

TEACHER STRESS AND BURNOUT AND  
PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES:  
A RELATIONAL STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

This study focused on the relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of elementary school principals as perceived by elementary school teachers. The topic of stress is one that has been ongoing for hundreds of years but the teaching profession has seen an increase in this condition over the past four decades. Teacher stress and burnout is a condition that can impact teacher health, job retention, teaching performance, and beyond. Therefore, this topic is important as the findings could serve to help minimize this condition. It could also inform educational leaders about leadership styles and their relation to stress and burnout. Sosik and Godshalk's (2000) model of leadership style, mentoring functions received, and job related stress, was the theoretical framework that guided this study.

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to analyze statistical data via the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educator's Survey (MBI) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire - Form 5X – Rater Form (MLQ). The results of this study revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between the leadership styles of elementary school principals and teacher stress and burnout, which aligned with the majority of the literature on this topic.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my awesome and hardworking mother, Sis. Dorothy Jean Gross. Thank you for being the kind of mother that taught me the importance of working hard, never giving up, staying focused, and helping others. You built a straight, high, and narrow bridge and then, you taught me, through your example, how to cross it.

I also dedicate this work to my wise and loving husband, Dr. Michael Thompson, Sr. Michael, your support, wisdom, and encouragement was a vital part of my success; to my wonderful, patient, and encouraging children, Alana and Michael, Jr.; to my special father, Mr. Melvin Gross, to my beautiful and dear aunt, Mrs. Virginia Williams, to my strong and astute sister/friend, Min. LaTresa Cardwell-Kelly, and to my loving and helpful family members. Your patience, prayers, love, faithfulness, advice, and encouragement were essential in helping me to successfully accomplish this massive goal. I love, thank, and appreciate all of you.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

$r$	Pearson product-moment correlation
$a$	Cronbach's index of internal consistency
$p$	Probability associated with the occurrence under the null hypothesis of a value as extreme as or more extreme than the observed value
$<$	Less than
$>$	Greater than
$=$	Equal to

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The topic of stress is one that has been ongoing for hundreds of years but the teaching profession has seen a great increase in this ailment over the past four decades (Cosgrove, 2000). Stress is a condition that can present itself in either a positive (eustress) or negative (distress) form. However, it is the negative form of stress that poses the greatest problem for teachers. When negative stress is not properly addressed, handled, and released, it can lead to depression, sickness, exhaustion, and ultimately, to burnout. When teachers enter into the state of stress known as burnout, the ramifications can be numerous, observable, and detrimental both directly and indirectly. Therefore, it is vital to have an understanding of the factors that often serve as catalysts for teacher stress and burnout and manner in which principals' leadership styles correlate with this tempestuous condition.

The condition of teacher stress and burnout (TSB) has been addressed throughout numerous discussions, debates, research articles, studies, and books. A number of those oral and written ideas have focused on the probable relationship between teacher stress and burnout and leadership. However, the focus on teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles from the elementary school perspective has been limited. As a result, teacher stress and burnout and the leadership style of leaders in elementary schools in two southeastern school districts, is the foundational focus of this study.

Kyriacou (2001) described teacher stress as unpleasant and negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression, that stem from some aspect of their work as a

teacher. Guglielmi and Tartrow (1998) defined the term burnout as a state of emotional, physical and attitudinal exhaustion which may develop in teachers who unsuccessfully deal with stress over a long period of time. Together these make the condition teacher stress and burnout (TSB)

According to Powell and Cheshire (2004), the National Union of Teachers reported that “stress is one of the biggest problems facing teachers today, and that it is the main health and safety concern in four out of five schools. Compared to other occupational groups (e.g. doctors, dentists, nurses), teachers experience lower job satisfaction and poorer mental health” (Powell & Cheshire, 2004, p. 56). O’Donnel, Lambert, and McCarthy (2008) highlighted teaching as a high stress job that has the potential to be very frustrating and emotionally draining. Additionally, as noted by Farber (1984), the high risk of stress and burnout that accompanies teaching can compromise and damage high quality educational practices that should be consistently applied in the schools of today if learning is to effectively occur. Still, Klassen, Usher, and Bong (2010) shared a description by Greenglass and Burke (1997), which described teaching as a stressful occupation that includes many demands from leaders, colleagues, parents and the community. Teaching is also described as an occupation that is “plagued by work overload, policy shifts, and lack of successes” (Klassen, Usher, & Bong (2010, p. 466). Similarly, Robins (2010) explained that teachers often leave the teaching profession prematurely due to extreme anxiety, depression, and pressures caused by ever changing educational standards, evolving technological advances, and various external issues.

Cosgrove (2000) examined how stress plays a vital role in teacher breakdowns and the reasons that they are so common today’s schools. He also looked at the consequences of this condition and the ramifications for schools when they fail to get this issue under control. Additionally, Cosgrove (2000) identified what teachers, schools, and school leaders can do to

turn this problem around through self-help strategies and practical support. Cockburn (1996) shared the importance of understanding and tackling stress, the challenges that accompany teaching, and invited educators to explore some practical tools that could be used in order to minimize stress factors that cause so many teachers to explode and ultimately, leave the profession of teaching. Lambert and McCarthy (2006) viewed the stresses that have become a normal aspect of the teaching profession for teachers who educate in this age of accountability standards. Lambert and McCarthy (2006) also highlighted how such stress impacts educators along with other factors such as working with students with disabilities, multicultural differences, classroom instructional factors, and student-teacher relationships.

Swick and Hanley (1980) addressed the topic of stress and teaching by identifying internal and external stressors that influence teachers both positively and negatively. Also, they shared the importance of understanding stress and the incorporation of stress management techniques like organization of the classroom environment, using teaching teams, establishing priorities, being involved in self-renewal activities, and maintaining good health through proper eating and exercise activities. Hayes (2006) wrote about stress relief for teachers by focusing on the nature of stress in classrooms and identified practical ways in which teachers could help themselves to better cope with this issue, thereby, also giving their students what they needed in order to learn effectively. Leithwood and Beatty (2008), explained how principal leaders influence the performance and emotional well-being of teachers in the areas of stress, anxiety, and burnout, job satisfaction and morale, a sense of individual and collective self-efficacy, and through motivation and a willingness to improve their practices. Therefore, it is essential that leaders have a better understanding of productive leadership styles as doing so could be instrumental in meeting the needs of teachers which could serve to minimize their stress and burnout levels.

## Purpose and Focus of Study

The purpose of this study is to determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of principals in elementary schools as perceived by elementary school teachers. Specifically, this study seeks to address teacher stress and burnout in kindergarten, first, and second grade elementary school teachers and its relation to transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles as perceived by those elementary teachers. This study is needful because teacher stress and burnout is a condition that negatively impacts teacher retention, job satisfaction, teacher health, teaching ability, educational practices, educational climates, and ultimately, student learning.

## Rationale and Justification for Study

In current research, a variety of studies have been conducted that address stress, burnout, and leadership. However, few of them have examined these variables from the elementary school perspective. Hence, a gap exists in the present research and it is for this reason that this study is justified and has been chosen for extended research and examination. The information in this study adds to the body of knowledge on teacher stress and burnout and transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles and the correlation between these variables. There is a possibility that the informational knowledge identified, organized, and shared in this study could be used to modify teacher stress and burnout factors in a positive fashion through leadership, thereby, extending the life and future of teachers/educators, students, and educational establishments for years to come.

This topic was chosen because teacher stress and burnout is a problem that can have far-reaching consequences. First, it often motivates teachers to exit the teaching profession within their first five years of teaching. Richard Ingersoll (2001) found that between 40 and 50% of all

beginning teachers left the teaching profession altogether after just five years of teaching. Also nationally, approximately eight percent of educators chose to stop teaching in the late 80s and the educational profession has seen a steady increase in that number each year (Feng, 2005).

Secondly, teacher stress and burnout often affects the health of teachers, thereby, leading to greater sicknesses and missed work time. Thirdly, teacher stress and burnout can lead to poor teaching performance, which in turn, often results in poor student learning (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008). When students do not learn, they get left behind and when that happens, they can either become lost children or difficult children in the classroom, in society, and beyond. Such students usually do not transition through the educational process successfully and as a result, they normally leave school without a diploma. Some of them end up becoming poor citizens and negative ripples emerge that can impact not only them, but their families, communities, societies, and nations. Therefore, since the negative tentacles of teacher stress and burnout often extend beyond teachers and their own personal health, this study is purposeful and necessary. This is especially the case at the early elementary school level (K-2<sup>nd</sup>) as this is where young students get their educational foundation. A foundation that could serve to enhance their academic achievement and ultimately, their lifelong success.

Teacher stress and burnout stem from many contemporary contextual issues such as teacher retention and attrition, teacher job satisfaction/dissatisfaction, work stress, job stress and health, teacher health (physical/mental), organizational climate, teacher morale, teacher efficacy, school safety, classroom management, student assessments, teacher evaluations, school change, organizational management, academic achievement, student retention/dropout prevention, and teacher absenteeism. Additional contemporary issues include instructional leadership, organizational health and climate, collegial leadership, and school improvement along with



issues surrounding how to best lead people and manage things within the educational walls. More narrowly, this study was closely developed via the contemporary issues of teacher attrition and teacher retention, which is often impacted by work/occupational stress, burnout, and health, effective leadership, and school climate, which ultimately effects student retention and dropout prevention rates.

Teacher attrition (teacher turnover) is a major contemporary concern as it can aid in dismantling the educational structure in a manner that can be difficult to repair. Being able to retain teachers, especially good and highly qualified teachers, is crucial as doing so is a major component of successful teaching and successful learning. The U.S. Department of Education (1998) highlighted teacher attrition as a leading concern in the educational arena for general education teachers and even more so, for special education teachers where according to their research studies, two teachers in special education leave the field of education for every one teacher that graduates. As indicated in the literature, high teacher turnover rates have perplexed educational stakeholders for several decades. Nationally, approximately 50% of novice teachers leave the teaching profession after five years of teaching or less and teacher stress and burnout has been pinpointed as a primary reason of high turnover rates (Ingersoll, 2001). However, “principals who are able to identify stressed-out educators might be better able to intervene before teachers decide to leave the field” (McCarthy, Lambert, & Crowe, 2010, p. 307). According to Black (2003), while many novice educators are suffering from extreme levels of stress and leaving the profession, many veteran teachers are not far behind as many of them experience feelings of inadequacy, failure, and job dissatisfaction. Ingersoll (2001) also explained how there is a shortage of qualified teachers because of the large number of teachers leaving the educational profession prior to retirement. Many of those teachers are leaving as a

result of having minimal administrative support, limited decision making abilities, and because of classroom management and discipline problems; issues that impact teacher stress and burnout levels as well (Ingersoll, 2001).

In the Washington Post, Rene Sanchez (1989) surveyed 47 schools and more than 1,200 teachers in those schools. In 45 of the 47 sampled schools, D.C. public school teachers explained that they experienced stress so often that they occasionally took leave in order to recover (Sanchez, 1989). Additionally, Guglielmi and Tatrow (1998) indicated that teacher stress and burnout will often “affect the learning environment and interfere with the achievement of educational goals insofar as they lead to teachers’ detachment, alienation, cynicism, apathy, and absenteeism and ultimately the decision to leave the field” (p. 61).

According to the book Breakdown: The facts about stress in teaching by John Cosgrove (2000), approximately 5,500 teachers chose to retire early due to health issues in 1993 with “teachers’ unions blaming illness, breakdown, and demoralization brought on by stress” (p. 2) as primary reasons for the early retirements. Government figures indicated that 6075 teachers did the same thing in 1995 and 3000 of those teachers were termed extremely “overstressed.” Also, today’s schools exist in an age of accountability and high demands, as teachers must address local, state, and federal mandates, ensure Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), and address the typical and not-so-typical every day issues that accompany education. These issues center on discipline, classroom management, parental involvement, community concerns, fiscal accountability, instructional requirements, time constraints, and safety matters. As a result, these demands, mandates, and concerns, combined with a number of additional factors like class size, school size, school location, and student socioeconomic levels, serve to drain teachers. Unfortunately, teachers are drained even more when they are expected to bare these burdens with

a smile and perform adequately in their classrooms with minimal resources, help, and support on all educational levels and increasingly, on the elementary school level.

Some teachers chose to teach on the elementary school level in order to positively influence children during their most formative years. Additionally, a number of teachers also chose elementary education in hopes of encountering fewer occupational distresses. However, elementary school teachers, like middle and high school teachers, have experienced greater stress and burnout levels over the years as the educational demands, along with other external and internal issues that accompany teaching, have continued to increase. Young students receive their educational, social, psychological, and physiological foundation at the elementary school level and laying a strong foundation is crucial to their present and future success. Teachers who are mentally, physically, and psychologically stable, have the ability to do so more effectively. However, teachers who are overly stressed often have difficulty presenting quality instruction which can impact student learning in a negative fashion. Such chronic stress can motivate teachers to leave the teaching profession prematurely and for good (Dworkin, 1986). When teachers leave the profession prematurely, they may be replaced by under qualified teachers. As a result, students under the tutelage of such teachers rarely get the educational stability necessary for academic success (McCarthy, 2010). When students are academically unsuccessful, they do what many adults often do when they achieve little to no success on their jobs; they give up and they quit. This leads to higher dropout rates and causes negative consequences.

According to the Center of Public Education (2007):

High dropout rates beget social and economic woes for communities as well. Dropouts are far more likely to become unemployed, receive public assistance, commit crimes, and become incarcerated. At the same time, they are less likely to receive job-based health insurance and pension plans, to stay healthy and live full lives, and to vote and make other kinds of civic contributions. In fact, the average dropout pays about \$60,000 less in taxes over his or her lifetime (Rouse 2005, Waldfogel et al. 2005, Muennig, 2005, Moretti

2005, and Junn 2005). Raising graduation rates would save taxpayers money, greatly expand tax revenues, boost employment, reduce crime, and improve citizenship. (p. 1)

This topic is significant to the field of education as the findings could serve to help minimize teacher stress and burnout events and assist educational leaders in developing a better understanding of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles and how these leadership styles correlate with teacher stress and burnout. As highlighted throughout this study, stressed out teachers can end up being burned out teachers and when teachers burn out, they often leave the teaching profession prematurely. This can have a negative impact on the educational foundation that is vital to academic learning, instructional teaching, and the field and future of education. Therefore, the information in this study could be used to heighten teacher retention and job satisfaction, which could then serve to improve student learning and achievement. It could also enhance training and professional development for school leaders while encouraging greater collegiality, balance, and consideration throughout the leadership process. Doing so could ultimately serve to benefit society, the nation, and the world.

Hence, the rationale for choosing this topic centers around the belief that teacher stress and burnout is a serious issue for the world of education, its stakeholders, and for the world as a whole and as indicated by the literature, this is also an issue that can have widespread implications when it is not properly addressed and remedied. Additionally, this study includes the belief that leaders play an influential role in stress and burnout events that teachers experience and can thereby turn the negative cycle that accompanies this condition around, by considering various avenues of change; even if one of those avenues centers on the style(s) of leadership that a leader chooses to apply.

Ultimately, while numerous studies have focused on stress, burnout, and leadership connectedness, the literature that addresses the relationship between teacher stress and burnout

and applied leadership styles at the elementary school level, are limited. This study fills that gap. The elementary school level was chosen because of its foundational construct and impact on early elementary education as this is where formal teaching and learning actually begin. The concepts that students learn at the elementary school level will often serve to enhance or jeopardize their future academic achievement and educational success, and eventually, their lifelong success as well. Ultimately, educational achievement is a fundamental aspect of life, liberty, and happiness both nationally and internationally. However, educational achievement is difficult to obtain without a solid educational foundation and without those who are in the trenches; the elementary school teachers. Elementary school teachers, particularly those in the early elementary grades, play a pivotal role in making that happen. It is for this reason that an additional study needs to be conducted on teacher stress and burnout. Consequently, my hope is that this study will help provide additional data that will allow educational leaders to consider teacher stress and burnout, along with probable leadership style correlations, and the manner in which statistically relational data could be used to improve this negative condition, thereby, impacting teacher retention, job satisfaction, and student learning and graduation rates, for the better. Furthermore, the data generated from this study could also be used to advance principal effectiveness training, enhance leadership success, and encourage collegial leadership through the knowledge, flexibility, and balanced implementation of effective leadership styles. Thus, helping to minimize the stress level of school principals as well.

## Theoretical Framework of Study

Sosik and Godshalk's (2000) model of leadership style, mentoring functions received, and job related stress, is the theoretical framework guiding this study. This particular model branches from Manning, Jackson, and Fusilier's (1996) simplified model of work stress (Figure 1), which is rooted in Matteson and Ivancevich's (1982) theory of job stress and health.

Matteson and Ivancevich (1982) studied the manner in which management, along with personal and external sources, can negatively impact the health of workers. Manning, Jackson, and Fusilier (1996) carried this theory further by explaining how there are certain personal factors (i.e., years of experience) and external factors (i.e., leadership styles, theories, behaviors, and methods) that can stimulate stressful experiences for workers and they examined how supportive leadership (i.e., collegial/transformational/supportive leadership) can serve to minimize those stressful experiences for individuals working for such leaders, thereby impacting the cost of health care services in a positive manner.

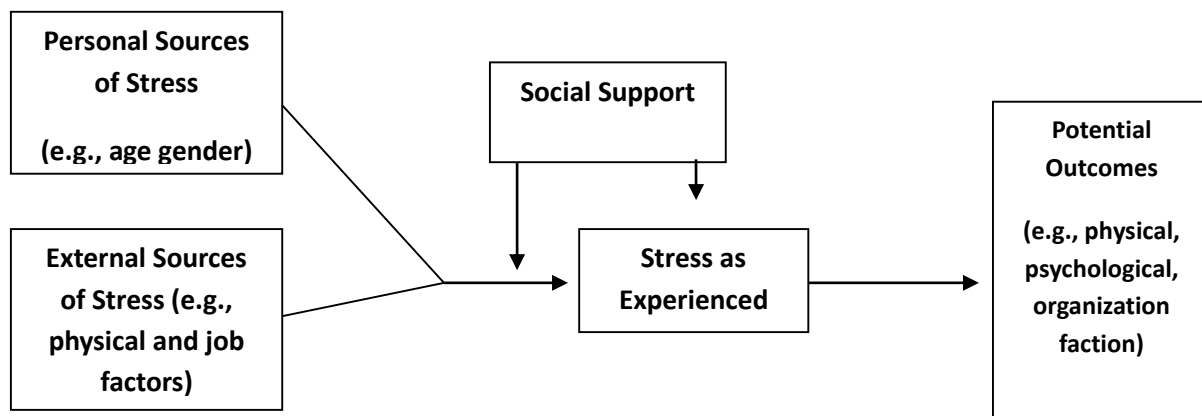


Figure 1. A Simplified Model of Work Stress

According to Sosik and Godshalk's (2000) theoretical model, leadership styles that are used by mentors and leaders, along with certain mentoring functions or tasks, can cause stress to be experienced by those under their leadership, as noted in Figure 2.

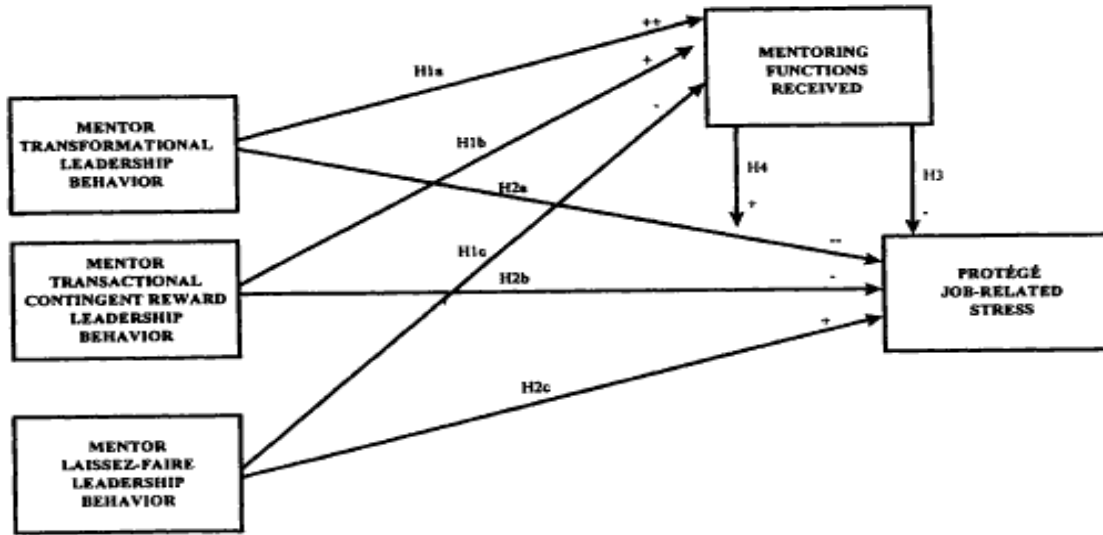


Figure 2. A Model of Leadership Style, Mentoring Functions Received, and Job Related Stress

Within this particular model, Sosik and Godshalk (2000), highlighted transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership as leadership styles that are connected to mentoring functions and impact job stress.

The framework indicated in Figure 3 is based upon Sosik and Godshalk's (2000) model of leadership style, mentoring functions received, and job related stress. Figure 3 predicts the probable relationships between leadership styles and teacher stress. Several relationships are illustrated in Figure 3. First, leadership styles are viewed as being transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. Second, the style of leadership used by school leaders

is connected to teacher stress outcomes. Third, teacher stress outcomes can lead to job satisfaction or burnout and therefore, job dissatisfaction.

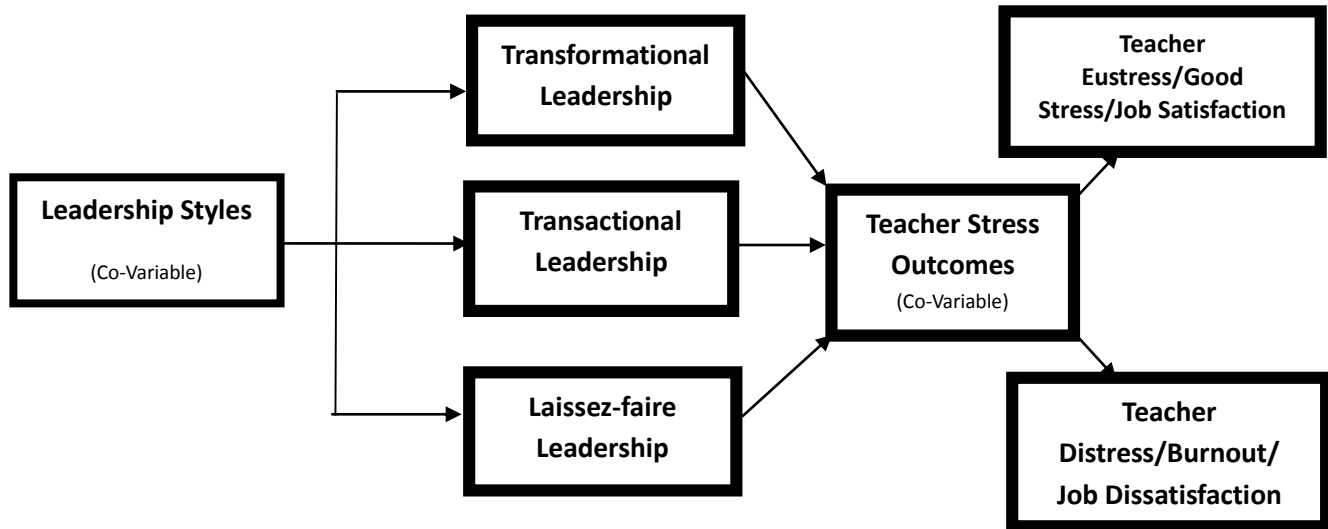


Figure 3. Model of leadership styles and teacher stress

As indicated by Sosik and Godshalk (2000):

The transactional-transformational leadership paradigm is grounded upon seminal work by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). Bass and Avolio’s (1994) Full Range of Leadership (FRL) model represents a refinement of Bass (1985) and is the foundation of extensive training of individuals from industry, education, military, religious, and non-profit sectors. The FRL model proposes that every leader may display some amount of laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational leadership styles. (p. 369)

Additionally, transactional leadership and transformational leadership methods are identified as the most effective forms of leadership (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Transactional leadership involves an exchange between leaders and followers known as contingent reward leadership. Contingent reward leadership is considered as being the most effective aspect of transactional leadership and includes the process of providing feedback, setting goals and outcomes, and accomplishing those goals and outcomes via the incorporation of recognition and rewards trade-offs (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Transformational leadership, which is deemed by



many as being even more effective than transactional leadership, is a leadership styles that includes the ability of leaders to form mutually beneficial relationships that will enable leaders to become moral agents and stimulates followers to become leaders (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000).

### Research Questions Guiding Study

The research questions below guided the collection and analysis of data in this study (a being the main research question and b-d being subsequent questions):

- a) Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of principals in elementary schools?
- b) Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transformational leadership style of principals in elementary schools?
- c) Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transactional leadership style of principals in elementary schools?
- d) Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the laissez-faire leadership style of principals in elementary schools?

### Overview of Research Design and Methods

Muijs (2008) describes quantitative research as the process of “collecting numerical data” and examining mathematical methods in order to explain certain events and occurrences that occur in research. To examine and analyze the research data for this study, a quantitative research design was used to calculate/quantify the data and to generalize the results. The fundamental variables of this study included teacher stress and burnout and principals’ leadership styles and the unit of analysis for this study were teachers from elementary schools in the Escambia County School District in Escambia, Florida and the Mobile County Public School

System in Mobile, Alabama. The research study sample was comprised of kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers in elementary schools throughout these two school districts. Random selection was used in order to choose which kindergarten through second grade teachers would be surveyed in this study via survey research data collection methods.

Data was analyzed using a correlation analysis research design; the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. This analysis design aligned with the research questions of this study as this particular design is used to determine the probability of a positive or negative relationship between two variables and as a result, it was used to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles. The surveys known as the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educator's Survey (MBI-ES) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire - Form 5X – Rater Form (MLQ) were used to gather and collect the data for this research design. For comparative information and extended outcome considerations, characteristic/demographic information was requested which included the teacher's gender, ethnicity, years of experience, and educational level. The principal's ethnicity and gender, along with the socioeconomic level of the school (Title I or Non-Title I) was also requested. Additionally, teachers were asked about the types of classes serviced by them (general education, special education, or inclusion; self-contained vs. departmentalized). Other features of the analysis process included the use of the statistical data analysis software; Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program. This program was used with the statistical significance of .05 being considered and the descriptive demographic data being summarized.

## Definition of Key Study Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms and definitions were used:

*Elementary Education:* Elementary education refers to education for students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade.

*Laissez-faire Leadership* - Absent leadership that provides no guidance for followers and allows them to govern themselves and make their own decision (Bass, 1998; Yukl 1998).

*Leader:* The individual in the group given the task of directing and coordinating task-relevant group activities by getting those involved to question the content, purpose, and organizing framework of the educational programs in which they participate (Walker, 1990).

*Leadership:* The process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988).

*Leadership Style:* Behavior pattern exhibited by leaders in their attempt to influence the activities of others (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988).

*Organizational Climate:* Perceptions shared by employees concerning the types of behaviors and actions that are applauded, accepted, and supported by organizational practices, policies, and procedures (Schneider, 1990).

*Principal:* One who holds a post of presiding rank, esp. the head of an elementary school or high school (Webster's New College Dictionary, 2008).

*Teacher Stress & Burnout:* A condition caused by constant and unresolved stress that causes once motivated teachers to either leave the teaching profession or teach without motivation (Payton, 1986). The experience by a teacher of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher (Kyriacou, 2001).

*Transactional Leadership* - Leadership which focuses on follower needs through the process of exchange. Transactional leaders are empowered to evaluate, correct, and train followers when tasks are not effectively accomplished and apply rewards according to the accomplishment of expected outcomes. The three behavioral components that transformational leaders use to motivate followers center around, contingent rewards and punishments, passive management by exception, and active management by exception (Bass, 1998; Yukl, 1998).

*Transformational Leadership* - Leadership that has a positive effect on followers through trust, loyalty, admiration, and respect. It focuses on productive individual, group, and organizational change. Additionally, it highlights the big picture by motivating teams and individuals to be more effective and efficient by addressing goals, visions, and final outcomes through effective communication which centers on the importance of task outcomes, their higher level needs, and by inspiring them to focus less on personal interests and more on sacrificing for the betterment of an organization. The four components of transformational leadership are charisma, inspirational leadership, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1998; Yukl, 1998).

#### Limitations of the Study

Respondents from this study were limited to only kindergarten, first, and second grade elementary school teachers from two southeastern school districts; the Escambia County School District in Escambia, Florida, and the Mobile County Public School System in Mobile, Alabama. Participation in this study was requested which means that teachers had the opportunity to accept or decline the request which impacted study participation. Accurate and timely teacher responses could not be guaranteed in this study. Also, data were limited by the use of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire –Form 5X (Bass & Avolio, 1997) and the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educators Survey (Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach, & Jackson, 1996).

### Assumptions of the Study

One of the assumptions of this study was that teachers would honestly express their experience with stress and share the factors that have contributed to their personal stress and burnout condition as applicable. Another is that teachers would accurately and willingly share their perception of the leadership styles used by their school principal. A theoretical assumption was the belief that teachers would benefit from this study directly and that principals and students would benefit subsequently, through the findings of this study. Such assumptions will have to be investigated more closely and longitudinally in order to determine the true benefits of this study. Lastly, assumptions of this study were that teachers would want to participate in this study, teachers would read and answered survey questions to the best of their ability, and they would believe that their participation could play a part in helping teachers, principals, students, educational establishments, and beyond for years to come.

### Organization of the Study

This research proposal was divided into five chapters. Chapter one included the introduction of the study, the purpose and focus of the study, the rationale and justification for the study, the theoretical framework of this study, guiding research questions, overview of research design and methods, definitions of key terms used in the study, and the organizational outline of the study. Chapter two consisted of a review of the literature related to teacher stress, by reviewing research and information surrounding teacher stress and burnout, leadership and leadership theories, leadership styles, and findings that address probable links between teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles. The third chapter explained the methodology plan that was used to gather (Survey Research) and analyze (Pearson-Product Moment Correlation) the data related to the condition of teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles of school

principals, and the relationship between these variables. It also included the design of the study (Quantitative Research), the population sample that was surveyed (K-2<sup>nd</sup> Gr Teachers), and the descriptions of the test instruments that were used (MBI and MLQ). The fourth chapter highlighted the test method (Pearson  $r$ ), the findings, and the interpretation of the results of teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles. The fifth and final chapter summarized the study of teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles. A discussion of the implications of the study for educational/instructional leaders were included as well.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to determine whether a statistically significant relationship exist between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of principals in elementary schools as perceived by elementary school teachers. Specifically, this study seeks to describe the influence that transformational leadership styles, transactional leadership styles, and laissez-faire leadership styles have on teacher stress and burnout experiences on the early elementary school level (K-2<sup>nd</sup>). Also, varying aspects of this topic were addressed in this review of the literature.

The focus of this literature review is to provide relevant information of important studies, concepts, ideas, theories and findings that center around teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles and to examine the body of inquiry that is presently available on this topic from current bodies of research. It does so by identifying and describing the beliefs, theories, and concepts concerning teacher stress/burnout and leadership styles while also highlighting the definite and indefinite knowledge surrounding these variables. Also, it causes questions to arise concerning those things that have not been addressed and exposes holes that exist in the present research. In order to generate the information needed for this chapter, several databases were used. Also, several college libraries and community libraries were visited along with UA's library and UA's database system in order to retrieve books, peer reviewed journal articles, dissertations and dissertation abstracts. Additionally, newspaper articles and abstracts, and business periodicals, along with popular magazine editorials that focus on this topic were pulled and used in this process as well.

To complete the literature review, I began by creating an outline which focused on several key terms that centered on stress, burnout, teacher stress, teacher burnout, leadership, leadership theories, and leadership styles. When I began the process of searching out preliminary data sources, I used electronic web browsers such as Internet Explorer or Safari to search databases like ERIC, Google Scholar, and PsychINFO. I also searched UA's database through the UA library by entering the terms from my outline which focused on stress, burnout, teacher stress, teacher burnout, leadership, leadership theories, and leadership styles. I also searched these terms with the incorporation of elementary education, elementary teachers, and elementary school leaders/principals. I chose these terms because I needed to find as much revelatory information as I could on these focal terms in order to successfully learn what had already been researched, studied, evaluated, and addressed on these topics. Additionally, I entered the terms stress and leadership, organizational stress and leadership behaviors, climate stress and leadership methods, models of leadership and worker stress, job stress and leadership influences, and teacher stress and leadership styles. These combined terms were organized and searched together as a means of finding out if any cause and effect/relational studies had already been done on this topic by looking at whether or not a significant correlation existed between the leadership style(s) used by elementary school principals and teacher stress and burnout experiences. Doing my search in this fashion yielded many books, book reviews, directories, dissertations, journal articles, reports, and papers along with magazines and newspapers that addressed my topic.

The literature review is organized in three main sections. Section one addresses teacher stress and teacher burnout. The sub-sections of section one highlight the definitions, signs, and symptoms of stress and burnout and the causes, factors, and catalysis of stress and burnout, and



the results, ramifications, and ripple effects of stress and burnout. The second section of this review addresses leadership and leadership styles with the sub-sections being leadership, leadership theories, and leadership styles. It then becomes more specific as it reviews transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire leadership. Section three focuses on teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles, collaboratively. It also views successful and destructive leadership, leadership and follow-ship, and possible gaps in the literature. The literature review is organized in this fashion in order to allow for greater stability and structuring of this vital information.

Reviewing the literature revealed that a great deal of research has taken place on the subject of stress and burnout, teacher stress and teacher burnout, and the role of leadership in relation to these variables. Additionally, the research revealed limited studies as it relates to this topic on the elementary school level. Therefore, it is a topic that warrants closer scrutiny as a means of hopefully, identifying certain leadership styles that can serve to minimize the negative effects that accompany this condition.

According to the literature, Swick (1989) identified stress as an affective reaction that a person experiences in response to specific events or particular situations. Additionally, Montgomery and Rupp (2005) conducted a study on teacher stress that focused on the relationship between teacher stress and coping mechanisms, including environmental structure, intra-individual variables, and personality mediator variables. The study by Klassen, Usher, and Bong (2010) explained how teacher stress is the “experience of negative emotions resulting from a teacher’s work” (pp. 466-467) which results in negative teacher-pupil relations and low teacher effectiveness. O’Donnel, Lambert, and McCarthy (2008) performed a study that examined stress among elementary teachers and its probable relationship to the socioeconomic status of its

students and the time of year (i.e., testing season). Clunies-Ross, Little, and Kienhuis (2008) investigated teacher stress and the manner in which proactive or reactive classroom management strategies are used and how they can impact that stress.

A study by Ahghar (2008) examined the occupational stress of teachers and the impact that organizational climate has on teacher stress levels among secondary school teachers in Tehran, Iran. In this article, the author explained how leadership shapes the climate of the school which thereby, impacts teacher stress levels, which often manifests in mental, physical, or behavioral forms. The four organizational climates highlighted by Ahghar (2008) include the open organizational climate, the engaged organizational climate, the disengaged organizational climate, and the closed organizational climate. The open organizational climate is more democratic in nature as the leader allows for teacher suggestions, advice, and constructive criticism. The leader of such a climate is also supportive of teacher ideas without being overly pushy or micromanaging. Engaged organizational climate leaders are quite the opposite as such leaders do not value teacher ideas, opinions, or suggestions. Teachers that operate in this type of climate often feel pressured and unsupported by school leadership. As a result, teachers in this type of climate often have better collegiality with one another as they pull together, socialize, and support one another through the teaching process. Leaders that are over disengaged organizational climates, listen to the advice, suggestions, and constructive criticisms of the teachers. He also praises their efforts and limits the amount of pressure that they have to deal with on a daily basis. However, the teachers in such climates are often not respectful, helpful, or supportive of one another and their interaction is often, ineffective. The author used a multi-stage random selection method to sample 220 of these teachers. Two survey instruments were used which included the 27-item questionnaire on organizational climates to identify the four

types of organizational climates and the other instrument was a 53-item stress survey by Vingerhoets which measured stress via skill discretion, task control, decision authority, work and time pressure, physical exertion, role ambiguity, hazardous exposure, lack of meaningfulness, job insecurity, social support from co-workers and from supervisors” (p. 319). According to the results 40.02% of teachers at the secondary school level experienced moderate or higher levels of stress, so that the predictions concerning occupational teacher stress could be made which indicated that the highest levels of stress existed in disengaged and closed organizational climates.

Lambert, McCarthy, O’Donnel, and Wang (2009) studied teacher stress by viewing classroom demands and the availability of classroom resources using the Classroom Appraisal of Resources and Demands (CARD) instrument. The study by Borg and Riding (1991) evaluated teacher stress and its effect on job satisfaction, teacher absenteeism, and career commitment. Cenkseven-Onder and Sari (2009) conducted a study on teacher burnout and its influence on teacher well-being by viewing the quality of school life as perceived by teachers and found that a significant relationship existed. Additionally, Rieg, Paquette, and Chen (2007) examined teacher stress and its causes, as well as ways for novice elementary teachers to alleviate stress. Farber, (1982) explained that individuals have often used the terms stress and burnout interchangeably and inappropriately, as they do differ. There has been minimal hard data produced on the topic of burnout and as a result, stress has often been studied as a substitute (Farber 1982). While Farber (1982) has viewed this interchange as erroneous, other studies have not done so. Cosgrove (2002) highlighted a study finding by Professor Gary Cooper, the Head of Occupational Psychology at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology in 1991, which indicated that “one in five teachers suffered from anxiety and depression which

would not be out of place in a psychiatric hospital outpatient unit” (p. 2). The theory surrounding teacher stress and burnout stems from a social cognitive standpoint as stress emerges when teachers identify certain situations as being overwhelming to their necessary personal and social resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

### Teacher Stress & Teacher Burnout

Teaching is an occupation that is becoming increasingly difficult and demanding due to the tasks that accompany this profession. As a result, teachers are often at risk for high levels of stress, stress-related illnesses, and ultimately, for burnout. Stress is defined as mental, emotional, or physical tension, strain, or distress (Webster’s New College Dictionary, 2008). Stress, according to the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (1998), is defined as the “harmful and physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker” (Ross; 2004, p. 1). Similarly, teacher stress is described as negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression, resulting from some negative aspect of their work as a teacher (Kyriacou, 2001). Contrasting views however, identify stress as a condition that is usually not taken seriously or acknowledged as a problematic issue as it is a notion that is difficult to analyze effectively (Ross, 2004).

“For decades, researchers in the social sciences have identified teaching as an occupation with a high risk of stress” (Durham & Varma, 1998, p. 152). Klassen, Usher, and Bong (2010) described teacher stress as the “experience of negative emotions resulting from a teacher’s work” (pp. 466-467) which results in negative teacher-pupil relations and low teacher effectiveness. Cockburn (1996) stated that stress can be productive for everyone when given in moderation. However, distress can cause numerous issues and problems to emerge and manifest physically,

psychologically, socially, and in other ways. Therefore, causing the lives of those individuals to spiral out of control.

Cosgrove (2000) examined stress why it has become such a common condition that many teachers experience. Cosgrove (2000) also pointed out that stress affects teachers from all backgrounds: black, white, male, female, novice, veteran, elementary, secondary, and higher education, exceptional and mediocre educators and identified what could be done in order to minimize this spreading epidemic. McCarthy, Lambert, Crowe, and McCarthy (2010) studied teacher stress and job satisfaction. A total of 158 teachers were surveyed and according to the results, teacher preventative coping resources, along with job satisfaction, are positively related and both constructs are connected to classroom stress. This plays a direct role in teacher attrition or their plans to leave the field of education prematurely. Measurement instruments for this study included the Classroom Appraisal of Resources and Demands also known as the CARD, and the Preventative Resources Inventory (PRI): Self-Acceptance Scale (McCarthy, Lambert, Crowe, and McCarthy).

Unfortunately, stress and burnout, and the characteristics and circumstances that often accompany this condition, can negatively impact workers in a way that adversely affect their ability to successfully take care of their students, customers, or clients. Burnout is a term that was first coined by Freudenberger (1974) and was identified as having certain characteristics and conditions that many human services professionals experienced as a result of extreme stress (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Teacher burnout is noted as a state of emotional, physical and attitudinal exhaustion which may develop in teachers who have been unsuccessful at coping effectively with stress over a long period of time (Guglielmi & Tartrow, 1998). Maslach and Jackson (1981) classified burnout, as an extreme form of unresolved, chronic stress which stems

from working in educational/human services institutions where individuals are required to be intensely involved with other people for extended periods of time. This intense involvement can ultimately manifest as emotional exhaustion and frustration. As a result, individuals usually lose their feelings of concern and regard toward others (their students, clients, co-workers, leaders, etc.) which can result in the burned out individual treating people as impersonal objects. Once a person enters into that state of extreme stress known as burnout, it can become progressively difficult to perform and complete job tasks effectively and efficiently, thereby, impacting their employment future and their future success (Luk, Chan, Cheong, & Ko, 2010). Unfortunately, this extreme condition makes it difficult for teachers to efficiently and effectively perform, teach, assist, and help their students to succeed.

#### *Signs and Symptoms of Teacher Stress and Burnout*

Cosgrove (2000) explained how stress “can make us fearful, angry, frustrated, and unable to relax. It can leave us feeling helpless and hopeless, or vulnerable to illness. It’s demoralizing, weakening, and dispiriting” (p. 27). Swick (1989) cited Selye’s description of stress as being the nonspecific response of the body to any demand that becomes a destructive issue only “when it becomes a predominantly negative factor in a person’s life (eroding the abilities to function)” (p. 6). This can manifest in acute or short-term stress, which shocks the equilibrium because of its intensity or as chronic or long-term stress, which is also intense and can be debilitating to the individual. Spaniol and Caputo (1979) described burnout as a condition that occurs when an individual is unable to effectively deal with work stress and stresses that occur in everyday life (Dworkin, 1986). Freudenburg (1974) views burnout as “cynicism, negativism, inflexibility, rigidity of thinking, unhappiness, boredom, psychosomatic symptoms, and a condition in which helping professionals wear out in their pursuit of impossible goals” (Maslach & Jackson, 1981,

p. 25). Shukla and Trivedi (2008) highlighted the topic of burnout in Indian teachers, which resulted from stress, and its tentacles which manifested via physical fatigue, psychosomatic illnesses, energy loss, emotional exhaustion, cynicism, anger, depression, and apathy.

According to the *National Institute on Occupational Safety and Health* (1998), stress can be linked to an array of physiological conditions such as gastrointestinal tract problems, sleeping disorders, cardiovascular disease, strokes, asthma, confusion, depression, and high blood pressure, just to name a few and “it has been suggested that 80 percent of all modern diseases have their origins in stress” (Peltzer, Shisana, Zuma, Wyk, Zungu-Dirwayi, 2009, p. 247).

An article highlighted in the *Review of Educational Research* by Guglielmi and Tatrow (1998), reviewed the effect that both teacher stress and teacher burnout have on the health of teachers. This article also discussed how the negative effects that accompany teacher stress and burnout can hurt the organizational health of a school as well. In regards to the educational health of a school, teacher stress and burnout will end up affecting the “learning environment and interfere with the achievement of educational goals insofar as they could lead to teachers’ detachment, alienation, cynicism, apathy, and absenteeism and ultimately the decision to leave the field” (p. 61). An article in the *Financial Times Limited* by Lyn Oudtshoorn (2000) explained how:

Stress begins with the adrenaline rush we feel at times of high arousal. The evolutionary purpose of the fight or flight response is survival and it remains entirely appropriate in situations of acute threat. However in the face of chronic, low-level threat (in other words, worry), the body reacts in the same way, but without the same opportunities to discharge the energy it generates. This is sorted as a tension that slowly eats away at our levels of resilience, our capability and, ultimately, our health. (p. 1)

Luk, Chan, Cheong, and Ko (2010) explored teacher burnout issues and the probable relationship between “burnout and social problem solving and holistic health” in Macau at two different schools. A total of 138 teachers were surveyed using a Chinese version of the Maslach

Burnout Inventory (C-MBI) and the Body Mind Spirit Well Being Inventory (MSWBI) were the instruments used to collect the necessary data for this study. The results of this study showed that surveyed teachers experienced average burnout and shared that those experiencing greater levels of burnout needed closer attention. Additionally, the findings also supported the belief that teacher burnout may have a significant impact on their ability to solve problems effectively while also destructively influencing their overall holistic health. Luk, Chan, Cheong, and Ko (2010) explained that:

Burnout is a term that has been identified as the inability to successfully cope with and deal with job stress. Internationally, there is now a heightened level of concern surrounding teacher stress and burnout among school teachers (Dworkin 1997; Maslach and Jackson 1981). As a result of this heightened concern, numerous studies have been formulated to examine the “sources of stress of school teachers and its management. Broadly speaking, job nature in terms of over work, classroom discipline, lack of parental support, personal factor consisting of blaming oneself, low self-efficacy, neuroticism; and environmental factors such as lack of information about changes, lack of social, organizational and government supports are the major sources of stress. (p. 491)

Additional studies have combined the study of stress with variables to include the teachers’ emotional intelligence, marital status, level of teaching experience, religious backgrounds, sex, and demographic data (Luk, Chan, Cheong, & Ko, 2010). To identify the three components of burnout, Maslach and Jackson (1981) developed a multidimensional model which included “(1) emotional exhaustion (feeling of drain and tiredness), (2) depersonalization (treating clients as impersonal objects), and (3) lack of personal accomplishment (feeling of inefficiency, ineffective and inadequacy)” (Luk, Chan, Cheong, & Ko, 2010, p. 490).

Teacher burnout causes teachers to feel great dissatisfaction, regret, weariness, exhaustion, bitterness, disillusionment, and is marked by “rationalization, decreased motivation, cynicism, day-to-day existence, and alienation from the system, especially from administrators and supervisors who are perceived as additional burdens” (Oliva & Pawlas, 2001, p. 45). Such



burnout and pressures that stem from work can cause a great deal of wear and tear on the body, as teachers try to meet the mounting needs and requirements that increasingly go along with the job. As indicated in an article by Susan Black (2003), according to the American Federation of Teachers' online Healthfile, stress has biological roots that can cause physical harm when particular chemical reactions are stimulated and "when the brain senses stress, the hypothalamus alerts the pituitary, which, in turn, signals the adrenal glands to secrete the hormone cortisol" (p. 36). When released in the proper dose, cortisol plays a vital role in the regulation of insulin, blood pressure, and cardiovascular operations. However, when excessive amounts of cortisol are released as a result of extreme, chronic stress, brain cells can be destroyed, thereby causing short-term memory loss, high blood pressure, exhaustion, mood swings, and weight gain (Black, 2003). Some of the physical results of excessive occupational stress include ulcers, insomnia, headaches, and stomach issues. The psychological outcomes of such stress include confusion, excessive worry, indecisiveness, angry outbursts, and depression, all of which affects teachers inside and outside of the classroom (Black, 2003).

In the *Washington Post*, Rene Sanchez (1989) welcomed readers to visit a normal Washington "D.C. public school classroom to meet the typical teacher: Worried about safety, lacking textbooks, annoyed by repairs never made, losing faith in a bureaucracy that seems to control every paper clip purchase" (p. 1). As indicated in this article, over 1200 teachers were surveyed from 47 schools and in 45 of the schools, over one-third of the teachers, cited stress as a reason that they usually take leave time from work. Platsidou and Agaliotic (2008) conducted a study on special education teachers using job related stress, burnout, and job satisfaction factors. To perform this study, 127 special education teachers in primary schools from Greece, were surveyed using the Maslach Burnout Inventory, the Inventory of Job-related Stress Factors, and

the Employee Satisfaction Inventory. According to the results, Greek special educated teachers reported average satisfaction with their current working conditions and low satisfaction concerning the probability of promotion and teacher pay. The job-related stress survey identified four factors as sources of teacher stress which included the following: “teaching in a multi-category classroom, programme organization and implementation, assessment of students, and collaborations with other special education experts” (Platsidou & Agaliotic, 2008, p. 61).

Stacciarini and Troccoli (2003) performed a study that focused on occupational stress, job satisfaction, and health along with a constructive coping thinking style. The theoretical approach used was based upon Cooper’s et al. (1988) model of occupational stress and Epstein’s (1998) cognitive-experiential self-theory (CEST). A correlational design was applied to come up with finding via the use of the Constructive Thinking Inventory, the Occupational Stress Indicator, the Nursing Stress Inventory, and a researcher-designed questionnaire. A total of 461 nurses were surveyed and the results yielded that occupational stress had a direct relationship to the “state of health, and inversely associated with global constructive and job satisfaction” (p. 480-490).

#### *Causes, Factors, and Catalysis*

Many factors play a pivotal role in contributing to teacher stress and teacher burnout. Cosgrove (2000) outlined six major sources of teacher stress which included poor student behaviors, pupil discipline problems, time and time management pressures, poor student motivation and student disruption, poor working conditions, low job status, and conflicts with colleagues. The biggest stressors were said to stem from poor student behaviors and pupil discipline problems. According to Lambert and McCarthy (2006), teachers now have to work in a highly punitive framework of accountability thereby causing “high levels of teacher stress,

amounting to demoralization, and are a significant result of working under coercive threats of dismissal” (p. 2). Hayes (2006) explained how teachers’ “own beliefs of students’ ability, age, gender and personality can impact how we teach and can be everyday stressors” (p. 38), therefore, causing teachers to react in negative fashions that often manifests as anxiety, depression, and/or anger. Cockburn (1996) highlighted five main categories and causes of stress with the first one being situational or “here and now stress” and the second type being stress that is caused by a “reaction to an anticipated event” (p.7). The third cause of stress is noted to occur as a result of one’s imagination, and the fourth is said to stem from the emergence of events from past stress. The last cause of stress is stated to happen through levels of stress have built up over time.

In a study by Winters (1993), it was indicated that:

Teachers work in isolation from other adults and from each other, with conscripted students, without sufficient technological support, and without offices or private meeting places. They punch time clocks or initial sign-in sheets. Their teaching is interrupted by public address system announcements from administrators. Teachers are observed and rated by supervisors. They employ few or no secretarial services and little or no planning time. The range of decisions over which they exert control ever diminishes as someone tells them what to teach, why students’ rights must be protected, why parents and community will have a greater voice in telling them what to do, and how the union is the collective voice for each individual. (p. 23)

Borg and Riding (1991) stated that the “nature and causes of teacher stress are complex” (Powell & Cheshire, 2004, p. 56). They include teacher classroom discipline issues stemming from poor student behaviors, teacher personality traits and coping skills, environmental issues, and contextual factors (Powell & Cheshire, 2004). Similarly, Kyriacou (2001) reported how teacher stress often emerges from time constraints, workload demands, teaching unmotivated students, and trying to maintain order and discipline within the classroom. Kyriacou (2001) also

stated that teacher stress is often stimulated by the personal personality traits, coping skills, and environmental influences of each teacher. Hinshaw, Richter, and Kramer (2009) revealed that:

Secondary school teachers in Ireland found that the main sources of stress were poorly motivated students, maintaining discipline, time pressures and workload, coping with change, being evaluated by others, dealing with colleagues, self-esteem and status, administration and management, role conflict and ambiguity, poor working conditions, classes with a wide ability range, trying to maintain values and standards, and demands of state examination system. (p. 240)

Montgomery and Rupp (2005) conducted a meta-analysis on 65 studies on teacher stress that focused on the relationship between teacher stress and coping mechanisms, including environmental structure, intra-individual variables, and personality mediator variables. The results of this study indicated that teacher stress is related to negative emotional responses, thereby, showing the impact that coping mechanisms, personality, and burnout have on teacher stress. A study by O'Donnell, Lambert, and McCarthy (2008) examined teacher stress and its probable connection to schools poverty status and the time of year that student testing and academic data is collected. The findings of this study revealed no significant relationship between teacher stress, the socioeconomic status of the school, nor the time of year that data is collected. However, correlations were noted to have occurred between teacher stress and the number of minority students within a classroom, student assessment scores, and the perceived availability of instructional resources.

Brewer and McMahan (2003) conducted a study that enabled them to examine job stress and burnout that is experienced by technical and industrial educators as a means of improving the understanding of job stress and enhancing the working life of industrial and technical educators. Subjects for this study consisted of 133 randomly sampled technical and industrial educators. They were surveyed using the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Human Services Survey by Maslach and Jackson and the Job Stress Survey by Spielberger and Vagg. According to the

results of this study, lack of support throughout the organization was found to be a severe stressor over job pressure stress and demographic characteristics.

Burnout is described having a feeling of exhaustion, fatigue, irritation, and/or dissatisfaction because of disengagement and disconnection (Schaufeli, Maslach, & Marek, 1993). Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter (1986; 2010) defined burnout as a condition that results from prolonged stressful events occurring in the areas of emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment, and depersonalization. In an article by Hoogh and Hartog (2009), burnout is viewed as a “psychological response to chronic work stress which combines emotional exhaustion, depersonalization (also labeled as cynicism), and reduced personal accomplishment or professional efficacy” (p. 1058). It is also linked to a perceived lack of control, lack of voice, and powerlessness (Hoogh & Hartog, 2009).

Similarly, Oliva and Pawlas (2001) explained how teacher burnout is often the result of chronically stressful situations that stem from:

Unruly and, in some cases, unmanageable students; students for whom English is not the primary language; massive amounts of paperwork and record keeping; low pay; inadequate budgets; high teacher-pupil ratios; uncaring or perceived as uncaring administrators and supervisors; school facilities in need of repair; parental demands; major focus on meeting academic standards imposed by individual states; restrictions on freedom to plan and teach; and overemphasis on student test scores. (p. 47)

#### *Results, Ramifications, and Ripple Effects of Stress and Burnout (Costly Consequences)*

The costly results and ramifications of teacher stress and burnout are numerous and worth greater study when considering the concepts of school improvement, teacher quality, students’ academic success, effective school leadership, and lifelong success. According to Swick (1989), some of the major outcomes of stress include physiological problems like dramatic changes in eating habits and high blood pressure, and psychological functioning issues such as extreme nervousness and chronic depression. He also explained how teachers who suffer from stress,

commonly develop feelings of helplessness and inferiority, loss of physical and psychological stamina and energy, and develop illnesses that are psychosomatic in nature but seemingly real. A study by Hinshaw, Richter, & Kramer (2009) reported that:

As many as 25 percent of K-12 teachers leave the profession by the end of their first year and only 50 percent remain in the field after five years. Another study reported that K-12 teachers are challenged today with new demands resulting from technical, and moral changes that define their traditional roles. (p. 240)

Peltzer, Shisana, Zuma, Wyk, and Zungu-Dirwayi (2009) explored the relationship between job stress and stress related illnesses among teachers in South Africa. They found that educators suffered from extremely high levels of stress and that hypertension, stomach ulcers, asthma, mental distress, and alcohol abuse was connected to that stress. A study by Borg and Riding (1991) examined the topic of teacher stress and its impact on job satisfaction and reviewed other consequences that can emerge from teacher stress. Participants of this study included 545 secondary school teachers that were assessed using a questionnaire survey. This survey found that teachers who reported experiencing greater stress levels enjoyed teaching less, were absent more often, had a greater chance of leaving the teaching profession, and were less likely to ever consider teaching again.

Additionally, Hoogh and Hartog (2009) stated that stress and burnout can have consequences that are negative and detrimental for organizations and their employees. Some of these consequences manifest as “decreased job productivity, reduced job commitment, and increased absenteeism and job attrition, thereby, leading to greater job turnover rates which serves to negatively impact the entire organizational structure of a school and its stakeholders” (p. 1058). A study by Smith and Smith (2006) explained how teacher attrition is often the result of the many stressful aspects that can accompany teaching at a Title I/low-income school. In many of these schools, novice teachers usually leave the profession within three to five years.

When those teachers leave the teaching profession, they are often replaced by more unqualified teachers. After a period of time, those teachers experience stress as well and they also leave.

This stress stimulated cycle hurts not only teachers but their students as well, as students rarely get the educational stability necessary for academic success, which can ultimately, lead to higher dropout rates and an array of negative accompanying consequences.

According to the Center of Public Education (2007):

High dropout rates beget social and economic woes for communities as well. Dropouts are far more likely to become unemployed, receive public assistance, commit crimes, and become incarcerated. At the same time, they are less likely to receive job-based health insurance and pension plans, to stay healthy and live full lives, and to vote and make other kinds of civic contributions. In fact, the average dropout pays about \$60,000 less in taxes over his or her lifetime (Rouse 2005, Waldfogel et al. 2005, Muennig, 2005, Moretti 2005, and Junn 2005). Raising graduation rates would save taxpayers money, greatly expand tax revenues, boost employment, reduce crime, and improve citizenship. (p. 1)

Therefore, it is major that educational leaders consider teacher stress and burnout as an important issue that mandates closer scrutiny and investigation into various avenues; avenues that will assist in turning this negative cycle around. Even if one of those possible avenues centers around the leadership style that educational leaders choose to apply.

### Leading and Leadership

Leading and leadership is a concept that has been around since the beginning of time and for centuries, the construct known as leadership has been described, defined, theorized, and analyzed by numerous individuals in a variety of ways. While this variety allows for greater subjectivity of the term known as leadership, common threads exist throughout its many descriptions.

According to Bennis and Nanus (1985), there are 350 leadership definitions highlighted in various research literature,

Leadership is the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward some goals which they come to find desirable. (Tead, 1935, p. 20)

Leadership is the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically toward the achievement of group goals. (Koontz, O'Donnell, & Weihrich, 1984, p. 506)

Sergiovanni (1990) defined leadership as being able to influence others to become followers instead of subordinates and Walker (1990) described leadership as “maintaining excellence in the curriculum of a school” (p. 419). Yukl (1981) termed leadership as the combination of personality traits, role relationships, influence, individual behavior and patterns of interaction while Hersey and Blanchard (1982) simply identified it as the “process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation” (p. 83). Similarly, Hodgetts and Altman (1979) explained leadership as having enough influence to motivate individuals to use their efforts towards achieving particular goals. Still, Kelly (1974) identified leadership as assisting a group to achieve certain goals via the performing of certain acts. Gill (2006) addressed the nature of leadership and its importance by describing it as the “performing art and the application of science, both of which allows the blending of the spiritual, emotional, behavioral, and intellectual events” (p. 7).

Katz and Kahn (1966) stated that there are three crucial aspects of leadership that consist of personal characteristics, positional attributes and a category of behavior. Leadership, was identified by Ram and Prabhakar (2010), as one of the most substantial facets of organizational success. It is also considered to have a vital impact on the manner in which an organization and its workers perform (Wang, H. Law, Hackett, Wang, D. & Chen, 2005). Additionally, Larson and Vinberg (2010) highlighted that leadership is a significant aspect of any organization and Fullan (2001) stated that successful leadership is marked by leaders who are energetic, hopeful, and enthusiastic. He also identified five components of leaders who can successfully impact change.



Those five components are moral purpose, knowledge building, understanding change, relationships, and coherence making.

In the article entitled Leadership: who needs it, the author Peter Gronn (2003) stated that the concept of leadership and the many contradictions surrounding this construct as the criticisms are many. “Embedded in each of these criticisms is the claim that, if leadership is to retain its conceptual and practical utility, then it has to be reconstituted in a distributive, as opposed to a focused, form” (p. 267). This article is broken into several areas to include an interview transcript. One of the main subtitled areas focuses on the terms management and leadership. At one time, according to the author of this text, the terms management and leadership were used almost simultaneously as one was often substituted for the other. The problems arose when distinctions began to be made between the two. This was apparent in the interview dialogue that was extracted from this article.

Leadership is a concept that is viewed as being highly subjective and without a true or solid definition. The term leadership appears to be determined by whether or not an individual has a measure of power that can be effectively used. However, the way in which leadership is viewed is often skewed by the manner in which a person has been exposed to it. The positives or negatives of that exposure serve to either enhance the understanding or following of leadership or it serves to create problems for leaders in a variety of different ways. This is where the dividing of leadership labor comes into play in either a favorable or unfavorable fashion as this is where the leader-follower binary issue comes into focus. There is a “presumed symbiosis between these two analytical constructs that they are like the horse and carriage in the song about marriage: i.e. there cannot be one without the other” (Gronn, 2003, p. 278). In other words, in order to be a leader, one must have at least one or more followers. Otherwise, one is not

considered a true leader. Along with this, a leader is expected to have a certain level of greatness. While this is preferred, there is a “dominant contemporary conception of leadership which remains the doctrine of ‘exceptionalism’. Exceptionalism reemerged in the two decades that form the backdrop of this discussion, during which command-and-control line managerialism was supplanted by rhetorics of integration and control achieved through management” (Gronn, 2003, p. 281).

Ultimately, while there are many who believe that leaders are unnecessary in the educational arena, it makes me think about a quote that I have heard throughout my life, “You never miss your water until the well runs dry.” While it is difficult to totally pinpoint some forms of leadership in action, it becomes painfully apparent that it is most needed when it is actually missing. Therefore, it is vital that educational leaders strive to be the best that they can be as they vacillate throughout their work days, leading and managing, so that in the event that they are no longer in that position, they will truly be missed.

### Leadership Theories

Over the last four decades, researchers and organizational establishments have been infatuated with the phenomenon known as leadership and they have made numerous attempts to create collective terms and measures for this concept (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2005). This became most apparent via the study of leadership theory, which originated when Taylor (1911) published the Principles of Scientific Management (Lin, 1999). Leadership theories are important in that they offer a better understanding of leadership as each theory provides a vital piece of a jigsaw puzzle that works together in order to enhance the ability to view the whole leadership picture collectively as no one theory is sufficient alone (Gill, 2006).

Some of the major theorists that have contributed greatly to the philosophy of leadership are Frederick W. Taylor, James McGregor Burns, Bernard Bass, Bruce Avolio, Roger Gill, Kenneth Leithwood, William Greenfield, Fred Fiedler, Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard, and Peter Gronn, just to name a few. A number of theories that were formalized due to some of these theorists included Trait Theories, the “Great Man” Theories, Contingency Theories, Situational Theories, Behavioral Theories, Participative Theories, Management Theories, and Relationship Theories. Seemingly, leadership styles that have emerged over the years have their roots in at least one of these above theories. Additional leadership theories that have surfaced over more recent years consist of Transformational Leadership, New Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Visionary Leadership, Organic Leadership, Servant Leadership, Instructional Leadership, Moral Leadership, Emergent Leadership, Charismatic Leadership, and Leadership-Style Theories (Grint, 1997).

Hoy and Miskel (1987) explained that three major theories that are foundational to the study of leadership include trait theory, behavioral theory, and contingency theory. Trait theory was considered the overriding theory preceding the 1950s and attempted to identify special psychological or physical attributes of successful leaders, thereby, separating these attributes from those generally possessed by their subordinates. According to Gunbayi (2005), the trait model of leadership focused on the personal qualities of leaders and attributed success to those personal qualities. However, this particular model did not explain why some leaders are successful and others are not (Bass, 1990).

The behavioral theory of leadership focused on the observable behaviors of leaders in certain settings and focused on their concern for their subordinates and accomplishing the mission (Owens, 1981). Fiedler’s contingency model is “a model designed to diagnose whether

a leader is task oriented or relationship oriented” (p.69) and it matches leadership styles that are implemented to particular situations (Daft, 2008). Bess and Goldman (2001) described Fiedler’s contingency theory as a form of situational leadership that addresses issues and conditions that leaders face. However, it limits the ability of that leader to modify his or her behaviors due to the contemporary situation that is at hand. The path-goal model is a “contingency approach to leadership in which the leader’s responsibility is to increase the subordinates’ motivation by clarifying the behaviors necessary for task accomplishment and rewards” (Daft, 2008, p. 77).

According to Bess and Goldman (2001), the path-goal theory stems from studies of Robert House and his associates (e.g. House & Dessler; 1974; House & Mitchell, 1974) and this theory is considered to be both transformational and transactional as the leader works to develop group norms and pushes group member goals while creating procedures, expectations, and particular structures for followers. The situational theory, as addressed by Daft (2008), is a theoretical model created by Hersey and Blanchard’s extension of the leadership grid, focusing on followers’ characteristics, therefore, determining leadership behaviors that are most effective (Daft, 2008, p. 73). Bess and Goldman (2001) described situational leadership theory as a form of leadership where leaders attempt to modify and adapt their approaches to different challenges, conditions, and situations as needed.

The study by Gunbayi (2005) highlighted the behavioral model and the manner in which it emphasizes the action of leaders over their personal qualities. However, according to Gunbayi (2005), “most research indicates that there is a need to analyze the situation in which the leader operates” (p. 12). According to Hoy and Miskel (1987), contingency theory centers around the manner in which leaders’ personality characteristics, behaviors, and situational variables connect and also seeks to identify which type of leadership best fits particular situations. In the study by

Gunbayi (2005), contingency theorists focus on identifying variables that make certain forms of leadership behaviors more or less effective depending upon a given situation (Hellriegel, Slocum, & Woodman, 1995).

Similarly, Gill (2006) identifies several leadership theories that are vital to the study of leadership. These theories are the trait theories, theories of emergent leadership, leadership style theories, psychodynamic theories, contingency theories, and new leadership theories. Trait theories, also viewed as Great Man Theories (during the period when most leaders were males), have the assumption that leaders have certain psychological traits and qualities that causes them to be natural leaders. Their capacity to lead is considered natural, inherent, and intrinsic as great leaders are believed to be born and not made. Such leaders are often viewed as being heroic and able to rise to the leadership occasion as needed and because their leadership traits separate them from those who are followers, they are naturally perceived as better and above the rest.

According to Ivancevich, Konopaske, and Matteson (2008), numerous studies were conducted in order to highlight the belief that centered on leadership intelligence, personality, physical characteristics, and supervisory ability. Some of those studies were investigated by Stogdill who reviewed 33 studies that indicated that leaders had higher traits of intelligence than their followers. In the 1950s and 60s, studies by Edwin Ghiselli, focused on personality traits and suggested that certain personality traits were a natural aspect of effective leaders. He also implied that this trait became more important to a leader as that leader advanced up the corporate ladder (Ivancevich, Konopaske, and Matteson, 2008). Additionally, physical characteristics were considered important traits of natural born leaders and physical aspects of individual such as height, weight, age, or appearance, were viewed as being advantageous when they fell within a particular norm set or spectrum. The supervisory ability trait was defined as the “effective

utilization of whatever supervisory practices are indicated by the particular requirements of the situation” (Ivancevich, Konopaske, and Matteson, 2008, p. 415).

Theories of emergent leadership centers around the notion that leaders naturally emerge as needed according to particular actions, issues, or needs that may arise. This particular theory stresses the significance of followers and their needs. The vertical dyad linkage theory, or leader-member exchange (LMX) theory has grown out of work in this area” (Gill, 2006, p. 40). The leader-member exchange (LMX) theory is known as the psychodynamic theory and it is similar to emergent leadership, as it defines the “effectiveness of leaders as a function of the psychodynamic exchange that occurs between leaders and group members (followers or subordinates). Leaders provide direction and guidance through influence permitted to them by members” (Gill, 2006, p. 46).

A popular emergent leadership theory is the servant-leadership method. In this form of leadership, Greenleaf (1977) highlights strong natural leaders and strong natural servants. The leader is able to rise to the occasion, “take charge, make the decisions and give the orders, and strong natural servants, assume the leadership role because they see it as a way in which they can serve” (Gill, 2006, p. 41). Hence, there is a strong reciprocal relationship that naturally exists between leadership and servant-hood.

According to Greenleaf (1977), the system known as servant leadership was developed via a number of factors that he encountered throughout his lifetime. During the late 1960s and the early 1970s, Greenleaf observed a number of notable educational institutions crashing and falling, and trying unsuccessfully, to regain their footing. He also noticed during this time, the apparent lack of hope in the students that were a vital part of these institutions of higher learning. Greenleaf wanted to turn this tide of negativity around. These experiences, combined with those

derived from working with other organizations, and his career with AT&T, resulted in the servant leadership model which expressed that truly great leaders are servants first. Hence, being able to first serve others, is the ultimate key to greatness (Greenleaf, 1977).

Leadership-style theories focus on what effective leaders do via the scientific management method that was formulated by Frederick W. Taylor during the early start of the twentieth century. This method addressed the importance of focusing on organizational goals, proficient methods and procedures, and task focused leadership. Similarly, action centered leadership (ACL) is identified as being task oriented, structured, and directional as it focuses on the task, the team, and the individual. This leadership method rejects the idea that effective leaders have common traits that make them a leader. However, it does propose that true leaders should possess a high level of competence which enables them to successfully address a variety of different situations using five leadership methods that are directive, consultative, participative, negotiative, and delegative (Gill, 2006).

Contingency leadership theories highlight the idea that the effectiveness of a leader is based upon certain personality characteristics and behaviors, and as a result, is subjective as it views the manner in which certain environmental variable may determine which leadership style is best suited for any given situation. This leadership theory is also based upon the needs of followers and on the conviction that no particular style of leadership is better than another (Hoy & Miskel, 1987). Fiedler's contingency theory, path-goal theory, situational leadership, and Reddin's 3-D theory of managerial effectiveness all fall under the contingency leadership concept.

The New Leadership Theory consists of visionary leadership, charismatic leadership, and transformational leadership. Gill (2006) highlighted how Burns (1978) indicated that:

Vision, charisma, and transformation are the keywords for the New Leadership. The concept of transformational leadership arose from the study of rebel leadership and revolution in the early 1970s (Downton, 1973). However, it was a political historian and biographer, James MacGregor Burns, who in a seminal book in 1978 first described ‘transforming leadership’ and contrasted it with ‘transactional leadership.’ (p. 50)

Hallinger (2003) began his research by addressing the manner in which the field of educational leadership has evolved via the development of new conceptual models. This determination was made through the observations of 125 empirical research studies which yielded that instructional and transformational leadership were at the summit of leadership studies. In the past, contrasting leadership models that were applied by school administrators centered on situational leadership, trait theories, and contingency theories. Instructional leadership is a model that is characterized by directionally firm leadership that centers on control and supervision of curriculum and instruction which became a model of choice between the late 1980s and the early 1990s. However, during the 1990s, a shift began to occur in leadership expectations as the focus began to turn more towards shared, democratic, collegial, and empowered leadership which thereby, ushered in the transformational leadership model. Through the transformational leadership model, organizations are encouraged and empowered to play a role in the selection of goals, objectives, and change practices in regards to teaching and learning. It is important to note however that the usability, suitability, and effectiveness of such a model is subjectively linked to the internal and external structures of a school. Additionally, as with many new or rediscovered methodologies, the context by which instructional and transformational leadership is viewed and defined will evolve and modify according to the fluctuating needs of a school (Hallinger, 2003).

In contrasting the instructional leadership model with the transformational leadership model, several criteria should be used as a means of successfully identifying the characteristics



of the two. The three suggested criteria include viewing whether or not a model uses a top-down or a bottom up approach to leadership; whether there is a target for change that is organized as first-order or second-order; and whether or not there is a focus on staff relationships that focus on managerial/transactional leadership versus transformational leadership. Hallinger (2003) noted that:

Instructional leadership has been characterized by some scholars as a directive and top-down approach to school leadership (Barth, 1990; Day et al., 2001). Instructional leadership emphasizes the principal's coordination and control of instruction (Cohen & Miller, 1980; Heck et al., 1990). The broad brushes of research on instructional leadership in effective schools produces an image of the principal as directing or orchestrating improvements in the school. In contrast, transformational leadership is often considered a type of shared or distributive leadership. Rather than a single individual-the principal-coordinating and controlling from above, transformational leadership focuses on stimulating change through bottom-up participation (Day et al., 2001; Jackson, 2000; Marks & Printy, in press). (p. 338)

According to Lin (1999), Taylor formulated the Principles of Scientific Management which served as a catalyst for the study of leadership theory in 1911. However, this document was challenged in the Hawthorn Studies (Mayo, 1933) and followed up by the Ohio State Leadership Studies by Andrew Halpin, who sought to show that leadership behavior was composed of structures, considerations, and personalities. As a result, fascination and infatuation grew and several terms emerged that have been used interchangeably over the years to include leadership style, leadership style theories, leadership behaviors, leadership models, leadership methods, and organizational behaviors. However, leadership style was the focal term for this study.

## Leadership Styles

The personal values, beliefs, and philosophies that an individual possesses can have a direct impact on the personality that forms the foundation for how that individual operates and performs. When that individual is a leader, the personality of that individual then serves to shape their leadership style.

As indicated by Hersey and Blanchard (1988), leadership styles can be described as “consistent behavior patterns that they (leaders) used when they worked with and through other people, as perceived by those people” (p. 146). This form of leadership has an internal element that centers on values, philosophies, beliefs, and knowledge. Hence, there is also an external factor that includes task behavior, relationships, situational aspects, and individual empowerment (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988). As outlined by Smith (1997), the first study surrounding leadership style was originated in the late 1930s, by Lewin, Lippitt, and White. This study incorporated the use of autocratic, democratic, or laissez faire leadership styles on five groups of young boys. The findings of this study indicated that higher satisfaction, greater morale, better order, and higher achievement was experienced by those who were supervised by democratic leaders.

Griffith (1979) examined the seven leadership styles presented by the leadership style model of Tannenbaum and Schmidt. In this model, autocratic leaders made decisions and then shared those decisions with subordinates on one end of a presented continuum. Similarly, Gill (2006), explained how “traditionally, leadership has tended to be equated with autocratic commands and there are still many who see leadership mainly in terms of the issuing of orders which are eagerly obeyed by followers whose loyalty is largely determined by the charisma of the leader” (p. 13). On the other end are leaders who willingly delegate authority and empower their subordinates to make decisions in a spectrum that is outlined and defined by those leaders.

Within this style of leadership, a leader may shift from telling, selling, consulting, sharing, and delegating and back again, according to external situations and factors that may arise (Griffith, 1979).

In a publication by Peter F. Olivia and George E. Pawlas entitled *Supervision for Today's Schools* (2001), these authors explained how there are two main aspect of leadership styles or leadership approaches with a subsidiary or third approach being a combination of the two. These authors categorized these styles under the classifications of Style 1 and Style 2. Style 1 emphasized the ideology of directive behavior, it concentrates on institutional needs, and is focused on status while Style 2 included nondirective behaviors, centered it focus on the person, and directed its attention towards “openness of the system” (p.432). Leaders that employ Style 1 are often more directive in their behavior which includes the process of ordering, prescribing, and telling. Such leaders are also task oriented over people oriented, and they are more centered on administrative efficiency. Contrary to this particular leadership approach, leaders that fall within the Style 2 category are more nondirective as they are more concerned with being helpful, and with facilitating and counseling as they lead. Additionally, they are humanly oriented as their focus point is on interpersonal relationships and the human aspect of leadership. Nevertheless, in practice, it is vital that leaders “learn to adapt the two styles to their situations. As there is a time to reap and a time to sow, there is a time to exhibit authoritarian behavior and a time to stress human-relations skills” (Olivia & Pawlas, 2001, p. 432).

An article by Goleman (2000) shared the six leadership styles that most executives use. Like differing personalities, these leadership styles varied in their structure, configuration, and classifications. They included the coercive style, authoritative style, affiliative style, democratic style, the pacesetting style, and the coaching style. Coercive styled leaders demand immediate

compliance, authoritative leaders mobilize people towards a particular vision, and affiliative leaders create emotional bonds and harmony. Additionally, democratic styled leaders work to build consensus via participation while pacesetter leaders expect excellence and self-direction. Coaching styled leaders help in the process of developing people for the future (Goleman, 2000).

Smith (1997) examined Theory X and Theory Y leadership theories by studying the relationship between teacher perceptions of leadership behaviors and the organizational climate of secondary Alabama schools. According to this leadership theory, Theory X workers are lazy, untrustworthy, and irresponsible and therefore, Goleman (2000) proposed that Theory X supervisors needed to become more aggressive and dominant in order to motivate individuals to effectively complete their jobs by using coercion, threats, control, and finally, through the use of punishment. Contrary to this form of leadership, Theory Y leaders assume that most individuals are good, trustworthy, and capable of self-direction which means that the leader is not required to use coercion, threats, punishment, or control as a means of accomplishing goals (Smith, 1997).

According to research conducted by Dulewicz and Higgs (2005), the personality and approach of a leader is viewed as a fundamental aspect of leading. This belief has its roots in Fiedler's contingency theory (Fiedler, 1964) which is used to diagnose the leadership style of a leader as being either task oriented or relational oriented, and then matched to particular situations as needed. This testing and diagnosing of various leadership styles ultimately led to the rise of the "Transformational" movement. In this movement, schools began the process of transitioning from the internal leader focus to the external follower focus (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2005). As a result, the association between the attitudes, behaviors, and performance of followers and transformational leaders has been well documented according to Judge and Piccolo (2004). Similarly, there has been an increased focus on varied leadership behaviors and their

efficacy. Those behaviors have centered on goal-oriented behaviors, involving behaviors, and engaging behaviors. In goal-oriented leadership behaviors, the leader “sets direction and behaves in a way in which he/she plays a significant role in directing others” (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2004, p. 107) to achieve certain goals. The involving behavior of a leader allows the leader to provide strong direction while inviting others to share in the process. In engaging leadership, the behavior of the leader is one that encourages facilitating and focusing on the skills and abilities of others and allowing them to shine (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2005).

A study by Lin (1999) explained how the traditional leadership organizational theory that stemmed from the scientific management theory is based upon the top-down management style and has recently “become the target of criticism because of its lack of teacher and community support and consequently lack of effectiveness” (p. 30). According to Lin (1999), the most effective principals utilize democratic decision-making within their leadership styles over autocratic leadership (e.g. Blasé & Blasé, 1994; Blasé, Blasé, Anderson & Dungan, 1995; Conley & Goldman, 1994; Lashway, 1996; Leithwood, 1992; Myer & Stonehill, 1993; Reilly, 1995; Weiss & Cambone, 1994). Therefore, the three forms of leadership styles that are currently used within the public school system and deemed to be most effective include the hierarchical leadership style, the facilitative leadership style, and the transformational leadership style according to Lin (1999). The hierarchical leadership style focuses on control, efficiency, and routines that are predictable. Facilitative leadership styles allow the leader to operate as a supporter over being the center of attention. The Transformational leadership style is one that motivates followers, nurtures acceptance, and is marked by flexibility, open-mindedness, encouragement, sensitivity, shared decision-making, and diversity skills. Lin (1999) also indicated that of the current forms of leadership in existence, the most dominant leadership styles

that have recently emerged and grown in popularity are transactional and transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1995). The situational leadership model by Hersey and Blanchard, along with many other leadership models such as servant leadership by Greenleaf, bureaucratic leadership by Taylor, transactional leadership and transformational leadership via Burns and Bass, and laissez-faire leadership, have served to stimulate the many studies that focus on the construct known as leadership style (Lin, 1999). While there are many leadership styles, models, methods, and behaviors that have been researched over the years, the three leadership styles that were highlighted in this study, centered on transformational leadership (collegial), transactional leadership, and laissez-faire leadership.

### *Transformational leadership*

In the 1970s and 1980s, the theory known as transformational leadership began to be exposed and highlighted in basic leadership literature and the ideology that accompanied this form of leadership motivated the educational arena to increasingly accept it over the years. Over the past two decades, this leadership theory has become one of the most popular approaches to understanding the effectiveness of leaders (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). This form of leadership became more preferred over the top-down traditional form of leadership and over the instructional leadership model and as a result, has been studied at an increasingly progressive rate in educational research (Hallinger, 2003).

Transformational leadership is viewed as a leadership style that has a positive effect on followers through trust, loyalty, admiration, and respect, thereby, allowing leaders and followers to sharpen and motivate one another (Burns, 1978). Also, this form of leadership allows leaders to use “creative and visionary direction to motivate their employees to be more innovative and creative, therefore, creating greater productivity within an organization” (Nielsen, Randall, Yarker, and Brenner, 2008, p. 16). Transformational leaders observe the needs of their

employees and work to develop those needs in order to produce leaders. They also help their workers to be aware of the significance of accomplishing goals and they provide strategies to help them complete those goals. Leaders who are transformational also encourage their subordinates to put the needs of the organization or team above their own personal needs (Bass, 1978).

While the transformational leadership model was formulated by Bass, a more extensive adaptation of this model was constructed by Leithwood and a team of his colleagues. This modification resulted in numerous studies being conducted in regards to its application throughout the educational world (Hallinger 2003). The model of transformational leadership that was constructed by Leithwood identified the following components: “individualized support, shared goals, vision, intellectual stimulation, culture building, rewards, high expectations, and modeling” (Hallinger, 2003, p. 335).

As indicated by Bedeian and Hunt (2005) transformational leadership is viewed as an effective form of leadership that is a vital aspect of creating productive and adaptable change throughout an organization. Such leaders “risk disorder and instability as they seek out opportunities for change” (p. 103). These transformational leaders have the incredible ability to inspire individuals to focus on group goals over personal goals, which is a viable aspect of change (Jones & Rudd, 2008). According to Gill (2006), “transforming or transformational leadership occurs when both leader and followers raise each other’s motivation and sense of higher purpose” (p. 50). In contrast, transactional leadership allows for an exchange to occur between leaders and followers, as feasible to the wishes of the leader with no sense of higher purpose.

The four components of transformational leadership are charisma, inspirational leadership, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1998; Yukl, 1998). This particular style of leadership focuses on productive individual, group, and organizational change and motivates teams and individuals to be more effective and efficient by addressing goals, visions, and final outcomes through effective communication. Such communication centers around the importance of task outcomes, their higher level needs, and it inspires them to focus less on personal interests and more on sacrificing for the betterment of an organization (Bass, 1998; Yukl, 1998). Transformational leadership is described as a form of leadership that motivates and stimulates followers and transformational leaders have the knowledge and skills vital to adaptability and environmental change (Lin, 1999). According to Burns (1978), two of the most basic and general forms of leadership and inseparable follower interaction occur within transformational leadership and another form of leadership known as transactional leadership.

An opposing view of transformational leadership described it as being more of a ruthless form of leadership as it requires a high level of control and manipulation within in (Gronn, 1995). Within this article, the leader that is a transformational leader causes a greater level of awareness within his stakeholders or at least attempts to do so. The article by Peter Gronn (1995) entitled *Greatness revisited: The current obsession with transformational leadership*, examined transformational leadership in a clear and insightful manner. The purpose of this article was to expose the overwhelming fascination that accompanies this style of leadership and the misperceptions that accompany this style of leadership as well. According to this article, Bernard Bass stimulated the transformational leadership push. This form of leadership was known as the “great man” or “hero of history” leadership before its reformation. Gronn (1995) highlighted how the great man or hero of history form of leadership had to be revamped as a



result of the cynicism and scorn that surrounded it. This dissatisfaction arose as a result of the grand claims and seemingly, unrealistic declarations that accompanied this model of leadership. However, as it is with any model, no one form of leadership is the answer to all questions, all problems, or all situations. Those who managed to arrive at a particular concept would usually realize this as claiming to have the answer or professing to be the best requires one to either prove it, which is not completely possible, or to humbly accept that their model is simply a piece of a much grander puzzle. This is why the great man and hero of history leadership was quieted and revamped as transformational leadership in the 1990s. In order to push this form of leadership, Bass, along with his team, used surveys that included scaled items from seven sets. Four of these items focused on transformational leadership, two of them focused on transactional leadership, and there was one item included which centered on non-leadership or laissez-faire leadership. According to Bass, these all of these items served to focus on the full range of leadership, which was considered as being more realistic, balanced, and acceptable (Gronn, 1995). Eeden, Cilliers, and Deventer (2000) studied transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership collaboratively. In regards to transformational leadership, they began by viewing its components which consisted of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence involves respect and admiration for the leader along with the duplication of leadership values, behaviors, and commitments. Inspirational motivation means that the excitement and motivation demonstrated by a leader serves to stimulate followers in a similar capacity. Individualized consideration entails the leader having enough insight to consider the ability and knowledge level of followers and determining the need or organizing for enhanced development for the follower.

### *Transactional Leadership*

Transactional leadership focuses on follower needs through the process of exchange. Transactional leaders exchange rewards with their followers for their effort and respond to the needs of their workers as they accomplish particular goals, tasks, and expected outcomes (Burns, 1978). However, as indicated by Emery and Barker (2007), transactional leaders are empowered to evaluate, correct, and train followers when tasks are not effectively accomplished. Additionally, transactional leadership is based upon authority that is bureaucratic and organizational legitimacy (Emery & Barker, 2007). Transactional leaders also tend to “emphasize work standards, assignments, and task-oriented goals” (Emery & Barker, 2007, p. 79) while focusing on employee compliance and the completion of organizational tasks. Eeden, Cilliers, and Deventer (2000) described transactional leadership as involving a social exchange process as followers successfully complete a task or multiple tasks in order to receive an award or to avoid the possibility of receiving a penalty, also known as contingent reward. The other aspect of transactional leadership is that of management-by-exception (active or passive) which involves the leader either looking for discrepancies and providing corrective action or waiting for infractions or complaints to come directly to him or her before taking action. Another concern associated with transactional leadership was the exchange for favors or rewards component as such actions could compromise the negatively impact the leader and follower relationship and thereby, cause unintentional consequences (Burns, 1978).

Nguni, Slegers, and Denessen (2006) highlighted four transactional dimensions that transactional leaders use during the process of leading (Avolio et al., 1999, Bass & Avolio, 1990; Hater & Bass, 1988). Three out of four of them are used to motivate followers and centers around contingent rewards and punishments, passive management by exception, and active

management by exception. The fourth and less motivating component of transactional leadership is laissez-faire leadership. Nguni, Slegers, and Denessen (2006) defined these four dimensions of transactional leadership in the following fashion:

- Contingency reward: The extent to which leaders set goals, make rewards on performance, obtain necessary resources, and provide rewards when performance goals are met.
- Management by exception – active: The extent to which leaders closely monitor followers’ performance and keep track of mistakes.
- Management by exception – passive: The extent to which leaders may not be aware of problems until informed by others and generally fail to intervene until serious problems occur.
- Laissez-faire leadership: The extent to which leaders avoid responsibility, fail to make decisions, are absent when needed, or fail to follow up on requests. (p. 149)

#### *Laissez-faire Leadership*

Laissez-faire leadership, which is also referred to as absent leadership, provides no guidance for followers and allows them to govern themselves and make their own decision according to their own preferences. Such leaders will often refuse to take a stand and they usually avoid and ignore issues and problems that arise. Also, they tend to not intervene in issues or situations when needed and they often refuse to implement needed follow-up procedures (Bass, 1998; Yukl, 1998). Eeden, Cilliers, and Deventer (2000) address laissez-faire or passive leadership and describe it as the avoidance or absence of leadership where the “leader leaves responsibility for the work to the followers and avoids setting goals and clarifying expectations, organizing priorities, becoming involved when important issues arise, taking a stand on issues and making decisions” (Eeden, Cilliers, and Deventer, 2000, p.255), thereby, allowing for self-regulation and management. Laissez-faire leadership is ultimately considered as non-transactional leadership and such leadership is not really leadership at all according to

Gill (2006). This non-transactional, hands off approach to leadership serves to heighten clashes, differences, conflicts, and low achievement levels across the board. Examples that Bass and Avolio give are “former US president Calvin Coolidge, who is reputed to have slept 16 hours each day; Louis XV of France, famous for his ‘Apres moi, le deluge!’; and his successor, Louis XVI, who preferred to tinker with clocks than to attend to matters of state” (Gill, 2006, p. 51). Laissez-faire leadership is sometimes noted as a destructive form of leadership as well.

### Teacher Stress and Burnout and Leadership Styles

It has long been believed that overall leadership and the manner in which an individual leads or chooses to lead (leadership style) can positively or negatively influence not only the organizational climate but the subordinates of that leader as well (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988). A Biblical scripture stated that “when the wicked rule, the people mourn.” If there is some truth to this statement, then it stands to reason that the opposite could be said concerning good ruler-ship or leadership as well. While one form of leadership is not considered as being more or less “wicked” in comparison to another, there is a great possibility that different forms of leadership can impact the organizational climate of a school and hence, can directly influence individuals that operate throughout that particular school climate in a variety of ways. Stress and burnout can be one of those different ways and therefore, should be taken seriously as the ramifications for failing to do so, can be massive.

“Rosenholts believed that teacher competence and the behaviors of principals may have reciprocal effects” (Hipp, 1997, p. 5) and a study by Keiper & Busselle (1996) reported that teacher stress was greatly impacted by the lack of administrative support. Similarly, the Southeast Center for Teacher Quality (2005a, 2005b) noted that teacher attrition was related to the lack of administrative support as well (Margolis & Nagel, 2006). A study by Nielsen,

Randall, Yarker, and Brenner (2008), revealed that there is some evidence that links the psychological well-being of employees to the transformational leadership style of a leader. Additionally, Bono and Ilies (2006) identified a positive “relationship between charismatic leaders and positive emotions and mood” (Nielsen, Randall, et al., p. 17). Also, Gilbreath and Benson (2004) found that the behavior of a supervisor “explained incremental variance over and above other workplace factors when predicting general health” (Nielsen, Randall, et al., p. 17). Similarly, there are several studies, according to Nielsen, Randall, et al (2008), that have focused on the link between transformational leadership and subordinate health (Seltzer et al., 1989), transformational leadership and subordinate well-being (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007), and transformational leadership and subordinate job-related stress (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). As outlined by Nielsen, Randall, et al., (2008), these studies were cross-sectional and the only study producing a causal connection between the behavior of a leader and the wellness of a subordinate came from a longitudinal study conducted by Dierendonck, Haynes, Borril, and Stride (2004). Similarly, a study by Hetland, Sandal, and Johnsen (2007) studied levels of stress and burnout in subordinates and the probably correlation to leadership qualities. This study revealed that subordinates with leaders that demonstrated transformational leadership qualities had lower stress and burnout levels. However, those with laissez-faire leaders or passive-avoidant leaders were more vulnerable to stress and burnout.

The study by Winters (1992) indicated that teacher burnout levels are affected significantly when leaders have leadership behaviors that show compassion and concern. This study also indicated that low levels of teacher burnout were connected to nondirective leadership behaviors while high levels of burnout were associated with directive leadership behaviors. Sosik and Godshalk (2000) examined the probable relationship between leadership styles and its

influence on others by viewing the behaviors displayed by mentors and the levels of job related stress experienced by those being mentored. Accordingly, this study found that mentors who use transformational leadership behaviors, such as motivating, supporting, developing and inspiring, could produce followers that experience decreased levels of stress, thereby, increasing satisfaction.

Dierendonck, Haynes, Borril, and Stride (2004), studied leadership behavior styles and the well-being of their subordinates with the notion that the “supervisor-subordinate relationship is reported as one of the most common sources of stress in organizations (e.g., Landeweerd & Boumans, 1994; Tepper, 2000) and an essential element of the psychological climate within an organization (James & James, 1989)” (Dierendonck, Haynes, Borril, & Stride, 2004, p. 165). In this study, Dierendonck, et. al. (2004) surveyed 562 staff members four times within a 14 month period (longitudinal design) to investigate the relationship between subordinate well-being and leadership behaviors. Two measures of leadership were used to pull nine subscales of leadership ranging from Presenting Feedback to Communication, to Fairness and Respect. Six items were also retrieved from Warr’s (1990) depression and anxiety scales, which allowed for the examination of subordinate well-being by enabling employees to rate how their jobs made them feel, whether they felt consistently strained or reasonably happy. The results yielded that leadership behavior and subordinate responses are connected. Still, Offermann and Hellman (1996) conducted a study that focused on the probable relationship between leadership styles and subordinate stress and found that a relationship did exist between the two variables.

Bono, Foldes, Vinson, and Muros (2007) conducted a study that focused on workplace emotions and supervision by exploring the effect the leadership behaviors have on employee emotions. Subjects for this study included 57 health care employees that were randomly selected

and surveyed using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ – Form 5x) (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999), a survey frequently used to assess transformational leadership with “high reliability and convergent and discriminant validity” (Avolio, et al., p.12, 1999). To determine worker emotions, participants’ were questioned about their job satisfaction, stress levels, affective experience, and work status interactions. The author of this article explained that two prominent reasons why employees experience stressful emotions through interaction with their supervisors, center around the fact that supervisors are responsible for performance evaluations and supervisors often limit the autonomy of their workers, which is viewed as a need by many workers. Such interactions tended to lead to feelings of extreme anxiety and irritation for most employees, thereby, causing stress and burnout to occur. Results from this study specified that employees experienced more positive emotions when they interacted with customers and co-workers, and fewer positive emotions when they dealt with their supervisors. Another result from this study was that employees with leaders that were transformational in their approach to leadership, experienced greater, positive emotions throughout the normal work day. Finally, the last results highlighted that employees that regulated their emotions experienced greater levels of stress and decreased job satisfaction but having a transformational leader tended to generate lower stress levels and increased job satisfaction (Bono, Foldes, Vinson, & Muros, 2007).

According to Calabrese (1987), the principal can be an agent for reducing negative teacher stress and capitalizing on positive stress. In this article, the author began by looking at the importance of positive stress and the manner in which good stress or positive stress can serve as a motivator while negative stress can be debilitating. The author discussed the way that principals can stimulate teacher success and increase instructional effectiveness by viewing the causes of stress, like classroom management issues, and by actively getting involved by turning

those stressors around. Calabrese (1987) identified three main causes of stress to fall under three categories: (1) Teacher-Administrator, (2) Teacher-School, and (3) Teacher-Classroom.

“Principals can address these areas, improve their school’s effectiveness, and lower the stress potential of their faculty members by applying leadership” (p. 69) via the following acronym:

L - Let go of the reeling that you’re responsible and that you have all of the answers.

E – Evolve a leadership style that encourages teacher input

A – Adapt yourself to the communication style of your school

D – Deliver what you promised

E – Encourage your staff both orally and in writing.

R – Review your policies and guidelines for ambiguities, concise language, and clear directions (Calabrese, 1987).

Timms, Graham, and Caltabiano (2006) conducted a study on gender implications of perceptions of trustworthiness of school administration and teacher burnout and job stress. This study was done as a means of gathering greater information concerning relationships between teachers and administrators, teacher morale, participative decision making, trust, and how deficiencies in these areas can serve as a catalyst for stress and ultimately, for burnout. A sample of 90 teachers were surveyed using the Queensland Independent Education Union (QIEU) generated survey that questioned teachers about their gender, morale, trust in leadership, and stress levels. According to the results, there were significant “effects for gender and school, with female primary teachers experiencing more burnout job stress than male primary teacher” (p. 343). Female teachers also reported feeling less trusting and confident of school administrators. This article concluded by proposing that greater studies, through the use of empirical measures, needed to be done as a means of gathering more quantitative data since more sustained investigations are in order (Timms, Graham, & Caltabiano, 2006).



The study performed by Kanste, Hyngas, and Nikkila (2007) evaluated the probable relationship between job burnout and transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez faire leadership. The results stated that transformational leadership and active management by exception were not related to burnout but laissez-faire leadership was positively related to emotional exhaustion and burnout. Skogstad, Einarsen, Torsheim, Aasland, & Hetland (2007) studied the relationship between laissez faire leadership and psychological distress in workers. According to the results of this study, laissez faire leadership is strongly related to psychological distress as such leadership allows for greater role conflict and uncertainty, conflict between co-workers and bullying. A study performed by Hipp (1996) investigated the manner in which specific leadership behaviors can impact the self-efficacy of a teacher by using Bandura's theory of social cognitive learning of self-efficacy as the framework. This study was performed within low and high efficiency schools and proposed ten leadership behaviors that sustained a teacher's sense of efficacy. Those leadership behaviors included modeling behavior, believing in the capacity of the teacher, encouraging innovation and consistent development, inspiring group purpose, promoting teacher empowerment and shared decision making. The others included recognizing teacher efforts and accomplishments, fostering teamwork and collaboration, providing personal and professional support, managing student behavior, and promoting a sense of community. The findings of this study showed that the direct behaviors of a principal, along with indirect forms of instructional leadership, served to greatly influence the work and outcome of teachers, thereby, impacting overall school success (Hipp, 1996).

The article entitled by Mark A. Gooden (2005) examined the leadership styles of African American principals in secondary schools and the part that leadership styles play in educational success of educators and students. Gooden (2005) begins with a qualitative study that focuses on

the leadership styles of African American principals in an urban technology high school and how those administrative styles (ethnohumanist vs. bureaucratic) impact such schools. The findings of this study indicated that the leadership styles of school leaders had a positive connection to the educational success of their students and their teachers.

According to Hunter-Boykins and Evans (1995), there is a possible correlation between principals' leadership styles and the morale level of teachers serving under those principals. In determining this correlation, a study was conducted to "(1) determine if there was a significant relationship between principals' administrative leadership and teachers' morale and (2) to determine if there were significant differences among teachers' morale under varying administrative leadership styles" (p. 153). The Leadership Ability Evaluation (LAE) and the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaires (PTO) were the instruments used to collect the necessary data for this study. Leadership styles such as Autocratic, Autocratic-Submissive, Democratic-Cooperative, and Laissez-Faire were covered in the LAE. The PTO gave the covered 10 categories that ranged from "Teacher Rapport with Principal" to "Community Pressures" (p. 157). The results of this study indicated a low positive relationship between the leadership styles of school principals and teacher morale. This study also revealed that a "significant difference existed among the ages of the teachers and school morale. The highest number of low morale schools had more teachers in the 35-39 age range. While morale does not guarantee productive teaching and learning, it does increase to ability of effective teaching and learning being able to occur. As noted in this article, the positives that accompany high morale such as less absenteeism, low teacher turnover rates, and a better learning environment can serve to ultimately produce some positive learning results and is thereby, noteworthy when considering styles of leadership to implement while leading.

## Leadership, Stress, and Other Factors

The probable relationship between leadership and worker stress and burnout has been researched numerous times. However, there are additional factors that need to be considered. Hoogh and Hartog (2009) conducted such a study to examine and evaluate charismatic and autocratic leaders, and the neuroticism and locus of control (i.e., personality traits) of followers, as they relate to follower burnout. The Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (the Dutch version) was used as a means of measuring worker burnout. This allowed exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy to be reviewed within this context. The Charismatic Leader Behavior Scale and the Autocratic Leader Behavior Scale were pulled from an instrument known as the Dutch adaptation of the Charismatic Leadership in Organization questionnaire (CLIO) in identifying autocratic and charismatic leadership behaviors of leaders that relate to burnout. In order to measure the personal locus of control and neuroticism of those working under charismatic or autocratic leaders, the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) was the instrument of choice. Consequently, as outlined in the results, autocratic leadership styles enhanced work overload and stress and charismatic leadership styles had a minimizing effect on work overload and stress. Additionally, there was also a correlation between leadership styles, follower burnout, and the personal personality traits possessed by the follower.

Winters (1992) study on teacher stress, burnout, and school climate, shared how Iwanicki (1983):

Places a major source of job distress, which he defines as extreme stress, in the failure of schools to organize properly to meet the demands of the public as well as the needs of teachers and students. The organization must use a social system or human resources approach to define the plan of operation. Administrators are charged with the problem of recognizing and utilizing personnel to match the job to reduce the possibility of role-related conflict. (p. 40)

## Successful Leadership

Due to the complexities that currently exist in the world that we live in, it is difficult for leaders to be successful alone. The issues that co-exist with the leadership position demand a level of expertise that pulls from varied sources and assistants. Therefore, major emphasis is being placed on firm leadership and the promotion of collegiality and teamwork and successful leaders do this by recognizing the unique abilities and skills that other have. They also know how to promote those skills and abilities in order to accomplish the mission, goal, and objective of an organization (Jones and Rudd (2008).

Similarly, Mazurkeiwicz (2011), stated how successful leaders have the ability to reveal the potential that is within others and also have the power of persuasion in order to get things done. “Such a leader should also be self-aware and reflective. They should understand the importance of knowledge and experience, and value the learning process as well” (p. 88). According to Lin (1999), successful school leaders with strong leadership skills know how to establish an orderly climate, institute a safe learning environment, and communicate high values, goals, and expectations.

According to Winters (1992), highlighted the view of Farrant and Ashforth regarding positive and successful leadership and supervision within a business organization by sharing the following:

New employees come into the situation with a set of fears and anxieties and have difficulty reconciling their desires for power in the group to the reality of the situation. Part of the adjustment involves degrees of perceptions of helplessness and work alienation. Farrant (1989) and Ashforth (1989) both stated that these perceptions can be ameliorated by a supervisor who has taken the trouble to create a healthy organizational climate. (p. 38)

Therefore, positive leadership fosters change that is supportive, transformational, and productive.

Ekman (2003) indicated that both moral and organizational issues are important in good leadership and persistence is a requirement for true leadership success. True leadership success encompasses having power is a construct that allows individuals to have a level of control and influence over others. However, when some leaders are given power, they hold on to it for dear life. Nevertheless, power can be best handled and served by being shared. According to Grubb and Flessa (2006), while dividing and sharing leadership power can be very productive, the process of learning how to do so and actually doing so, is often easier said than done. Nonetheless, it is a process that can be rewarding for leaders who decide to engage in it, thereby, enhancing the leadership abilities of others while lightening their own personal workload as well.

### Destructive Leadership

A study by Skogstad, Einarsen, Torsheim, Aasland, and Hetland (2007) used the MLQ to identify laissez-faire leadership as a destructive form of leadership that heightens workplace and psychological stressors and bullying at work and found the results supported this view. Aasland, Skogstad, Notelaers, Nielsen, and Einarsen (2009) conducted a study that focused on the prevalence of destructive leadership behaviors and they identified three specific destructive leadership behaviors to include tyrannical, derailed, and supportive-disloyal. Tyrannical leaders have leadership behaviors that focus on the accomplishing of organizational goals, tasks, and strategies but this is often done at the risk of subordinates. Leaders such as this may manipulate, belittle, and humiliate their workers as a form of motivation to get the job done. However, due to their ability to accomplish the mission they are often evaluated in different ways by different individuals, according to their beliefs about leadership. Similarly, derailed styled leaders have described as having anti-organizational and anti-subordinate behavior like bullying, humiliating, and deceiving while also participating in fraudulent and/or unprofessional activities such as

absenteeism, fraud, and stealing. Supportive-disloyal leadership includes pro-subordinate behavior along with anti-organizational behavior. These leaders know how to successfully motivate and inspire their subordinates while stealing organizational resources. They may also give their workers more benefits than they deserve, thereby, causing the organization to suffer loss. These leadership styles, like laissez faire leadership, often impact subordinates negatively and generate stress levels that can be harmful and destructive (Aasland, Skogstad, Notelaers, Nielsen & Einarsen, 2009).

### Leadership and Follow-ship

The concept of leadership and fellowship go hand-in-hand and according to Gill (2006), while the two go together, the practice of follow-ship is not always automatic. Following is done either with enthusiasm or unwillingly and this can lead to either satisfaction or strong dissatisfaction. In order to turn around the negative impact that dissatisfaction can bring, the concept of empowerment can be implemented. This can be done through the process of delegating, mentoring, coaching, and establishing team missions and values (Gill, 2006). Similarly, Yukl (1998) explained how successful leadership has influence as a backdrop and is therefore, able to rouse followers to action. Conger (1998) focused on similar themes in his study of ‘the dark side’ of leadership, in which he recognizes that leaders may use their charismatic qualities for personal gain and negatively turn against what is good for both followers and the organization in an abusive fashion. Aasland (2009) identified a study by Kelloway and his colleagues which also identified such negative behaviors in their study of poor leadership. In this study, they identified and differentiated the variance between an active, abusive, and avoidant/passive leadership styles. Avoidant or passive leadership, which is also referred to as ‘laissez faire leadership’ (Bass, 1990), represents a leadership style in which the leader has been physically appointed to a leadership position but in practice, has abandoned the

responsibilities and duties assigned to him or her (Aasland, 2009).

Brown and Mitchell (2010), explained that the tone of an organization, in regards to its goals and behaviors, is “set by leaders and their ability to effectively communicate and reward their workers, thereby, motivating those workers to yield to a desired tone” (p. 583). Leaders of the above magnitude, with strong leadership skills and abilities, are central to the success of not only business organizations but to educational organizations as well. Similarly, Foster (1986), expressed that leadership is a task that is consensual and it is also includes the process of sharing ideas and responsibilities, “where a leader is a leader for a moment only, where the leadership exerted must be validated by the consent of followers, and where leadership lies in the struggles of a community to find meaning for itself” (p. 10).

According to Jones and Rudd (2008), effective leaders “need to include their subordinates and employees, their peers, and perhaps even their superiors” (p. 89) in their critical leadership and change processes. Such collegial leadership empowers and often serves as a change catalyst by enhancing follow-ship, shifting stressful organizational environments into less stressful climates, and strengthening the utilization of leadership styles cause the above actions to occur more effectively.

#### Missing Stress and Burnout Consideration

Seemingly, a number of elementary school principals are just as stressed and burned out as their teachers and as a result, they may be leading from and through those same negative symptoms as stressed and burned out teachers. Fullan (2001) explains how principals are expected to do so much more with so much less; less support, money, guidance, and less understanding from those in authority. It is for this reason that so many school administrators are abandoning the administrative position altogether. However, he believes that principals can learn

to minimize some of their stressful frustrations by developing leaders within their schools that can assist them with the day to day instructional, operational, organizational, and leadership requirements that accompany their position. This can be done more effectively through collegial collaboration, teamwork, power sharing, professional development, professional learning communities, trust, and by the use of observations. It can also be done via the study of stress and burnout in educational leaders and factors that can serve to turn this negative cycle around for them as well.

Also, while most leaders seem to lean more towards one type of leadership style over another, many leaders are now coming to the realization that such unyielding leadership is not as effective. Balance in the use and implementation of leadership styles is a key factor of effective leadership as being too far to the left (autocratic) or too far to the right (laissez-faire) can be detrimental and unfavorable to the leaders, their followers, and organization as a whole.

### Summary

This literature review provided information on the concepts surrounding teacher stress and burnout, concepts and theories of leadership, leadership styles, and the manner in which teacher stress and burnout, along with the leadership styles of a leader, may correlate. The main purpose of this review was to address the important aspects, studies, concepts, theories and findings connected to this study topic. This review was also organized to provide relevant considerations and examinations of the current research that is presently available on this topic. Additionally, this review demonstrated the ever increasing tentacles of teacher stress and burnout, the complexity of leadership and leadership styles, and the way that leadership styles (among other factors) can relate to teacher stress and burnout. This review also indicated that there is a need for additional research that addresses the topic of teacher stress and burnout in



elementary schools, and its relation to transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles, and beyond.

This study is important because the current research on the topic of teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles is very limited at the elementary school level. Also, it is vital because the success or failure of an organization tends to rise or fall according to leadership. Additionally, many educators know that effective school leadership, along with successful teaching and student learning, start at the elementary level; a level that is a mandatory component of students' academic, civic, societal, financial, and life-long success.

In this study, teacher stress and burnout was discussed as a negative condition that should be greatly reduced as it can become almost debilitating for teachers and hurtful for those attached to those teachers. As indicated by Cosgrove (2000), teacher stress and burnout (TSB) is a condition that can negatively impact teachers and the overall organizational health of a school, thereby, greatly diminishing the success of all parties involved. While stress can be a positive or negative condition (eustress vs. distress), it is the negative form of stress or distress that hurts teachers and schools the most. Negative stress often manifests through symptoms of illness, depression, and extreme exhaustion, and can result in burnout. Hence, causing a ripple effect of negative consequences to occur that touches teachers, organizational/school climates, students, and other school stakeholders (Cosgrove, 2000).

According to Powell and Cheshire (2004), the National Union of Teachers reported that “stress is one of the biggest problems facing teachers today, and that it is the main health and safety concern in four out of five schools. Compared to other occupational groups (e.g. doctors, dentists, nurses), teachers experience lower job satisfaction and poorer mental health” (p. 56). O’Donnel, Lambert, and McCarthy (2008) identified teaching as a job that has the potential to be

very frustrating and emotionally taxing. Additionally, as noted by Farber (1984), the high risk of stress and burnout that accompanies teaching can compromise and damage the educational practices that are consistently applied in the schools of today (O'Donnel, Lambert, & McCarthy, 2008). Still, Klassen, Usher, and Bong (2010) shared a description by Greenglass and Burke (1997), which described teaching as a stressful occupation that includes many demands from leaders, colleagues, parents and the community. They also saw it as an occupation that is plagued by work overload, policy shifts, and lack of successes (p. 466). Similarly, Robins (2010) shared how the pressures of teaching, which can occur via ever-changing standards, evolving technological advances, and external influences and reviewed how those issues, along with many others, can cause teachers to experience extreme anxiety and depression, thereby, causing many of them to leave the field of teaching prematurely.

Leadership styles were identified as a variety of leadership methods or behaviors that school principals used while leading. The focal leadership styles within this study centered on transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire leadership.

Transformational leadership is currently viewed as a viable form of leadership that today's leaders should aspire to implement during the leadership process. Transactional leadership is viewed as a more traditional form of leadership that encompasses a reciprocal effect that occurs between the leader and employee. In this particular form of leadership, the leader will exchange rewards for a job well done or consequences and punishments when a job is not done well.

Laissez-faire leadership is identified as the least favorable form of leadership. This form of leadership is also called "absent leadership" because laissez-faire leaders tend to just sit back and allow things to run themselves or they only get involved with an issue when they absolutely have to. Such laid-back leaders often leave the process of leading in the hands of the teachers and the

results can be good or bad, depending upon the strength, professionalism, and self-motivation of their staff. More often than not however, it appears that laissez-faire leadership will usually lead to more negative than positive outcomes.

As indicated, Eeden, Cilliers, and Deventer (2000) studied transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. The positive components of transformational leadership included idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. While not everyone views this style as being exceptional, it is considered as being more democratic. Hence, it is considered as the most acceptable form of leadership for today's educational leaders. Transactional leadership was described as involving a social exchange process between leaders and followers as followers successfully complete assigned or expected tasks as a means of receiving awards and avoiding probable penalties as a contingent reward. Transactional leadership is also viewed as management-by-exception (active or passive) which involves the leader either looking for discrepancies and providing corrective action or waiting for infractions or complaints to come directly to him or her before taking action. Additionally, laissez-faire or passive leadership is described as the avoidance or absence of leadership. In this form of leadership, leaders will often leave the "responsibility for the work to the followers and avoids setting goals and clarifying expectations, organizing priorities, becoming involved when important issues arise, taking a stand on issues and making decisions" (Eeden, Cilliers, and Deventer, 2000, p.255), thereby, allowing for self-regulation and management. Such leadership can lead to non-performance, poor academic results, poor teaching habits, bullying, and even higher levels of stress and burnout.

Teacher stress and burnout along with the leadership styles of leaders was addressed as having a probable connection since leaders play a viable role in shaping the climate of their

schools and the stakeholders within those schools. Thereby, indicating the possibility of leadership styles having a correlation to teacher stress and burnout. According to Hunter-Boykins and Evans (1995), there is a positive relationship between principals' leadership styles and the morale level of teachers serving under those principals. Winters (1993) study highlighted the way that teacher burnout levels are significantly impacted by compassionate, empathetic, and concerned leaders. This study also revealed that low levels of teacher burnout were connected to nondirective leadership behaviors while high levels of burnout were associated with directive leadership behaviors. Sosik and Godshalk (2000) investigated the possible connection between leadership styles and job related stress by studying mentors and mentee relationships. The findings of this study indicated that mentors with transformational leadership behaviors (motivating, supporting, developing and inspiring) often produced followers that experienced decreased stress levels which decreased burnout instances and increased their satisfaction levels. Similarly, a study by Dierendonck, Haynes, Borril, and Stride (2004), highlighted leadership behavior styles and the well-being of their subordinates with the finding that one of the most common causes of organizational stress and burnout, is the supervisor-subordinate relationship.

In closing, while earlier researchers have studied the relationship between teacher stress and burnout conditions (TSB) and leadership styles, it has been difficult to identify studies that focused specifically on these variables from the elementary school perspective. However, based upon the numerous studies that have been conducted, the evidence indicates that there is a direct correlation between the leadership styles of leaders and the stress and burnout levels of their followers. Also, although studies indicate that stress can be a positive or negative condition (eustress vs. distress), negative stress or distress hurts teachers and schools the most and can

often lead to burnout. The symptoms that accompany stress and burnout includes depression, exhaustion, sickness, and hopelessness, thereby, causing waves of negative repercussions to impact not only teachers but those attached to their educational arenas as well (Cosgrove, 2000). Therefore, it is essential that leaders of educational organizations have an understanding of this topic and the relationship that certain leadership styles, methods, and behaviors can have on teacher stress and burnout conditions (TSB). Doing so could serve to proactively address teacher stress and burnout, the negative ramifications that accompany this condition, and it could positively impact school teachers, their leaders, their students, and other school stakeholders as well. It could also positively influence the overall organizational health and climate of the school. All of which could serve to improve the future of education, society, and ultimately, the world.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles of elementary school principals. Specifically, this study seeks to describe the relationship between teacher stress and burnout and transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles as perceived by early elementary school teachers (K-2<sup>nd</sup>).

The focus of this methodology chapter is to identify the methods and procedures that were used to complete this study. A descriptive research method was used to examine and analyze the relationship between teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles in a quantitative format via measurement instruments.

Data for this study was generated via kindergarten through second grade elementary school teachers. The early elementary school level (K-2<sup>nd</sup>) was chosen because this is where students get their educational foundation. That educational foundation needs to be strong and sturdy if students are to transition through the stages of education with success. Teachers play a pivotal role in establishing that foundation. However, it is difficult for teachers to establish that foundation when they are stressed and burned out. Therefore, this study is needful and the manner in which this study was analyzed is included in the methodology chapter.

The research questions below guided the collection and analysis of data in this study (1 being the main research question and 2-4 being subsequent questions):

- 1) Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of principals in elementary schools?
- 2) Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transformational leadership style of principals in elementary schools?
- 3) Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transactional leadership style of principals in elementary schools?
- 4) Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the laissez-faire leadership style of principals in elementary schools?

The unit of analysis for this study was comprised of teachers. These teachers were randomly selected from kindergarten through second grade teachers from elementary schools located in the Escambia County School District in Escambia, Florida and the Mobile County Public Schools in Mobile, Alabama. The research sample for this study consisted of 162 full-time, kindergarten, first, and second grade elementary classroom teachers. Permission to survey these elementary teachers was obtained by submitting a formal letter of request to the superintendent of the Escambia County School District in Escambia, FL and the superintendent of Mobile County Public Schools in Mobile, AL and both superintendents gave their consent. The final data results revealed inferential data that will be useful in the future.

### Research Design

The research method for this study was quantitative research and the variables for this study were analyzed using a correlational research method; Pearson-Product Moment Correlation. Quantitative research, as highlighted by Cresswell (2009), allows the relationship between variables and theories to be examined/measured via the use of instruments. These instruments yield numerical data that can be analyzed through the use of statistical procedures

and ultimately, shared in a finalized report (Cresswell, 2009). The correlational research design is generally used when studying educational and social science problems. It is advantageous in that it allows numerous variables to be studied at one time as several factors can influence a particular behavior. “Correlational designs allow us to analyze how these variables, either singly or in combination, affect the pattern of behavior” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007, p. 336). An additional advantage of this form of research is that it enables the statistical significance of a relationship between variables to be studied. Weaknesses within the correlational research design can stem from relationships that result from outlying or overlapping artifacts and from the halo effect due to rater bias (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007).

#### Unit of Analysis

In order to conduct this study, the unit of analysis was teachers. These teachers were full-time kindergarten, first, and second grade elementary school teachers. They were chosen from elementary schools that are located throughout the Escambia County School District in Escambia, Florida and the Mobile County Public School System in Mobile, Alabama.

#### Data Collection Method

Survey research was used to collect data for this study via two instruments. Both instruments were used to survey kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers that were randomly selected from elementary schools. The two instruments were the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educator’s Survey (MBI-ES; Maslach, Jackson, & Schwab, 1986, 2010) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ – Form 5X -Rater Form; Bass & Avolio, 1995, 2000, 2004). Both the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educator’s Survey (MBI-ES) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire - Form 5X – Rater Form (MLQ) were sent electronically through email to participants via Qualtrics (survey software). Teachers were asked to complete



the surveys electronically and to return them electronically to the researcher for statistical analysis. Additionally, the following demographics were requested during the survey process: the teachers' gender, age range, ethnicity, years of experience, and highest degree obtained, and the principals' ethnicity and gender. The socioeconomic level of the school (Title I or Non-Title I) was also requested and the type of class or classes serviced by that particular teacher on a daily basis (general education, special education, inclusion; self-contained, departmentalized) were requested as well. In order to encourage teacher participation, information about this study was emailed to potentially participating teachers via the IRB Consent Form. The consent form requested their participation in this study and cited potential benefits to the future of education. It also informed them of the confidentiality surrounding this study and offered information of the research study findings.

#### Teacher Stress and Burnout Measure

The Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educator's Survey (MBI-ES), is used to measure stress and burnout that teachers encounter on the job (Maslach, Jackson, & Schwab, 1986, 2010). The Maslach Burnout Inventory is an instrument that was initially designed to measure stress in health professions. The second edition of the MBI was formed to measure burnout components experienced by teachers. This instrument measures chronic stress and burnout in educators via emotional exhaustion, depersonalization/cynicism, and personal accomplishment/professional efficacy categories through 22 job related feeling statements. The statements on this survey can be rated from 0 (never) to 6 (every day) (Maslach, Jackson, & Schwab, 1986, 2010). The MBI was highlighted as being a significant research instrument for groups in order to generate further knowledge on the burnout phenomenon and to determine if a large number of employees suffer from this condition within an organization (Maslach, Jackson, & Schwab, 1986, 2010). Maslach

and Leiter (1997) identified studies on the validity and reliability of the MBI and “reported Cronbach alpha values ranging from .88 to .90 for emotional exhaustion, .74 to .76 for depersonalization, and .72 to .76 for personal accomplishment” (Lambert, McCarthy, O’Donnell, & Wang, 2009, p. 978). Similarly, Winters (1992), identified the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educator’s Survey and its reliability as follows:

Subscale coefficients range from .71 to .90 (N=1,316). Subscale standard errors of measurement range from 3.16 to 3.80. Test- - retest reliability coefficients range from .60 to .82 after two to four weeks (N=53) and .54 to .60 (N=248) after two years. Cronbach alpha estimates on the Form Ed range from .76 to .90 (N=469) and .72 to .88 (N=462) are reported in two studies (Hargrove, 1989). (p.67)

Therefore, this instrument is noted as being reliable as it consistently yields similar results (via Cronbach alpha values) and valid as it measures what it was produced to measure.

#### Leadership Styles Measure

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire – Form 5X - Rater Form (Bass & Avolio, 1995, 2000, 2004) was used to gather and collect the data on the leadership styles of elementary school principals as perceived by their teachers. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) is a tool that measures transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles of individuals and scales of leadership and it includes nine leadership subscales.

Transformational leadership aspects measured by this instrument include intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, idealized influence (attributed), idealized influence (behavior), and intellectual stimulation. Transactional leadership is measured by the MLQ via contingent reward and management by exception (active) and management by exception (passive) and laissez-faire, an inactive form of leadership characterized by a reluctance to become actively involved and a view that the best leadership is to disassociate from the action” (Jones & Rudd, 2008, p. 91).

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ Form-5X) (Bass & Avolio, 1996; 1997; 2004) has descriptive items that focus on aspects of transformational and transactional leadership along with features of passive/avoidant leadership and outcomes of leadership. Factors of transformational leadership that are measured include three charismatic features known as idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, and inspirational motivation, along with intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Transactional features that are measured include contingent reward and management-by-exception (active). While management-by-exception (passive) and laissez-faire leadership are aspects of transactional leadership, they are positioned under the title of passive/avoidant. The final range that is measured is termed as outcomes of leadership and measure extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction. “The reliability of the MLQ, as reported by Bass and Avolio for each leadership factor, ranges from .74 to .91” (Jones & Rudd, 2008). Respondents are asked to identify how often particular leadership behaviors are observed using a five point Likert scale that ranges from 0 to 4 with 0 meaning not at all and 4 indicating frequently, if not always. Reported reliabilities for the individual scales included in the MLQ are indicated in Table 1 as follows according to Pinegar (1994):

Table 1

*Reliability of the MLQ: Previously documented reliability coefficients*

Reliabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6
Spangle & Braiotta (1990)	.87	.86	.87	.68	.84	.76
Keller (1992)	.83		.79			
Hater & Bass (1988)	.94	.90	.89	.86	.67	.69
Bass & Avolio (1989)	.93	.89	.86	.77	.74	.64
Seltzer & Bass (1990)	.93	.90	.86			
1 – Charisma						
2 – Individual Consideration						
3 – Intellectual Stimulation						
4 – Contingent Rewards						
5 – Active Management by Exception						
6 – Passive Management by Exception						

The transformational scales consistently receive higher reliability ratings than do the transactional scales. Bass and Avolio (1989) recommend separating Management-by-exception into its active and passive components to enhance the explanatory power of the instrument. The reliability of the scales are typically increased to above .70 which is suggested by Nunnally (1978) as acceptable (Active management-by-exception alphas range from .67 to .84, and Passive management-by-exception alphas range from .64 to .76); however, they are not consistently above the generally preferred level of .80 as defined by Carmines and Zeller (1979). (Pinegar, 1994, pg. 62)

Similarly, the validity of the MLQ has been tried and tested in a number of additional studies that have also used this instrument to measure leadership behavior. Bono, Foldes, Vinson, and Muros (2007) explained that the workplace emotions were significantly related to the role of organizational leaders and highlighted the MLQ as a vital instrument in determining that significance. A study by Skogstad, Einarsen, Torsheim, Aasland, and Hetland (2007) used the MLQ to identify laissez-faire leadership as a destructive form of leadership that heightens workplace and psychological stressors and bullying at work and found the results supported this view. Sosik and Godshalk (2000) described the MLQ as a psychometrically sound instrument and used it to determine if a correlation existed between transformational and transactional leadership behaviors of mentors and job-related stress experienced by employees.

Finally, the MBI and the MLQ instruments were used in this study to survey kindergarten through second grade teachers as the validity and the reliability of both instruments have been tried, tested, and determined in numerous studies. Information from the returned data was used as a means of determining if a statistically significant relationship existed between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of elementary school principals. The findings that emerge from this study will be shared with school administrators and higher educational organizations as a means of helping to minimize the condition of teacher stress and burnout via educational awareness.

## Sample and Sampling Strategy

The research study sample was comprised of 92 kindergarten, first grade, and second grade teachers from elementary schools in two southeastern school districts; the Escambia County School District in Escambia, Florida and the Mobile County Public School System in Mobile, Alabama. The sampling strategy for this study was random sampling/selection. This strategy was used to determine the kindergarten, first, and second grade elementary school teachers that would be invited to participate in this study. Teachers were organized into two separate lists by school districts. Those teachers were numbered and that range of numbers were ran through Randomizer.org; an online random number generator, according to the number of kindergarten through second grade teachers needed for this study. The numbers that were generated determined the teachers that received an invitation to participate in this study.

Teachers were chosen from these two school districts because of the statistical needs tied to my research design as doing so would allow for greater generalization of the data results. I also chose these two districts because I preferred to survey a fairly large sample from this population. The Escambia County School District has a large number of elementary schools (30) and it is located in my current residential location, so accessing a sample from this district was somewhat more convenient for me. The Mobile County Public School System was chosen because it also has a larger group of elementary schools (50) throughout its district and it is similar to the Escambia County School District in Escambia, Florida. The targeted sample size for this study was 103 participants (G\*Power 3.1.9.2). Invitations to participate in this study were sent to a total of 200 teachers from each system and a total of 162 teachers agreed to participate. Upon agreement, teachers were given access to the MBI and the MLQ surveys. The

finalized data yielded a sample size of 92 participants (89% of the targeted sample size) that completed the MBI, MLQ, and the demographic questions.

#### Data Analysis Method

Data was analyzed using a correlational research statistics/analysis design known as the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ), which aligns with the research questions of this study. This correlational research statistics/analysis design is strong in that it allows the relationship between numerous variables to be examined and analyzed and  $r$  yields a small standard error (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Therefore, it was used to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of principals in elementary schools as perceived by elementary school teachers. Data was collected on the variables and was computed using a correlation coefficient ( $r$ ). The surveys known as and the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educator's Survey (MBI) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ – Form 5X – Rater Form) were used to gather and collect the data for this research design. Reliability of instruments were measured via Cronbach's alpha which yielded a reliability coefficient (.70 is acceptable) (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007).

Additional descriptive demographic variables were requested and applied to the survey process. The descriptive demographic data was requested on the teachers' gender, age range, ethnicity, years of experience, and highest degree obtained. The principals' ethnicity and gender, along with the socioeconomic level of the school (Title I or Non-Title I) were requested as well. Also, teachers were asked about the type of classes they service on a daily basis (general education, special education, inclusion; self-contained or departmentalized). This demographic information was then organized and grouped using frequency distribution tables. The MBI and

the MLQ survey data were returned and analyzed statistically. The data findings were organized in tabled and summarized.

### Summary

In summary, chapter III describes the research methods that were used to examine and analyze whether a statistically significant relationship existed between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of elementary school principals as perceived by elementary school teachers. This chapter includes the research design (Quantitative), the unit of analysis (teachers), and the data collection methods (survey research) that were vital to this study. It also includes information surrounding the sample (K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teachers) that was used in this study. As indicated in this chapter, the foundational variables for this study were teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire). Teachers, from elementary schools throughout the Escambia County School District and Mobile County Public Schools, were the unit of analysis for this particular study. Random selection/sampling is the sampling strategy that was used in order to determine the elementary school teachers that were asked to participate in this study. The data was analyzed using a correlational analysis research design (Pearson-Product Moment Correlation). This particular research design was used to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of principals in elementary schools as perceived by elementary school teachers. The specific instruments that were used in this study were the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educator's Survey (MBI) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire - Form 5X – Rater Form (MLQ). These two surveys were used to gather and collect the data for this study and they were chosen because they have been consistently used in numerous studies on teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles. They were also been selected because of their

determined reliability and validity. Both surveys were sent electronically through email to participants through Qualtrics. Surveyed teachers were asked to complete the surveys electronically and to return them electronically to the researcher for statistical data analysis through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, 1989). The benchmark for statistical significance was set at .05. Once these surveys were completed and the accompanying data was collected, organized, analyzed, and examined, the methodology results were then presented in chapter four. In regards to limitations, participation in this study was requested which means that participation in this study was a choice. Some teachers chose to participate and some chose not to participate. Also, accurate and timely teacher responses could not be guaranteed or forced. Additionally, some teachers, particularly new, non-tenured teachers, may have felt uncomfortable about participating in this study. As it relates to delimitations, survey participants were limited to only K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers; survey participants were limited to two southeastern school districts, and only two surveys were used in this study; the MLQ and the MBI. Lastly, assumptions of this study were that teachers would respond openly, honestly, and accurately; teachers would want to participate in this study, and teachers would believe that their participation in this study would play an essential part in enhancing the life of education and educational stakeholders.

In closing, the methodology chapter is a crucial aspect of this study as it was used to produce the means by which chapter four was expanded upon. This chapter also played a vital role in stabilizing this study for this current research project and for future research studies as well.



## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

The focus of this results chapter is to present an analysis of data gathered as a result of this study. The purpose of this study is to determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of elementary school principals. Specifically, this study seeks to describe the relationship between teacher stress and burnout and transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles as perceived by early elementary school teachers (K-2<sup>nd</sup>). Elementary school teachers served as the unit of analysis for this study. Elementary school teachers were highlighted in this study because students receive their educational foundation at this particular level. That educational foundation can be compromised when teachers suffer from stress and burnout. Participating teachers were randomly selected from kindergarten through second grade teachers from elementary schools within the Escambia County School District in Escambia, Florida (30) and elementary schools from Mobile County Public Schools in Mobile, Alabama (50). The research sample for this study consisted of 92 full-time, kindergarten, first, and second grade elementary classroom teachers (89% of the targeted sample size of 103). Permission to survey these teachers was obtained from the superintendent of the Escambia County School District in Escambia, FL and the superintendent of Mobile County Public Schools in Mobile, AL. Quantitative and descriptive research methods were used within this study on teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles. Survey research was used to collect the data for this study. The

two survey instruments that were used were the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educator's Survey (MBI) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire - Form 5X – Rater Form (MLQ). The raw data were analyzed using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ). The descriptive demographic data were summarized and presented in tables. The data were retrieved as a means of answering the following research study questions:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of principals in elementary schools?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transformational leadership style of principals in elementary schools?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transactional leadership style of principals in elementary schools?
4. Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the laissez-faire leadership style of principals in elementary schools?

### Sample and Subscale Descriptive Analysis

#### *Study Sample*

To address the question of whether a statistically significant relationship exists between teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles of elementary school principals as perceived by elementary school teachers, a total of 162 responses were collected from the survey instruments. When correlations were ran, outliers were tested via standardized values, or z scores, where the values below -3.29 or above 3.29 were the criteria for outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012). No outliers were present in the data set. Partial responses were present for the dependent variables and a demographic question. A total of 48 participants did not have a transactional leadership score. A total of 50 participants did not have a transformational leadership score. A total of 40

participants did not have a laissez-faire leadership score. When factoring in all overlaps of nonresponses for the dependent variables, a total of 69 participants were removed. An additional respondent was removed for not responding to the demographic question: does your school receive Title 1 funding? As a result of all removals, a total of 92 respondents were used in final analyses (89% of the targeted sample size of 103).

A majority of the participants were female (85, 92%). Most of the subjects were of Caucasian/white ethnicity (60, 65%). A majority of the participants were between 35 and 49 years old (39, 42%). Most of the subjects had a Bachelor’s degree (47, 51%). A majority of the participants had more than 15 years of teaching experience (36, 39%). Most of the subjects taught second grade (36, 38%). A majority of the participants taught at schools that received Title 1 funding (81, 88%). Most of the subjects taught general education classes (57, 51%). A majority of the participants taught at a school with a female principal (73, 79%). Most of the subjects taught at a school with a Caucasian/white principal (62, 67%). Frequencies and percentages of the demographics are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

*Frequencies and percentages of demographics*

Demographic	<i>n</i>	%
What is your gender?		
Male	7	8
Female	85	92
What is your ethnicity?		
Caucasian/white	60	65
African American/black	29	32
Hispanic/Latino	1	1
Prefer not to answer	2	2
What is your age range?		
20 – 34	27	29
35 – 49	39	42
50 – 64	23	25

65 and over	2	2
Prefer not to answer	1	1
What is your highest earned degree?		
BS	47	51
M. Ed./MA	40	44
Ed. S.	4	4
Dr.	1	1
How many years of teaching experience do you have?		
First year teacher	9	10
2 – 5 years	17	19
6 – 14 years	30	33
15+ years or more	36	39
What grade level do you teach? (teachers had multiple responses)		
Kindergarten	17	18
First grade	28	30
Second grade	36	38
Other	13	14
Does your school receive Title 1 funding?		
Yes	81	88
No	11	12
What type of class/classes do you teach (teachers had multiple responses)		
General education class	57	51
Special education class	8	7
Inclusion class	22	20
Self-contained (teaching all core subjects to same group of students)	22	20
Departmentalized (teaching assigned subjects(s) to more than one group of students – either the teacher or the class rotates)	3	2
What is your school principal's gender?		
Male	19	21
Female	73	79
What is your school principal's ethnicity?		
Caucasian/white	62	67
African American/black	25	27
Hispanic/Latino	1	1
Asian	2	2
Prefer not to answer	2	2

*Note.* Due to rounding error, not all percentages may sum to 100.

Stress and burnout scores ranged from 1.41 to 5.53, with  $M = 3.41$  and  $SD = 1.03$ .

Transactional scores ranged from 1.50 to 4.88, with  $M = 3.11$  and  $SD = 0.61$ . Transformational scores ranged from 1.35 to 4.80, with  $M = 3.05$  and  $SD = 0.86$ . Laissez-faire scores ranged from

1.00 to 4.25, with  $M = 2.55$  and  $SD = 0.78$ . Means and standard deviations of continuous variables are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics of Continuous Variables*

Composite Scores	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Stress and burnout	1.41	5.53	3.41	1.03
Transactional	1.50	4.88	3.11	0.61
Transformational	1.35	4.80	3.05	0.86
Laissez-faire	1.00	4.25	2.55	0.78

*Note:* Stress and burnout possible range was 1.00 to 7.00  
 Leadership possible ranges were 1.00 to 5.00.

*Reliability of Study Scales*

Cronbach's alpha tests of reliability and internal consistency were conducted on scales; one test per scale. The Cronbach's alpha provides mean correlation between each pair of items and the number of items in a scale (Brace, Kemp, & Snelgar, 2012). The alpha values were interpreted using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2010) where  $\alpha > .9$  excellent,  $>.8$  good,  $>.7$  acceptable,  $>.6$  questionable,  $>.5$  poor, and  $\leq .5$  unacceptable. Results for transformational leadership indicated excellent reliability. Results for Laissez-faire indicated good reliability. Results for transactional leadership indicated questionable reliability. Results for stress and burnout indicated unacceptable reliability. As a result, interpretations for this variable must be made with caution. Reliability statistics for the three composite scores for leadership are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

*Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics for the Three Composite Scores for Leadership*

Scale	No. of Items	$\alpha$
Stress and burnout	22	.43
Transformational	20	.95
Transactional	8	.60
Laissez-faire	8	.84

### Statistical Analysis of Research Questions

**Research Question One:** Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles used by elementary school principals?

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is not a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles used by elementary school principals?

To address research question one, three Pearson correlations were conducted to assess the relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles used by elementary school principals. A Pearson ( $r$ ) is a bivariate measure of association (strength) of the relationship between two variables. Given that all the variables in the research are continuous (interval/ratio) level, Pearson correlations are the appropriate bivariate statistical analysis (Pagano, 2009).

#### **Pearson Correlation #1 (Stress and Burnout and Transformational Leadership)**

A Pearson correlation was conducted to assess the relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transformational leadership styles of principals in elementary schools. Prior to conducting the Pearson correlation, the assumptions – linearity and homoscedasticity – must be

assessed. Linearity was assessed with a scatterplot between teacher stress and burnout and transformational leadership style. The assumption was met as the data followed an approximate linear trend (Figure 4). The assumption of homoscedasticity was assessed with a scatterplot between regression standardized predicted values and regression standardized residuals. The assumption was met as the data points were randomly distributed and the data did not follow a particular pattern (Figure 5).

Results of the correlation indicated significance,  $r = -0.59, p < .001$ . Thus, there is sufficient evidence for a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transformational leadership styles of principals in elementary schools. Therefore, high transformational leadership is correlated with lower stress and burnout in teachers. Results of the Pearson correlation are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

*Pearson Correlation between Teacher Stress and Burnout and Transformational Leadership*

Teacher stress and burnout	
Transformational leadership	-0.59**

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

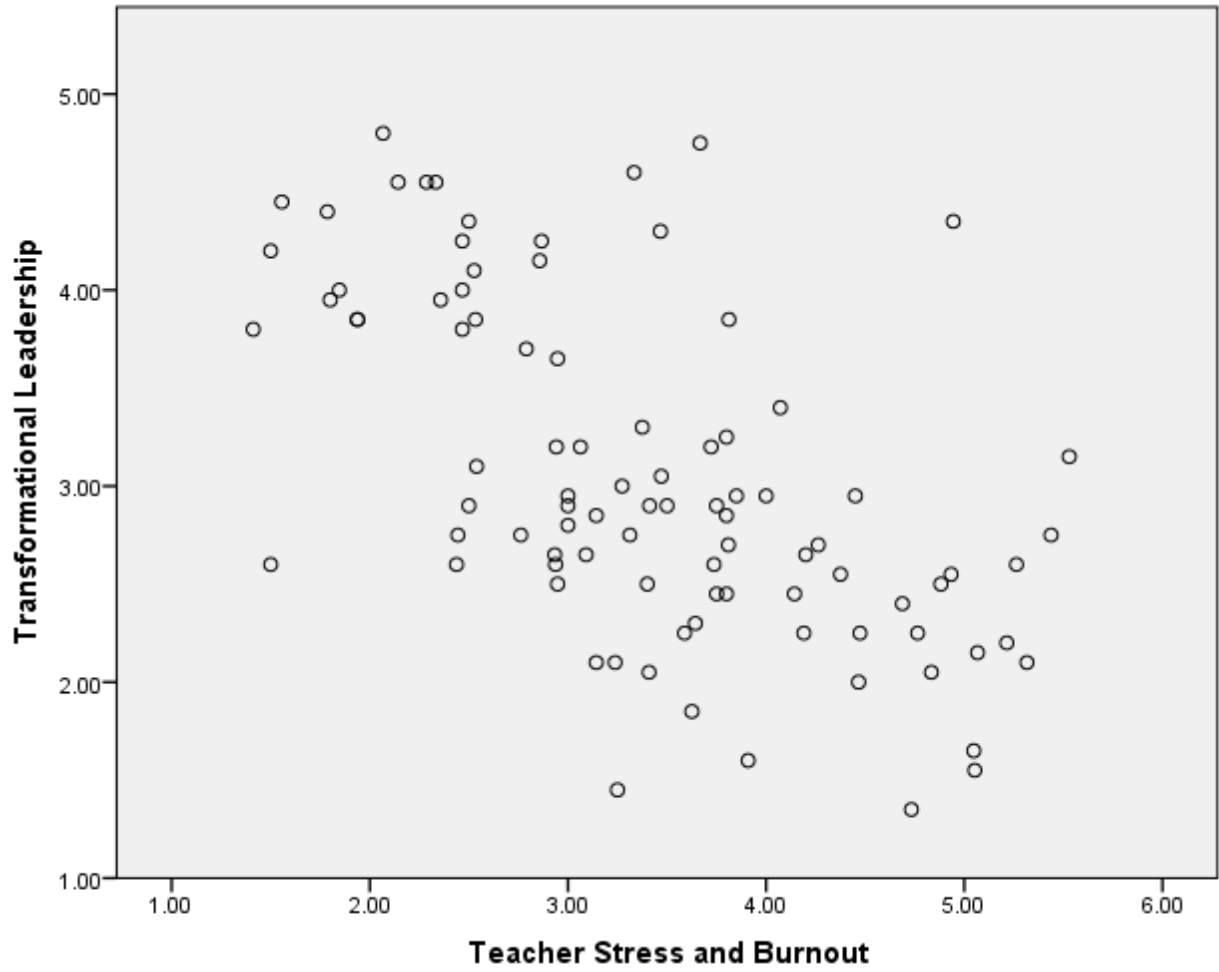


Figure 4. Scatterplot of teacher stress and burnout and transformational leadership.



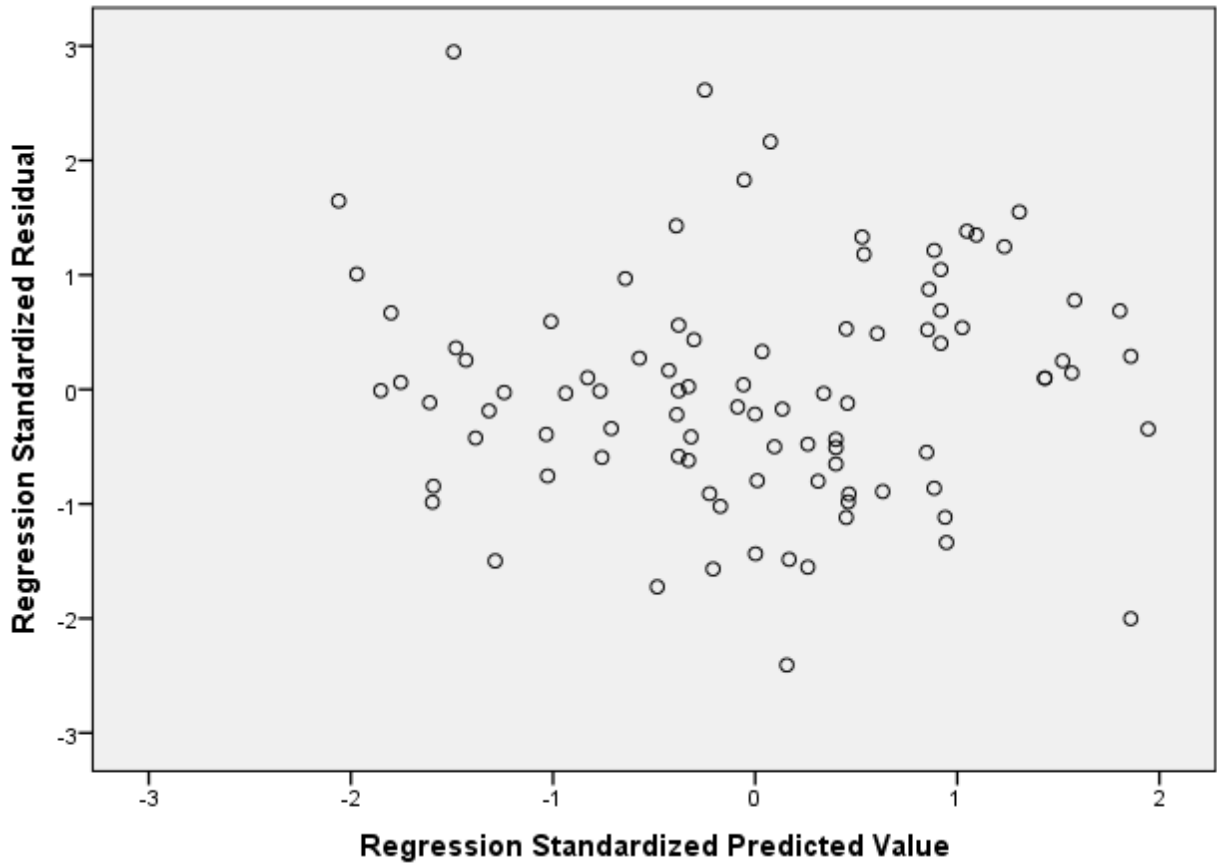


Figure 5. Residual scatterplot to assess for homoscedasticity.

### **Pearson Correlation #2 (Stress and Burnout and Transactional Leadership)**

A Pearson correlation was conducted to assess the relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transactional leadership styles of principals in elementary schools. Prior to conducting the Pearson correlation, the assumptions – linearity and homoscedasticity – must be assessed. Linearity was assessed with a scatterplot between teacher stress and burnout and transactional leadership style. The assumption was met as the data followed an approximate linear trend (Figure 6). The assumption of homoscedasticity was assessed with a scatterplot between regression standardized predicted values and regression standardized residuals. The

assumption was met as the data points were randomly spread and the data did not follow a particular pattern (Figure 7).

Results of the correlation indicated significance,  $r = -0.31, p < .001$ . Thus, there is sufficient evidence for a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transactional leadership styles of principals in elementary schools. Hence, transactional leadership is correlated with low teacher stress and burnout. Results of the Pearson correlation are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

*Pearson Correlation between Teacher and Stress Burnout and Transactional Leadership*

Teacher stress and burnout we	
Transactional leadership	-0.31**

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

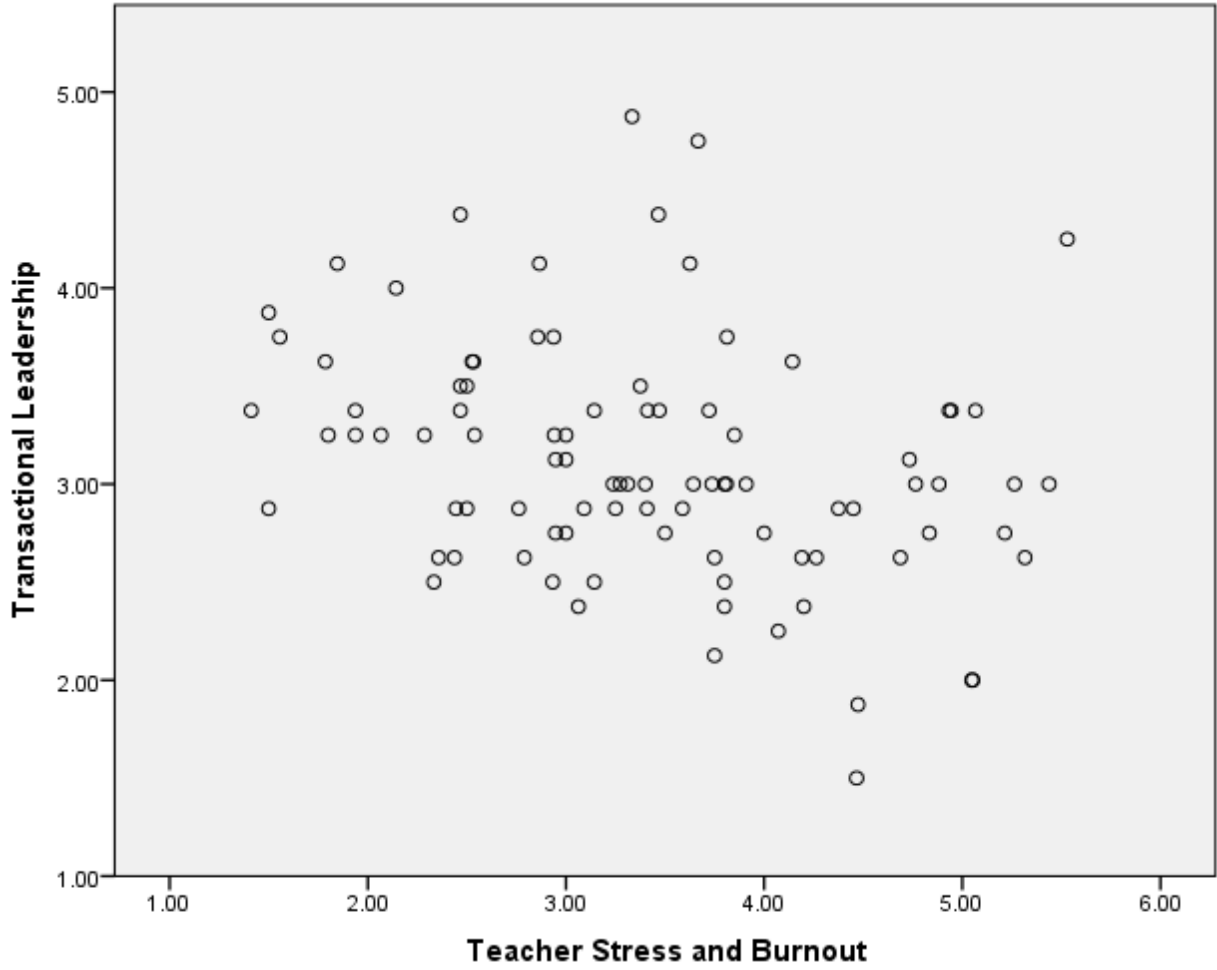


Figure 6. Scatterplot of teacher stress and burnout and transactional leadership.

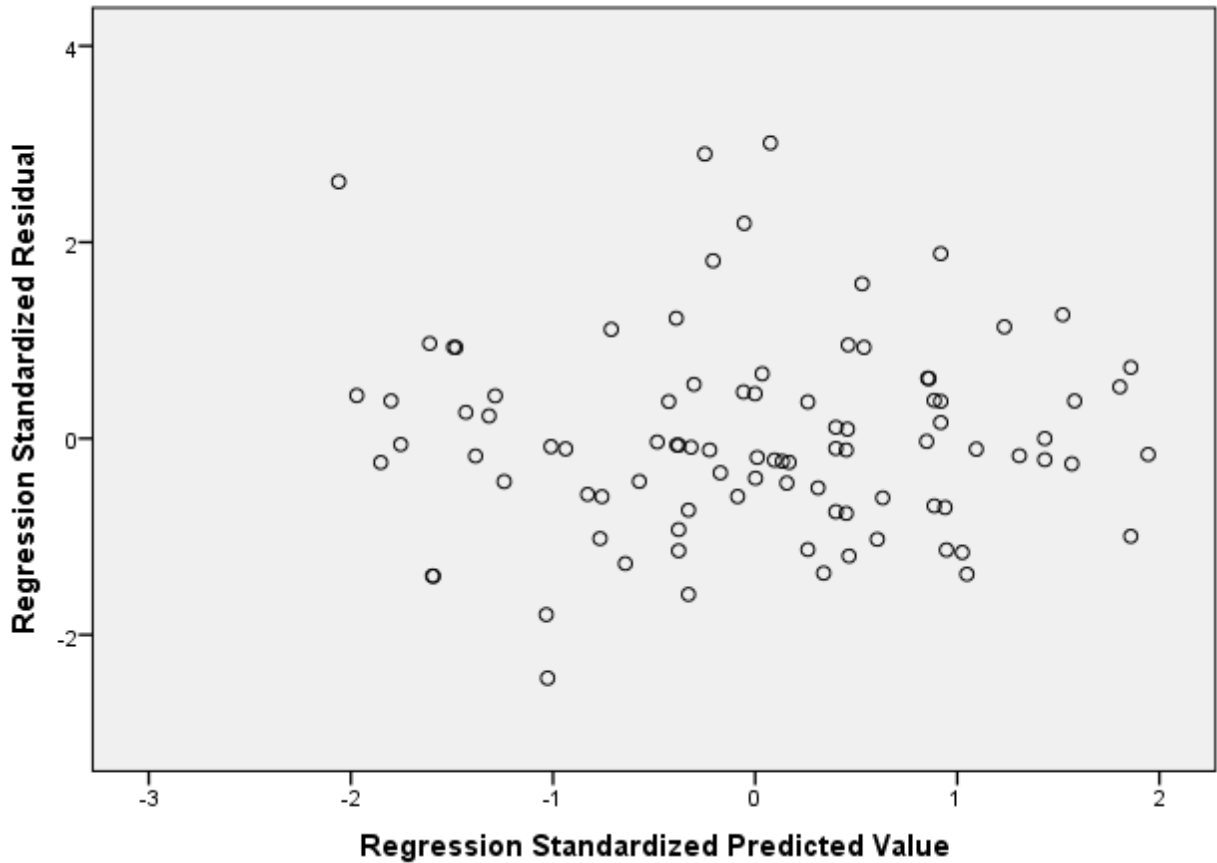


Figure 7. Residual scatterplot to assess for homoscedasticity.

Pearson Correlation #3 (Stress and Burnout and Laissez-faire Leadership)

A Pearson correlation was conducted to assess the relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the laissez-faire leadership style of principals in elementary schools. Prior to conducting the Pearson correlation, the assumptions – linearity and homoscedasticity – must be assessed. Linearity was assessed with a scatterplot between teacher stress and burnout and transactional leadership style. The assumption was met as the data followed an approximate linear trend (Figure 8). The assumption of homoscedasticity was assessed with a scatterplot between regression standardized predicted values and regression standardized residuals. The

assumption was met as the data points were randomly spread and the data did not follow a particular pattern (Figure 9).

Results of the correlation indicated significance,  $r = 0.36, p < .001$ . Thus, there is sufficient evidence for a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the laissez-faire leadership style of principals in elementary schools. Therefore, laissez-faire leadership is correlated with high teacher stress and burnout. Results of the Pearson correlation are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

*Pearson Correlation between Teacher Stress and Burnout and Laissez-faire Leadership*

	Teacher stress and burnout
Laissez-faire leadership	0.36**

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

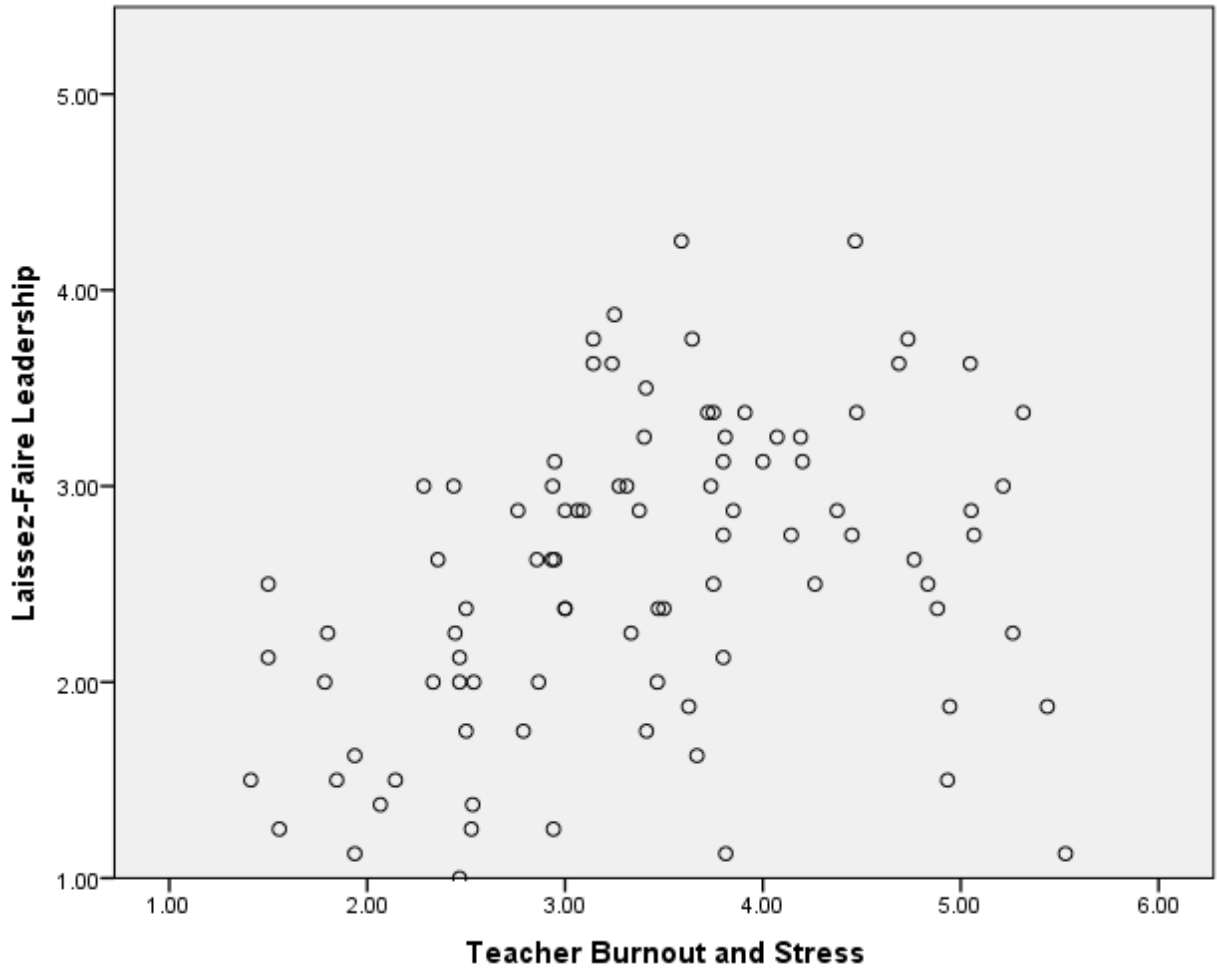


Figure 8. Scatterplot of teacher stress and burnout and laissez-faire leadership.

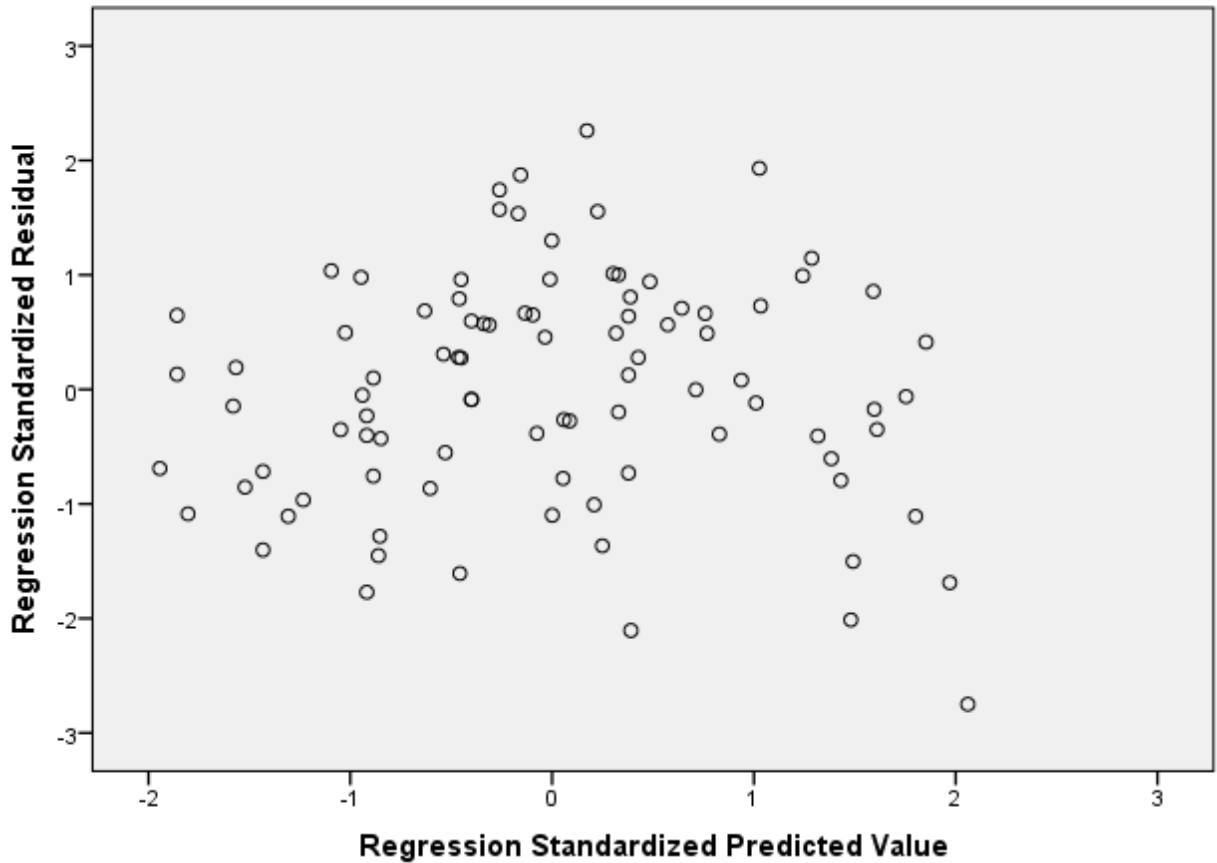


Figure 9. Residual scatterplot to assess for homoscedasticity.

All three leadership styles indicated significant associations with stress and burnout. The Pearson correlation between transformational leadership and stress and burnout indicated significance,  $r = -0.59, p < .001$ . The Pearson correlation between transactional leadership and stress and burnout indicated significance,  $r = -0.31, p < .001$ . The Pearson correlation between laissez-faire leadership and stress and burnout indicated significant results,  $r = 0.36, p < .001$ . This table was produced in order to display the correlational results between the three leadership styles and teacher stress and burnout, in one place. Hence, it is clear that while both transformational and transactional leadership are doing a good job at removing teacher stress and

burnout, transformational leadership is doing the best job overall in minimizing this condition. Laissez-faire leadership on the other hand, is causing and increasing stress and burnout within the school environment. A summary table of the three correlations is presented in Table 8.

Table 8

*Pearson Correlation between Teacher Stress and Burnout and All Three Leadership Styles*

	Stress and burnout
Transformational leadership	-0.59**
Transactional leadership	-0.31**
Laissez-faire leadership	0.36**

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

#### Summary of Analysis

This chapter includes an analysis of the statistical data that centers on teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) of elementary school principals as perceived by elementary school teachers. Through survey research, the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educator’s Survey (MBI) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire - Form 5X – Rater Form (MLQ) were used to gather the data through Qualtrics. Data were retrieved from 92 elementary school teachers and the Pearson-Product Moment Correlation was the test of statistical significance that was used to analyze this data. This analysis was conducted via SPSS. The statistical outcomes of the research study questions are as follows:

Research Question One: Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles (transformation, transactional, and laissez-faire) used



by elementary school principals? The results revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles used by elementary school principals (see below).

Research Question Two: Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transformational leadership styles of principals in elementary schools? The results of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient was **-0.59**, which is statistically significant at the .001 *p* level. Thus, the relationship appears to be significant between teacher stress and burnout and the transformational leadership styles of principals in elementary schools.

Research Question Three: Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the transactional leadership styles of principals in elementary schools? According to the results of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation, the correlation coefficient was -0.31, which is statistically significant at the .001 level. The relationship appears to be significant as it relates to teacher stress and burnout and the transactional leadership styles of principals in elementary schools.

Research Question Four: Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the laissez-faire leadership styles of principals in elementary schools? The results of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient was 0.36, which is statistically significant at the .001 level. As a result, the relationship appears to be significant between teacher stress and burnout and the laissez-faire leadership styles of principals in elementary schools.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to interpret the study findings, to reflect upon the appropriateness of the research design and methods that were used to answer the questions surrounding the topic, to reflect on the implications of the study findings, and to share possible recommendations for future research in order to further extend the topic of teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles.

This discussion and conclusion chapter is organized into seven main sections. The initial review section gives a quick, clear, and concise summary of the findings of this study. The next section allows the study findings to be interpreted and its meaning, significance, and suppositions, shared. The sub-section of section three focuses on interpretation and organizational framing. Section four allows the validity and usefulness of the research design and methods of this study to be reflected upon. Section five allows the practical implications of this study for practice and policy, to be shared as a means of extending these areas. In section six, further research considerations surrounding this topic are shared and in section seven, I have shared what I have learned about my profession and myself during this project. Organizing chapter five in this manner allows for greater structuring, understanding, and distributing of the information within this study.

## Recapitulation of study

This study focused on the relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of school leaders as perceived by elementary school teachers. Teacher stress and burnout is a problem that can have extensive implications. Hence, this topic is important to the field of education as the findings could serve to help minimize teacher stress and burnout events. It could also assist educational leaders in developing a better understanding of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles and how these styles relate to teacher stress and burnout. Sosik and Godshalk's (2000) model of leadership style, mentoring functions received, and job related stress, was the theoretical framework that guided this study. This particular model extended from Manning, Jackson, and Fusilier's (1996) simplified model of work stress and is rooted in Matteson and Ivancevich's (1982) theory of job stress and health.

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of elementary school principals as perceived by teachers. Data were collected on teacher stress and burnout using the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educators Survey (Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach, & Jackson, 1996, 2010). The leadership style of school leaders were collected through the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire – Form 5X - Rater Form (Bass & Avolio, 1995, 2000, 2004). The null hypotheses were tested to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles. The results of this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between the leadership styles of elementary school principals and teacher stress and burnout, which aligned with the majority of the literature on this topic.

## Interpretation of Study Findings

### *Leadership Styles and Teacher Stress-Burnout*

Is there a statistically significant relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) of principals in elementary schools?

The findings of this study were tested using Pearson's product-moment correlations ( $r$ ). Data analysis results revealed that there is a correlation between the leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) used by elementary school principals and teacher stress and burnout (see interpretations below).

### *Transformational Leadership and Teacher Stress-Burnout*

Is there a statistically significant relationship between the transformational leadership style of principals in elementary schools and teacher stress and burnout?

The results of the study findings confirmed those noted within my theoretical framework by Sosik and Godshalk (2000). Sosik and Godshalk (2000) studied the leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) used by mentor leaders and the way that certain mentoring functions or tasks correlated with mentee stress and burnout. Sosik and Godshalk's (2000) study findings indicated that transformational leadership behaviors often produce subordinates that have decreased levels of stress and burnout and increased levels of job or task satisfaction. Sosik and Godshalk (2000) explained that transformational leadership qualities served to strengthen the emotional bond between leaders and their followers. In contrast to my study however, Sosik and Godshalk (2000) also added that transformational leadership, when combined with a developing type of mentoring/leadership style, will enhance job or task satisfaction. This in turn, minimizes stress and burnout even more than using

transformational leadership alone. It does so by applying developmental qualities to mentees or subordinates. Qualities such as building self-efficacy, teaching goal setting, explaining the overall purpose of a task, and giving specific attention to each individual under their mentorship/leadership. Additionally, Hetland, Sandal, and Johnsen's (2007) findings revealed that transformational leadership abilities were directly associated with minimized stress and burnout levels among subordinates. Similarly, Bono, Foldes, Vinson, and Muros' (2007) study results indicated that employees with transformational styled leaders, often experience more positive emotions throughout the workday and therefore, less stress. Kanste, Hyngas, and Nikkila's (2007) study evaluated the probable relationship between burnout and transformational leadership as well. The study findings revealed that transformational leadership was not related to stress and burnout in subordinates. However, the results of the study contrasted with those reported by Dvir and Shamir (2003) which revealed that some subordinates may feel more stressed by transformational leaders as their personalities may not successfully align successfully with the indirect aspects of this form of leadership. This difference may be due to Gronn's (1995) alternative description of transformational leadership. Gronn (1995) described the transformational leadership style as being a type of leadership that mandates a high level of control and manipulation in order to truly work. Such behaviors could cause elevated stress and burnout levels to occur in some individuals who are under such leaders. Nevertheless, transformational leadership is yet noted as one of the best and least stress-inducing forms of leadership that is currently in place.

#### *Transactional Leadership and Teacher Stress-Burnout*

Is there a statistically significant relationship between the transactional leadership style of school principals in elementary school and teacher stress and burnout?

The results of the study findings were consistent with Kanste, Hyngas, and Nikkila's (2007) study findings which revealed that transactional leadership is not related to stress and burnout. Bateman (2002) found that transactional leadership is a form of leadership that motivates its workers to accomplish goals, perform their jobs efficiently, and to receive rewards accordingly. When this is done, stress is usually lowered. Also, Eeden, Cilliers, and Deventer (2000) described transactional leadership as involving a social exchange process which occurs when followers successfully complete tasks in order to receive contingency rewards. Such awards usually serve to increase job satisfaction and minimize stress and burnout. These results also align with Sosik and Godshalk's (2000) study findings (theoretical framework) which identified transactional leadership styles, along with transformational leadership methods, as two of the most effective leadership styles as both have the capability of increasing mentee or employee satisfaction and minimizing their stress levels. Nevertheless, in contrast to my study, Sosik and Godshalk (2000) also noted that transactional leadership lightens job stress and burnout in a greater fashion whenever it is combined with good mentee development functions (giving support, attention, goal setting, building of self-esteem skills, etc.). In further contrast to my findings and those of Sosik and Godshalk (2000), Emery, College, Barker, and Fredonia's (2007) study noted that transactional leadership could cause job dissatisfaction, lack of organizational commitment, and stress. This indicated that this could be due to the "quid pro quo" facet of transactional leadership which can reverse the contingency reward side that accompanies this leadership, for the worse (Emery, College, Barker, and Fredonia, 2007). As a result of this potential reversal, transactional leaders may sometimes over-emphasize mistakes, express extreme dissatisfaction, and add punishments to match; all of which can then, enhance stress and burnout factors in their employees. Similarly noted by Eeden, Cilliers, and Deventer

(2000), the other side of transactional leadership includes management-by-exception (active or passive). This side of transactional leadership usually involves the leader either looking for discrepancies and then, providing corrective action or waiting for infractions or complaints to come directly to him or her before taking action. Leading in this fashion often causes stressful outcomes for those under this form of leader. This could account for the data analysis difference that occurred between the evaluation of transformational leadership styles, transactional leadership styles, and teacher stress and burnout.

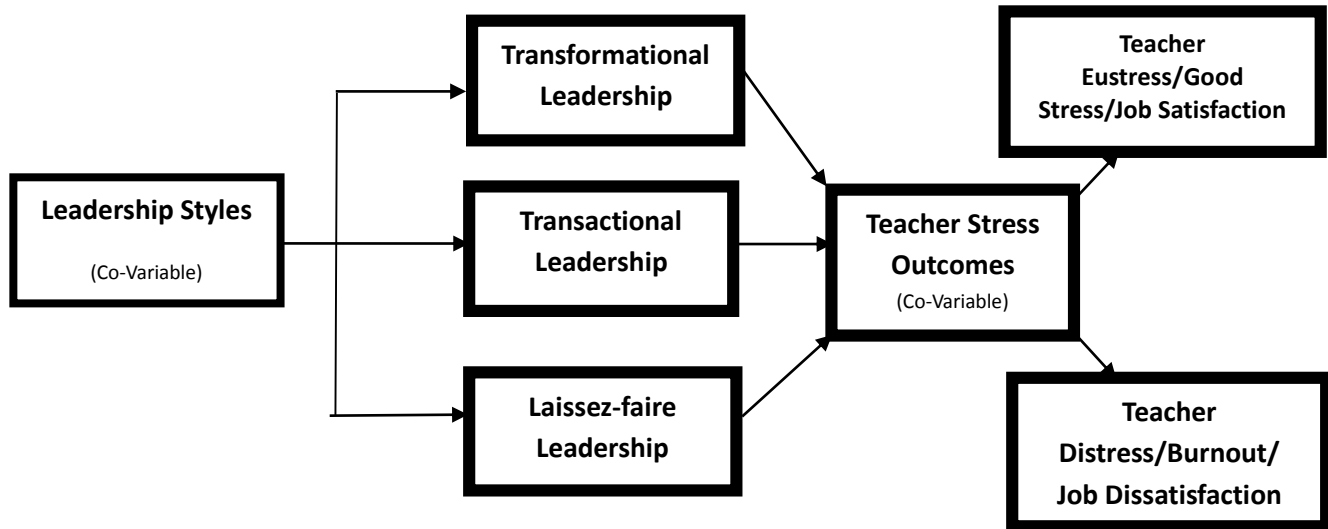
#### *Laissez-faire Leadership and Teacher Stress-Burnout*

Is there a statistically significant relationship between the laissez-faire leadership style of principals in elementary school and teacher stress and burnout?

The results of this study's findings were consistent with those from Kanste, Hyngas, and Nikkila's (2007) study results, which revealed that laissez-faire leadership is positively related to stress, emotional exhaustion and burnout. Similarly, Aasland, Skogstad, Notelaers, Nielsen and Einarsen (2009) conducted a study and found that laissez faire leadership can be damaging to employees as it can stimulate negative stress levels. Additionally, Skogstad, Einarsen, Torsheim, Aasland, & Hetland (2007) studied the relationship between laissez faire leadership and psychological distress in employees and found that laissez faire leadership was strongly related to psychological distress as this form of leadership allows for greater role conflict, uncertainty, conflict between co-workers, and bullying. Likewise, my theoretical framework study by Sosik and Godshalk (2000) revealed that laissez-faire leadership is a form of leadership that should be avoided as it causes stress for most individuals that are exposed and subordinate to it. In contrast to my study however, Sosik and Godshalk (2000) also revealed that laissez-faire leadership, when combined with positive mentoring functions that serve to develop its mentees, can modify

and improve upon some of the negative aspects that are associated with this type of leadership.

Figure 10. Model of leadership styles and teacher stress



The model in Figure 10, which is based upon Sosik and Godshalk's (2000) model of leadership style, mentoring functions received, and job related stress, predicted and illustrated the probable correlational relationship between leadership styles and teacher stress and burnout. First, leadership styles were noted as being transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. Second, the style of leadership used by school leaders was predicted to be connected to teacher stress outcomes. Thirdly, it predicted that teacher stress outcomes could then lead to either, eustress/good stress and job satisfaction or distress, burnout, and job dissatisfaction. I've tested this model and the findings of my study served to update, inform and extend the ideas surrounding this topic in each area, with the exception of job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction, as neither of these two areas were directly tested. The results of my study revealed that there is a statistical correlation/relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of their school principals. That correlation can be productive and satisfying or negative and harmful, depending upon the style of leadership that is implemented.



As aforementioned, Sosik and Godshalk's (2000) theoretical model of leadership style, mentoring functions received, and job related stress, is a particular model that branches from Manning, Jackson, and Fusilier's (1996) simplified model of work stress which is rooted in Matteson and Ivancevich's (1982) theory of job stress and health. Sosik and Godshalk's (2000) theoretical model revealed that that leadership styles used by mentors and leaders, along with certain mentoring functions or tasks, can minimize stress or heighten stress for those under their leadership. Within this model, Sosik and Godshalk (2000), highlighted transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership as leadership styles that were connected to mentoring functions and that impacted job stress. Additionally, transactional leadership and transformational leadership methods were identified as the most effective forms of leadership (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Transactional leadership involves an exchange between leaders and followers known as contingent reward leadership. Contingent reward leadership is considered as being the most effective aspect of transactional leadership and includes the process of providing feedback, setting goals and outcomes, and accomplishing those goals and outcomes via the incorporation of recognition and rewards trade-offs (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Transformational leadership, which is deemed as being the most effective form of leadership, is a leadership style that includes the ability of leaders to form mutually beneficial relationships that will enable leaders to become moral change agents and thereby, motivate followers to become leaders (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). My data analysis correlated with these findings and revealed similar results as both transformational and transactional leadership styles yielded less stress and burnout in elementary school teachers while laissez-faire leadership resulted in more stress and burnout.

#### Meta-Reflection on Research Design and Methods of Study

Quantitative research was the research method that was used in this study. Data was

analyzed using a correlational research statistic/analysis design known as the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ), which aligned with the research questions of this study. This particular research design was used to determine the probability of a positive or a negative relationship between two variables. Therefore, I appropriately used this method to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of principals in elementary schools as perceived by elementary school teachers. The results revealed that there was a significant correlation between the two variables. The correlational research design is strong in that it allows the relationship between numerous variables to be examined and analyzed and  $r$  yields a small standard error (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Survey research was used to gather and collect research data for this study via two surveys; the Maslach Burnout Inventory: Educator's Survey (MBI) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ – Form 5X – Rater Form). While these research designs and methods worked for my study, I was concerned when my reliability coefficient did not completely align with an acceptable reliability coefficient of .70, which is adequate according to Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007). The low alpha reliability coefficient of 0.43 that emerged on my dependent variable (stress and burnout) may have been due to question misinterpretations, changed answering patterns, or other factors. This is an area of concern as such scores could impact the ability to successfully rely on this scale and its results.

If I had to do this all over again, I would possibly do a pilot study in order to help generate higher Cronbach alpha reliability scores. There is also a good possibility that I would go with a mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) approach as this would have provided a more well-rounded set of research results. I say this because having the opportunity to combine the components of qualitative research (interviewing, observing, recording, coding, etc.) along

with my current quantitative research, could have possibly allowed a more comprehensive view of my topic to emerge. Doing this could have served to enhance the results that I currently have by allowing recurring themes to emerge, observational data to be gathered, and probable relationships to be formed, thereby, broadening the overall research data result.

#### Practical and Policy Implications of your Study

My study extends the information concerning teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles by addressing the current elementary school gap that existed on this topic. While a number of research studies have been conducted on the subject of stress, burnout, and leadership over the years, few of them have analyzed these variables from the viewpoint of the elementary school teacher or the elementary school level. The information in this study emphasized the notion that the leadership style of leaders can impact their subordinates in either a positive or negative fashion due to their relationship to one another. This study added to the body of knowledge on teacher stress and burnout by viewing how stress and burnout in elementary school teachers correlated with transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. This information could be used to possibly help turn teacher stress and burnout around for the better.

The final study findings of this study revealed that there is a correlation between teacher stress and burnout and principals' leadership styles. Generally, the implication is that teachers experience more or less stress based upon the type of leadership style that's used by their school leader. Transformational leaders had fewer teachers that suffered from stress and burnout. Similarly, Nielsen, Randall, Yarker, and Brenner (2008), revealed that there is some evidence that links the psychological well-being of employees to the transformational leadership style of a leader. Additionally, Bono and Ilies (2006) identified a positive "relationship between

charismatic leaders and positive emotions and mood” (Nielsen, Randall, et al., p. 17). Also, Gilbreath and Benson (2004) found that the behavior of a supervisor “explained incremental variance over and above other workplace factors when predicting general health” (Nielsen, Randall, et al., p. 17). According to Nielsen, Randall, et al (2008), several studies have found a link between transformational leadership and subordinate health (Seltzer et al., 1989), transformational leadership and subordinate well-being (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007), and transformational leadership and subordinate job-related stress (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Consequently, it is vital that educational arenas and educators learn more about these leadership styles and the benefits of incorporating transformational leadership styles or at a minimum, transactional leadership styles, as doing so could help lessen the condition of teacher stress and burnout. Next in line was transactional leaders as their teachers experienced stress and burnout on a lower level as well. Transactional leaders had teachers with stress and burnout levels that fell between that of transformational and laissez-faire leaders which could give the impression that it is a more balanced form of leadership.

Opposite of transformational and transactional leadership was laissez-faire leadership. Teachers with laissez-faire leaders tended to experience stress and burnout at a higher rate. I believe that these teachers experienced higher levels stress and burnout because laissez-faire leaders tend to naturally generate stress more often than not. Laissez-faire leadership, also referred to as absent leadership, passive leadership, and destructive leadership, produces leaders that will often refuse to take a stand on issues that matter and they usually avoid problems that arise (Bass, 1998; Yukl, 1998). Eeden, Cilliers, and Deventer (2000) identified laissez-faire leaders as leaders who will often leave their work undone or they will pass it along to their workers. Additionally, they usually avoid making decisions, taking a stand on things that matter,

setting goals, giving clear expectation, setting priorities, and getting involved when needed; all of which can cause high levels of stress for individuals under such leadership (Eeden, Cilliers, and Deventer, 2000). Laissez-faire leaders provides little to no guidance for followers, thereby, causing self-regulation, self-management, and bullying to rise as well. While self-regulation/management is not necessarily a bad thing, it can become a negative when leadership is truly needed. Also, the bullying aspect that could possibly arise via co-workers with strong willed personalities, could create a hostile and unhealthy occupational climate for those with more docile, introverted, or even balanced personalities. Hence, the condition of teacher stress and burnout is a likely outcome for most individuals when laissez-faire leaders are in rule, which is why this form of leadership is viewed as one to be avoided.

It is vital to note that teacher stress and burnout often affects the health of teachers, thereby, leading to greater sicknesses and missed work time as indicated in a study by Feng (2005). Also, teacher stress and burnout can result in poor teaching habits. Teaching habits that can end up having a negative impact on student learning and achievement (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008). In addition to this, teachers are leaving the educational profession at a consistently increasing rate year after year (Feng, 2005). Yet, fewer individuals are entering the field of teaching, which is becoming increasingly problematic for school systems and schools all over the world. Much of this premature exit from the educational arena is due to stress and burnout.

In regards to recommendations, teacher programs could train teachers in the art of stress management and burnout prevention as a means of extending the life of teaching. This could help boost teacher retention rates for the better. It could also enhance student retention, thereby, resulting in greater learning, greater academic achievement, and greater overall educational success. When this is done, it extends the longevity of educational establishments as well.

Likewise, Education Administration/Education Leadership educational college programs should teach future leaders about transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership, whether leadership styles can be learned or changed, and how to effectively use them while leading. These leaders should also have the opportunity to examine, experience, and practice each form of leadership. The act of experiencing these forms of leadership could serve to help increase empathy and inspire greater job success for leaders and their teachers. Once this is done, the information should be shared and discussed and a plan of action could follow. It is also important to bring real teachers to the bargaining table; particularly those in elementary and in Title I schools. It is similarly vital to actually hear those teachers in order to learn more about their concerns, suggestions, and ideas. Once this is done, an action plan should be organized and implemented or a pilot study could be conducted to see what does/does not work best within the walls of education. It would also be great if those responsible for making educational policies could teach a class in a Title I school and a Non-Title I school, for at least one day, per school type, each school year. Particularly prior to creating new educational laws and implementing new requirements. Doing so would assist policy makers in making more, well informed decisions for those under them, thereby, minimizing stress levels for school systems, their schools, and their stakeholders/customers/consumers.

Finally, the findings of this study could serve to help curtail stress and burnout conditions for teachers and assist educational leaders in developing a better understanding of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles and how these leadership styles correlate with teacher stress and burnout. As highlighted throughout this study, stressed out teachers can end up being burned out teachers and when teachers burn out, they often leave the teaching profession prematurely. This can have a negative impact on the educational foundation

that is vital to academic learning, instructional teaching, and the field and future of education. Hence, the information in this study could be used to heighten teacher retention and job satisfaction, which could then serve to improve student learning and achievement. It could also enhance educational policy regarding training and professional development for school leaders while encouraging greater collegiality, balance, and consideration throughout the leadership process. Doing so could ultimately benefit teachers, school leaders, students, community, industry, the economy, and beyond.

### Study Limitations

Several limitations were noted in this study. One of the first limitations was the Cronbach alpha scores. These scores were skewed and lower than expected on the stress and burnout scores and they were moderate on the transactional scores. A low Cronbach alpha score of 0.43 emerged via my stress and burnout dependent variable. A moderate score of .60 emerged on the transactional independent variable. Low score variations are usually attributed to participants misinterpreting the questions or changing their answering patterns. Such scores could have also been the result of reverse coding within the questions. This is an area of concern as such scores could impact the ability to successfully generalize and rely on the scores from this particular scale. Another limitation centered on the number of participants that fully completed both surveys in my study; 89% of my targeted sample size (92/103) did so. This may have been due to the busyness of the participants, the number of questions presented in the study, or participation concerns. As a result, a number of surveys were unable to be considered during data analysis. A third limitation is that data was only retrieved from elementary schools and those schools were from two southeastern school districts. Therefore, the data findings were generalizable to elementary schools located throughout this particular region. Fourthly, another

limitation was that other probable stress and burnout factors were not analyzed via the Pearson  $r$  correlation analysis method, multiple regression analysis, or other viable means. While the data findings indicated a correlation between teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles, other factors may have had a greater impact on this condition.

#### Next Steps in Research on Topic

The next steps in research on teacher stress and burnout and leadership styles could address this topic using qualitative research methods. Doing so could serve to extend this study by allowing individuals to elaborate on the source of their stress and balance out the research findings. Also, a study could be conducted on how principals perceive their personal leadership styles and then analyze how their views align with the perception of their teachers. Likewise, the three leadership styles outlined within this study could be considered along with how they relate to one another. Title I and Non-Title I school outcomes could also be compared to one another as it relates to teacher stress and burnout as well. Additionally, the findings of my study could be extended by viewing the possible connection between principal/teacher stress and burnout and the following constructs: teacher retention and attrition, teacher job satisfaction/dissatisfaction, organizational climate, teacher morale, teacher efficacy, school safety, classroom management, student assessments, teacher evaluations, academic achievement, student retention/dropout rates, and teacher absenteeism. Additional research could add the concepts of instructional leadership, organizational health and climate, collegial leadership, and school improvement along with issues surrounding how to best lead and manage within the walls of academia. Also, a longitudinal study could be conducted on the manner in which stress and burnout impacts leaders and the way that it effects teachers, their students, and their personal style as well. In extended studies, one could determine the statistical connection between teacher stress and burnout and



principals' stress and burnout levels and more importantly, how to minimize, manage, and control negative stress and burnout for stakeholders within the educational arena and the world of work as a whole.

Lastly, elementary school principals are just as stressed and burned out as their teachers are and as a result, they may be leading from and through those same negative symptoms as stressed and burned out teachers. Fullan (2001) explains how principals are expected to do so much more with so much less; less support, money, guidance, and less understanding from those in authority. It is for this reason that so many school administrators are abandoning the administrative position altogether. Therefore, this is definitely a viable extended study possibility as well.

#### What Have you Learned About Self and Your Profession from Doing this Study?

I learned a great deal about my profession while working on this study. I also began to view stress and burnout, along with leadership styles, with a new set of eyes. I learned that both transformational and transactional leadership decrease teacher stress and burnout. However, of these two leadership styles, transformational leadership does the better job of lessening this condition. Laissez-faire leadership, on the other hand, increases teacher stress and burnout. Also, during this study, I came to realize that many non-educators and educators that were no longer in the classroom, tended to view stress and burnout as an insignificant issue. Some educational leaders saw it as a condition that attached itself to those with weaker minds or imbalanced hormones. I also realized that many leaders naturally caused stress and burnout consistently and without empathy as many had perhaps forgotten what it was like to be a teacher. Hence, they were sabotaging their teachers, their students, and their own schools; thereby, sabotaging themselves as well. During this study, I paid closer attention to educational

stakeholders and as a result, I saw firsthand the impact of stress and burnout on teachers, leaders, students, parents, and communities. So much so, that I witnessed many teachers and a few school principals, leaving the field of education altogether or deciding to go back to school in order to redefine themselves, in order to yet, exit their current positions for one that offered less stressful options. Whenever this happened, it often hurt students academically, emotionally, psychologically, and even socially. I also came to the realization that when an individual is burned out beyond repair, it is sometimes better for them to exit the profession than to stay as staying could lead to greater destruction. Additionally, a number of parents withdrew their children from some of these schools and several surrounding businesses left the area in search of locations with stronger schools and more stable teachers. Ultimately, I realized that leaders have the ability to change their climate for the better through their leadership styles/behaviors and expectations. When leaders use their leadership styles/behaviors and productive expectations to modify their climates for the better, they serve as catalysts for change. Such change can minimize stress and burnout incidents within the school walls and possibly improve upon other secondary issues as well. Similarly, within the classrooms, teachers can change the climates of their classrooms in the same manner; through their leadership style.

Lastly, during this study, I interacted with the community, mentored stressed and burned out teachers, mentored school students, and communicated with a number of educational stakeholders. Through this communication, I learned that stress and burnout issues can sometimes extend beyond the walls of education and when this happens, it can negatively impact the entire educational profession. Nevertheless, there is hope and much of that hope starts with studies like this one and so many others. Such studies can generate greater dialogue, ideas, plans, and ultimately, successful outcomes. Therefore, it is vital that educators position

themselves to stay involved in study and research, to stay focused, and to continue to grow and develop themselves and others. It is equally as important that educators help and respect one another, that they show empathy, and that they treat others better than they desire to be treated. More than anything, it is monumentally important to build positive relationships at work as well as outside of work. I believe that choosing to lead, teach, follow, and serve from such positions can enhance the educational profession and the world, for the better; today, tomorrow, and for years to come.

I learned a lot about myself from engaging in this study as well. I learned the importance of setting a goal(s), staying focused on that goal, persevering, and accomplishing that goal. When I first began this study, I was excited and encouraged about getting started, making connections, completing this large project, and making the world a better place. However, once I got deeper into this experience, I had many moments of apprehension and concern but I remained encouraged as well. There were times when I took several steps forward and several steps backwards but nevertheless, I continued to move forward. As my eyesight went dim over the years, I would schedule appointments, get new glasses, and keep moving forward. My computers crashed many times. I would buy a new one or get one repaired and I would keep moving forward. I learned the importance of staying the course, encouraging myself, focusing on the positives, laughing often, setting boundaries around my life, and learning how and when to say no. Most of all, I learned how to juggle several tasks at a time. While tackling this vast assignment, I had to stay true to my wifely and motherly duties, work a full-time job, serve at my church and in the community, mentor teens, help teachers, women, and children in need, and deal with grief and loss (like most people) and I had to do so without complaining. During those times, I took a lot of deep breaths, I prayed often, and I kept moving forward. I learned that

when you really want to achieve something, you have to humble yourself, receive correction, and not to wear your heart on your sleeve. One must be able to follow directions, stay focused, and to keep moving ahead. In order to do so more effectively, I had to learn how to ask for help, guidance, and assistance. I also had to learn how to conduct research, comprehend, and evaluate on a higher plane. I realized the importance of connecting myself to positive people, places, and things, speaking positive affirmations, and never giving up. It is easier to remain focused when you do so. I now fully understand that regardless of how you feel physically, mentally, emotionally, or otherwise, you can accomplish almost anything if you stay focused and continue to work towards your goal through completion. Through the help of a great God, a great collegial leadership team, and a great level of focus, determination, and perseverance, I have finally accomplished this great goal. Now, I can and will focus on other goals; goals that will continue to develop and stretch me into the true servant-leader that I've always strived to be. Thank you.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix A  
Participation Request Letter to Superintendents

Mr. Malcolm Thomas, Superintendent  
Escambia County School District  
75 N Pace Blvd,  
Pensacola, FL 32505

Dear Mr. Thomas:

I am a doctoral student at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, AL and I am writing to request your permission to investigate the probable correlation between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles used by school principals. Teacher stress and burnout is a condition that is on the rise in today's schools and according to research, teacher stress and burnout can have far-reaching implications that can impact more than just teachers. It can also impact the health and organizational climate of schools, educational leaders, students' learning, achievement, and success, and beyond. My hope is that the data and knowledge generated via this study could serve to help minimize this condition and benefit the field of education as a whole.

In order to pursue this study, I will need to randomly select six kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers from each elementary school in your district. Via email, teachers will be asked to complete two survey instruments and it will take approximately 15 – 25 minutes to complete both surveys. Confidentiality will be ensured through the use of numbers as neither teachers' names nor school names will be identified in this study or in any future publication.

If further information or verification is needed concerning this study, please feel free to contact me or my Dissertation Chairman, Dr. Bob Johnson at 205-348-6417.

I appreciate your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Carla M. Thompson



Martha Peek, Superintendent  
Mobile County Public Schools  
1 Magnum Pass  
Mobile, AL 36618

Dear Mrs. Peek:

I am a doctoral student at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, AL and I am writing to request your permission to investigate the probable correlation between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles used by school leaders.

In order to pursue this study, I will need to randomly select six kindergarten, first, and second grade teachers from each elementary school in your district. Via email, teachers will be asked to complete two survey instruments and it will take approximately 15 – 25 minutes to complete both surveys. Confidentiality will be ensured through the use of numbers as neither teachers' names nor schools' names will be identified in this study or in any future publication.

Teacher stress and burnout is a condition that is on the rise in today's schools and according to research, teacher stress and burnout can have far-reaching implications that can impact more than just teachers. It can also impact the health and organizational climate of schools, educational leaders, students' learning, achievement, and success, and beyond. My hope is that the data and knowledge generated via this study could serve to help minimize this condition and benefit the field of education as a whole.

If further information or verification is needed concerning this study, please feel free to contact me or my Dissertation Chairman, Dr. Bob Johnson at 205-348-6417.

I appreciate your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Carla M. Thompson

**Appendix B**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM**

**Consent to Take Part in a Research Study**

**You are being asked to be in a research study.** The name of this study is as follows: Teacher Stress and Burnout and Leadership Styles: A Relational Study. This study is being done by Carla McKinney-Thompson, a graduate student in the College of Education at the University of Alabama.

**What is the purpose of this study—what is it trying to learn?** The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles used by principals.

**Why this is study important—what good will the results do?** There is a possibility that several positives may stem from this study: 1) educational leaders may have a better view of the correlation between teacher stress and burnout and transformational and transactional leadership styles, 2) educational establishments could extend the educational life/careers of teachers and enhance job satisfaction, and 3) early elementary students could gain a better educational foundation as a result of teacher retention and job satisfaction.

**Why have I been asked be in this study?** You have been asked to participate in this study because you are one of the teachers at the kindergarten, first, or second grade level that is currently teaching at one of the participating schools.

**How many other people will be in this study?** Approximately 200 teachers will be invited to participate in this study from your district.

**What will I be asked to do in this study?** You will be asked to complete two surveys in this study. One will center around your beliefs about your stress and burnout experiences (if any exist) and the other survey will focus on your perception of the leadership styles used by principals.

**How much time will I spend being in this study?** It will take approximately 15 – 25 minutes to complete both surveys via email.

**Will being in this study cost me anything?** There is no cost associated with this study.

**What are the benefits of my being in this study?** Learning more about the probable correlations between transformational and transactional leadership styles and teacher stress is

one of the benefits of this study. Another benefit is that it could lead to a minimization of teacher stress and burnout levels. It could also increase job satisfaction for teachers and principals, and improve teaching practices and student learning.

**What are the risks (dangers or harms) to me if I am in this study?**

Your participation in this study will present no risk to you.

**How will my privacy be protected?**

Only numbers will be used in this study and you will not be identified in any publication or in this study.

**How will my confidentiality be protected?**

This information will be strictly confidential as no school names or teacher names will be used in this study or in any publication associated with this study. Participating schools and teachers will be numbered and randomly selected from those numbers based upon the number of participants needed from participating schools.

**Do I have to be in this study?**

No. You are not required to participate in this study.

**If I don't want to be in the study, are there other choices?**

If you'd prefer to not be in the study, you may refuse.

**What if new information is learned during the study that might affect my well-being or decision to continue in the study?**

If new information is discovered during this study, I will inform you and give you the option to withdraw your participation consent.

**What if I have questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints?**

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Ms. Tanta Myles, the University of Alabama's Research Compliance Officer at 205-348-8461. If you currently have questions, suggestions, or concerns about this study, feel free to contact me (334-327-0492) or Dr. Bob Johnson (205-348-6417).

**What else do I need to know?**

You do not give up any of your legal rights by signing this consent form. The University of Alabama's Institutional Review Board (IRB) is a committee that's committed to protecting the rights of people involved in research studies. Periodically, the IRB may review study records in

order to ensure that the study is being completed as planned and to ensure that participants in research studies are being treated ethically, fairly, and appropriately.

I have read this consent form and I understand what I am being asked to do. I freely agree to take part in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix C  
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA  
HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTIONS PROGRAM  
CONSENT FORM FOR WEB SURVEYS

Carla McKinney-Thompson, Principal Investigator from the University of Alabama, is conducting a study called Teacher Stress and Burnout and Principals' Leadership Styles: A Relational Study.

The purpose of this study is to learn if a relationship exists between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles used by principals.

Taking part in this study involves completing two web surveys. It will take about 15-25 minutes to finish both surveys.

One of these surveys contains questions about your beliefs about your personal stress and burnout experiences. The other survey includes questions about your perception of the leadership styles used by your primary school principal.

We will protect your confidentiality by ensuring that study participants and participating schools are only be identified through the use of numbers and neither you nor your school will be personally identified in this study nor in any other publication. Only the investigator and the dissertation committee team leaders will have access to the data. The data are password protected.

There will be no direct benefits to study participants in this study.

The findings of this study will be useful to teachers, school leaders, and students as they could serve to help minimize teacher stress and burnout experiences which could possibly extend the educational life/careers of teachers. Additionally, the findings could help early elementary students to gain the educational foundation needed for educational and lifelong success via greater teacher retention and job satisfaction which often enhances teachers' instructional abilities, expertise, and skills; all of which could ultimately assist in minimizing school principals' stress and burnout levels as well.

The chief risk is that some of the questions may make you uncomfortable. You may skip any question(s) that you do not want to answer.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns about this study, please contact me at by email at [cmckinneythompson@crimson.ua.edu](mailto:cmckinneythompson@crimson.ua.edu) or the Dissertation Chair, Dr. Bob Johnson at 205-348-6417 or by email at [bjohnson@bamaed.ua.edu](mailto:bjohnson@bamaed.ua.edu).

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Ms. Tanta Myles (the University Compliance Officer) at (205) 348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066. If you have complaints or concerns about this study, file them through the UA IRB outreach website at [http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO\\_Welcome.html](http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html). Also, if you participate, you are encouraged to complete the short Survey for Research Participants online at this website. This helps UA improve its protection of human research participants.

**YOUR PARTICIPATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY.** You are free not to participate or to stop participating any time before you submit your answers.

If you understand the statements above, are at least 19 years old, and freely consent to participate in this study, click on the "I AGREE" button to begin taking the surveys.

Thank you.

Appendix D  
Invitation Email

Hello Fellow Educators,

My name is Carla McKinney-Thompson and I'm a PhD student in the Educational Leadership Policy and Technology Studies Department at the University of Alabama and I'm conducting a research study on teacher stress and burnout. The purpose of this study is to explore whether a relationship exists between teacher stress and burnout and the leadership styles of principals in elementary schools.

Your participation in this study is crucial because teacher stress and burnout is an issue that touches the foundation and the future of education. Teacher stress and burnout impacts teacher retention, teacher health, job satisfaction, teaching ability, educational practice, school climates, and ultimately, the success of teachers, students, and school leaders. The information generated through this study could serve to help minimize stress and burnout experiences for elementary school teachers, thereby, benefiting teachers, their students, and their principals as well.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please click on the Qualtrics link at <http://qualtrics.com>. This link will direct you to an online consent document. After reading the consent document, if you agree to complete the two connecting surveys, click on the “**I Agree**” button. You will then be granted access to the surveys and you may proceed. It will take approximately 15 to 25 minutes to complete both surveys. The information gathered via these surveys will be confidential and no teachers' names nor schools' names will be identified in this study (or in any other study) at any time.

If you have any questions concerning this project, please contact me at [cmckinneythompson@crimson.ua.edu](mailto:cmckinneythompson@crimson.ua.edu).

Your response and your time is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Carla McKinney-Thompson  
Doctoral Student  
University of Alabama, Graves Hall  
(Dissertation Chair: Dr. Bob Johnson; 205-348-6417)

Appendix E  
Teacher Surveys

**MBI-Educators Survey**

Christina Maslach, Susan E. Jackson & Richard L. Schwab

*The purpose of this survey is to discover how educators view their job  
and the people with whom they work closely.*

**Instructions:** On the following pages are 22 statements of job-related feelings. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about *your* job. If you have *never* had this feeling, write the number “0” (zero) in the space before the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate *how often* you feel it by writing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way. An example is shown below.

---

<b>How often:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>		
	Never	A few	Once	A few	Once	A few	Every day ...

---

**Example:**

**How Often 0-6**  
**Statement:**

---

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel depressed at work.

If you never feel depressed at work, you would write the number “0” (zero) under the heading “How Often.” If you rarely feel depressed at work (a few times a year or less), you would write the number “1.” If your feelings of depression are fairly frequent (a few times a week but not daily), you would write the number “5.”

**MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire  
Rater Form (5x-Short)**

Name of Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization ID #: \_\_\_\_\_ Leader ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

This questionnaire is to describe the leadership style of the above-mentioned individual as you perceive it. Please answer all items on this answer sheet. **If an item is irrelevant, or if you are unsure or do not know the answer, leave the answer blank.** Please answer this questionnaire anonymously.

IMPORTANT (necessary for processing): Which best describes you?

I am at a higher organizational level than the person I am rating.

The person I am rating is at my organizational level.

I am at a lower organizational level than the person I am rating.

I do not wish my organizational level to be known.

Forty-five descriptive statements are listed on the following pages. Judge how frequently each statement fits the person you are describing. Use the following rating scale:

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

*THE PERSON I AM RATING. . .*

1.	Provides me with assistance in exchange for my efforts	1 2 3 4
	..... 0	



Appendix F  
Permission to use Surveys



[www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com)

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for the above named person to use the following copyright material for his/her thesis or dissertation research:

Instrument: ***Maslach Burnout Inventory, Forms: General Survey, Human Services Survey & Educators Survey***

**Copyrights:**

**MBI-Educators Survey (MBI-ES):** Copyright ©1986 Christina Maslach, Susan E. Jackson & Richard L. Schwab. All rights reserved in all media. Published by Mind Garden, Inc., [www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com)

Three sample items from a single form of this instrument may be reproduced for inclusion in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation.

The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any published material.

Sincerely,

Robert Most Mind  
Garden, Inc.  
[www.mindgardecom](http://www.mindgardecom)



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To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for the above named person to use the following copyright material for his/her research:

Instrument: ***Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire***

Authors: ***Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass***

Copyright: ***1995 by Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass***

Five sample items from this instrument may be reproduced for inclusion in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation.

The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any published material.

Sincerely,

Robert Most  
Mind Garden, Inc.  
[www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com)

Appendix G  
IRB Approval

Office for Research

March 11, 2014

Institutional Review Board for the  
Protection of Human Subjects

Carla M. Thompson  
ELPTS  
College of Education  
The University of Alabama

THE UNIVERSITY OF

Re: IRB # EX-14-CM-029 “Teachers Stress and Burnout and Principals’  
Leadership Styles: A Relational Study”

R E S E A R C H

Dear Ms. Thompson:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your protocol has been given exempt approval according to 45 CFR part 46.101(b)(2) as outlined below:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:  
(i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and  
(ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Your application will expire on March 10, 2015. If your research will continue beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of Continuing Review and Closure Form. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of FORM: Continuing Review and Closure.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the assigned IRB application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

IM, CIP

Director & Re  
Office for Research 144  
The University of Alabama