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## **The Principal and Teacher Evaluation: A Study of Influencing Pressures**

Andy Brock

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THE PRINCIPAL AND TEACHER EVALUATION:  
A STUDY OF INFLUENCING PRESSURES

by

Andy W. Brock

A Dissertation  
Submitted to the Graduate School,  
the College of Education and Human Sciences  
and the School of Education  
at The University of Southern Mississippi  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## ABSTRACT

This quantitative study focused on determining the amount of influencing pressure principals encountered during summative teacher evaluations, determining if there was a relationship between the pressures a principal experienced while completing a summative teacher evaluation and the summative evaluation score teachers received, and determining if there was a relationship between teacher evaluation scores and district accountability levels. A survey instrument was created containing 23 possible influencing pressures derived from a literature review along with 14 items for the purpose of collecting demographic data from each participant. The survey instrument used a horizontal numeric scale to measure the amount of influencing pressure the principal encountered during summative teacher evaluation.

The sample used in this study was taken from school districts in Mississippi, where the superintendent gave permission to the researcher to do research. Teacher evaluation scores were collected from the Mississippi Comprehensive Automated Performance-Based System used by the Office of Federal Programs at the department of education. The scores were part of the public-school level Federal Programs plan.

The frequency, mean, and standard deviation were calculated for each influencing pressure to determine the degree to which principals encountered each pressure. A multiple linear regression analysis was completed to determine the relationship between the influencing pressures principals encountered while completing summative teacher evaluations and summative teacher evaluation scores. A one-way ANOVA was used to determine if a relationship between teacher evaluation scores and district accountability levels exist. The results of the study show that principals feel the most pressure in

regards to having an impact on student achievement and growth. Furthermore, the study revealed no relationship between the pressures principals rated and teacher summative evaluation scores. The study also indicated no relationship between teacher evaluation scores considered effective and the accountability level of a school district. The benefits of this study include providing a better understanding of teacher evaluation and the influences that determine the effectiveness of a teacher and the relationship between the effectiveness of teachers and district accountability levels.

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## DEDICATION

As with any goal I have set out to complete, my family has been there supporting me along the way. I want to thank my wife, Kimberly R. Brock, for her patience and for gently keeping me on track even when obstacles got in the way. I want to thank my children, Andrew Joshua Brock and Laken Hope Brock, for checking on my progress and encouraging me to complete my task. I would also like to thank my parents Marvin and Pauline Brock. They always encouraged me in all of my studies and emphasized the importance of education. God has provided me with a loving family that has always had my best interest at heart.

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## CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

The role of the principal as it relates to teacher evaluation has evolved. For years, school management and student discipline were viewed as the chief responsibilities of the principal. Over time, the role of the principal has shifted to that of instructional leader, teacher coach, and teacher evaluator with the intent of growing teachers. To better understand the challenges today's principals face, it is important to consider the evolution of the principal's role over several decades. Additionally, details regarding the development of teacher evaluation are also addressed.

The earliest American schools shared several characteristics that are counterintuitive to the goal of today's educators. While teaching was considered one of the humblest and noblest professions, there was isolation, monotony, and little or no adequate support for beginning teachers (Glickman, Gordon, Ross-Gordon, & Glickman, 2001). The principal's role was indistinguishable from the *principal teacher* who was chiefly responsible for the management of the school's functions along with the expected instructional duties (Kimbrough, 1990). Publications in the early nineteenth century began to reflect the recognition of the position, and other teachers within the schools began to view this person as the authority figure for both teachers and students. The principal was expected to assist in providing resources to teachers so they might more adequately fulfill their duties as educators. Teacher evaluation was likely informal and, by observing teachers, the principal may have provided career support as he deemed necessary (Beck & Murphy, 1993). Teaching was viewed as a respectable position, and students were expected to learn the material as it was provided. For these reasons, a formal type of teacher evaluation system may not have been deemed necessary at this

time. Provided a teacher exercised proper dress and grooming habits, appeared confident and enthusiastic and had integrity and proper language skills, teachers were considered suitable for the field of education (Shinkfield, 1995). Measuring the capacity to motivate students to learn was not the main focal point because it was assumed that good teaching would lead to student achievement (Stiggins, 2014).

During the 1920s, the role of the principal began to take on a new shape. The National Education Association (NEA) gave recognition to principals by creating a department specifically for them (Orlosky, 1984). Beginning in 1928, the NEA began conducting studies of K-8 principals every ten years. The study included a survey in which some questions would remain the same every subsequent decade in order to determine attitude trends, while other questions would vary to include matters of the principalship relevant to the era (Protheroe, 2008). The principal was viewed as a public servant and social leader in the community. Teachers viewed the principal as the presiding officer, organizer, and guide; students viewed the principal as a transmitter of values, teacher, and disciplinarian. The principalship was a noble profession, and the person in this position was expected to be enthusiastic about the job. At this time, spiritual truths and values dominated the culture of education. Principles of scientific management were frequently employed. As long as these ideas were maintained and encouraged, teachers and principals were considered successful (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

A decade later, the thirties, the principalship adjusted once again. The human relations movement in management came about as the result of the Hawthorne Plant studies. While it centered on management in the rapidly growing industrial world, there were implications that could be felt in the educational arena. Workers were viewed as

individuals with aspirations and opinions whose work productivity was motivated by supervisor actions (Brighton, 1965). Teachers and students continued to view the principal as the chief authority figure, and organization and supervision became the main roles of the principal. There were standards for evaluation of teachers in place, but rather than instructional in nature, they focused instead on efficient and economical management. The principal no longer spent much time providing instruction directly. Principles of scientific management continued to be held significant, but the new and improved educational arena involved educational research and business efficiency and economy in schools (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

In the 1940s, social issues increased in importance. World War II was making headlines; thousands of men were called away to serve. The school principal was a cornerstone of society—now considered the leader on the home front. Democracy took a “front seat” in education. Teachers viewed the principal as a sharer of responsibilities and a facilitator for instructors’ efforts. The community saw the principal as a public relations representative, and Superintendents considered principals to be co-leaders. There was a dominating belief that humanity could solve social problems, and education was the vehicle for bringing this idea about. The evaluative standard was simply whether or not the principal behaved democratically in his duties (Beck & Murphy, 1993). School overpopulation became a problem in many areas. Some schools were consolidated, and there were massive teacher shortages. The curriculum was undergoing major reconstruction, and administrators often had no choice but to hire undertrained individuals to fill vacancies. (Brighton, 1965).



Ten years later in the fifties, the principal's role evolved once again. Educational research was not brand new to the school principal, but during this era, its importance and use increased drastically. Principals were expected to combine practical skills with theoretical insights. They were expected to be able to answer critics with data that "demonstrate the effectiveness of the practices in question" (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 52). Being efficient and effective time managers was also an important feature of the role. Minor details of school operation were sometimes given more attention than considered practical today. Teachers continued to view the principal as a supportive, democratic instructional leader. Students began to view the principal as a personable and friendly leader who was closely involved with everyone. This decade's principal encouraged parent support because research supported its proven benefits. The evaluative methods of the day were almost nonexistent. During this decade, principals were called to complete academic preparation programs before starting their leadership roles, and success was assumed if principals followed university principles for their roles (Beck & Murphy, 1993). Studies in human relations began to shed light on the effectiveness of teamwork and the way in which leadership attitudes affect employees. Findings of the fifties supported that leaders needed to be psychologically distant in order to avoid emotional distractions that may arise when disciplining or coaching subordinates (Fiedler, 1958).

The National Society for the Study of Education (NSSE) published a yearbook in the 1960s, which suggested the principalship should be considered a profession. This publication led to an increased awareness of the need for substantial principal training and illuminated the potential for scientific research in education (Orlosky, 1984). The educational arena was viewed as a well-developed bureaucracy, and the principal was

expected to manage it. Educators had faith in “correct” techniques to bring about desired results. Teachers saw the principal as a morale builder as well as a deliverer of educational knowledge. Students saw the principal as an indirect disciplinarian; the teacher was the first line of defense. The community expected the principal to support harmonious relationships among themselves, teachers, and the students. With standardized test data, success was directly correlated to the student product. Evaluation of teachers was both formative and summative (Beck & Murphy, 1993). At the end of this decade, the public began to demand more accountability from teachers, and most schools gave formal written evaluations to the majority of their teachers (Shinkfield, 1995). Official teacher evaluation reports included questions regarding personal characteristics, staff relationships, classroom control, instructional skills, and general school service (Brighton, 1965).

The Seventies principal was expected to be humanistic and socially relevant. Educational efforts were expected to be meaningful, and it was the principal’s job to impart that meaning to teachers, students, and the community. The principal had begun to juggle many roles at this time, a situation that required principals to have many different talents to be effective (Beck & Murphy, 1993). During the mid-1970s, researchers began to take note of schools that were exceptionally high-performing. Some of these schools were in very poor districts, while others were part of wealthier areas. The disparity led to the general belief that when educators and students are properly motivated, all schools could be effective. With the educational supports and accepted training programs available during this decade, all educators were expected to be capable of bringing about academic success. Effective schools were characterized by strong

leadership, student and teacher evaluation/monitoring methods, an atmosphere conducive to meeting the goals of the school/district, communication to students regarding the importance of mastering basic skills, expectations that students will be successful, and careful management of resources as needed to accomplish goals of the school (Glickman et al., 2001). Teacher evaluation became a complex and formal activity, which was evidenced in 1971 with the Stull Act. A key provision of this legislation included student progress as part of teacher evaluations. Educational literature of the decade suggested the logic in principals providing meaningful evidence through teacher evaluation. Evaluations were five-fold, consisting of who was to be evaluated, value term used in the evaluation, value judgment, evidence, and criteria. Precision of evaluation was ultimately important because teacher job security was expected to be tied to the results (Hyman, 1975).

In the Eighties, the principal's role shifted to that of a more businesslike leader. The principal was expected to be a problem solver, resource provider, and teacher coach (Beck & Murphy, 1993). Elaborate evaluative instruments began to trend in the educational world, partly in response to the 1983 federal government report *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative of Education Reform* (Senge et al., 2000). Terms such as *validity* and *reliability* were used in discussions about teacher evaluation (Orlosky, 1984). Toward the end of the 1980s, new research into school effectiveness heralded new findings and expectations. The list of characteristics of an effective school increased from only five general items to a dozen or more specific ones. For example, effective schools were noted for their exceptional curriculum and instructional articulation and organization; parental involvement and support; collaborative planning and collegial

relationships; as well as the usual strong leadership, order, and expectations as accepted in prior research (Glickman et al., 2001).

In the 1990s, the standards-raising movement, or restructuring movement, determined the course of educators. The changing nature of the social fabric, education turmoil due to an economic crisis, and evolution from an industrial- to a post-industrial world had brought about many new challenges for schools, students, and educators. More than 30% of students represented minorities and, by the year 2000, nearly half were expected to be non-white. Many students came from homes where both parents worked or were from one-parent homes. Students spent more time on their own and did not have the parental support usually expected from a traditional two-parent home. As a result, many students and their families were faced with poverty, unemployment, crime, drugs, malnutrition, and a variety of other challenges that equated to undesirable educational outcomes. The need for supportive organizations and services increased drastically. Effective school research was showing that achievement gaps between low- and middle-socioeconomic status students were not improving (Glickman et al., 2001). On a positive note, this decade was characterized by marked leaps in the technological world. The demand for innovative technology meant demand for educators with a new skill set. The principal added elaborate roles to an already-overwhelming repertoire of job expectations: organizational architect, initiator, servant who leads from within a web of interpersonal relationships. In addition, the principal was expected to be a social architect, one who “bridges the connection between the conditions of education and the total conditions of children” (Beck & Murphy, 1993). Kimbrough (1990) went further to add “Obviously, the principal is accountable for the development of instructional

excellence (p. 8)”, promoting a team mentality with a common mission: maximizing student academic achievement. For this reason, teacher evaluation became a measure of how well the principal met this goal.

By the new millennium, Glickman et al. (2001) reported a change in the focus of educational research. The new emphasis was shifting from school effectiveness to school improvement. The previously accepted list of characteristics of effective schools now included additions that specifically promoted school improvement. Principals were encouraged to implement varied sources of leadership within the school (i.e., lead teachers, assistant principals, etc.), resist practices that isolate teachers and work as a collective toward a common vision. The focus of the school was less on menial management and more on instruction and learning. Improving schools were to use data-based feedback to assess areas in need of improvement for monitoring and adjusting current practices. Scholars such as Strauss (2013) noted that effective leadership and effective teaching are the greatest tools for improving schools. Evaluating effectiveness became inevitable.

### Current Role of the Principal

According to the 1998 Educational Research Service study, sixty percent of those surveyed cited insufficient compensation as it relates to the workload as the number one reason for the ever-growing principal shortage. M. S. Tucker and Coddling (2002) state that the second- and third-most noted reasons for principal shortage were excessive stress and a lack of time. They go on to emphasize the numerous challenges today’s principals encounter each day and the skill set needed to navigate them successfully. For example, according to "Decisions, Decisions! A Week in the Life of a Principal | Education World"

2018), the moment principals step onto the school campus in the morning, they are likely bombarded by requests from numerous individuals: secretary, teachers, parents, custodians, support staff, and students. However, due to limits of time, manpower, and resources, school leaders will likely need to implement a mental triage system to manage the early morning challenges successfully. More menial tasks will be delayed, while other, more urgent tasks are addressed immediately. The author goes on to add that being able to multi-task is a desirable trait for school principals. In the course of a single school day, principals have documented having to report criminal activities to local authorities, dealing with staff or students who suddenly become very ill, covering state-testing duties in the event the appointed administrator is unavailable, dealing with budgeting issues for the upcoming school year, and managing parents who drop in unexpectedly regarding school safety among many other issues. With the aforementioned list of complicated issues, principals share that other random behaviors—such as a child attempting to choke another child—require immediate attention and follow-up conferences with teachers to recommend courses of action for such behavior. Principals cover duty posts in the event teachers are absent and coordinate with custodians to prepare the grounds for visits from the community. In the meantime, salespeople call to promote their products. School leaders must manage curriculum issues when needed, check on office staff to assist as the occasion arises, and seek solutions to discipline issues that are beyond those handled within the classroom. Interviews for people seeking employment fall under the heading of principal duties. They endorse field trips and sign-off on a plethora of forms and other relevant paperwork. Before the end of some days, principals are on duty for evening ball games or are available for questions and comments at parent meetings ("Decisions,

Decisions! A Week in the Life of a Principal | Education World," 2018). In addition to this list of tasks is the growing demand for principals to provide feedback to teachers about their performance.

Today, clearly the need for an effective teacher evaluation process has become a higher priority. In 2014, the U.S. Department of Education published an extensive guide regarding evaluation, outlining rationale and protocols. Since the principal currently acts in various interrelated roles including the instructional leader, teacher coach, business manager, and student disciplinarian, embedding teacher evaluation into the large list of job requirements may be a heavy burden. It is well established that a schools' instructional leader directly influences the teacher and, thus, the student. Just as teachers must provide goals and expectations to their students, provide appropriate and adequate time for mastery, monitor with assorted evaluative protocols and make adjustments accordingly, principals must adapt their daily schedules to include teacher monitoring and evaluative routines (M. S. Tucker & Coddling, 2002).

It should also be noted that there are two types of teacher evaluation: formative and summative. Formative evaluation is intended as teacher support and takes place throughout the year by way of classroom observations. It is comprised of individualized goals and provides guidelines for becoming a more effective teacher. Summative evaluation, on the other hand, is the checkpoint to determine whether the teacher has met individualized goals. Although many districts attempt to provide both types of assessment using one instrument near the end of the school year, this practice is frowned upon due to the weak emphasis on formative assessment (Snowden & Gorton, 1998). It has also been a continual source of discontent among teachers because it is difficult to

accept that a single summative report can determine the effectiveness of an individual (Senge et al., 2000).

The principal as teacher evaluator has different definitions and characteristics when viewed over time. Today, the principal has been mandated to become more than the enforcer of district, state, and federal policies. The principal is tasked with examining instructional practices, monitoring student and teacher progress, and giving teachers meaningful, evidence-based feedback to enhance teacher effectiveness (Cosner, Kimball, Barkowski, Carl, & Jones, 2015). The goal of teacher evaluation has advanced from *grading* the teacher to *growing* the teacher. Whereas giving a low grade can be viewed as punitive, addressing weaknesses to provide a learning path for improvement (growth) is likely viewed more positively. To help initiate the change from *grading* to *growing* the teacher, the principal must make the school a place of learning not just for students, but for teachers as well. It is the role of the principal to promote professional growth (Danielson, 2016).

Another factor principals must consider in evaluating teachers is the teacher's disposition. A teacher's disposition affects teaching. Unless a teacher acknowledges a willingness to change instructional practice, change is not likely to take place (M. S. Tucker & Coddling, 2002). The principal can shape the disposition of teachers most effectively during the teacher's initial year of teaching. For many, desirable traits such as work ethic, self-discipline, and a sense of persistence take years to develop (Wheatley, 2002). A comprehensive teacher induction program that incorporates principals giving increased attention to teacher dispositions during the hiring process is key. For teachers who are already employed, the principal has the duty to guide teachers to desired



dispositions. Desired dispositions may focus more on the teacher as a person or the teacher as part of the school collective. On a personal level, effective teachers tend to exhibit the following characteristics: empathy, a positive view of others, a positive view of self, authenticity, and a meaningful purpose and vision. In terms of desired dispositions for the teacher as a team member, this may mean sharing a common school vision, identify and promoting shared values, monitoring the school's efforts, a commitment to professional growth, and commitment to the goals of the school (Nixon, Dam, & Packard, 2010)

Teacher growth is often tied to coaching and applies to both established teachers and newly hired teachers. For established teachers, the principal may need to provide ongoing support for achieving the desired instructional goals. Supportive efforts could take the form of professional development, collaboration with a consultant, observation of mentor teachers, or any other coaching method the principal deems necessary. As a coach to new teachers, the principal often needs to work closely with the teacher during the induction period. During this time, the principal should help acclimate new teachers to the demands of their new job. As the instructional leader of the school, the principal can cooperate with new teachers to give them professional guidance and support in line with the goals and expectations of the school. This type of collaboration involves the principal providing feedback on instructional and classroom management issues to teachers. By addressing such issues quickly, new teachers have the opportunity to become more confident in their performance, and student achievement will not suffer (Baker-Gardner, 2016).

Regarding collaboration in the twenty-first century, educational pedagogy suggests teachers and principals should create a shared vision that includes a combination of professional learning and teacher evaluation. Authority-based visions do not last. Instead, it is the result of the candid collaboration of all stakeholders and establishing one is time- and labor-intensive (Senge et al., 2000). Furthermore, Senge et al. (2000) add that the goal of teacher evaluation is teacher career development in order to improve student academic success: change. Change must involve learning, starts small, and is characterized by challenges. To clarify, for teachers who receive ineffective ratings, the principal is tasked with giving support to help build their skills (Bradley, 2014). For the principal to help teachers grow and provide an atmosphere that promotes professional learning and growth, it is important to give meaningful feedback. For feedback to be valuable, principals must individualize it to address the teacher's strengths and weaknesses. The feedback needs to be specific, focused, and presented in a positive, compassionate manner. Principals need to make sure that feedback is regular and ongoing, allowing the feedback recipient to respond and contribute to the discussion (Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStefano, 2014). After a principal creates an atmosphere of professional learning and growth, the focus can turn to helping teachers who have the most need. The principal can devote less time to frequent evaluations and more time to improvement. More time can be spent with new teachers in the district as well as with more experienced teachers who are facing greater difficulties in the classroom. (Simon, 2012).

Authentic teacher evaluation has been an important tool for helping to improve teacher effectiveness. Evaluation helps the teacher become more aware of skills that need

to be perfected. When the principal and teacher work together, evaluation becomes a powerful tool to bring about teacher growth. Teacher evaluation is also viewed as a means of ensuring the academic progress of students (Arar & Oplatka, 2011). The conversations between principal and teacher may be difficult. Consistent, candid feedback that highlights strengths and weaknesses along with a collaborative relationship between principal and teacher aids in driving positive changes in teacher effectiveness (Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStefano, 2014).

Despite a shift to a more positive approach for evaluating teaching, teacher evaluation retains some negative connotations. In some cases, evaluation can lead to dismissal. Teacher termination is likely when student standardized testing results are used in evaluations to determine the effectiveness of a teacher. If a teacher's students perform poorly on state tests, the evaluation results can make it difficult for a principal to recommend the teacher for contract renewal (Nixon, Packard, & Dam, 2011). Add to this the continual argument among a variety of stakeholders regarding how students' growth is to be measured. If student performance is to be tied to teacher performance, this point bears consideration (Stiggins, 2014). Because of the negative connotations involved with teacher evaluation, the principal as the main evaluator of teachers faces many external pressures to give teachers good evaluations.

#### Additional Challenges

Principals can face political pressures related to teacher evaluations. News media portrays teacher evaluation based on how it is viewed by unions and teachers. Unions have voiced concerns and outwardly opposed teacher evaluations incorporating student standardized test scores. This has brought about strained relationships among teachers,

unions, principals, and policymakers (Aguilar & Richerme, 2014). Political pressures vary from district to district, but one popular political topic has been merit pay. If qualifying for merit pay is dependent on positive teacher evaluations, the need for valid outcomes is crucial. Evaluation outcomes, in this case, could affect budgeting decisions. (Edgar, 2012).

Despite the importance of teacher evaluation and the pressures that come with it, there are other challenges to authentic evaluation, including the time that principals must invest. The yearly evaluation cycle requires multiple observations and multiple conferences. Additionally, the principal has an enormous amount of data and paperwork that must be stored for each teacher. In the past, the principal did not spend such a considerable amount of time evaluating teachers. Nevertheless, the other managerial demands of the principal have not been reduced, so many principals struggle with completing timely and thorough evaluations of all their schools' teachers (Cosner et al., 2015).

It should also be noted that many principals may not have the content knowledge to rate a teacher fairly. Teachers have expressed concerns about a principal not having the content knowledge of their subject and thereby not understanding the challenges that lie in teaching in that area. It can be a struggle for principals to evaluate teachers when they do not know the content. In some cases, the principal will evaluate the teacher on classroom procedures rather than content delivery (Edgar, 2012).

Principals often have the added pressure of navigating through new evaluation instruments. When a new evaluation system is implemented, a principal must develop his or her expertise in using the system effectively (Cosner et al., 2015). In some states,

principals must go through rigorous training and be deemed proficient before they can utilize a new evaluation system (Donaldson & Papay, 2014).

Realizing that not all teachers are going to grow and be productive, even after the cycle of evaluation and remediation, may pose additional stress on principals. When all efforts to improve a teacher have been exhausted to no avail, non-renewal of the teacher is the next course of action a principal may face. A principal may inflate teacher evaluation ratings in order to avoid the unpleasantness of non-renewing an employee. Per Nixon, Packard, and Douvanis (2010), “the issues regarding teacher contract non-renewal are arguably the most stressful, demanding, time-consuming, and emotional tasks required of a school principal.” Such pressure can make principals feel defensive about teacher evaluation. This knowledge, along with inadequate support from the district, can prevent principals from dealing with inadequate teachers (Nixon, Packard, et al., 2010).

In addition to those previously mentioned, several other factors have the potential to alter how a principal expresses opinion and, thus, the common goal—teacher instructional growth and student academic performance. Principals may feel the need to consider professional relationships and loyalty to the teachers being evaluated (Arar & Oplatka, 2011). Principals are aware that a bad evaluation could cost a teacher a pay raise or even a promotion (Edgar, 2012). Even a principal’s own biases can lead to evaluations that are not consistent with objective performance.

#### Problem Statement

For many years, some form of teacher evaluation has been utilized to measure the manner in which teachers perform their jobs. In the majority of cases, the school

principal has been the one responsible for evaluating teachers and ultimately deciding whether a teacher needs improvement or if the dismissal is in order. Having this authority has resulted in overwhelming pressure and stress for the principal due to numerous circumstances. These situations have the potential to affect schools in a variety of ways. A large amount of research has been conducted on the topic of teacher evaluation, the role of the principal in teacher evaluation, and how professional learning can be used to help grow a teacher's skills and ultimately the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. Evaluations have moved from being high stakes based to growth based. There is little or no research available regarding how pressure and stress facing principals differ due to the type of evaluation being completed and how these evaluation types may or may not affect schools' performance on state assessments, particularly schools involved in school improvement.

#### Research Questions

This study will address several questions. One question regards the degree to which principals experience influencing pressure when performing summative teacher evaluations. A second question examines the relationship between the influencing pressures principals encounter when performing summative teacher evaluations and the ratings they give to teachers during such evaluations. A final question addressed in this study determines whether there is a significant relationship between teacher evaluation scores and the accountability rating of the school districts.

#### Delimitations

The sample for this study is limited to school districts in the state of Mississippi as well as the Mississippi State Department of Education. The sample is further limited

to principals who conduct summative teacher evaluations. Some districts may utilize other personnel such as assistant principals, lead teachers, or department chairs to conduct summative evaluations; however, these individuals are not included as participants in this study.

### Assumptions

The following assumptions were made in this study:

1. All principals participating in this study will provide accurate information about conducting summative teacher evaluations.
2. All principals participating in this study understand the Mississippi Professional Growth System.
3. All principals participating in this study perform summative teacher evaluations themselves rather than delegating the activity to other personnel.
4. All principals participating in this study have similar characteristics to principals who do not participate in this study.
5. The survey instrument used in this study is valid.
6. The Mississippi State Department of Education Office of Educator Effectiveness provides all relevant data requested.
7. All Mississippi State Department of Education employees who are interviewed will provide accurate information.

### Justification

In the state of Mississippi, as well as other states, high stakes testing determines the accountability rating a school receives. Administration and teachers are held accountable for how students score on these tests. According to the National Center for

Education Statistics, Mississippi had thirty percent of fourth-grade students to score proficient or above in mathematics, twenty-six percent to score proficient or above in reading, twenty-three percent to score proficient or above in science on the 2015 administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Twenty-two percent of eighth-grade students scored proficient or above in mathematics, twenty percent scored proficient or above in reading, and twenty percent scored proficient or above in science ("NAEP State Profiles," n.d.) Mississippi ranked forty-eighth in the United States based on the average percentage of students scoring proficient or above on the mathematics and reading portion of the assessment (Selbe, 2016). Due to the poor performance on this national assessment and the fact that the state utilizes a standardized teacher evaluation system, it follows that Mississippi is an excellent candidate for this research study. Research has shown that one of the most important factors that have a positive effect on how students learn is being taught by an effective teacher (Miles & Frank, 2008). To that end, school principals are tasked with the job of evaluating teachers, providing feedback and professional learning to assist teachers to grow, and dismissing teachers with consistently poor evaluations.

Mississippi has also recently made a transition from using an evaluation system that could be perceived as high stakes to an evaluation system that is more focused on teacher growth. Even though the old system, M-STAR, had teacher growth as a component, it also included how students performed on state assessments (Education, 2014). According to the Mississippi Department of Education's Professional Growth System webpage, the Teacher Growth Rubric evaluation system was designed to give



teachers “feedback and high-quality learning experiences to continuously improve their practice and student learning” (Education, 2018).

Teacher evaluation is a source of stress and pressure for school principals for many reasons. These stresses could increase the likelihood of a teacher receiving a rating indicating effectiveness that cannot be justified. This study will look at the degree to which principals identify with influencing pressures regarding summative teacher evaluations as well as the relationship between influencing pressures and summative teacher evaluation scores. It will also address the relationship between summative teacher evaluation scores and the accountability rating of the school in which the teacher is employed. The school and school district accountability ratings are based on students’ standardized test scores. The results of the study may shed light on an area of weakness needing to be addressed in the school improvement process. For schools to improve, teacher evaluations must accomplish their job – improve the effectiveness of teachers. For teacher evaluations to accomplish improving teacher effectiveness, the evaluation type being used must produce valid results. External pressures on principals to give satisfactory ratings to a teacher may negate the intended purpose of evaluating teachers. If teacher evaluations do not produce valid results, a principal’s time may be better spent on other tasks.

### Theory

Two theories will be used to frame this study: contingency management theory and cognitive resource theory. “In coining the term, *contingency* theory, Lawrence and Lorsch (1969) argued that different environments place differing requirements on organizations, and accordingly, on the leaders of those organizations (Scott, 1986)”. In

other words, three different school districts may offer the same teacher evaluation instrument and, depending on varying factors such as demographics, resources, and levels of experience; there may be very different results. What works for one district may not work for another (*The handbook of educational theories*, 2013).

The cognitive resource theory was developed by Fred E. Fiedler and Joseph E. Garcia. Fiedler and Garcia (1987) stated,

The theory says that in the best of all best possible worlds, the leader's intellectual abilities are the major source of the plans, decisions, and strategies that guide the group's actions. These plans, decisions, and strategies are communicated to the group in the form of directive behavior, and acted upon if the group supports the leader's and the organization's goals, or if the leader is not distracted by stress. (p. 105)

This theory infers stress could affect the validity of teacher evaluation. The cognitive resource theory provides a basis for examining how stress plays a role in an administrator performing the duty of teacher evaluator.

## CHAPTER II – REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Introduction

The purpose of this study is to determine how principals' stress and pressure may or may not be reported to affect the outcomes of teacher evaluations, whether or not there is a significant relationship between districts with the same accountability level, and if there is a correlation between schools in school improvement and those that are not.

This literature review examines how the principal roles and the process of teacher evaluation have changed over time, the pressures felt by individuals in the position of school principal, and how those pressures may affect the outcomes of teacher evaluations. The review also examines situational leadership theory, cognitive resource theory, and the law of unintended consequences. These theories will form the basis of the theoretical framework for this study.

### Roles of the Principal

The principal's role has changed drastically since the early 1900s. Whitehead, Boschee, and Decker (2013) adapted the metaphorical themes from the 1920s through the 1990s, introduced by Beck and Murphy (1993). The decades were broken down into the following categories: (a) prior to the 1920s – formative period; (b) 1920s – values broker; (c) 1930s – scientific manager; (d) 1940s – democratic leader; (e) 1950s – theory-guided administrator; (f) 1960s – bureaucratic executive; (g) 1970s – humanistic facilitator; (h) 1980s – instructional leader; (i) 1990s – school reform leader; (j) 2000 to present – guiding force.

### *Roles of the Principal through the 1920s*

Whitehead et al. (2013) noted that, during the formative period, the principal was non-existent. Rather than having a principal lead the school, there was a head teacher. The position of head teacher developed into the school principal because of the increase in student numbers and the greater responsibility of managing the school.

Whitehead et al. (2013) added that during the 1920s the principal was perceived as the values broker: the principal was viewed as the spiritual leader of the school and was considered a dignified leader. They went on to say that this era was known as the scientific manager decade, which meant principal support would be a need for implementation of new scientific management principles. It was noted by Beck and Murphy (1993) and Whitehead et al. (2013) that, along with the principal being considered the spiritual leader, the principal was also considered the scientific manager who used current methods and worked on designing newer, more efficient methods of school management. They further expressed that the principal was expected to be a social leader in the community and make useful contacts for the school. Beck and Murphy (1993) indicated the literature of the 1920s did not directly talk to the evaluation of the principal or teachers. They reported that, during this decade, the public viewed an effective principal as one who ran a well-managed school.

### *Role of the Principal during the 1930s*

During the 1930s, Whitehead et al. (2013) indicated that the role of the principal moved to an entirely administrative role and that the principal was responsible for the entire school, essentially serving as supervisor of all those working at the school. Beck and Murphy (1993) noted that the literature of the time began considering the principal to

be the head of a business and, thus, the school as a business enterprise. They added that the literature of this decade viewed the principal as an organizer and supervisor, one who was expected to enforce policies handed down from the superintendent. Beck and Murphy (1993) suggested that the principal derived the authority to implement and enforce these policies directly from the superintendent, a relationship characteristic that carried over into the relationship between principal and teachers. During the 1930s, universities began developing training programs for principals according to Whitehead et al. (2013). These researchers discovered that principals took classes to develop their skills in the areas of curriculum, business, management, and finance. These are still areas universities include in educational leadership programs today. Whitehead et al. (2013) referenced this decade as a time where the principal moved away from being the spiritual leader of the school to a role of the school's middle manager steering through the bureaucracy of education.

#### *Role of the Principal during the 1940s*

According to Whitehead et al. (2013), the 1930s scientific manager morphed into the 1940s democratic leader, which meant the principal began taking on the role of the person in charge, democratically leading the way. Beck and Murphy (1993) described the school leader as the one who was relied on to ensure the school provided an atmosphere where teachers and students could experience peace and democracy in light of the horrors of World War II.

According to Whitehead et al. (2013), the role of the principal was all-encompassing. They said the principal was expected to be the leader in curriculum and supervision. Additionally, they shared that the principal was expected to communicate

with the school's community members to inform the public of the practices and priorities of the school. Beck and Murphy (1993) stated in the literature of the 1940s that the principal was viewed to be a supervisor and one who ensured all joint decisions were implemented; thus, the principal became the public relations representative for the school. They went on to add that, during the 1940s, the principal should be evaluated based on his wise use of the resources available and his use of democratic methods to lead and facilitate group decision making. Essentially, the responsibilities of the principal were beginning to grow.

#### *Role of the Principal during the 1950s*

The 1950s heralded the principal as the theory-guided administrator, according to Whitehead et al. (2013). Their research indicated a drastic change in the role of the principal. These authors stated that the principal became the defender of the school and its practices by using data and educational theory to refute critics. Consequently, they reported that the principal became bogged down with minute details of school operations during this decade. Beck and Murphy (1993) agreed by adding that, in the 1950s, there was an expectation for the administrator of a school to be skilled with teaching and management and to be able to apply theories developed in the area of education as well as other sectors outside education. They added that the use of theory and empirical data was paramount for the administrator and that the principal was expected to study the scholarly work being produced by universities. They shared that principals were expected to take the educational theories of instructional practices and communicate as well as model them for teachers. Time management was imperative for the principal to complete all of the new demands effectively (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Whitehead et al., 2013). Beck and

Murphy (1993) pointed out that principals had to learn to delegate tasks to others at the school and had to make the superintendent and school board aware of the need for additional supports (i.e., clerical personnel who were needed to make more time available to attend to instructional tasks). However, these researchers also noted that along with the addition of such non-certified support personnel came the duty of supervising their work. As for principal evaluation, Beck and Murphy (1993) indicated it had remained virtually unchanged since the forties: if the principal's work was reflective of expectations, then the principal was considered effective.

#### *Role of the Principal during the 1960s*

Whitehead et al. (2013) called the 1960s principal the bureaucratic executive. This metaphor was appropriate because the role of the principal became that of a bureaucrat. The principal was expected to be the protector of the bureaucracy and also had to learn to use political finesse to deal with anyone who might challenge the system. Whitehead et al. (2013) indicated that, during this time, the principal had to use ever-increasing complex scientific terms and strategies for planning and measuring. The degree to which principals used scientifically based strategies was much more significant than in previous decades (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

Whitehead et al. (2013) contended that accountability for the school became part of the growing list of responsibilities of the principal. The principal had to begin dealing with what the authors called a role of conflict. Whitehead et al. (2013) identified that the conflict occurred because the principal had to simultaneously deal with instruction, students, managerial functions, and instructional personnel. Another reason for the conflict was the fact that principals were becoming more accountable to a larger number

of stakeholder groups (Beck & Murphy, 1993). Also, Beck and Murphy (1993) mentioned that the expectations of these groups might be different.

The principal continued to be responsible for bringing new research and teaching methods to teachers along with the additional responsibility of building up the morale of teachers (Beck & Murphy, 1993). Another concern, student discipline, was one of the principal's managerial functions. The principal had to maintain discipline, or the entire school could be affected ("The Principal's Role in School Discipline," 2014). Beck and Murphy (1993) noted the importance placed on evaluating the principal to determine effectiveness during the sixties. They stated that principal evaluation results were based on the effectiveness of the teachers and the performance of the students. They also shared that "Principals of this decade, experienced a fair amount of inner conflict and stress" (p. 113).

#### *Role of the Principal during the 1970s*

During the 1970s decade, Whitehead et al. (2013) identified the principal's role as the humanistic facilitator, meaning everyone was looking for the principal to give meaning to the educational efforts of the school. Beck and Murphy (1993) viewed the role of the principal as moved away from bureaucratic executive to a role of using persuasion and suggestion to lead others and to interact with the superintendent and school board. They indicated that, during the 1970s, the role of the principal was affected by external trends in education. Not only did the principal have to deal with students and teachers, but the principal was also expected to be an educational leader in the community (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Whitehead et al., 2013). Beck and Murphy (1993) stated that during the 1970s the principal was expected to ensure educational experiences



were meaningful to students as well as the community. They also stated that the principal had the role of helping to foster mutually rewarding positive relationships between all stakeholders including students. According to Beck and Murphy (1993) and Whitehead et al. (2013), the principal was expected to fill many different roles requiring a range of abilities. Some of these roles were directly related to creating and maintaining positive relationships within the school and externally in the community (Beck & Murphy, 1993). With no definition or direction for this role, the principal could be described as a conflicted person who continually attempted to juggle being both an instructional leader and business manager while also attempting to placate assorted educational stakeholders (Roe & Drake, 1974).

Beck and Murphy (1993) found that evaluation of the principal during the seventies moved toward being objective and quantifiable. Also, they shared that some evaluators moved toward identifying a list of desirable qualities which they used to rate the principal subjectively.

#### *Role of the Principal during the 1980s*

According to Whitehead et al. (2013), the 1980s brought in the age of the instructional leader; the principal's role was evolving from a managerial role to a guiding role. They stated that the principal was required to focus more on classroom teaching and student learning. Effective teaching was expected, and the principal was the one charged with making sure it was happening by facilitating teachers, supporting professional learning, providing supports and resources for the teachers, and creating an atmosphere conducive to learning. During this decade, the principal's role was to guide teachers and students toward the educational goals of the school by helping to achieve changes to

increase effectiveness (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Whitehead et al., 2013). However, managerial roles did not disappear. The principal continued to be tasked with duties such as student discipline. The principal was expected to enforce the beliefs and expectations placed on students in regards to their behavior (Hartzell & Petrie, 1992). These ideas were a major shift in the way the principal had been involved in the school. Beck and Murphy (1993) noted that, in the past, the principal worked from the fringes of the classroom; but during the eighties, the principal was expected to be highly involved in instruction. They went on to add that not only was the principal highly involved in instruction, but he also worked with the teacher to provide professional development to increase effectiveness and monitor its implementation in the classroom to ensure success. These researchers also offered another notable role of the eighties' principal: visionary. Being a visionary meant the principal had to grow and propagate a vision for the school to the employees, students, and stakeholders of the school. The principal was expected to promote the vision of the school and essentially become a change agent to help the school move toward achieving the vision (Beck & Murphy, 1993). The principal accomplished this by engaging the community and shaping a positive view of the school (Whitehead et al., 2013). On a final note regarding principals of the eighties, principals had to face and deal with rescuing schools in crisis (Beck & Murphy, 1993). Schools during this era were in danger of closing to the point that the current education system seemed doomed (Goodlad, 1984).

Beck and Murphy (1993) write that the principal of a school was believed to be the person that would determine if the school was either saved from or doomed to this dark outlook. Also, they add that, during this time, effectiveness and accountability were

included in the growing role of the principal. In continuation, the principal was considered the person whose actions determined whether a school was effective. DeRoche (1985) stated, “The school principal is *the*, not *a* major influence on the quality of education in a school.” Beck and Murphy (1993) added that not only was the principal held accountable for the outcomes of the school, but the principal was also still responsible for managing school operations. They also share that the principal continued to have the responsibility of locating resources for the school and was also held responsible for how the resources were to be used. They concluded that the principal of the 1980s was evaluated based on the success or failure of the school and was ultimately accountable for the school’s performance.

#### *Role of the Principal during the 1990s*

According to Beck and Murphy (1993), the 1990s principalship was influenced by “the perceived crisis in the economy, the changing nature of the social fabric of society, and the evolution from an industrial to a post-industrial world” (p. 179). In this decade, the principal was identified by Whitehead et al. (2013) as the school reform leader and was tasked with moving the school away from the bureaucracy model toward a post-industrial model. Beck and Murphy (1993) agree this was a challenge for the principal. They regarded the principal of the 1990s as an organizational and social architect due to the tasks involved in reforming the school. The principal was expected to facilitate this move by being an ethical servant leader who helped the school become a compassionate learning community (Whitehead et al., 2013). Shaw and Newton (2014) expressed that servant leaders “aspire to serve first, and then they make a conscious choice to lead” (p. 102). They continued by saying that the servant leader put the success of the

organization ahead of themselves. Whitehead et al. (2013) pointed out that the principal, as a reform leader, had to be able to engage the community and consider input from stakeholders. Principals had to be ready to “take a lot of flak” (p. 43) to implement the reforms needed and have excellent communication skills within the district and community (Whitehead et al., 2013). Also, the principal had to establish a vision for the school from community input. They further identified the ability to bring together key individuals and experts to increase decision-making capacity was key to the reform leader. Whitehead et al. (2013) added that the principal was also highly involved in assessing the performance of teachers.

#### *Role of the Principal from 2000 until the Present*

During the period from 2000 until 2013, Whitehead et al. (2013) reference the principal’s role as the guiding force and heavily defined by accountability, which referred to bringing about expectations for the school to perform well on a myriad of assessments. They went on to say that the responsibility of the principal was to make sure teachers and students were making gains on these assessments tied directly into the role of being the instructional leader of the school. Moreover, as the instructional leader of the school, the principal became a collector, analyzer, and interpreter of data—data which provided a means for the principal to quantify the performance of teachers and students which, in turn, guided the role of instructional leader. The principal had to become collaborative and inclusive of teachers when making decisions affecting the school and learning (Whitehead et al., 2013). It was important for the principal to plan goals of the school using input from community stakeholders and teachers writes Lunenburg (2010). Lunenburg (2010) went on to say that this type of strategic planning provided stability for

the school because teachers know what was expected and it allowed them to set goals that would move the school in the desired direction. Also, by using the data that had been collected and providing teachers with professional development, the principal was able to build teacher competency. Arar and Oplatka (2011) proposed that principals must use evaluation as a tool to guide teachers in building their capacity and help teachers to see the importance of self-motivation for improvement, thus promoting student achievement. Whitehead et al. (2013) discussed the principal role of instructional technology leader during this period as technology for the classroom was evolving at a fast rate, and the principal had to guide teachers through effectively utilizing this new tool.

Additionally, parental involvement had become increasingly important. The principal was expected to encourage parents to become more involved in their child's academic career. Increased parental involvement efforts brought an additional challenge to the principals: the shift of the family structure. Another concern that principals of this decade faced, according to the authors, was providing a safe and secure school environment free from bullying and other acts of violence and providing nutritious food and exercise. By providing a safe and secure school environment, the principal can lower the stress level of the entire school, thereby creating an atmosphere that promoted learning (Pahnos, 1990).

## Teacher Evaluation

### *The justification for Teacher Evaluation*

According to other researchers it has been suggested that instruction by an effective teacher has the greatest impact on student achievement. Wright, Horn, and Sanders (1997) conducted a study to support this statement. According to their findings,

providing support for improving the effectiveness of teachers is crucial, regardless of student achievement levels.

P. D. Tucker and Stronge (2005) suggested that a teacher's instruction should be assessed, and the results of evaluations should be used to improve the effectiveness of the teacher. Further, they indicated that, if student learning outcomes were related to teacher effectiveness, then we should be evaluating teachers. Teacher evaluation is important because it imparts the expectations of the school district to everyone and assists the school district in determining the effectiveness of a teacher (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1984). According to Sanders (1978), there are several potential uses for teacher evaluation.

Evaluation information may potentially be used in many different ways, for a variety of stated or unstated reasons. The uses intended by the evaluator/sponsor/audience influence the evaluation subtly as well as directly. These potential uses include, but are not limited to, the following: improving performance, improving efficiency, determining benefits, placing value on, building credibility or confidence, serving in decision making, describing and assessing, determination status of, comparing, and judging. (p. 309)

Feeney (2007) described evaluation as an exercise intended to increase the instructional skills of a teacher and, furthermore, believed that it positively affects student learning.

However, not everyone feels that teacher evaluation is the universal remedy for producing effective teachers. Frase and Streshly (2000) stated that teacher evaluation is nothing more than making sure that the proper forms are completed and filed in order to show compliance with state law. Simply demonstrating compliance stood in direct

contrast to the actual reason for evaluating teachers. They also noted that this held meaning across districts whether they were inner-city, rural, wealthy, poor, large or small and went further to bring the validity of the evaluations into question. Of those evaluated, nearly ninety percent were rated Very Good or Outstanding, while none were rated Unsatisfactory (Frase & Streshly, 2000).

These types of results began to receive more media attention in the late 1990s; articles began to appear in newspapers regarding teachers who were being moved from school to school due to incompetence in the classroom (Frase & Streshly, 2000). Frase and Streshly (2000) stated that the reality of the audit of the Zeus School District, as well as other districts, showed eighty percent of the teaching observed during the audit was scored as well below average. These findings leave educators to wonder whether these are typical results of teacher evaluations. In asking whether principals could determine if a teacher was effective, Jacob and Lefgren (2006) found that principals gave teachers high ratings. They went a step further to compare these teachers' class standardized reading and mathematics scores to the effectiveness rating of the teacher. The results of their study showed that the principals were proficient in determining the effectiveness of the teacher.

The reliability of teacher evaluation differs from district to district depending on the principal doing the evaluation and the expectations of the district. Some districts have rigid policies that determine how to implement teacher evaluations. For example, Marshall (1996) preferred to use teacher evaluation to increase the skills of teachers and, thereby, increase student outcomes. He provided teachers with a narrative review of their performance for each evaluation. Some of the teachers appreciated the in-depth

comments, however that sentiment was not felt by all teachers. The unhappy teachers complained because this type of evaluation was not mandated by the district. Following the complaints, Marshall (1996) was instructed to stop giving written feedback and only use the district's seven-page evaluation checklist for all teacher evaluations.

### *Formative and Summative Teacher Evaluation*

Teacher evaluation systems are available in two major forms: formative and summative. Scriven (1996) stated, "Formative and summative evaluation are the two elements in one particular classification of the roles of evaluation." (p. 151) These types of evaluations have been named in accordance with their uses. Formative evaluation, as defined by Peterson (1995), is an evaluation that is used to provide feedback to a teacher in order to help improve instruction. He defines summative evaluation as that which is used to "make decisions or judgments, for example, to retain teachers." (p. 53)

Marzano (2012) found that principals support the use of both formative and summative evaluations, but principals concluded that the formative is more important than summative. Principals suggested that formative evaluations are better at fulfilling the desired outcome of teacher evaluation – thus, making teachers better at their jobs. He then stated that an evaluation system that focuses on building teacher capacity should focus on "three primary characteristics." (p. 16) The first characteristic is that the evaluation system should be "comprehensive and specific." (p. 16) Marzano (2012) maintained, "*Comprehensive* means the model includes all those elements that research has identified as associated with student achievement. *Specific* means the model identifies classroom strategies and behaviors at a granular level." (p. 16) The second characteristic is that the system should encompass a developmental scale. He expounded,



“A second characteristic of a teacher evaluation system that focuses on development is that it employs a scale or rubric that teachers can use to guide and track their skill development.” (p. 18) By utilizing a scale, teachers are allowed to be responsible for their personal growth and skill development and set higher goals for continued improvement (Marzano, 2012). Lastly, he offered that the system should recognize and reward teacher growth. Teachers need to identify areas of improvement and chart their improvement as the school year progresses; and, at the end of the school year, the principal should examine the progress of the teachers and reward those that have shown growth (Marzano, 2012).

Peterson (1995) proposes that summative evaluations differ from formative evaluations in that they are used by principals to make decisions about teachers (i.e. contract renewal). According to his work, the nature of summative evaluations and their consequences cause the evaluation process to lose its purpose of improving teachers. Popham (2013) defined the role of summative evaluation as being “to help decision makers to continue or terminate a given program.” (p.20) Furthermore, Popham believed summative evaluation is given its name because it involves summary decisions about teachers rather than improvement-oriented decisions. He suggested that the only school improvement implication attached to such an action would be in the case of teacher-dismissal due to one poor summative teacher evaluation. Even though summative evaluations do not produce growth in teachers abilities like formative evaluations, they are still an important tool in teacher evaluation (Popham, 2013).

According to Valentine (1992), if a school district decides to use only one evaluation system, it should use a system that combines both formative and summative

evaluation. Many districts have applied this principle in order to meet federal requirements attached to funding. Grants such as the Race to the Top Program, which was introduced in 2009, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act flexibility waiver of No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 are two mandates attached to funding (Popham, 2013). However, Stanley and Popham (1988) and Popham (2013) agreed that combining summative and formative evaluation into one system is a mistake. They point out that teachers will not be willing to divulge weaknesses to a principal during a formative evaluation if they think that the information will be used against them during the summative evaluation.

Moreover, if the teacher is unwilling to share weaknesses with the principal during formative evaluation in order to increase their skills, the formative evaluation process will be rendered useless. Popham (2013) explains it simply in the following statement:

The reason that dual-mission teacher evaluation won't work resides in human nature. Teachers want to improve their skills. I've never met one who didn't. But teachers also want to keep their jobs. I've never met one who didn't. Realistically, with few exceptions, job-keeping trumps skill-improving. (p. 21)

Popham (2013) offered a possible solution: ensure that the two types of evaluation are carried out by two different individuals rather than solely by the principal. Stanley and Popham (1988) offered three strategies to separate the formative and summative aspects of teacher evaluation.

The three strategies include the following directives:

- separate the evaluation functions between different administrators at the school site if there is more than one administrator
- allow highly rated teachers to become formative evaluators if the school site has only one administrator
- assign the role of formative evaluator to the school principal and allow a district-level administrator to assume the role of the summative evaluator when there is only one administrator at the school site.

By taking steps to separate the evaluation functions, teachers and schools will be able to benefit.

#### *Barriers to Effective Teacher Evaluation*

There have been barriers of effective teacher evaluations. One of the barriers has been teacher contracts. In the Zeus School District, principals were discouraged from giving poor evaluations due to stipulations such as tenure laws and other union contract regulations in teacher contracts (Frase & Streshly, 2000). Peterson (1995) talked about teacher tenure causing an obstacle for effective teacher evaluation. According to him, tenure prevents teacher evaluation from being effective, because teachers know that the evaluation does not factor heavily in determining job retention. He stresses that politics can play a decisive role in teacher evaluation, especially when one considers cases in which those in power encourage an administrator to give adequate evaluations to teachers for personal reasons.

This type of activity was found in many of the districts that were audited, according to Frase and Streshly (2000). They visited a large urban school district and

examined a ten percent sample of teacher evaluations. After examining the teacher evaluations, they observed the corresponding teachers' classrooms and discovered that, even though the teachers had received excellent evaluation ratings, their classroom performance was extremely lacking and that the teachers were completely ineffective. The authors concluded that politics motivates school officials to go through the motions of evaluations and complete the necessary paperwork effectively, in many cases, covering up the truth.

Another sometimes subtle barrier to effective teacher evaluation involves attempts by the principal to dismiss an ineffective teacher. In research by Frase and Streshly (2000), it was determined that teacher evaluation for this specific purpose might result in the principal losing great amounts of time observing and gathering data, and there is no guarantee that the teacher will be dismissed as a result of the evaluation. They point out that many principals have given up on trying to use teacher evaluation as a means of removing ineffective teachers at all. Nixon et al. (2011) explained that "principals feel that their, rather than the teachers', level of performance is on trial" (p. 5) when trying to dismiss ineffective teachers. However, Nixon et al. (2011) revealed that the odds of a successful teacher dismissal when brought to court are usually greater than a ratio of three to one. Having such a high success rate brings into question whether or not principals are following through on dismissing ineffective teachers is due to external barriers or their lack of ability to be effective teacher evaluators. Stanley and Popham (1988) have noted that it could be the fault of the evaluation system utilized and not the principal's ability. They made a note of a teacher dismissal reversed by the court because the evaluation system used by the district was "simplistic, invalid, and unfair collection

of spur-of-the-moment evidence-gathering coupled with arbitrary decision making.” (p. xi)

### *Improved Teacher Evaluation*

For a teacher to grow from the evaluation experience, Feeney (2007) stressed that quality feedback for the teacher is imperative. He said that one should not attempt to provide meaningful feedback by using an evaluation instrument that only rates a teacher using a scale. Furthermore, he shared that meaningful feedback in the form of evaluation that allowed the teacher to be an active participant in the evaluation process was a much better evaluation process because it allowed the teachers to draw conclusions about their performance by analyzing student outcomes. He emphasized that, once the principal completes the teacher’s formal observation, it is important that there is a meaningful conversation between the principal and teacher regarding the results of the evaluation. Post-evaluation conversations should involve both teacher and principal reflection as well as a course of action for improvement; and the overall goal should be enhancing student academic achievement (Feeney, 2007). Rooney (1993) saw the old system of evaluation, in which the principal held a pre-conference with the teacher, completed the classroom observation, and then had a post-conference, was not helping teachers grow in their instructional skills. In a study by Mette, Range, Anderson, Hvidston, and Nieuwenhuizen (2015), teachers identified discussion in which the principal encouraged self-reflection on instructional performance during the post-evaluation conference as the best factor in improving overall teacher effectiveness.

Another positive change in teacher evaluation, according to Bradley (2014), is the move to an evaluation system that promotes teacher growth instead of a system that is

merely punitive. She asserts that utilizing a system that focuses on teacher growth supports the principal's efforts to establish a culture of evaluation that is supportive of teachers and their individual needs. She adds that a growth system of evaluation allows the teacher and principal to use observations and walk-throughs along with student achievement data to determine areas of weakness and provide professional learning opportunities. Danielson (2016) reported that punitive teacher evaluation systems undermine the desired outcomes of teacher evaluation. However, she proposes that many systems of evaluation are not fulfilling the professional learning needs of teachers. Accordingly, she suggests that to correct this deficiency is for schools to adopt systems that allow the school to establish learning communities where teacher deficiencies can be addressed. These learning communities would provide an environment where teachers can learn from each other, thereby, promoting growth. She continues, it is the responsibility of the principal to establish norms and expectations for the learning community and to make sure that they are driven by needs determined from student data and teacher evaluation (Danielson, 2016). Bradley (2014) warns that changing the execution of teacher evaluation can be stressful, but teachers and students can reap the rewards from a well-designed system that promotes growth. It is also important to recognize that principals need support, resources, and authority to make needed changes in teacher evaluation (Derrington, 2011).

#### *Teacher Evaluation Then and Now*

Multi-factored teacher evaluation instruments are not new to the education arena say Medley and Coker (1987). Their research followed that of Boyce, which showed that, as early as 1915, these types of instruments were gaining attention and becoming the

topic of studies. During upcoming decades, they noted the disadvantages of using such tools; multi-factored teacher evaluation instruments were vulnerable due to subjectivity and perspective of the evaluating principal. In a later study regarding the accuracy of principals' judgments in teacher performance, they discovered that the average evaluating principal was generally inaccurate when making conclusions about teacher instructional performance. Peterson (1995) stated that, although there was supporting evidence that these types of teacher evaluations were not effective, school districts continued to encourage their use over time.

Young, Range, Hvidston, and Mette (2015) noted that past teacher evaluation systems have not changed how teachers teach and have not increased student achievement. Fortunately, teacher evaluation has been making a shift away from the episodic principal visit and checklist to a more comprehensive model that incorporates formative and summative evaluations focused on teacher development (Derrington, 2011). Multiple sources of evidence have replaced the single classroom visit by the school principal (Derrington, 2011) with Peterson (1995) agreeing that teacher evaluation should involve multiple data sources. He continued that principals should not only use multiple sources, but also the sources used should vary by teacher. Teachers are different, and they all carry out their work differently. Young et al. (2015) provide further support: direct classroom observation of teachers to identify teaching behaviors and providing meaningful feedback equates to better summative teacher ratings and, hopefully, improved instructional effectiveness. In their study, they found that principals believed that evaluation systems that aligned "practice to performance expectations,"

(p.169) adopted “a growth-oriented approach to teacher improvement,” (p. 169) and used “multiple measures to assess teacher performance” (p. 169) improved teacher practice.

### *Teacher Evaluation and School Improvement*

In the recent past, teacher evaluation reform became important because federal grant money was tied to districts implementing new rigorous teacher evaluation systems (Aguilar & Richerme, 2014). Hence, teacher evaluation became a big part of the impetus in improving low performing schools. The general thought, these researchers shared, was that better teacher evaluation would help districts identify and retain effective teachers. New teacher evaluation systems not only relied on classroom observations but also depended in part on student scores on high stakes standardized testing. Jackson (2014) shared that one of the advantages of new evaluation systems was that it provided “principals structured ways to communicate more clearly with teachers about performance.” (p. 36)

However, Jackson (2014) indicated that, if principals get consumed in learning the new processes in making sure their school is compliant, the likely result will be no growth. Aguilar and Richerme (2014) brought up another drawback: research had shown that making student achievement and growth count as a majority of a teacher’s evaluation rating can hurt the teacher evaluation process. Hallinger, Heck, and Murphy (2014) pointed out the lack of evidence in teacher evaluation having a positive effect on learning outcomes. The process is tedious and may even be counterintuitive. After careful consideration of their findings, they suggested that districts strongly consider investing their time and efforts in strategies other than teacher evaluation for school improvement.



Mangin (2016) offered another avenue for dealing with new high-stakes teacher evaluation systems. In completing a study on teacher leadership, specifically, the use of a teacher leader, Mangin (2016) explained that a teacher leader is more commonly known as a teacher coach. The study examined the use of a teacher leader to provide support for teachers to meet the high-stakes requirements of an evaluation. She determined that the district was historically supportive of using teacher leaders as a school improvement strategy, and teacher leaders were tasked with providing high-quality professional learning opportunities to increase teacher effectiveness which, in turn, helped boost teacher evaluation outcomes. However, Mangin (2016) also discovered that high-stakes teacher evaluation overshadowed the efforts of the teacher leaders because of the risk environment created by such evaluations. That is, rather than evaluation efforts leading to motivation for teacher improvement, it instead caused teacher stress, minimized self-improvement efforts, and resulted in teachers focusing on compliance rather than academic growth.

New teacher evaluation systems that arise from federal mandates may not be the best avenue for increasing teacher effectiveness or school improvement. However, according to Jackson (2014), some see the evaluation instruments as a beginning point to open up conversations with teachers. These conversations allow principals to enter a coaching relationship with the teacher and use the opportunity to talk to teachers about ways they can improve their instruction.

#### Pressures on the Principal

Principalships are characterized by numerous external pressures for many facets of the job, and nowhere is this more apparent than when dealing with teacher evaluation.

These pressures are related to politics, the public, and job or personal limitations such as lack of knowledge or time. Berube and Dexter (2006) say the role of the principal is a complicated one. All at once, the principal must be a supporter and evaluator while also juggling a variety of perceptions and situations. Mistrust between teacher and principal or teacher and the authority position of the principal provides additional challenges along with the often-changing evaluation process.

### *Political*

According to a study by Aguilar and Richerme (2014), when state mandates are initiated to promote student academic achievement, there may be unexpected outcomes. Since such mandates may be linked to teachers' instructional performance as well as related to additional funding, as in the case of the Reach to the Top federal grant, the pressure to have a teacher evaluation system to measure effectiveness increases. Also, depending on the type of publication used to disperse state mandate details and the audience in question, writers can directly or indirectly have a negative impact on readers. Principals may face pressure in the teacher evaluation process, particularly if it is viewed in a negative light. Danielson and McGreal (2000) provide an example in which a principal explained that he would give satisfactory teacher evaluation ratings regardless of teacher performance because the district had already experienced litigation related to dismissal stemming from low evaluation ratings. The Superintendent made it clear that she did not wish to face similar lawsuits.

Jao-Nan (2014) sought to find the reason incompetent teachers continued to retain their positions despite the research regarding the effect it has on student learning. In the process, this researcher determined pressure from teachers' unions to be a major factor in

detering incompetent teacher dismissal. Union representatives argue that principals do not have the knowledge base in all subject areas to determine teacher competence; therefore, teacher evaluation systems that rely heavily on principal's input regarding subject area competency is unreliable and should not be used as evidence to dismiss a teacher from his/her position (Jao-Nan, 2014). Additionally, principals may prefer to tolerate incompetence, rating poor-performing teachers positively, rather than dealing with union pressures.

#### *Supervisor/Superintendent*

The need for supervisor or superintendent support is an added pressure to the principalship regarding teacher evaluation systems. Derrington and Campbell (2015) proposed that principals need specific support to meet the rigorous expectations of state-mandated teacher evaluation systems. They said that principals are expected to perform multiple observations per teacher, use a detailed rubric as part of their evaluation, and be ready to provide quick, meaningful feedback. Moreover, principals are evaluated on their ability to carry out such tasks. They concluded that, although principals are not always supported by their supervisors or superintendents, superintendents who support principals in the implementation of teacher evaluations stand a greater chance of experiencing beneficial outcomes than in cases where there is little or no supervisory support. Bridging the gap between superintendent and principal fosters meaningful, well-timed support.

#### *Public: Socioeconomic Area*

Principals faced pressures regarding teacher evaluations when they worked in an area characterized as low-middle socioeconomics (Arar & Oplatka, 2011). In areas with

few job opportunities, a poor evaluation could mean dismissal for a teacher, and low socioeconomic areas are not as likely as wealthier districts to attract teacher replacements. Consequently, principals may feel inclined to grade teachers positively regardless of their performance. Eady and Zepeda (2007) support these findings in their research: recruiting and hiring teachers in rural areas and maintaining a consistent teacher workforce, for many years, has been difficult. They point out that some teachers are expected to teach out of their disciplines as a result of the limited employee pool, which leads one to question whether it is fair to give teachers in this situation poor evaluation ratings.

*Public: Marketing the School*

In an era characterized by the desire for school choice, principals feel pressure to attract students, because increasing student enrollment increases revenue received by the school says educational researcher Oplatka (2007). He shares that student recruitment may involve advertising the school's best programs in order to promote the school's public image, a task viewed negatively by many principals as inconvenient although necessary. Other principals view the marketing of their schools differently (Oplatka, 2007). Principals who view marketing as an important task often believe the principal's character is one of the most important elements of promoting the school image: principals are expected to be ethical and effective leaders, to encourage educational innovation, and to support the vision of the school. On the other hand, his research showed that some principals found marketing schools to be unethical because it presented an unrealistic view of the school. Additionally, the research concluded that principals who marketed their schools found the task to be particularly exhausting and challenging.

### *Public: Parents*

According to Epstein (1985) teachers responded in a survey that they supported teacher evaluation systems provided it was fair. Local and state policy-makers began to explore the question of how to provide fair teacher evaluations, considering merit pay and other benefits were being linked to teacher performance. This researcher also attempted to correlate the results of teacher evaluation by parents and teacher evaluation by principals. She believed that involving parents in the evaluation process may create pressure for the principal, because teacher ratings may differ greatly due to perspective. The possible difference is because principals have inside knowledge of teacher duties and classroom management skills that parents may never observe.

On the other hand, her research showed that very involved parents might have greater knowledge of the teacher's teaching style and instructional habits. A principal, based on his/her observations, may give high ratings to a teacher that a parent finds mediocre. Principals must contend with disgruntled teachers who failed to be rewarded financially based on negative and conflicting results (Epstein, 1985).

### *Time*

The overburdened principal is faced with time constraints each day, and teacher evaluation is a multi-faceted, time-consuming task. Cosner et al. (2015) shared that teacher evaluation systems are encouraged to include the following features: teacher observation, teaching artifact analysis, measures of student achievement/growth, and standards-aligned rubrics. Cosner et al. (2015) points out that in addition to this large list of laborious expectations, there exists the need for trust-building between principal and teacher. Furthermore, evaluators should inform the teacher of the requirements of the

evaluation system before the observation for maximum effectiveness—yet another time-consuming aspect of the principalship. Hult, Lundström, and Edström (2016) added that principal work overload continued to be a major obstacle when attempting to perform effective teacher evaluations. Anderson and Pigford (1987) went further by suggesting the need for principals to offload as many non-instructional tasks as possible—the priority of principals and school leaders should be improving teacher effectiveness.

### *Race*

Principals may face pressure with teacher evaluation where race is concerned. Research has shown that principals tend to give higher ratings to teachers of their race (Beare, Torgerson, Marshall, Tracz, & Chiero, 2014). However, new studies are showing that Hispanic teachers are assessed as more effective than White teachers at teaching English learners, a finding that may change the face of teacher training and, thus, teacher evaluation (Beare et al., 2014).

Bailey, Bocala, Shakman, and Zweig (2016) found that over a three-year study of teacher evaluations in a large urban school district, black teachers received disproportionately lower evaluation ratings than their white counterparts. The disproportionate lower evaluation ratings persisted throughout the study, although the gap narrowed slightly over time. Although no reasons were provided, the results were significant enough that the researchers encouraged school administrators to find ways to provide training for black teachers as needed to minimize the gaps in evaluation ratings between the races.

*Limited Expertise in Evaluating and Observing Classroom Teachers*

Cosner et al. (2015) share in their research that effective classroom instruction equates to positive student academic outcomes; effective classroom instruction is enhanced by the ability of the principal to provide meaningful feedback and set realistic goals. It is a high-pressure expectation of today's school principals. They agree that the principal is chiefly responsible for teacher evaluations in a variety of curricular areas and is also required to have the expertise to analyze student test data to set attainable goals. Also, the principal should be able to adequately and efficiently manage evaluation evidence for all teachers while, at the same time, keeping up with the latest educational trends. Donaldson and Papay (2014) agree that the type of teacher evaluation that states require can be beneficial for setting and achieving student learning goals, but they also note that few principals have the expertise to carry out the many demands of the evaluation system. In an additional study, Simon (2012) examined two school districts who were initiating new teacher evaluation systems and found that it was better to have trained evaluators, lead teachers, and the administrator working together with a combined skill set to bring about more meaningful outcomes for the process. Wise et al. (1984) researched four school districts who had found success in implementing teacher evaluation systems, and all agreed that evaluator training to enhance expertise for the task was prudent. Not only did they agree that principals should be given adequate time to conduct evaluations and observations, but also principals should be trained specifically for the purpose. They emphasize that with the implementation of new instruments, evaluators should be made aware of changes to the process and should be trained accordingly.

### *Accurate Identification of Effective Teachers*

Jacob and Lefgren (2006) provided information related to teacher evaluation when used as an indicator of merit pay. They say the pressure to identify effective teachers becomes paramount when merit pay enters the equation, and principals are asked to make the determination of which teachers are worthy of additional compensation. The principals in this study were told that they were not being evaluated for their ability to identify effective teachers and, furthermore, made no mention of financial reward teachers stood to gain from the type of rating principals gave them. Without these two obvious pressures, principals were able to provide accurate assessments of teachers' abilities. Depending on principals' perspectives, the study concluded that in certain circumstances, principals were adequate at identifying the best and worst teachers at the school based on standardized test results, but they had more difficulty addressing ability issues within the two extremes. In other words, teachers with exceptional positive student academic growth or negative student academic growth were easiest to rate, whereas teachers whose students showed varying degrees of academic growth were more difficult to rate. A separate study by Jao-Nan (2014) "found that school principals did not find it easy to assess the competence of their teaching staff." (p. 156) Some reform measures go so far as to deny teachers recertification following their evaluations until they can correct their professional deficiencies, bringing into question whether one person conducting the evaluation is appropriate (Eady & Zepeda, 2007).

### *Content Knowledge*

Edgar (2012) conducted a study regarding the impact a principal may have if he/she lacks the necessary content knowledge during the teacher evaluation process,



particularly in the area of music. In one situation, the principal admitted his lack of musical prowess but provided a list of expectations to the school orchestra leader nonetheless. In the study, the principal's written feedback was provided regarding the expectations of the teacher's interpersonal abilities and skills rather than curricular objectives. In a second example, a band instructor felt that administrators might have good intentions for the music program, but without the necessary content knowledge, may not be able to provide effective feedback for improvement. In summary, this research found that teacher evaluations have implications for financial rewards, grounds for dismissal, and professional growth, so principals must be well-versed in a variety of subject areas in order to provide accurate ratings.

According to Danielson and McGreal (2000), one reason many teacher evaluation systems fail to produce positive results is limited administrator expertise on a variety of levels: content area, subject taught, and grade level. These researchers share an example in which a teacher of fourth graders is to be evaluated by a principal who formerly taught high school science. The teacher had little confidence that the principal would be able to provide meaningful feedback for her situation. Moreover, she carefully selected instructional topics to include for her observation, knowing the principal would likely not understand the topic and, as a result, would not be able to argue against her effectiveness. She chose lessons that were comfortable for her to teach and avoided possible pitfalls to receiving a complimentary rating.

### *Mandated Change*

A study by Clement (2014) shows that mandated change in an evaluation system seems to provide unnecessary pressure on principals and, historically, produces few

positive outcomes for classroom instruction. She clarifies that, although there are many ways in which mandated change is manifested, if it involves the implementation of a teacher evaluation system, the success or failure of the system depends on many important factors. Principals, mainly responsible for the bulk of teacher evaluations, are required to implement the necessary changes as outlined in new teacher evaluation instruments regardless of teacher perspective regarding the changes. She further researched how teachers responded to top-down initiatives and found that teachers often responded negatively for a variety of reasons: the accompanying sense of compulsion, little training to ensure understanding of the changes, and the transitory nature of changes. This research recommended a school-level approach for a smoother adoption of mandates, with the principal having the added task of interpreting the policy for teachers and guiding them through its implementation.

In a study by Fink (2003), it was found that mandated change had negative implications for the principal and teachers of a school district. While it was wholeheartedly embraced in the beginning, the time constraints it created for the principal left teachers attempting to deal with some leadership aspects of the mandate themselves in hopes of achieving the expected outcomes; however, the informal leadership began to face pressures and lost momentum. Even the most experienced teachers expressed the feeling of sadness and diminishment as a result of the mandate.

Danielson (2016) gave another view of mandated change, and associated stress in her study: educators may view it as a punishment rather than a means of improvement. When teachers feel their professional, creative freedom is being stifled, enthusiasm is likely to wane. If the objective is compliance, then teachers may be left to question the

meaningfulness of the process. Furthermore, this researcher encourages principals to build relationships between the teachers and themselves, a sensible suggestion but a daunting one when considering the number of teachers many principals are expected to evaluate each school year.

Jackson (2014) brought out in her research that mandated change also may be viewed as a pressure-point for principals if a district lacks the necessary supports needed to implement it effectively. She proposed that provisions in new mandates regarding school improvement call for quicker results than ever, and principals—especially those in low-performing schools—are battling with changing the culture of the school. Principals need to be able to manage crises effectively; parents want to know their children are safe. Also, new teacher evaluation systems involve analysis of student performance data, and success of the overall use of the system is more likely to occur when principals can communicate the aspects of the analyses and help teachers set common goals. Jackson's research pointed out that legal issues that arise as a result of some mandates are expected, another stressor that principals will need to be able to manage if they are to be successful school leaders. For example, since new teacher evaluation instruments are often tied to Common Core standards, teachers who are rated with such instruments but do not teach state-tested classes would be held accountable the same as teachers who teach state-tested classes. Court cases are expected to arise from such issues.

Another note regarding mandated change and the pressure it can bring for principals is discussed by Eady and Zepeda (2007): many mandates come in a one-size-fits-all package. That is, schools in wealthy districts, as well as poorer rural districts, may be expected to follow the same guidelines regarding teacher evaluations (or other

expectations of the state) although rural areas may be ill-equipped with resources and the necessary workforce for effective implementation.

### *School Improvement*

In a study by Krajewski (2005), several principals of urban schools were asked to share how they coped with the pressure of improving their schools despite numerous challenges faced by their districts. The principals were expected to increase student academic achievement in areas where the population consisted of minorities, were located in low socio-economic areas, were characterized by safety and security issues, and enrolled large numbers of special education or at-risk students. Improving their school included seeking out highly-qualified teachers, spending extra time on teacher evaluations, encouraging unity, and relationship-building. The principals also shared the need for providing a safe environment for learning, making necessary repairs, creating programs that target lowest-performing students and student mothers, and allowing people to lead while, at the same time, remaining the instructional leader of the school. West, Peck, and Reitzug (2010) add that the increased pressures urban principals face may “negatively affect the possibility for lasting urban school reform.” (p. 259)

### *Impacting Student Achievement*

In research by Chappelle and Price (2012), they remark “Principals in school buildings are under immense pressure to improve outcomes for all students.” (p. 1) They share that evidence in numerous studies shows that building principals acting as instructional leaders can improve student achievement. Furthermore, they concluded that teacher perceptions of the principal as an instructional leader make a difference in the areas of math and reading; and principals who took a student-centered approach to

student achievement yielded the best results. While it is unrealistic for a principal to meet with each student regarding a means of academic improvement, the results of the study were significant to the point that the impact school leaders have on student achievement should not be ignored. Chappelle and Price (2012) suggest a systematic approach of monitoring student progress through individual teacher meetings, identifying strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum, assessing students' progress by screening or other testing measures, and informing both teachers and students of the school's progress toward meeting goals. They warn that it would be easy to underestimate the complexity of the approach they suggest, but with proper training and supports, principals could grow as instructional leaders and, consequently, impact student achievement positively.

#### *Pressure to Give Meaningful Evaluations*

Jensen (1981) illuminates yet another pressure principals experience during teacher evaluations: the need to provide meaningful, reliable results. That is, teacher evaluation instruments may require a principal to provide feedback based on a walk-through, but very short observations provide very little information about the effectiveness of the teacher. Teachers in this study shared that principals should observe the natural setting multiple times throughout the year to gain the best insight before drawing conclusions. He also noted that, since observations are often planned, the lesson has an artificial quality; therefore, ratings would be skewed as would accompanying feedback. In a separate study by Marshall (2005), the author supports these findings. Not only are the observed lessons often staged, but because there are so few of these high-stakes rating opportunities within the school year, an ordinarily exceptional teacher may feel anxiety and perform poorly—again, skewing the results.

### *Teacher Retention*

Shaw and Newton (2014) report in their study that funding for teacher training is not always abundant; and, since research shows the greatest impact on student achievement is an effective classroom teacher, retaining highly-qualified teachers is a must for school districts. This study found a significant correlation between teacher retention and the servant leadership style of the principal. Therefore, the pressure to employ a variety of interpersonal skills for building job satisfaction among teachers is encouraged, which is especially true in challenging school districts report researchers Greenlee and Brown Jr (2009). They assert that teachers in low-socioeconomic areas tend to be underqualified, failed at least one teacher certification exam, and had less experience than teachers in wealthier areas. Furthermore, research shows the achievement gap ever-widening for students in these districts, adding greater challenges to principals and teachers. To assist in alleviating the problem, researchers advise principals to take on the role of improving the school culture through relationship-building and shared decision-making, a role that contrasts with the former principalship description in which principals dictated their expectations with little or no assistance toward improvement.

### *Non-Renewal*

Berube and Dexter (2006) discussed the usual teacher evaluation scenario: the principal observes the teacher, generally gives positive feedback, and the two attempt to provide the student with the best education possible. However, in the event a teacher performs poorly, there can be legal implications for the principal, for it is difficult to non-renew a teacher given a good rating barring extreme circumstances. Regarding the

pressures incurred by principals regarding the non-renewal process, Nixon, Packard, et al. (2010) share the following:

The issues regarding teacher contract non-renewal are arguably the most stressful, demanding, time-consuming, and emotional task required of a school principal.

The non-renewal process is sure to extract an emotional and political toll on the principal. The principal is made to feel as if she/he is on trial rather than the teacher's level of performance. (p. 45)

Another problematic feature of non-renewing a teacher this group of researchers brings to light is filling the vacancy it creates. This action creates the need to train another person concerning the goals of the school, which drains funds and decreases momentum toward school improvement. On a final note, Stoelinga (2010) noted in her research that, when non-renewal is linked to teacher evaluations, the question of the accuracy of the rating comes into question; evaluation based on a single observation holds little credibility, especially if performed by a minimally trained principal. Also, job dissatisfaction in other school districts and perpetual teacher turnover increases the likelihood of a school district inheriting a less-qualified teacher than desired. Sadly, she shares that some principals have resorted to drastic measures to avoid the non-renewal process; the behavior has been coined harassing supervision. She further reports that this type of principal behavior is usually seen in districts that use teacher evaluation instruments or processes that are poorly equipped to identify low-performing teachers; it is also found in areas with high principal turnover rates or in cases of principals who were not adequately trained to deal with teacher growth.

### *Burnout: Extensive Responsibilities*

In a study by West et al. (2010), urban principals identified three overlapping roles—instructional, managerial, and political—that contributed to principal burnout. The duties were so extensive and varied that principals were often unable to focus on matters they wished to address or were required to address. They conclude that the desire to be good instructional leaders was often pushed aside in order to deal with unavoidable management issues.

### *Burnout: Limited Control*

West et al. (2010) also found that principals often feel limited control, a factor that can lead to burnout. These researchers shared examples of principals' accounts of superintendents handing down numerous time-sensitive demands to principals with little or no support, and the need to attend district meetings off-campus intensified the lack of time to complete necessary tasks. The researchers added that the unpredictability of events provided additional stressors that upset the principals' daily routines. Moreover, state and district expectations have increased drastically over the past few years, another source of stress that principals are helpless to change but are accountable for meeting. Such expectations are usually linked to student achievement and publicized; and, although many people are involved with educating the students, the principal is generally the only person directly linked to the academic performance of the school.

West et al. (2010) point out that frequent technological advancements have led to other elements of the profession that are out of a principal's control. For example, students use cell phones to record fights, and social media is continually an issue.



Principals have the added challenge of maintaining a positive image for the school, managing public relations, and dealing with associated discipline issues.

Politics contribute to principal burnout; undermining authority or too much assistance from outsiders can create additional problems for principals say West et al. (2010). They shared the following principal's comments in their study: "There's just so much pressure to achieve, and there's so little support." (p. 255)

*Burnout: Lack of Personal and Professional Time*

West et al. (2010) discussed another element of principal burnout: lack of personal and professional time. Principals often work long hours, some stating they worked upwards of seventy hours and reported to their offices for additional work on Sundays. Others noted that the long hours had taken a toll on their health and also found it nearly impossible to attend training that would assist them in their career. West et al. (2010) remind that many principals have families, which come with their stresses and challenges; some principals report that lack of ability to balance work and home obligations ultimately led to divorce.

*Burnout: Principal Turnover*

West et al. (2010) brought out how lack of personal time stressed school principals; for this reason, principals may choose their families over their careers. In the event a principal's career is tied to the performance of the school, even in the case where a low-performing school is on track toward improvement, some principals would rather leave the profession than cope with the possibility of imminent failure. Strickland-Cohen, McIntosh, and Horner (2014) found that, since administrator turnover is a significant barrier to the sustainability of effective programs and practices of a school,

every effort should be made to alleviate the problem. They proposed that some school districts intensify the problem of principal turnover by requiring principals to rotate randomly among schools—especially effective administrators; while one school benefits, a less-capable administrator may cause a school that is making progress to lose ground.

### *Cumulative Stress Buildup*

Veto, Nugent, and Kruse (2001) note the principals are beset by stress from all directions. The list of stressors to the principalship is broad and lengthy, and when asked, principals are quick to offer examples; however, managing the stress is not such an easy task. These researchers list several features of a principal's stress-filled day: extended hours due to after-school activities, teacher evaluations, scheduling, budgeting, along with many other roles and tasks. At times, these jobs coincide with one another. There are more jobs required in one day than there are hours available to complete the tasks. Principals in this study reported that being chiefly responsible for such a large number of situations causes them to feel stress; furthermore, the constant barrage of unpredictable events left them feeling overwhelmed. The researchers add that an especially difficult aspect of the principalship is dealing with the myriad—and often fluctuating—opinions of the public.

Thus, the number and types of stressors experienced by principals are varied and numerous and can directly affect his/her ability and willingness to conduct adequate, appropriate, and meaningful evaluations of teacher performance. These range from pressures outside the school to their own skills, knowledge, and time—all of which act as barriers to effective evaluation. And, in order for teacher evaluation to contribute to

improving instruction, it is critical that these pressures not influence principal evaluations.

### Theory

Three theories will guide this research project. The first theory is the situational leadership theory. In a study by Walter and et al. (1980), Situational Leadership is described as follows: "...the leader should engage in different combinations of task and relationship behavior depending upon the maturity of members of the group in relation to a specific task." (p. 618) It was found that principals who failed to manage tasks and relationships using Situational Leadership theoretical guidelines were less successful and, particularly, were regarded negatively by teachers. It was concluded that "flexible and balanced use of task and relationship behaviors is beneficial for both organizational productivity and personal satisfaction." (p. 621)

Vecchio (1987) also conducted a study that tested Situational Leadership theory. He found that less-qualified teachers, or less mature members of the group, required more assistance from their leaders. The study provided inconclusive results in regards to more experienced and effective educators. Thompson and Vecchio (2009) did yet another study to test this theory and, likewise, yielded no clear results.

Johansen (1990) based the theory of situational leadership on-task behavior, relationship behavior, follower maturity, and effective leader behavior. He defined task behavior as the extent to which a principal specifically prescribes designated duties. Relationship behavior is defined as "the extent to which leaders are likely to maintain personal relationships between themselves and members of the group." (p. 74) Effective leader behavior is defined as "that which is appropriate to the situation." (p. 74) Each of

these behaviors can be related to the principal and the process of teacher evaluation. Hersey and Blanchard (1982) defined maturity as “the willingness and ability of people to take responsibility for directing their behavior.” (p. 151) They further categorized maturity into two parts: job maturity (the ability to perform a task) and psychological maturity (the motivation to perform a task). The concept of job maturity will be used to examine whether principals can complete a valid teacher evaluation. The intent is not to say that principals cannot be effective, but principals may feel that they lack the content knowledge to give teachers fair evaluations. The concept of psychological maturity will be used in examining whether or not a principal is willing or motivated to complete accurate teacher evaluations based on stresses that are encountered.

Another theory utilized in this research project is Fiedler and Garcia’s cognitive resource theory. As defined by the website <http://www.leadership-central.com>, their theory claims that stress affects the leader’s ability to make rational decisions. This theory is based on Fiedler’s 1967 Contingency Model. Basically, this theory states that in low-stress situations, a leader should rely on his/her intelligence, whereas in high-stress situations, relying on experience is more effective. Cognitive Resource theory will be incorporated into the study to help determine how stress can affect the principal’s decisions regarding teacher evaluation.

The final theory that will be incorporated in this study is the law of unintended consequences. The law of unintended consequences is a concept from the field of economics (Norton, 2008). Even though the law is usually applied in economics, it is appropriately useful regarding teacher evaluation required by the federal government. Norton (2008) stated that this law usually refers to the unintended effects of the

government during the enactment of legislation or regulation of mandates. Throughout the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act, the federal government essentially mandated high-stakes teacher evaluation. Norton (2008) recognized Robert K. Merton for his analysis of the law of unintended consequences by describing one facet of the law as “instances in which someone wants the intended consequence of an action so much that he purposefully chooses to ignore any unintended effects.” (para. 8) This study will use the law of unintended consequences to examine the outcomes of teacher evaluations. The intended effect of teacher evaluation according to the literature reviewed is to grow teacher effectiveness, which will subsequently increase student achievement. When referring to the law of unintended consequences and school reform, Fink (2003) stated, “at a time when teacher shortages and teacher morale are growing problems for many educational jurisdictions... [there is] an urgent need to build better bridges of understanding between policy makers and policy implementers” (p. 10).

## CHAPTER III - METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a relationship between the presence, degree, and nature of pressures experienced by principals that may influence how they rated teachers using the Mississippi Educator Professional Growth System and their summative teacher evaluation scores. This study examined the relationship between teacher evaluation scores and the state assigned accountability rating of districts. General demographic information was collected from each participating principal and included details such as the length of time the participant had been employed as a principal, how long the participant had served at his/her present position, the grade range of the school where the participant was employed, the approximate number of evaluations the participant had administered, the accountability rating of the participant's school, and the participant's general disposition regarding the Mississippi Educator Professional Growth System. These data points helped clarify the results of this study.

### Research Questions

RQ 1: To what degree do principals experience influencing pressures when performing summative teacher evaluations?

RQ 2: Is there a relationship between influencing pressures principals experience when performing summative teacher evaluations and summative teacher evaluation scores?

RQ 3: Is there a relationship between summative teacher evaluation scores and the accountability level of the school districts?

## *Variables*

Table 1 identifies the variables and the sources from which they were obtained.

Table 1

### *Variables and Sources*

Variable	Source
Influencing pressures	Survey instrument
Years of experience as a principal	Survey instrument
Years employed in the current position	Survey instrument
Highest degree earned	Survey instrument
Number of teachers evaluated	Survey instrument
Years of evaluation experience	Survey instrument
Age Group	Survey instrument
Gender	Survey instrument
School improvement status	Survey instrument
District name	Survey instrument
School name	Survey instrument
Summative teacher evaluation scores	MDE and school districts
School accountability scores/levels	Archival data from MDE

## Research Design

The research design of this study was a quantitative survey design and also included a qualitative component. According to Creswell (2014), the “survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. From sample results, the researcher generalizes or draws inferences to the population” (pp. 155-156). This study included twenty-three influencing pressures as reported by the principal about the evaluation system as a dependent variable. This study also included both teacher evaluation scores and school accountability scores provided by the Mississippi State Department of Education. These are additional dependent variables. Independent variables included scores given to each pressure identified, the length of time the respondent had been a

principal, the number of years the respondent had been employed in his/her present position, the highest degree earned by the respondent, the number of teachers evaluated by the respondent, the number of years the respondent had evaluated teachers, the respondent's age group, the respondent's gender, the school improvement status of the respondent's school, the district and school in which the respondent was employed, the number of teachers whose summative evaluation score fell within each score category, and the accountability score/level for each school. The data were collected using a cross-sectional survey, a public records request, public information from the Mississippi Department of Education's federal programs online planning application, and information collected directly from the school district. A cross-sectional survey allowed the researcher to quickly and conveniently collect large amounts of data from the extensive geographic area. Additional information about the evaluation systems and validity of the information submitted by school districts was planned to have been collected by interviewing staff of the Office of Teaching and Leading at the Mississippi Department of Education. An interview instrument was developed for this purpose. This instrument was planned to be the qualitative element of the research design.

### Participants

After the approval of this study by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), all school superintendents in Mississippi public schools were contacted by email and asked for permission to conduct research in their respective districts. Principals currently employed in a district where the superintendent gave permission were recruited by email to participate in this study. There are slightly more than 900 principals currently employed in Mississippi public schools.



Principals were asked to complete a survey instrument in order to gain insight into their perspective regarding the teacher evaluation system and the pressures they experienced when rating teachers. The instrument also collected demographic data. The principal, by necessity, was asked to identify the district and school with which he/she was associated. However, the data was anonymized for this study. Identifying data was not nor ever will be shared publicly; it was used solely for this study. Identifying data from the survey responses were used to match survey data to teacher evaluation scores, school accountability, and school improvement status in order to complete the statistical calculations for this study.

The Mississippi Department of Education was contacted and asked to participate in the study. A public records request was filed with the Department of Education for archived summative teacher evaluation scores. School accountability scores were obtained from the Department of Education website. On February 21, 2019, the Mississippi Department of Education provided professional development to school administrators regarding the latest revisions to the teacher evaluation system. During the webinar training session, a representative of the state department shared that 18,881 of 24,794 teachers in the state had a rating of effective during the 2017 – 2018 school year. Education (2019a) Further, it was reported that 31.4% of school districts in Mississippi did not report teacher evaluation scores to the State Department of Education. There was also a request submitted to the Mississippi Department of Education requesting permission to interview employees of the Office of Educator Effectiveness to determine issues the department had encountered with summative teacher evaluation data and any corrective measures the department had taken to address such issues. Individual

participants from the Department of Education were to be informed that they would not be identified in order to maintain anonymity. However, the Mississippi Department of Education declined to participate in this study. (Cory M. Murphy, 2019)

## Instruments

### *Influencing Pressures Survey Instrument*

Quantitative data for this study were collected using a horizontal numeric scale survey with items to determine the level of pressure a principal had experienced from different influences when assigning an evaluation score for a teacher. The survey contained a section of demographic items to ascertain the length of time the respondent had been employed as a principal, the number of years the respondent had been employed in his/her present position, and the number of evaluations the respondent had administered. A pilot study was utilized to determine the reliability of the survey instrument. The survey instrument was piloted in Louisiana. Cronbach's alpha was calculated using the responses collected to analyze the reliability of the instrument.

Principals were asked to provide a rating from 1 to 5 in regard to teacher evaluation using the following guidelines: (1) "This topic does NOT influence me in regard to teacher evaluations"; (2) "This topic MAY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations"; (3) "This topic will PROBABLY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations"; (4) "This topic will DEFINITELY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations"; and (5) "This topic influences the MAJORITY of my teacher evaluations." Principals rated twenty-three possible pressures. The internal consistency of the twenty-three items was high as indicated by Cronbach's Alpha of 0.853. Each item's statistics were reviewed to determine if the reliability could be increased if the item was omitted

from the survey instrument. Only two items were of concern; however, Cronbach's Alpha would only increase by 0.006. Therefore, all items were retained in the survey instrument.

A factor analysis using the principal component analysis and a Varimax with Kaiser normalization rotation method was utilized to categorize influencing pressures. The factor analysis resulted in four components being identified. The reliability of each component, or category, was verified using Cronbach's alpha. Possible influencing pressures fall under the following categories: principal ability, principal support, principal personal stress, and school improvement. Table 2 identifies the influencing pressure categories and the corresponding item numbers from the survey instrument.

Table 2

*Influencing Pressures and Corresponding Instrument Item(s)*

Influencing Pressure Category	Item Number(s)
Principal Ability	8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
Principal Support	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10
Principal Personal Stress	9, 20, 21, 22, 23
School Improvement	16, 17, 18, 19

*MDE Archival Data*

A public records request was filed with the Mississippi Department of Education to collect anonymized teacher evaluation scores by district and school. The request for the data to be anonymized was for the purpose of protecting the identity of individual teachers. The most current school accountability scores and levels for all districts and schools were downloaded from the Mississippi Department of Education website.

### *MDE Interviews*

An interview instrument was developed to obtain general information about the teacher evaluation model, the implementation of the model, and the perceived reliability of the model. Additional questions regarding summative teacher evaluation issues the Office of Educator Effectiveness had experienced was to be addressed. This instrument was planned be used to interview staff members of the Mississippi Department of Education.

### *Procedures*

A cross-sectional survey dealing with pressures that principals encounter when assigning an evaluation score was developed. The survey instrument was transferred to an electronic form that could be disseminated to participants by email. An email was created and emailed to the superintendent of each public-school district in Mississippi requesting permission to survey principals. To consent, the superintendents could either reply to the email indicating consent to proceed or send a letter confirming consent. A sample consent letter for the superintendent to sign was included in this email as a template. A total of 158 superintendents were emailed of which 51 consented to their principals being contacted. After receiving approval from the superintendent, principals in participating districts were sent an email containing a link to the online survey instrument. A reminder to complete the survey was sent by email. A second and final follow-up was sent before the survey was closed. The survey remained active for sixty days to give ample time for principals to respond. The number of principals contacted totaled 263 with 130 responding to the survey.

The Department of Education responded to the request for public records with a letter explaining that the requested information did not exist. However, districts are required to submit teacher evaluation data before June 30 of each year. Upon being asked why the information did not exist, the Office of Reporting indicated that the Executive Director of Teaching and Leading should be contacted for further details. The response from the director stated, “it has been determined that the MDE will not be able to release the requested limited data collected, due to components of the Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth System (PGS) being piloted, among other contributing factors.” (Cory M. Murphy, 2019) After being denied access to the data, an alternate source was found for the teacher summative evaluation scores.

The Office of Federal Programs at the Mississippi Department of Education utilizes an electronic system for school district programmatic planning. This system contains anonymized teacher evaluation scores for all schools receiving federal funds. After the federal programs' plans are approved, the information becomes public and is accessible from the federal programs section of the Mississippi Department of Education website. This system was used to collect teacher evaluation score data for the study. If a school's evaluation scores were not listed, an email was sent to the superintendent to request the missing information. An interview instrument was developed to be used to interview selected staff at the Mississippi Department of Education.

An email requesting permission for interviews was sent to the Executive Director of the Office of Teaching and Leading at the Mississippi Department of Education. However, the executive director did not give permission to recruit employees to be interviewed.

## Analysis

IBM's SPSS statistics software was used to analyze the quantitative data related to this study. A data file was created using the data collected from the survey instrument and the public records downloaded from the Mississippi Department of Education website. Blank responses were removed to help eliminate response bias. Descriptive statistics were calculated to be reported for the variables included in this study. A multiple linear regression analysis was run on the data collected by the survey to determine the relationships between the evaluation scores that teachers received on evaluations and the pressures encountered by principals when they assigned scores on teacher evaluations. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to determine the relationship between teacher evaluation scores and school accountability scores.

## CHAPTER IV – RESULTS

### Descriptive Statistics

The survey instrument used in this study collected descriptive data about the participants. This data included the type of school in which the principal was currently employed, the length of time the principal had been employed in their current position, how many years the respondent had been a principal, the highest level of education completed by the principal, the number of years the principal had completed written evaluations of teachers, the average number of teachers the principal evaluated annually, the gender of the principal, the age range of the principal, and whether or not the school where the principal was employed was involved in any form of state or federal improvement program. The accountability level of each school was collected from the website of the Mississippi Department of Education.

Table 3

#### *Descriptive Statistics of Participants*

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Employed at current position		
< 1 year	12	14.6
1 – 5 years	48	58.5
6 – 10 years	14	17.1
11 – 15 years	2	2.4
16 – 20 years	3	3.7
20+ years	3	3.7
Time as a Principal		
< 1 year	4	4.9
1 – 5 years	29	35.4
6 – 10 years	25	30.5

Table 3 Continued

11 – 15 years	13	15.9
16 – 20 years	6	7.3
20+ years	4	4.9
Highest level of education		
Master's Degree	45	54.9
Specialist's Degree	19	23.2
Doctoral Degree	18	22.0
Time completing evaluations		
< 1 year	1	1.2
1 – 5 years	27	32.9
6 – 10 years	33	40.2
11 – 15 years	15	18.3
16 – 20 years	4	4.9
20+ years	2	2.4
Average teachers evaluated annually		
1 – 25	28	34.1
26 – 50	38	46.3
51 – 75	11	13.4
76 – 100	3	3.7
125 – 150	2	2.4
Participants Gender		
Male	45	54.9
Female	37	45.1
Age range of participant		
20 – 30	1	1.2
31 – 40	14	17.1
41 – 50	47	57.3
51 – 60	17	20.7
61 – 70	3	3.7

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More than fifty percent of principals responding to the survey had been employed in their current position for a period of one to five years. The largest percentage of principals, 35.4% of the respondents, had served as a school principal between one and five years. Only 45.2% of the school principal in this study had a degree above the master's level. Most principals had greater than six years' experience in evaluating teachers with the largest percent of principals evaluating fifty or fewer teachers annually. Of the eighty-two principals who completed the survey in its entirety, 45 were male, and 37 were female, with 57.3% falling within an age range of 41 – 50 years old.

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics of participant's school*

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Type of School		
Primary School	4	4.9
Elementary School	29	35.4
Middle School	20	24.4
High School	17	20.7
K – 12 School	7	8.5
Other	5	6.1
Currently in State/Federal improvement		
Yes	26	31.7
No	56	68.3
Participant school's accountability score		
A	19	23.2
B	28	34.1
C	17	20.7
D	14	17.1
F	4	4.9

Table 4 Continued

Entire state school's accountability score		
A	196	22.3
B	280	31.9
C	169	19.3
D	153	17.4
F	77	8.8
N/A	2	0.2

The most represented type of school in the study was the elementary school while middle school a close second. When participants were asked whether their school was undergoing some form of school improvement, 68.3% responded “no.” The largest percentage of accountability scores represented by the participants was from schools that received a score of B. The percentage of participant schools scoring in each accountability level to the percentage of all schools in each accountability level varies between 2.2% and -3.9%. This indicated that the sample closely resembled the overall state in regard to the percentage of schools in each accountability level.

#### Statistical Results

The survey instrument contained pressures that the principal may experience while conducting teacher evaluations. These pressures were grouped in four concise pressure categories: principal ability, principal support, principal personal stress, and school improvement. Each of these categories included statements that principals were asked to rate using a horizontal numeric scale. Descriptive statistics were calculated for each statement using SPSS.

RQ 1: To what degree do principals experience influencing pressures when performing summative teacher evaluations? The identified pressures portion of the

survey instrument consisted of 23 statements. The mean and standard deviation can be seen in Table 5. The pressure statements are listed in descending order with respect to the mean, noting that the higher the mean, the greater the influence of the pressure to the principals

Table 5

*Pressure Statements Descriptive Statistics*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of...			
10. the need to have an impact on student achievement and growth.	80	3.08	1.465
11. completing the process in order to non-renew a teacher.	80	2.30	1.174
8. time constraints for completing teacher evaluations	82	2.07	1.184
1. retaining qualified personnel in a low-socioeconomic area.	82	1.98	1.267
2. finding qualified personnel in a low-socioeconomic area.	82	1.94	1.309
3. the amount of support given to my decisions from my Superintendent or supervisor.	82	1.93	1.109
12. the implementation of state/federal mandated changes and educational programs.	79	1.92	1.130
13. having a school in a state/federal school improvement plan/program.	80	1.63	1.011

Table 5 Continued

4. Superintendent, School Board, and/or other supervisory figures.	80	1.61	0.948
14. my limited knowledge of the teacher's content area.	82	1.59	0.800
15. my burnout from the lack of personal and professional time.	81	1.57	0.921
16. my cumulative buildup of stress.	81	1.57	0.879
17. my lack of expertise in giving actionable feedback to teachers.	82	1.52	0.849
18. my own burnout from limited control.	80	1.49	0.857
19. my lack of expertise in helping teachers set realistic goals.	82	1.46	0.773
5. parental input (either positive or negative).	82	1.43	0.817
20. the public image or marketability of the school.	82	1.34	0.724
21. my lack of expertise in analyzing student data.	82	1.27	0.545
22. my lack of confidence in identifying the effectiveness of a teacher.	81	1.26	0.543
23. a high principal turnover rate at my school.	81	1.17	0.565
9. the race or ethnicity of the teacher being evaluated.	82	1.13	0.438
6. public opinion.	82	1.12	0.507

Scale: 1 = This topic does NOT influence me in regard to teacher evaluation; 2 = This topic MAY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations; 3 = This topic will PROBABLY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations; 4 = This topic will DEFINITELY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations; 5 = This topic influences the MAJORITY of my teacher evaluations

The descriptive statistics indicated that principal participants in this study feel the greatest pressure from needing to have an impact on student achievement and growth. This pressure had a mean of 3.08 and a standard deviation of 1.465.

RQ 2: Is there a relationship between influencing pressures principals experience when performing summative teacher evaluations and summative teacher evaluation scores? Factor analysis was used to cluster the twenty-three pressures into common categories. The factor analysis using the principal component analysis and a Varimax with Kaiser normalization rotation method identified four clusters of variables. The sample size used for this factor analysis was small. However, according to Mertler and Vannatta (2005), if the sample contained several high-loading variables, a smaller sample size could be used. Also, the use of the factor analysis in this study was utilized to help verify the categorization of the pressure items used by the researcher. The reliability of each category was examined using Cronbach's alpha. The categories were identified as principal ability ( $\alpha = .827$ ), principal support ( $\alpha = .853$ ), principal personal stress ( $\alpha = .810$ ), and school improvement ( $\alpha = .668$ ). According to Tavakol and Dennick (2011), an acceptable range for alpha is 0.70 to 0.95. However, they note the value of alpha can be affected in the case of a low number of items. The school improvement category had five pressures to load; therefore, the category was retained and considered reliable. The descriptive statistics for the variables used are located in table 6.

Table 6

*Pressure Categories and Teacher Evaluation Scores Descriptives*

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Pressure categories			
School improvement	55	2.15	0.818
Principal ability	55	1.56	0.598
Principal support	55	1.49	0.503
Principal personal stress	55	1.42	0.631
Percent of Effective Teachers	55	77.77	20.698
Teacher evaluation scores - All	2171	2.87	0.515
Evaluation Score	N	Percentage	
1	19	0.9	
2	396	18.2	
3	1613	74.3	
4	143	6.6	

The relationship of the four pressure categories principals may experience and the percent of teacher evaluation scores considered effective were examined by utilizing a multiple linear regression statistical test using SPSS. According to the Mississippi Department of Education, a teacher with an evaluation score of 3 or 4 is considered to be effective. Education (2019d) The research sample contains 2171 teacher evaluation scores. Of the 2171 teacher scores obtained, 1,756 or 80.9% of the teachers were considered effective. A forced entry multiple regression with an alpha level of .05 was used to determine if the dependent or outcome variable, percent of teachers considered effective, could be predicted by the independent or predictor variable categories of principal ability, principal support, principal personal stress, and school improvement.

The ANOVA indicated the percent of effective teacher evaluation scores could not be statistically predicted Teach\_PCT\_Effective,  $F(4, 50) = .909$ ,  $p = .466$ ,  $R^2 = .068$ ,  $adj. R^2 = -.007$ . None of the four pressure categories added statistically to the prediction.

RQ 3: Is there a relationship between summative teacher evaluation scores and the accountability rating of the school districts? A chi-square test of association was employed to test if there was a relationship between whether or not a school was in school improvement and teacher evaluation scores. The descriptives for the chi-square test are shown in Table 7

Table 7

*Teacher Evaluation Score – School Improvement Descriptives*

Score	School Improvement		Total
	Yes	No	
1	6	13	19
2	117	279	396
3	392	1221	1613
4	49	94	143
Total	564	1607	2171

The expected cell frequencies had one cell value less than five which violates an assumption of the chi-squared test for associations. To overcome this violation, the scores of 1 and 2 were collapsed into a single category of non-proficient scores and the scores of 3 and 4 were collapsed into a single category of proficient scores. The chi-squared test was run again and resulted in all expected cell frequencies greater than five. There was not a significant association between whether or not a school was in school improvement and whether or not a teacher received a proficient or non-proficient rating,  $\chi^2(1, N=2171) = 3.574$ ,  $p = .059$ .

To further investigate if there was a relationship between summative teacher evaluation scores and the accountability rating of schools, a one-way ANOVA was utilized. Due to the low sample size, the accountability levels of A and B were combined and the accountability levels of C, D, and F were combined. The descriptive statistics for the ANOVA are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

*Summative Teacher Evaluation Scores Descriptives*

Accountability Level	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
A and B	34	86.939	12.902
C, D, and F	22	64.494	23.182
Total	56	78.121	20.674

The number of schools in each accountability level group included in the study decreased once accountability levels were combined into fewer categories. Levene's test was utilized to test for the equality of variances and revealed homogeneity was violated ( $p = .002$ ). The assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met. As a result of the assumption being violated, Welch's ANOVA was utilized to determine summative teacher evaluation scores were not statistically significantly different for different accountability levels, Welch's  $F(1, 29.507) = 17.180, p < .001$ .



## CHAPTER V – DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine to what degree principals experienced influencing pressures when performing summative teacher evaluations, to determine if there was a relationship between influencing pressures principals experience when performing summative teacher evaluations and summative teacher evaluation scores, and to determine if there was a relationship between summative teacher evaluation scores and the accountability ratings of schools. By determining these relationships, school leaders will gain insight into how their responses to pressures may influence teacher evaluations and thus school accountability levels. This chapter will provide a summary of the results, limitations of the study, implications for practice, recommendations for future study and final conclusions.

### Summary of Results

To determine the degree principals experienced influencing pressures when performing summative teacher evaluations, the mean and standard deviation was calculated for each of the identified pressures. Each principal was asked to rate the pressures using a rating scale where a rating of 1 indicated the topic did not influence them in regard to teacher evaluation, a rating of 2 indicated the topic may influence some teacher evaluations, a rating of 3 indicated the topic probably influenced some teacher evaluations, a rating of 4 indicated the topic definitely influenced some teacher evaluations, and a rating of 5 indicated the topic influenced the majority of teacher evaluations. The need to have an impact on student achievement and growth had the largest mean ( $M = 3.08$ ) and, therefore, was the pressure principals felt all-around most influential on teacher evaluations. A score of 3 on the rating scale indicated this stress

would probably influence some teacher evaluations. Public opinion had the smallest mean ( $M = 1.12$ ) and was identified as the least influential pressure overall and, consequently, does not influence teacher evaluations. There were no means close to the score of 4 or 5 which translated into no stress being so great as to definitely influence or influence the majority of teacher evaluations.

According to Fiedler and Garcia (1987), the cognitive resource theory plans, decisions, and strategies were acted on if a leader was not distracted by stress. According to the pressures listed in Table 5, school leaders had not experienced a large amount of pressure in regard to teacher evaluations. Therefore, according to the cognitive resource theory, principals should be able to carry out teacher evaluations that truly reflect the ability of the teachers to be evaluated. Lawrence and Lorsch (1969) indicated different environments naturally place different requirements on individuals because of the uniqueness of the leadership in an organization. However, as indicated by the means of the pressure reported by principals in multiple districts, there was little variance in the amount of pressure experienced.

Research question two inquired if there was a relationship between influencing pressures principals experienced when performing summative teacher evaluations and summative teacher evaluation scores. A multiple linear regression was used to determine if there was such a relationship. The influencing pressures were categorized into four distinct categories based on a factor analysis. The four categories included principal ability, principal support, principal personal stress, and school improvement. Using a forced entry multiple linear regression, the data were analyzed to determine if these four categories could predict the outcome of teachers scoring effective on their summative

teacher evaluation. The results of the omnibus ANOVA showed there was no statistically significant relationship between the four influencing pressure category predictors and the teacher summative evaluation score outcome variable.

This result mirrored the results found in research question one in that, according to Fiedler and Garcia (1987), a low amount of stress should not interfere with the decisions of a leader. Therefore, since there was no significant relationship between the influencing pressures and teacher summative evaluation scores, the scores should be a valid measure of teacher effectiveness. Furthermore, the cognitive resource theory, as stated by Fiedler and Garcia (1987), states that in the absence of experiencing stress, the individuals in a group will act on the directed behavior according to the organization's leadership. In this case, the school principal was part of the group, and the Mississippi State Department was the public schools' leadership.

Research question three investigated whether there was a relationship between summative teacher evaluation scores and the accountability rating of the schools. The chi-square test of association resulted in showing no statistically significant relationship. Further investigation using a one-way ANOVA was completed. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met; therefore, Welch's ANOVA was used to determine there was a statistically significant relationship between summative teacher evaluation scores and the accountability rating of schools included in the sample.

According to the Mississippi Succeeds Annual Report Card User Guide published by the Mississippi Department of Education, accountability scores are as follows: minimal (F), basic (D), passing (C), proficient (B), advanced (A). (Education, 2019c) Out of all participant schools in this study, 42.7% scored below the level of B. In

comparison, 45.5% of all public schools in Mississippi scored below the level of B. Teacher evaluation scores indicated 80.9% of the teachers included in the research sample scored proficient which closely mirrors the 76% of teachers scoring proficient in the state according to the Mississippi Department of Education. (Education, 2019a) Stronge (2010) considered effective teachers “the most significant schooling factor impacting student learning.” With Mississippi having a large percentage of teachers considered effective, one would think the state would have a large percentage of schools with a rating of proficient or above.

### Limitations

This study utilized a survey instrument to collect self-reported data from principals in Mississippi public school districts. The instrument asked each participant principal to rate on a rating scale an identified stress in regards to assigning a teacher evaluation score. The rating scale rating was completely subjective. Two principals may have experienced the exact same amount of stress but rated it differently. Also, seven schools replied to the survey more than once. Duplicates were removed by retaining the first response from each school. Therefore, the study was limited by the type of measure used in the study.

The principals who were recruited for the study were from the districts in which the superintendent gave permission for the research. This limited the size of the pool from which the principal could be solicited for participation. Another size limitation of this study was whether or not a principal voluntarily completed the survey instrument.

Some of the principals did not answer all of the items posed in the survey, thus introducing a limitation of incomplete data. Incomplete data was also a limitation in

regard to summative teacher evaluation scores. Due to the Mississippi Department of Education not participating in the study, self-reported public teacher evaluation scores from the department's Mississippi Comprehensive Automated Performance-based System were utilized in the study. Scores for schools that did not self-report in the system were requested directly from the participant school districts. However, not all scores could be obtained in that way. Having incomplete summative teacher evaluation scores could not have been mitigated even if the Mississippi Department of Education had participated. According to the Department of Education, only 60.3% of districts reported summative teacher evaluation data. (Education, 2019a) This percentage is comparable to the 67.1% reporting rate for the participants in this study. Another limitation of the study stemmed from the Mississippi Department of Education not giving permission to interview staff members. This prevented the gathering of information about problems identified with the evaluation process, such as the quality of the data received, if districts had explained why their scores were not submitted, whether or not there were concerns about the percentage of teachers scoring effective on their evaluations, and how the department of education was planning to address any identified issues.

### Implications for Practice

The results of this study may have several implications for practice in regard to public school teacher summative evaluation in Mississippi. Principals feeling almost no pressure while completing summative teacher evaluations, 80.9% of teachers in the sample scoring effective on evaluations, and 45.5% of schools scoring below the proficient level may be indicative of a broken system. Results also showed there were no

statistically significant differences in teacher evaluation scores across different accountability levels, which further calls into question whether or not a systemic problem exists. Continued examination of the teacher evaluation system may be warranted.

This study and data from the Mississippi State Department of Education revealed that all school districts are not submitting teacher summative evaluation data. One possible explanation is that districts are not requiring principals to evaluate their teaching staff. Another could be that districts do not choose to share teacher evaluation data with state leadership because they view the teacher evaluation process as another state mandated responsibility. To address this noncompliance issue, the department of education has added an accreditation standard requiring districts to submit this data annually. Only time will determine if this measure corrects this issue.

Another implication includes principal preparation. Principals may not be adequately prepared to determine the effectiveness of teachers. Principal preparation programs should help ensure principals are heavily trained to complete accurate teacher evaluations. For principals already in the field, extensive training should be offered to increase their knowledge of determining the effectiveness of the teachers they evaluate. This training could be implemented by either the State Department of Education or by way of a district-level initiative.

#### Recommendations for Future Study

This study opens the door for further research in the area of teacher summative evaluation and pressures principals encounter while completing evaluations. The first recommendation for future study would be to conduct a qualitative study involving principal and teacher attitudes involved with teacher evaluation. It would be interesting

to see if principals express more concern over pressures they experience while completing summative teacher evaluations with the change in research method. Principals could be given the opportunity to express their feelings about the process prescribed by the Mississippi State Department of Education. It would be easier for principals to express whether or not they are trying to determine the effectiveness of a teacher or complete a compliance task. Teachers' attitudes dealing with scores received on summative evaluations could be introduced into the study. Teachers could be questioned to gain insights into how they feel about the ability of the principal to rate their effectiveness accurately.

Another interesting offshoot would be to repeat this study in other states to see if the results are comparable to Mississippi. This would aid in generalizing the results of this study to a larger population or showing a possible uniqueness of this state. The study could also show differences in results as compared to the type of summative evaluation used in other states. There may be more pressures placed on principals in other states that are dependent on differing attitudes toward teacher summative evaluation, especially in states where teachers are unionized.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, this study looked at the degree principals in Mississippi encountered identified pressures while completing teacher summative evaluations, the relationship between possible pressures principals may experience during the completion of summative teacher evaluations and the scores principals recorded on those evaluations, and the relationship between teacher evaluation scores and district accountability levels. It was revealed that principals experienced very low levels of pressure when completing

teacher evaluation scores. There was no statistically significant relationship found between the identified pressures principal could possibly experience and the score a teacher received on their summative evaluation. The study also showed no statistically significant relationship between the summative teacher evaluation scores received and the accountability level of school districts. However, this study did produce some implications to be addressed regarding teacher evaluation in Mississippi.

The Mississippi Department of Education has obviously reached some of the same conclusions. Due to districts not submitting their summative teacher evaluation scores, the Department of Education introduced a new accountability standard that requires districts to report their scores on an annual basis. (Education, 2019b) Further, the State Department has implemented an additional accreditation standard requiring all administrators to complete a state-approved training on the Professional Growth System evaluation instrument. (Education, 2019b). The outcome of these interventions is yet to be determined. Hopefully, the outcome will be a stronger system of evaluation that is used to rate the effectiveness of teachers in Mississippi more accurately but, most importantly, increase the achievement of all students and schools.



## APPENDIX A – IRB Approval Letter

### Office of Research Integrity



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#### NOTICE OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD ACTION

The project below 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 regulations (45 CFR Part 46), and University Policy to ensure:

- The risks to subjects are minimized and 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 involving risks to subjects must be reported immediately. Problems should be reported to ORI via the Incident template on Cayuse IRB.
- The period of approval is twelve months. An application for renewal must be submitted for projects exceeding twelve months.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: IRB-19-111

PROJECT TITLE: The Principal and Teacher Evaluation: A Study of Influencing Pressures

SCHOOL/PROGRAM: School of Education, Educational Research and Admin

RESEARCHER(S): Andy Brock, Kyna Shelley

IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Exempt

CATEGORY: Exempt

Category 2.(i). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording).

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

APPROVED STARTING: July 24, 2019

Donald Sacco, Ph.D.

Institutional Review Board Chairperson

## APPENDIX B – Standard (Online) Informed Consent



### INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD STANDARD (ONLINE) INFORMED CONSENT

STANDARD (ONLINE) INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURES		
<p>The Project Information and Research Description sections of this form should be completed by the Principal Investigator before submitting this form for IRB approval. Use what is given in the research description and consent sections below when constructing research instrument online.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Last Edited March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019</p>		
Today's date: April 28, 2019		
PROJECT INFORMATION		
Project Title: The Principal and Teacher Evaluation: A Study of Influencing Pressures		
Principal Investigator: Andy W. Brock	Phone: 601-303-0234	Email: andy.brock@usm.edu
College: Education and Psychology	School and Program: School of Education: Educational Administration, Ph.D.	
RESEARCH DESCRIPTION		
<p><b>1. Purpose:</b></p> <p>The Mississippi Department of Education requires all districts to perform summative teacher evaluations. All employees experience influencing pressures when making decisions when performing job related duties. Influencing pressures may affect how employees perform their job duties. The purpose of this study is examine which influencing pressures principals most identify with when performing summative teacher evaluations and determine if there is a relationship between these pressures and evaluation scores teachers receive. This study will provide principals the opportunity to share their unique view of teacher evaluation.</p> <p><b>2. Description of Study:</b></p> <p>Mississippi public school principals will be asked to complete an online survey dealing with influencing pressures experienced during summative teacher evaluation. Employees of the Mississippi Department of Education will be asked to participate in an interview. Each individual will be contacted by email to ask for permission to participate in the study. If the individual agrees to participate, a consent form will be completed to document the participant's consent. A link for the survey instrument will be provided by email for each consenting principal. Mississippi Department of Education employees consenting to an interview will be recorded using an audio recorder and later transcribed. The interview will either be conducted by phone, video conference, or face-to-face. A meeting time and method will be established before the interview.</p> <p><b>3. Benefits:</b></p> <p>Participants will benefit by having their unique experiences included in a study that could possibly help shape the process of teacher evaluation in Mississippi. This research will contribute to the literature and practice of summative teacher evaluation.</p> <p><b>4. Risks:</b></p> <p>This study does not present any risks for the participants. The information collected will be confidential.</p>		

**5. Confidentiality:**

This data, and any files created containing this data will be password protected and encrypted so it can only be accessed by the researcher, dissertation committee chairperson, and the statistician. Likewise, interview files will be transferred to an electronic format and be protected in the same manner. Any materials acquired that are not in an electronic format will be locked in a locked filing cabinet. After a period of two to three years, electronic data will be deleted from all devices, and any physical data will be shredded.

**6. Alternative Procedures:**

N/A - The research participants are able to withdraw their consent to participate at any time with no penalty or prejudice.

**7. Participant's Assurance:**

This project has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations.

Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the IRB at 601-266-5997. Participation in this project is completely voluntary, and participants may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits.

Any questions about the research should be directed to the Principal Investigator using the contact information provided in Project Information Section above.

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

Consent is hereby given to participate in this research project. All procedures and/or investigations to be followed and their purpose, including any experimental procedures, were explained to me. Information was given about all benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that might be expected.

The opportunity to ask questions regarding the research and procedures was given. Participation in the project is completely voluntary, and participants may withdraw at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits. Unless described above and agreed to by the participant, all personal information is strictly confidential, and no names will be disclosed. Any new information that develops during the project will be provided if that information may affect the willingness to continue participation in the project.

Questions concerning the research, at any time during or after the project, should be directed to the Principal Investigator with the contact information provided above. This project and this consent form have been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5125, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, 601-266-5997.

**Include the following information only if applicable. Otherwise delete this entire paragraph before submitting for IRB approval:** The University of Southern Mississippi has no mechanism to provide compensation for participants who may incur injuries as a result of participation in research projects. However, efforts will be made to make available the facilities and professional skills at the University. Participants may incur charges as a result of treatment related to research injuries. Information regarding treatment or the absence of treatment has been given above.

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

By clicking the box below, consent is hereby given to participate in this research project. All procedures and/or investigations to be followed and their purposes, including any experimental procedures, were explained to me. Information was given about all benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that might be expected.

☐ Check this box if you consent to this study, and then click "Continue." (Clicking "Continue" will not allow you to advance to the study, unless you have checked the box indicating your consent.)

If you do not wish to consent to this study, please close your browser window at this time.

## APPENDIX C – Superintendent Permission Request

Dear Superintendent:

I am a doctoral candidate enrolled in the School of Education and Psychology at The University of Southern Mississippi. I am conducting a research study as part of the requirements of my Ph.D. degree in Education Administration. I am currently working on my dissertation and would appreciate the participation of principals from your school district in my study. I am writing to ask for written permission to contact and survey principals in your district. My research is being supervised by my committee chair, Kyna Shelley, Ph.D.

The title of my study is ***The Principal and Teacher Evaluation: A Study of Influencing Pressures***. The target population for this study is principals that complete summative teacher evaluations in Mississippi. Participation by principals in this project is purely voluntary. Principals participating in this study will be asked to complete an online survey instrument. This survey instrument contains items that will obtain demographic information from each participant as well as data regarding the amount of influencing pressure experienced when completing summative teacher evaluations. Completing the survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes.

Please **reply to this email to indicate you are granting permission** to contact and survey principals in your district or **provide a letter on school district letterhead**. An email reply may be sent to [andy.brock@usm.edu](mailto:andy.brock@usm.edu), **OR** a letter may be mailed to the address below. I have attached a sample return letter for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Andy W. Brock  
P.O. Box 444  
Tylertown, MS 39667  
[andy.brock@usm.edu](mailto:andy.brock@usm.edu)

## APPENDIX D – Superintendent Sample Return Letter

[School Letterhead]

[Date]

Andy Brock  
PO Box 444  
Tylertown, MS 39667

Dear Mr. Brock,

I understand that you are a doctoral student at The University of Southern Mississippi in the School of Educational Research and Administration. I also understand that you are conducting a study entitled The Principal and Teacher Evaluation: A Study of Influencing Pressures.

I understand the purpose of this study is to examine which influencing pressures principals most identify with when performing summative teacher evaluations and determine if there is a relationship between these pressures and evaluation scores teachers receive. I understand how this study may benefit education. I also understand that the risks of participating in this study are minimal. I, therefore, support this project and hereby provide permission for our district to participate in this study. I understand that the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee of The University of Southern Mississippi, which ensures that projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations, has approved this project.

Sincerely,

<Signature>

[Typed Name]

## APPENDIX E – MDE Interview Permission Request Email

Hello, my name is Andy Brock, and I am a current doctoral student at The University of Southern Mississippi. As partial fulfillment of my degree, I am conducting a quantitative research study with qualitative aspects (as principal investigator) that attempts to determine if influencing pressures principals experience affect summative teacher evaluation scores and how they are related to accountability ratings.

The qualitative aspect of the study will use an interview research method and is seeking participation from employees of the Mississippi State Department of Education that deals with teacher evaluation. The two individuals I would like to interview include the Director of Educator Talent Acquisition & Effectiveness and the Assistant Director of Educator Effectiveness. Interviews will last 90 minutes and can be scheduled at a time that is convenient for the participant. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Furthermore, your participation would be greatly appreciated and will provide a useful perception of teacher evaluation. Please respond to this email to indicate your willingness to participate in the interview. Furthermore, by indicating your willingness to participate, you are also giving me permission to conduct the interview and use your responses in my study.

Sincerely,  
Andy W. Brock  
P.O. Box 444  
Tylertown, MS 39667  
andy.brock@usm.edu

## APPENDIX F – Survey Instrument

### Principal Pressures Survey - Mississippi

Start of Block: Default Question Block

#### Q1 When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of...

	This topic does NOT influence me in regard to teacher evaluation (1)	This topic MAY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (2)	This topic will PROBABLY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (3)	This topic will DEFINITELY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (4)	This topic influences the MAJORITY of my teacher evaluations (5)
Public opinion. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Superintendent, School Board, and/or other supervisory figures. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of support given to my decisions from my Superintendent or Supervisor. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The lack of support given to my decisions from my Superintendent/Supervisor. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finding qualified personnel in a low-socioeconomic area. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q2 When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of...

	This topic does NOT influence me in regard to teacher evaluation (1)	This topic MAY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (2)	This topic will PROBABLY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (3)	This topic will DEFINITELY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (4)	This topic influences the MAJORITY of my teacher evaluations (5)
Retaining qualified personnel in a low- socioeconomic area. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parental input (either positive or negative). (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time constraints for completing teacher evaluations. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The race or ethnicity of the teacher being evaluated. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The public image or marketability of the school. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q3 When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of...

	This topic does NOT influence me in regard to teacher evaluation (1)	This topic MAY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (2)	This topic will PROBABLY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (3)	This topic will DEFINITELY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (4)	This topic influences the MAJORITY of my teacher evaluations (5)
My lack of expertise in analyzing student data. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My lack of expertise in giving actionable feedback to teachers. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My lack of expertise in helping teachers set realistic goals. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My limited knowledge of the teacher's content area. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My lack of confidence in identifying the effectiveness of a teacher. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4 When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of...

	This topic does NOT influence me in regard to teacher evaluation (1)	This topic MAY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (2)	This topic will PROBABLY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (3)	This topic will DEFINITELY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (4)	This topic influences the MAJORITY of my teacher evaluations (5)
The implementation of state/federal mandated changes and educational programs. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a school in a state/federal school improvement plan/program. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The need to have an impact on student achievement and growth. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Completing the process in order to non-renew a teacher. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My own burnout from limited control. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q5 When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of...

	This topic does NOT influence me in regard to teacher evaluation (1)	This topic MAY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (2)	This topic will PROBABLY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (3)	This topic will DEFINITELY influence SOME of my teacher evaluations (4)	This topic influences the MAJORITY of my teacher evaluations (5)
My burnout from the lack of personal and professional time. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My cumulative buildup of stress. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A high principal turnover rate at my school. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q6 Choose the type of school at which you are currently employed:

☐ Primary School (1)

☐ Elementary School (2)

☐ Middle School (3)

☐ High School (4)

☐ K-12 School (5)

☐ Other (please specify) (6)

---

-----

Q7 How long have you been employed at your current position?

☐ < 1 year (1)

☐ 1 - 5 years (2)

☐ 6 - 10 years (3)

☐ 11 - 15 years (4)

☐ 16 - 20 years (5)

☐ 20+ years (6)

---

Q8 How many total years have you served as a principal?

☐ < 1 year (1)

☐ 1 - 5 years (2)

☐ 6 - 10 years (3)

☐ 11 - 15 years (4)

☐ 16 - 20 years (5)

☐ 20+ years (6)

---

Q9 What is your highest level of education completed?

☐ Master's Degree (1)

☐ Specialist's Degree (2)

☐ Doctoral Degree (3)

---

Q10 Choose the grade level(s) of the students at your school. (You may choose more than one.)

☐ Kindergarten (1)

☐ 1st (2)

☐ 2nd (3)

☐ 3rd (4)

☐ 4th (5)

☐ 5th (6)

☐ 6th (7)



- ☐ 7th (8)
  - ☐ 8th (9)
  - ☐ 9th (10)
  - ☐ 10th (11)
  - ☐ 11th (12)
  - ☐ 12th (13)
  - ☐ GED (14)
  - ☐ Elementary Self-contained Special Education (15)
  - ☐ Secondary Self-contained Special Education (16)
-

Q11 What is the 2019 accountability level of the **district** in which you are employed?

☐ A (1)

☐ B (2)

☐ C (3)

☐ D (4)

☐ F (5)

---

Q12 What is the 2019 accountability level of the **school** in which you are employed?

☐ A (1)

☐ B (2)

☐ C (3)

☐ D (4)

☐ F (5)

---

Q13 How many years have you completed *written* evaluations of teachers?

☐ < 1 year (1)

☐ 1 - 5 years (2)

☐ 6 - 10 years (3)

☐ 11 - 15 years (4)

☐ 16 - 20 years (5)

☐ 20+ years (6)

---

Q14 How many teachers, on average, do you evaluate annually?

- ☐ 1 - 25 (1)
  - ☐ 26 - 50 (2)
  - ☐ 51 - 75 (3)
  - ☐ 76 - 100 (4)
  - ☐ 101 - 125 (5)
  - ☐ 125 - 150 (6)
  - ☐ 150+ (7)
- 

Q15 What is your gender?

- ☐ Male (1)
  - ☐ Female (2)
-

Q16 What is your age (choose one of the given age ranges)?

☐ 20 - 30 (1)

☐ 31 - 40 (2)

☐ 41 - 50 (3)

☐ 51 - 60 (4)

☐ 61 - 70 (5)

☐ 71+ (6)

---

Q17 Is your school currently involved in any form of state or federal improvement program?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

---

Q18 What is the school district in which you are employed?

(This information is being requested ONLY for data management purposes and NOT for identification, publication, or release.)

▼ XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Q19 What is the school in which you are employed?

(This information is being requested ONLY for data management purposes and NOT for identification, publication, or release.)

▼ XXX

End of Block: Default Question Block

---

# APPENDIX G – Rotated Component Matrix

Table A1.

*Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>*

Pressure Statement	Component			
	1	2	3	4
13. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - My lack of expertise in helping teachers set realistic goals.	.921			
12. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - My lack of expertise in giving actionable feedback to teachers.	.860			
15. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - My lack of confidence in identifying the effectiveness of a teacher	.850			
14. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - My limited knowledge of the teacher's content area.	.749			
11. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - My lack of expertise in analyzing student data.	.717			
8. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - Time constraints for completing teacher evaluations.	.421			
4. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - The lack of support given to my decisions from my Superintendent/Supervisor.		.830		

Table A1 Continued

3. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - The amount of support given to my decisions from my Superintendent or Supervisor.	.737	
2. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - Superintendent, School Board, and/or other supervisory figures.	.684	
7. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - Parental input (either positive or negative).	.632	
10. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - The public image or marketability of the school.	.613	
5. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - Finding qualified personnel in a low-socioeconomic area.	.603	.582
1. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - Public opinion.	.432	
22. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - My cumulative buildup of stress.	.400	.787
20. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - My own burnout from limited control.		.756
21. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - My burnout from the lack of personal and professional time.	.424	.753



Table A1 Continued

23. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - A high principal turnover rate at my school.		.708	
6. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - Retaining qualified personnel in a low-socioeconomic area.	.589	.592	
9. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - The race or ethnicity of the teacher being evaluated.			
16. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - The implementation of state/federal mandated changes and educational programs.		.407	.668
17. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - Having a school in a state/federal school improvement plan/program.			.661
18. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - The need to have an impact on student achievement and growth.			.636
19. When evaluating teachers, I feel pressure because of... - Completing the process in order to non-renew a teacher.	.402		.550

---

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.<sup>a</sup>

a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations. a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

Component: 1 = principal ability; 2 = principal support; 3 = principal personal stress; 4 = school improvement

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