. And to my mother, Carolyn Barkley, who taught me how to treat people, and to my god-father, David Howard, who raised me and taught me how to be a man, even though I am not his son he treated me as if I were his only son.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Natasha, our children,Joscelyn, Madison, and Victoria, for supporting me and allowing me the time and space to take on this endeavor for the last 12 months.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

              Statement of the Problem
              Purpose of the Study
              Research Questions
              Definition of Terms
              Delimitations
              Assumptions
              Justifications

              Common Core Curriculum
              Theoretical Framework
              Constructivism
              SUMMARY

              Preliminary Procedures
              Participants
              Research Questions
              Operational Procedures
              Data Analysis
              SUMMARY

              Description of the Respondents

Results
Data Analysis
Data Findings
Hypothesis Results
Summary

Introduction
Summary of Procedures
Major Findings
Discussion
Limitations
Recommendations for Policy and Practice
Recommendations for Further Research
Summary

LIST OF TABLES

Table

xi

CHAPTERI

INTRODUCTION

In a conversation with President George W. Bush about education, including the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Dr. Stephen Covey shared, "I was deeply troubled that an almost single-minded focus on accountability may simply be pushing teachers to turn our children into better test-takers"(Covey,2010, p. 1).When asked what he thought was needed, he responded, "partnerships between schools and parents in educating the whole child, which includes developing both the character, strength and the competencies required to really succeed in the 21st Century" (Covey, 2010, p. 1). In today's schools there is a great deal of time spent on getting students prepared for tests and in the technical elements of the subject areas, but not in how they are to behave in society. When officials reference accountability, they are segregating it to test scores, and that has been found to be the end all to what ails education. Because postsecondary success is the over-arching goal of school reform, attention to social and behavioral development has fallen by the wayside. The issue of social and behavioral development is justified not only by the resulting increase in instructional time available to students when office disciplinary referrals for misconduct decrease, but also by the likely gains that are associated with improved social integration and behavior in post-school environments such as work and home (Unley & Sailor, 2002). This is an indication that schools are now being charged with the responsibility of not only teaching the three Rs, but also teaching students how to behave.

To be most effective in the 21st century, students need to become proficient in core subjects such as reading, writing, science, and math and they need to become

proficient in basic social and life skills. In short, they need to have the mindsets, skill-sets, and tool-sets to (a) take care of themselves, to become independent; (b) to interact well with others, to become interdependent; and (c) to continually improve and stay current over time (Hatch, 2011). *The Leader In Me* program provides the abovemindsets, skill-sets, and tool-sets for learning. Student outcomes in the 21st century call for students to not only learn the 3R's along with critical thinking, communication, and technology skills, but to also have life and career skills. The life and career skills defined by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2011) call for students to be adept at the following:

    a. Adapt to change

    b. Be flexible

    c. Manage goals and time

    d. Work independently

    e. Be self-directed learners

    f. Interact with others

    g. Work effectively in diverse teams

    h. Manage projects

    i. Produce results

    j. Guide and lead others

    k. Be responsible to others(Partnership For 21st Century Skills, 2011c, p. 1)

These skills model what the *7 Habits*, if coupled with the 3Rs, can produce, which is a well-rounded person who is prepared to live in the 21st century. The *7 Habits* are broken up into three parts: the private victory, the public victory, and self-renewal.

The 7 Habits

Learning Habit One of the 7 Habits, *Be Proactive*, will teach students to become aware of and stand apart from what is happening and to critically examine how they see things. When referencing the discipline issue at a school, Habit One guides the students on how to use their three freedoms: imagination, conscience, and independent will. Furthermore, this habit exposes the students to the subject of control. Knowing what a person can control is important in teaching students to become proactive. Being proactive teaches people that they are ultimately responsible for their own actions. It gives them the initiative to forwardly think, create, and own their personal happiness because they will not allow the outside world to control them (Covey, 1989). The controls that a person has in life are as follows:

    a. Direct control – issues that involve their own behavior

    b. Indirect control – issues that involve the actions of others

    c. No control – issues that are beyond one's control

When looking at the 21st century skill set, which is a readiness set of skills that prepares students to compete in a global economy, being proactive provides the fuel for initiative, change, flexibility, and being self-directed(Covey, 2008). In today's world, the everyday challenges of life will present a more rigorous way of thinking for students far from the present-day practice of thinking skills and content knowledge. Because of this there is a need for people in the future to be more self-directed, and being proactive provides that skill because the art of being proactive is tied to people making decisions well before problems come up (Covey, 1998).

Habit Two, *Begin with the End in Mind*, gives a person the responsibility to create an image for his or her life. This image is then used as the reference for how everything that a person wants to happen in the future will be. This habit makes the case that everything is essentially created twice. First, the creation occurs mentally from setting one's goals, then the physical creation, the actual production or realization of the goal, occurs. This habit serves as the opportunity to write a personal mission statement (Covey, 1998). This mission statement serves as the center theme of a person's proactive life. Furthermore, Habit Two references centers or where a student places all of his or her energy and focus. The centers, according to Covey, should be principles or natural laws that never change (Covey, 1989). When Habit Two is put into action, goal setting and initiative are the skills that students will come away with as a positive lesson. Having the skill to define a personal mission statement that one is willing to follow will produce a student who has initiative and self-direction(Covey, 2008).

Habit Three, *Put First Things First*, is the habit of time management. As a 21st century concept, Habit Three addresses the skills of planning, organization, and initiative. This is important for students because in order to effectively live in today's world it is important to identify the elements of daily living that demand attention. Not only identifying them is important, but also putting them in their proper place is essential to being effective. The habit divides time and the things that happen in daily living into two concepts: important and urgent. Important items are those items that must be completed in order for a student to achieve his or her mission and goals. Urgent things are those items that must be taken care of immediately. Everything that a person has to do will be divided into four quadrants. The quadrants are urgent/important, not urgent/important)

urgent/not important, and not urgent/not important. Once the mission in Habit Two is established, knowing what is important and urgent becomes easy to discover (Covey, 1998). This will be important for students in that if they apply the concepts and lessons of putting first things first they will find that there is enough time to care for all of the issues that they are faced with on a daily basis.

Covey calls the first three of the 7 Habits the Private Victory, because they involve changes within one's own self. Covey asserts that as people gain mastery of the private habits, they move from dependence to independence (Covey,1989). This movement happens because of a person needing people to make decisions about their life to a thought process of combining the private victory habits so that they can be independent in how they think and act. In a mature student, neither dependence nor independence is the optimal model by which they need to live. Interdependence, the optimal model, has to do with the fact that people depend on others to accomplish the daily challenges of life. In an interdependent world everyone brings the best of their talents so that everyone has the opportunity to realize true success (Covey,1989). With students, the continuum starts with being totally dependent on teachers and parents in the beginning of the education experience. This dependency involves the student needing the approval and assistance of others in order to complete simple tasks at school such as learning how to raise and fold the American flag. When a student becomes independent he or she knows where the flag is located in the office, how to get it without adult supervision, and displays the maturity to perform the task by him or herself. When students learn to master the task independent of an adult and can make it happen using a

population of students only, with everyone doing their part of the job, then they have

found interdependency.

In 1989, Covey states that Habits 1, 2, and 3 can be simply articulated as *make*

and keep a promise, while the second three habits translate to *involve others in the*

*problem and work out the solution together.*Likewise, Habits 4, 5 and 6 which build upon

relationship developing skills are called the *Public Victory.*Through the addition of the

public victory, one moves to the preferred state of interdependence. Interdependence is

the state of people depending on each other to achieve goals. When looking at

interdependence from a standpoint of teaching students it is important to look at the way

that students can apply interdependence positively. Positive interdependence is linking

students together so that one cannot succeed unless the group succeeds. The desire to

shift the focus of education to a more globalized method of learning positive

interdependence ensures that a group's success is tied to each individual doing his or her

own duties within the confines of the group. Positive interdependence is at the heart of

cooperative learning. In the classroom, having students learn material through the use of

small group work is an example of interdependence (Johnson & Johnson, 2004).

Habit Four is *Think Win/Win* and begins with a discussion of the six paradigms of

human interaction, which focus on winning and losing. This habit is the first of three

habits that focus on the *Public Victory*. The main paradigm is the abundance mentality.

The abundance mentality rewards sharing resources as only a means to an end. However,

that end is not just making the individual happy, but finding the way that makes everyone

happy. In schools, Habit Four is the habit that will help students learn to work with

others to find the best way to completing jobs with others. Having this mentality will

teach students the basis of conflict management and creative problem solving. Habit Four creates flexibility and adaptability in that students will learn to work effectively in different climates and can see where they can have different priorities.

Habit Five, the second habit of the Public Victory, *Seek First to Understand and Then to be Understood*, is the habit of communication. This habit teaches students how to first listen then to speak. Listening should be more than hearing the words that are said; emphatically listening for true understanding is ideal. Learning to listen with the intent to understand rather than the intent to respond is important in communicating with others. Learning to emphatically listen will teach students to communicate better with their friends, teachers, and, more importantly, their parents. The art of emphatic listening will teach the students to connect with the other person. Whether they are parents, teachers, or other students, they will truly connect with people through listening. Just as important, however, is that students will gain the skill to communicate and, from listening, they will learn courage in speaking(Covey,1989). Courage comes from having the ability to speak truthfully with another person.

The Sixth Habit, which is the last habit of the public victory, *Synergize*, is the habit that teaches that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This habit is the one habit for which Habits Four andFive prepare readers. Before students can hope to synergize with people, they must be able and willing to want to find the best way of working together and listening to others. Synergy in a school can be found when everyone subordinates themselves for the greater good. In the classroom, synergy will teach students to value the differences between people instead of shunning them.

Shunning is one of the methods of handling diversity. In order for a student to learn to live by the habit of synergy, he or she must learn the three levels of diversity.

First, there is shunning, which is deliberately avoiding diversity. The students who are considered *shunners* will be the ones who have not been exposed to other groups of people and who stay away from people who are different. They can learn however, that all people have positives that outweigh the negatives. The next method of dealing with diversity is to tolerate the differences between people. Those who tolerate diversity believe that it is perfectly acceptable that people are different. In schools, the problem with being tolerant is that it prevents students from finding synergy because they still want to work with other students who have the same belief system that they have even though theyacknowledge that people are different. The goal of schools should be to create students who celebrate the differences between people. This is important because in a global economy students are going to need this type of paradigm to thrive. Celebrators see diversity as an opportunity to create more together to achieve more (Covey, 1989). Synergy gives people the right to have their own opinions about any subject because they can be respected for who they are. Synergy is the habit that pulls all of the other habits together.

The last habit is that of *self-renewal*, which encompasses all of the habits. Habit Seven allows students to renew physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually, so that they can continue to exercise their daily lives and activities. Habit Seven presents students with ways to have healthy choices, emotional wellness, lifelong learning, and purposeful living (Hatch, 2011). The habit itself is aptly title*Sharpens the Saw* is analogous to sharpening a saw. With the pressure of testing in schools becoming more prevalent,

students will need to have a means of balancing those pressures with enjoyment. This habit teaches that humans need to find ways to make our physical, mental, social, and spiritual selves better by participating in the activities of the dimensions. Physically, students need to learn to recoup that desire to go outside and play. Mentally, students need to not always look for the short and easy method to perform activities, especially activities like reading, playing chess, and playing a musical instrument. Socially, smart phones, computers, and the Internet have taken away the fine art of just holding conversations in today's society and that has made people less social and caring. Spiritually, people need to have a belief in something that is bigger than life itself, and with the entire outside influences and instant information the one thing that is becoming lost is a sense of spirituality.

Culture

Since schools are responsible for shaping the whole child, one area that a school has to be concerned about is establishing how to live in an orderly culture. Culture has been described as "the interrelated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for symbolic thought and social learning"(Roberson, 2011). Fullam and Hargreaves (1996), inshort, defined culture as the procedures and rules of a school or "the way that we do things around here"(Valentine, 2006, p. 3).Culture is not something imposed on a social setting, but something that is developed through the social interaction(Morgan, 1986). This development happens over time and is shared and handed down to succeeding generations within the organization (Valentine, 2006). Traditionally, culture is viewed through the day-to-day routines that an organization practices, and there exists a strong correlation between certain aspects of a school's

culture and student performance (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2004). In a school's culture are the rules, regulations, and expectations that everyone has for the school. Dress codes, teacher procedures for discipline, and rules for entering the classroom are all systematic processes for the way things are done in schools. Research and experience of educators indicated that a school's culture is not often created solely by the teachers. Even though school administrators have a vision of what schools are supposed to look like, the vision should be collaborationbetween administration, faculty, and staff (Deal & Peterson, 2009). The culture is created by these groups because, of all the parts of a school that exist, these three groups of people will likely be the constant seen as students matriculate through the years. Bryke, Lee, and Holland, (1993) found that, in order to have a sense of excellence in a school, the school also must have a sense of community. A sense of excellence and community comes from the culture, and if the culture promotes community then excellence propels itself throughout the school. As the excellence propels in the school a more desirable working and learning environment is created. With an environment of excellence, students and teachers would be more intrinsically motivated and possess a greater passion for learning and teaching. School culture is the shared experiences both inside and outside the school (traditions and celebrations) that create a sense of community, family, and team membership for the school. People in any healthy, excellent organization must reach a consensus about end goals and whether those goals are worth accomplishing. The culture drives the consensus and makes the less enjoyable or harder concepts of education worth doing in culturally healthy schools.

Climate

The term *climate* is often synonymous with school environment or learning environment and has a definition of being the social sets of norms and expectations in a school (Loukas, 2007). Factors that will be used to measure a school's climate are collaboration**,** student relations, school resources, decision making, and instructional innovation. These factors have been found to be greater predictors of school achievement than demographics (Hoy & Hannum, 1997).

Over time, research has shown that teachers who collaborate on matters of curriculum and instruction find themselves better equipped for classroom work (Little, 1987). They take considerable satisfaction from professional relationships that withstand differences in viewpoints and occasional conflict (Little, 1987). Likewise, collaboration in any field will make job satisfaction and retention higher because teachers would have a communicative/collaborative process to rely upon when they face a problem. Collaborative environments prove especially helpful when there are shared goals within the culture of teachers and administrators (Rosenholtz, 1985). Without it, teachers of all levels of experience possess a sense of loneliness in isolated classrooms. Teachers need to be better prepared to support one another's strengths and to accommodate weaknesses. Having shared responsibility for the decision and accountability for the outcomes and shared resources are all characteristics of collaboration that teachers must have for collaboration to work (Cook & Friend, 1991). From working together, a teacher can reduce his or her individual planning time, while increasing the available pool of ideas and materials. Schools become better prepared and organized to examine new ideas, methods, and materials, and the faculty becomes adaptable and self-reliant.

While searching different studies on student achievement Tater, Hoy, and Hov (2006) found that schools with a strong sense of collective efficacy had students who performed better (Tater et al., 2006). The relationships are formed through efficacy because everyone's success is tied to the success of the individual student. The process of learning and teaching is actually a process of building relationships. The higher the level of relationships that a student has to his or her school, the better the student will perform. This level of relationships is tied to whether a student feels that the people in school care about them, as an individual(Center for Social and Emotional Education, 2010). The relationships or attachment to school by students has been found to directly influence school success when it comes to attachment to teachers (Bergin & Bergin, 2009). Bergin also found that,"relationships are easier to obtain in early education levels as opposed to secondary levels because of time constraints in secondary schools" (p.150). Nevertheless, in secondary schools, it wasfound that being a good teacher requires establishing close, trusting relationships with students(Beihuizzen, Hof, van Putten, Bouwmeeser, and Asscher, 2001).

The process of evaluating production in schools is vastly different from the process that is used to evaluate businesses. This is because businesses, unlike schools, control their own inputs, so what they bring in can be easily judged by concrete possessions. Schools have the opportunity to chooseonly who they hire to teach and the equipment that they buy. Ulrich(2004)also reported that classrooms and hallways that were decorated in concepts of learning were found to create greater participation and involvement in the learning process. This is very important in *Leader in Me,* as schools having a constant reminder of what the school is about and why the culture of the school

becomes very important to the climate of the school is. It is also important because more students are becoming visual learners, and seeing posters around the school depicting the importance of the *7 Habits* and 21st century skills will enhance the learning.

In the area of decision making it is imperative that the decisions made in schools be based not only on test data. The indicators that are most suggested are test scores, rigor of coursework, graduation rates, attendance rates, promotion rates, and co-curricular activity participation (American Association of School Administrators, 2006). Deborah Wahlstrom suggested that only three types of data really need to be collected to make school management decisions: demographics, process, and outcome (Jianping et al., 2010). These types of data are proper for looking at decision making from an objective point of view. The best authority is the classroom teacher, because he or she sees what is happening when the administrator is not around. The administrator may not be the best authority for making prudent decisions about the education process in a school.Successful schools use a democratic method of making decisions on the campus, incorporating inputfrom both administration and faculty(Little, 1987).

Instructional innovation may promise authentic, effective learning at all levels of schooling. The question then becomes whether schools are delivering on that promise or just replacing new words of practice on old curriculum. With the advent of a new millennium and the changing of the way that students learn, it is imperative that schools change as well. The method of teaching and the role of teachers have to change from an instructional engineer, who uses application of the latest scientific methods to instruct(Hokanson, Miller, & Hopper, 2008). The method suggested is that of an instructional architect who balances instruction, design, and research to increase learner

motivation and interaction. This type of teacher is optimal because he or she enhances learning to a broader spectrum through holistic learning experiences (Hokansonet al., 2008).

<div align="center">Statement of the Problem</div>

School leaders are always in search of methods to improve their schools' climates and cultures. This study's importance rests with school administrators who are looking to explore another method to improve the work environment for teachers and achievement of students. Research on teachers' views of climate and culture does not provide a great amount of informationon how they play a part in academic achievement and development of children (National School Climate Center, 2008). The gap in research on the topics of teacher perception of climate and culture from a view of a school-wide method of teaching and administering a school such as *The Leader In Me* is the result of five issues:

a. First, there exists an inconsistency and inaccuracy in terms of school climate definition.

b. Second, while there are superior options, state policymakers have made poor choices in terms of school climate measurement at the state level.

c. Third, there is a lack of defined climate-related leadership at the state level.

d. Fourth, many states continue to isolate school climate policy in health, special education, and school safety arenas, without integrating it into school accountability policies or the beliefs of the community at large.

e. Fifth, many states have not yet created quality or improvement standards, which can easily link data to improvement plans and technical assistance (National School Climate Center, 2008).

If this problem isnot resolved then the goals of educational accountability will neverbe met. Teachers, in turn, will always feel a sense of unpreparedness and unrest in performing on the job. The most glaring problem in schools today, according to a Phi Delta Kappa poll in conjunction with Gallup, is school discipline. Discipline topped the list for the first 16 years of the poll and has remained near the top in recent years (Rose & Gallup, 2005). School discipline continues to be one of the greatest challenges in education, as identified by both educators and the public at large, and is considered one of the most persistent problems faced by schools. It is the opinion of this writer that the discipline of a school can be tied to the culture and climate that persists in the school. If culture and climate are in concert with each other and are defined and taught in a school, then adhering to the norms of them will make the education process much easier in schools. This, in turn, could create a better situation in which teachers to work.

The principal at A.B. Combs Elementary School, Muriel Summers, was working at a marginalized magnet elementary school that was barely surviving. The school was the lowest-performing school in the district. Summers was issued a challenge to invent a learning model that was different from any other model in the United States. She was not going to receive any additional funds or personnel. This job had to be done in only one week, and she found a way. Because Summers was a person of vision, at a cross roads of managing her school, she needed a profound method of changing her school for the better. She found this method through the use of Stephen Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. With her experience using the *7 Habits,* she suggested a leadership development model based on the lessons of the habits. This was an idea that no other school in the country had previously tried, so she implemented the process with the

assistance of Franklin Covey, a company that is a global consulting and training company in leadership, strategy execution, and individual effectiveness (Franklin Covey, 2006).

Thepresent study is designed to show that schools can change the teachers' perceptions of their school's overall climate and culture, while at the same time increase the academic performance of a school through the implementation of the *Leader In Me* process. Increasing the overall presence of culture and climate attributes can produce a more effective school (Leadership for Student Success, 2006). Students at *Leader in Me* schools are reported to learn more and have the initiative to lead not only themselves, but also others because they are learning in a school over which they feel ownership. Evidence of this can be found in schools such as Joseph Welsh Elementary School where the school experienced a 67% drop in discipline referrals after the first year of implementing The *Leader In Me*(Franklin Covey Company, Center for Advanced Research, 2010). Initially, A.B. Combs Elementary piloted The *Leader In Me*in 1999 using one teacher per grade level. That year, the percentage of students passing end-of-grade tests jumped from 84 to 87%, largely due to the improved scores of pilot students. During year two, the entire school embraced the process, and the percentage of passing students rose to 94%. A.B. Combs has since steadily maintained elevated scores for an entire decade, peaking at 97%. Scores dropped when the state test changed, but the drop was far less than the district average (Hatch, 2011). Teachers will experience a more enjoyable work environment and find more satisfaction in the day-to-day activities of teaching. This has been reported to be a result of six keys: shared leadership, ubiquitous strategy, student leadership, a supportive environment, parent and community involvement, and a model of caring (Hatch, 2011). Teachers at *Leader in Me* schools

report a high level of job satisfaction, which alone will produce better students.

Administrators will find that when students are more in tune with school, they will want

to learn, and this might increase academic accountability on standardized tests. Society

can expect to have a better-rounded individual upon completion of school, thus

improving and complementing a work force. This is really important because not all

students will attend college, despite popular belief about what students should do after

high school. The obvious benefit of implementing the *Leader In Me* obviously will be a

population of young people who will graduate high school with a more mature perception

on life because they have been exposed to the lessons from the *7 Habits*. The lessons of

the habits can and will be beneficial to everyone who learns them because they are not

just for one demographic.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a relationship

between *Leader in Me* school teachers' perceptions of the school's culture and school

climate, as compared to non *Leader in Me* teachers' perceptions, and to determine if there

is a difference in the schools' discipline referrals in a two year period. The study looks at

teacher perception from two distinct points of view, the culture of schools and the climate

of schools. Both of these topics have been studied immensely as individual subjects in

schools, but when looking at them in concert with each other as they relate to *Leader in*

Me schools there is not a plethora of information. The results of this study will be to

school administrators and teachers who are looking for a method of improving the culture

and climate of the school, which can improve student learning.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a relationship between *Leader in Me* school teachers' perceptions of the school's culture and school climate, as compared to non *Leader in Me* teachers' perceptions, and to determine if there is a differences in the schools' discipline referrals in a two year period. The independent variables are whether or not a school is a *Leader in Me* school, teacher perception of school culture, and school climate. School climate and school culture will be determined by the completion of surveys. The dependent variable will be the number of discipline referrals. Each school's number of discipline referrals will be compared to all other schools' number of referrals in the study. The Research Questions that will be answered through this project will be:

a. Is there a difference in teacher perception of school culture between *Leader in Me* schools and non-*Leader in Me* schools as measured by the variables in School Culture Survey?

b. Is there a difference in teacher perception of school climate between *Leader in Me* schools and non-*Leader in Me* schools as measured by the variables in the School Level Environment Questionnaire?

c. Is there a relationship between teacher perception of school culture and school climate and student discipline referrals at *Leader in Me* schools and schools without the program as measured by the schools' discipline reports?

Definition of Terms

Culture - The shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization(Wegner & Hall, 1998).

Climate - School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of students', parents, and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures(Center for Social and Emotional Education, 2010).

Leader in Me school - A school that has fully implemented *The Leader In Me* curriculum into its culture and climate(Covey S. , 2008).

NCLB (No Child Left Behind) - is a United States Act of Congress concerning the education of children in public schools. NCLB was originally proposed by the administration of President George W. Bush shortly after he was inaugurated(Sunderman, Kim, & Orfield, 2005).

Delimitations

The delimitations of this study include the fact that only a predetermined number of *Leader in Me* Schools and non-*Leader in Me* Schools participated in the data collection. The study consists of schools in the same state and geographical region so that there was a consistency in the school testing procedures. The study also uses only public schools because in most cases these schools are the ones that receive Title I funding and are by law required to administer state tests.

Assumptions

The assumption of this study is that all respondents honestly completed the questionnaire and returned it in the manner requested. It was also assumed that the instrument was easy for the respondents to use.It is further assumed that survey participants are certified teachers in public K-12 schools.

Justification

This study is important because, if using the methods prescribed in The *Leader In Me*isas effective as reported, the data could be used by school administrators and community leaders who are considering the use of this method of teaching in their schools to improve learning environments. This study could be a tool that could assist administrators in determining if The *Leader In Me* would be effective in improving their teachers' perceptions of their jobs within the school. The information may answer questions about trends in data found how teachers feel in the workplace and if implementing The *Leader In Me* could be the answer to shortcomings in perception data about culture and climate and teachers' perceptions of the factors.

Each year, schools spend a great deal of funds on professional development for teachers. The topics discussed are often old news to teachers because they deal with the same issues each year. Even though schools provide professional development about teaching methods, they usually do not include methods of improving the way that a school actually works on a daily basis at a personal level. Bergin and Bergin (2009) found teaching to be more about establishing relationships with students than about what is being taught. Bergin and Bergin (2009) also reported that "the more effective teachers are those who establish meaningful relationships with students" (p.152). The *Leader*

InMe is a method of teaching that incorporates the *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* lessons into everything taught in schools. Teachers in *Leader in Me* schools suggest that they do not see the methods as just something else to do, but instead as a way to produce a risk-free environment for students to feel good about themselves and learn (Hatch, 2011).

Summary

Dr. Stephen Covey (2010) shared, "I was deeply troubled that an almost single-minded focus on accountability may simply be pushing teachers to turn our children into better test-takers" (p. 1).When asked what he thought was needed, he responded, "Partnerships between schools and parents in educating the whole child, which includes developing both the character strength and the competencies required to really succeed in the 21st Century" (Covey, 2012, p.1). Since schools are responsible for shaping the whole child, one area that a school has to be concerned about is establishing how to live in an orderly culture. Climate is just as important and is also often synonymous with school environment or learning environment and has a simple definition of being the social sets of norms and expectations in a school (Loukas, 2007). This study is important because it provides insight into whether using the methods prescribed in The *Leader In Me* is as effective as reported. If so, the data could be used by school administrators and community leaders who are considering the use of this method of teaching in their schools to improve the learning environments. This study could assist administrators in determining if The *Leader In Me* would be effective in improving their teachers' perceptions of their jobs within the school. This study will provide insight into teachers'

perceptions of culture and climate at schools that are presently implementing The *Leader In Me* and compare the findings to teachers' perceptions in non-*Leader in Me* schools.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

On January 8, 2002, President George W. Bush and the United States government

pledged their dedication to the improvement of the nation's education system by

implementing *a* landmark in education reform known as the *No Child Left Behind Act of*

2001 (Soto, 2007).NCLB has been called the most significant and contentious addition to

the education process in the United States since the federal government began

participating in the process of educating students. It was described by President George

W. Bush as a transformation of educational practice designed to narrow and eventually

eliminate the achievement gap for American children (Soto, 2007). The act has been

described by those in education as a process to gradually weaken the public education

system (NCPEA, 2009). When President Bush signed NCLB into law it contained a

number of accountability provisions for schools to produce higher achievement scores,

especially in math and language arts. At the core of the NCLB were a number of

measures designed to produce broad gains in student achievement and to hold states and

schools more accountable for student progress (Education Week, 2004).

The goal of NCLB is defined as having all students in the United States perform

at a proficient level in math and language by 2014. The accountability applies to schools

that receive Title I funds from the federal government. The funding is to provide aid to

those schools in which there at least 35% of students are from low-income families.

While the intention of NCLB appeared to be positive, the reality of NCLB has come to

mean a test-and-punish approach to school reform. Many educators view NCLB as an

unrealistic demand on the education system because it places the extreme importance on

the proficiency levels of state tests and uses the results to determine the goals and direction of education. This, in essence, took away the states' rights to establish their means of a proficient or an adequate level of education, thus creating a one-size-fits-all accountability model that does not consider differences in the variables of education. The achievement levels from standardized tests scores that schools achieve have become the gauge by which the public measures school efficiency.

Since the inception of NCLB, more than 10,000 schools nationally have been put on NCLB's infamous list of schools in need of improvement, and even more face an escalating series of sanctions that address neither their needs, nor their challenges (Karp, 2007). The National Association of Education Progress (NAEP) has shown that NCLB has actually slowed the rate of achievement and never narrowed or closed the gap in test scores. Though state test scores have increased, NAEP results did not show sustained improvement in math and reading (NCPEA, 2009). This suggests that the achievement gap remains.

Moreover, a study from Rice University and the University of Texas at Austin reports that each year 135,000 students leave Texas public high schools before projected graduation dates, and a disproportionate number of these are African American, Latino, and English as Second Language (ESL) learners. More importantly, data collected from the study reveal 271,000 students from poor high schools in an urban district between 1997 and 2002 did not complete high school, which shows that the state's "high-stakes accountability system has a direct impact on the severity of the dropout problem" (Oleck, 2008, p. 20). In short, NCLB's accountability requirements led to the pressures that fed the dropout rate, according to the study by Oleck.

Mcneillet al. (2007) also categorized the graduation rate by ethnicity, race, and language. They found that 60% of African Americans, 75% of Latino students, and 80% of ESL learners did not graduate within five years. In Texas, the graduation rate was earlier reported to be around 2 to 3% but in actually it was 33% (Oleck, 2008). Even though the dropouts helped raise the graduation rates, many of the ethnic groups that NCLB was originally said to help were actually hindered. The reason for these groups failing to graduate was the increasing pressures from the requirements of NCLB.

The omnipresent goal of schools has always been to produce citizens who can survive and even thrive in an educated society. Schools today should produce students who have the skill sets to not only live in, but also to contribute to society. Having these types of skills will help children compete in a global economy. In order for schools to produce these students, schools must couple the 3Rs (reading, writing, and arithmetic) with the 4C's (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity). Though NCLB focused upon the 3R's, the result was a student who could take a test well.

In an effort to produce students who can compete globally, many groups have advocated a movement toward national standards of learning. President Barack Obama, in September 2011, introduced a program that waived the cornerstone requirements of NCLB (Klein, 2011). In this waiver program, states were given the freedom to set their achievement goals and produce intervention programs for their failing schools. In order for a state to receive the waiver, they are required to adopt college- and career-readiness standards, focus on 15% of their failing schools, and create guidelines for teacher evaluations based upon student performances (Klein, 2011). States are also required to identify and have interventions for the lowest 5% of their schools. The waiver also

mandates states to identify another 10% of schools that struggle with particularly low graduation rates.

To truly focus education, a mechanism must exist to give schools the necessary time and resources to produce a student who can succeed in the global economy (About The Standards, 2011). The answer to the problems lays in the creation of The Common Core Curriculum and 21st Century Skills. These two programs provide a true fusion of the 3Rs and the 4Cs. In the global economy, emphasis is placed upon life and career skills, learning and innovation skills, information, media, and technology skills in addition to the 3Rs core subject skills. One major misconception of education is that all students need to attend college to be successful people. Therefore, schools have long adopted curriculum to focus on postsecondary, theoretical skills rather than practical, applied skills and knowledge. Many students today will venture into the workforce as mechanics and electricians, or into an occupation as a video game tester, for which no or few postsecondary degrees exist. Many believe that the true mission of a school should to be to prepare students for a productive adult life in a rapidly changing world.

Common Core Curriculum

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) initiative is a state-led curriculum created to provide a clear framework to prepare students to enter either a postsecondary educational institution or the workforce. The CCSS concentrate not on the content that is to be taught, but instead on the more important issue of what tasks or skills students possess despite their path after graduation. The standards are divided into two categories: college and career readiness standards and K-12 standards.

The CCSS identify what information and skills students should have before they graduate high school in order to succeed at the entry-level of both credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training (About The Standards, 2011). The standards:

a. Are aligned with college and work expectations;

b. Are clear, understandable and consistent;

c. Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;

d. Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;

e. Are formed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society;

f. Are evidence-based (About The Standards, 2011, p. 1)

The idea of common standards among all states for educating students did not start with the federal government. Rather, it began in the states. In 2005, the National Governors' Association led the push for states to use the same measures to calculate each state's graduation rates. Before NCLB was passed, ESEA was the federal government's role in education. ESEA, though, was very costly at a price of $120 billion. In the area of school accountability in America, testing has existed since the 19th century, but interest in accountability can be traced back to the 1966 report *Equality of Education Opportunity or the Coleman report* (Vinovskis, 1998). At the time, U.S. Commissioner of Education Frank Keppel proposed to Congress the provisions of the ESEA to garner federal support and financial aid for the education of disadvantaged students. When the law passed, Congress included provisions of evaluation in the program. ESEA did not deliver as

promised with the testing during the years 1968 and 1969. Beginning in 1969 NAEP

started as a voluntary assessment for states (Vinovskis, 1998). The ESEA, according to

President George W. Bush, was inefficient and fell short of the desired result of education

(Bush, 2001). This failure of education was previously fought by President Ronald

Reagan who proposed eliminating the Department of Education (Richman, 1988).

President Bush proposed NCLB which passed as a solution to all of the problems with

ESEA.

The CCSS initiative evolved into a large effort, as education officials from 48

states worked to develop a new set of academic standards for K-12 schools. Alaska and

Texas were the only two states that did not participate in the initial proposing of the

standards (Harrison, 2010). The consensus among the states for what a student should

possess prior to graduation became known as CCSS and fell into five areas: (1) Solve

problems, (2) Communicate, (3) Adapt to change, (4) Work in teams, (5) Analyze and

conceptualize(Burnham, 2010).

Teaching the Common Core Standards in schools does not change the basic

curriculum or core classes. CCSS will help to ensure that students will receive the same

curriculum from school to school, district to district, and state to state. CCSS shape a

more fluid, methodical approach to education for schools and allows more opportunity to

share experiences and best practices to educate all students and improve all participating

schools' ability to best serve the needs of students. This is because the design of the

standards is anchored in college and career readiness provisions, along with being

internationally benchmarked and evidence-based (National Education Association, 2010).

To produce students who can compete in a global economy, Partnership for21[st]Century Skills (P21) focuses upon core subjects and thinking themes; learning and innovation skills; information; media, and technology skills; and life and career skills. The support systems for accomplishing these outcomes are standards and assessments, curriculum and instruction, professional development, and learning environments (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2011b). The framework for P21 is based on essential skills that citizens and workers in the 21st century need.

It is believed that schools must move beyond their focus on the basic subjects and instead focus on a higher level and broader scope of learning (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2007). In addition to the core subjects (language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language, civics, government, economics, arts, history, and geography), the P21 content adds global awareness; financial; economic; business, and entrepreneurial awareness and literacy; civic literacy; health and wellness awareness; and environmental literacy. The coupling of an historical, standard curriculum with a P21 curriculum produces a student who has the necessary skills to communicate and succeed in any society.

Global awareness, the first part of the P21 framework, teaches students how to work with and have a mutual respect for people from different backgrounds and cultures. Students learn to act in an informed manner and discuss social, cultural, political, and other issues that affect human beings (University of Wisconsin-Superior, 2010). In this subject matter, knowledge, empathy, communication, and civic duty are important components to learning. Global awareness as a subject compliments the curriculum of The *Leader In Me* and teaches students Habits Four through Six, of the *7 Habits,* the

habits of the public victory. Habits Four through Six are the habits where students learn

how to turn problems to solutions, communicate, and learn to work with others.

Financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy is the second part of the P21

framework, knowledge of how to make appropriate, personal economic choices

(Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2011a). This framework exposes students to the role

of the economy in society. Students learn how entrepreneurial skills help them in the

workplace and at choosing a career field. The next P21 framework is civic literacy.

Students learn how the governmental process works, and students are exposed to the

rights and obligations of responsible citizenship at not only the local, state, and national

levels but also globally. In the civic arena, students engage in democracy to learn its

importance not only in their immediate community but also world-wide (Partnership for

21st Century Skills, 2011a). Health literacy, another aspect of the P21 framework, deals

with having a knowledge and basic understanding of health information and services.

Health literacy incorporates the need for physical education in schools through

information on nutrition, exercise, risk/stress reduction, and public health and safety

issues. This is important to students because they need to have knowledge about how to

take better care of themselves. The last component of the P21 framework is

environmental literacy; this gives students an opportunity to learn about the air, land,

climate, and how these subjects coupled with others work together. Students learn how

population growth and development affect resources of the planet.

The P21 curriculum, along with the 3Rs, the traditional curriculum, grants

students exposure to more skills that should make students more responsible people. The

traditional curriculum coupled with the P21 curriculum work well together because it is

becoming more important that students have the mind-set, skill-set, and tool-sets to take care of themselves, work well with others, and continually improve themselves over time (Hatch, 2011). With so much emphasis on the 3Rs, there is not enough time given to develop the 4Cs, which has placed students at a great disadvantage. This disadvantage causes students to lack experience in thinking critically, solve problems, communicate with others, or collaborating with others. Core Curriculum and 21[st]Century Skills together make a natural curriculum. To have an effective transition from only the Core Curriculum to a core and P21, incorporation of the *7 Habits* and the *Leader In Me*becomes imperative. Figure 1shows how the habits correlate with the 21st century skill set to connect students' learning, thinking, and performing.

Table 1

7 Habits and the 21st Century Skills

	The 7 Habits	Mindsets	Skill-sets	Tool-sets
Taking Care of Self (Becoming Independent)	1: Be Proactive	I am responsible for my actions and attitudes	Initiative	Leadership Notebook
	2: Begin with the End in Mind	I have a plan	Goal-settingPlanning	

Table 1 (continued).

	The 7 Habits	Mindsets	Skill-sets	Tool-sets
Working Well with Others (Becoming Interdependent)	**4:** Think Win-Win	I find ways everyone can win	Conflict Management	Quality Decision Tools
	5: Seek First to Understand, then to be Understood	I listen before I talk	ListeningPublic Speaking	
	The 7 Habits	Mindsets	Skill-sets	Tool-sets
Staying Fit and Renewed (Sustained Growth)	7: Sharpen the Saw	I lie a balanced life	Healthy ChoicesEmotional WellnessLifelong LearningPurposeful Living	

Note. From "The *Leader In Me*, What it is, How it is Delivered, and the Promising Results it is Seeing," by D. Hatch, 2011, http://www.theleaderinme.org, p. 2.Copyright 2011 by Franklin Covey.Reproduced with permission from Franklin Covey.

History of Leader In Me Schools

      Leader in Me schools integrate the principles of personal leadership and effectiveness in everyday, age-appropriate language into the core subjects and curriculum of an elementary school. These approaches are a holistic, school-wide experience for teachers and students and create a common language and culture within the school built on proven principle-based leadership skills found in The *7 Habits* (Press Release, 2011). This process aligns itself with the Standards for Staff Development, established by Learning Forward, (formerly National Staff Development Council). The three underlying beliefs of The *Leader In Me* call for a paradigm that transitions from hierarchical models of leadership in schools to one in which titles and positions define leaders in a culture where everyone is given the opportunity to lead (Fonzi & Ritchie, 2011).

      The Covey Leadership Center started working in the field of education in 1989, when Joliet Central High School in Joliet, Illinois, began implementing the *7 Habits* with students (Major, 2008). The *Leader In Me* was adapted from the *7 Habits* by a principal, and now its implementation in schools is overseen by Sean Covey. The school-wide approach emphasizes leadership, personal responsibility, and goal-setting (Delisio, 2011). Another school, A. B. Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary School in North Carolina, has become a model school that embraces the *7 Habits*. The school includes students from kindergarten through fifth grade and fully integrates the *7 Habits* into the curriculum and philosophy. Combs improved its reading and math test scores on the North Carolina End of Grade tests from 67% of students performing at or above grade level to 94% performing at or above grade level during the 2000-01 school year 18

months after adopting the Covey principles(Franklin Covey Company, 2012a). In 2004-05, A.B. Combs reported that 97% of its students passed the End-of-Grade standards. In the wake of Combs' success, which was published in Covey's books, over 500 individual schools are using *7 Habits* to varying degrees. Since initial implementation, A.B. Combs Elementary has reported academic growth. The percentage of students passing end-of-grade tests rose from 67% to a peak of 97%, which is quite a feat for a school in which 40% of students receive free or reduced-price lunches and 18% are English language learners. Enrollment also rose; the number of students vaulted from 350 to nearly 900, with more waiting to join (Covey, 2009).

Leader In Me Recognition

There are nine criteria that are used to govern *Leader in Me*schools. These criteria from The *Leader In Me* website are used to give schools a rubric of how the program is to be performed on the school level:

a. Having a Lighthouse Team

b. Creating a Leadership Environment

c. Integrating leadership language into instruction and curriculum

d. Collaboration of staff members

e. Providing student leadership roles

f. Parental involvement

g. Producing Leadership Events

h. Tracking goals

i. Seeing improvements as a result of the implementation(Franklin Covey Company, 2012).

The level of commitment and achievement schools put forth in (Franklin Covey Company, 2011) implementing The *Leader In Me* curriculum depends upon whether or not the school receives recognition. When a school makes progress in achievement, Lighthouse recognition is given. This recognition results from a school's achievement and the impact on its staff, students, parents, and the greater community. Recognition typically takes two to three years but can be achieved sooner if schools make it a priority to achieve results sufficient to pass the Lighthouse review. The review evaluates the school's performance against nine criteria according to Franklin Covey Company (2012c).

    a. A Lighthouse team is in place at the school, meets regularly and oversees
        school-wide implementation of the leadership model with students, staff,
        parents and community members.

    b. The school campus environment reinforces the model by adding leadership
        language displays and bulletins to hallways and classrooms that emphasize
        individual worth and leadership principles.

    c. Teachers integrate leadership language into school curriculum and instruction
        daily.

    d. The staff collaborates and works together to effectively build a culture of
        leadership in classrooms and throughout the school.

    e. The students are provided with meaningful student leadership roles and
        responsibilities.

    f. The parents of students understand The *Leader In Me* model and the *7 Habits*
        and are involved in activities that support the leadership model.

g. A system is in place for setting and tracking school-wide, classroom, academic and personal goals.

h. The school sees improvements resulting from implementing The *Leader In Me*process, which includes measuring, collecting baseline data and tracking results to determine how the leadership model is bringing improvements.

i. The school holds events to share their leadership model with the community and other schools and hosts a mini or full Leadership Day or a similar event that includes parents, business partners and educatorsFranklin Covey Company (2012c).

To implement The *Leader In Me*a school has to commit to a three year process of knowledge building (Fonzi & Ritchie, 2011). But the implementation is not a one-size-fits-all process because of the populations, achievement levels, and challenges that are found at different schools (Covey, 2008). During the first year the school will go through a process of engagement and buy-in. The faculty, administration, and staff learn the desired expectation of The *Leader In Me*. Through a new paradigm of leadership and exploration of how schools have implemented the program, the vision for the school then emerges and every member of the staff will be shown how they impact the big picture.However, the important event is the internalizing of the *7 Habits*. This is the greatest step because it enlightens those who share the vision. Once the staff learns what the habits are, they then grasp the common jargon of the *7 Habits*and implementation of the habits begins as a process in the classroom where the staff learns how to teach the habits and assign leadership roles.

Teachers participate in a seven-day professional development that includes developing a school vision and curriculum goals for the school. The vision is established by answering the questions: "What is our vision for our school? What will we do differently? And what impact could we have?" (Franklin Covey, 2012c). In *Leader in Me* schools the first agenda item for the school year is to establish the culture. At A.B. Combs Elementary School, they take the first week of the year to recreate the culture of their school. Establishing the culture would not seem to be a good decision with the time table of accountability test, but this step is important in the process of implementation. During this first week students and faculty will experience learning the *7 Habits*, write class mission statements, and talk about accountability. The students write classroom codes of cooperation and define what acceptable behavior is (Covey, 2008). In most schools, time is spent reviewing school rules. This reviewing is more an act to make sure that students are exposed to the rules. These rules govern the school, but they do not really empower students or set an expectation. This type of action is more a reactive action meant to look proactive.

A Lighthouse team is put in place at the school. This team meets regularly and oversees school-wide implementation of the leadership model with students, staff, parents and community members. The Lighthouse team typically consists of six staff members who are responsible for the smooth implementation of the process. They will mentor teachers, organize activities, and oversee everything that has to do with making the process run smoothly (Franklin Covey Company, 2011). The school campus environment reinforces the model by adding leadership language displays and bulletins to hallways and classrooms that emphasize individual worth and leadership principles. This not only

makes the school more attractive, but constantly reminds everyone what the school is about. The physical decorations throughout *Leader in Me* schools create an image for those who visit, as well as for the members of the school (Gulchak, 2011). Along with the environment, teachers are to integrate leadership language into school curriculum and instruction daily. The integration will keep what is important to the school not only in the eyes of everyone involved with the school, but in their minds. The collaboration of the staff then effectively builds a culture of leadership in classrooms and throughout the school. Another important aspect of leadership in *Leader in Me* schools is that the students are provided with meaningful student leadership roles and responsibilities.

The parents of students need to understand The *Leader In Me* model and the *7 Habits* to be totally involved in activities that support the leadership model. The school will see improvements resulting from implementing The *Leader In Me* process, which includes measuring and collecting baseline data, and tracking results to determine how the leadership model is bringing improvements.

Leader in Me school teachers see students through a different paradigm than is presently available. With accountability testing and the accompanying pressure, teachers see students through a paradigm of intelligence, but *Leader in Me* schools look at the actual capability of the students to be not only learners, but also leaders. As the great educator Roland S. Barth puts it, "The nature of the relationships among the adults who inhabit a school has more to do with its quality and character and with the accomplishments of its pupils, than any other factor"(Franklin Covey, 2012b).This model is just as much about the adults as it is the children. It is inside out—first teachers, then students, and then parents. If those three factors in a school are optimistic about student

learning then it becomes the most important thing that happens in the school daily. The literature associated with The *Leader In Me* schools consistently report:

a. Increases in students' self-confidence, teamwork, initiative, responsibility, creativity, self-direction, leadership, problem-solving, communication, diversity awareness and academic performance.

b. Improved school culture

c. Dramatic decreases in disciplinary issues

d. Increased teacher pride and engagement

e. Greater parent satisfaction and involvement(Franklin Covey, 2012a).

All criteria work toward a school climate that improves learning. A positive outcome of this curriculum is a change in school culture due to fewer problems in the area of student discipline. This means more students in class receiving instruction, which translates into more achievement. Success at achievement and at producing students with 21st century skills is realized when schools recognize the good in students and give them more responsibilities to shape their school culture.

<div align="center">TheoreticalFramework</div>

Constructivism

As a method of teaching, constructivism is the philosophy of students constructing their own knowledge of the world through experience and reflection. In a constructivist classroom the teacher's function is to assist students in making meaning about what is being taught(Brooks, 2004). The emphasis of constructivism is the learner over the teacher, and the learning takes place as a process of cognitive construction. In order for constructivism to truly be realized in a classroom, the teacher must have

autonomy and an ongoing, professional judgment in what and how learning takes place

(Brooks & Brooks, 1999). The concept of the student being the emphasis in the

classroom is that each student learns differently and teachers should construct the lessons

and curriculum to ensure that the content being taught is being learned at the same time

(Brooks & Brooks, 1999). Brooks also stated that, "each student still constructs his or

her own unique meaning through his or her own cognitive processes" (p. 19).The search

for understanding is what motivates students to learn and this wanting or desire to learn is

what causes students to use more cognitive energy into investigating and discussions in

the classroom which causes them to study more on their own. Brooks identified five

central tenets to constructivism (Brooks & Brooks, 1999, p. 19).

    a. Teachers seeking the students' point of view

    b. Students using their own life experiences to shape their views about how the

       world works.

    c. Attachment to relevance of the curriculum which grows their learning as their

       interest.

    d. Teachers structuring lessons around "big ideas" as opposed to small bits of

       information.

    e. Teachers assessing student learning in the context of daily classroom

       investigations, not as separate events.

SchoolClimate

    The National School Climate Council defines school climate as the patterns of

people's experiences of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal

relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures (Cohen

&Geier, 2010). The climate of a school is also synonymous with school environment or school-level learning environment. The climate of a school contains the social systems of shared norms in a school and how those systems work together with others to produce a learning environment. Teachers often define climate as the amount of teacher morale, or their empowerment on campus (Johnson & Stevens, 2006). A good climate exists when teachers, students, parents, and administrators function in a manner that is cooperative and beneficial for the students' welfare. When teacher perceptions of school climates are positive, the benefits are increased retention and attendance and better home-school relationships (Monrad et al., 2008). Schools with strong climates can be identified by having more students who perform well academically. The research on positive school climates suggests that having a positive school climate leads to a greater focus on and attunement to what students need to learn and for teachers to teach (Hess, Yoon, & Le, 2006). This performance is the offspring of teachers who care about their students(Muller, 2001).

With such a strong relationship between school climate and academic performance, climate is often associated with improvement of schools (Mitchell, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2010). This relationship will in some cases parallel students' perceptions of a school. For example, if teachers see an orderly workplace in the environment of a school, the students will more than likely see the same, which could have an impression on them and how teachers and students perform at the school (Center for Social and Emotional Education, 2010). When combining constructivism and school climate it is the time and opportunity that makes the meaning of the learning personal (Keefe & Jenkins, 1997). Teachers in constructive classrooms create learning

communities that allow students to confront the big ideas, use what they learn and discussions about the ideas in generating work to explain the lesson in real world applications (Keefe & Jenkins, 1997).

School Climate Collaboration

The focus of school climate collaboration is rooted in improving instruction andstudent learning. When examining the differences of focus on collaboration between successful and unsuccessful schools, successful school faculties' collaboration focuses on improving practice. These practices are then used, in turn to, improve student learning. The Center for Comprehensive School Reform reports that the use of "one of several group processes available for the study of student work" promotes "ensuing discussions of the assignment, the link between the work and content standards, their expectations for student learning, and the use of scoring rubrics," leading to improved teaching and student learning(Centerfor Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, 2007, p. 2). When developing a collaboration plan, a district needs to look at the plan being results driven (Hirsh, 2004). This is in opposition to having a smorgasbord of professional development courses. In a *Leader in Me* school, the collaboration focuses upon how schools use a common language of teaching the seven habits in their everyday lessons and in the effort of showing the habits in the language that teachers use with students.

School Climate Student Relations

School climate research illustrates that many areas affect the learning environment within schools. A positive school climate,as Kuperminc has claimed, will produce a school with less behavioral problems from students (Kuperminc, Leadbeater, Emmons, & Blatt, 1997). There is research(Hoy & Hannum, 1997) regarding school climate that advocatesthe better the interpersonal relationships and opportunities for students to learn, the better the chance of having students achieve academically. The achievement, along with the students' ability to adjust to the rigor of school, is also increased(Daggett, 2008). Likewise, Moore reported that "teachers who have a positive perception of the climate of a school are more satisfied with their jobs"(Moore, 2012, p. 10). To improve a school's climate there are several interventions that a school leader can implement. Some might be:

a. Involving community leaders and parents in the process of learning

b. Teaching moral principles to students

c. Violence prevention programs

d. Due process for students in all situations and at all stages

e. Mutual respect from teachers, students, administration

f. Climate is a very complex and far-reaching topic for researchers. Researchers have identified six factors that influence the climate of a school:

g. Number and quality of interactions between adults and children (Kuperminc, Leadbeater, Emmons, & Blatt, 1997)

h. Students' and teachers' perceptions of their school environment, or the school's personality (Johnson & Johnson, 1993)

i. Environment factors such as buildings and classrooms along with instructional materials(Johnson & Johnson, 1993)

j. Academic performance (Johnson & Johnson, 1993)

k. Feelings of trust and respect for students and teachers (Manning & Saddlemire, 1996).

School Climate School Resources

It has been found that a school's building and equipment influence the attitudes of students toward education; these attitudes have a correlation to academic achievement. If a school's building is in disrepair, then the message implied is that the building is not important (Maier, 2010). Mentally, this can influence a student's thought process negatively because the people who are pushing the importance of education to them seem not to care about the resources of their school.

When looking at the field of school design and making an environmental analysis of a school, the quality of the settings has a direct effect on a child's self-identity, self-esteem, and academic performance (Ulrich, 2004). Overcrowding, when it comes to square footage per pupil, factors in decreasing the reading scores for girls and increasing behavioral problems for boys. Ulrich (2004) also reported that classrooms and hallways that were decorated in concepts of learning were found to create greater participation and involvement in the learning process. Similarly, having attractive classrooms had a beneficial effect on students (Ulrich, 2004).

Looking at school resources as the sole determiner of student achievement would be an indefinite and exhausting task. Having a school that provides physically safe environments and structures, in addition to, the necessary equipment to teach a student

isimportant at determining student achievement. Making sure that a school has the potential to improve in the areas of technology is very important, especially in schools that promote 21st century skills. *Leader in Me* schools have constant reminders to promote the school climate and culture via aesthetics in classrooms, hallways, and outside appearance. As more students are becoming visual auditory learners, constantly seeing visuals around the school depicting the importance of the *7 Habits* and 21st century skills and hearing teachers speak of them in classroom lessons will enhance the learning (Covey, 2008).

School Climate Decision Making.

There are over 50 million entries on a Google search for data being used in educational decisions. These data are what schools use to make informed decisions regarding the processes of what education should be. The focus on data-driven decisions is used at the federal, state, and even local levels. In most schools, the main responsibility of a principal is to oversee the process of teaching at his or her school. However, with the increasing amount of work necessary for a school administrator, data-driven information provides efficacy when determining the strengths and weaknesses of a school. The indicators that are heavily data driven are test scores, rigor of coursework,graduation rates, attendance rates, promotion rates, and co-curricular activity participation (American Association of School Administrators, 2006). Deborah Wahlstrom suggested that only three types of data: demographics, process, and outcome really need to be collected to make real school management decisions (Jianping et al., 2010). These types of data welcome decision making from an objective viewpoint. To take correct and efficient decisions from concept to practice, administrators must make

decisions on a broad arena of topics, including some which the administrator may not be

the best authority. Bursalioglu found that there are five stages of decision making.

    a. Understanding the problem, gathering information with regards to the

        problem,

    b. Analysis and interpretation of the information,

    c. Formulating the solution ways,

    d. Selecting the most efficient solution,

    e. Implementation and assessment(GÜLCAN, 2011, p. 638).

These steps are suggested when making change in an organization to prevent or

resolve a conflict or to influence organization members.

Moreover, decisions about the climate are often the results of collaborative efforts

among teachers, staff, and administrators. In collaborative decision-making,

organizational structure should be present. One way to achieve this is to have a council

of teachers from each field meet periodically with counselors, administrators, and other

personnel to plan lessons under the direction of the school principal. At these meetings

issues determined by the school principal such as conducting the teaching tasks, the order

and discipline at school, school-community relationships, educating the students,

planning works, making various job divisions, examining and approving the grades, and

other topics are covered (GÜLCAN, 2011).

In schools implementing The *Leader In Me*approach, teachers are assembled into

teams of decision makers and mentors. These groups are composed of individuals from

multi-grade and multi-specialty areas whose opinions are respected, and their

collaborative efforts are unsurpassed. The collaborative process eliminates the practice

of teachers and builds teacher capacity, and isolation improves the formal structure of the

school. Also included in the decision-making process of these schools are students who

are responsible for shaping the climate and culture of the school. At A.B. Combs

Elementary school, for instance, every student takes on a different responsibility in and

around the school (Covey, 2008). This creates an initiative of empowerment, ownership,

and pride at the school.

School Climate Instructional Innovation

School-based management (SBM) is the passing of the decision-making process

from the district level to the school level. In many schools, the decision making is further

passed to the classroom teacher who is ultimately in charge of the delivery of education.

Managing a school district or even a school has become a more complex undertaking

than it was in the past. Thus, involvement of teachers in the process becomes

increasingly multi-leveled and incorporates the talents of more stakeholders. SBM's

purpose is to improve school performance and the attributes of education for students.

The closest people to the area in which decisions are made will make better decisions

(Robertson, Wohlstetter, & Mohrman, 1995). Wohlsetter also reported the impact of

SBM has been found to be limited in earlier research(Summers & Johnson, 1994).

Moreover, SBM does not necessarily guarantee school improvement (Robertson et al.,

1995). Robertson et al. indicated that to find the validity of SBM one must examine two

distinct issues: the school governance mechanism and the process by which the

mechanism works (Robertson et al., 1995). Constant change happens in schools today

more than ever and happens rather quickly. When change takes place, the approach at

managing the change must also be quick. If the speed of the decision is as rapid as the

change itself, then the school will likely be effective in its management process (Robertson et al., 1995).

Research supporting SBM revealed that increasing employee involvement in the decision-making process improves performance of the school (Lawler, 1986). The four key elements of SBM decentralization are power, knowledge and skill, information, and rewards. Knowledge and skills are needed to expand the role of everyone who is involved so that they can improve the outcomes of the decisions made. The knowledge has to be both technical to make sure the decision is worked out in a prudent fashion and have a business like so that the decision is relevant to the school and is brought about in an interpersonal way so that other stakeholders buy in to the idea. Information must encompass the present performance level and expected or desired level. Lastly, the rewards provide incentives for making the change possible (Lawler, 1986).

In *Leader in Me* schools, the process of change will always have the same obstacle as any other new thing in schools: the teachers' perception of change being something else to do. To allay the teachers' fears of the change process there has to be a two to three year transformation. The process is implemented in three phases:

a. Phase 1 - Establishing a Culture of Leadership

b. Phase 2 – Applying the Tools of Leadership

c. Phase 3 – Maximizing the Results

Training for the transformation, the process of change, are the staff, a Lighthouse team, and support personnel (Hatch, 2011). Each group goes through training differently due to the level of involvement that each has to the area of improvement. This training is indicative of the methods that Lawler (1986) proposed.

The staff, including the Lighthouse team, holds a *vision day*, which defines what an ideal school should look like. This function is also attended by parents, district administration, and community members. After the vision day, the staff and the Lighthouse team are taught the *7 Habits* and how to apply the habits to their personal effectiveness. This training program mirrors that which Franklin Covey has presented to government and corporate clients for over 20 years. A number of principals see this step as the utmost productive step in the process because it gives the staff an opportunity to internalize their thoughts, which transforms the entire school culture (Hatch, 2011).

Revised School Level Environment Questionnaire

The Revised School Level Environment Questionnaire measures teachers' perceptions of schools. According to the Revised School Level Environment Survey, only five factors influence school climate: collaboration, student relations, school resources, decision making, and instructional innovation. The original instrument developed by Dr. Darrell Fisher and Dr. Barry Fraser, both from Australia, was a 56-item five-point scale survey that contained 58 factors for analysis. Fisher and Fraser's research described a distinction between school-level and classroom-level climate. Study of climate, they found, was better because the teachers had an understanding about how a school should work; thus their perceptions were inflated. Students, on the other hand, were researched using the views of students (Fisher & Fraser, 1990). The revision of the survey is the work of Dr. Bruce Johnson and Dr. Joseph Stevens. Johnson and Stevens revised the original questionnaire because it had no published factor analysis results which made it a tentative instrument (Johnson & Stevens, 2006).

School Culture

Culture is defined as the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of a group and refers to the language, thought, spirituality, social activity, and interaction of the group. The culture of the school is disconnected from the religion, socioeconomic status, or size of a school, although the culture influences everything that occurs in school. The development of culture is an important issue because school culture has been seen by many researchers to be the missing link to school improvement(Wegner & Hall, 1998). Every school develops its own culture, and that culture defines the daily school operations. Culture can be improved, and whenever a school looks at changing any practice, it should examine first how the change will affect the culture. The building principal should be the driving force behind the change of the culture. Testimony from successful school principals suggests that focusing on the development of the school's culture as a learning environment is fundamental to improved teacher morale and student achievement. Valentine, Clark, Hackman, and Petzko(2004) reporting findings from a national study of highly successful middle level schools provided practical insight about effective, collaborative school cultures in highly successful schools.

a. Principals and teachers shared a common core of values and beliefs that guided programs and practices, including high expectations for all students, education of the whole child, all students will be successful, and a dedication to a coherent curriculum, student-centered instruction, and the effective use of formative and summative student data.

b. Principals viewed themselves as collaborative leaders, as did their teachers. They fostered collegiality and the opportunity for collaborative work among teachers centered on curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

c. Teachers were also strongly committed to collaboration, fulfilling school-wide roles as decision-makers, coordinators of professional development, and leaders in the efforts to improve classroom instruction across the whole school.

d. Student and adult learning was the focus of the schools, with all adults committed to continual learning for student and themselves.

e. School structures, such as student and adult schedules and physical arrangements of classrooms, were designed to foster collaboration and relationship building among students-teachers, students-students, and teachers-teachers.

f. Principals and teachers indicated that building "relationships" among adults was a major factor in creating their effective school cultures, with principals and teachers regularly discussing the importance of relationships and the part relationships play in the difficult decision-making, problem-solving tasks that a faculty/staff must address (Valentine et al., 2004).

Student Relations and Attachment

Students spend approximately seven hours a day with their teachers for about half of a calendar year. For schools to be successful there shouldexist a certain attachment relationship to school. When teachers and students become attached, student performance is found to be improved(Bergin & Bergin, 2009). When parents participate in the process of their child's education both at home and in school the relationship with the teacher is characterized as mutuality, warmth, respect increases the motivation for the student to achieve (Fan & Chen, 2001). With the high stakes of accountability in schools, enhancing teacher-student-parent relationships is fundamental to raising student achievement. Student attachment to school influences success in two ways: indirectly to parents and directly through to teachers and the school itself (Bergin & Bergin, 2009). Bergin and Bergin (2009) also found that "attachment in schools can also be attributed to a student's relationship to his or her parents" (p.155). For the purpose of this study, the term relations will be interchangeable with attachment, which is a deep and enduring, affectionate bond that connects one person to another across time and space (Bergin & Bergin, 2009). The relationship of a school should not be one of dependency but liberation to explore what is going on in the world. Students should not be dependent upon the teacher for their education, instead they should be encouraged to explore. Attachment functions in the classroom are present in the feeling of security that the students posses, the inner motivation that they have to explore, and the need to be social. This is especially true in toddlers and in middle childhood and adolescence. Adolescent children also start to gain a sense of autonomy from family members. The school environment takes a larger role in the attachment function of the child. Therefore, if

students feel an attachment relationship with their teachers, then children of differing academic levels show higher achievement scores and a lower instance of retention and fewer referrals (Pianta, Nimetz, & Bennett, 1997). The relationship is important to the development of the child because the security of attachment is associated with success in school (Bergin & Bergin, 2009).

Much of the research regarding attachment focuses upon teachers and students in preschool or elementary classrooms(Bergin & Bergin, 2009). Preschool and elementary teachers have an easier time with establishing an attachment to students because they have fewer students and more time with those students (Bergin & Bergin, 2009). In secondary settings, teachers are not only faced with a greater number of students on a daily basis but they also, along with secondary students, believe that good teachers establish trusting, close relationships with students(Beihuizzen et al., 2001). Secondary students who have been found to have a good secure relationship with their teachers are also more interested and engaged in school, which is related to achievement and grades (Bergin & Bergin, 2009).

School Resources

The Coleman study of 1966 used data from over 600,000 students and teachers from across America and found that achievement in schools was related to the social makeup of schools more than the quality of the student's school (Kiviat, 2000). The areas of social makeup in the schools that were seen as important were the student's sense of control of his or her environment and future, verbal skills of teachers, and family background of the student (Kiviat, 2000). In the study of schools that are implementing The *Leader In Me* program and the impact that it has on students, teachers,

administrators, and a school's culture as a whole, it has been found that this program has

many encouraging possibilities in the areas of resource efficiency and equity. John C.

Freemont Elementary School in Taylorsville,Utah is a K-6 school in an ethnically diverse

area of Salt Lake City. This school had a student population between 520-560 students

and 26 faculty members. It also had about 50% of its students on free-and-reduced-

lunch, 19% of the students were Hispanic, 8% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3% African

American, 2% American Indian/Alaskan. It was within one of nine federally established

refugee cities that attracted a great number of immigrants. For five years, the school

district did not meet average yearly progress of the No Child Left Behind Act and was

federally audited. In 2011 Franklin Coveyfound in a two week investigation that the

school's*Leader in Me* program and *7 Habits* training were to be credited with:

a. Highest ranking of student on-task behavior

b. Positive school learning climate

c. Rapid student vocabulary growth

d. 60% decline in disciplinary referrals

e. Teachers having high academic expectations

f. Parental satisfaction

g. Teachers providing instruction to help students apply learning outside the classroom

h. Teachers' use of district approved instructional material to meet the needs of all students(Franklin Covey, 2011, p. 2).

The auditors also found that teachers were more satisfied with their work. The processes of The *Leader In Me* also led to a more collegial relationship between teachers and opportunities for professional development (Franklin Covey, 2011).

What adds to this program's efficiency is the cost of implementation. Funding for the program has to be secured, but asking a school district to provide total support is a huge undertaking. That is why Franklin Covey suggested that funding be brought forth by both private and public sources(Franklin Covey Company, 2011). When looking at funding from the school's district, there are three sources available for such a program. First is Title I, which is federal funds, funneled to the schools to provide salaries and programs that will most improve student achievement. Secondly is Title II Part A, which is used to improve quality of teachers and principals. Lastly, the school district can look at professional development funds. Private sources such as community and parent groups provide ample opportunity to secure funds. There have also been instances where businesses within the community have provided funding. The sources for this group should start with the local chamber of commerce, multinational businesses with local headquarters, and, of course, local businesses(Franklin Covey Company, 2011).

Decision Making

The method of site-based school management is used to improve learning and teaching in a school. In making decisions that impact the day-to-day flow of site-based school management, there are three ways to classify decisions: mandated, expedient, and essential (Arterbury & Hord, 1991, p. 3). Mandated decisions often times do not need a great deal of discussion for their implementation. These are mandates over which a school has no control. Expedient decisions are used to improve the efficiency and

management of the school. These decisions are usually made by school boards and include the management of the school's facilities and equipment. Even though the decisions are made and managed from another source, the desire is to try to control the decision. In trying to make expedient decisions, the staff, or at least the site-based arm of the staff, might evidentially hurt their own efficiency in doing their jobs. Moreover, they also could lose focus on what is important to them and their role on the campus. Essential decisions, or the decisions that impact the teaching and learning process, are the decisions that site-based management teams should focus on in schools. Essential decisions are the ones that are categorized in the day-to-day running of the curriculum and the instruction in a school. These two decisions are also known as thewhat and the how of education. For a site-based team to make the best decisions possible for their individual school they will focus on producing and adjusting the curriculum process documents, testing, and staff development (Arterbury & Hord, 1991). This process needs to happen because without changing those three things then the entire reasoning for site-based management is lost. At the coreare the site-based decisions made by those who are responsible for making decisions to improve educational outcomes for all students, the teachers and the administration on campus.

The principal's role in the schools has changed to developers and facilitators as opposed to bosses. Conley (1991) found that the principals created a vision that everyone bought into, or a clear sense of purpose, by using a large amount of data. They also allocated resources important to the vision and created ad hoc committees and task forces. Then they empowered teachers to become the decision makers and supported them only as a navigator through school bureaucracy (Conley, 1991).

The issue that always arises when decisions have to be made is who wants to make the final call. This is because of the traditional view of the role of teachers in the school setting. Teachers see their role in school as being confined in the walls of their own classrooms; this is where they have confidence in the decisions that they make. When it comes to making decisions that affect the entire school, most have been found to be reluctant. Teachers who buy into that train of thought believe that it is the principal's job to make school-wide decisions. *Leader in Me* schools phase in the process of the program by creating a Lighthouse Team. This team's job is to facilitate the training of the program. The decision of how to phase in the program then becomes a teacher-led effort.

Instructional Innovation

Teaching in a global economy will require teachers to not only teach students the reading, writing, science, and math courses, but also help them to develop social and life skills. As discussed earlier, there has to be a focus on the mind, skills, and tools of students for them to be independent, interdependent, and renewed. It is more important for a school to emphasize deeper thinking of a subject rather than knowing a little about a lot. This idea works well with incorporating the *7 Habits* into the curriculum in place at a school. The problem with the change to The *Leader In Me* program is that teachers are finding it hard to find time for incorporating the subjects of the habits and leadership. But with the internal makeup of the 21st century skills framework and its integration The *Leader In Me* incorporation will be simple in nature to teach. This will be seen in the way that each habit can be interwoven into lessons across the board of education. In the framework and integration the goal should be as psychologist Jerome Bruner wrote:

We teach a subject not to produce little living libraries on that subject, but rather

to get a student to think mathematically for himself to consider matters as a

historian does, to take part in the process of knowledge-getting. Knowing is a

process, not a product.(Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2007, p.8).

An example of how *The Leader In Me* and the *7 Habits* can help in this is with Habit

Five, Seek First to Understand, then, to be Understood. This habit will teach students

how to incorporate the critical skill of listening and communicating.

Since 1999, when A.B. Combs Elementary became the first school to incorporate

the program, there have been over 600 schools that have implemented *The Leader In Me*.

In taking the principles from the *7 Habits* to the students, six keys have been found for

successfully accomplishing the incorporation: sharing the role of leader, ubiquitous

strategy of incorporation, student leadership, having an environment of support,

parent/community support, and modeling/caring of staff (Hatch, 2011). Shared

leadership is an approach to teaching leadership in a way that the lessons are not taught as

concepts but as a principle-centered way of looking at everything that is taught to

students. For instance, when talking about lessons in history and wars, students can be

shown how being more interdependent can prevent the reasons for war. Students in all

instances on a campus can learn how interdependence can work by the way that the

employees at the school work together. Once teachers learn what the habits are, they will

start to live them personally. Ubiquitous strategy could then be seen in the way that

everything that the teachers see happening around them can be a real-life, omnipresent

lesson in how everything ties back into the *7 Habits.* This really helps in finding those

teachable moments that happen daily. Student leadership will be ingrained into the fiber of the schools by giving students opportunities to lead.

School Culture Instrument.

The School Culture Survey (SCS) provides information about the shared values/beliefs, the patterns of behavior, and the relationships in the school. The School Culture Survey (SCS) is a six-factor, 35-item survey completed by teachers about their school's culture. The survey measures the culture of a school through six categories:

a. Collaborative Leadership: Measures the degree to which school leaders establish and maintain collaborative relationships with school staff. The leaders value teachers' ideas, seek input, engage staff in decision making, and trust the professional judgment of the staff. Leaders support and reward risktaking and innovative ideas designed to improve education for the students. Leaders reinforce the sharing of ideas and effective practices among all staff.

b. Teacher Collaboration: Measures the degree to which teachers engage in constructive dialogue that furthers the educational vision of the school. Teachers across the school plan together, observe and discuss teaching practices, evaluate programs, and develop an awareness of the practices and programs of other teachers.

c. Professional Development: Measures the degree to which teachers value continuous personal development and school-wide improvement. Teachers seek ideas from seminars, colleagues, organizations, and other professional

sources to maintain current knowledge, particularly current knowledge about instructional practices.

d. Collegial Support: Measures the degree to which teachers work together effectively. Teachers trust each other, value each other's ideas, and assist each other as they work to accomplish the tasks of the school organization.

e. Unity of Purpose: Measures the degree to which teachers work toward a common mission for the school. Teachers understand, support, and perform in accordance with that mission.

f. Learning Partnership: Measures the degree to which teachers, parents, and students work together for the common good of the student. Parents and teachers share common expectations and communicate frequently about student performance. Parents in strong partnerships trust teachers, and students generally accept responsibility for their schooling.(Valentine, 2006)

Summary

Theomnipresent goal of schools has always been to produce citizens who can survive and even thrive in an educated society. Schools today should produce students who have the skill sets to not only live in, but also to contribute to society. Having these types of skills could help children compete in a global economy. In order for schools to produce these students, schools should couple the 3Rs with the 4Cs which are critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. Though NCLB focused upon the 3Rs, the results of NCLBwas students who could take tests well.

The Leader In Me is a program that was adapted from the *7 Habits* by a principal, and now its implementation in schools is overseen by Sean Covey. The school-wide

approach emphasizes leadership, personal responsibility, and goal-setting (Delisio, 2011).

This program can improve the climate and culture of a school. Teachers often define

climate as the amount of teacher morale or their empowerment on campus (Johnson &

Stevens, 2006). A good climate exists when teachers, students, parents, and

administrators function in a manner that is cooperative and beneficial for the students'

welfare. When teacher perceptions of school climates are positive, the benefits are

increased retention and attendance and better home-school relationships (Monrad et al.,

2008). Schools with strong climates can be identified by having more students who

perform well academically(Bergin & Bergin, 2009). Research suggests that having a

positive school climate leads to a greater focus on and attunement to what students need

to learn and for teachers to teach (Hess, Yoon, & Le, 2006). Culture is defined as the

beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of a group and refers to the language, thought,

spirituality, social activity, and interaction of the group. The culture of the school is

disconnected from the religion, socioeconomic status, or size of a school, although the

culture influences everything that occurs in school.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research design that was used for studying teacher perception of culture and climate, along with the discipline referrals of *Leader in Me* Schools and non-*Leader in Me* Schools. The schools that are designated as *Leader in Me* Schools were found on the website for The *Leader In Me* (Franklin Covey Company, 2012d). The schools that are not *Leader in Me* Schools are schools from the same geographic state and region. Research questions that were used and the hypotheses are outlined below. The rationale for the method of selecting the schools and teachers is explained. The contents of Chapter III consist of the participants, research design, and procedures. The chapter describes the survey instruments (Appendix A) that were used to collect the data regarding the study. The dependent and independent variables are explained, along with the statistical process that were used to collect the data.

Preliminary Procedures

The study was designed to investigate whether being a *Leader in Me* School or not has an impact on teachers' perception is of climate and culture along with discipline referrals of schools. Specifically, the researchedhoped to find evidence that would support changing to The *Leader In Me* paradigm of school culture. This study was designed to examine if teachers at *Leader in Me* Schools felt better about their work environment as opposed to non-*Leader In Me* School teachers. Also the study was designed to examine if Leader *In Me* school teachers perceptions had any relationship to student discipline.

One of the primary purposes of this study was to add to the existing literature on The *Leader In Me* schools. As of the date of this writing, the research on the topic is limited because of the newness of The *Leader In Me*. Research on school climate and culture has not looked at the climate and culture of *Leader in Me* schools.

Participants

The study was performed at schools that are presently participating in The *Leader In Me* and at schools that have not made the transformation into the program. The survey was taken by teachers at the selected schools. The schools that were considered *Leader in Me* schools were schools that are in the process of becoming a *Leader in Me* school. The schools that were not considered *Leader in Me* Schools were schools chosen from the same geographic region that The *Leader In Me* Schools came from. Once the school districts and principals agreed to participate, they were sent a packet of surveys for the teachers to complete.

Instrumentation

The present study sought to investigate whether there is a relationship between a school being a *Leader in Me* school or a non-*Leader in Me* school and its teachers' perception of the schools' climate and culture. A *Leader in Me* School is a school that has integrated The *Leader In Me* into its curriculum. The study used two survey instruments to study culture and climate.

School Culture Survey Description

To study culture, the study used the School Culture Survey (Gruenert & Valentine, 1998), which is a six factor, 35 item survey that was completed by teachers. The survey provides insight about the shared values/beliefs, the patterns of behavior, and

the relationships in a school as determined by perceptions of teachers. This survey used a

five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 *(Strongly Disagree)* to 5 *(Strongly Agree)* and

measures the teachers' perceptions of culture with six factors: collaborative leadership,

teacher collaboration, professional development, collegial support, unity of purpose, and

learning partnership. The validity of the School Culture Survey was developed to have

documented the relationships between the factors of the SCS and numerous other school

effectiveness/improvement variables such as principal instructional and transformational

leadership, school climate, and teacher empowerment. The School Culture Survey was

developed at the Missouri Center for School Improvement's Project ASSIST

(Achievement Successes through School Improvement Site Teams). Factor analysis of

the study resulted in the categories of subscales of school culture: Collaborative

Leadership (items 2, 7, 11, 14, 18, 20, 26, 28, and 32), Teacher Collaboration (items 3, 8,

15, 23, 29, and 33), Professional Development (items 1, 9, 16, 24, and 30), Unity of

Purpose (items 5, 12, 19, 27, and 31), Collegial Support (items 4, 10, 17, and 25), and

Learning Partnership (items 6, 13, 21, and 35). These six dimensions are based on a

review of literature on school culture, effective school cultures, and collaborative school

culture (Gruenert & Valentine, 1998). The validity and reliability of the School Culture

Survey (SCS) have been tested through numerous research projects, dissertations, and

other research projects in the United States (Gruenert & Valentine, 1998).

The individual reliabilities using Cronbach's Alpha factor reliability for the factors of the School Culture Survey are listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Cronbach Alpha School Culture Survey

Cronbach's Alpha	Factor ReliabilityCoefficients
Collaborative Leadership	.91
Teacher Collaboration	.83
Unity of Purpose	.82
Professional Development	.86
Collegial Support	.79
Learning Partnership	.65

In the effort to assess the validity of the School Culture Survey (SCS), Gruenert (1998) administered the School Culture Survey to the participants at the same time with the SCS. The School Culture Survey was an established instrument developed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals to assist with the planning, budgeting, school accreditation reports, school initiatives, and longitudinal research (Keefe & Jenkins, 1997). Only four out of 10 factors in the School Culture Survey were chosen to correlate with the original School Culture Survey because the school culture factors not used were insufficient in their capacity to reflect elements of culture (Gruenert & Valentine, 1998). Gruenert found that each of the six factors was correlated with a minimum of two of the four culture factors of the School Culture Survey.

a. The culture factor Collaborative Leadership corrected with Teacher/Student

Relations (r= .633), Administration (r= .657), and Instruction Management (r= .483)

b. The culture factor Teacher Collaboration correlated significantly with

Teacher/Student Relations (r =.532) and Student Academic Orientation (r = .483)

c. Unity of Purpose correlated significantly with all four school factors. Those

correlations were Teacher/Student Relationships (r =.387), Student Academic

Orientation (r = .485), Administration (r = .384), and Instructional

Management (r = .454)

d. Professional Development correlations were statistically significant with two

climate factors, Teacher/Student Relations (r = .436) and Student Academic

Orientation (r = .475)

e. Collegial Support was statistically significant with Teacher/Student Relations (r

= .506) and Administration (r = .544)

f. Learning Partnership was statistically significant with Student Academic

Orientation (r = .416) and Instructional Management (r = .439)

Overall, 15 of the 24 correlations were significant at the .05 level and another

seven were significant at the .01 level. Therefore, the new School Culture Survey

correlated highly with the established School Culture Survey. These relationships

support the validity of the SCS (Gruenert & Valentine, 1998).

School Level Environment Questionnaire Description

One commonly used instrument for measuring teachers' perception of school climate is the School Level Environment Questionnaire(SLEQ), which was first reported in 1982 and was used to measure school climate in several studies in Australia (Johnson et al., 2007). To study the climate of schools in this project, The Revised School Level Environment Questionnaire was the instrument used (Johnson et al., 2007). This survey is a five factor, 21 item survey that was a revision of the SLEQ. The original SLEQ contained a number of limitations. First, the instrument was developed without a great deal of awareness of relevant literature. Second was the issue of the instrument being applicable and important to teachers. Third was that parts of the instrument were not developed with schools in mind. Finally, the instrument required too much time to complete. The original instrument consisted of 56 items in eight scales. The revised version was reduced to the present form by renaming scales and eliminating 14 items. The revised version has also undergone both exploratory and a confirmatory factor analysis with goodness-of-fit (.93) and a comparative fit index of CFI; .94 indicates this is close to the often recommended criterion value of .95, indicating that the factor structure fit the data reasonably well. The error of approximation (.052) was also lower than the recommended level of .06. X^2 was statistically significant, indicating that the model did not fit the data exactly, but with a large sample size as in the study that the validation study was performed under that had a sample size (N=1,274) even minor differences between the observed and implied covariance matrix may result in statistical significance (Schumaker & Lomax, 1996). The revised survey has also been found to have a structure that works equally well for all samples. An analysis of variance

indicated that the Revised SLEQ identified climate differences between schools. The

instrument, the Revised SLEQ was designed to measure a staff member's perception of

school climate with regard to five scales. A factor analysis of the five scales results in the

categories of the subscales: Collaboration (items 1, 6, 11, 16, 20, and 21), Student

Relations (items 2, 7, 12, and 17), School Resources (items 3, 8, 13, and 18), Decision

Making (items 4, 9, and 16), and Instructional Innovation (items 5, 10, 15, and 19). The

scores for the instruments as a whole displayed a relatively strong reliability coefficient

in the validity test. Scores for each of the five factors also had an acceptable reliability

coefficient, from .77 to .86. These coefficients of the original SLEQ are in the same

range as this revised version (Johnson et al., 2007). ANOVAs were used to investigate

whether the Revised SLEQ would show a difference between schools. It was found that

there was a significant difference between schools on each of the climate factor scores.

Results of the validity study demonstrated the factorial validity of the 21-item

Revised SLEQ. Bruce Johnson (2007) also found that inter-factor correlations ranged

from .29 to .63, which justified using an oblique rotation. The factor analysis confirmed

the association of items with their hypothesized factors. The Revised SLEQ's structure,

measurement, and properties were found to apply equivalently for elementary, middle

school, and high school teachers.

The Revised SLEQ was found to be a reliable and valid instrument to measure

perceptions of school environment(Aldridge et al., 2006, p. 123). The Revised SLEQ can

be an important tool for research in teachers' perceptions of school climate. The Revised

SLEQ was also used to determine teachers' perceptions of a number of factors that deal

with job satisfaction, school quality, professional development, and student achievement.

The Cronbach's Alpha for the factors of the School Climate Survey areillustrated in Table 3.

Table 3

SLEQ Factor Reliability Coefficients

Factors	Cronbach Alpha
Collaboration	.82
Decision Making	.78
Instructional Innovation	.79
Student Relations	.86
School Resources	.77

Research Questions

The following research questions may determine if a relationship exists between *Leader in Me* participation and teacher's perceptions of school culture and of school climate. The conclusion developed for this study has added to the growing body of knowledge in the area of school climate and school culture and where The *Leader In Me* is linked to greater culture and climate reports. The final result determined that a relationship exists between culture, climate, and discipline referrals.

After reviewing the literature and analyzing various instruments that measure culture and climate in schools, the following questions were developed for this study:

a. Is there a difference in teacher perception of school culture between *Leader inMe* Schools and non-*Leader in Me* Schools as measured by the variables in the School Culture Survey?

b. Is there a difference in teacher perception of school climate between *Leader in Me* Schools and non-*Leader in Me* schools as measured by the variables in the School Level Environment Questionnaire?

c. Is there a relationship between teacher perception of school culture and school climate and student discipline referrals at *Leader in Me* Schools and non-*Leader in Me* Schools as measured by the schools' discipline report?

These questions provided salient data to determine the difference in teacher perception of school culture and school climate in *Leader in Me* schools.

<center>Operational Procedures</center>

Permission to conduct the study was secured from The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to proceeding (Appendix K). Upon permission from the USM IRB, the research was conducted after permission from the school districts had been provided. Once permission from the schools was secured, questionnaires designed specifically for this study (Appendix E) were sent to the perspective schools' administrators to be delivered to teachers. An informed consent document asked teachers to return the completed questionnaires to a designated envelope in their school's office reception area at their convenience but within two weeks Appendix F). The researcher used The Revised SLEQ and The School Culture Survey to measure teachers from *Leader in Me* Schools and Non-*Leader in Me* Schools. The researcher used quantitative measures for the analysis of responses. The design of the analysis was casual comparative to *LeadersIn Me School* teachers Non-*Leader In Me School*teachers and their perception of school climate with regard to the five scales: collaboration, decision making, instructional innovation, student relations, and school

resources. The researcher also used the findings of school culture with regard to the six scales of teacher collaboration, collaborative leadership, professional development, collegial support, unity of purpose, and learning partnerships. Summary findings were submitted to the Research Director of The University of Southern Mississippi at which time, raw data was destroyed.

Data Analysis

The methodological design of the study was quantitative. Statistical procedures, including primarily inferential statistics, were used to analyze the survey data. Once the surveys were completed, the R-SLEQ and School Culture Survey data was gathered by the researcher. Data from the surveys was imported into Excel spreadsheets and responses were analyzed. Means, standard deviations, and correlations provided the descriptive analyses, while several test were used to conduct inferential analyses. Data was collected and analyzed in order to determine significance. This includes the Meta Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and the f-test. The researcher also examined data using measures of central tendency. MANOVA is a commonly utilized inferential statistical procedure that can be used to test two or more sample means. The f-test is one of the most common inferential statistics used in the educational and social sciences. F-tests were used to determine if significant differences exist between teachers' perceptions with regard to each of the school climate subsets.

SUMMARY

The questionnaires were developed to determine the culture and climate of schools. After IRB approval, permission letters were sent to the superintendents. After permission was granted and surveys were returned, they were analyzed using descriptive,

differential, and correlation statistical processes to compare one or more statistical

categories against the constant independent variables and dependent variables.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS/PRESENTATION/ANALYSIS OF DATA

The *Leader In Me* is advertised as a transformational program for improving schools. The program claims to produce higher academic achievement, fewer discipline problems, and increased engagement among teachers and parents. The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a relationship between *Leader in Me* school teachers' perceptions of the school's culture and climate and the schools discipline referrals in a two year period. The independent variables of this study are the teachers' response to survey questions concerning school culture and school climate. The dependent variable is the number of discipline referrals that the participating schools had for the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years. The schools that are identified as *Leader in Me* schools are schools that participate in the transformational program of The *Leader In Me*. These schools are listed on the website www.theleaderinme.org. Presently there are over 1000 schools worldwide that are participating in the program(Franklin Covey Co., 2012d). This chapter describes the results and statistical findings of the study.

Description of the Respondents

There were 500 questionnaires distributed among 15 schools. Of the 500 questionnaires, 172 respondents among nine schools returned questionnaires, representing a 34.4% rate of return on surveys and 60% of the schools responded. Frequency data from this sample indicated that 97.1% of the teachers were female. Years of experience among teachers ranged fairly evenly from less than one year to over 20 years, both at *Leader in Me* schools and non-*Leader in Me* schools. The majority of the

respondents had a bachelor's degree at 62.8%, while 37.2% have obtained a master's degree or above.

Primary data consisted of 172 teacher reported surveys from nine schools in two school districts in Mississippi and one district in Florida. Tables 4-6 explain the frequency demographics of the respondent's gender, experience, degree, and grade level taught. Table 4 illustrates the gender of the respondents. In Table 4 frequency of female respondents constituted 97.1% of the total population of respondents and males constituted 2.9%. In Table 5 the frequencies of school grade levels illustrates that in The *Leader In Me* schools, with 46 respondents, 100% of the respondents worked at schools that have grades K through six, and 15.2% or seven respondents reported working at schools that provided education for seventh and eighth grades.

In Table 6 the frequencies of school grade levels for non-*Leader in Me* schools, with 126 respondents, 100% of the respondents worked at schools that have grades K-4, 80 respondents or 63.5% worked at schools that provided education for students in the 4th and 5th grades, 46.8% or 59 respondents reported working at schools that provided education for students in the 6th grade and 26 respondents or 20.6% reported working at schools that provided education for students in the seventh and eighth grades.

Table 7 illustrates the grade levels that the teachers who participated in the study taught. In *Leader in Me* schools 95.6% of the teachers taught grade levels K-6 and 4.4% of the teachers taught grades 7 and 8. In non-*Leader in Me* schools 89.6% of the teachers taught grade levels K-6 and 10.4% of the teachers taught grade levels 7 and 8. Table 8 illustrates the frequencies of teacher experience of non-*Leader in Me* schools. In non-*Leader in Me* schools 14.3% or 18 teachers have two years of experienceor less, 11.1% or

14 teachers have three to five years' experience, 15.1% or 19 teachers have six to 10 years' experience, 17.5% or 22 teachers have 11 to 15 years' experience, 16.7% or 21 teachers have sixteen to twenty years' experience, and 25.4% or 32 teachers have 21 or more years' experience. Table 9 illustrates the experience of teachers of *Leader in Me* schools 13% or 6 teachers have 2 years or less experience, 13% or 6 teachers have 3-5 years' experience, 23.9% or 11 teachers have 6-10 years' experience, 19.6% or 9 teachers have 11-15 years' experience, 8.7% or four teachers have 16-20 years' experience, and 21.7% or 10 teachers have 21 or more years' experience.

Table 10 illustrates the education level of non-*Leader in Me* school teachers. Of the 126 teachers who responded 62.7% or 79 respondents have earned a bachelor's degree, 34.1% or 43 respondents have earned a master's degree, and 3.2% or 4 respondents have earned aspecialist degree. Table 11 illustrates the education level of *Leader in Me* teachers. Of the 46 teachers 63% or 29 teachers have earned abachelors, 34.8% or 16 teachers have earned amaster's degree, and 2.2% or 1 teacher has earned a specialist degree.

Table 4

Frequencies of Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	5	2.9
Female	167	97.1
Total	172	100

Table 5

Frequencies of School Grade Levels in Leader in Me Schools

Grade Level	Frequency	Percentage
K	46	100%
1	46	100%
2	46	100%
3	46	100%
4	46	100%
5	46	100%
6	26	56.5%
7	7	15.2%
8	7	15.2%
Total	46	100%

Table 6

Frequencies of School Grade Levels Non Leader in Me Schools

Grade Level	Frequency	Percentage
K	126	100%
1	126	100%
2	126	100%

Table 6 (continued).

Grade Level	Frequency	Percentage
3	126	100%
4	80	63.5%
5	80	63.5%
6	59	46.8%
7	26	20.6%
8	26	20.6%
Total	126	100%

Table 7

Grade Level Taught Leader In Me Schools

Grade Level	Frequency		Percent
	Non LIMS	LIMS	
K	32	13	45
% within LIMS	25.4%	28.3%	
1	39	13	52
% within LIMS	31%	8.3%	
2	41	9	50
% within LIMS	32.5%	19.6%	

Table 7 (continued).

Grade Level	Frequency		Percent
	Non LIMS	LIMS	
3	33	12	45
% within LIMS	26.2%	26.1%	
4	16	9	25
% within LIMS	12.7%	19.6%	
5	19	12	31
% within LIMS	15.1%	26.1%	
6	16	3	19
% within LIMS	12.7%	6.5%	
7	6	1	7
% within LIMS	4.8%	2.2%	
8	7	1	8
% within LIMS	5.6%	2.2%	
Total	126	46	172

Table 8

Frequencies of Teacher Experience in Non Leader in Me Schools

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percent
2 yrs. or less	18	14.3%
3-5 years	14	11.1%
6-10 years	19	15.1%
11-15 years	22	17.5%
16-20 years	21	16.7%
21+ years	32	25.4
Total	126	100%

Table 9

Frequencies of Teacher Experience Leader in Me Schools

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percent
2 yrs. or less	6	13%
3-5 years	6	13%
6-10 years	11	23.9%
11-15 years	9	19.6%

Table 9 (continued).

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percent
16-20 years	4	8.7%
21+ years	10	21.7%
Total	46	100%

Table 10

Frequencies of Education Non Leader In Me Schools

Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Bachelors	79	62.7%
Masters	43	34.1%
Specialist	4	3.2%
Total	126	100.00%

Table 11

Frequencies of Education Leader In Me Schools

Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Bachelors	29	63%
Masters	16	34.8%
Specialist	1	2.2%
Total	46	100.00%

Results

This study was a non-experimental, quantitative study investigating whether a statistically significant relationship existed between teachers' perceptions of school culture and school climate and at *Leader In Me* schools and non-*LeaderIn Me* schools and the number of discipline referrals at the schools. This study used primary data collected through surveys of teachers in Mississippi and Florida who teach Kindergarten through eighth grade and archival discipline data collected from either the school front office or district office.

To assess whether a relationship existed between the dependent variable and the independent variables, this study used MANOVA analysis to determine the relationship between the dependent variable, whether a school was a *Leader in Me* school or not, and teacher perception of school culture and school climate. The dependent variable of discipline referrals for a school was gathered based on the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years.

Data Analysis

Questions 1-5 identified the frequency of respondents' demographic

information as shown in Tables 4-11.Shown in Table 12 are the descriptions and

frequencies of questions 6-40 of the School Culture Survey of non-*Leader In*

*Me*respondentsto this survey. Table 13 illustrates the descriptions and frequencies of

questions 6-40 of the same survey (SCS) for *Leader In Me* schools. These questions are

questions 1-35 on the original School Culture Survey instrument, and they are used to

show the teachers' perception of school culture.

As shown in Table 12, descriptive of non-*Leader In Me* schools for school

culture, Question Table 12, (M = 3.75),Question 18, (M=4.44) measures teachers

understanding of the mission of the school, Question 1, (M=4.39) measures teachers'

utilization of professional networks to obtain information and resources for classroom

instructionQuestion 28, (M=4.38) measures teachers valuing school improvement, and

Question 29, (M=4.28) measures how strongly teachers' performances reflect the mission

of the school.

Table 12

School Culture Survey question responses for Non Leader in Me Schools (N=126)

School Culture Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teachers utilize professional networks to obtain information and resources for Classroom instruction.	4.39	.64

Table 12 (continued).

School Culture Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Leaders value teachers' ideas.	4.16	.86
Teachers have opportunities for dialogue and planning across grades and subjects.	4.05	.97
Teachers trust each other.	3.88	.82
Teachers and parents have common expectations for student performance.	3.84	1.0
Leaders in this school trust the professional judgments of teachers.	4.09	.84
Teachers spend considerable time planning together.	3.75	1.0
Teachers regularly seek ideas from seminars, colleagues, and conferences.	4.04	.85
Teachers are willing to help out Whenever there is a problem.	4.33	.70
Leaders take time to praise teachers that perform well.	4.07	.94
The school mission provides a clear sense of direction for teachers.	4.32	.71

Table 12 (continued).

School Culture Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Parents trust teachers' professional judgments.	3.75	1.0
Teachers are involved in the decision-making process.	3.89	.96
Teachers take time to observe each other teaching.	3.28	1.1
Professional development is valued by the faculty.	4.10	.74
Teachers' ideas are valued by other teachers.	4.21	.65
Leaders in our school facilitate teachers working together.	4.27	.77
Teachers understand the mission of the school.	4.44	.60
Teachers are kept informed on current issues in the school.	4.16	.77
My involvement in policy or decision making is taken seriously.	3.69	.98

Table 12 (continued).

School Culture Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teachers are generally aware of what other teachers are teaching.	3.89	.84
Teachers maintain a current knowledge base about the learning process.	4.33	.58
Teachers work cooperatively in groups.	4.04	.83
Teachers are rewarded for experimenting with new ideas and techniques.	3.70	.96
The school mission statement reflects the values of the community.	4.15	.78
Leaders support risk-taking and innovation in teaching.	3.91	.85
The faculty values school improvement.	4.38	.60
Teaching performance reflects the mission of the school.	4.28	.72
Administrators protect instruction and planning time.	4.10	.88

Table 12 (continued).

School Culture Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teaching practice disagreements are voiced openly and discussed.	3.60	.93
Teachers are encouraged to share ideas.	4.39	.68
Students generally accept responsibility for their schooling, for example they engage mentally in class and complete homework assignments.	3.59	1.03

Note: The School Culture Survey was a 5 point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

As shown in Table 13, descriptive of *Leader in Me* schools for school culture, Question 23, (M=4.46) measures teachers work cooperatively in groups, Question 12, (M=4.59) measures parents'whether trust in the professional judgment of teachers, and Question 25, (M=4.46) measures whether teachers are kept informed on current issues in the school.

Table 13

School Culture Survey question responses for Leader in Me Schools (N=46)

School Culture Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teachers utilize professional networks to obtain information and resources for classroom instruction.	4.46	.72

Table 13 (continued).

School Culture Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Leaders value teachers' ideas.	4.33	.89
Teachers have opportunities for dialogue and planning across grades and subjects.	4.17	1.4
Teachers trust each other.	3.98	.83
Teachers support the mission of the school.	4.37	74
Teachers and parents have common expectations for student performance.	3.96	.84
Leaders in this school trust the professional judgments of teachers.	4.48	.58
Teachers spend considerable time planning together.	3.74	1.25
Teachers regularly seek ideas from seminars, Colleagues and conferences.	4.11	.82
Leaders take time to praise teachers that perform well.	4.33	.73
The school mission provides a clear sense of direction for teachers.	4.59	.54
Parents trust teachers' professional judgments.	4.11	.64
Teachers are involved in the decision-making process.	4.20	.68
Teachers take time to observe each other teaching.	3.28	1.18
Professional development is valued by the faculty.	4.24	.87
Teachers' ideas are valued by other teachers.	4.22	.62

Table 13 (continued).

School Culture Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Leaders in our school facilitate teachers working together.	4.48	.69
Teachers understand the mission of the school.	4.50	.54
Teachers are kept informed on current issues in the school.	4.24	.79
Teachers and parents communicate frequently about student performance.	4.24	.67
My involvement in policy or decision making is taken seriously.	4.11	.70
Teachers are generally aware of what other teachers are teaching.	3.96	.98
Teachers work cooperatively in groups.	4.46	.58
Teachers are rewarded for experimenting with new Ideas and techniques.	3.87	.98
The school mission statement reflects the values of the community.	4.46	.54
Leaders support risk-taking and innovation in teaching.	4.35	.67

Table 13 (continued).

School Culture Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teachers work together to develop and evaluate programs and projects.	4.17	.79
The faculty values school improvement.	4.70	.46
Teaching performance reflects the mission of the school.	4.48	.58
Administrators protect instruction and planning time.	4.13	.98
Teaching practice disagreements are voiced openly and discussed.	3.87	.95
Teachers are encouraged to share ideas.	4.54	.50
Students generally accept responsibility for their schooling, for example they engage mentally in class and complete homework assignments.	3.80	.91

Note: The survey School Culture Survey was a 5 point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

As shown in Table 14, which is descriptive of *Leader in Me* school climate for Leader In Me school Question 5 (M=4.07) measures whether new and different ideas are always being tried out, Question 6 (M=4.07) measures if there is good communication among teachers and Question 1 (M=4.02) measures if teachers design instructional programs together.

Table 14

SLEQ question responses for Leader in Me Schools (N=46)

Climate Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teachers design instructional programs together.	4.02	.74
Most students are well mannered or respectful of the school staff.	3.80	.85
Instructional equipment is not consistently accessible.	2.30	1.19
Teachers are frequently asked to participate in decisions.	3.96	.86
New and different ideas are always being tried out.	4.07	.68
There is good communication among teachers.	4.07	.87
Most students are helpful and cooperative with teachers.	3.93	.71
The school library has sufficient resources and materials.	3.57	1.20
Decisions about the school are made by the principal.	3.48	1.07
New courses or curriculum materials are seldom implemented.	2.15	.89
Students in this school are well behaved.	3.54	.91
Video equipment, tapes, and films are readily available.	3.70	1.03

Table 14 (continued).

Climate Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
I have very little say in the running of the school.	2.46	1.00
We are willing to try new teaching approaches in my school.	4.17	.87
I seldom discuss the needs of individual students with other teachers.	2.13	1.00
Most students are motivated to learn.	3.78	.84
The supply of equipment and resources is not adequate.	2.28	1.12
Teachers in this school are innovative.	4.28	.62
Classroom instruction is rarely coordinated across teachers.	2.26	.95
Good teamwork is **not** emphasized enough at my school.	1.70	.78

Note: The survey School Culture Survey was a 5 point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

As shown in Table 115, descriptive of Non *Leader in Me* schools for school culture question 15 M=4.19, teachers are willing to try new teaching approaches, question 19 M=4.13, teachers are innovative, and question 5 M=4.09, and teachers think that there is good communication among teachers.

Table 15

SLEQ question responses for non-Leader in Me Schools (N=126)

Climate Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teachers design instructional programs together.	3.81	.94
Most students are well mannered or respectful of the school staff.	3.74	1.04
Instructional equipment is **not** consistently accessible.	2.53	1.27
Teachers are frequently asked to participate in decisions.	3.63	1.01
There is good communication among teachers.	4.09	.72
Most students are helpful and cooperative with teachers.	3.94	.82
The school library has sufficient resources and materials.	3.71	1.09
Decisions about the school are made by the principal.	4.21	.77
New courses or curriculum materials are seldom implemented.	2.67	1.19

Table 15 (continued).

Climate Perception Questions	Mean	Standard Deviation
I have regular opportunities to work with other teachers.	3.65	1.14
Students in this school are well behaved.	3.58	1.00
Video equipment, tapes, and films are readily available.	3.76	.99
We are willing to try new teaching approaches in my school.	4.19	.66
I seldom discuss the needs of individual students with other teachers.	2.47	1.12
Most students are motivated to learn.	3.65	.92
The supply of equipment and resources is not adequate.	2.65	1.17
Teachers in this school are innovative.	4.13	.63
Classroom instruction is rarely coordinated across teachers.	2.42	1.03
Good teamwork is not emphasized enough at my school.	1.98	1.05

Note: The survey School Culture Survey was a 5 point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

Data Findings

Statistical significance for each independent variable was set at .05, and a

Pillai's Trace statistic was conducted. To conduct the analysis a MANOVA was

performed using the dependent variables. The MANOVA for this study has the main

objective of determining if the responses of teachers on the two surveys (SLEQ) and

School Culture Survey from The *Leader In Me* schools and the non-*Leader in Me* schools

are altered because of the type of school where they teach. If the overall test is

significant, the study can then conclude that the effect of being a *Leader in Me* school is

significant. MANOVA tests are useful in experiments where at least some of the

independent variables are manipulated (French, Macedo, Poulsen, Waterson, & Yu,

2006). The manipulation is the fact that the two groups of teachers are from different

types of schools: either they are *Leader in Me* schools or they are not.

Hypothesis Results

Hypothesis 1 was stated as follows: H_1 There is a statistically significant

relationship between whether a school is a *Leader InMe* school and school culture. This

study did find a significant statistical difference in whether a school was a *Leader in Me*

school and the teachers' perceptions of culture $F(5,165) =1.184$, p=.317. Table 16shows

the factors of the School Culture Survey that were used to test this hypothesis result.

Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted for school culture and *Leader in Me* schools. The

descriptive statistics are as follows:

Table 16

Factors of School Culture Survey

Factors of Culture	LIMS	Mean	Standard Deviation
collaborative_leadership	Yes	4.03	.66
	No	4.27	.51
	Total	4.10	.63
teacher_collaboration	Yes	3.75	.75
	No	3.86	.82
	Total	3.78	.77
professional_development	Yes	4.24	.515
	No	4.37	.487
	Total	4.28	.509
unity_of_purpose	Yes	4.31	.559
	No	4.47	.477
	Total	4.35	.54

Table 16 (continued).

Factors of Culture	LIMS	Mean	Standard Deviation
collegial_support	Yes	4.1	.60
	No	4.27	.49
	Total	4.15	.58
learning_partnership	Yes	3.78	.76
	No	4.02	.58
	Total	3.84	.72

Note: The survey School Culture Survey was a 5 point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

Hypothesis 2 was stated as follows: H_2 There is a statistically significant relationship between whether a school is a *Leader in Me* school and school climate. This study did find a statistically significant difference in whether a school was a *Leader in Me* school and the teachers' perceptions of climate F (5,166) =2.655, p=.024. Table 17shows the factors of the School Level Environment Questionnaire that were used to predict the relationship between school climate and *Leader in Me* schools. Therefore, the hypothesis was supported for *Leader in Me* schools and the teachers' perceptions of climate. This study did find a significant difference in two factors in *Leader In Me* schoolswhich were school resources, (M=3.16) and decision making (M= 3.62), making *Leader In Me* schools better on school resources and higher in decision making.

Table 17

Factors of School Level Environment Questionnaire

Factors of Climate	LIMS	Mean	Standard Deviation
Collaboration	Yes	3.06	.53
	No	2.96	.37
	Total	3.04	.49
student_relations	Yes	3.72	.81
	No	3.76	.65
	Total	3.73	.77
school_resources	Yes	3.16	.57
	No	2.96	.48
	Total	3.11	.55
decision_making	Yes	3.62	.56
	No	3.29	.58
	Total	3.53	.58
instructional innovation	Yes	3.74	.49
	No	3.66	.38
	Total	3.72	.46

Note: The survey School Culture Survey was a 5 point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

Hypothesis 3 was stated as follows: H_3There is a statistically significant relationship between whether a school is a *Leader in Me* school and school discipline referrals. Table 18 shows discipline records from the 2010-11 school year. In *Leader in Me* schools during the 2010-11 school year there was a significant statistical relationship in discipline referrals $F(11,88)=6.825, p<.001, R^2=.460$. The results suggest that being a *Leader in Me* school in the year 2010-11indeed had an important influence on discipline referrals in this type of school. With this finding the hypothesis is accepted. This result can be controlled by the mean scores in three factors: professional development of teachers (M=4.22) unity of purpose (M=4.27), and collegial support (M=4.06).Schools that want to reduce the number of discipline referrals may do so by becoming a *Leader in Me* school.

Table 18

Leader in Me Schools Culture 2010-11

Discipline Referrals for 2010-11	Mean	Standard Deviation
disciplinepc2010	1.03	.70
collaborative_leadership	3.97	.69
teacher_collaboration	3.71	.78
professional_development	4.22	.51
unity_of_purpose	4.27	.57

Table 18 (continued).

Discipline Referrals for 2010-11	Mean	Standard Deviation
collegial_support	4.06	.62
learning_partnership	3.74	.77
Collaboration	3.01	.47
student_relations	3.65	.79
school_resources	3.07	.51
instructional_innovation	3.72	.45

Note: The survey School Culture Survey was a 5 point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and

5=strongly agree.

Table 19

Coefficients of School Culture Survey Leader In Me Schools 2010-11

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standardized Coefficient	Sig.
	B	Beta	
(Constant)	1.81		.01
collaborative_leadership	-.01.	-.10	.96
teacher_collaboration	.08	.09	.54
professional_development	-.15	.11	.43

Table 19 (continued).

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standardized Coefficient	Sig.
	B	Beta	.07
collegial_support	.17	.15	.32
learning_partnership	.37	-.41	.005
collaboration	-.04	-.2	.77
student_relations	-.27	-.30	.01
school_resources	.02	.01	.84
decision_making	.06	.05	.56
instructional_innovation	.38	.24	.01

Note: The survey School Culture Survey was a 5 point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

A coefficient correlation was tested to determine how *The Leader In Me* schools in factscored in the 2010-11school year in all factors of the School Culture Survey and the School Level Environment Questionnaire Survey and it was determined that these schools scored high in their correlation with the factors of learning partnership and student relations. In contrast, instructional innovation was not an area that was strong in the teachers' minds. In Table 19 the Beta score and significance for learning partnership showed that teachers of *Leader In Me* schools experienced a high degree of working relationship with parents and students. Also, as can be seen in Table 19, the correlation was high in student-teacher relations demonstrating high levels of students and teachers relating with each other. Finally, Table 19shows the correlation between instructional

innovations and discipline; the more instruction innovation found in a school the more discipline referrals that school had reported. This finding shows that teachers are reporting that the more they are asked to try new teaching ideas the more they are having problems with the discipline of students.

Summary

To assess whether a relationship existed between the dependent variable and the independent variables, this study used MANOVA analysis. The study used the MANOVA to determine the relationship between the dependent variable, whether a school was a *Leader in Me* school or not, and teachers' perceptions of school culture and school climate. This study found that *Leader In Me* schools,in fact,have teachers that perceive their schools' culture as high in a number of factors, includingprofessional development, unity of purpose, and collegial support. The study also found that the non-*Leader In Me* schools possessed high means in teachers' perceptions of their schools with the same factors. The study also found that when school climate is studied being a *Leader In Me* school has a statistically significant difference when looking at teacher perception of the climate. Teachers at *Leader In Me* schools reported having higher means in decision making, school resources, and collaboration. The study found that *Leader in Me* schools culturally were high in their means in the areas of teachers working cooperatively in groups, leaders in the schools having administrators who trust professional judgment of teachers, and teachers being kept informed on current issues in the school.

In testing Hypothesis 1, there is a statistically significant relationship between whether a school is a *Leader in Me* school and school culture. This study found a

significant statistical difference in whether a school was a *Leader in Me* school and the teachers' perceptions of culture. Although significance was found, the hypothesis concerning school culture and *Leader in Me* schools was not accepted because the means of the factors concerning culture were not significantly higher than non-*Leader In Me* schools.

In testing Hypothesis 2, a statistically significant relationship between whether a school is a *Leader in Me* school and school climate was found. The hypothesis was supported for *Leader in Me* schools and the teachers' perceptions of climate. This study found a significant difference,however in two factors in *Leader in Me* schools, school resources and decision making. Because of these factors, the hypothesis that *Leader In Me* schools have better teacher perception of school climate was accepted.

Regarding Hypothesis 3, a statistically significant relationship existsbetween whether a school is a *Leader in Me* school or not and school discipline referrals. In *Leader in Me* schools during the 2010-11 school year there was a significant statistical relationship with discipline referrals. The results suggest that being a *Leader in Me* school in the year 2010-11indeed had an important influence on discipline referrals in this type of school. The result can be controlled by three factors: professional development of teachers, unity of purpose, and collegial support. These findings support the hypothesis that *Leader in Me* schools have fewer discipline referrals.

When looking at coefficient correlation to determine how The*Leader In Me* schools scored in the 2010-11 school year in all factors of the School Culture Survey and the School Level Environment Questionnaire it was determined that these schools scored high in their correlation with the factors of learning partnership and student relations. In

contrast, instructional innovation was not an area that was strong in the teachers' minds. This shows that in 2010-11 *Leader In Me* schools had a level of significance for learning partnership, which demonstrated that teachers of *Leader In Me* schools experienced a high degree of working relationships with parents and students. The correlation was also high in student-teacher relations, demonstrating high levels of students and teachers relating with each other. Finally, the correlation between instructional innovations and discipline demonstrated that the more instruction innovation found in a school, the more discipline referrals that school reported. This finding shows that teachers are reporting that the more they are asked to try new teaching ideas, the more they are having problems with the discipline of students.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECCOMENDATIONS

Introduction

The primary purpose of this study was to determine if there were statistically significant relationships among *Leader In Me* schools and the teachers' perceptions of school culture and climate at these schools. One surefire way to determine how culture and climate affect teachers is by ascertaining the number of discipline issues that are present in the school in which they teach. Identifying the factors of climate and culture that teachers report to be significant may assist administrators in determining if the transformation to The *Leader In Me* paradigm can be helpful to their school or school district. It may also aid administrators in selecting a method of true culture or climate change that will assist in improving teacher-student relationships.

Summary of Procedures

The primary data for this study were obtained from 172 teacher-reported surveys from three school districts, one in Florida and two in Mississippi. Nine schools participated in the study, which examined teacher perception of school culture and school climate and their effect on discipline referrals. A MANOVA analysis was used to determine whether a relationship exists between the dependent variable, discipline referrals over a two year period, and the independent variables of the School Culture Survey and the School Level Environment Questionnaire.

Before the study began, permission was gained from district superintendents and The University of Southern Mississippi's Institutional Review Board (IRB) along with the authors of the surveys. From August 1, 2012 to August 31, 2012 surveys were

distributed to participating school principals who, in turn, distributed, collected, and mailed the completed surveys to the researcher. Data were compiled and analyzed by the researcher. To measure reliability of items the authors of each surveys submitted the survey's Cronbach's alpha test of coefficient reliability on each set of survey items.

Major Findings

The relationship between *Leader In Me* school teachers' perception of school culture and school climate were found to be statistically significant in some but not all areas. The *Leader In Me* schools' teachers' perceptions of school culture had the most significance in how they view the learning partnership that exists between them and parents.

Research Question 1: Is there a difference in teacher perception of school culture between *Leader in Me* Schools and non-*Leader in Me* Schools as measured by the variables in School Culture Survey? This study did not find a significant relationship between teacher perception of school culture in the area of collaborative leadership, collegial support, professional development, unity of purpose, and school resources.

Research Question 2: Is there a difference in teacher perception of school climate between *Leader in Me* Schools and non-*Leader in Me* Schools as measured by the variables in the School Level Environment Questionnaire? This study did find a significant relationship between teacher perception of school climate in the area of school student relations and school resources. The factor of student relations was higher in its mean than school resources.

Research Question 3: Is there a relationship between teacher perception of school culture and school climate and student discipline referrals at *Leader in Me* Schools as

measured by the schools' discipline reports? The study did find a statistically significant difference in teacher perception of school climate, school culture, and discipline referrals. The study found that learning environment and student relationships correlated highly in reducing discipline referrals in *Leader In Me* schools. In contrast, instructional innovation did not help in producing positive teacher perceptions of school climate.

Discussion

The findings in this study are consistent with what the seven habits are represent, which is relationships. Teaching the Sevenhabits in schools is said to have a positive effect on students regardless of race, gender, or disability. Transforming a school to The *Leader In Me* can change how teachers, parents, and students view the education process and how they view each other. Teachers will see that it is their job to encourage and support students in seeking out their leadership abilities (Fonzi & Ritchie, 2011). Muriel Summers found when speaking with community members and business owners that they all wanted students who had competencies beyond academic scores (Covey, 2008). What a21st-century business needs are people who are responsible and can solve problems.Of all the people involved in the process of education it is the teachers who have the greatest influence on the learning of students. That is why the inside-out approach of changing teachers' paradigms first will be the most important change that a school will need to make in order to change climate or culture.

If the learning of the seven habits is prevalent in schools, then it is the private victory that has the biggest impact on how teachers see their job. The impact occurs because teachers will actually look to change how they see themselves. And the

teachers' perceptions are important because of the change that happens individually (Covey, 1989).

The way that teachers perceive the learning environment is important because it is the teachers who have close relationshipswith parents and students, and they are probably the first to understand students' method of learning. A national study that examined what makes an effective school found that it is the collective effort that produces high student achievement(Leithwood et al., 2004). According to the report, it is a shared leadership between parents, schools, and the community that takes a role in students' development. Therefore, it is important for teachers and administrators to decide what type of input they want from parents. On one hand,some administrators say they want parental input, while teachers are saying they want the students to take ownership over their education (Carter & Healey, 2012).

This partnership between parents and teachers, according to findings from a national study of highly successful middle level schools, provided practical insight about effective, collaborative school cultures in highly successful schools (Valentine et al., 2004). In order to increase parents' participation in the learning partnership it is suggested that schools look at what are they doing to get parents into the door, and what happens once they do arrive(Erwin, 2010).If schools desire to produce a welcoming environment administrators should consider the following:

1. Where are parents asked to meet when they are at the school?

2. How is communication handled

3. How can the school make parents needs satisfying (Erwin, 2010)?

Just as important, is once the parent arrives, is the ratio of parents to teachers, and considering whether the parents feel pressured. Another consideration is when talking to parents are teachers using the language of "educationese" or are they speaking using easy to understand language (Erwin, 2012). Learning partnership truly measures the degree to which teachers, parents, and students work together for the common good of the student. Because parents and teachers of students at *Leader In Me* schools share common expectations for the students and communicate frequently about student performance, parents trust teachers and students generally accept responsibility for their schooling (Valentine J.). Teachers and parents also communicate more in schools where the learning partnership is high thereby providing teachers an alternate avenue to which they can handle academic and discipline issues.

Because of laws like NCLB the relationship between students and teachers, and therefore school, has dwindled to the point that the graduation rate of high school seniors in America's 10 largest cities has, in fact, dropped to the point that it now hovers around 50% (Toppo, 2006). This could be in part an effect of increasing pressure for accountability to testing. Teachers at *Leader In Me* schools see students through a different paradigm than is presently available (Franklin Covey, 2012b). With accountability testing and the accompanying pressure, teachers see students through a paradigm of smartness, but *Leader in Me* schools look at the actual capability of the students to be not only learners but also leaders (Covey, 2008). As the great educator Roland S. Barth puts it, "The nature of the relationships among the adults who inhabit a school has more to do with its quality and character and with the accomplishments of its pupils, than any other factor"(Franklin Covey, 2012b). This model is just as much about

the adults as it is the children. It is inside out—first teachers, then students, and then

parents. If those three factors in a school are optimistic about student learning then it

becomes one ofthe most important things that happen in the school daily. In order for

teachers to relate to their students they must first possess the traits of responsibility,

respect, perseverance, honesty, integrity, and patience, among others. These traits are

described by Stephen Covey as principles (Covey, 1989).

The reason for the difference can be attributed to the leadership style of the

building administration (Wenton, 2010). This is important to this study because the

majority of the principals were in fact females. It has been found that teachers have more

influence on what occurs in the classroom than principals do in the way of innovation

(Lineburg, 2012). The standards of accountability made by NCLB provided even tougher

requirements for teachers. Because of this it is more important for principals to know

how to innovate instruction in a more efficient manner.

<center>Limitations</center>

Generalizability of this study's findings is limited by some factors. This research

did not specifically ask teachers from *Leader In Me* schools if they felt that the

transformation changed the climate or culture of their schools. Moreover, this study did

not ask specifics of what the differences in discipline referrals were. The small number

of schools and the geographic locations was also found to be a limitation. Of the number

of referrals several could have occurred on the bus as opposed to in the classroom. These

questions may have changed the differences when the discipline referrals were used in

the coefficient correlations.

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

The relationship between school culture and school climate is important to school administrators that may be in a school where student discipline referrals are high and teachers do not seem to have the vision that is common to the schools. Stephen Covey found that teachers who want to work with young people do better as teachers (Covey, 2008). The teachers are the ones who foster student learning in the subject matter andcan have a life changing effect on their students (Covey S. , 2008). In order to produce students who can compete in a global economy it is imperative that schools have the resources to produce and thrive, not just survive. With Common Core Curriculum and 21st Century Skills becoming a part of the new foundation of educating students many of the life lessons that people need are contained in The *Leader In Me*transformation. The buy-in for school administrators lies in the fact that skill sets that are presented as effective from business leaders and stakeholders such as initiative, goal setting, planning, time management, listening, and public speaking can be easily seen in The *Leader In Me* curriculum.

The attachment of teachers to students was found to be a very good indicator as to how a school can reduce the number of discipline referrals. This was reported to be direct because the school on the first day defines what the culture of the school will be. Establishing the school culture may not seem to be a wise decision because of accountability of testing. On the contrary, it is more important for a school administration and faculty to discuss the culture of the school with the students even as early as the first day of class (Covey, 2008). The discussion of school culture will drive the climate of the school as the students now will know what is expected of them.

The climate on a school campus is how the teachers, administration, students, and or parents and their social systems work together. Teachers often equate climate with their empowerment or their own morale in schools. When teacher perceptions of school climates are positive, the benefits are increased retention and attendance and better home-school relationships (Monrad et al., 2008). Schools with strong climates can be identified by having more students who perform well academically. The research on positive school climates suggests that having a positive school climate leads to a greater focus on and attunement to what students need to learn and for teachers to teach (Hess et al.,2006). This performance occurs because of teachers that care (Muller, 2001).

With such a strong relationship between school climate and academic performance, climate is often associated with improvement of schools (Mitchell et al., 2010). This relationship will in some cases parallel students' perceptions of a school. For example, if teachers see an orderly workplace in the environment of a school, the students will more than likely see the same, which could have an impression on them and how both teachers and students perform at the school (Center for Social and Emotional Education, 2010).

<div align="center">Recommendations for Further Research</div>

Further studies should help define the reason why *Leader In Me* schools appear to be successful at developing students by focusing on areas other than teacher perceptions about culture and climate.

1. Further studies should focus on what perceptions parents have about climate and culture at their child's school. Parents'perceptions of individual schools are not tied to money. In a survey by, Gallup and Phi Delta Kappa, a professional

association for educators,parents of school aged children were questioned on the quality of education. The Gallup Poll found that parents' perceptions of education for the United States is tied to how much is spent on education by the government. Conversely, their perceptions of their own local school is higher and is tied to what they actually see at the school itself (Gallup , 2010)

2. Further studies should focus on state test scores at *Leader In Me* schools and non *Leader In Me* schools. This is because if there a positive difference in test scores existsat *Leader In Me* schools then transforming to The *Leader In Me* can be justified to school officials in terms of school testing and accountability.

3. Lastly, future studies should focus on what drives schools to implement The *Leader In Me* and whether they are experiencing expected results from the transformation. This topic will give school officials examples of what issues are faced by schools that decide to go through the transformation. Also, this topic should have some type of pre- and post-survey on what the schools found to be positive and negative about the transformation.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were statistically significant relationships between teacher perception of school culture and school climate at *Leader In Me* schools and non *Leader In Me* Schools. Previous literature has linked these variables to increased teacher perceptions of culture and climate.

Primary data was obtained from teacher-reported survey instruments that were administered in nine schools that serve K-8 grade student populations in the states of Mississippi and Florida. A MANOVA analysis was used to determine whether

relationships exist between the dependent variable, discipline referrals over a two year period, and the independent variables of the School Culture Survey and the School Level Environment Questionnaire. The relationship between the variables was found to be significant in culture through learning partnerships and in climate through student teacher relations.

Although this study has limitations, recommendations for policy makers are to include researching schools' present practices in relation to the factors of the surveys used herein to determine climate and culture and defining the vision of the school to all stakeholders. Recommendations for policy makers also include implementing The *Leader In Me*transformation in schools. Implementation can assist in making true inside-out personal changes that teachers and schools need to improve relationships. These recommendations will ensure that administrators, teachers, students,parents, and could develop the type of school culture and climate that is conducive to learning.

Recommendations for further research include using parents' perceptions of culture and climate to see if they feel that The *Leader In Me* really works. Another recommendation is to focus on test scores of *Leader In Me* schools as opposed to schools that have not experienced the transformation. Conclusively, a study is needed to find out why schools transform to The *Leader In Me*.

APPENDIX A

LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO USE THE SCHOOL CULTURE SURVEY

Brian Barkley

to ValentineJ

Dr. Valentine:

I am a graduate student in the Education Leadership Doctoral Program at The University of Southern Mississippi. I am writing my dissertation on teacher perception of school climate and culture at The *Leader In Me* Schools versus non-*Leader in Me* schools. I am writing you today to request permission to use your School Culture Survey as a part of my study.

I am also wondering, with the permission, will I be receiving a clean copy (the one from the website has "sample survey" printed across it? And, the site describes a process for approval wherein the recipient will receive a number of items, namely:

1. A letter granting permission to use the requested instrument.

2. Guidelines for administering, scoring and interpreting the instrument.

3. A master copy of the instrument for your copying.

4. A spreadsheet in which you may enter the survey data for automated scoring and production of data charts.

5. Any information on the internal validity and reliability of the survey including the Cronbach's Alpha.

You may contact me via this email address or by phone at 228-229-6849

Thank you.

APPENDIX B

RESPONSE FROM DR. VALENTINE

Brian

You have permission to use the School Culture Survey as an instrument for your dissertation research. This permission is contingent upon your attentive following of all IRB regulations that protect the privacy and rights of respondents, as such would be normally required by your university's Institutional Review Board. I am attaching the materials you will need to use the SCS. Please send me a PDF copy of your study once it has been completed and defended.

Best of luck with your study.

Jerry Valentine

Jerry W. Valentine, Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus

University of Missouri

1266 Sunset Drive

Columbia, MO 65203

(573) 356-8948

APPENDIX C

LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO RECEEIVE VALIDITY AND

RELIABILITY INFORMATION OF SCHOOL CULTURE SURVEY

Dear Dr. Johnson:

My name is Brian Barkley, the graduate student from the University of Southern Mississippi. I spoke with you earlier today about the School Climate Survey. If you could, please include the validity/reliability information on the survey and a letter of permission to use the instrument. You can email it to this account.

Thanking you in advanced.

Brian Barkley

APPENDIX D

LETTER FROM DR. JOHNSON TO GRANT PERMISSION TO USE REVISED SLEQ

Hello Brian,

You can certainly use the SLEQ in your study. I have attached the instrument and a list of its factors as well as some SLEQ papers, which you may already have. Let me know if you still have questions or want to talk more about its use in your study. I will be interested in hearing about your results.

Bruce

Bruce Johnson

Department Head, Teaching, Learning & Sociocultural Studies

University of Arizona

1430 E. 2nd St.

PO Box 210069

Tucson, AZ 95721-0069 USA

Email: brucej@email.arizona.edu

Web: coe.arizona.edu/tls

Phone: 520 626-8700

Fax: 520 621-1853

APPENDIX E

SUPERINTENDENTS' PERMISSION TO SURVEY LETTERAND CONSENT FORM

16119 South April Drive
21 November 2011

Superintendent's Name
District's Name
District Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Superintendent,

I am currently a doctoral candidate at The University of Southern Mississippi. I will be conducting research on teacher perception of school climate and school culture. I am interested in how teachers at *Leader in Me* Schools and Non-*Leader in Me* Schools perceive school culture and school climate and whether the perceptions contribute to students' achievement.

I would like your written permission to survey teachers in your district. In addition to the questionnaire responses, I will be using the school districts' test scores on standardized tests. It should take no more than 10 minutes. The questionnaire contains 35 questions on school culture and 21 questions on school climate. On the school culture subject there are 11 questions on collaborative leadership, 6 questions on teacher collaboration, 5 questions on professional development, 5 questions on unity of purpose, 4 questions on collegial support, and 5 questions on learning partnership. Concerning school climate there are 6 questions on collaboration, 5 questions on student relations, 4

questions on school resources, 3 questions on decision making, and 4 questions on instructional innovation.

There are also 5 questions on demographics of the teachers. A copy of the survey instrument and directions are attached for your reference.

The data collected from the completed questionnaires will be compiled and analyzed. The data collected are anonymous. Upon completion, this information will be shared with my dissertation committee. The questionnaire will contain a participant's letter explaining the study and the participant's consent. Respectfully, I request that teachers refrain from writing their name or any identifying information. All information gathered will be kept completely confidential in the researcher's home. Upon completion of this research study, I will shred all surveys. As the researcher, I would be very grateful for your participation.

Information provided by classroom teachers can provide a valuable source of information about school culture, school climate, and how it affects student achievement. The data provided will be used by me, the researcher, to add to the bank of research on school culture and school climate.

Should you have any questions, please contact: Brian Barkley, email: coachbarkley@yahoo.com, or at brianbarkley@eagle.usm.edu. This research is under the supervising Professor, Dr. David Lee, david.e.lee@usm.edu, The University of Southern Mississippi, email:

This research will be reviewed and approved by the Human Subject Protection Review Committee, which ensures that all research fits the federal guidelines for involving human subjects. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject

should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-6820.

Sincerely,

Brian Barkley, MS

Doctoral Candidate

The University of Southern Mississippi

Consent to Participate in School Culture/School Climate Survey

As superintendent of _____ District, I give Brian

Barkley permission to conduct educational research at the following schools:

_____ (schools will be listed here).

This research will be conducted on School Culture, School Climate, and student

achievement. Permission is granted to survey K-12 teachers. I understand that

participation in this survey is voluntary. All responses will be kept confidential. No

individuals will be identified in any of the reports.

_____   _____

Superintendent's Signature   Date

APPENDIX F

ADULT CONSENT FOR RESEARCH FORM

The University of Southern Mississippi

118 College Drive #5147

Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

(601)266-6820

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Date: Fall, 2012

Title of Study: Teacher Perception of School Culture and School Climate in *The Leader*

In Me Schools

      Research will be conducted by: Brian Barkley (228) 229-6849

      Email Address: brianbarkley@eagles.usm.edu

      Faculty Advisor: Dr. David Lee

_____

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are being asked to take part in a research study. To join the study is voluntary.
You may refuse to join, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study, for any
reason, without penalty.

Research studies are designed to obtain new knowledge. This new information may help
people in the future. You may not receive any direct benefit from being in the research
study. There also may be risks to being in research studies.

Details about this study are discussed below. It is important that you understand this
information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this research study.
You will be given the first three pages of this consent form and the researcher will keep
the fourth sheet, which contains your signature. You should ask the researchers named

above, or staff members who may assist them, any questions you have about this study at any time.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this research study is to examine teacher perception of school culture and school climate.

How many people will take part in this study?

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be one of over 100 people in this research study.

How long will your part in this study last?

You will be asked to sign a consent form and fill out a questionnaire, which will last no longer than 10 minutes. A report of my findings will be made available to you upon request at the conclusion of this study by emailing me at brianbarkley@eagles.usm.edu.

What will happen if you take part in the study?

You will be asked to sign a consent form and fill out a questionnaire. The researcher will collect data from the questionnaire. Throughout the process of analysis, the researcher will keep the questionnaire in a locked box. The questionnaire and consent form will be shredded upon completion of this project.

What are the possible benefits from being in this study?

The benefit of the study will be the contribution of the findings to a better understanding of the subjects of school culture and school climate. The study will provide insights for teachers, administrators, and policymakers for the need of incorporating the Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens into school curriculum, teacher's attitudes and perceptions of school culture and school climate. The results may better enable educators and policymakers to address the issues of culture, climate, and life skills. Participants should request a summary from brian.barkley@eagles.usm.edu.

What are the possible risks or discomforts involved from being in this study?

There are no risks with obtaining test scores from your state department of education website. This information is made public and viewable. A superintendent letter will be mailed asking for permission to use their school districts test scores from the department of education and have teachers complete a questionnaire explaining It should take no more than 5 minutes to complete. The superintendent letter will explain that the questionnaire contains 35 questions on school culture, 21 questions on school climate, and 5 questions about demographic questions. The risks are that the respondents may not feel comfortable answering questions regarding their attitudes and perceptions of school culture and school climate, and the professional development provided. These concerns may be allayed by the assurances of confidentiality for respondents that will be provided. Only the researcher and faculty advisors will view the participant responses. All responses will be kept secure and locked in the researcher's home. Questionnaires and consent forms will be destroyed after one year.

How will your privacy be protected?

Participants will not be identified in any report or publication about this study. Questionnaires will be collected and placed in a lock box. Only researcher and faculty advisors will view these questionnaires. Questionnaires will be kept secure and locked in the researcher's home. Questionnaires and consent forms will be shredded after a year.

What if you have questions about this study?

You have the right to ask, and have answered, any questions you may have about this research. If you have questions or concerns, you should contact the researcher listed on the first page of this form.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

This project has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be directed to the chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-6820.

Title of Study: Teacher Perception of School Culture and School Climate in *The Leader In Me* Schools

Principal Investigator: Brian Barkley

APPENDIX G

PARTICIPANTS AGREEMENT

<u>Participant's Agreement:</u>

I have read the information provided above. I have asked all the questions I have at this time. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

_____   _____
Signature of Research Participant   Date

_____
Printed Name of Research Participant

_____   _____
Signature of Research Team Member Obtaining Consent   Date

_____
Printed Name of Research Team Member Obtaining Consent

APPENDIX H

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS EXPLAINING THE STUDY

Dear Participants,

I am currently a doctoral candidate at The University of Southern Mississippi. I am conducting a research study on teachers' perceptions of school culture and school climate at The *Leader In Me* Schools and how they contribute to students' achievement on the state test. Please take a few moments of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire.

The questionnaire contains 35 questions on school culture and 21 questions on school climate. On the school culture subject there are 11 questions on collaborative leadership, 6 questions on teacher collaboration, 5 questions on professional development, 5 questions on unity of purpose, 4 questions on collegial support, 5 questions on learning partnership. Concerning school climate there are 6 questions on collaboration, 5 questions on student relations, 4 questions on school resources, 3 questions on decision making, and 4 questions on instructional innovation.

There are also 5 questions on demographics of the teachers.

Upon completion, this information will be shared with my dissertation committee.

The data collected from the completed questionnaires will be compiled and analyzed. All data collected are anonymous. All information gathered will be kept completely confidential. To ensure confidentiality of the school and teachers, no one will be identified by name, including the school district, the location of district, or the name of the school. Upon completion of this research study, I will shred all surveys. As the researcher, I am very appreciative for your participation; your completed questionnaire will serve as your consent to participate as well as the consent form. However, you have the option to decline to participate if you so wish. If you decide to withdraw from participation at any time, there is no penalty or risk of negative consequence.

As a part of this study, I will be asking approximately 100-150 teachers to complete a survey to gather data that can provide valuable information on school culture, school climate, and student achievement. I will use the data you provide to add to the research bank on school culture, school climate, and student achievement. Should you have any questions, please contact: Brian Barkley, email: brianbarkley@eagles.usm.edu; phone: 228.229.6849. This research is conducted under the supervision of Dr. David Lee, University of Southern Mississippi, email: david.e.lee@usm.edu.

This research project has been reviewed and approved by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that all research fits the federal guidelines for research involving human subjects. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-6820.

Thanks

APPENDIX I

SCHOOL CULTURE SURVEY

School Culture Survey

Indicate the degree to which each statement describes conditions in your school.

Please use the following scale:

1=Strongly Disagree   2=Disagree   3=Undecided   4=Agree   5=Strongly Agree

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	Teachers utilize professional networks to obtain information and resources for classroom instruction.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2.	Leaders value teachers' ideas.	①	②	③	④	⑤
3.	Teachers have opportunities for dialogue and planning across grades and subjects.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4.	Teachers trust each other.	①	②	③	④	⑤
5.	Teachers support the mission of the school.	①	②	③	④	⑤
6.	Teachers and parents have common expectations for student performance.	①	②	③	④	⑤
7.	Leaders in this school trust the professional judgments of teachers.	①	②	③	④	⑤
8.	Teachers spend considerable time planning together.	①	②	③	④	⑤
9.	Teachers regularly seek ideas from seminars, colleagues, and conferences.	①	②	③	④	⑤
10.	Teachers are willing to help out whenever there is a problem.	①	②	③	④	⑤
11.	Leaders take time to praise teachers that perform well.	①	②	③	④	⑤

12. The school mission provides a clear sense of direction for teachers.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

13. Parents trust teachers' professional judgments.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

14. Teachers are involved in the decision-making process.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

15. Teachers take time to observe each other teaching.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

16. Professional development is valued by the faculty.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

17. Teachers' ideas are valued by other teachers.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

18. Leaders in our school facilitate teachers working together.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

19. Teachers understand the mission of the school.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

20. Teachers are kept informed on current issues in the school.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

21. Teachers and parents communicate frequently about student performance.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

22. My involvement in policy or decision making is taken seriously.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

23. Teachers are generally aware of what other teachers are teaching.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

24. Teachers maintain a current knowledge base about the learning process.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

25. Teachers work cooperatively in groups.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

26. Teachers are rewarded for experimenting with new ideas and techniques.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

27. The school mission statement reflects the values of the community.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

28. Leaders support risk-taking and innovation in teaching.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

29.	Teachers work together to develop and evaluate programs and projects.	①	②	③	④	⑤
30.	The faculty values school improvement.	①	②	③	④	⑤
31.	Teaching performance reflects the mission of the school.	①	②	③	④	⑤
32.	Administrators protect instruction and planning time.	①	②	③	④	⑤
33.	Teaching practice disagreements are voiced openly and discussed.	①	②	③	④	⑤
34.	Teachers are encouraged to share ideas.	①	②	③	④	⑤
35.	Students generally accept responsibility for their schooling, for example they engage mentally in class and complete homework assignments.	①	②	③	④	⑤

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Missouri, 1998.

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Missouri, 1998.

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APPENDIX J

SCHOOL-LEVEL ENVIRONMENT QUESTIONNAIRE - REVISED

The following are statements about the school in which you work and your working environment. Indicate how well each statement AGREES WITH YOUR DESCRIPTION OR VIEWS of your school environment.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	Teachers design instructional programs together.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	Most students are well mannered or respectful of the school staff.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Instructional equipment is **not** consistently accessible.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Teachers are frequently asked to participate in decisions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	New and different ideas are always being tried out.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	There is good communication among teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Most students are helpful and cooperative with teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	The school library has sufficient resources and materials.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	Decisions about the school are made by the principal.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	New courses or curriculum materials are seldom implemented.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	I have regular opportunities to work with other teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12.   Students in this school are well behaved.   □   □   □   □   □

13.   Video equipment, tapes, and films are readily available.   □   □   □   □   □

14.   I have very little say in the running of the school.   □   □   □   □   □

15.   We are willing to try new teaching approaches   □   □   □   □   □

    in my school.

16.   I seldom discuss the needs of individual students   □   □   □   □   □

    with other teachers.

17.   Most students are motivated to learn.   □   □   □   □   □

18.   The supply of equipment and resources is **not** adequate.   □   □   □   □   □

19.   Teachers in this school are innovative.   □   □   □   □   □

20.   Classroom instruction is rarely coordinated across teachers.   □   □   □   □   □

21.   Good teamwork is **not** emphasized enough at my school.   □   □   □   □   □

APPENDIX K

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER

THE UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
118 College Drive #5147 | Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
Phone: 601.266.6820 | Fax: 601.266.4377 | www.usm.edu/irb

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: 12032905
PROJECT TITLE: Teacher Perception of School Climate and
                  School Culture in The Leader In Me Schools
PROJECT TYPE: Dissertation
RESEARCHER/S: Brian Barkley
COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education & Psychology
DEPARTMENT: Education Administration & Supervision
FUNDING AGENCY: N/A
IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Expedited Review Approval
PERIOD OF PROJECT APPROVAL: 04/10/2012 to 04/09/2013

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

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