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Principals' Perceptions of the Barriers and Impediments to Distribute Leadership and Share Decision Making Under an Era of Heightened Accountability: An Exploratory Study Using Q-Technique

Michelle Grace Maltempi
Long Island University, michelle.maltempi@my.liu.edu

Principals' Perceptions of the Barriers and Impediments to Distribute Leadership and Share Decision Making Under an Era of Heightened Accountability: An Exploratory Study Using *Q*-Technique

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Michelle Grace Maltempi

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Dr. James Dunne, Ed. D., Associate Professor, Committee Chairperson
Dr. Joseph Piro, Ph. D., Professor, Committee Member
Dr. Lynne Manouvrier, Ed. D., Associate Dean, Committee Member

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College of Education, Information and Technology
Long Island University
LIU Post Campus

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DEDICATION

At a young age, a love for learning was instilled in me. My grandfather Herbert Rosen, whose relentless work ethic, persevering attitude, and unequivocal drive exemplified the true meaning of hard work, stick-to-it-ness and goal-driven pursuits, has acted as a guiding light. His mantra was, "The world is in your hands." His wife, Joan, encapsulated a strong will and ensured that the family was always taken care of. My grandfather Rosario Maltempi, a jubilant spirit with an old-fashioned work ethic and a heart of gold, was a loving and hardworking man. His wife, my grandmother Grace Maltempi, who holds a special place in my heart, exemplified a loving and caring woman who always took care of the family and encouraged us. My Mom, a doctor herself, inspired me as a little girl to be just like her one day. I promised myself I would do great things like her. As she would say, completing a doctorate is like "an Olympics of the mind." My father, an amazing electrical engineer and physicist, has inspired me to be great like him! These individuals are the driving force behind why I do what I do and am who I am.

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Abstract

Educational institutions—and, more specifically, principals—are faced with meeting the mandates and demands set forth by local, state, and federal initiatives. Accountability has forever changed the context in which the traditional role of a principal leads. This study examines the beliefs, attitudes, and opinions of public high school principals on distributed leadership within a context of accountability. In addition, it investigates their trust levels. The study of subjectivity can be employed utilizing a systematic mixed-methods approach called *Q* technique. This methodology has the power to reveal the shared viewpoints or intersubjectivity and models held by public high school principals. Data were analyzed from 28 suburban New York public high school principals located in Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland, or Westchester counties concerning their beliefs regarding the potential barriers and impediments in distributing leadership responsibilities within the context of heightened accountability. In addition, it assessed their trust levels as these levels related to distributing their leadership. This study identified and examined 3 models of shared viewpoints held by public high school principals. Background characteristics were utilized to describe the clusters of participating principals. These characteristics consisted of: years of experience as a public-school administrator, years of prior experience as a teacher, highest level of education, and decade graduated from high school. Information was also gathered regarding principals' beliefs in the effectiveness of distributed leadership. The 3 *Q* models revealed, consensus and disagreement. To identify and understand where changes in leadership must be made, it is necessary to research school leadership from an alternative perspective by understanding the intersubjectivity of high school principals.

Keywords: accountability, distributed leadership, high school, principals, *Q* methodology, trust

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE CHANGING ROLE OF A PRINCIPAL UNDER HEIGHTENED ACCOUNTABILITY AND A DISCUSSION REGARDING DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

In 1956 Jean Piaget and Bärbel Inhelder conducted a study to determine the egocentrism of children by utilizing the Three Mountain Task. In this task, children were shown a three-dimensional model of three mountains, with different landscapes. The children were allowed to walk around the model. Using a doll, the researchers placed it at different vantage points from the children. The children were asked which of ten pictures best represented the perspective of the doll at the location it was placed. Their study revealed that children below the age of seven, were egocentric in their perspectives and views, and by the time they reached the age of seven, they consistently could explain the perspectives of others. Perspective and perceptions are key elements in human behaviors and decision-making. At seven years old and beyond, in which our world becomes less egocentric and more altruistic, we become aware of those around us, as we consider their needs and expectations. Leaders in an organizational structure like an educational system, have the cumbersome job of not only basing decisions and behaviors centered upon their own egocentric needs and motives, but they also have the job of considering the many needs of those under their charge.

To further compound the expected authority of these leaders, they are also charged with leading their organizations towards success, which includes meeting performance norms and student achievement. Accountability systems have always been implemented in our American education system. Principals have always had the responsibility to meet the unique needs of the students they oversee, by making sure teachers do as expected, keeping in mind their own tenuous position as the presumed central figure of the school (Brazer, Rich, & Ross, 2010;

Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003; Gedik & Bellibas, 2015; Spillane & Kenney, 2012; Timperly, 2008; Wallach, Lambert, Copland, & Lowry, 2005).

Since the launching of Sputnik, the United States along with other countries, has been in an arms race to competitively educate their youth towards global dominance and educational superiority. Historical benchmarks like A Nation at Risk and No Child Left Behind (NCLB), has evolved educational institutions into newly focused societal and governmental demands. These new expectations based on the societal and governmental demands put forth in expectations towards graduation rates and college-and career readiness has further contributed towards these goals. To respond to such demands, this literature review will delve deeply how principals respond to, and their perceptions of implementing distributed leadership under a heightened time of accountability. Insight provided by the literature, will delineate how distributed leadership exercised by principals at the secondary level are demonstrated and implemented within the structural makeup of schools.

Student academic success is the priority and focus of what drives educational action. It is therefore imperative that we provide principals with the proper training and preparation to meet the needs of the students they serve, and the faculty under their charge (DeMatthews, 2014; Huggins, Klar, & Buskey, 2017; Militello & Janson, 2007; Spillane, Healey, & Leigh, 2009; Wright, 2008). To meet not only the demands of their students, but of the mandated governmental policies as well, our principals must be an active component in the power-sharing processes. In the discussion to follow, empirical evidence will be provided and analyzed on the structure of school organizations through the lens of distributed leadership. This study aims to take a distributed perspective approach on school leadership as it is anchored in empirical and theoretical work.

A systematic, empirically based study regarding principals' leading schools under a time of heightened accountability systems while considering the barriers or impediments principals face when attempting to distribute their power or share decision making with teachers, has the potential to reveal key ingredients and necessary steps to take moving forward. Utilizing this information has the potential to equip current and future principals with leading these organizations successfully, while tapping into the vast knowledge-base faculty and staff encompass within the school organization. Furthermore, a closer look at principals' ideologies and their perceptions of the development and use of social structures and cultivating networking opportunities through trust within the schools, will be investigated. Additionally, the application of a distributed leadership perspective will provide a thorough understanding of what principals still need to do and how they can best meet the ever-evolving needs of our American education system.

Schools are an intricate web of complex relationships, social contexts, educated persons, hierarchical structure, and a body of students that all coexist within the confines an educational institution. Educational organizations are comprised of professionals representing a broad knowledge base. The potential for these organizational structures to innovate and meet the unique needs of their student populations through the utilization of knowledge-sharing and advice-networks towards the development of enhanced instructional practices can be cultivated (Gronn, 2000; Militello & Janson, 2007; Smylie, Mayrowetz, Murphy, & Louis, 2007; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Spillane et al., 2009; Spillane & Kenney, 2012; Timperley, 2008; Watson & Scribner, 2007). Creating a social structure, interdependent of each other, and based on trust, in which its members utilize each other as resources for advice and information is

fundamental towards carrying out mandated goals and developing knowledge (Spillane, Kim, & Frank, 2012).

School systems are hierarchically organized institutions. The actors within the school system are charged with meeting common and set goals in which the desired outcomes are forth by a multi-leveled system. This multi-leveled system includes governmental, state, district, and building level criterion, in which personnel must work cohesively and in concert to achieve the goals set forth by this multi-layered and multi-leveled system.

From a historical standpoint, the American educational system has always encompassed accountability systems at some level and to some degree. The educational accountability systems that have been developed and implemented throughout our American history, at times, have been renamed, reinvented or rediscovered for implementation, and have evolved over time. In the here-and-now that we live in today, school systems are expected to produce well-rounded, college and career-ready students (Knapp & Feldman, 2012; Wallach et al., 2005; Lowry, 2005) equipped with the skills necessary to meet the technological advances of our time, and of the future, as well as meet the diverse complexities they will one-day face in the globalized world we live in. Schools can no longer depend solely on the traditional roles of teachers (where their only intent was on instructing the student) and the once traditional leader-centric roles (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Smylie et al., 2007; Spillane et al., 2001; Spillane et al., 2009; Timperley, 2008; Watson & Scribner, 2007; Wright, 2008) of principals to meet the vast needs of this ever-changing world. Rather, these perspectives, views, and ideologies must shift, as they incorporate, and rely upon, the cultivation of the varied- and wide-ranging expertise personnel whom work in the school encompass and have to offer others.

School organizations more than ever, are held accountable for their academic performance and are expected to engage students within an environment that exercises and emphasizes academic press (high expectations for both students and staff that are established through the school's environment drawn from school policy and practices) (Spillane et al., 2001). Academic press relies upon the performance that has been measured in a multitude of methods including utilizing aggregated test scores of student populations, graduation rates, and teacher evaluations. Accountability has always been present in the America educational school systems. Now, more than ever, there is great emphasis on academic press and accountability. Schools unable to demonstrate performance level expectations, are met with negative sanctions that include the removal of staff and faculty, state control, school closures, and restructuring educational hierarchies to gain academic success. With the vices of high demands, like meeting performance levels, pressing tightly upon school systems, much of the focus has shifted to the position of the principal and his or her role in increasing school performance levels, cultivating an instructionally-led approach through a myriad of methodologies and implementations, as well as meet the set expectations of the district and community at large (Gonzalez & Firestone, 2013; Louis & Robinson, 2012; Styron & Styron, 2011; Wieczorek & Theoharis, 2015).

With demands intensifying on the position of the principal, the expectations of those within this position have evolved. As high-stakes testing becomes the norm across the United States and in other countries as well, results of these tests are closely tied to student, teacher, and principal accountability (Ehren & Hatch, 2013; Sanzo, Sherman, & Clayton, 2011; Styron & Styron, 2011). These mounting pressures have redefined the role of the principal. As the world continues to advance, it is inevitable that our schools mimic these changes. With greater emphasis on standardized testing, academic benchmarks, and accountability, the demands on

educational leaders are ever-changing and dynamic. School systems and more specifically, school leaders are driven to respond and adapt to these growing pressures. Studies have underscored the impact educational policy changes and demands have had on the school principalship role like job loss (Hochbein, Mitchell, & Pollio, 2013), public scrutiny and criticism (Keith, 2011), school restructuring (Louis & Robinson, 2012; Richardson, Watts, Hollis, & McLeod, 2016; Sanzo et al., 2011), meeting achievement gap concerns (Thibodeaux, Labat, Lee, & Labat, 2015), concerns regarding student college- and career- readiness, (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a), as well as concerns regarding receiving financial assistance from governmental grant programs (Wieczorek & Theoharis, 2015).

Navigating through the intricate web of social, behavioral, and context-based environments will shed light on, and assist in gaining a deeper understanding towards the importance of creating professional learning communities and investing in professional opportunities. This will enhance collaboration and knowledge transfer amongst teachers towards instructional advances have the potential to benefit the student body under their charge (Copland, 2003; Harris, 2007).

No longer, can the role of principal be identified as one of individualistic (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Smylie et al., 2007; Spillane et al., 2001; Spillane et al., 2009; Timperley, 2008; Watson & Scribner, 2007; Wright, 2008). Instead, to achieve and accomplish the many demands of school systems today, school leaders must trust and depend on the expertise, knowledge, and know-how of those under their charge (Copland, 2003; Harris, 2007; Harris, 2005b; Huggins, et al., 2017; Hulpia & Devos, 2010; Hulpia, Devos, & Rosseel, 2009; Militello & Janson, 2007; Smylie et al., 2007; Spillane et al., 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b; Wright, 2008). Utilizing a distributed leadership perspective, an investigation as to what encompasses this

leadership perspective, and the promising outcomes such implementation may have for those within the role, and those under their charge may have, will be discussed at length.

The literature review to follow, investigates comprehensively the role of the principal in the past, present, and illuminates possible future responsibilities and expectations this organizational leader must exercise through the lens of an ever-changing time. Additionally, this study aims to discuss at length, the perceptions, shared viewpoints, attitudes, and beliefs of secondary principals, and the trust they place in those they distribute their power to. Information will be gleaned from the principals of 127 public high schools in Long Island, New York. Due to the high level of complexity that this phenomenon requires, the application of a mixed methods approach, *Q* methodology, and descriptive analyses will be employed to study the phenomenon of interest.

Statement of the Problem

During a time of heightened accountability, organizational networks such as schools, and their leaders, principals, are under tremendous pressures to perform at high-levels and produce students that are college- and career- ready (Gonzalez & Firestone, 2013; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b; Watson & Scribner, 2007). Within the confines of a school system, a social network of educated members encompasses a plethora of expertise in a variety of subject areas. How do these organization systems including hundreds of members within the network utilize each other for knowledge? With accountability systems tightening and the of pressure on principals increasing, it is integral that these organizational networks tap into the knowledge-bases and expertise of those within the organization. Utilizing each other as knowledge-brokers, and imparting one's know-how on others, is the key to an organizational network's success, cohesiveness, and production. Furthermore, through the distribution of leadership

responsibilities, the employment of shared-decision making, and the facilitation of collaboration, the possibility of meeting these mandates becomes highly plausible. Tapping into the shared viewpoints and subjectivities of principals and their perceptions of distributing their leadership responsibilities is timely and essential as accountability measures continue to accelerate and change.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the models of shared viewpoints, beliefs, attitudes, role expectations, and opinions of public high school principals as they relate to distributed leadership under the context of heightened accountability. This study will explore the distributed leadership perspectives and perceptions of principals, and their ideologies regarding trust as it relates to tapping into and utilizing those under their charge as resources. An investigation of the perceptions and trust levels of high school principals under the context of heightened accountability and their proposed dependencies on distributed leadership will be discussed.

Significance of the Study

Expected Contribution of This Research

Gaining an understanding regarding the importance and near necessity of distributing leadership to meet the vast needs and demands of a school system are important in guiding principals towards meeting accountability demands, while preparing students for their future. By tapping into the highest potential possible of school systems' knowledge-base is a key aspect of creating a sense of group efficacy, as well as a source for providing more informed and sound decision-making processes. In addition, we can create environments through collaboration and professional development where gaps can be bridged, more information can be shared, and professional development can be tailored towards the faculty they employ. In order to tap such

potential, principals must be equipped through schooling, preparation, and training, with the leading tools necessary to share, spread, and include the power they hold as a formal leader. Equipping principals with the leading strategies and techniques necessary to implement distributed leadership, holds promising potential in meeting a common goal mandated under accountability systems and expectations.

Furthermore, a considerable area that is under-researched within the distributed leadership literature is in the area of high school principals. Most research, although scant, has focused upon the distributed leadership of principals and other administrative positions at the elementary level. This study will focus upon the distributed leadership exercised by high school principals within the context of heightened accountability, as well as analyze their perceptions of trust in others while doing so. Bridging the gaps that currently exist in the extant literature, will provide for a deeper understanding of what is entailed in encompassing and exercising a distributed leadership perspective as well as how to best prepare incoming high school principals to lead.

The landscape through which these central actors navigate their responsibilities has been altered due to heightened accountability. It is therefore important that we gain a deeper understanding of this evolving position to make more informed decisions about how to lead, about which topics school leadership preparatory programs should cover, and about how to best equip current principals with the skills and strategies necessary to successfully lead within the context of heightened accountability and the ever-changing policies and mandates that principals must follow.

Definitions and Key Terms

Throughout the study, operationalized definitions of usage of key terms and descriptions will be utilized. To proactively avoid confusion the definitions provided below, for these key terms, will be adhered to throughout the body of the writing presented.

Accountability – systems put in place at the local, state, and federal levels in which the performance (high-stakes testing) of a school is gauged dependent upon many factors and criterion set forth by both federally mandated expectations, guidelines, and standards, as well as by administration at the local level of control (Knapp & Feldman, 2012).

Artifacts – are the common resources of a culture (physical or abstract) to the society within, and can be the tools, routines, structures, and other various aspects of a situation that mediate interactions between leaders and/or individuals and objects, structures, or their followers and their actions (Timperley, 2008; Watson & Scribner, 2007).

Distributed leadership – is considered a collective form of leadership focused upon the interactions of teachers and principals, by which they work together to develop their expertise and increase their human capacities leading towards instructional innovations within an organizational setting (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Mayrowetz, 2008; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004).

Formal leader – are school leaders that are placed in a designated position amongst staff (Spillane et al., 2009).

Human capital – the development and improvement on human capacities including knowledge and skillsets, through professional development and sound instructional practices (Farley-Ripple & Buttram, 2015; Spillane, Hopkins, & Sweet, 2015).

Informal leader – an individual identified by others (who is not designated a formal position within the organization) as someone who offers knowledge, information, or advice that has the ability to contribute towards the development of others (Watson & Scribner, 2007).

Organization – is a grouping of individuals who are continuously working and engaging over time as they acquire and learn methods of practice (Gronn, 2000).

Principal – is a formally appointed position, tied to positional authority which requires those within this position to identify, acquire, allocate, coordinate, and utilize social, material, and cultural resources in order to establish a culture and climate conducive to teaching and learning (Spillane et al., 2001; Watson & Scribner, 2007).

Shared-decision making – includes multiple constituencies within the school made up of committees in which risk taking and learning take place in order for strategic decisions to be developed and carried out (Brazer et al., 2010; Hollingworth, 2012; Spillane et al., 2010)

Social capital – is embedded in the relationships amongst people, in which their trust in each other, their expertise, and their joint-sense making enables school improvement and instructional reform (Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc, 2016; Daly & Finnigan, 2011; Spillane et al., 2012).

Teacher leader – the primary responsibility of these individuals is to teach; however, they are also formally designated a leadership position such as chairperson of a department or grade level organizer that influences others within the organizational community towards educational practice improvements (Harris, 2005b; Spillane et al., 2009).

Trust – is the willingness to demonstrate vulnerability to others with the understanding that you will not be harmed or judged (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a).

Theoretical Rationale and Framework

A select set of relevant and applicable theories were chosen and utilized as a backdrop for the theoretical context and rationale for this study. These theories assisted in providing a framework in understanding the complexities of school leadership and the intricacies they must consider when leading within a context of heightened accountability and expectations. To understand human behaviors and decision-making, the literature suggests (Spillane et al., 2001) that leadership can be divided into three components which will be noted as *thinking*, *perceptions*, and *actions* and *behaviors*. These categories follow an emergent and sequential flow (Gronn, 2000) that begins with a thought-process surrounding a given motivation, leading to perceptions, and producing actions and or behaviors accordingly. The theories utilized within this study reflect each level of the components noted. The theories of social capital, human capital, and distributed cognition would constitute the component of cognition. Institutional theory and organizational leadership theory are within the category of perceptions. Finally, contingency theory, action theory, and distributed leadership are within the component of actions and behaviors.

Cognition

Social capital theory. School organizations are socially-based and knowledge-rich environments that encompass cognitive and tangible resources. From a social aspect, school organizations are comprised of administrators, faculty, and staff, that work interdependently (Camburn et al., 2003; Militello & Janson, 2007; Spillane & Kenney, 2012) to achieve the goals of the organization, in pursuit of student academic success. Cognitively speaking, school organizations are comprised of highly educated individuals who have expertise over a variety of subjects. Social capital theory posits that through social ties, networking, collaboration, and interrelations, embedded in social relations and structures, individuals with resources,

knowledge, and information can exchange, assist, and support individuals within the organization. Social capital theory, therefore, suggests that through these relations, thinking, productivity, and learning can be constrained or enacted (Baker-Doyle & Petchauer, 2015; Daly & Finnigan, 2011; Daly & Finnigan, 2010; Hatch, Hill, & Roegman, 2016; Moolenaar, 2012; Snow, Martin, & Dismuke, 2015; Wright, 2008).

Human capital theory. According to human capital theory, human capital is the economic value one encompasses within their own skill sets and assists in maximizing human capacities (Mayrowetz, 2008). Furthermore, human capital is the knowledge about certain disciplines and contexts, as well as the resources an individual brings with them to an organization for personal and shared use within the organization (Snow et al., 2015).

Distributed cognition theory. Distributed cognition theory suggests that social context and one's cognitive potential play a role in the dissemination of information. The interdependence of social contexts and the people that comprise these environments, mediates the sharing or constraint of information and knowledge and usage of artifacts. According to distributed cognition theory, the knowledge and artifacts shared are 'stretched over social and cultural boundaries towards the completion of a shared complex task (Harris, 2007; Harris & Spillane, 2008; Spillane et al., 2001; Timperley, 2008; Watson & Scribner, 2007). According to Gronn (2000)

> distributed cognition is the idea that mind and mindfulness are not solely features of the interior mental life of individuals but are manifest in jointly performed active and social relations. Distributed mind, therefore means the pattern of overall activity-based attention between socially positioned actors, and their relations with various representational and computational objects, tools or implements in the performance of

> tasks. This definition means, in turn, that situations and contexts, and their objects, both structure and meditate thinking. (p. 323)

Perceptions and Perspectives

Institutional theory. Institutions are born from organizational structures when leadership is able to infuse the values and align the needs of the organization with their followers (Baloglu, 2012). School organizations, especially those under the charge of state and federal controls, mandates, and policies, are considered institutions for their overarching goals, objectives, expectations, and general set of rules and regulations that supersede individual leaders' needs or wants for the school(s) under their charge. According to Spillane et al. (2008), "institutional theory has stressed the emergence of dominant organizational forms rather than the leadership practices or activities that may be particular to individual organizations" (p. 8). Furthermore, according to Spillane and Kenney (2012), organizational legitimacy and organizational integrity are the two main pillars of institutional work. Leaders must obtain the support of those they lead and are also charged with the responsibility to bring their constituents together as they work towards common goals and expectations. Throughout this work, leadership must exhibit reliability and consistency to those under their charge.

Organizational leadership theory. As noted throughout the literature, those in leadership positions are highly influential individuals (Gonzalez & Firestone, 2013; Hollingworth, 2012; Sanzo et al., 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a). Leaders therefore, according to organizational leadership theory, have the power to affect not only the interactions they have with their constituents, but with the interactions and interpersonal relations their constituents have with each other within the organization (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a; Watson & Scribner, 2007). According to Copland (2003) and Blitz and Modeste (2015), leaders

who emphasized the importance of developing human relations have the ability to inspire greater commitment from their followers and provide their followers with a sense of greater support and effectiveness.

Action and Behaviors

Contingency theory. Within this theory, environment is the factor that is most influential in human behavior and interactions. Contingency theory posits that there is not one approach that best assists in organizing, rather, dependent on the environment, leaders must implement the method they deem most effective (Spillane et al., 2001). Within a school system, contingency theorists posit that situational context within a school includes staff size, staff stability, environmental and task complexities, and task certainty (Spillane, Diamond, & Jita, 2003; Spillane et al., 2004).

Activity theory. Activity theory or, as it is also referred to, socially distributed activity theory, aims to take a more holistic perspective on the study of organizational work as it highlights the importance of social context (Gronn, 2000; Spillane et al., 2001; Spillane et al., 2003) and provides a conceptual framework to bridge the gaps between activity and structure and individual free will and determinism (Watson & Scribner, 2007). Furthermore, activity theory provides for a framework in which leaders can identify and describe patterns of distribution through various contexts, as well as explore and analyze activity components while investigating the pragmatic qualities of work (Copland, 2003; Mayrowetz, 2008; Watson & Scribner, 2007).

Distributed theory of leadership. Distributed leadership theory is a composite of the theories aforementioned, with great emphasis on cognition theory components and action theory components. Within this hybrid theory, the theory of cognition is utilized to ascertain a focus on cognition's reliance upon artifacts available within situation and context (Harris, 2007).

Distributed leadership is based on the interactions and actions of others in determining to who, and how this leadership will be shared. The actions that they take in determining who they will share their leadership responsibilities with, is evidenced in the actions they take (action theory). Furthermore, according to Harris (2007), action theory is illustrated based on the interactions between leaders and their constituents, the execution of tasks are defined and constructed. Distributed leadership theory focuses on the practice of leadership, and how it distributed amongst people that hold both formal and informal positions. It also concerns the utilization of collaboration (Harris, 2007, Harris, 2005a; Spillane et al., 2001), and an emphasis on how leadership is *stretched over* "social and situational contexts of the school" (Spillane et al., 2004, p. 5).

Justification for the Research

Prior research has not paid particular attention to the utilization, implementation, and dependencies principals have exercised as it relates to distributed leadership under the context of heightened accountability systems at the secondary level. Prior research, rather, has focused on principals at the elementary and middle school levels primarily, or in other countries outside of the United States. Furthermore, secondary school principals are charged with a plethora of responsibilities and expectations. Leadership requires an interdependent relationship between these leaders and their constituents.

Prior research and analysis has focused centrally upon the role of the principal as the main contender in meeting organizational goals. It is therefore necessary to conduct a study that considers these influences, as well as to investigate the trust that principals have in those they distribute their leadership to in order to gain a deeper understanding into the complex role of the principal, the qualities they look for in others to share their responsibilities with, as well as to

gauge the stressors and complex responsibilities these school leaders have in leading their schools towards performance levels that are monitored at the local, state, and federal levels. This study aims to utilize a distributed leadership perspective as well as gain insights into the trust factors that assist principals in forging forward as they meet the needs of the school with the assistance of those they choose to distribute their leadership to (both in formal and informal positioned individuals). Additionally, this study will focus on the intersection of context and practice through a mixed-methods approach. As principals within school systems are charged with more responsibility as it relates to accountability expectations, now more than ever, is it imperative to identify tactics and strategies that will assist these school leaders with meeting these vast goals set forth at the local, state, and federal levels. In addition, taking this multi-perspective approach to understand the many demands on this key actor within a school organizational setting, has not taken into account the unique experiences principals within the northeastern region have experienced as they lead their teachers and students towards meeting the many mandates and expectations set forth for them to meet. As noted by Harris and Spillane (2008), taking on a distributed leadership perspective "is a way of getting under the skin of leadership practice, of seeing leadership practice differently and illuminating the possibilities for organizational transformation" (p. 33). Accountability has changed the context in which the objectives and goals for schools are to be met. In order to obtain these goals, this study posits gain the shared viewpoints of public high school principals on Long Island is the first step towards the implementation of distributed leadership. In doing so, the potential to enhance the workplace environment for teachers through the cultivation of professional relationships and the development of social capital, while working towards the local, state, and federal mandates to essentially improve or maintain student performance and academic press becomes possible.

Delimitations

This study was limited to high schools in the northeastern region of the United States. Furthermore, it was delimited to only those with formally designated positions as principals in the schools identified for participation.

Limitations

The information divulged and examined here, are based on the sole perceptions of those principals who responded to, in full, their perceptions, ideologies, beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes towards distributed leadership under an age of heightened accountability systems and mandates. Information gleaned from this study, is specific to those who participated. Furthermore, *Q* methodology encompasses some inherent limitations. A limitation of *Q* methodology includes the interpretations of the researcher in determining the concourse as well as in deducing deeper meaning from the data. In addition, this study will utilize a sample of participants who are representative of a particular population. Therefore, information utilized within the analysis may not be as generalizable as if the sample of participants involved in the study were randomly selected. According to Levitt and Red Owl (2013), limitations "include the purposive nature of person samples in *Q* studies, the ultimate qualitative interpretation of the findings, and the non-traditional form of generalizability of the results and conclusions" (p. 404). Additionally, unlike other regions of the United States where socio-economic status is congruent in a concentrated area, the region examined is unique in that it represents a cross-section of many socio-economic statuses within a small and central area. Therefore, this varying representation may lessen how generalizable the information found will be.

Although limitations have been considered within the proposed study, the contributions it will make towards this body of knowledge supersedes these limits. Research regarding

distributed leadership is nascent. Therefore, a gap currently exists regarding a focus on high school principals and their perceptions. Furthermore, the studies reviewed have not taken into account the context of accountability on the role of the principal and how this context may dictate the ways in which they lead and distribute their responsibilities to others in both formal and informal positions within the school organization. It is therefore necessary to conduct a study that considers these influences, as well as to investigate the trust that principals have in those they distribute their leadership to in order to gain a deeper understanding into the complex role of the principal, the qualities they look for in others to share their responsibilities with, as well as to gauge the stressors and complex responsibilities these school leaders have in leading their schools towards performance levels that are monitored at the local, state, and federal levels.

Organization of the Study

Chapter One provided the background and contextual information as related to the identified general problem addressed in this dissertation. Chapter Two scrutinizes the extant literature within the areas of distributed leadership, principal perceptions, and the role of accountability. Chapter Three provides for a foundation for the type of research methods implemented and the practices utilized for this study. Chapter Four details the findings of this study and Chapter Five provides a discussion, conclusion, and recommended directions for future research.

Chapter Summary

As educational systems become more scrutinized under the lens of accountability measures, secondary level principals, now more than ever, are charged with a multitude of responsibilities. The role of a principal, although always held accountable, has evolved into a leadership position that relies upon the expertise of others in both formally and informally

designated positions, to meet the vast expectations of local, state, and federal mandates. The formal role of a principal requires the contributions of many in which interdependencies within this structural network are evident and prevalent. Therefore, it is necessary to understand their viewpoints, beliefs, and attitudes as it relates to distributing their leadership responsibilities within a context of accountability while also considering their trust levels in others to move forward.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The scope and purpose of this study is to systematically describe the perceptions of high school principals and their use of distributed leadership under heightened accountability mandates and systems while considering their trust levels. Applying a theoretical frame to conceptualize a distributed leadership perspective amongst high school principals under accountability mandates at the local, state, and federal levels will provide much-needed, and missing insight that can be drawn upon, and analyzed in contribution towards the growing body of work in this area.

The review of literature to follow, addresses two major components of this study: a framework of distributed leadership and principal perceptions. Within these components, a focus on principals and accountability, trust, and a distributed leadership perspective will take place. A description and summarization of the following aspects within these components will be addressed to build upon these conceptual frameworks:

1. the changing role of the principal and an evidenced discussion including the need to shift from an egocentric position of leading to one that is incorporative,
2. the impact of accountability,
3. a discussion of the contributing factors leading to this evolving role,
4. an investigation of the responsibilities and expectations of the contemporary principal,
5. empirically documented problematic issues faced by past and current principals under a time of heightened accountability,
6. the importance of trust in and between, leaders and their constituents,
7. a detailed discussion regarding a distributed leadership perspective,

8. and, information and an analysis underscoring the importance of trust and knowledge sharing through the path of social capital development.

Sources Matrix

Exploring distributed leadership within the context of heightened accountability is at its infancy. To fulfill the purpose of this study, it is necessary to be familiar with the information available and the studies conducted thus far regarding distributed leadership. The sources referred to throughout this study, have been organized into a matrix encapsulating the details of each (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1

Empirical and Theoretical Studies in Review of Extant Literature

Reference	Sample	PR/CC/DLSO/DLMM	Method	Design
Baker-Doyle and Petchauer (2015)	4-year long longitudinal study of 2,400 college students	CC	Qualitative	Descriptive; Exploratory
Baloglu (2012)	225 primary school teachers	DLMM	Mixed methods	Casual design
Bickmore and Dowell (2011)	2 principals from charter schools	PR	Qualitative	Multiple case study
Blitz and Modeste (2015)	165 administrators and 3,663 teachers from 121 schools across the United States.	DLMM	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Brazer et al. (2010)	3 year-long longitudinal study of on principals, teachers, and school board members from 3 school districts	DLMM	Qualitative	Multiple case study
Bridwell-Mitchell and Cooc (2016)		CC	Theoretical	Review of literature and research
Camburn et al. (2003)	407 principals representing all school levels from 17 geographical regions	DLSO	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Copland (2003)	4-year long longitudinal study of principals and teachers from 16 San Francisco, Bay Area schools	DLSO	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Cosner (2010)		PR	Theoretical	Analysis of literature and research

Daly (2012)		CC	Theoretical	Analysis of literature and research
Daly and Finnigan (2010)	23 district office personnel and 35 site administrators in Dos Mundos, Texas	CC	Mixed methods	Exploratory case study
Daly and Finnigan (2011)	49 leaders; 19 from central office and; 30 from within the schools in 18 K-8 schools near Los Angeles, CA	CC	Mixed methods	Exploratory case study
Daly et al. (2010)	5 principals and 12 teachers from 5 schools	CC	Mixed methods	Exploratory case study
DeMatthews (2014)	Principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches and teachers from 6 elementary schools in West Texas	DLSO	Qualitative	Multi-case study
Drysdale et al., (2014)	Data were drawn from over 100 participants from 3 countries; Australia, Sweden and USA	DLMM	Qualitative	Multiple-perspective case study
Ehren and Hatch (2013)	1 principal and 2 teachers from 9 elementary schools in New York City	CC	Qualitative	Exploratory case study
Farley-Ripple and Buttram (2015)	42 elementary school teachers from one district	CC	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Gedik and Bellibas (2015)	4,311 teachers, school administrators and other school staff	DLMM	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Goodwin, Cunningham, and Eagle (2005)		PR	Historical	Review of existing historiography

Gonzalez and Firestone (2013)	25 New Jersey middle school principals	CC/PR	Qualitative	Exploratory case study
Gronn (2000)		DL	Theoretical	Analysis of research
Harris (2005a)		DL	Theoretical	Analysis of literature and research
Harris (2005b)		DLSO	Theoretical	Analysis of literature and research
Harris (2007)		DL	Theoretical	Analysis of literature
Harris and Spillane (2008)		DL	Theoretical	Analysis of literature and research
Hatch et al., (2016)	1-year long longitudinal study of between 10 and 16 superintendents from 3 school districts in the Northeast	CC	Qualitative	Descriptive; Exploratory
Heck and Hallinger (2009)	4-year long longitudinal study of 195 elementary schools within one Western state	DLSO	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Hochbein et al. (2013)	1,059 public schools: 631 elementary, 227 middle, and 201 high schools in one Midwestern state	CC	Mixed methods	Descriptive; exploratory
Hollingworth (2012)	1 principal, 1 superintendent, and 38 teachers from a midwestern high school	PR	Qualitative	Descriptive case study
Huggins et al. (2017)	6 high school principals	DLMM	Qualitative	Exploratory; Multiple site case study

Hulpia and Devos (2010)	8 schools: 4 schools identified as having teachers with low-commitment and 4 schools identified as having teachers with high-commitment	DL	Quantitative	Exploratory
Hulpia et al. (2009)	46 schools in Belgium partook in the first stage of the study in which they were identified as high or low commitment schools based upon 1,902 teacher responses. The study utilized 8 schools: 4 identified with low commitment levels and; 4 identified with high commitment levels. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted as well.	DLSO	Mixed methods	Comparative analysis
Kafka (2009)		PR	Historical	Review of existing historiography
Keith (2011)	102 principals from 52 elementary schools, 25 middle schools, and 25 high schools in the state of Virginia	PR	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory

Knapp and Feldman (2012)	18-month longitudinal study of 15 schools in four urban school districts in the United States	CC/PR	Mixed methods	Multi-case study
Lambert (2002)		DLSO	Theoretical	Analysis of literature and research
Louis and Robinson (2012)	7 principals and data from 175 schools within 45 districts, and 9 states	PR/CC	Mixed methods	Descriptive and exploratory case study
Mayrowetz (2008)		DL	Theoretical	Analysis of literature
Merchant et al. (2012)	Principals from San Antonio, Texas and Sweden	PR/CC	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Militello and Janson (2007)	78 participants; 39 principals and 39 counselors	DLMM	Mixed methods	Descriptive and exploratory case study
Mombourquette (2013)	Fourteen of the 46 school jurisdictions with Alberta, Canada	CC/PR	Quantitative	Descriptive; Exploratory
Moolenaar (2012)		CC	Theoretical	Analysis of literature and research
Moolenar et al. (2014)	278 educators and aggregated test scores from 11 charter schools in the USA	CC	Mixed methods	Instructive case design
Moolenar et al. (2012)	775 educators from 53 Dutch elementary schools	CC	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Penuel et al. (2009)	43 teachers from 2 elementary schools in California	CC	Mixed methods	Case study

Richardson et al. (2016)	279 principal job advertisements	PR	Qualitative	Descriptive; Exploratory
Rizzuto et al. (2009)	775 undergraduate Psychology students in a Southeastern university	CC	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Rousmaniere (2013)		PR	Historical	Review of existing historiography
Sanzo et al. (2011)	10 middle school principals	PR/CC	Qualitative	Inductive exploratory study
Smylie et al. (2007)	3-year longitudinal study of two secondary schools	DLMM	Qualitative	Comparative case study
Snow et al. (2015)	12 elementary school liaisons	CC	Qualitative	Case study
Spillane (2006)	Principals and teachers in informal leadership positions of 13 K-5 and K-8 Chicago	DL	Qualitative	Descriptive and exploratory case study
Spillane et al. (2003)		DL	Theoretical	Opinion editorial
Spillane et al. (2001)		DL	Theoretical	Analysis of literature and research
Spillane et al. (2004)		DL	Theoretical	Analysis of research
Spillane et al. (2009)	Principals and staff from 44 elementary, middle and high schools	DLMM	Qualitative	Descriptive case study
Spillane et al. (2015)	A longitudinal study of 316 staff members from 2 school districts in the Midwest	CC	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Spillane and Kenney (2012)		DL	Historical	Essay
Spillane et al. (2012)		CC	Theoretical	Essay

Spillane and Sherer (2004)	13 public schools in Chicago, Illinois	DL	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Styron and Styron (2011)	50, K-12 principals in Mississippi	PR	Mixed methods	Descriptive; Exploratory
Thibodeaux et al. (2015)	5 superintendents, 5 principals, and 212 teachers in a southern coastal state	PR/CC	Mixed methods	Multi-site case study
Timperley (2008)		DL	Theoretical	Analysis and review of research
Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015a)	3,215 teachers from 64 elementary, middle and high schools from two districts	CC	Qualitative	Descriptive; Exploratory
Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015b)		DLMM/DLSO	Theoretical	Analysis and review of research
Wallach et al. (2005)	3-year long longitudinal study of high schools in Washington State	DLSO	Mixed methods	Multiple site descriptive and exploratory case study
Wang and Degol (2016)		CC	Theoretical	Analysis of literature
Watson and Srcibner (2007)		DL	Theoretical	Analysis of literature and research
Wieczorek and Theoharis (2015)	2-year longitudinal study of 4 urban middle- and high school principals in the Northeast	PR/CC	Qualitative	Descriptive; Exploratory
Wright (2008)	13 principals, 2 assistant principals, 2 central office personnel, 2 school facilitators from 20 secondary and elementary schools in Alberta, Canada	DLMM	Qualitative	Comparative case study

Vidich and McReynolds (1969)	1-year long longitudinal study of 23 New York City High school principals	PR	Qualitative	Descriptive: Exploratory

Note. CC = Context and Culture; PR = Principal's Role/Perceptions; DL = Distributed Leadership; DLSO = Distributed Leadership: School Outcomes; DLMM = Distributed Leadership: Mental Models.

The Changing Role of the Principal: The Impact of High-stakes Testing on the Role of the Principal

The role of the principal has changed based upon societal changes and governmental demands. To respond to such demands, this literature review will delve deeply into how the traditional role of a principal has evolved. An exploration of the contributing factors leading to this change, and an analysis of the issues that have arisen from this time of heightened accountability will be employed. Furthermore, techniques, strategies, and approaches that can be exercised by principals in this ever-evolving position will be discussed as well.

The Past: The Role of the Principal

According to several articles and studies reviewed, the traditional role of a principal encompasses responsibilities revolving around managing and evaluating their faculty as a measure of school productivity as well as providing support for student learning (Bickmore & Dowell, 2011; Hollingworth, 2012; Keith, 2011; Richardson et al., 2016). In addition to these responsibilities, Keith (2011) noted that a traditional principal role includes district-level compliance, budgetary concerns, assurance of school safety, and the management of public relations. According to Gonzalez and Firestone (2013), in the past, principals rarely provided their teachers with support or guidance. According to Drysdale, Bennett, Murakami, Johansson, & Gurr, (2014), the *heroic* principal or traditional in our case, is autocratic, hierarchical and non-participative, while a *post-heroic* leader, or a contemporary principal in our case, is "facilitative, collaborative, empowering, and encourages ownership" (Drysdale et al., 2014, p. 786). In the next section, a closer look at the historical evolution of the principalship will be discussed.

A historical chronology of the principalship. As with societal changes, the role of public figures, and those charged with great responsibilities, such as principals, evolves and

responds to the needs and expectations of the outside world. The expectations of principals across the United States has maintained a core set of role responsibilities originating back to the 1800s where these key figures had modest beginnings as head teachers of small school houses and community educational institutions. Only within the last 20 years, has the position of principalships been greatly influence by reform efforts, social changes, and powerful economic challenges (Goodwin, Cunningham, & Eagle, 2005).

1800s. In the 1800s schools were small, communal entities that were non-graded, and generally run by the teachers from within (Kafka, 2009). Local school board members were involved in broader decisions that influenced these schools. As more responsibilities were given to these teachers to attend to, such as town clerk, court messenger, and church bell ringer, to name a few, these teachers were referred to as the heads of school (Goodwin et al., 2005, Kafka, 2009). Head teachers or masters were charged with basic management functions during this time (Mombourquette, 2013). By the mid nineteenth century, educational reformers and government officials developed an outline of what the public-school system should achieve and named these public schools common schools (Rousmaniere, 2013). By the 1860s the teaching workforce had more than tripled. With a larger workforce, educational reformers appointed principals to supervise over teachers (Rousmaniere, 2013).

By the first half of the 19th century, city schools with larger populations, were developing a bureaucratic organization of personnel that were organized by grade level. In these larger schools, principals were charged with additional responsibilities that included financial decisions, personnel considerations, and the management of the school facility (Goodwin et al., 2005). As graded schools during the mid nineteenth century gained in popularity, the creation of a hierarchically organized schools system between district and school leaders was developed

(Rousmaniere, 2013). The development of such a system, clearly defined the roles of the district from that of principals. According to Rousmaniere, "the principal was a stabilizing ballast to a school building filled with multiple teachers and classrooms and acted as an administrative agent to a centralized office" (p. 23). During this time, the principal's role was one of functionality in which they addressed student enrollment and discipline (Rousmaniere, 2013). Their jobs were at the hands of community members and parents. A dissatisfied parent or community member could fire the principal at will. In addition, according to Rousmaniere, through the late nineteenth century, principals were solitary figureheads who fended for themselves and were unprotected by any type of formal school structure. Principals during this time period were charged with multiple responsibilities which included organizing fundraising efforts, managing the school, and teaching their students (Rousmaniere, 2013).

The early 1900s. By the 1900s, principals were viewed as managers in which their role was to manage their schools as a business in a more progressive manner (Goodwin et al., 2005). During this progressive period, principals were individualistic, and demure about their responsibilities as a principal (Goodwin et al., 2005, Kafka, 2009). During this time, principals defined their own roles, deemed their position to be "whatever they wanted it to be" (Goodwin et al., 2005, p. 3), while distinguishing themselves as above all others within the school building. Kafka noted that in 1904, New York City local superintendents were cautioned "not to infringe upon the duties and rights of principals" (p. 322). Principals during this time, were authoritative and highly respected figureheads.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the beginning of the progressive movement occurred. During this time, educational reformers worked towards the betterment of American education, a main objective was to improve the status and job description of the principal (Rousmaniere,

2013). A trailblazer in administrative progressive reform was Ellwood P. Cubberley. Cubberley, a teacher, principal, and professor believed that school leadership should be managed scientifically rather than based upon a strong personality or belief system (Rousmaniere, 2013). Cubberley believed that the role of the principal should be professionalized further. Educational reformers like Cubberley believed that in order for students, teachers, and community members alike to respect the principal, the principal should have their own space for reflecting, managing, and organizing the school. According to Rousmaniere, "the construction of a principal's office thus became a central strategy for enhancing the role" (p. 35). Reformers believed the principal's area was a place where administrative paperwork could be completed, however, the reformers encouraged principals to delegate such tasks to secretaries so that they could be more visible to the students and teachers alike. As noted by Rousmaniere, "through the early twentieth century, school principals' work remained a very hands-on immediate job, requiring individual leadership strategies and no small amount of energy and creative thinking" (p. 55). As the goal of educational reformers was to professionalize the principalship through procedures that designated physical space within the schools they ran, the 1920s brought about even greater emphasis on the position of the principalship.

1920s. The role of the principal in the 1920s and 1930s was that of a "spiritual leader, scientific manager, social leader, and dignified leader" (Goodwin et al., 2005, p. 3). Principals during this time period were viewed as above the all others (Kafka, 2009). Furthermore, according to Rousmaniere (2013), in the mid-nineteen twenties, "the principal's application of both executive skill and personal power drew on the combination of both traditional bureaucratic and charismatic authority" (p. 39). This charismatic authority and bureaucratic way was brought on by external factors that included the economic conditions of the Great Depression

(Mombourquette, 2013). Along with economic decline, an emphasis on developing the individual and a focus on the whole child occurred. This led to education in vocational skills and an increase in the growth of school size due to rural and urban school consolidation (Mombourquette, 2013). According to Rousmaniere,

> American secondary education underwent radical changes in both size and content in the first decades of the twentieth century. In 1900, there were barely 300,000 high school students in the United States; by the 1920s there were two million, and in 1929, over three million. This growth was due in part to the expanded purview of public education occasioned by child labor and compulsory education laws that both increased and diversified high school enrollment. (p. 61)

As the 1920s came to a close, a new decade that focused on more stringent credentialing procedures and requirements for principals occurred. These requirements along with heightening tensions in the late 1930s leading up to the Second World War, further contributed to the changing role of the principalship. In the next section, a discussion regarding these events, in detail, will occur.

1930s. Progressive administrative reformers believed that principals needed to be properly credentialed in order to gain further professionalization. To be properly credentialed, principals were to complete graduate work that would culminate in them identified as professors of education. These graduates were then carefully selected and trained by experts in the field (Rousmaniere, 2013). The credentialing of principals was emphasized by progressive administrative reformers, and by the 1930s about three quarters of all high school principals around the country had held a bachelor's degree (Rousmaniere, 2013).

A pivotal time period for school principals was in the late 1930s and early 1940s, during the Second World War in which the social issues experienced by the outside world influenced and affected public school leadership (Goodwin et al., 2005, Kafka, 2009).

1940s. World War II brought about many changes in the role of the principalship. During this time, winning the war was at the precipice of society; schooling and education took a back seat to winning the war, which in turn impacted the influential role of the principal during this time period. In 1947, with the advent of the Educational Testing Service (ETS) that established widespread testing of students' physical and mental capabilities, a new-found interest in widespread testing and maintenance of the status-quo was borne.

In addition, during the 1940s, principals were required to have taught for two to five years and hold a bachelor's degree (Rousmaniere, 2013). During this time, less than one quarter of the states in the country required principals to take a certification exam as well. The 1940s was a time in which schools experienced public and governmental scrutiny. Principals were facing cultural changes and intensified educational policy development (Rousmaniere, 2013). Principals were navigating between answering the call to cultural issues that occurred in the hallways of the schools they oversaw, while "more administrative demands from the educational bureaucracy tied the principal to the office desk" (Rousmaniere, 2013, p. 86). The complexities of historical events like World War II and cultural changes further contributed towards the changing role of the principal. The 1950s, a decade that included fears of educational inferiority and cultural encroachments like the Red Scare contributed to how schools hired and fired teachers, and the ways in which principals led. In the next section, a closer look at these events will follow.

1950s. A decade after the development and implementation of ETS, Sputnik was launched by Russia, which fueled mass criticism of public school education within the United States. Schools during this time, paid great attention to science, mathematics, and foreign language education of students. Principals were charged with expenditure plans involving monies granted by the National Defense Education Act (NDEA).

In the 1950's according to Kafka (2009), principals were seen as "efficient administrators" who were micromanaged by their superintendents, as they were advised on how to address students and conversate with faculty (Kafka, 2009). Principals were in between teachers and increasing regulations and reforms. Principals were responsible for addressing traffic safety issues, evaluating textbook budgets, supervising new employees, reviewing students' tests, and working out bus route problems (Rousmaniere, 2013). During this time, the principal was an authoritative figure who knew the communities' expectations and was free to enforce rules (Rousmaniere, 2013). The "Red Scare" effected the society at large, and in turn effected schools as well. Teachers were questioned about their political beliefs and alignments. Principals were charged with identifying and removing teachers believed to be communists. In September of 1949, the Feinberg Law implemented in New York State, required principals to survey their teachers' political beliefs (Rousmaniere, 2013). Compounding the responsibilities of principals further, was the 1954 court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education* that lead to the desegregation of schools (Rousmaniere, 2013).

Prior to the 1960s and 1970s principals were managers and disciplinarians that preserved social order and obedience. However, with increasing diversity in schools due to the civil rights movement, principals needed to navigate through high tensions, differing opinions, and oppositional behaviors like student boycotts and sit-ins (Rousmaniere, 2013).

The 1960s and 1970s. In the 1960s principals were to be conservative in their political and personal lives as during this time, principals were not protected by unions or tenure. Rather, principals were under the scrutiny and mercy of the school board (Rousmaniere, 2013). Principals became even more secluded as the development of collective bargaining for teachers occurred and educational unions were developed (Rousmaniere, 2013).

During the 1960s and 1970s, an emphasis on civil rights was on the forefront of societal change and upheaval. During this period, principals were leading schools during a time of conflict and change. Principals dealt with the external pressures of the civil rights movement as well as internal conflicts and change including teen pregnancies, adolescent drug abuse and underage drinking (Mombourquette, 2013). Other conflicts principals had to navigate through during this time was student rights issues, due process, sexism, and the mainstreaming of disabled children (Goodwin et al., 2005).

In 1972 the passage of Title IX placed greater pressures on principals as these leaders were responsible for assuring their schools were free of gender discrimination. Furthermore, in 1975, with the passage of Federal Public Law 94-142, referred to as the Education for Handicapped Children Act, principals were responsible for providing their students with free and appropriate education to students classified as handicapped within the least restrictive environment.

By 1975, there were over one-thousand principal unions across 24 states. (Rosumaniere, 2013). The 1970s brought upon greater demands by the public regarding more access and better response from principals. During this time, curriculum changes, open enrollment, and a focus on teacher practices and school policies had occurred (Rousmaniere, 2013). With a heightened sense towards racial and ethnic identity, principals, seen as a symbol of power within schools,

were often questioned and asked to justify their actions based upon their own racial identities (Rousmaniere, 2013). During the 1960s and 1970s, multiple civil rights cases against principals towards the education of minority children had occurred (Rousmaniere, 2013). To ease racial tensions, principals were charged with implementing federal government enrichment programs that included community engagement and participation (Rousmaniere, 2013). By the end of the 1970s, the "negotiation of federal engagement in, regulation of, and funding for public education had become a critical piece of principals' work" (Rousmanienер, 2013, p. 128).

During this historical time of civic unrest, Vidich and McReynolds summarized the past role of a high school principal as one who, "was a dignified, erudite, and slightly distant figure, autonomous in authority and respected both inside and outside the school" (Vidich & McReynolds, 1969, p. 9). During the 1967-1968 school year, Vidich and McReynolds conducted a descriptive analytical study within a theoretical framework of institutional theory. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of urban high school principals and their role in adequately addressing the problems they faced. The study conducted, interviewed 23 New York City high school principals and included four seminars relevant to secondary urban education. Each seminar was attended by 12 principals during the 1967-1968 school year. To acquire information, during the interview portion of the study, researchers asked principals questions regarding how their jobs have changed over time, the main duties they perceived to have, and what problems they felt they had come into contact with to make their jobs more difficult or complicated (Vidich & McReynolds, 1969). According to the Vidich and McReynolds, findings indicated that,

> the real job of the principal is the improvement of classroom instruction, principals are much more likely to be involved with such problems as the proper management of a large

> cafeteria, the sophisticated scheduling needed to make full of an overcrowded school, the collecting of information and preparation of reports for superiors, acting as final arbiter in discipline and organizational problems, and representing the school to its public. (p. 12)

In 1969, at the time of this study's publication, the conclusions of Vidich and McReynolds noted that principals, "emerge as embattled administrators individually and collectively holding the line against encroachments on their authority within the schools and defend off criticisms of the school from without" (p. 32). Prior to the 1960s and 1970s, principals and teachers worked side-by-side without the frameworks of unions. However, with civil rights at the forefront of societal concern, the rise of teacher unions and collective bargaining agreements had developed (Goodwin et al., 2005). The development of such organizations changed the dynamics between the principal and teachers, as now, they were no longer colleagues. The development of unions, and mandates like Title IX and Federal Public Law 94-142 placed great pressures on principals to comply fully, and follow all entitlements required at the federal, state, and local levels.

1980s. According to Goodwin et al. (2005), the 1980s brought about waves of school reform that changed the principal's role to that of an instructional leader (Mombourquette, 2013; Rousmaniere, 2013) and "agent of school reform" (p. 6). The most influential factor of the reform efforts during this time, was the publication of *a Nation at Risk* published by the National Commission of Excellence in Education in 1983. The report emphasized increased achievement and accountability as well as identified the American education system as eroding (Rousmaniere, 2013). To address the deficits, high expectations and controlled efforts would need to take place (Rousmaniere, 2013). In 1983 schools increasingly experienced high-stakes standardized assessments. "For the modern school leaders, that responsibility was complicated by stringent

requirements of local, district, and federal requirements, and community expectations" (Rousmaniere, 2013, p. 147). Federal mandates and reforms created unique working conditions for principals of the early 1980s, as they were charged with balancing the needs of the students while also meeting the objectives set forth by these mandates like standardized testing and free-market competition (Rousmaniere, 2013). Reforms were fueled by increasing national concerns called "the crisis" that regarded the poor performance on standardized tests of American school children (Rousmaniere, 2013). To target these concerns, schoolwide assessments were administered, and data reports were analyzed and utilized as a rewards and punishment system for schools (Rousmaniere, 2013). In the early 1970s, student standardized test scores were inaccessible to the public (Rousmaniere, 2013). However, by the late 1980s education officials required that accountability policies be adhered to which included publicizing school performance data (Rousmaniere, 2013).

By the mid-1980s, cultural tensions and concerns were less attended to as principals' concerns turned to aligning their school with the state and federal mandates of student academic accountability (Rousmnaiere, 2013). Research of the 1980s showed that effective schools were those led by principals effective in leading instructionally (Rousnamniere, 2013).

In 1986, a publication by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, published *Time for Results* in 1986, that demanded greater teacher empowerment and school governances restructuring (Goodwin et al., 2005). According to Goodwin et al., from 1988 through the 1990s, an emphasis on teacher, parent, student, and community member involvement in decisions-making, metamorphized the role of the principal from that of a school leader, to a facilitator who works aside others collaboratively to solve and identify problems (Goodwin et al., 2005). Similarly, Mombourquette (2013), referred to principals during this time period as group

facilitators and change agents who responded to "the demand of local communities to exert greater influence on the direction of the school" (p. 3). As the 1980s brought about stronger teacher's unions, an increase in opportunities for teachers to part take in school decisions "challenged the traditional authority structure in schools and often implied a critique of principals' capabilities" (Rousmaniere, 2013, p. 143).

In the four decades that followed the Second World War, state and federal interventions changed the landscape in which administrative operations took place (Rousmaniere, 2013). In addition, the educational system experienced the development of teacher unions, parent activists, the perpetuation of oppositional youth, increased racial issues, and overarching bureaucratic encroachments.

1990s. As accountability measures placed more responsibility on the role of the principal, an increase in mandated principal evaluations had occurred between 1975 and 1990, in which this mandate started with nine states and increased to forty states by 1990 (Rousmaniere, 2013). Rousmaniere noted that through the 1990s and into the 2000s a shortage in principals occurred due to a declining interest, intensified high-stakes accountability demands, and a profession known for its high stress, low wages, and extended hours of work that averaged 60 hours per week. As the involvement of governmental mandates and federal laws with public education became the norm, the 2000s brought upon even more regulations regarding accountability, sanctions, and high-stakes testing. In the next section, a discussion regarding the principal's role during this time period will occur.

2000s. In 2001, public access to standardized performance results were formalized by the reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act known as *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) (Rousmaniere, 2013). This monumental act exposed achievement gaps

amongst underserved students (Congressional Digest, 2017), and created an educational system that had accountability measures, and sanctions for states and schools out of compliance, or performing below level. Sanctions including school restructuring, the firing of principals, and the loss of wages, posed greater pressures upon school leaders. With such negative sanctions looming, the role of the principal was once again redefined as they were faced with answering the call of external mandates and requirements. As noted by Goodwin et al., (2005), "the emphasis on school reform has produced much criticism of school administrators" (p. 10). Governmental and societal changes, including "federal legislation, court mandates, funding issues, and equity issues" (Goodwin et al., 2005, p. 7), have influenced an evolution of the traditional principal to that of a contemporary principal confronted with traditional responsibilities and now, bureaucratic ones as well. This argument is further bolstered by Kafka (2009), as the author stated that "principals have historically drawn on shifting sources of authority to assert their institutional and personal power" (p. 318). According to Goodwin et al., (2005) "Conflicts between local governance and state and district mandates, between the need for strong leadership and shared power, between increased expectations and needed resources have created role overload and role ambiguity" (p. 7). According to Goodwin et al., (2005), changes in the principalship include the emphasis on information access, accountability measures made accessible to the public, an emphasis on quantitative information, an emphasis on curriculum and instruction, and external impositions.

Due to compounded complexities in the role of the principalship, issues in leading have given rise to a plethora of responsibilities without proper supports an imbalance in leading and managing, as well as an increase in the uncertainty and intricacy of the position (Goodwin et al., 2005). The political pressures placed upon school leaders is most evident in the policies and

reforms that are developed around accountability. Kafka (2009), noted that as "government officials, policymakers, and district leaders increasingly seek to hold schools individually accountable for student achievement, they inevitably focus on the individual leaders of those schools- the principal- as agents of success or sources of failure" (p. 319). These changes have influenced how principals lead, and who they work with (Kafka, 2009). Rousmaniere (2013) describes this time as one in which principals were both educational and business leaders situated within a competitive environment as the school reforms they were leading under were both standard- and market-based. With school choice that included charter schools and voucher systems, principals were scrutinized similarly to teachers, as they too were held accountable for their students' performance levels on standardized tests (Rousmaniere, 2013).

Most recently, *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) was signed into policy by Barack Obama on December 10, 2015. Stemming from the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson and reauthorized in 2001 under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), The 2015 ESSA was to be implemented over a three-year time period. Full implementation of ESSA went into effect in August of 2017.

Components of ESSA. NCLB was prescriptive in nature and the reauthorization enabled ESSA to maintain particular components of NCLB, while restructuring other parts. In particular, ESSA assists in advancing equity amongst all students and protecting dis-advantaged and in high need (Congressional Digest, 2017). In addition, ESSA outlines that states and school districts develop plans that ensure that students learn through high academic standards. In addition, ESSA asserts that stakeholders receive information regarding statewide assessments. Additionally, ESSA maintains that accountability systems and action plans continue to address low performance and poor graduation rates over time (Congressional Digest, 2017).

Considerations for Principals. Through the implementation of ESSA, there are more opportunities for school leader support and the recruitment of high-quality leaders through grant monies and optional three percent of Title II funds allocated that could be reserved for school leaders' activities and support mechanisms. The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) suggested that principals build coalitions with teachers and parents to advocate on behalf of their schools (Karhuse & Chodak, p. 17, 2015).

Testing and Accountability Under ESSA. ESSA requires that students in grades three through eight will be assessed in math and reading on an annual basis, while students in high school must be assessed once in these areas. Furthermore, according to NASSP (Karhuse & Chodak, p. 17, 2015) national assessments like the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and American College Test (ACT) could potentially fulfill the high school requirement. States will be responsible for designing accountability plans and measures based upon the input of local districts and principals.

Performance Goals. School performance will be gauged through student academic achievement on assessments, high school graduation rates, English Language Learner (ELL) language proficiency and progress, as well as an additional indicator to be determined at the state level. This additional indicator can include student or teacher engagement, the climate and safety of a school (by surveying parents, teachers, and students about school conditions), or student access to advanced coursework and their completion (Darling-Hammond et al., 2016)

Interventions will be in place for schools that are in the bottom five percent within a state. In addition, high schools who demonstrate graduation rates below 67% will be identified as needing state interventions. Finally, if student subgroups illustrate a lack of progress or

underperformance, interventions will be implemented. All interventions will be reassessed every three years.

In March 2017, Betsy DeVos the U. S. Secretary of Education updated the plans each state must submit in accordance with ESSA in order to ensure "greater flexibility for State and local leaders to do what they know is best for the children while also maintaining important protections for economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English learners" (Congressional Digest, p. 5, 2017). Organizations and associations like the National Association of Secondary School principals and The American Federation of School Administrators demand that school leaders participate in the decision-making process regarding ESSA, as well as part-take in recommendations for United States Elected Officials to consider. In a 2015 letter (Bartoletti, Connelly, & Woodward) noted that they believed that "support for principals and other school leaders must be a focus of state and local district efforts to improve schools" (p. 2).

Support and guidance is crucial in assisting principals as they navigate through new policies, procedures, and expectations. According to Rousmaniere (2013), under No Child Left behind, principals often reoriented the school towards test preparation to meet the new requirements. Principals were responsible for applying and connecting district initiatives to the classrooms under their charge, because they were on the receiving end of any negative sanctions or consequences as it related to their schools poor or low performance (Rousmaniere, 2013). Governmental mandates like NCLB, ESSA, and other educational policies and reforms, have placed great demands upon the expectations of educators and principals alike. According to Kafka (2009), "principals experience that accountability pressure in deeply personal ways" (p. 328). With such pressures, the role of the principal, is expected to evolve and meet the

expectations set forth by the accountability measures in place. To do so, the contemporary principal, must shift the way in which school leadership is carried out. This redefined role, demands an interdependency in, and between leaders and their constituents. According to Rousmaniere,

> American school principals have long played active and productive roles in the development of public education. Their ranks have included "hard-charging" men and women, all former teachers, who struggled to make progressive educational change, address community needs, and improve academic instruction. They have held multiple roles as they managed a large institution of adults and children while responding to the demands of multiple constituencies outside their building. Their work is notoriously busy, messy, multifaceted, and intense. (p. 151)

The pressures of teacher needs, along with external pressures placed on the principal through district-level requirements and governmental mandates, are all contributing factors to redefining the role of the principal. Accountability reforms and policies impacted the focus of principals as they "became more externally focused, paying attention to the reward system and evaluations originating outside of the school more so than to professional and moral accountability" (Rousmaniere, 2013, p. 141). No longer is the principal fulfilling only the traditional role, but now is expected to meet additional responsibilities and demands as well (Blitz & Modeste, 2015; Brazer et al., 2010; Copland, 2003; DeMatthews 2014; Drysdale et al., 2014; Huggins et al., 2017; Hulpia et al., 2009; Militello & Janson, 2007; Spillane & Kenney, 2012; Timperley, 2008; Wallach et al., 2005; Wright, 2008). According to Rousmaniere,

> From this central position, principals have stood literally at the front door of educational change. Principals' ability to exact such change has depended on the context of the many

> different elements that surround them—school, community, students, district, state—as well as their own professional and personal capabilities. (p. 152)

Accountability has changed the context in which leaders lead, and the way in which they navigate through their leadership responsibilities. In the past, principals worked individually, defined their own roles, and made their own decisions. In the next section, a closer look at the impact accountability has had on the role of the principalship will occur.

The Impact of Accountability

Accountability systems can be found deeply rooted in our history dating back to the 1950s. With the launching of Sputnik by Russia, an arms race had ensued to be the smartest, strongest, and best in the world (Styron & Styron, 2011). In 1965, when Lyndon B. Johnson was president, the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was implemented in which accountability and high standards were emphasized (Styron & Styron, 2011). Accountability is a high-stakes system in which standards-based reforms are present at the local, state, and federal level (Knapp & Feldman, 2012). Other mandated governmental policies regarding accountability and high-stakes testing have since been passed as well. One that caused pivotal changes was the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). This act "marked a new era in school accountability reforms" (Hochbein et al., 2013, p. 270). In addition to educational policy changes, additional pressures of accountability are due to the increased availability of comparative data of national and international performance such as the results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (Hochbein, et al., 2013).

Aside from principals meeting the expectations of the mandated federal legislation posed, they must also be cognizant of the negative sanctions and potential interventions that may occur if their schools are identified as low-performing. Schools are expected to meet targeted Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) in which student achievement is utilized as the measuring stick towards such a goal (Ehren & Hatch, 2013). Interventions include replacing principals that are ineffective with the goal of turning around low-performing schools (Richardson, et al., 2016; Styron & Styron, 2011) and possible restructuring or closures (Ehren & Hatch, 2013; Hochbein et al., 2013; Keith, 2011).

The motivation behind states assigning schools within their confines to adhere to federal accountability systems, include monetary implications. As noted by Hochbein et al. (2013), grants sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) assist in fueling the creation of policies and political will towards school improvements. In addition, schools receive financial accommodations from federal funds when they meet their AYP (Keith, 2011). One particular program involving monetary benefits was the Race to The Top (RTTT) federal grant program (beginning in 2009) in which monetary benefits were enjoyed by states that increased their accountability measures of teachers and principals (Wieczorek & Theoharis, 2015).

It is integral to equip acting and future principals with the tools, strategies, and approaches necessary to assist them in managing the plethora of responsibilities and expectations they, as school leaders, have. The extant literature points to a need for professional development in this area as principals face obstacles that they were not necessarily trained to handle.

Student academic success is at the forefront of what drives educational policy. It is therefore imperative that we provide principals with the proper training and preparation to meet the needs of the students they serve. To meet not only the demands of their students, but of the

mandated governmental policies as well, principals must be an active component within the decision processes that develop these policies. In the discussion to follow, empirical evidence will be provided and analyzed on the changing role of the principal during a time of heightened accountability as a result of high-stakes testing.

High-stakes testing has placed tremendous implications on all levels within the educational system. With the passage of federal policies mandating school systems to perform at all-time high levels utilizing standardized assessments as the tool of measurement, the pressures and stressors that are induced by these mandates are complicating the role of principals. Principals are seen as the change agent of their schools and are held responsible for meeting AYP and performance objectives set forth by federal, state, and local mandates (Ehren & Hatch, 2013; Mombourquette, 2009). As the evolution of education transitions towards the use of standardized testing, it is necessary that we equip principals with the skills necessary to meet not only the requirements posed by the federal and state governments, but also to meet the ever-changing needs of the student populations they serve (cultural concerns, home life issues, and socio-economic considerations).

Accountability has been shown to complicate the role of the principal (CITE). Therefore, although accountability and the mandates projected at the federal, state, and local levels are in place to improve academic performance and press, principals may choose to lead their schools as individualistically as possible to avoid the risks involved in not meeting academic goals and objectives. In addition, principals may fear that distributing their leadership responsibilities could contribute to inefficiencies in running the school or in decision-making processes. Furthermore, because rules and regulations implemented by government policies often change, this too may pose as a limitation to distributing leadership. Finally, as noted previously,

principals may face sanctions if their schools don't meet performance standards, and because of this, they may feel it necessary to run the school as they deem fit so that they are judged solely on their own abilities.

In this section, a critical review of the extant literature pertaining to the changing roles of principals within the boundaries accountability will be explored and the following questions will be addressed:

1. What contributing factors have led to a change in the role of the principal?
2. What responsibilities must contemporary principals undertake?
3. What problematic issues may principals face during a time of heightened accountability?
4. How can future principals prepare and be successful in an age of heightened accountability?

The Changing Role of the Principal: Contributing Factors

As accountability has become heightened, we must reflect as to what contributing factors have led to a shift in the traditional role of a principal. Through review of the literature, themes emerged as to the contributing factors of principal role changes (see Appendix for an illustration of the competing factors experienced by principals). Through government mandates, incentivizing reward systems (monetary) and programs (grants) of states and schools has been implemented to improve performance (Copland, 2003; Louis & Robinson, 2012). In addition, sanctions and ramifications have been placed on repeatedly low-performing schools which have fueled fears regarding the restructuring of the school, state control, or the firing of principals (Brazer et al., 2010; DeMatthews 2014; Drysdale et al., 2014; Keith, 2011; Militello & Janson, 2007; Spillane & Kenney, 2012). Furthermore, public scrutiny based upon publicized data and

performance levels have also contributed to a shift in the role of the principal in which the pressures they experience, are due to the possible negative sanctions or scrutiny they may face if their schools are not up to par (Blitz & Modeste, 2015; Drysdale et al., 2014; Sanzo et al., 2011; Spillane & Kenney, 2012). See Figure 2.1.

Governmental mandates. Throughout history, under the charge of many presidents, government mandated educational policies have been passed to increase student achievement and make states more accountable. In doing so, the educational system has become an environment in which instruction has become data driven and the fate of a school and its organizational members are determined by the achievement of their students. Principals are responsible with leading their faculty and staff in data informed decisions and evidence based instructional practice. They are expected to demonstrate a high orientation of pedagogy, support student outcomes, and be an active agent in developing the professional qualifications of teachers (Nir & Hameiri, 2013). Throughout the literature reviewed, one of the most influential governmental mandated policies to pass is the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act. Through a test-driven approach, this legislation created a more stressful educational environment for school principals now fear the possible negative consequences if their schools are identified as low-performing (Spillane & Kenney, 2012; Styron & Styron, 2011). NCLB set the stage for increased yearly federal requirements and the expectation that all students, despite their disability status, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or native language, meet a high level of proficiency in English and mathematics as defined by the policy (Brazer et al., 2010; Keith 2011; Sanzo, et al., 2011; Spillane & Kenney, 2012). As noted by Thibodeaux et al. (2015) expressed concern with the obstacles school leaders must face when attempting to reduce achievement gaps. In addition, these growing pressures from the state and federal governments have created an

imbalance between central and local discretion as described by Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015a). State governments are deemed responsible for developing testing that will gauge the performance of their students. This information is reported back to the federal government in which schools are identified as meeting performance levels or not. Since these mandates are developed at the federal level, but implemented at the state and local levels, an imbalance between the two occurs in the expectations across states. Furthermore, according to Louis and Robinson (2012) the mandates and implications placed on schools and their principals by NCLB are profound. These implications include monetary implications, school restructuring, and principal job loss.

With federal mandates and policies continuing to gain momentum, the impact these stressors have on principals continues to complicate this role. Principals are now expected to cope with these mounting pressures as well as manage other school-related responsibilities (Keith, 2011). In the next section, a review of the negative sanctions linked to the high-stakes accountability systems posed, will be discussed.

Monetary reward systems. Schools that participate and meet federal requirements in achieving performance leveled goals are provided with federal financial aid. The aggregated scores of schools are compiled and schools that meet these requirements are provided with monies for their success (Wieczorek & Theoharis, 2015). On the contrary, schools that do not meet performance level standards, are not provided additional monies which threatens jobs cuts, program loss, and in severe cases, the restructuring of schools (Louis & Robinson, 2012; Richardson, Watts, Hollis, & McLeod, 2016; Sanzo et al., 2011). To explore principal response to RTTT policies, Wieczorek and Theoharis (2015) interviewed four urban high school principals. Findings indicated that principals were apprehensive towards the policy; however,

they worked diligently to meet the demands of this mandate through changes in their evaluation systems and instructional practices, while taking into the consideration feelings and needs of their teachers. Wieczorek and Theoharis' study shed light on the responses of principals as it related to a specific accountability initiative called RTTT. To extend information further regarding policies and their impact on principals, the proposed study will gather and analyze information as it relates to the internal beliefs and perceptions of principals within a context of an overarching theme of accountability.

As aforementioned, the driving forces of high-stakes accountability systems are the aggregated standardized test scores of students over time. In the next section, a discussion underscoring the significance of these tests, and the role they play.

Test scores. Principals are seen as the representative of the school. When schools under perform on standardized tests, principals are often the first to be blamed (Hochbein, Mitchell, & Pollio, 2013). Principals are charged with leading their teachers in instructing in instructionally sound approaches and methods (Farley-Ripple & Buttram, 2015). When test scores reflect an underwhelming result of this, principals are often the first to experience ramifications for this. As discussed by, Sanzo et al. (2011), the United States has seen a dramatic increase within the past 25 years in utilizing testing for accountability measures that have become invasive and intrusive on school practices. Testing has become the central focus of school systems in which student scores on standardized tests are utilized to inform decisions regarding school restructuring (Ehren & Hatch, 2013; Wallach et al., 2005) and the replacement of ineffective principals (Richardson, et al., 2016). This shift in focus has altered the approaches school principals take in meeting objectives and in their prioritization of responsibilities, which include the incorporation of others in sharing their leadership responsibilities.

To expose the pressures principals endure through testing and accountability measures, and to identify the role principals have on developing and maintaining inclusive school environments under these pressures, Merchant et al. (2012) conducted a study utilizing data from the International Successful School Principals' Project (ISSPP), interviews, and observations. Findings indicated that principals sustained their focus on academic accountability requirements as they navigated through the extensive responsibilities they, as building leaders, had.

Although a shift in focus has occurred, a principal's internal belief system often mediates between the oppositional pulls of what is required and what they believe is right. Gonzalez and Firestone (2013) compared the growing pressures of accountability as felt by principals within the frameworks of organizational leadership theory and action theory to analyze this internal conflict further. The researchers conducted interviews and reviewed student achievement data. Findings indicated that principals felt personally responsible to the children they oversaw, and that their own conscience was a mediator in the competing accountabilities posed. Principals wanted to exercise what they thought the best practices were in meeting students succeeding (internal), however, they were also aware of the external mandates placed upon them in which they were required to implement policies and practice set forth by their local, state, and federal agencies (Gonzalez & Firestone, 2013). To gain further insight into how principals internalize externally mandates policies and initiatives, the proposed study will further extend research within this realm.

As noted, principals have experienced both internal and external conflicts as a result of the accountability systems imposed on them. The publication of student test scores, school ratings, and teacher performance levels, has fueled even further external conflicts within the realm of high-stakes accountability. The publication of such information has led to widespread

public scrutiny of schools, principals, and teachers. In the next section, a discussion will follow regarding how accountability has created transparency between school systems and the community they serve.

Public scrutiny. Accountability systems have led to the performance of schools becoming much more visible under the public eye. Media and news coverage has strengthened accountability systems as these public servants; principals, are now, more than ever, open to community opinions and ridicule (Blitz & Modeste, 2015; Drysdale et al., 2014; Sanzo et al., 2011; Spillane & Kenney, 2012).

As noted by Sanzo et al. (2011), the publication of test results and school performance levels has brought considerable attention to school leadership practices, that are under the constant scrutiny of parents, taxpayers, board members, and district staff (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a). These daily occurrences have the potential to lead to community and professional embarrassment that creates a stressful climate for principals (Styron & Styron, 2011). Principals experience the potential for a loss of professional respect by the community they serve. Similarly, Ehren and Hatch (2013) conducted a study with the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) that rated test and school performance with letter grades that were publicized.

To exemplify the added pressure of an additional accountability system, Ehren and Hatch (2013) studied the unintended effects of accountability when school systems focus heavily on subject areas that are tested. Within the theory frameworks of institutional theory and action theory and based upon semi-structured interviews of principals and teachers, findings indicated that although these accountability systems drove schools to improve, a hyper-focus on testing continued to be the dominant measure of school performance. Standardized tests are the

measuring stick utilized in determining the effectiveness of a school. Other factors including teacher observations, community participation, and student involvement are not as heavily considered. The results of this study underscore principals' reorganization of school responsibilities and priorities; in which accountability is of the greatest concern. The study conducted by Ehren and Hatch provided insight into the impact accountability systems have on the impact accountability has had on school systems. The data gathered however, were from a principal, and 2 teachers at the elementary school level in New York City. The proposed study will investigate the perceived leadership of high school principals within a suburban setting to gain further information as it relates to leading within a context of heightened accountability.

The role of the principal has transitioned from one that is the manager of an organization, to one that requires the current role of the principal to incorporate traditional role elements intertwined with data-driven accountability-dependent decisions. In the next section, we explore the new role of the principal as defined by the plethora of stressors mentioned earlier.

The Contemporary Role of the Principal

Due to the scrutiny of community members, local, state, and federal governments, the principal has been charged with fulfilling many responsibilities and requirements that include managerial tasks, financial decisions, teacher guidance and support, school representative to the community, and student supporter. The more recent role of a principal requires that they be flexible to the external and internal tug of expectations, while also demonstrating a capacity to meet the demands of a traditional principal's role. The internal and external conflicts experienced by principals is representative of institutional theory, which posits that the dominant level of an organization will supersede that of individual practices, beliefs and activities.

To illustrate how a shift in importance has occurred due to high-stakes testing demands, Styron and Styron (2011) conducted a study that analyzed principal-completed surveys. Through the framework of institutional theory, findings indicated that regardless of gender, school level, years of administrative experience, school type or degree level, accountability was the most frequently reported response, while safety was the least frequent response (Stryon & Styron, 2011). Similar to the findings in Styron and Styron's study, further corroborating evidence supporting a shift in importance from school safety concerns to accountability concerns can be found in Bickmore and Dowell's (2011) study.

To bolster these findings, Bickmore and Dowell (2011) examined the practices and priorities of two principals in a charter school utilizing a case study design. Within the frameworks of institutional theory and organizational leadership theory, the researchers examined the concerns and uses of these principals' time as it related to the plethora of responsibilities they, as principals, had. Findings indicated that accountability concerns consumed more of the interviewed principals' time than school safety, personnel issues, student-related issues, management issues, school promotion or instructional issues and teacher supervision. The study's findings are useful towards information regarding the use of principals' time, however, this proposed study will fill the gap by taking into account principals' perceptions as it relates to distributed leadership within the context of heightened accountability.

The findings from each of these separate studies (within a framework of institutional theory), is an alarming fact regarding how accountability has shifted some of the most basic, and important elements involved in the job of a principal (like managing teachers and guiding students). To further examine the extensive job of a principal, principals must also consider the needs of their teachers.

In addition to sustaining, or increasing student performance levels, principals are charged with the responsibility to meet the needs of their teachers under this tide of accountability as well. Accountability terms have also made teachers the focal point of ramifications involving low performance levels. School leaders are in a unique position to influence their followers. Organizational leadership theory posits that leaders are highly influential in their constituents' decision-making and practices. Through a frame of organizational leadership theory, it was discovered by Thibodeaux et al. (2015), that principal leadership significantly impacted teacher retention and the decision to remain in the field. To discover this, the researchers conducted a mixed-methods study utilizing survey data from The Teacher Retention Survey Instrument (which included several subsections regarding leadership influences). Unique from the other studies reviewed, this study focused upon subject area emphasis as well. The findings from this study indicated that principals placed greater demands on their teachers who taught in the subject areas tested. Furthermore, the researchers identified that principal leadership behaviors under the countless demands of high-stakes testing and the effects their behaviors had on teacher retention and attrition were significant. Principals who demonstrated supportive behaviors (as it related to high-stakes testing) towards their teachers expressed higher job satisfaction, and a willingness to remain in their current position. In the proposed study, an assessment of how principals perceive their leading to be during a time of heightened accountability will be analyzed.

To best meet the needs of their teachers, it is important that principals work with their organizational followers as they collaborate towards a common goal in meeting accountability requirements. Principals must tap into the expertise of their constituents, collaborate, share decision-making, provide challenges to their staff, and opportunities to work and lead others. In

addition, a principal must be an innovator who utilizes creative methods in targeting needs of their students while maintaining focus on the objectives set forth by school policies and reforms.

To study the role of the principal as an instructional and assessment innovator, Hollingworth (2012), conducted a qualitative study of teachers and principals utilizing organizational leadership theory as its frame. Findings indicated that the principal acted as a change-agent in developing teacher knowledge and implementing uniform assessment practices. Principals enacted the creation of teacher teams at the building level, to cultivate communities of shared ideas in teaching and learning. In addition, principals provided teachers with training and development to further enhance their knowledge and skills. Based upon these implemented innovations, findings indicated that the relationship between the principal and their followers determined the level of success these initiatives had. Hollingworth' study shed light on the impact principals can effect on developing teacher knowledge, shared decision-making, and implementing cohesive instructional practices. To gain further understandings regarding shared-decision making, the proposed study will delve deeply into the perceptions and understandings of high school principals as it relates to distributed leadership.

As discussed, due to accountability and high-stakes testing, the attention of a principal has shifted from much more traditional aspects of running an instructional institution (managing and budgeting). In the next section, the problems that principals have faced due to high-stakes testing and accountability systems will be examined.

Problematic issues. Since the inception of accountability systems, and an emphasis on school performance levels, problematic issues have arisen. Principals are under scrutiny more than ever and are expected to meet criteria imposed upon them. In this case, there is no one right way in which to lead towards compliance and increasing school performance outcomes. Based

upon contingency theory, in which context and situation define the ways to best lead, are at the core of how principals lead, and to whom they distribute their leadership responsibilities with. Other concerns to consider, are the steps taken in bridging the gap between high- and low-performing schools. Furthermore, principals must make decisions that consider the socio-economic, learning, and language discrepancies within their schools.

The internal and external conflict experienced by principals, due to the added responsibilities of accountability are experienced based upon the necessity to meet criteria that may not align with their school's demographic or an imbalance between their personal beliefs or preferences in leading. Louis and Robinson (2012) conducted a study to examine the way in which school leaders balance the requirements of the external mandates placed upon them regarding accountability policies and how these elements affect their work. Utilizing an institutional theory frame, findings indicated that principals demonstrated negative attitudes and weaker instructional leadership towards external accountability when these policies did not align with their own values, beliefs, or preferences. The researchers investigated principals of seven schools in which they inquired about community context, personal leadership philosophies, leadership priorities, federal and state policies as it related to their instructional leadership, district policies and their leadership, resources availability and its effects on their leadership, and their sense of ownership in intertwining internal and external policies. The findings from this study noted that when policies aligned with their personal preferences and beliefs, principals were willing to internalize external mandates. However, when these mandates did not align with their beliefs or ideas, principals expressed negative attitudes towards external accountability mandates (Louis & Robinson, 2012). In Louis and Robinson's study, they found that external accountability had an impact on the role of the principal. In the proposed study, the findings will

either further extend these findings, or contradict them. In either sense, information gleaned from this study will add to the growing body of research in this area.

In addition to accountability systems not aligning with principal preferences and leadership expectations, another problematic feature that has arisen from high-stakes testing and accountability mandates, are properly identifying schools as low-performing or high-performing based upon state set definitions and parameters. To explore the difficulties posed by such a universal system, Hochbein et al. (2013), studied the accuracy of a Midwestern state in labeling low-performing schools based upon set parameters. Within a framework of institutional theory and contingency theory, researchers analyzed student aggregated scores on math and reading tests. Findings indicated that there was a disproportionate amount of high schools identified as low-performing as compared to elementary schools. Researchers found that although the pool of schools analyzed contained 60% elementary schools as compared to 19% high schools, high schools were identified as low-performing at a much larger rate over two sample years. The authors noted, "examination of the metrics used by the State-identified operational definition exposed a bias among the three levels of schools in the identification of persistently low-achieving schools" (Hochbein et al., 2013, p. 281). This unique study provided information on an area that is under-researched and needs to be further explored in order to understand the unique needs of schools at each level. In order to best assess the performance of schools, this study sheds light on the fact that school level matters, and the way they are treated and analyzed needs to be revisited, as ramifications for schools identified as low performing may be erroneously assigned. This study provided insightful information regarding the treatment and evaluations of high schools and shed light on the fact that the midwestern schools studies were

overidentified as persistently low and had therefore suffered from several biases related to AYP (Hochbein et al., 2013).

As accountability becomes heightened within our schools, a focus on hiring principals and school leaders that will be the most effective in meeting these new standards and accountability systems is a necessity. Richardson et al. (2016) analyzed job advertisements seeking principals and whether these advertisements reflected the changing organizational needs of the role and responsibility of a principal in this changing climate. Utilizing a framework of human capital theory, in which one encompasses certain skillsets and levels of expertise with them to the organization, the researchers found that 80% of the advertisements reviewed, reflected traditional requirements including the management of faculty. The authors noted that "we found that most of the job announcements articulated few job demands or expectations different from those we might have seen in decades earlier" (p. 86). As changes are implemented at almost every level of education, it is important that the principals school districts draft, can and will meet these requirements.

With the job description of the principal changing, it is important going forward to make strides towards improving student achievement while providing school organizational members with the appropriate supports needed to contribute towards a school environment that is thriving, while still meeting the mandates imposed by the local, state, and federal governments. In the next section, a discussion regarding what principals can do to best meet the needs of the ever-changing environment and context they manage, in this integral role as school leader, will be explored.

The Future: The Role of a Principal

There is much to do as the role of the principal has transitioned from traditional to what we have defined here as a contemporary principal. Influences due to accountability and high-stakes testing have altered this position as we once knew it. It is therefore imperative to respond to these changes by developing practices that enrich and equip principals with the tactics and strategies necessary to tackle these accountability requirements.

As noted in Knapp and Feldman (2012), principals must be innovative and creative in this time of heightened accountability and principals must provide their faculty and staff with professional development in areas of need that will best meet the new criteria set forth by federal mandates (Keith, 2011).

To identify what factors, contribute to successful school leaders in a time of data-driven decisions-making, Knapp and Feldman (2012) conducted a study in which they analyzed how principals navigated through internal and external accountability systems. Utilizing a framework of action and institutional theories, findings indicated that successful school leaders internalized the expectations set by external mandates and developed accountable practices through innovation, data-informed decision making, and modeling expectations. Implementing innovative techniques through data-driven decision-making provides the principal with a compass as to how to navigate through the internal and external mandates placed upon them. Knapp and Feldman's study focused upon information collected from urban schools within the United States. The proposed study however, will focus upon the unique perceptions of suburban school leaders and the ways in which they believe they successfully lead schools during a time of heightened accountability.

In 2011 Keith's study framed through the lens of distributed cognition theory and social capital theory, examined the perceptions of principals regarding their appeal for professional

development training. Findings indicated that principals expressed concerns regarding a lack of training in improving student results in students identified with disabilities or from students living in poverty. The author noted that principals expressed the greatest levels of desirability in professional development that focused on topics that involve research-based instructional methods, raising the achievement levels of students with disabilities as well as raising the level of achievement in students living in poverty (Keith, 2011). Keith's study focused on professional development and gathered data from school professionals at varying school levels and job titles. Through this study, they discovered the needs of principals regarding the mandates and policies set in place by their schools and states. The proposed study will continue within this vein as the perceptions of principals are assessed in determining their specific needs as it relates to the high school level, and the expertise they deem most necessary.

Throughout the extant literature, an emphasis on the best practices of principals involving the initiation of professional development to inform faculty about evidence-based instruction, was consistently emphasized (distributed cognition and social capital theories). To further discover what constitutes the best practices of principals, Sanzo et al. (2011) interviewed successful principals (principals were determined to be successful based upon NCLB accreditation). Findings indicated that successful principals encompassed shared leadership style, facilitated professional development, lead with an instructional orientation, and acted transparently. Sanzo et al.'s findings noted that principals who acted openly and honestly, as well as used shared leadership served their schools effectively. The proposed study will further information in this area, as distributed leadership includes acts of openness, honesty and collaboration.

In 2017, Huggins et al. conducted a multisite case study that investigated the development of leadership capacity of teachers by high school principals. Through the framework of distributed leadership theory and distributed cognition theory, the researchers found that principals were willing to relinquish some of their leadership tasks like allowing a teacher to run a school improvement meeting. Principals noted that sharing their tasks and responsibilities with others (even though this took up a large amount of their time in answering questions and fixing mistakes), that the benefits far-outweighed the time and effort originally invested. The principals noted that developing others' capacities were worth the added time and investment. These findings underscore the principals' role in leadership capacity building at not only the individual level, but at the organizational level as well (Huggins et al., 2017). Through this shared extension of leadership tasks, leaders increase the capacity of the organization through enhancing teacher efficacy, and to tap into the social capital and intellectual potentialities of those members within the organization

Utilizing a distributed leadership perspective, Copland (2003), conducted a mixed-methods longitudinal study that included data within a sample of 16 schools on the capacity building of principals through inquiry towards school improvement, it was found that involving teachers in decision-making processes contributed towards teaching and learning improvements.

With the re-conceptualization of leadership practices due to heightened accountability, that began in the late 1980s, principals, must now more than ever, lean on others to assist them in achieving the needs of the organization. According to the literature, when leadership is shared and distributed, the development of community within the organization occurs, organizational commitment and confidence amongst members within the organization strengthens, an enhancement of internal capacity occurs, trustworthiness increases, and in improvement in

pedagogy becomes evident which in-turn, produces highly effective organizations (Copland, 2003; Huggins et al., 2017; Hulpia & Devos, 2010; Militello & Janson, 2007; Watson & Scribner, 2007).

These results further underscore the importance and power of distributing leadership among organizational members, providing principals and their staff with appropriate professional development and the open and accepting attitudes towards accountability to lead in a successful, and impactful manner.

Accountability has forever changed the landscape of leadership and the context in which leading occurs within schools. Altering an individualistic, stance on leadership to one that is incorporative and collaborative in nature (Copland 2003; Drysdale et al., 2014; Wallach et al., 2005; Watson & Scribner, 2007), is necessary to meet the contemporary demands within successful school communities. As the traditional role of a principal fades, we shift our attention next to the foundation of distributing leadership and sharing power with others; context and climate.

Heightened accountability has changed the context in which principals lead their schools. As noted earlier, principals are under great scrutiny and pressures to have their schools meet performance goals. The contemporary principal must lean on others and distribute their power to do so. In determining who will assist them with their responsibilities, principals seek out those they trust to complete the job in an efficient and correct fashion. Trust is the backbone that supports the willingness of risk one is prepared to take on others. As noted by Huggins et al. (2017), “risk that is inherent in developing leadership capacity in others…principals ultimately will be held accountable for the leadership of their schools” (p. 10). The reciprocal and dynamic relationship between principals and their colleagues is based upon that provisional sense of trust.

Through observable evidenced actions, principals and their followers can assess how much, and to what extent, trust and the willingness to go above and beyond for each other, and the organization is possible. According to Smylie et al.'s (2007) year-long longitudinal case study framed utilizing social capital theory and distributed cognition theory, the study investigated the development of distributed leadership in two schools it was found that,

> trust matters in the design, performance, and perceptions of distributed leadership; that the relationship between trust and distributed leader development is dynamic and mutually reinforcing; that an initial level of positive provisional trust may be necessary; and that principal leadership and the trust relationship between principal and teachers are especially important to distributed leadership development. (p. 469)

The findings indicated in Smylie et al.'s study reflect information gathered from two secondary schools and four middle schools as it related to the development of distributed leadership. To gain a deeper understanding of the development of distributed leadership, the proposed study will gather and analyze information explicitly from principals at the high school level.

With trust setting the stage for the implementation of sharing power and distributing leadership tasks and responsibilities to those in informal and formally appointed formal positions, it is possible to move the organization towards meeting the unique and high-demands of school systems by enabling others in decision-making processes, sharing knowledge, and collaborating with others. In the next section, a detailed discussion of the extant literature on distributed leadership will be explored and analyzed.

Distributed Leadership

In prior studies regarding school leadership, emphasis on the sole individual, the principal, was focused upon as being the key component and change agent to affect change

within a school. However, with greater demands placed upon those within this role, the literature reviewed, has focused upon how those in this position of principal, distribute or allocate their leadership responsibilities to those under their charge. As the context in which these leaders have been affected by heightened accountability, it becomes highly unlikely that one individual within the school will encompass all of the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to meet their leadership responsibilities without distributing them with others (Hulpia & Devos, 2010; Spillane, 2006).

Viewing school leadership from a perspective in which leading requires the input and actions of many, shifts our thinking of a once individualistic, heroic leader (Spillane, 2006). Rather, a distributed leadership perspective underscores the importance of interactions in and between leaders and their followers, as well as the practices they exercise. Additionally, a distributed leadership perspective, takes into account the *how* and the *why* of leaders as well. Examining the employment of not only the skill-set of the principal, but also of others who are knowledge-rich as well, is a key feature within a distributed leadership perspective (Spillane 2006). According to Spillane (2006) and Mayrowetz (2008), investigations on leadership have not considered how, and to what extent, leadership responsibilities and tasks are disseminated or 'stretched over' formal and informal leaders.

What is distributed leadership? Across the literature, distributed leadership is considered a collective form of leadership focused upon the interactions and relationships of teachers, by which they collaborate in order to develop their expertise and increase their human capacities leading towards instructional innovations within an organizational setting (Gedik & Bellibas, 2015; Harris & Spillane, 2008; Hulpia & Devos, 2010; Mayrowetz, 2008; Smylie et al., 2007; Spillane et al., 2001; Spillane, et al., 2004; Watson & Scribner, 2007). Three key factors

are necessary for distributed leadership to occur. According to Timperly (2008) and Spillane (2006), these three elements include: leader, follower, and situation. As defined within the literature, artifacts are mediating physical and abstract factors between individual agency and the structure or action of the objects one comes into contact with (Watson & Scribner, 2007). According to Mayrowetz, utilizing artifacts, language, tools, material and social context allows researchers to study leadership activity through the lens of situated activity. Harris (2007) identifies material and cultural artifacts as the product of social and cultural situations. Artifacts are considered, and can include material (administrative and instructional documents, buildings, materials, and tools) and cultural artifacts (teacher observations, protocols, language, notational systems, and organizational structures) (Harris, 2007; Mayrowetz, 2008; Militello & Janson, 2007; Spillane et al., 2001; Spillane & Sherer, 2004; Watson & Scribner, 2007). As previously noted, schools are composed of an intricate web of social interactions dictated by situation and context.

A distributed leadership perspective. Shifting how we analyze school leaders, begins with a shift in perspective. Implementing a distributed leadership perspective, provides researchers and practitioners with an analytical or conceptual tool to guide their work, rather than prescribe how to do it (Timperley, 2008). Analyzing school leadership from a distributed leadership perspective, moves beyond the actions of an individual, but rather focuses on the reliance upon others in informally designated positions like teacher leaders to accomplish the tasks and responsibilities of principals (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Spillane et al., 2009). A distributed leadership perspective assumes “that school leadership is best understood by exploring leadership tasks” (Harris, 2007, p. 317) and is “distributed over leaders, followers, and the school situation” (Harris, 2007, p. 317). Furthermore, Spillane et al. identified two aspects of

distributed leadership identified as the *leader plus* and practice aspects. The leader plus aspect takes into consideration the interdependent nature of school leaders and school staff in both formal and informal positions relying upon each other to manage and lead schools (Spillane et al., 2009, Timperley, 2008). Accordingly, the practice aspect, as explained by Spillane et al. (2009) is the "product of the interactions among school leaders and followers as mediated by their situation" (p. 409). The essence of distributed leadership takes into consideration that leadership activities within a school are shared and distributed within the organization with an emphasis on collaboration (Spillane, 2009).

According to Watson and Scribner (2007), a distributed leadership perspective contains three elements that include leadership as an "emergent property associated with groups and networks of individuals who interact" (p. 448). Secondly, this perspective notes leadership as being boundary spanning and crossing (Watson & Scribner, 2007). Finally, a distributed leadership perspective sheds light on the fact that skills and knowledge are spread and shared throughout the organization, rather than viewing the leader as omnipotent and all knowing (Watson & Scribner, 2007).

With the literature conceding upon the fact that more analyses need to be done regarding school leadership and a distributed leadership perspective, Watson and Scribner (2007), noted that "distributed leadership has emerged as a popular perspective of school leadership that appears to offer a degree of rapprochement between traditional individualistic models and democratic alternatives" (p. 447). With the perspective that investigating individual school leaders may be antiquated, a deeper look at the need for this change will be discussed.

From an individualistic to collaborative standpoint. According to Watson & Scribner (2007), distributed leadership differs greatly from individualistic models. Changes fueled by

policy shifts, social behaviors of organizational members and socio-environmental changes have contributed to the perspective shift and theoretical evolution towards a distributed leadership perspective (Watson & Scribner, 2007). Furthermore, Harris, (2005a) noted that an erosion of the single-model leader is gradually occurring. Harris noted that,

> old organizational structures of schooling simply do not fit the requirements of learning in the 21st century. Therefore, there are new models of schooling emerging, largely based on different collaborations and networking. Implicit within the new forms is a requirement for leadership practices that are lateral rather than vertical, and for leadership that crosses organizational boundaries. The model of the singular leader is gradually being replaced with leadership that is premised upon teams rather than individuals, with greater emphasis being placed upon teachers as leaders. (p. 10)

The benefits of knowledge-sharing. Knowledge-sharing in, and amongst colleagues within a school system has been found to develop new knowledge, assist in cultivating shared values, norms, and orientations towards schooling, commitment, as well as allow for greater access to expertise and instructional knowledge (Daly et al., 2010; Farley-Ripple & Buttram, 2015; Snow et al., 2015). In addition, providing knowledge-sharing opportunities allows for those involved to experience collective responsibility and action (Daly et al., 2010; Farley-Ripple & Buttram, 2015; Moolenaar, 2012), as well as have the ability to garner more information regarding student performance and achievement, have increased instructional efficacy, and higher levels of teacher job satisfaction (Daly, 2012). In Hatch et al.'s (2016) social network analysis of three school districts over a two-year period, a study investigating the impact and role instructional rounds had on social network development and district improvements (framed within social capital and distributed cognition theories) was conducted. According to Hatch et

al. (2016), instructional rounds are "collective, structured, observations and reflections on classroom practice" (p. 1022) that include teachers and/or administrators. These rounds act as informational sessions that are used to develop a common focus of instruction through the development of social networks (Hatch et al., 2016). Findings from this seminal study, revealed that a foundation for instructional innovations was developed through the relationships and social networks cultivated due to these instructional rounds. Furthermore, Hatch et al. noted that these social developments were considered the channels through which materials, tools, information, and social capital could flow. Hatch et al.'s study focused upon the unique relationships between superintendents and site-based administrators. The site-based administrators were not specified within the study, and therefore may hold a position that includes a dean, assistant principal or principal. As initiatives and local policies are oftentimes relayed from central office administrators, principals are charged with responding to these needs and mandates accordingly. The proposed study will focus upon the perceptions of solely high school principals which in turn will be based upon the needs of their schools as communicated by those in central office positions like superintendents and assistant superintendents. In the next section, a discussion regarding the importance of social capital and its development will occur.

The cultivation and benefits of developing social capital. As noted by Spillane et al. (2015), developing human capital (teachers' knowledge and skills) continuously, is imperative towards the development of social capital. Through encountering new information or advice, social capital has the power to change programs, mend individual differences, improve teaching and learning, increase student achievement and teacher commitment, and increase home-school connections (Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc, 2016; Penuel, Riel, Krause, & Frank, 2009). In order to cultivate social capital, Snow et al. (2015), suggested that "communities of practice integrate

social and decisional capital in a practical manner" (p. 47). Daly and Finnigan (2011) highlight that the development and cultivation of social capital amongst organizational members enhance resources and have the potential to generate and diffuse knowledge.

Principals experience building expectations and the goal of achieving multilayered tasks. With such demands, the interdependencies between staff and principals is a necessity. According to Gedik and Bellibas (2015), they argued that successful outcomes are not possible without the dependence upon administrative and instructional staff through a distributed leadership approach. Administrators are charged with the responsibility of providing opportunities for shared knowledge to occur, and the development of social capital within school organizations to not only enhance school information systems, but in order to distribute their leadership with others as well (Penuel et al., 2009).

As previously noted, empirical research regarding distributed leadership is in its infancy. Harris (2007) posited that, "the link between distributed leadership and positive school and student outcomes needs to be either clearly established or refuted" (p. 323). Based upon an extensive analysis and review of the extant literature, empirical studies regarding distributed leadership will be discussed in the section to follow.

Empirical studies. The empirical studies reviewed, have studied the relationship between distributed leadership and the development of leadership capacity, on school improvement, teacher organizational commitment, school reforms. In addition, empirical studies exploring mental models, perspectives, and conceptual frameworks were reviewed as well. After a thorough review of the literature regarding distributed leadership, two categories emerged as to the scope of the studies conducted: the utilization of a distributed leadership perspective and approach to identify and quantify school outcomes and performance or, studies conducted on the

distributed leadership perspective of school organizational members which employed the exploration of mental models, perspectives, and conceptual frameworks.

Empirical studies exploring school outcomes. In recent years, distributed leadership has become the focus of school leadership literature and the potential it may have in addressing and improving school outcomes. Distributed leadership and the relationships that are cultivated in, and between colleagues has the potential to developing leadership capacity (Huggins et al., 2017) and promises to cultivate mutual learning (Harris, 2005b; Hulpia & Devos, 2010), instill program consistency (Hulpia et al., 2009), provide for opportunities to guide decisions (Wallach et al., 2005) and practice through inquiry-based information (Copland, 2003), ascertain collective responsibility (Daly et al., 2010; Farley-Ripple & Buttram, 2015; Moolenaar, 2012), cultivate opportunities for innovation (Hatch et al., 2016), and ascertain high student achievement or move student achievement through steady improvements (Lambert, 2002).

Tapping into the capacities of others through relationship building and trust in distributing leadership tasks and responsibilities requires certain leader-oriented traits and characteristics. In 2017, Huggins et al. conducted a study of six high school principals and their abilities and personality traits, to foster leadership and capacity in others under their charge that was framed within the theories of distributed cognition, organizational leadership, and distributed leadership theories. Utilizing a case study approach, information was collected from 24 interviews. Findings indicated that principals who had the ability to facilitate leadership capacity in others, encompassed: commitment to developing leadership capacity in others; cognizance of what was needed to build capacity in others; and, an understanding attitude in the fact that leadership development takes time, tolerance, and risk (Huggins et al., 2017).

Within the literature, an emphasis on collaboration and the organization of professional learning communities and collegial networks were identified as integral towards school improvement and the cultivation of mutual and professional learning (Blitz & Modeste, 2015; Camburn et al., 2003; Copland, 2003; DeMatthews, 2014; Drysdale et al., 2014; Harris, 2005a; Harris, 2005b; Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Lambert, 2008; Mayrowetz, 2008; Militello & Janson, 2007; Smylie et al., 2007; Spillane et al., 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b; Wallach et al., 2005; Watson & Scribner, 2007; Wright, 2008). Collaboration and professional learning communities have been found to facilitate advice and information, develop social capacity, provide grade-level assistance, develop curriculum, and influence and instruction (Daly & Finnigan, 2010; Daly & Finnigan, 2011; Daly et al., 2010; Farley-Ripple & Buttram, 2015; Rizzuto et al., 2009; Moolenaar et al., 2012; Spillane et al., 2012; Spillane et al., 2015; Waes et al., 2015).

In 2014, DeMatthews conducted a qualitative multi-case study of six elementary schools who utilized professional learning communities to improve schools. Within a frame of social capital and distributed cognition theories and utilizing information from teacher observations and interviews over a one-year period, it was found that aspects of professional learning communities are impacted by the way in which principals distribute their leadership across these communities (DeMatthews, 2014). Principals that facilitated professional learning communities utilized distributed leadership to cultivate these communities. As noted by DeMatthews (2014), principals that work with teachers, share decisions, engage in leadership activities alongside their teachers, and share expertise and knowledge "enhance their community's ability to meet the needs of all students" (p. 183).

Professional learning communities and school improvement efforts are intertwined and codependent. In 2009, Heck and Hallinger conducted a study on the impact of shared leadership on school improvement implementing a framework of institutional and distributed leadership theories. The authors conducted this longitudinal study over four years and of 195 elementary schools. The authors identified school improvement as growth in student math achievement scores over this period. To study the distributed leadership exercised by school leaders within these schools, the authors focused upon the "collaboration practiced by the principal, teachers, and members of the school's improvement team in leading the school's development" (Heck & Hallinger, 2009, p. 662). To gather data, they utilized completed survey information from teachers and their perceptions of the distributed leadership experienced within their schools and as evidenced by their principals. Findings of this study concluded "significant direct effects of distributed leadership on change in the schools' academic capacity and indirect effects on student growth rates in math" (Heck & Hallinger, 2009, p. 659). Heck and Hallinger's study provided insight into the impact distributed leadership can have at the third-grade level. Furthermore, information and data gathered were from elementary school teachers. To bridge the gap of information missing as it relates to distributed leadership at the high school level, the proposed study will gather data and information explicitly from principals at the high school level.

School improvement efforts are often formalized through policy and reform mandates. In 2003, Camburn et al. conducted a study of elementary schools from 17 geographic regions who had adopted comprehensive school reform (CSR) models as it related to distributed leadership practices (framed within institutional, distributed cognition, and distributed leadership theories). Data were collected utilizing completed School Leader Questionnaire (SLQ) and School Characteristics Inventory (SCI) information from 374 principals. Findings indicated that in

schools where reforms were present, the way in which school leaders led was associated with the extent to which instructional leadership functions were activated (Camburn et al., 2003). According to Camburn et al. (2003), leaders who attended to instructional leadership functions and developed teacher capacity to lead through comprehensive school reforms (CSR), provided for more effective means in encouraging instructional leadership. The study conducted by Camburn et al analyzed schools in which the CSR were set in place to define specifically the role of school leaders at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels. The proposed study will look at the perceptions of solely high school principals and in which initiatives may not be in place to dictate the ways in which these figureheads lead their schools.

The commitment teachers and other integral members of a school community have towards their organization has the potential to directly or indirectly impact school outcomes. Within a framework of distributed cognition, distributed leadership, and contingency theories, Hulpia and Devos (2010), conducted a comparative analysis. This study investigated eight secondary schools regarding the relationship between distributed leadership and teacher organizational commitment, found that leadership practice did make a difference in teachers' organizational commitment. Hulpia and Devos found that in schools where distributed leadership was more prominent, teachers were strongly committed to their schools and deemed their principals as accessible. This study has shed light on the fact that the labeling of schools as low or high has an impact on the relationships held between principals and their teachers, as well as the overall commitment of those teachers.

Empirical studies exploring mental models, perspectives, and conceptual frameworks. Spillane is the largest proponent, and most prolific contributor to the distributed leadership information base. Spillane and Sherer's (2004) longitudinal study framed within the theories of

distributed leadership and social capital, spanned over five-years and examined 13 elementary schools in Chicago. Data were collected from observations, structured and semi-structured interviews, videotaping of leadership practices, grade-level meeting observations, and improvement planning meetings. According to these results, Spillane and Sherer noted three ways in which leadership may be stretched over the practice of leaders: collaborated, collective, and coordinated distribution. Spillane and Sherer described collaborated distribution as the work of one spread amongst other leaders in a reciprocal and interdependent fashion. Spillane and Sherer identified collective distribution as the work of two or more interdependent leaders that exercise common practices, as they work separately towards a common goal. Finally, Spillane and Sherer explained coordinated distribution as tasks that are to be performed in a sequential order, amongst many, towards a common goal.

Perceptions shape the ways in which people interact with each other and their environment. Whether leaders choose to work collaboratively, collectively, through coordinated distributed leadership, or work solely, perceptions dictate to what, if any extent leaders will share their responsibilities.

Militello and Janson (2007), explored the perceptions of the professional relationship between 39 school counselors and principals utilizing *Q* methodology. Utilizing a distributed leadership framework, the authors identified one of four factors that closely paralleled the characteristics found within a distributed leadership framework. Characteristics explored within a distributed framework included “shared, engaged, and meaningful work” (Militello & Janson, 2007). Furthermore, Militello and Janson (2007), describe this framework as one in which collaborative engagement, the creation of learning communities, and an enhancement of internal capacities occurs. According to the authors, these findings indicate that more needs to be done in

terms of this specialized, and often isolated position. Militello and Janson (2007) explored the perceptions of the professional relationship between 39 school counselors and principals utilizing *Q* methodology within a distributed leadership framework. Employing a distributed leadership framework, the authors identified four factors:

1. Traditional Roles in Activities and Tasks
2. Constricted Interaction
3. Helping and Delegating Leadership
4. Socially Focused, Situationally Driven Leadership

Of the four factors discovered, only one (Helping and Delegating Leadership) closely paralleled the characteristics found within a distributed leadership framework. These findings indicate that more needs to be done in supporting principals. Principals need explicit strategies and techniques to meet the unique needs of their schools while also meeting the broad mandates set forth at the local, state, and federal level.

In 2015, Blitz and Modeste conducted a study regarding the Comprehensive Assessment of Leadership for Learning (CALL) (which utilizes a distributed leadership framework) utilizing completed information from 165 administrators and 3,663 teachers from 121 school across the United States. Within the five core domains of the CALL, the second greatest difference in perspectives of teachers and leaders was found in the Socially Distributed Leadership domain. In this domain, teachers and leaders are questioned about their perceptions of leadership practice and teacher leader tasks and decisions (Blitz & Modeste, 2015). These findings are further corroborated in Gedik and Bellibas' (2015) study as well. In 2015, Gedik and Bellibas utilized the CALL instrument to examined distributed instructional leadership capacities as they compared these capacities between elementary and secondary schools. Utilizing survey

information from 4,311 voluntary teachers, school administrators, and other school staff, the authors found marginal differences between each school level and the distributed leadership exercised, but rather, only found differences in terms of the leadership practices as it related to the monitoring of teaching and learning. Therefore, according to Gedik and Bellibas (2015) distributed leadership varies only at the level in which teachers are monitored, and collaboration is integrated, and is not dependent upon the academic level of the school. The studies conducted utilizing the CALL by Blitz and Modeste and Gedik and Bellibas, utilized the responses from school employees at varying levels. The proposed study will gain further insight into distributed leadership as it will focus solely on those persons who are secondary level principals.

Reforms and policies mandated at the local, state, and federal level, oftentimes define the role and responsibilities of the principal. As noted by Daly and Finnigan (2011), frequent interactions and ties between leaders and their constituents is integral towards coordinated reform efforts, because they provide for "the transfer of tacit, nonroutine, and complex knowledge allowing for joint problem solving and systemwide solutions" (p. 43). In 2008, Wright conducted a collective case study that included 13 practicing principals from one school district in Alberta, Canada. This study investigated principals' perceptions, experiences, and understandings of their roles as defined by, and through legislation and policy (institutional and distributed cognition theories). Findings indicated that principals studied, were unaware of "how power, control, and inequity continually shaped their own and other's experiences" (Wright, 2008, p. 24). Furthermore, Wright found that principals desired to distribute their leadership, but did not have the appropriate supports or know-how in identifying teacher-leaders. Wright's study utilized information gathered from principals, assistant principals, central office personal and 2 school facilitators within a specific geographical region. To further elaborate on

principal's perceptions, the proposed study will incorporate the perceptions of high school principals from a different geographical region.

Having the appropriate supports in place, can impact how, and what, work is completed. Copland (2003) conducted a longitudinal study of reform efforts of 16 schools in San Francisco, that focused heavily upon distributed leadership and underscored the importance of building expertise and knowledge bases within these schools. Based upon both qualitative and quantitative data sources, and within the framework of distributed leadership theory, Copland found that "key within that understanding is the notion that the distribution and sharing of leadership, built through shared inquiry into improving student learning, provides a policy direction for moving beyond narrow role-based strategies that have defined school leadership for decades" (p. 394). This study is within the framework of a particular school reform within the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC). Under this reform, the results gleaned may be due in part to the policies and initiatives implemented. The current study proposed, will focus upon the perceptions of principals and not necessarily of any particular initiatives that implement distributed leadership. In doing so, this will provide more information as it relates specifically to public high school principals.

As reform efforts and heightened accountability have redefined the role of the principal, now more than ever, it is important to understand this multifaceted role. Furthermore, it has been gleaned from the literature, that in order for schools to meet mandates and objectives, an interdependent role between the principal and their constituents is necessary. Utilized a distributed leadership approach that integrates the development of relationships through collaboration, trust, and professional development has the power to implicate positive outcomes and promising alternatives to a once individualistic role.

The Impact of Climate and Culture on School Systems

Preparing high school graduates for a globalized world, within a context of heightened accountability, requires educators to exercise innovative teaching practices, and leaders to tap into the social capital available to them. Accountability, as noted throughout the reviewed research, effects the climate of schools. Climate, therefore impacts the context in which leaders lead, teachers instruct, and students learn. This context constructs the culture of the school, which in includes the way in which instruction occurs, the communications in and between school organization members, and policies and protocols that are developed and adhered to (See Figure 2.1). To create such a climate and context, educational systems have increased focus on developing professional learning communities to advance effective teaching practices and to improve students' academic outcomes (Moolenaar et al., 2014). Cultivating a climate of knowledge and communicative networking assists in information exchange, knowledge transfer (Daly et al., 2010), and advice sharing towards the greater-good; which establishes and shapes the culture of a school organization (Wang & Degol, 2016). Altering this climate towards effective procedures and purposeful instructional practices, has the potential to improve student outcomes (Wang & Degol, 2016). Research has found that educators have more opportunities to increase student academic performance in school climates where trust and collaboration are present (Daly & Finnigan, 2011). The climate of a school system influences the risks and innovations principals and educators alike are willing to take in an effort towards bettering their own abilities, skill-sets, and knowledge-bases. Educators who take risks and are willing to admit a lack of knowledge in a particular subject-area, or instructional method, place themselves in a vulnerable position, as they may be judged by their colleagues.

When risk-taking within a school system is encouraged, the potential for members to tap into resources and become innovative within this social setting, becomes possible. The structure of a network has the power to influence the performance of an organization, the socialization amongst members, communications between members, and the transfer of knowledge, innovation, and productivity (Daly & Finnigan, 2010). Educators may seek out their counter-parts in the hopes of advancing their ideas or instructional practices. Through these social relationships, an organization like a school system, can cultivate trust, advice, and information-sharing (Spillane et al., 2012). In the next section, an in-depth analytical approach discussing trust, an integral component of risk-taking and the establishment of culture within school systems, will occur.

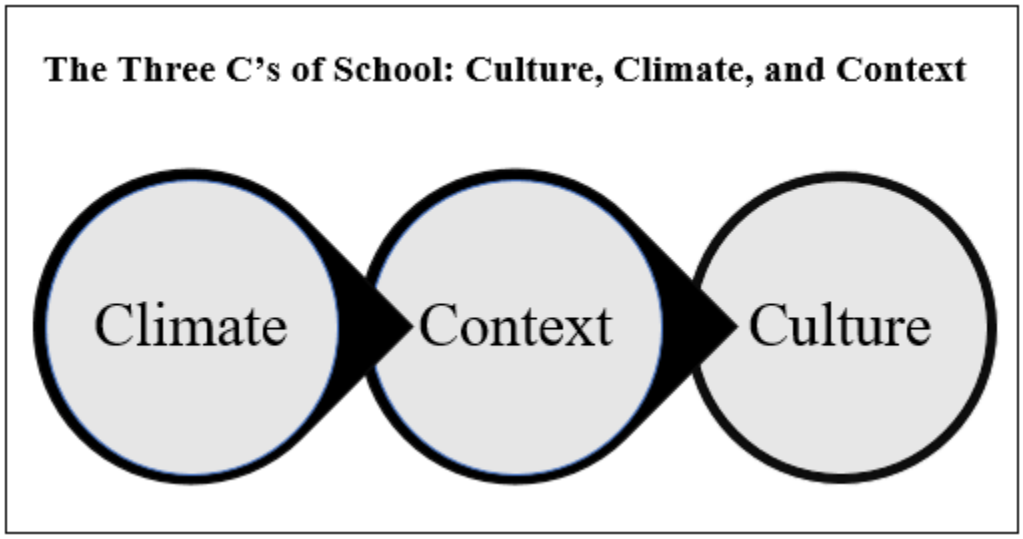

Figure 2.1. The process by which the culture of a school is created.

Trust. Trust is at the core of how leaders interact and engage with others; it determines the amount of information to share with others, and the level of transparency one feels

comfortable with exposing. According to Smylie et al. (2007), "trust is an expectation that another party will not act opportunistically, will be honest, and will make a good-faith effort in accordance with previous commitments" (p. 472).

Trust is comprised of five components according to Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015b). The five facets of trust, as explained by Tschannen-Moran and Gareis, are *benevolence*, *honesty*, *openness*, *competency*, and *reliability*. These five core components of trust contribute to the trust levels in schools and have the potential to foster and cultivate trust amongst principals, teachers, students, and other members of the school community. Through the lens of contingency theory, the authors noted that principals are viewed as benevolent when they can earn the trust of their followers and have the ability to demonstrate "genuine care for teachers, students, and parents alike" (p. 259). The authors suggested that in order for principals to be trusted, they must be honest in the interactions they have with their teachers (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b). Additionally, the authors suggested that in order for principals to be perceived as open, they must be transparent and "win the trust of their faculty through their willingness to extend trust, which is evident through their openness with information, influence over organizational decisions, and professional discretion" (p. 261). In order to exhibit competence, Tschannen-Moran and Gareis suggested that principals "get the job done" under any, and all circumstances as promised (p. 262). Finally, reliability, as noted by the authors illustrates that "teachers can count on them in their time of need" (p. 263) and that "teachers need not invest energy worrying whether the principal will come through in a difficult situation" (p. 263).

The five facets of trust are also discussed at length in Cosner's (2010) study, which further supports and corroborates the five facets of trust development. The author noted that "knowledge-based trust is typically operationalized through a set of specific trust facets as lenses

for considering the actions of others" (p. 119). As evidenced in the extant literature, trust is at the core of action, and in terms of this study, leadership as well. Trust dictates to how, and to what extent followers and principals alike, are willing to work with, and for, one another, towards a common goal of desirable organizational outcomes. In the next section, a discussion regarding the importance of trust in, and between leaders and their constituents will be addressed.

The importance of trust in, and between leaders and their constituents. As underscored above, trust is an integral component that binds the relationships between people together. For the purpose of this study, we examine the importance and necessity of trust in, and between leaders and their constituents through the lens of the extant literature reviewed. As noted in Cosner's (2010) examination of trust and trust processes, a focus upon the development of knowledge-based trust (also known as cognitive- or interaction-based trust that is developed through "repeated social interactions that provide interacting parties with knowledge that informs trust development" (p.119)) between principals and their constituents were investigated. According to this study, when trust is cultivated within the confines of a school system, knowledge-based trust acts as a primary mechanism within the organization to advance understanding and practice, cultivate productive attitudes and behaviors of organizational members, and produce desirable organizational outcomes. Furthermore, in Tschannen-Moran and Gareis' (2015a) correlational study of 3,215 teachers, and their trust in principals and principal leadership behaviors, school climate, and student achievement, it was found that "without trust, principals cannot be effective leaders. Faculty trust in the principal is related directly to student achievement and it is also related to important elements of school climate that are, in turn, related to student achievement" (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a, p. 84).

Similarly, as noted by Spillane et al. (2001), establishing, building, and nurturing norms of trust is essential towards school improvement.

Much of the actions and interactions school leaders take is based upon those perceptions they hold closely to them as it relates to those they trust. Perceptions of others leads the way in whether trust will be enacted or repealed. In the next section, a closer look at this aspect will be discussed.

Perceptions. Actions are based in the perceptions we hold close to us. The perceptions leaders hold regarding their followers and the trust they are willing to exercise, are based upon the actions of their followers, are developed over repeated interactions with, and observations of those around us. Amongst the many responsibilities held by principals, one that shapes their perceptions of those they lead, is that of classroom observations. The observational process dates back to the late 1800s where principals "were expected to observe classroom lessons daily" (Kafka, 2009). Today, practices regarding observations are similar to those procedures exhibited in the 1800s; principals are charged with the responsibility to observe, reflect, and provide feedback to their teachers. Naturally through this formal process, perceptions and opinions are developed and created reciprocally between the principal and the teacher. Furthermore, perceptions are developed through informal interactions as well. Through both formal and informal interactions, principals base their perceptions and willingness to trust others as supported by contingency and action theories. Accordingly, in Wright's (2008) collective case study 13 principals, two assistant principals and two office personnel regarding principals' perspectives of their leadership as it related to legislation and policy mandates within a distributed leadership perspective framework, it was found that when principals relinquished their control and shared their authority with teachers and differing school members for broader

involvement, an enhancement in collective agency and social trust was experienced. Furthermore, this study underscored the importance of social trust and cohesion towards building instructional leadership capacity (Wright, 2008).

In 2014, Drysdale et al. conducted a multiple-perspective case study of principals, teachers, students, parents, and school board members in Australia, Sweden, Arizona, and Texas. Using the frameworks of organizational leadership and social capital theories, findings indicated that teachers felt more empowered when principals created a culture of open communication and trust through activities that were engaging and worked towards the development of teachers through collaborative and team efforts and structures (Drysdale et al., 2014). On the contrary, Smylie et al. (2007) noted that "low levels of trust or distrust are likely to suppress or negatively affect perceptions" (p. 476). The study conducted by Drysdale et al focused upon a broad spanning geographical set of locations. The proposed study however, will assist in providing more specificity as it relates to principals at the secondary level within a framework of distributed leadership and within the context of heightened accountability.

As previously noted, perceptions are linked closely to the actions and behaviors one is willing to take, and the confidence one has in others. In Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015b) study of the role faculty trust has in the principal, and how this trust is cultivated through principal actions, it was found that, when principals exchange thoughts and ideas freely with teachers, it not only enhances perceptions of trustworthiness, but leads to greater openness on the part of teachers, and their perceptions of the professionalism within the building (within the framework of organizational leadership theory). In addition, Tschannen-Moran and Gareis found that the trust faculty has in principals, is "linked to faculty perceptions of professional orientation of a principal, suggesting that principals set the tone of professionalism in their

buildings" (p. 267). Tschannen-Moran and Gareis' study underscores the importance of trust in leading. To further gain insights into the perceptions of principals and their trust levels, the proposed study will collect data and analyze it as it relates to distributed leadership. Creating a climate of professionalism, open-communication, and transparency are key elements in not only building trust capacities but contribute towards positively related perceptions of those that principals lead.

Finally, as suggested by Cosner (2010) principals should obtain information as it relates to how they are being perceived in their leading. Cosner highlights the importance of leaders receiving feedback through assessments that are honest and require feedback (anonymously) from those under their charge. With the importance of trust supported and backed throughout the literature reviewed, now we turn our attention to how trust can be facilitated and cultivated by school leaders.

Facilitation and Cultivation. Seeking out advice, knowledge, or dependency takes on an element of risk and trust (Moolenaar, Sleegers, Karsten, & Daly, 2012). An admittance of lacking knowledge in a particular area opens one up to vulnerability. Those that partake in advice, knowledge-sharing, and leadership-sharing networks have a mutual understanding of the obligations they have, the reciprocal relationship of trust, and a mutual understanding of the benefits a social network like this has to offer (Rizzuto, LeDoux, & Hatala, 2009). This reciprocity, "implies an interdependence of knowledge, expertise, or information between the advice-seeker and the advice-giver" (Moolenaar et al., 2012, p. 359), as well as the opportunity to gain advice and ideas on complex issues (Daly et al., 2010). According to Cosner (2010), trust can be cultivated by principals dependent upon their interactions with others and principals' assessment of a "person's willingness and abilities to meet expectations or fulfill commitment…

and a person's behavioral predictability" (p.119). Cosner found that trust was cultivated when leaders exhibited in engaged listening, openness, information sharing, explanations of decisions, and create professional communities and collegial opportunities of learning for teachers (situated within the theories of contingency, distributed cognition, and social capital). In addition, Cosner, goes on to note that "principals foster collaborative cultures by emphasizing faculty cooperation over competition" (p. 135). When capacity in others is to be cultivated, principals must exercise some level of risk. When risks are taken, trust levels are taken into account. Similarly, in Huggins et al.'s (2017) study of developing leadership capacity in others, principals determined the level of risk they would take on others based upon their perceived internal and external trust factors. According to Huggins et al. (2017), "principals described risk taking as trusting people to make decisions and allowing them to make mistakes" (p. 10). Similar to Huggins et al. (2017), Wallach et al. (2005) found that trust develops over time, and through the relationships established. In Wallach et al.'s three-year long longitudinal study (utilizing a framework of social capital theory, contingency theory, and distributed cognition theory) of seven schools utilizing grant monies from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to reinvent themselves, it was found that teacher-leader groups, called Critical Friends Groups (CLG), "developed trust over the course of the school year, which began with readings about leadership and discussions of what values guide each person's leadership style" (p. 19). One assistant principal on the CLG noted that,

> It's really important for me to feel like I'm part of the school. So, I want to have conversations with [teachers] in terms of what they're doing and what they're thinking, what they need, how I can help, what I know that could add value to what they're doing and what I need to know so that I can be more aligned with the work of the school, so

> that we work together. A lot of the informal conversations are, in part, about just building relationships with teachers and with students. (p. 10)

Although principals are formally appointed leaders, the formal and informal interactions they have with their subordinates develops and strengthens trust further. In DeMatthews' (2014) qualitative multi-case study that investigated six elementary schools over a year regarding professional learning communities and the ways principals distribute leadership across their schools, it was found that "a principal's social interactions can facilitate the development of trusting relationships, collaboration, and a diffusion of expertise and knowledge" (p. 183). Furthermore, DeMatthews found that over time, faculty and staff grew more willing to have discussions. This study provided informative findings related to the interactions between leaders and their constituents at the elementary school level. To fill a gap in the literature regarding the interactions between school leaders and their constituents at the high school level, the proposed study will focus upon these unique interactions as information gleaned, will be based upon the perceptions of public high school principals.

In addition to time running its course in the development of perceptions of trust within others, another integral component to developing the perceptions of trust amongst leaders and their followers, is the usage of, and proper arrangement of leadership teams. In the case of Hulpia et al.'s (2009) study, leadership teams consisted of the principal, an assistant principal and teacher leaders appointed by the principal and assistant principal. In this quantitative study framed within the theory of distributed leadership, completed data from the Distributed Leadership Inventory (DLI), from 46 secondary schools was collected and analyzed. The researchers utilized this instrument to explore the characteristics of leadership teams (Hulpia et al., 2009). Findings indicated that a coherent leadership team that is supported and supervised,

should adhere to a clear framework for management and group cohesion which consists of openness, mutual trust, communication and cooperation, and no role ambiguity. These findings underscore the importance of the interplay between multiple individuals in schools, which brings us to the next section regarding the importance of trust and the outcomes related to trust within school systems according to the literature reviewed. The study conducted by Hulpia et al focused centrally upon the responses of teachers in Belgium. Utilizing the DLI, the proposed study will further extend this body of information as it is utilized to gather information regarding the use of distributed leadership amongst high school principals within a specific region in the United States of America.

Importance. Trust, as noted above, is cultivated over time, and through repeated interactions with others. The importance of building trust within school systems is evident throughout the literature reviewed. Trust allows teachers and principals to become innovative (Militello & Janson, 2007) and improve teaching and learning through collaborative efforts, mutual learning, and systematic change rooted in cultural norms and expectations (Harris, 2005b; Hulpia & Devos, 2010). Furthermore, trust sets the backdrop for increased teacher organizational commitment and citizenship (Cosner, 2010; Harris, 2005b; Hulpia & Devos, 2010), as well as higher attendance rates for teachers and increased employee job satisfaction (Cosner, 2010).

As previously noted, through the usage of *Q* methodology, Militello and Janson (2007) investigated the perceptions of relationships between 39 counselors and principals utilizing a distributed leadership framework. Findings within this study, indicated that a mutual trust, acknowledgement, and open lines of communication provided for a solid foundation of which principals and counselors could collaborate and make systematic changes within the school

systems (Militello & Janson, 2007). Not only does trust act as a change agent towards systematic changes within a school system, but it has the potential to garner higher commitment levels from constituents as well. Hulpia and Devos (2010) conducted a qualitative comparative study on eight secondary schools and the commitment teachers had to their organization based upon the leadership practices exhibited by their leaders. Findings indicated that the greater the accessibility, and the more leaders encouraged participatory decision-making, the higher teacher organizational commitment was.

In accordance with findings from other studies, (Harris, 2005b; Hulpia & Devos, 2010), Cosner (2010) noted that trust was key contributing factor related to job satisfaction and attendance of employees which was found to also negatively correlate to employees' desire to quit. Due to high trust levels of faculty in their principals, Cosner noted that not only does the organizational behavior of employees relate to trust, but so do teachers' orientation to commit to school community and innovate as well. Additionally, Cosner underscored that trust and the cultivation of trust by principals is positively related to the beliefs and perceptions constituents have in their leaders. Furthermore, Cosner noted that, "trust in leadership also appears salient in times of conflict, crisis, and organizational change, and school reform" (p. 121). Within an emphasis on trust, colleague interactions and opportunities to build trust are cultivated through five identified team-learning activities and aspects (Cosner 2010). Cosner identifies these five integral components as "feedback seeking, help seeking, speaking up about concerns and mistakes, innovation, and boundary spanning" (p. 123). The components identified by Cosner (2010) as cultivators of trust, underscore the integral role principals play in not only trust building, but also in the invaluable outcomes working collaboratively has the potential to produce. Copland (2003) further bolsters the ideology of professional learning and collaboration

as imperative not only to the cultivation of trust through time and attention, but in principals leading through a distributed leadership perspective.

Potential Barriers and Impediments to Distribute Leadership and Share Decision Making

Accountability becomes more and more prevalent as new educational policies continue to be introduced to the American educational system. In addition to the barriers and impediments accountability imposes on schools and specifically principals, it is important to consider other possible factors that deter principals from distributing their leadership responsibilities or in involving their teachers in shared-decision making processes.

Context and culture. Schools are complicated environments filled with highly educated professionals. These professionals each bring their own set of value-systems and experiences to the school. Because of this complicated social web, members of the school organization encompass differing values (Wright, 2008). A difference in values can pose as a potential problem when involving a group in shared-decision making processes as members of the group may encounter conflict. This in turn, may slow the process of decision-making down or lead to a break-down in relationships amongst faculty. In addition, because schools are so dynamic, principals often encounter problems that arise quickly and require immediate action and response. Due to the need for this immediacy at times, a distributed leadership approach may not always be the best way to address such matters that require split decisions or in times of crises or emergencies.

School structure. Schools have traditionally been bureaucratic and structured in a hierarchical manner. This traditional structure involves formal titles which may get in the way of distributing leadership. Schools and their districts often set the culture and context of how a school is expected to be lead. Districts may not encourage a distributed leadership approach

because staff may prefer a clear structure. Rather, school districts may expect their principals to lead in a more traditional fashion (Militello & Janson, 20007).

Privacy and confidentiality. In addition to a traditional structure, school districts impose particular privacy and confidentially rules and regulations for principals to abide by (Spillane & Sherer, 2004). Because of these rules and regulations, principals may not be able to share with staff the reasons they carry out certain responsibilities. In addition, sensitive issues that principals handle may be required to be kept private from other faculty members in the building.

Considering teachers. Lastly, an impediment or barrier that principals and teachers equally face in their day is a lack of time. Principals may feel as though their teachers are already overburdened with responsibilities. Principals may fear that their teachers may resent them by asking their teachers to take on additional responsibilities or by requiring them to make decisions they may feel uncomfortable making (Wright, 2008).

As school leadership responsibilities become more compounded by accountability mandates and expectations along with other factors aforementioned, distributed leadership holds promising answers into leading schools successfully. Distributed leadership is the incorporation of others' ideas, information, and advice through the development of professional relationships garnered through trust. Gaining a deeper understanding into the potential barriers to distributing leadership and how to overcome them, as well as to understand how professional relationships are formed and maintained through an investigation of principals' perceptions, will allow for more to be done in meeting the broad demands of school systems as information gleaned can become applicable towards preparing and training principals accordingly.

Gaps in the Research

Additional evidence regarding principal perceptions and the factors that impact these perceptions needs to take place. Gaining insight into this multifaceted and complicated role, will provide for a deeper understanding of how to best meet the needs of principals so that they can meet the mandates and requirements of their schools as the local, state, and federal levels. Equally as vital to answer, are the questions of; how, and to what extent, do principals exercise distributed leadership during a time when they are held so highly accountable for their students, teachers, and schools? Distributed leadership is unlike other leadership styles as it represents an emergent, and a contextually based set of actions based upon the groundwork of trust and past experiences. In the past, school leadership research has focused heavily upon the styles of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. Research has found the implications and outcomes of implementing such styles within school systems. Distributed leadership is far less researched and is not categorized as solely a style or a perspective. This unique take on leading provides a lens in which school leaders can lead during a time of heightened accountability, when pressures are high and the role of the principalship is at times ambiguous and under supported.

The empirical studies discussed highlight the positive outcomes and possible impacts distributed leadership may hold for schools and their stakeholders, however a gap in the literature exists regarding the perceptions of secondary principals their practice of distributed leadership under a time of heightened accountability, uncovering a gap within the extant literature, and a necessity for this study merging these concepts. High schools are unique settings in which students are expected to pass state examinations and meet local requirements towards graduation. At the secondary level, principals are responsible for making data-driven decisions, and providing their teachers with formative feedback that will assist in providing

students with evidence based, and instructionally sound lessons and information. As school reforms and policies continue to add pressure to this already multifaceted position as school leader, it is necessary to gain insight into principals' perceptions of their role, and how they implement distributed leadership to assist them in meeting vast expectations and benchmarks.

Chapter Summary

Within the current literature regarding distributed leadership, ambiguity exists with certain components of the concept. Definitions regarding artifacts were overarching and ambiguous. Furthermore, the literature referred to distributed leadership as either descriptive or prescriptive. In cases where distributed leadership was descriptive, literature denoted specific examples such as collaboration and professional development. In cases where distributed leadership was prescriptive, literature referred to distributed leadership as a way to improve school outcomes, student performance levels, and teacher instructional quality. Furthermore, distributed leadership, aside from the possibility of being categorized as descriptive or prescriptive, was also denoted as a perspective in which to lead and examine leaders from, as well. Distributed leadership was synonymous with other descriptors throughout the literature as well. Words used interchangeably with distributed leadership include, but are not limited to: shared leadership, collaborated leadership, and mutual leadership. A clearer definition and description of this term must be forged. Through review of the literature, it has also been discovered that further research utilizing empirical methods a must be implemented to gain a better understanding of distributed leadership's direct effects on school outcomes and on the capacity building of others. Moreover, instruments assessing distributed leadership need to be developed in the study of particular distributed leadership aspects, as opposed to all-encompassing instruments.

Chapter Two commenced with the changing role of the principal under the context of heightened accountability and the potential barriers and impediments principals may face when distributing their power. Next, the impact that context, trust, and the climate of a school, as it relates to knowledge-sharing practices was discussed. Finally, a thorough analysis and discussion of empirical studies that explored school outcomes and mental models, perspectives, and conceptual frameworks of distributed leadership, was explored. The review of literature provided led to the development and construction of this study's topic, the posed research questions to follow, and the methodology most appropriate in advancing and contributing towards the empirical work within this sector.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology implemented in this exploratory study designed to identify models of shared viewpoints held by public high school principals regarding their distribution of leadership within the context of heightened accountability. This chapter commences with an introduction to establish the purpose of this study, followed by the research questions that were used in guiding the research. Following these components, an overview of the methodology used in this study, *Q* methodology, will be provided. Additionally, a discussion of the participants involved in the study, the *Q* statements utilized, details of data collection, and a description of analytical and interpretive methods used will be discussed. Finally, an interpretation of the results will be provided.

The role of public high school principals has evolved due to the changing socio-political climate of accountability measures and mandates. The ways in which principals decide to lead, is based on their prior experiences, attitudes, and belief systems. The purpose of this study is to uncover commonalities in shared viewpoints amongst public high school principals regarding distributing their leadership within a context of heightened accountability utilizing a self-referential approach. Because the phenomena to be studied is subjective in nature, the research approach that will systematically study subjectivity is the mixed-methods approach of *Q* methodology.

Much of what is known about principal's perceptions has been gathered through qualitative research. Even less is known about the perceptions of principals at the high school level. Furthermore, from the exhaustive review of literature, studies reviewed did not take into

account the influences accountability systems have on high school principal's choice to distribute their leadership.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this exploratory study was to identify the models of shared viewpoints, beliefs, attitudes, role expectations, and opinions of public high school principals as they related to the potential barriers and impediments they may face when distributing their leadership responsibilities with others under the context of heightened accountability. This study confronts the following research questions (RQ):

RQ 1: What are the dominant shared viewpoints about distributed leadership held by public high school principals?

(a) What is the relative prevalence of the shared viewpoints identified?

RQ 2: What are the main differences and similarities between model viewpoints identified?

(a) In what ways are identified shared viewpoints distinguished from one another?

(b) In what ways do identified shared viewpoints reflect consensus?

(c) In what ways do identified shared viewpoints reflect an absence of salience?

RQ 3: How and to what extent are the following factors associated with identified shared viewpoints?

(a) Years of experience as a public-school administrator

(b) Highest level of education

(c) Years of prior experience as a teacher

(d) Decade graduated from high school

Revealing answers to these research questions, has the power to build upon and extend the current research in the areas of school administration, distributed leadership, and the influences of governmental mandates and school policy on school organizations and their members including students. Additionally, determining whether particular descriptive statistics such as prior teaching experience or highest level of education can assist school districts in making informative decisions about potential administrative candidates. Furthermore, information gleaned from this study can inform policymakers' decisions. As previously noted, research regarding the perceptions of public high school principals on the distribution of their leadership within the context of heightened accountability is lacking, therefore this study offers findings that are necessary and important.

Prior to a detailed discussion as to how *Q* methodology was implemented in this study, it is first necessary for the reader to have an understanding of *Q* methodology's terms and the foundational concepts that underly it.

Q Methodology and the Scientific Study of Subjectivity

Preceding the 1930's behavioral, natural, and social scientists believed that the study of subjectivity was beyond their scope of studies. Therefore, a scientific approach that provided empirical evidence was employed through the implementation of *R* methodologies in which studies could be performed objectively and systematically. Subjectivity was considered a phenomenon that could not be systematically analyzed as in objective or quantitative methods of analysis (*R* methodology). William Stephenson, a Doctor of Physics and Psychology, and an understudy to Charles Spearman the famed statistician best known for his development of a family of techniques to exploratory factor analysis and principal component analysis, challenged

these traditional approaches by underscoring the importance of the study of human subjectivity (Brown, 1980; McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Stephenson, 1953).

This study will implement *Q* methodology, a mixed method approach first developed by William Stephenson in 1935 and originally referred to as *Q* technique (Watts & Stenner, 2012). *Q* methodology was developed by Stephenson to gain access to the subjective viewpoints shared by a group of people. In 1935, Stephenson wrote a letter to the journal of *Nature* proposing that an inverted data matrix of the original factor analysis or *R* method could essentially turn the participants into variables, and the statements into cases. In doing so, Stephenson explained that the shared viewpoints of the group could be investigated. Although many in the psychology field were at first apprehensive of such a technique, due to their routines of testing abilities through verified tests, acceptance of the method was slow in London where Stephenson first introduced this method. Later in life, Stephenson moved to the United States where the method increased in popularity.

According to Stephenson (1953), the psychological term of subjectivity could now be examined utilizing *Q* methodology as he emphasized that human subjectivity is not merely a mental concept, but rather it is "a behavior or activity that is best understood relative to its impact on the immediate environment" (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p. 44). Furthermore, Stephenson (1953) noted that *Q*-mode factor analysis allows for a systematic approach to analyzing shared subjectivity. In *Q*-mode factor analysis an inverted data matrix is used such that people are the variables and their statements are examined cases. Once factor analyzed, the identification of one or more *Q* factors is determined and represent empirically derived clusters of individuals who hold shared viewpoints. Moreover, *Q* methodology takes a post-postulatory approach in which no prior assumptions by the researcher are made (Stephenson, 1953).

Contrastingly, an *R* methodological approach would not allow for such insight and further, would be based on pre-set, postulatory-dependent parameters (Stephenson, 1953).

Implementing a *Q* methodological approach in identifying the shared viewpoints of public high school principals through an assessment of their subjectivities, allows for considerations to be made regarding those factors most salient to them. Furthermore, this will provide insights into their perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs related to the statements (the *Q* set) provided within the study. Additionally, through its systematic identification of shared viewpoints, *Q* studies allows for areas of educational psychology, and psychology itself to be further investigated while also providing opportunities for areas never tested before to be examined (W. Stephenson Psychological Laboratory, 2010).

Q methodology as it is presently referred to is carried out in three stages. During the first stage, the researcher identifies an area of interest to explore. Literature, magazines, and pilot studies are conducted to determine all possible opinions on the given subject matter. The researcher identifies themes within these statements and refines them. To refine them even further, the researcher may collaborate with an expert within the field of study to refine these statements further. Statements are narrowed down to between 40 and 80 statements that broadly represent all possible opinions within the subject area of analysis.

In stage two, participants who are purposively sampled based on their experiences or expertise within the area of study are directed to sort given statements. Specific to *Q* methodology, the use of a forced-choice, fixed distribution, quasi-normal template allows subjects to revel their beliefs, attitudes, and opinions based on the provided condition of instruction (COI). Using a "condition of instruction," *Q* methodology engages participants in the sorting of statements into a forced-choice, fixed distribution, quasi-normal template based on

what is *most important* to what is *most unimportant* to them. Through a self-referential approach, the subjectivities of participants are revealed and can be systematically investigated. This template encompasses polar opposites and a neutral area. Typical ranges are from +4 to -4 with 0 in the middle. Participants are also asked to answer questions at the end of the sort involving their feelings about the sort as well as well as demographic and experiential information.

In stage three, through the employment of multivariate statistical techniques, of which are by-person or *Q*-mode factor analysis, clusters of persons with shared subjectivities are identified (*Q* factors). *Q* factors represent the similar patterns of viewpoints amongst cluster of persons within the study. These patterns are then converted into *Q* models of shared subjectivities Through a qualitative approach, *Q* models are hermeneutically analyzed employing a qualitative analysis of interpretation and exploration of the viewpoints represented within those models. Researchers inductively determine identifiers for each factor based on visual inspections of produced scree plots, detailed analysis of configured statement arrays, and a review of participant discourse and reflections of the sort.

Concept of Concourse in *Q* Methodology

"Concourse," originally referred to as a "trait universe" by William Stephenson (1953), refers to all possible discourse within a specific topic or area of interest. Concourse includes a broad range of opinions, attitudes, ideas, and beliefs. According to Watts and Stenner (2012), concourse theory developed by Stephenson includes subjective communicability which "represents an observable domain of self-referent statements and opinion" (p. 33). Statements within the concourse can hold different meanings to different people and can vary based on the context in which these statements are given. A plethora of sources can be used to develop the

concourse including both primary (group discussions and focus groups, interviewing, or researcher's own experiences) and secondary sources (discussion boards, newspapers, literature, etc.) (Block, 2008; Brown, 1993; McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Stephenson, 1953; Watts & Stenner, 2012). A concourse must be balanced in order to avoid any bias and to allow participants the opportunity to sort statements within the forced-choice template, free of frustration or restriction.

Q-sort Template and the *Q*-sorting Process

Generally speaking, most *Q* studies adhere to utilizing a quasi-normal, fixed distribution template that is of a forced-choice design. Figure 3.1 illustrates an example of the template employed within this design. The reasoning behind utilizing a force-choice design is to "force" participants to organize provided *Q* statements through rank ordering on a scale that contains a bipolar scale of anchor sets such as *most-disagree* to *most-agree* or *least-agree* to *most agree.* As recommended by Stephenson (1953) on the grounds of theoretical bases, the implementation of a *most* to *most* scale is needed in order to properly measure the "psychological significance" of the subjects involved in the study. Furthermore, Stephenson (1953) emphasized the importance of a *distensive zero,* that represents the middle of the sorting scale as this area would represent statements with little importance and less salience as compared to other statements within the sort. Within *Q* methodology, those statements ranked at the extremes are considered the most salient.

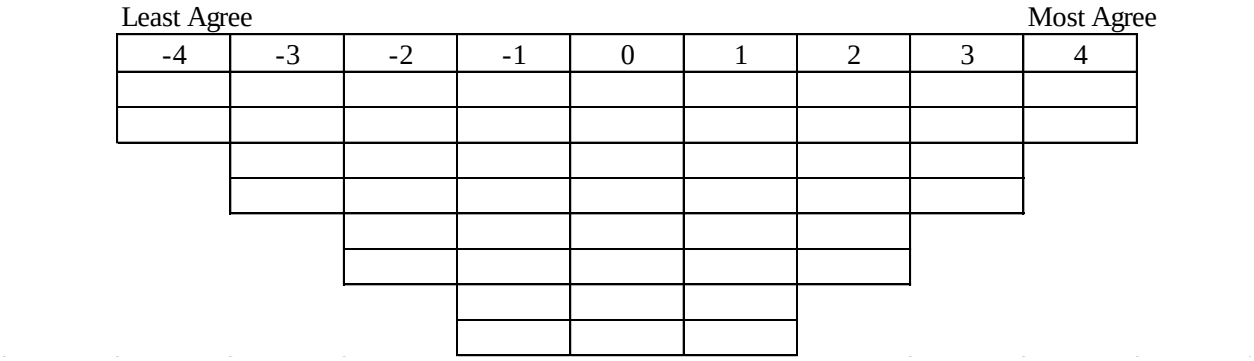

Figure 3.1. Typical *Q*-sort template representing a forced-choice, quasi-normal distribution.

Utilizing a bipolar scale in which 0 is the mid-point is believed to be the best way to organize ranking anchors as compared to a unipolar scale in which *most* to *least* is utilized. As cited in Wottowa (2015, pp. 50-51) and discussed by Red Owl (2012),

> The *most* to *most* anchoring approach in *Q* methodology and *Q* techniques studies may in some cases, lead to invalid (indeed, factually incorrect) measures. If a subject does not *disagree* with a given *Q* statement but that subject nevertheless forced to sort that state into a *most disagree* (or any other degree of *disagree*) column on the fixed-distribution template, that subject's responses comprises substantial if not pure measurement error. If, on the other hand, that subject were to *strongly disagree* with the given *Q* statement, the subject's score on that statement would be accurate and correct (at least to some degree) whether the statement was sorted into a column on either the *most disagree* side of the sorting template or a column on the *least agree* side of the template. It is my view that the psychological anchor in *Q* is the middle point of a sorting scale and that it does not matter whether that half-way point is between *most* to *most* or *least* to *most*. Under either anchoring scheme, the middle score still represents the point at which a respondent's views are least salient.

Distributions in *Q* studies employ either an 11-point (-5 to +5) scale, or a 9-point (-4 to +4) scale (McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Watts & Stenner, 2005). Subjects sort statements based on whether they agree (positive numbers) or disagree (negative numbers) accordingly. Furthermore, they sort these statements based on the level of agreement they have as it relates to their viewpoints. Statements which are regarded as unimportant or less meaningful than other statements in the sort are placed in or near the 0 column. Statements in the distensive zero region are considered non-salient.

Condition of Instruction

To provide participants with guidance in sorting statements, participants are directed to sort under a COI. The COI provides explicit guidelines and rules for the sorting activity and provides the basis for which participants' judgements in sorting are made. For demonstrative purposes, below a list of COI examples have been provided:

- Please sort the following statements into the template in terms of your beliefs about the role of homework in student academics.
- Please sort these statements into the template in terms of your views of how you would like your employees to describe you as a boss.

According to Watts and Stenner (2012), the COI provides participants with the opportunity to respond to the question at hand "along a single, face-valid dimension, such as most agree to most disagree, most important to most unimportant and so on" (p. 53).

The versatility of *Q* studies allows researchers to conduct their research in a variety of formats that includes: (a) single cases studies in which a lone participant can perform *Q* sorts under multiple conditions of instructions or at different times, (b) many participants

performing sorts under multiple conditions, or (c) the approach most often implemented within the social science research realm, multiple subjects perform sorts under a single COI.

Types of Samples in *Q* Studies

Q methodology employs two sample set types: the P set and the *Q* set. The P set encompasses those people sorting provided statements, while the *Q* set represents the statements to be sorted. As compared to *R* methodological studies where large numbers of participants are required to "power" the study, in *Q* methodology, this is not necessary, as the *Q* set will assist in identifying key conceptual variables (Levitt & Red Owl, 2013).

Q studies are concerned with generalizing concepts as compared to *R* studies where generalizations are applied to populations of people. In addition, the participants (P set) within a *Q* study must have knowledge and experience of the subject at hand. As noted by McKeown and Thomas (2013), "no special effort is made to ensure complete representativeness across respondent characteristics (age, party identification, religion, etc.) since the purpose is to explore the attitudes in a population" (p. 32). Therefore, a *Q* study can be conducted with a single case in which the P set consists of a lone participant (Stephenson, 1953; Watts & Stenner; 2012). Because involved subjects are expected to have experience or knowledge as a requirement to participate in the study, Brown (1980) and Valenta and Wigger (1997), noted that the P set should be purposively sampled.

The *Q* set represents a set of heterogenous stimuli that must broadly represent all opinions. The *Q* set can be developed from primary (interviews, group discussions, or researcher's own experiences) and/or secondary sources (literature, magazines, discussion boards, and newspapers) (Block, 2008; Brown, 1980; Stephenson, 1953). Respondents rank order items based on their own meanings, personal experiences, and psychological significances

(Watts & Stenner, 2012). Items ranked in the extremes as either highly psychologically salient, or least salient are those items that provoke the strongest reactions. According to Laparo, Siepak, and Scott-Little (2009), the unique sort of statements reflects "each participant's subjective beliefs with regard to the topic under investigation" (p. 23). Therefore, the statements are simply representative of the universe of concourse for participants to interpret based on their own unique experiences and understandings of them. Because of these reasons, it is imperative that statements are representative of various viewpoints and opinions such that a provocation of respondents' reactions are present during the time of the *Q* sorting process (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

In *R* methodological studies, a concern the "power" of a study related to sample size is always deemed important to consider. Contrastingly however, *Q* methodology is not concerned with the number of participants within the study, but rather with the number of statements representing the *Q* set. According to Brown (1980), Levitt and Red Owl, (2013), McKeown and Thomas (2013), and Watts and Stenner (2012) a *Q* set containing between 40 to 80 statements is sufficient in conducting a *Q* study. Furthermore, applying a computational formula in determining the possible amount of sorting patterns (${}_n\mathrm{P}_r = n!/[n - r]!$), illustrates an almost infinite number of sorts. In this study, as described to follow, 48 statements comprise the *Q* set. Employing this computational formula, it can be illustrated that this seemingly small sample of 48 representative statements offers participants 1.241E+61 various ways to sort the given statements.

Q Sort Data Collection

As previously noted, *Q* sorting employs a forced-choice technique later used for the factorization. Given a prescribed set of statements, participants rank order these statements into

the available spaces of template indicating high, low, and no salience. Because Q sorting is a self-referential activity, respondents identify provided statements as most or least salient to them based on their personal viewpoints and opinions.

Transposed Data Matrix

Traditional approaches to exploratory and factor analysis methods employ the multivariate technique of by-variable factor analysis. *R* methodologies implementing an exploratory factor analysis is the number of individuals *n* a selected population will be measured through the use of multiple tests and conditions. However, in *Q* mode or by-person factor analysis (or principal components analysis), the data matrix utilized in *R* methodology is transposed. In this inverted data matrix, the *Q* statements (tests or variables) are the cases and the participants are considered the variables (Valenta & Wigger, 1997; Watts & Stenner, 2005, 2012).

***Q*-Mode Factor Analysis**

***Q* factors.** As noted, *Q*-mode by-person factor analysis can identify the shared viewpoints of persons within clusters as people are treated as variables. Factor loadings deemed to be substantial and to hold similar views are based on a researcher determined cut-off value of $\lambda \geq = |+/-.30|$. Much like other *Q* studies, this cut-off criterion was utilized to interpret and label the *Q* factors that emerged.

***Q*-factor scores and *Q* scores.** Prior to an interpretation of factors, scores must first be standardized. Based on the relative weights for each item within the *Q* sample, a *Q*-factor score or standardized *z* score is calculated by multiplying the *z* score with the standard error of the template (*SE*). Standardized scores (*z* scores) are then rank ordered or algebraically ordered (by multiplying the converted z score by the standard deviation) into the original sorting template. *Q*

factors are then transformed into *Q* models. Because *Q* factors do not identify the specific content or underlying meaning of viewpoints, they must first be transformed into *Q* models.

_Q_ models. *Q* models assist in interpreting and understanding the connections between the clusters of people and their shared subjectivities. These models are needed so that proper interpretation and understanding of the underlying content of shared subjectivities can be connected based on the substantial factor landings of specific factors.

Q models represent hypothetical representations of shred subjectivities amongst clusters of persons and reflects how participants in the study are related to a particular *Q* factor based on the ordering of statements in the factor array. Factor arrays are developed by organizing statements representing the factor in the *Q* template based on their corresponding *z* or *Q* scores. The statements that make up the arrays provide meaning to the *Q* factors providing meaning and the opportunity for the researcher to inductively interpret the *Q* model meanings. *Q* models illustrate an idealized representation of the clusters of participants' shared beliefs, opinions, and attitudes. The models represent the theoretically idealized shared subjectivities of respondents.

Salience and consensus in Q models. *Q* models are interpreted based on the salience of the statements. *Q* models assist in uncovering the positive beliefs of participants identified as positive salience and a positive consensus (*Q* scores $\geq$ 2) across all models. Contrastingly, the *Q* model also assists in identifying the negative beliefs of participants known as negative salience and signifies a negative consensus amongst participants in the study (*Q* scores $\leq$ -2) across all models. Non-salient statements are sorted on or near zero at the center of the dust rut ion template. Non-salient statements are of least importance to respondents (*Q* scores 1 $\geq$ *Q* scores $\leq$ -1). When interpreting *Q* models, researchers focus on those statements that are the most salient as they are representative of those statements that are the most important and defining. Figure

3.2 illustrates an example of statements sorted based on salience and utilized for determining *Q* models and themes based on consensus.

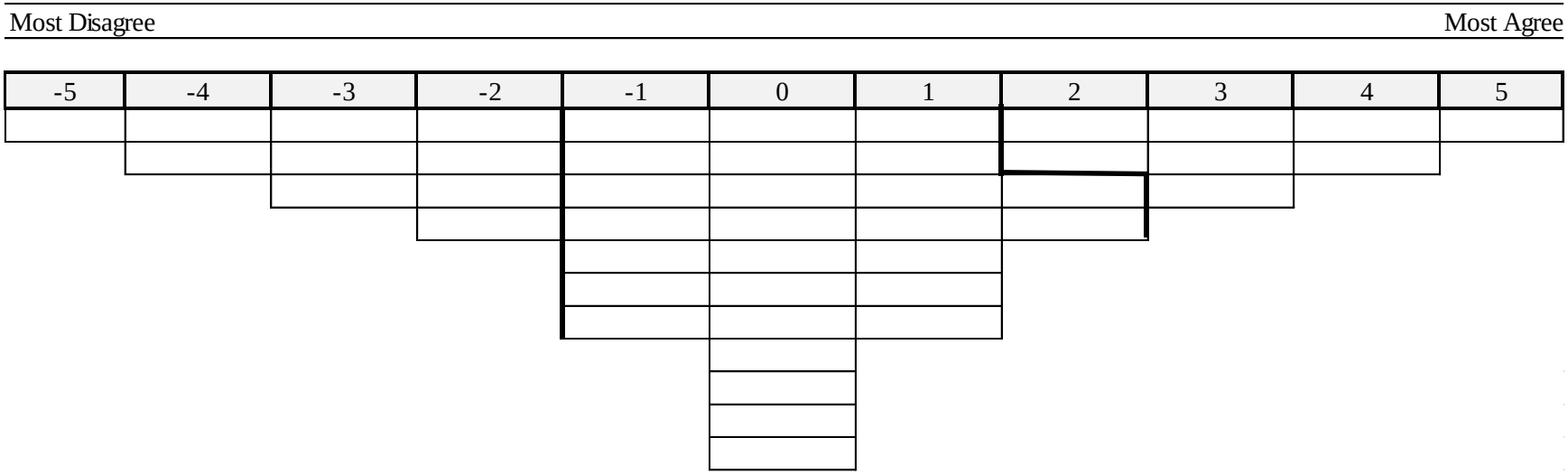

Figure 3.2. Potential themes based on salience following a completed *Q* sort. Bold lines indicate differing levels of salience.

Q models are representations of shared viewpoints; therefore, it is necessary to note that these models are not representative of any individual's specific viewpoint. Instead, *Q* models are a composite of these viewpoints and represent an ideal model of the viewpoint that is general and hypothetical.

Reliability and external validity. In *R* methodologies, requirements for reliability and validity of psychometric properties are necessary. Reliability is concerned with a test's results being produced over various points in time. While validity is based on a scale measuring what is intended to measure. However, in *Q* methodologies, concerns with reliability and validity are not as important since *Q* methodology employs a self-referential standpoint in the study of subjectivities. As noted by Brown (1980) validity is based on external reference criteria rather than internal references. Furthermore, Watts & Stenner (2013), explained that because *Q* methodology delivers what is claims to in the form of producing the viewpoints of participants, that this method is valid.

On the issue regarding reliability, Brown (1980) found that the test-retest reliability beyond a one-year period have about 85% consistency in replicated *Q* sorts by the same subjects. Furthermore, Watts and Stenner, In *R* studies, the standard criterion for acceptable reliability is $\alpha \geq .71$. *Q* study reliability far exceeds the acceptable reliability criterion of *R* studies, therefore demonstrating reliability and consistency.

In the section to follow, a description of the research design and implementation of *Q* methodology in this study will be provided.

Research Design and Implementation of *Q* Methodology in This Study

The previous section provided a brief introduction of *Q* methodology. With the underlying techniques and purpose of *Q* methodology delineated, I now present the research

design and implementation of this study. This study employs a hypothesis-generating exploratory analysis. The purpose of this study is to systematically study the subjectivity of public high school principals on their attitudes, opinions, and beliefs of distributing their leadership within the context of heightened accountability.

Person Sample

A voluntary, anonymous, non-probability sample of 28 New York State public high school principals employed in Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, and Rockland Counties comprises the sample used for this study. Public high school principals were contacted through publicly published e-mails, through posts on social media, and on the School Leadership 2.0 forum (https://schoolleadership20.com/forum). Within the e-mails sent, and the posts on social media sites and forums, the link to the survey was provided.

Participants' experiences and viewpoints assisted them in completing this anonymous online survey as it related to the topic under study. The person sample is represented by principals at varying educational levels, ages, experiences, and opinions regarding distributed leadership.

Even though the sample was acquired through non-probability techniques, and will not be statistically generalizable, the respondents in this sample demonstrate characteristics similar to public high school principals within the larger population of public high school principals. In addition to collecting individual completed *Q* sorts, demographic information regarding participants' years of experience in administration, highest level of education, years of prior experience as a teacher, and the decade they graduated from high school was also collected. Figures 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, and 3.8 are histograms that illustrate a summary of the final participant sample representing participants' years of experience as a public-school administrator, years of

prior experience as teachers, highest level of education, decades graduated from high school, and participants' views on the effectiveness of distributed leadership.

Administrative experience of the participant sample was varied in which the years of experience ranged from 2 years to as many as 21 years. See Figure 3.3 for further information regarding participant sample administrative experience.

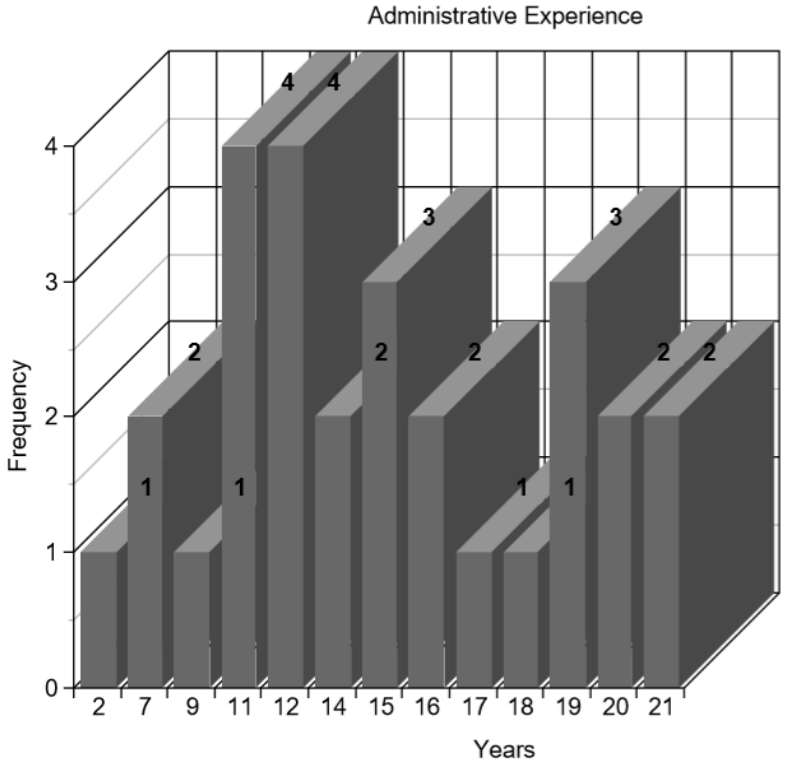

Figure 3.3. Histogram showing the years of experience as a public-school administrator of the participant sample.

Figure 3.4 demonstrates prior amount of teaching experience in years. The participant sample exhibited a range of years in experience from 2 years to 28 years with the majority falling within a range from 6 to 10 years.

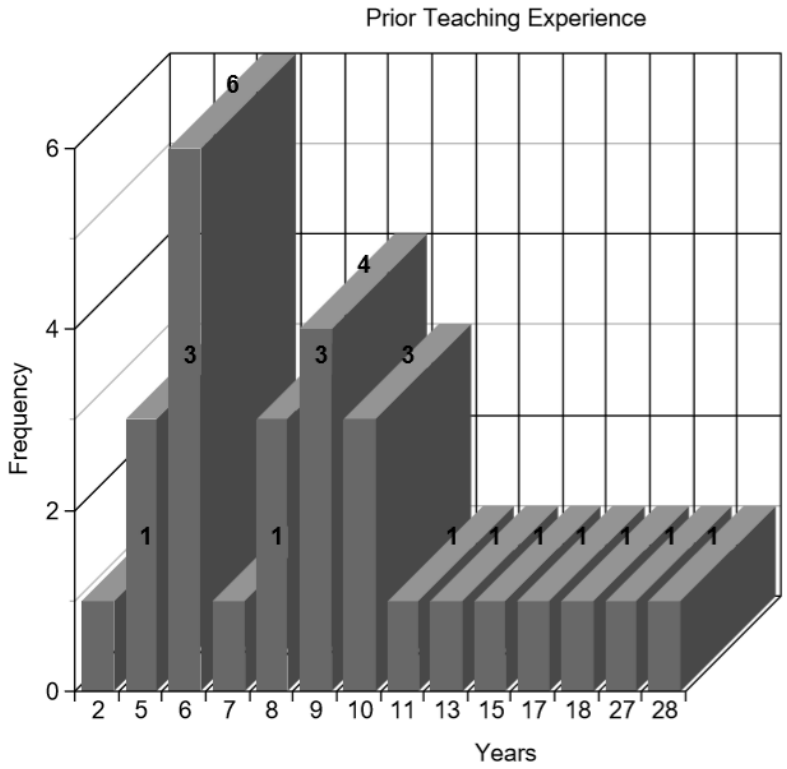

Figure 3.4. Histogram showing the years of prior experience as a teacher of the participant sample.

The majority of the participant population held an advanced certificate (15), while 9 have completed their doctorate and another 3 were in the process of earning a doctoral degree. One participant reported other as their highest degree and further elaborated a Master's in School Leadership. See Figure 3.5 for further information.

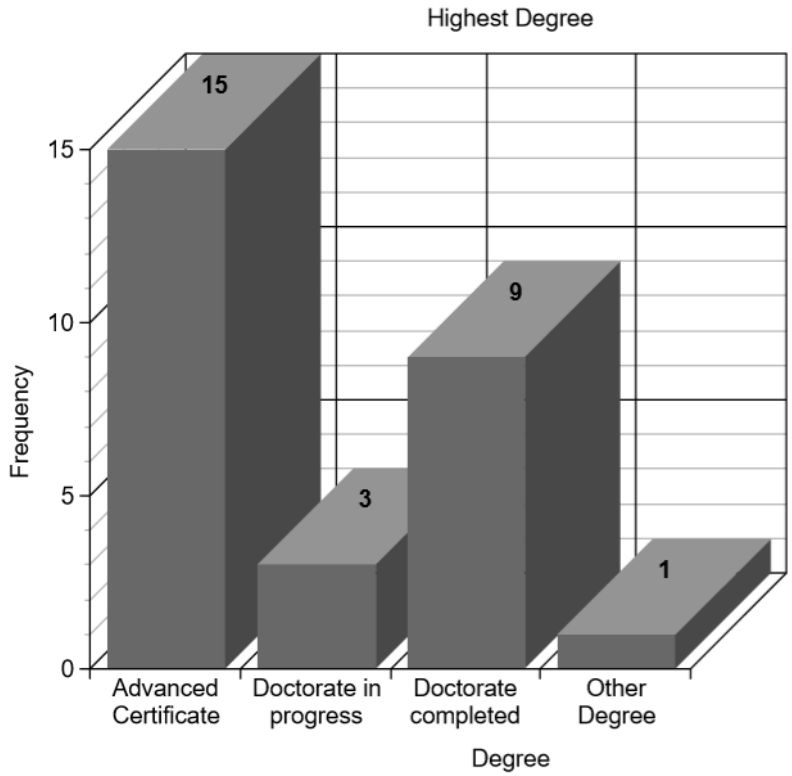

Figure 3.5. Histogram showing the level of education of the participant sample.

Participants were asked to share the decade they graduated high school. Twenty-six participants graduated high school in either the 1980s or 1990s, while 2 graduated in the 1960s. See Figure 3.6 for more details.

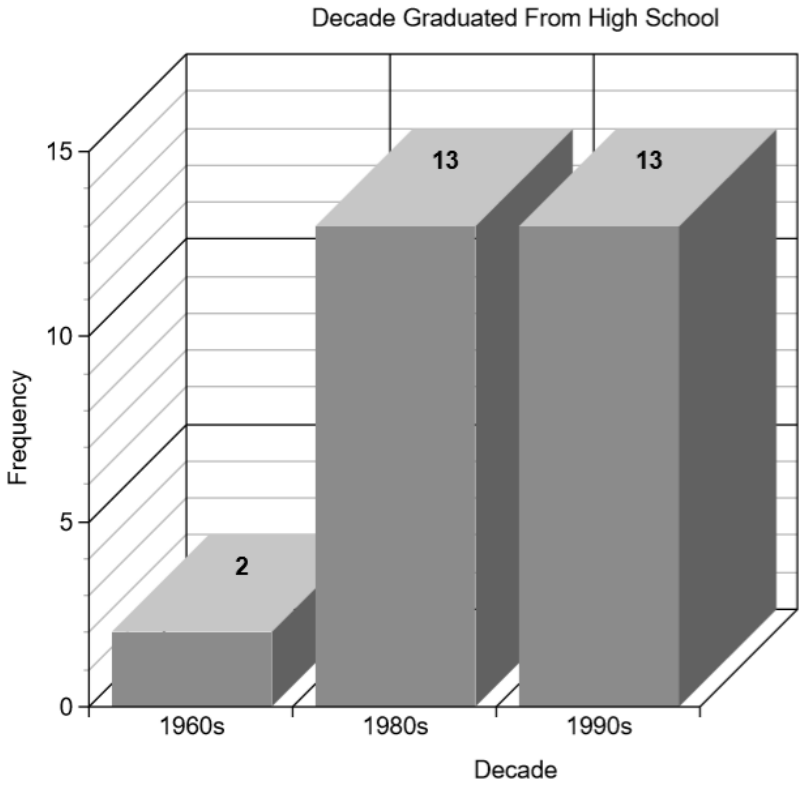

Figure 3.6. Histogram showing the decade graduated from high school of the participant sample.

Finally, respondents were asked about their opinion of the effective of distributed leadership. Their responses were wide ranging from a score of 1 (not very effective) given by 2 respondents, to the majority (22 respondents) rating distributed leadership as a 3 (effective) or 4 (highly effective). See Figure 3.7 for further information.

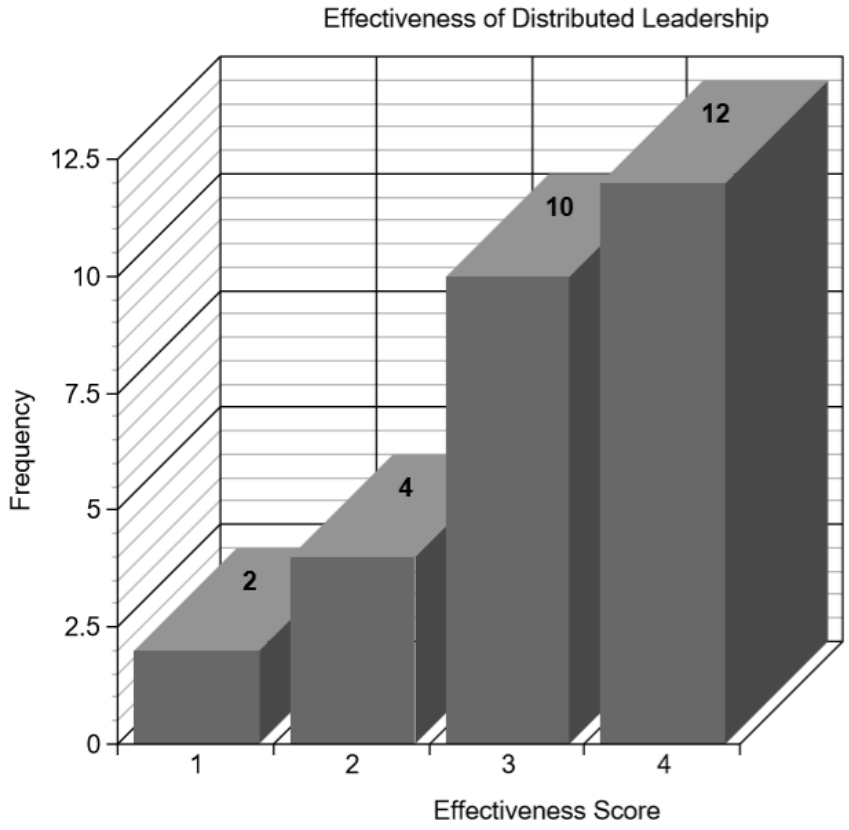

Figure 3.7. Histogram showing the views on the effectiveness of distributed leadership of the participant sample.

The survey was accessible to participants on September 13, 2018 and the survey was closed on the last response was received on October 9, 2018 following several days of no responses. At the culmination of the survey, 28 granted permission, while 0 did not grant permission. The final viable sample for this study was $N = 28$.

_Q_ Statements Sample

The 48 statements developed for the *Q* set in this study were derived from primary sources (interviews with public high school principals) and secondary sources through emerging themes in the literature reviewed. Based on the themes that emerged during the interviewing process and a review of the literature as discussed in Chapter II, the *Q* sample utilized reflects the

potential barriers and impediments to distribute leadership and share decision making. The *Q* sample used in this study is provided in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Q Sample: Q statements

Number	*Q* Statements
1.	Principals are afraid they may lose respect when they share authority
2.	DL can't work because staff have different values from administration
3.	Frankly, principals want to be judged only by their own decisions
4.	In true distributed leadership, there's no one to take responsibility
5.	Our district culture really doesn't encourage distributed leadership
6.	Distributed leadership blurs the lines between leaders and followers
7.	Teachers don't want authority because they already have to do so much
8.	Group decision making is good for compromise, but not for excellence
9.	Distributed leadership can only work in certain situations or contexts
10.	Many decisions require managerial skills that teachers don't have
11.	It's just easier for the principal to decide which ideas will work
12.	Administrative certification programs don't prepare leaders for DL
13.	Bureaucracy is the most common form of organization because it works
14.	DL cannot work because too many teachers will be opposed to change
15.	DL can't work because it makes processes and procedures too confusing
16.	Distributed leadership overly complicates the running of schools
17.	It's too hard to get a real decision out of a group of teachers
18.	Teachers are too busy to embrace a distributed leadership approach
19.	Most teachers will not accept DL because it's too much of a change
20.	It is naive to think that all power can be held by a single leader
21.	Leadership requires tough decisions that most teachers couldn't make
22.	Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions
23.	Principals cannot always share the reasons they do things with staff

24. Central office discourages sharing leadership beyond administration
25. It's risky when principals give teachers too much power in budgeting
26. Schools are just accustomed to hierarchical processes and procedures
27. Distributed leadership is a very inefficient way to run a school
28. Most staff want the certainty provided by a clear leadership structure
29. Principals lose power when they delegate to many decisions to others
30. I just don't think distributed leadership would ever work in schools
31. Most teachers resent being asked to accept administrative tasks
32. Principals lose power when they look like just a member of the group
33. Privacy rights often just make DL and sharing decisions impossible
34. Distributed leadership just doesn't work in crises or emergencies
35. Distributed leadership does much more harm than it does good
36. DL is hard to implement because government policies change so quickly
37. Distributed leadership could lead to chaos because no one is in charge
38. Decision making is too slow when too many people get involved
39. It takes a lot of courage to share authority with teachers and staff
40. We can’t share leadership with teachers regarding sensitive issues
41. Formal titles are often barriers to DL and sharing decisions
42. DL would produce far too many inconsistent decisions in the school
43. Unions limit how teachers can get involved in distributed leadership
44. DL devalues the leadership role because everyone thinks they can do it
45. Distributed leadership requires a lot of trust in both directions
46. Rules and regulations seriously limit our ability to share authority
47. Principals have leadership skills teachers haven't been trained for
48. Teachers just have not been trained to perform most leadership tasks

Q Sort Template and Sorting Scale

The *Q* sort template shown in Figure 3.3 represents a 9-point sorting scale (-4 to +4) in the form of a forced-choice, quasi-normal distribution containing slots for 48 statements to accommodate the *Q* sample. The template developed was designed to approximate a normal distribution representing data sets with $M = 0.00$, $SD = 2.05$ Skewness = 0.00, and Kurtosis = 2.36 which approximates a normal distribution. Regardless as to whether a sorting template adheres to a normal distribution, or deviates, Brown (1980) noted that similar results will typically be produced. However, when possible, it is recommended to utilize a quasi-normative distribution template (Brown, 1980; Watts & Stenner, 2012, 2005; Stephenson, 1953). The 48 statements were inputted to HTML*Q* (Aproxima, 2015), a graphical online *Q* sort program. HTML*Q* (Aproxima, 2015) allows participants to perform the *Q* sort by dragging and dropping virtual cards containing individual statements into the online template. The survey can be accessed at distleader.edsurveys.us.

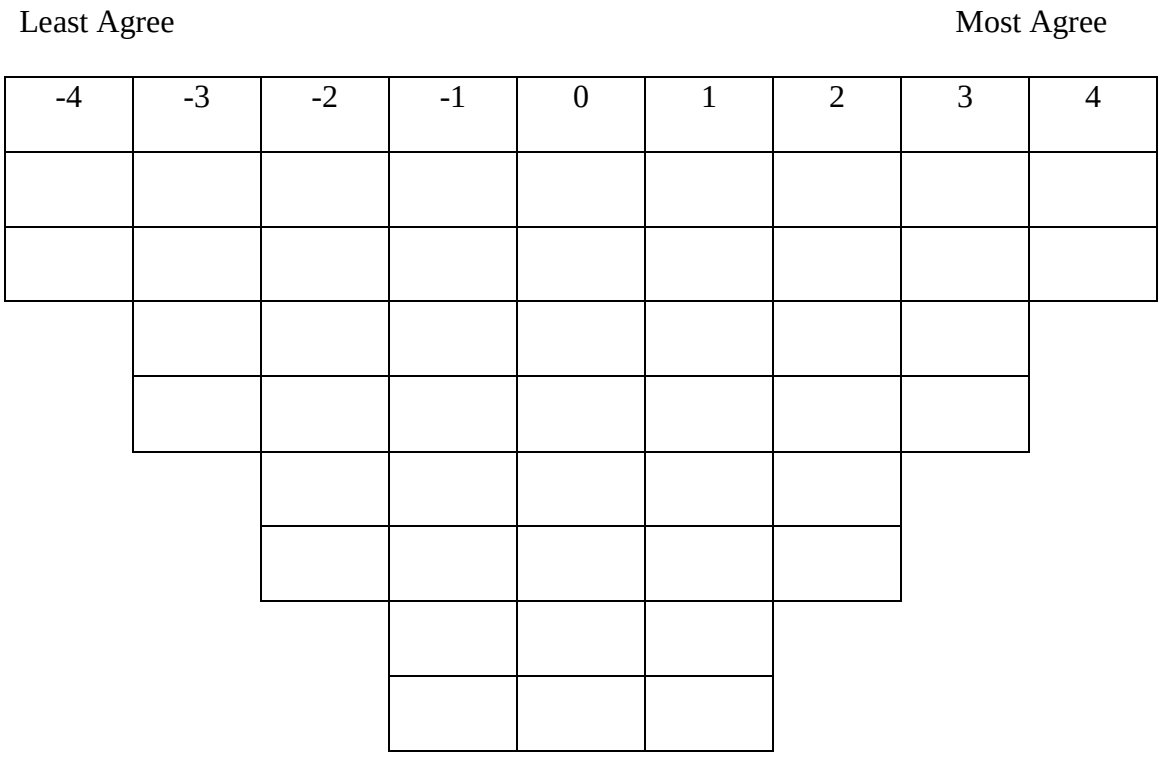

Figure 3.4. A quasi-normal, fixed-distribution *Q* sort template with 9-point scale and 48 statements slots accessible online. Distributional statistics for the template are $M = 0.00$, $SD = 2.05$, Skewness = 0.00, and Kurtosis = 2.36.

Condition of Instruction

The format of this *Q* study takes on a single COI utilizing multiple subjects' input. The COI employed in this study states, "Please sort these statements into the template in the way that best describes your view about the potential effectiveness of distributed leadership in high schools." Participants were instructed to individually read, rank-order, and sort provided *Q* sort statements ranging from *least agree* (-4) to *most agree* (+4) by dragging and dropping virtual cards onto a pre-set template.

Data Collection

The data ascertained for this research originated from the resulting online *Q* sorts and completed demographic questions. Using HTML*Q* (Aproxmia, 2015) an online data collection program. Participants of the study were provided with a web link to anonymously access the online *Q* sort survey. Participants were asked to independently complete the sorting activity utilizing a computer with access to the internet.

To begin the card sort, participants were initially asked to read each statement and place them into one of three categories: (a) most agree; (b) neutral or no opinion; (c) least agree.

The participants were then instructed to re-read, rank-order, and sort provided *Q* sort statements about distributed leadership ranging from *least agree* to *most agree* by dragging and dropping virtual cards onto the pre-set 9-point scale (-4 to +4) template. Once all boxes on the template were filled, and participants reviewed the arrangement of the statements, descriptive statistics were gathered. In addition, participants were provided with an opportunity to elaborate further about their viewpoints regarding their leadership under the context of heightened accountability. As recommended by Watts and Stenner (2012), post-sort questions posed to the participant allows the researcher "to explore each participant's wider understanding of the issue, to discover why they have sorted the items as they have and to get them to focus on the meaning and significance of particularly important and salient items" (p. 83).

Data Analysis Using *Q* Technique

The *Q* methodological procedures outlined in Stephenson's (1953) book, *On the Study of Behavior* and as discussed by Brown (1980) are implemented in this study, however, there are aspects of this study that do deviate from a purely traditionalist approach. This study employs both *R* methodological procedures alongside *Q* methodological procedures that are similar to the

methods employed by Block (2008). The main differences between *Q* technique employed in this study, and the traditionalist approaches in *Q* methodology are outlined below:

- In this study a single concept was under analysis, however, in a traditionalist approach, it is not uncommon to study multiple concepts.
- This study employs a common factor analysis as compared to a traditionalist approach in which a centroid method, or hand scoring method of factor analyzing data using principal components analysis would have been carried out. The reasoning for this approach, was to reduce the random error and rather, to focus on the shared variance developed by these models.
- Traditionally, theoretical or judgmental rotation would be employed in which a manual rotation would be carried out. Through this inductive approach, there is a possibility of losing results. Rather, in this study, a Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization was utilized in order to maximize the variance through a statistically-based rotation. This rotation helps to replicate results and develop an "ideal" model type of uncorrelated viewpoints.
- Traditionally, rank-ordering is employed to determine factors. However, in this study, with the use of an algebraic method, I converted *Q* factor scores (*z)* to precisely determine the sorting decisions made by respondents.
- Lastly, I collectively took the results of the *Q* technique step with those produced during the *R*-based results to analyze data. This final conglomerate of results signifies a true *Q* technique study as compared to a *Q* methodological study.

Q Factor Analysis and the Emerged *Q* Models

Q sort data was analyzed using Stata/IC version 15.1 applying *Q* factor analysis and a varimax rotation. *Q* factors were first extracted using a visual inspection of the scree plots developed following the factor analysis. Originating from Kaiser's rule related to *R*-mode factor

analysis, a criterion of factors with eigenvalues $\geq$ 1.5 after rotation were extracted for further analysis. These *Q* factors were used to identify clusters of persons within the variable sample who held similar viewpoints. Following this, models were interpreted, labeled, reported, and defined based on their commonalities. Patterns of high and low *Q* scored statements were sorted to establish the particular viewpoints of subjects who loaded on that specific factor. Each *Q* model identified, represents the hypothetically shared viewpoints of groups of public high school principals.

Covariates

Covariates considered in this study were included within this research design in order to provide a deeper understanding of the study's participants demographic and experiential characteristics, as well as uncover any underlying confounding or interacting variable. The following covariates were included in this study (n.b., variable names are shown in parenthesis):

(a) Years of experience as a public-school administrator (adminexp)

(b) Years of prior experience as a teacher (teachexp)

(c) Highest level of education (hidegree)

(d) Decade graduated from high school (hsdecade)

(e) Views on the effectiveness of distributed leadership (dlscale)

Data Analysis

Data from the *Q* sort were factor analyzed with Varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization using the State/IC version 15.1 statistical software on a PC computer. Based on visual inspection of produced the scree plot and an analysis of produced latent root (i.e, eigenvalue) criterion, *Q* factors were extracted. Factors with eigenvalues $\geq$ 1.5 were extracted as

they revealed viewpoints shared by at least two participants within the study. The extracted *Q* factors were utilized to identify clusters of respondents sharing common viewpoints.

Based on the substantiate content of the models, they were each interpreted, labeled and reported. Furthermore, the *Q* scores of statements with the highest and lowers scores revealed the particular viewpoints of subjects loaded on specific factors. In addition to the sorting activity, participants were asked to answer open-ended questions. As suggested by Watts and Stenner (2012), asking participants to answer post-sort questions is helpful in assisting the researcher gain a deeper understanding of individual viewpoints and perspectives. This approach is used to gain authentic viewpoints from participants and reflects their reality. Participants were asked to answer the following questions following the sorting activity:

(1) Why did you place the two statements into the "+4" column?

(2) Why did you place the two statements into the "-4" column?

(3) In the space below, please add any other comments or insights you would like to share with me about distributed leadership in high schools. Your views are important, and I want to make sure you have had the opportunity to express them in your own words.

(4) What are your views on the effectiveness of distributed leadership?

The qualitative questions provided, were analyzed and interpreted based on traditional qualitative techniques as well as through a systematic understanding of the qualitative data at hand.

Procedures

The Long Island University IRB approved the study on September 10, 2018 in the exempt category as subjects in this study were anonymous and were allowed to remove themselves from the study at any time. The survey was sent to the person sample once

exemption was received. The person sample was acquired via e-mail contact, School Leadership 2.0 online forum (https://schoolleadership20.com/forum), social media platforms, and through the implementation of snowball sampling technique. In addition, it was with participants' permission that the researcher was free to include participant responses and publish them for use within this dissertation. Participants involved in the study anonymously accessed the study with a provided URL link distleader.edsurveys.us. The survey was accessible between the dates of September 13, 2018 and October 13, 2018.

Using Stata/IC Version 15.1, data were analyzed, and the development of graphs and tables were created using Microsoft Excel version 10.

Ethical Considerations

Participants of this study were public high school principals from Nassau and Suffolk counties in New York. All participants voluntarily participated in the study and remained anonymous throughout. Participants were notified about the study's intent, purpose, and benefits. Furthermore, permissions of consent to utilize participants *Q* sorting information as well as all other information submitted were requested as well. Questions and procedures used to gather data in the survey were not offensive and did not cause any undue harm to participants. This survey instrument took public high school principals a median (*Mdn*) time of 13.27 minutes to complete. Participants had the option to remove themselves from the survey at any time without any explanation or consequence, therefore, the survey did not cause stress, was not upsetting or intrusive in any manner.

Disclosure and Control of Potential Researcher Bias

Recognizing and being transparent with my experience as a teacher who understands the complexities of the principalship and the immeasurable contributions these leaders make to their

schools on a continual basis, allows for me as the researcher to be open to all methodological judgements and decisions within this study. Furthermore, this openness diminishes possible researcher bias. In addition, as a teacher my experience within public high schools has the power to assist in gaining a deeper understanding of the barriers and impediments high school principals may face when attempting to share distribute their leadership responsibilities or in involving teachers in shared-decision making processes. Furthermore, *Q* statements were developed through a thorough literature review that further reduces any potential for researcher bias within the study. In addition, all dissertation committee members reviewed the statements to ensure that the *Q* set were a broad representation of viewpoints.

Methodological Limitations

Q is a powerful research technique however, it is limited in its ability to be generalizable to a larger population, as it utilizes a purposive sampling technique. Furthermore, due to this limitation, *Q* is not hypothesis generating and cannot hypothesis test. In addition, the qualitative nature of researcher's interpretations of the findings provides for a methodological limitation as well. Lastly, *R* methodological studies produce findings that oftentimes have the potential to be generalizable to larger populations. However, in *Q* methodologies, due to its non-traditional approach in generalizability (only to the population of which was involved in the study), limitations exist. Although these limitations are inherent in *Q* methodology along within areas of qualitative research, *Q* studies have the power to produce results in which other methods and measures may overlook subjective aspects. In addition, *Q* studies have the power to point researchers in the direction of what hypothesis to investigate further.

Chapter Synthesis

Chapter III provided the five research questions and six sub-questions that guided this study. In addition, a primer on *Q* methodology was provided. A detailed description of the application and implementation of *Q* methodology for this study was addressed as well. Because of the powerful techniques *Q* methodology uses, it was chosen as the method of choice as it best fit the researcher's interest in the shared viewpoints of public high school principals on the issues of accountability and their distribution of leadership while considering trust levels.

In the next chapter, the findings of this study will be discussed based on the methods aforementioned. Chapter IV provides the *Q* factors that emerged during factor analysis as well as the *Q* models representing the shared viewpoints of participants. Additionally, an analysis of the relationship between participants' demographic and experiential information as related to the *Q* models will be described as well.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS: PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS ON THE BARRIERS AND IMPEDIMENTS TO DISTRIBUTE LEADERSHIP AND SHARE DECISION MAKING

The purpose of this study is to determine and analyze the shared viewpoints and subjectivities held by public high school principals regarding the potential barriers and impediments they may face when distributing their leadership responsibilities with others and in involving their teachers in shared-decision making processes. In addition, this study takes into consideration particular demographic factors as they are associated with the shared viewpoints of principals within the sample.

The study's findings and data procured from survey responses will be presented in this chapter. This chapter will begin with a section discussing the statistical findings from the factor analysis conducted. The next section will discuss the *Q* models that emerged to reflect the shared viewpoints of participants. In addition, the section to follow will consider the context of heightened accountability and matters of trust regarding the potential barriers and impediments these principals might encounter when of distributing their leadership responsibilities. The section to follow, will analyze and discuss the main similarities and differences between the model viewpoints as well as discuss and describe the relative prevalence of the shared viewpoints identified. Following this section, the next section will discuss the demographic factors to the best extent possible in order to link how these particular factors are associated with the models interpreted and identified. Finally, this chapter will culminate with a discussion and analysis of the narrative responses provided by each participant in the study in order to further bolster findings, enhance the meaning of the models, and extend the findings of the *Q* models

identified as they relate to the shared viewpoints of public high school principals within the sample.

Results of *Q* Factor Analysis

A by-person, *Q* mode factor analysis was conducted to identify clusters of persons within the sample set who held shared viewpoints and perspectives regarding the barriers and impediments in distributing leadership responsibilities. *Q* Mode factor analysis was based on the participants' *Q* sorting patterns. An example of a selected participant's *Q* sort ((case18) through randomized selection) can be seen in Figure 4.1. As previously noted, clusters of participants sharing similar viewpoints are identified into *Q* factors. These *Q* factors were key elements within this study and were utilized to develop the *Q* models that will be discussed further.

Least Agree Most Agree

-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4
s35	s32	s22	s06	s00	s24	s03	s26	s43
s37	s34	s27	s08	s02	s25	s07	s28	s45
	s42	s29	s10	s04	s33	s09	s39	
	s47	s30	s11	s05	s38	s12	s41	
		s31	s13	s17	s40	s14		
		s36	s15	s18	s44	s20		
			s16	s19	s46			
			s21	s23	s48			

Figure 4.1. Note. s = statement and each number corresponds to the statement number assigned as noted in Table 3.1. An example of a participant's (case18) completed *Q* sort.

Adhering to the selection criteria identified in the previous chapter, three *Q* factors were initially identified. These factors were then extracted and rotated orthogonally applying a Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization in order to develop a set of common factors that were uncorrelated and represented shared viewpoints of public high school principals who participated in the study. A visual inspection of unrotated factors on the scree plot as shown in Figure 4.2, was conducted to determine the number of initial factor solutions to be extracted. To ensure that the factors extracted did not occur by chance alone, 840 iterations of multiple simulated data sets were randomly generated to produce the distributional shape of this study. Horn's parallel analysis was conducted using the Stata ADO file 'fapara' (Ender, 2010) in which a simulated random dataset ($N = 840$) was employed (see Table 4.1, Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4). Based on the substantive evidence beyond chance alone and based on the visual inspection of the scree plot in which eigenvalues were larger than 1.5 ($EV \geq 1.5$), three factors were retained. These factors were then rotated and analyzed further. As previously noted, the factors retained reveal that two or more participants share similar viewpoints within the factor ($EV \geq 1.5$).

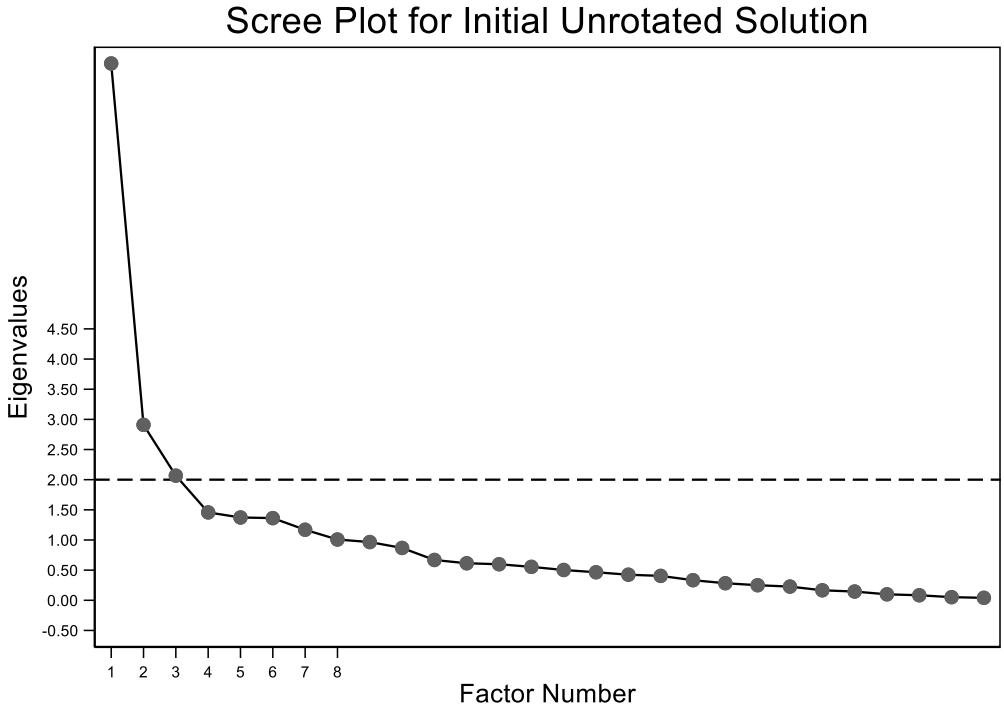

Figure 4.2. Scree plot of eigenvalues by factor number. This plot illustrates unrotated factors and is utilized to determine the number of factors to be extracted and retained for further analysis and interpretation.

Table 4.1

	FA	PA	Difference
1.	8.901783	2.375735	6.526049
2.	2.909079	2.064784	.8442948
3.	2.066986	1.825995	.2409907
4.	1.457609	1.633701	-.1760927
5.	1.373629	1.456294	-.0826647
6.	1.363038	1.302882	.0601562
7.	1.169824	1.159362	.0104621
8.	1.008078	1.028289	-.0202113
9.	.965776	.9069741	.0588019
10.	.8678284	.7997514	.068077
11.	.6690653	.6928429	-.0237776
12.	.6141477	.5920962	.0220515
13.	.5985708	.4996649	.0989059
14.	.5544993	.4105575	.1439418
15.	.5026069	.3258055	.1768013
16.	.4654781	.2504434	.2150347
17.	.42445	.1764044	.2480457
18.	.404685	.1120168	.2926682
19.	.3336255	.0487805	.284845
20.	.2832196	-.0092751	.2924948
21.	.2505535	-.063458	.3140115
22.	.2271994	-.113254	.3404534
23.	.1662876	-.1561864	.3224739
24.	.1453121	-.1949357	.3402478
25.	.0996481	-.22845	.3280981
26.	.0835173	-.2574381	.3409554
27.	.0526775	-.2823338	.3350113
28.	.0408263	-.3071529	.3479792

Note. Horn's parallel analysis of eigenvalues averaged over 840 replications using 'fapara' ADO file for Stata. *FA* = Factor Analysis and *PA* = Parallel Analysis. Eigenvalues $\geq$ 1.5. Blue = factors that satisfy the interpretive cut-off criterion.

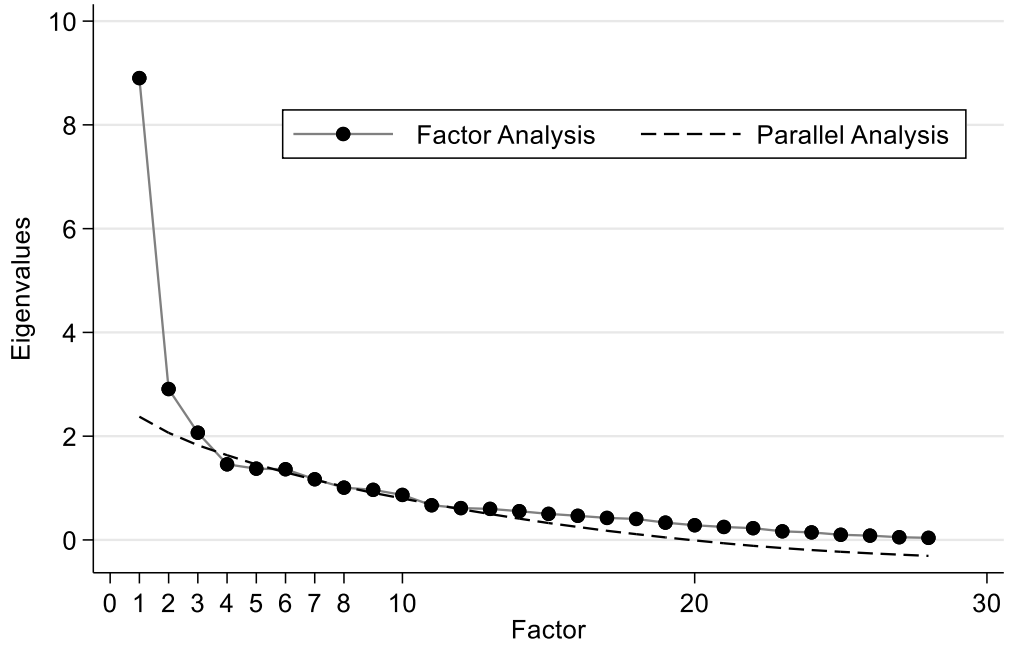

Figure 4.3. Plot illustrating Horn's parallel analysis utilized to determine the number of factors expected beyond chance alone, and to support the factor-solution as suggested by the visual inspection of the scree plot in Figure 4.2.

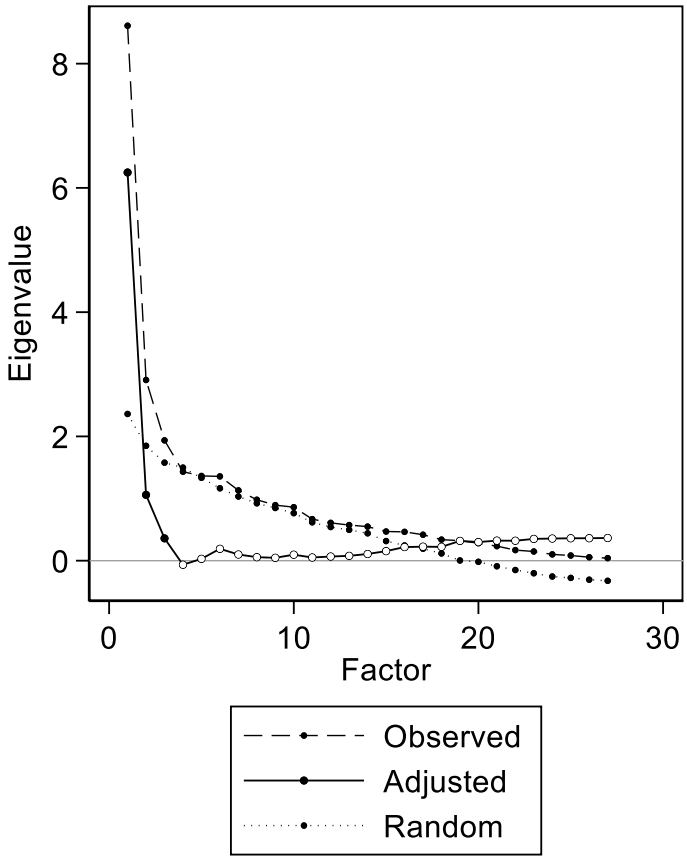

Figure 4.4. Plot illustrating a comparison of Horn's parallel analysis, observed data, and randomized data utilized to determine the number of factors expected beyond chance alone and to support the factor-solution as suggested by the visual inspection of the scree plot in Figure 4.2.

The three factors extracted were orthogonally rotated with applied Varimax rotation technique and Kaiser normalization in order to develop a set of factors uncorrelated to one another. These factors represent ideal or theoretically "pure" shared viewpoints that were then utilized to create the *Q* models of shared subjectivity. As a result of a theoretically "pure" viewpoint, these models do not represent the particular viewpoint of specific participants. Rather, they represent the amalgamation of viewpoints of participants. "Pure" models are a

conglomerate of each participant's proportion of variance and is based on their squared factor loading (λ^2).

The Varimax rotated factor loadings of the three-factor solution with corresponding factors, eigenvalues, percentages of variance explained, and the uniqueness values (*U)* of participating public high school principals is shown Table 4.1, which denotes the portion of a participants' view that is not explained by the three-factor solution. As discussed in Chapter III, the conventional cut-off criterion for factor loadings of $\lambda \geq |.30|$ was adhered to in analyzing and interpreting factors. Factor loadings that satisfy this criterion are illustrated in Table 4.2 and are indicated with particular colors for each of the three factors. One case (026) did not load on any of the three factors and is indicated in gray.

Table 4.2

Q Factor Loadings After Applied Varimax Rotation With Kaiser Normalization

Case	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	*U*
Case010	**.756**	-.131	**.332**	.302
Case016	**.733**	**.432**	-.170	.247
Case05	**.728**	.159	.168	.416
Case019	**.726**	.098	.065	.459
Case017	**.664**	**.398**	.007	.400
Case027	**.655**	.124	**.451**	.352
Case03	**.577**	**.486**	.006	.431
Case025	**.569**	**.328**	.168	.541
Case04	**.493**	**.357**	-.063	.626
Case024	**.386**	-.004	-.035	.850
Case01	**.370**	**.332**	.267	.682
Case013	**.333**	.089	**.327**	.774
Case018	**.393**	**.735**	-.045	.304
Case09	.003	**.688**	**.441**	.332
Case028	.216	**.678**	-.059	.491
Case011	-.085	**.676**	.134	.518
Case021	.188	**.653**	.140	.518
Case020	-.076	**.631**	**.342**	.479
Case012	.252	**.626**	.202	.504

Case015	**.535**	**.546**	.096	.407
Case08	.221	**.391**	**.353**	.674
Case07	.268	**.360**	**.312**	.701
Case026	.235	.273	.249	.808
Case023	-.123	-.052	**.768**	.393
Case014	.084	.224	**.675**	.487
Case022	**.355**	.157	**.620**	.465
Case06	**-.463**	.150	**.593**	.412
Case02	**.383**	**.327**	**.445**	.549
EV	5.614	5.009	3.255	
%	20.050	17.889	11.625	

Note. Total variance explained = 49.56%. Factor loadings $\lambda \geq |.30|$ are displayed in bold and negative loadings satisfying the interpretive criterion are displayed in red. Gray highlighting indicates that the case did not satisfy $\lambda \geq |.30|$. *U* indicates the proportion of each case's viewpoint that can't be explained by the three factors taken cumulatively.

Together, the three *Q* factors explain almost half (i.e., 49.56%) of the variance in the *Q* statements sorting patterns. As illustrated in Table 4.2, 9 respondents uniquely loaded positively at or above the a priori cut-off criterion on a single factor (32%). Three (11%) of the participants loaded uniquely on Factor 1, while another 4 (14%) uniquely load positively on Factor 2, and an additional 2 (7%) have a unique positive loading at or above the criterion on Factor 3. In addition, 17 (61%) cross-loaded on 2 of the 3 factors extracted. This result indicated that 8 (29%) participants' viewpoints are hybrids of Factors 1 and 2, while 4 participants (14%) cross-loaded on Factors 1 and 3 and one other participant cross-loaded on Factors 2 and 3. One (4%) of the three hybrid viewpoints negatively loaded on Factor 1, but positively loaded on Factor 3. One participant (4%) loaded onto all three factors. Figure 4.5 displays additional information regarding participants' partial viewpoints or hybrid viewpoints (one participant (4%) did not satisfy any factor based on the cut-off criterion). As noted earlier, the *Q* models are a "pure" representation of clusters of shared subjectivities and therefore, the partial model viewpoints provide evidence that these subjects have beliefs that often overlap or intertwine with more than

one identified *Q* model. Therefore, the model viewpoints derived from the *Q* factors represent the best representation of those individuals' shared viewpoints regarding the barriers and impediments of distributing their leadership responsibilities with others.

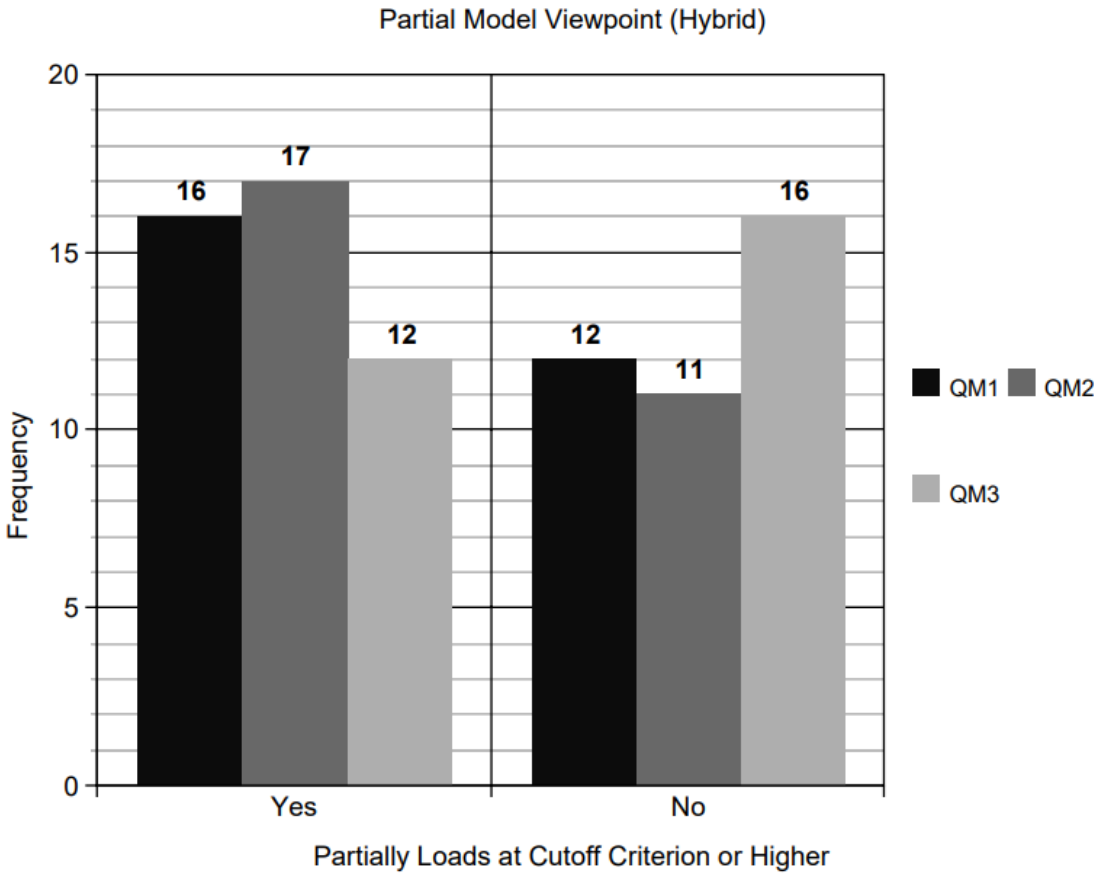

Figure 4.5. Histogram illustrating participants' viewpoints partially loading and satisfying the cut-off criterion $\lambda \geq |.30|$ for each of the three *Q* models.

The three-factor solution is satisfactory in explaining a portion of the unexplained variance for each public high school principal when the three factors are taken together. The median (*Mdn*) uniqueness calculated in the three-factor solution is $U = .483$, where U ranges from .247 to .850. This result suggests that the three-factor solution explains half (i.e., 49.56%) of the viewpoints of the participating public high school principals and as much as 85% for some principals. The unexplained variance (50.44%) that remains within the three-factor solution is

represented by a combination of the unique viewpoints of the individuals who participated in the study and also based on the views that may have not been captured by the statements within the *Q* set.

Factor 1 had a median (*Mdn*) absolute factor loading of 0.376 ($\lambda^2 = 0.141$) with an absolute loading minimum of 0.003 ($\lambda^2 = .000$) and an absolute loading maximum of 0.756 ($\lambda^2 = 0.571$). Three (11%) of the participants demonstrated a unique positive loading on Factor 1, with one participant demonstrating the only negative loading in the study on Factor 1. Therefore, Factor 1 illustrates the single-best model to reflect the viewpoints of the participants surveyed in this study. In addition, based on its eigenvalue from the statement sorting patterns across the *Q* sorts, the first factor explains more than 20% of the variance.

Factor 2 had a median (*Mdn*) absolute factor loading of. 0.345 ($\lambda^2 = 0.119$) with an absolute loading minimum of .004 ($\lambda^2 = .000$) and an absolute loading maximum of 0.735 ($\lambda^2 = 0.540$). Four (14%) of the participants demonstrated a unique positive loading on Factor 2. All four participants uniquely and positively loaded at or above the a priori cut-off criterion for Factor 2. Therefore, Factor 2 exemplifies the single-best model to reflect the viewpoints of (14%) of the participants surveyed in this study. In addition, based on its eigenvalue from the statement sorting patterns across the *Q* sorts, the second factor explains about 18% of the variance.

Factor 3 had a median (*Mdn*) absolute factor loading of 0.223 ($\lambda^2 = 0.050$) with an absolute loading minimum of .006 ($\lambda^2 = .000$) and an absolute loading maximum of 0.768 ($\lambda^2 = 0.590$). Two (7%) of the participants demonstrated a unique positive loading on Factor 3. Both participants uniquely and positively loaded at or above the a priori cut-off criterion for Factor 3. Therefore, Factor 3 illustrates the single-best model to reflect the viewpoints of 7% of the study

participants. In addition, based on its eigenvalue from the statement sorting patterns across the *Q* sorts, the third factor explains more than 11% of the variance.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the factor *z* scores for the three factors were converted into *Q* scores based on the standard deviation (2.05) of the sorting template. From the *Q* scores, *Q* models were developed; they represent the shared viewpoints from the three *Q* factors identified. Based on the *Q* models and the statistical properties derived from the by-person factor analysis, responses to the research questions that structured this study are provided in the sections to follow.

The total proportion of variance that is explained by this three-factor solution is 49.564% ($\sum s^2 = .49564$). The proportion of variance unexplained by the three-factor solution can be represented by uniqueness (*U*) in which the unique and individualistic viewpoints of participants in this study were not represented. The median (*Mdn*) uniqueness for the three-factor solution is $U = 0.483$, where *U* ranges from 0.247 to 0.850. Therefore, the three-factor solution represents about 52% (i.e., 1 – *U)* of the viewpoints of public high school principals on the barriers and impediments to distributing their leadership responsibilities.

To illustrate the median (*Mdn*), minimum, and maximum of the factor loadings, these values represented in Table 4.3. They were calculated based on those cases that met the interpretation criterion $\lambda \geq |.30|$ for each of the three factors. To interpret each of the *Q* models, these loadings were utilized to determine the strength of each viewpoint.

Table 4.3

	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Factor 1	0.376	0.003	0.756
Factor 2	0.345	0.004	0.735
Factor 3	0.223	0.006	0.768

Note. Each factor loading is represented as an absolute value.

Alternatively, in addition to reviewing the uniqueness of each case, the factor squared positive loadings (communality) h^2 by model were also taken into consideration when interpreting the models and the strength of each viewpoint. These data represent the percentage explained by the three-factor solution. The positive factor square loadings are illustrated in the comparative histograms below in Figure 4.6. In contrast to *U*, the positive square factor loadings represent the percentage of viewpoints explained by case.

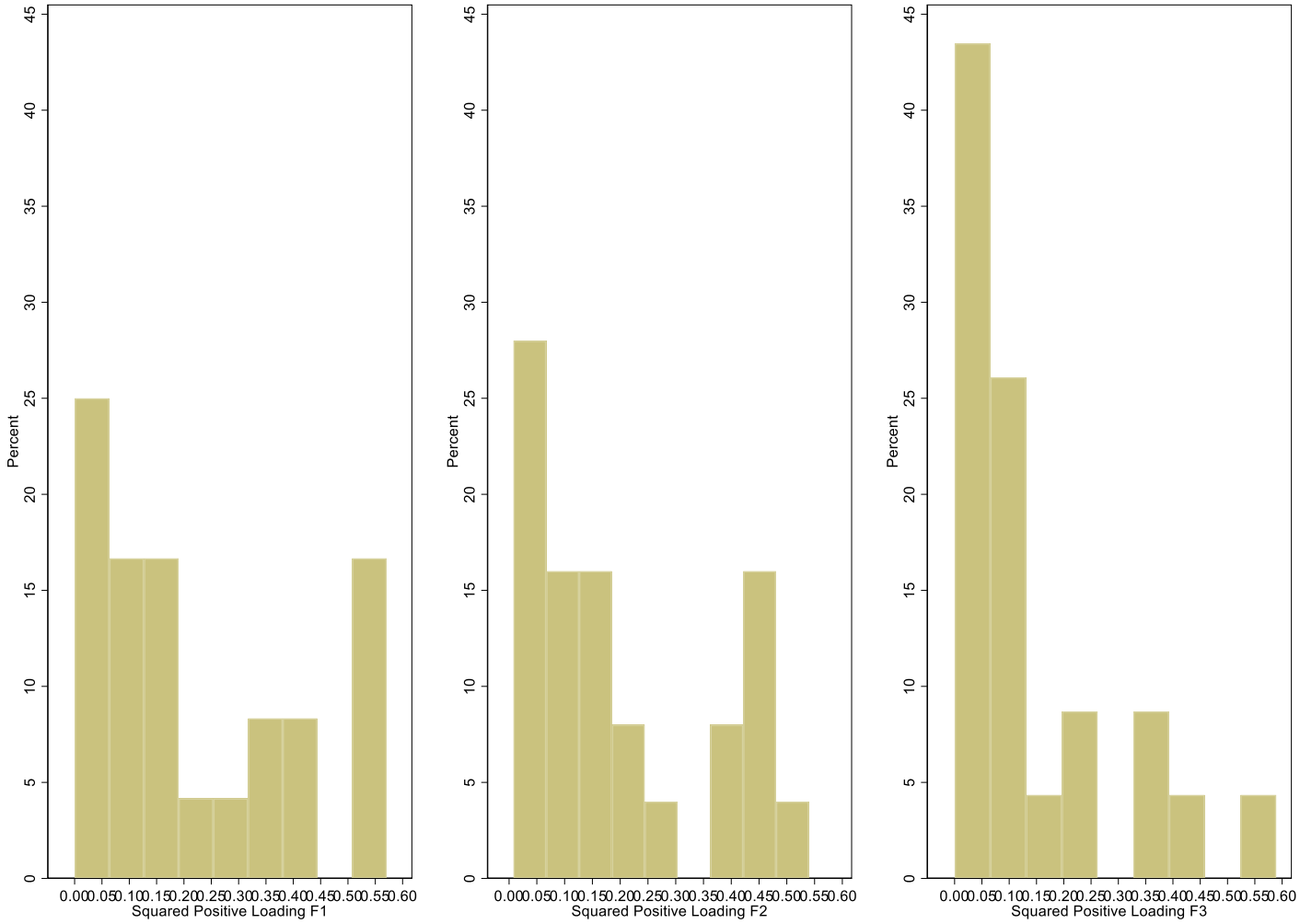

Figure 4.6. Positive squared factor loadings by model. Negative loadings are excluded from this graph.

Research Question 1: What are the dominant shared viewpoints about distributed leadership held by public high school principals?

As discussed, the study revealed three factors regarding the shared viewpoints of high school principals' regarding the potential barriers and impediments to distributing their leadership responsibilities. To give meaning to these factors, they were algebraically converted to *Q* models. *Q* models are a group of statements that represent the model and are organized in descending order. They indicate a cluster of participants who load highly on that particular factor would have hypothetically sorted the statements. The *Q* scored statements are then analyzed and interpreted based on their content to name the *Q* model.

As discussed, the standardized *z* scores algebraically converted from the *Q* scores were calculated by determining the product between the standard deviation (*SD* = 2.05) of the sorting template (See Figure 3.3 in Chapter III) and the corresponding *z* scores of each factor after applied Varimax rotation.

Based on the *Q* scores, three statistically uncorrelated *Q* models were derived regarding principals' perceptions of potential barriers and impediments to distributing leadership responsibilities. These perceptions are based on these models and their content as well as on statistical characteristics that assisted in responding to each of the research questions posed in Chapter III. The following is a discussion of the clusters of shared viewpoints discovered regarding the three *Q* models identified.

Q* Model 1: *Situationally Based and Relationally Concerned

Table 4.4 illustrates the shared viewpoints of public high school principals concerning the barriers and impediments they face when distributing their leadership responsibilities with others and their views regarding the potential barriers and impediments in distributing their leadership

responsibilities based on given situations and contexts as well as based on relationships with others. *Q* Model 1 explains 20.05% of variance amongst the statements within the *Q* sorts and represents 6 or one-fifth of the participating public high school principals. Three (11%) positively load on this factor only, satisfy the interpretive criterion of ($\lambda \geq |.30|$), and do not load on Factor 2 or Factor 3 at the interpretive cut-off criterion of $\lambda \geq |.30|$. This factor illustrates the only positive view from their perceptions regarding the potential barriers and impediments of distributing their leadership responsibilities. However, Case06, negatively loaded on Factor 1 and satisfied the interpretive cut-off criterion of ($\lambda \geq |.30|$). This respondent's viewpoint directly opposes the viewpoints of all others who believe in a *situationally Based and Relationally Concerned* set of considerations when distributing leadership responsibilities.

Within the participant sample, Factor 1 was at least a partial representation of their viewpoints. Nine (32%) produced factor loading scores at or above the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) on Factor 1 and Factor 2. This result suggests that their viewpoints regarding the barriers and impediments to distributing leadership responsibilities is a mixture of the two factors and positively encompasses qualities of both factors.

The participant sample also reflected a partial representation of viewpoints among Factors 1 and 3. Five (18%) respondents within the sample produced factor loading scores at or above the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) on Factor 1 and Factor 3. This hybrid viewpoint suggests that participants on these models have a mixture of beliefs represented by Factor 1 and Factor 3.

Finally, 1 (4%) participant satisfied the interpretive cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) and loaded negatively on Factor 1 and positively on Factor 3. This response demonstrates a disagreement with the viewpoints within Factor 1, and an agreement with the viewpoints within Factor 3.

Table 4.4 illustrates a visual representation of those statements that are the most salient within *Q* Model 1 and that meet the interpretive cut-off criterion of $Q \geq 2.0$ or $Q \leq -2.0$. Positive salient statements are highlighted in green and negative salient statements are highlighted in yellow. Those statements with a white background are non-salient statements within the model. As noted in Chapter III, positive salient statements are those statements that meet the interpretive cut-off criterion of $Q \geq 2.0$ and indicate the greatest and most psychologically significant agreement from the participant sample. They are the statements that participants within the sample most strongly agreed with. In contrast, while negative salient statements were those statements they least agreed with while meeting the interpretive cut-off criterion of $Q \geq 2.0$.

As noted in Chapter II, trust and context are important factors in determining whether distributing leadership responsibilities can occur, and if so, when and how. The literature reviewed, and the open-ended participant responses informed the interpretations of *Q* Model 1 while also providing insight into the conceptual understanding of this model.

The public high school principals whose views are reflected in *Q* Model 1 believe that distributed leadership is a viable strategy but only within specific situations and contexts. In addition, the viewpoints contained within this model express the beliefs that (a) policies and regulations do not act as barriers to distributing leadership responsibilities with others (b) believe distributed leadership can lead to consistency in decision making. Statements that were positively scored within this model include statements 20 (*It is naive to think that all power can be held by a single leader*), 45 (*Distributed leadership requires a lot of trust in both directions*), 39 (*It takes a lot of courage to share authority with teachers and staff*), and 22 (*Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions*).

In explaining why, he or she agreed most with Statement 20, one principal posited, "Dictatorships don't work! Even if you don't have a Distributive Leadership format, a good leader knows when and how to delegate important decision-making." Another principal, in responding to Statement 45, noted "The more teachers get to know me and my beliefs and decisions, the more they feel comfortable making decisions. You have to trust each other to make the right decisions." A respondent who sorted Statement 39 into the *most agree* (+4), explained, "Administrators have to be willing to be open-minded while practicing DL. Furthermore, some decisions may be contrary to the principal's decision, yet he or she would have to support the decision." Finally, in response to Statement 22, one principal asserted, "DL is a time investment....in order to gain insight into the issue, examine data, perspectives on the approach, potential solutions, vetting each solution, etc. cannot be done in haste or on the spot. It is for long-term planning, goal-setting, etc." Due to time being a factor, Statement 7 (*Teachers don't want authority because they already have to do so much*) was also a salient statement to respondents within this model. Based on the themes that emerged within *Q* Model 1, as well as the narrative responses, the overarching themes within this model are that (a) trust must be considered, (b) others need to be involved in leading, and (c) although distributed leadership can work, it takes time to develop and can be properly implemented only within the right situation or context. Furthermore, within this model, policies and regulations do not act as barriers or impediments in distributing leadership responsibilities.

Table 4.4

Q Model 1: Situationally Based and Relationally Concerned

Item	*Z*1	ABS*Q*1	*Q*1	Statement
20	1.88	3.88	3.88	It is naive to think that all power can be held by a single leader
45	1.65	3.41	3.41	Distributed leadership requires a lot of trust in both directions
39	1.49	3.07	3.07	It takes a lot of courage to share authority with teachers and staff
22	1.30	2.67	2.67	Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions
9	1.13	2.33	2.33	Distributed leadership can only work in certain situations or contexts
23	1.05	2.16	2.16	Principals cannot always share the reasons they do things with staff
7	.99	2.03	2.03	Teachers don't want authority because they already have to do so much
6	.93	1.92	1.92	Distributed leadership blurs the lines between leaders and followers
10	.87	1.78	1.78	Many decisions require managerial skills that teachers don't have
3	.86	1.78	1.78	Frankly, principals want to be judged only by their own decisions
4	.81	1.67	1.67	In true distributed leadership, there's no one to take responsibility
13	.80	1.64	1.64	Bureaucracy is the most common form of organization because it works
12	.74	1.52	1.52	Administrators wouldn't need certification if DL could work in schools
28	.72	1.50	1.50	Most staff want the certainty provided by a clear leadership structure
25	.70	1.45	1.45	It's risky when principals give teachers too much power in budgeting
2	.69	1.42	1.42	DL can't work because staff have different values from administration
8	.69	1.41	1.41	Group decision making is good for compromise, but not for excellence
11	.60	1.25	1.25	It's just easier for the principal to decide which ideas will work
1	.58	1.20	1.20	Principals are afraid they may lose respect when they share authority
14	.54	1.12	1.12	DL cannot work because too many teachers will be opposed to change
18	.51	1.05	1.05	Teachers are too busy to embrace a distributed leadership approach
5	.28	.57	.57	Our district culture really doesn't encourage distributed leadership
34	.05	.11	.11	Distributed leadership just doesn't work in crises or emergencies

15	.03	.06	.06	DL can't work because it makes processes and procedures too confusing
26	.03	.05	.05	Schools are just accustomed to hierarchical processes and procedures
43	.00	.01	-.01	Unions limit how teachers can get involved in distributed leadership
38	-.08	.16	-.16	Decision making is too slow when too many people get involved
29	-.12	.25	-.25	Principals lose power when they delegate too many decisions to others
21	-.16	.32	-.32	Leadership requires tough decisions that most teachers couldn't make
47	-.18	.36	-.36	Principals have leadership skills teachers haven't been trained for
27	-.26	.53	-.53	Distributed leadership is a very inefficient way to run a school
24	-.41	.85	-.85	Central office discourages sharing leadership beyond administration
31	-.46	.96	-.96	Most teachers resent being asked to accept administrative tasks
16	-.56	1.15	-1.15	Distributed leadership overly complicates the running of schools
33	-.62	1.28	-1.28	Privacy rights often just make DL and sharing decisions impossible
32	-.62	1.29	-1.29	Principals lose power when they look like just a member of the group
19	-.67	1.39	-1.39	Most teachers will not accept DL because it's too much of a change
17	-.83	1.71	-1.71	It's too hard to get a real decision out of a group of teachers
41	-.96	1.99	-1.99	Formal titles are often barriers to DL and sharing decisions
48	-1.01	2.09	-2.09	Teacher leaders are great, but they aren't trained like principals
30	-1.29	2.67	-2.67	I just don't think distributed leadership would ever work in schools
35	-1.46	3.02	-3.02	Distributed leadership is not all bad, but it does more harm than good
40	-1.52	3.13	-3.13	We can’t share leadership with teachers regarding sensitive issues
36	-1.52	3.14	-3.14	DL is hard to implement because government policies change so quickly
37	-1.73	3.56	-3.56	Distributed leadership could lead to chaos because no one is in charge
44	-1.74	3.58	-3.58	DL devalues the leadership role because everyone thinks they can do it
42	-1.82	3.75	-3.75	DL would produce far too many inconsistent decisions in the school
46	-1.89	3.89	-3.89	Rules and regulations seriously limit our ability to share authority
EV	5.61			
%	20.05			

Note. EV = eigenvalue. % = % variance explained. ABS*Q*M1 = absolute value of each *Q* score. Highlighted green areas indicate positive salience ($Q \geq 2.0$), and areas highlighted in yellow indicate negative salience ($Q \leq -2.0$). Non-salient statements have a white background ($-2.0 < Q < 2.0$).

Statements negatively scored within this model include Statements 46 (*Rules and regulations seriously limit our ability to share authority*), 44 (*DL devalues the leadership role because everyone thinks they can do it*), and 37 (*Distributed leadership could lead to chaos because no one is on charge*). These responses represent an opposing viewpoint from the one that is stated.

Principals were asked to explain the placement of these statements into the *most disagree* bins. Regarding Statement 46, one principal contended, "I cannot think of a single SED regulation, or district policy here which would inhibit my ability to empower others to be active participants in the decision-making processes and operations of the school." In response to Statement 44, another principal noted, "Value doesn't come from opportunity but rather from execution, decisions, and interactions." Finally, in response to Statement 37, a principal asserted, "As long as teacher leaders make decisions with consideration and cohesion there will not be any chaos [*sic*]."

Based on the themes that emerged within *Q* Model 1 and the narrative responses regarding the placement of highly negative salient statements, the overarching themes within this model are supported in that fact that (a) trust must be considered, (b) others need to be involved in leading, and (c) although distributed leadership can work, it takes time to develop and is applicable only within certain situations or contexts. Furthermore, within this model, interpretation of the narrative responses reinforced the belief that policies and regulations do not act as barriers or impediments in sharing leadership responsibilities with others.

Q Model 2: *Structurally Based and Policy-Driven*

Table 4.5 demonstrates the shared viewpoints of public high school principals regarding the barriers and impediments they may face when distributing their leadership responsibilities. *Q*

Model 2 explains about 17.89% of the variance among the statements within the *Q* sorts and represents 5 (18%) of the participating public high school principals in this study. All 5 who positively and uniquely loaded on Factor 2, satisfy the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$), and do not load on Factor 1 or Factor 3 at the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$). This factor demonstrates the participants' only positive viewpoint regarding the potential barriers and impediments to distributing leadership responsibilities. These cases represent *structurally based and policy-driven* viewpoints.

Furthermore, within the participant sample, Factor 2 was at least a partial representation of their viewpoints. Twelve (43%) respondents produced factor loading scores at or above the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) on Factor 1 and Factor 2 or Factor 2 and Factor 3. Specifically, 5 (18%) loaded at or above the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) on Factor 2 and Factor 3. These data suggest that the respondents' viewpoints regarding the barriers and impediments to distributing leadership responsibilities is a composite of the two factors and positively encompasses qualities of both factors.

Table 4.5 illustrates a visual representation of those statements that are the most salient within *Q* Model 2 and that meet the interpretive cut-off criterion of $Q \geq 2.0$ or $Q \leq -2.0$. Statements that are positively salient are highlighted in green, and statements that are negatively salient are highlighted in yellow. Those statements with white backgrounds are non-salient.

As discussed in the literature review in Chapter II, accountability, educational policies, and procedures can act as barriers to principals' leading in the modalities they deem best for their schools. Furthermore, trust considerations and situation and context are also important considerations when principals share

their leadership responsibilities with others. Based on the literature reviewed, as well as the narrative responses provided by the participants, an interpretation of *Q* Model 2 was conducted.

In this model, respondents express the belief that rules, regulations, bureaucracy, and the hierarchal structure that characterize most schools discourage distributing leadership responsibilities. In addition, within this model, respondents agree with those viewpoints in *Q* Model 1 regarding the need for trust and courage in sharing leadership with others. Further, this model corresponds to *Q* Model 1 in that those respondents agree that chaos will not ensue if distributed leadership is practiced. In contrast, however, *Q* Model 2 disagrees with *Q* Model 1 in that policies and regulations do get in the way of distributing leadership responsibilities, and, further, that on-the-spot decisions are made possible by distributing leadership responsibilities to others.

The highest positive salient statements within this model were Statement 43 (*Unions limit how teachers can get involved in distributed leadership*), Statement 41 (*Formal titles are often barriers to DL and sharing decisions*), Statement 45 (*Distributed leadership requires a lot of trust in both directions*), and Statement 46 (*Rules and regulations limit our ability to share authority*).

With regard to Statement 43, one principal noted, “Unions often tell teachers that items requiring decisions on a large scale are not part of the contractual obligations.” Another principal offered the following insight when responding to Statement 45:

> For DL to function, teachers, administrators, and other staff need not only to share some common values about teaching and learning but have an understanding and respect for one another. Once the locus of decision-making is expanded to include more people, it is

more likely that the respect, trust, understanding, and shared values is diffused. Trust is an important element to overcome this diffusion.

Table 4.5

Q Model 2: Structurally Based and Policy-Driven

Item	*Z*2	ABS*Q*2	*Q*2	Statement
43	2.66	5.49	5.49	Unions limit how teachers can get involved in distributed leadership
41	2.35	4.85	4.85	Formal titles are often barriers to DL and sharing decisions
40	1.79	3.69	3.69	We can’t share leadership with teachers regarding sensitive issues
45	1.59	3.29	3.29	Distributed leadership requires a lot of trust in both directions
26	1.37	2.83	2.83	Schools are just accustomed to hierarchical processes and procedures
39	1.37	2.82	2.82	It takes a lot of courage to share authority with teachers and staff
46	1.20	2.47	2.47	Rules and regulations seriously limit our ability to share authority
48	.88	1.81	1.81	Teacher leaders are great, but they aren't trained like principals
19	.79	1.63	1.63	Most teachers will not accept DL because it's too much of a change
36	.76	1.57	1.57	DL is hard to implement because government policies change so quickly
9	.70	1.45	1.45	Distributed leadership can only work in certain situations or contexts
28	.51	1.06	1.06	Most staff want the certainty provided by a clear leadership structure
23	.47	.97	.97	Principals cannot always share the reasons they do things with staff
24	.42	.87	.87	Central office discourages sharing leadership beyond administration
5	.37	.77	.77	Our district culture really doesn't encourage distributed leadership
17	.29	.60	.60	It's too hard to get a real decision out of a group of teachers
31	.20	.41	.41	Most teachers resent being asked to accept administrative tasks
1	.19	.40	.40	Principals are afraid they may lose respect when they share authority
20	.19	.39	.39	It is naive to think that all power can be held by a single leader
12	.11	.24	.24	Administrators wouldn't need certification if DL could work in schools
33	.11	.24	.24	Privacy rights often just make DL and sharing decisions impossible
10	-.01	.02	-.02	Many decisions require managerial skills that teachers don't have
14	-.09	.18	-.18	DL cannot work because too many teachers will be opposed to change

3	-.15	.31	-.31	Frankly, principals want to be judged only by their own decisions
38	-.17	.35	-.35	Decision making is too slow when too many people get involved
15	-.25	.52	-.52	DL can't work because it makes processes and procedures too confusing
7	-.25	.53	-.53	Teachers don't want authority because they already have to do so much
6	-.26	.53	-.53	Distributed leadership blurs the lines between leaders and followers
44	-.29	.61	-.61	DL devalues the leadership role because everyone thinks they can do it
21	-.36	.74	-.74	Leadership requires tough decisions that most teachers couldn't make
42	-.39	.79	-.79	DL would produce far too many inconsistent decisions in the school
8	-.53	1.10	-1.10	Group decision making is good for compromise, but not for excellence
18	-.58	1.19	-1.19	Teachers are too busy to embrace a distributed leadership approach
27	-.58	1.20	-1.20	Distributed leadership is a very inefficient way to run a school
47	-.60	1.23	-1.23	Principals have leadership skills teachers haven't been trained for
16	-.60	1.24	-1.24	Distributed leadership overly complicates the running of schools
4	-.61	1.25	-1.25	In true distributed leadership, there's no one to take responsibility
25	-.63	1.31	-1.31	It's risky when principals give teachers too much power in budgeting
11	-.64	1.32	-1.32	It's just easier for the principal to decide which ideas will work
13	-.66	1.37	-1.37	Bureaucracy is the most common form of organization because it works
2	-.92	1.90	-1.90	DL can't work because staff have different values from administration
30	-.94	1.93	-1.93	I just don't think distributed leadership would ever work in schools
34	-.96	1.98	-1.98	Distributed leadership just doesn't work in crises or emergencies
22	-1.10	2.26	-2.26	Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions
37	-1.32	2.72	-2.72	Distributed leadership could lead to chaos because no one is in charge
35	-1.32	2.73	-2.73	Distributed leadership is not all bad, but it does more harm than good
32	-1.76	3.63	-3.63	Principals lose power when they look like just a member of the group
29	-2.37	4.89	-4.89	Principals lose power when they delegate too many decisions to others
EV	5.01			
%	17.89			

Note. EV = eigenvalue. % = % variance explained. ABS*Q*M2 = absolute value of each *Q* score. Highlighted green areas indicate positive salience ($Q \geq 2.0$), and areas highlighted in yellow indicate negative salience ($Q \leq -2.0$). Non-salient statements have a white background ($-2.0 < Q < 2.0$).

Statement 29 (*Principals lose power when they delegate too many decisions to others*) had the highest absolute value of the negatively scored statement within *Q* Model 2. In addition, Statement 37 (*Distributed leadership could lead to chaos because no one is in charge)* and Statement 22 (*Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions*) exhibited some of the highest absolute values of negatively salient statements within this model.

To gain an understanding as to why principals identified those statements as most disagreeable to them, they were asked to explain their reasoning. Principals justified their reasoning for placing Statement 29 in the *Most Disagree* bin for the following reasons, "Again, delegation done right provides others with a sense of ownership and everyone moves forward in a positive direction"; "Principals' greatest power is their ability to inspire and motivate others to affect chang" [*sic*] and "This could actually be true if the principal is not effective and turns delegation into an abdication of authority and responsibility." In addition, one principal disagreed with Statement 37 because "A good leader will never let this happen. "I believe DL leads to people feeling valued as professionals."

Through an interpretation of the narrative responses, and the themes that emerged in *Q* Model 2, the dominant themes within this model are supported by the belief that the traditional hierarchal structure of schools, the strength of teacher unions, and policies and regulations can act as barriers or impediments to distributing leadership responsibilities. However, based on the viewpoints within this model, participants seek distributed leadership to respond to on-the-spot decisions. Further, they believe that this process can occur without ensuing chaos. Finally, this viewpoint highlights the importance of considering trust in others when distributing leadership responsibilities.

Q Model 3: *Situationally Based and Efficiency-Concerned Within a Culturally Encouraged School System*

Table 4.6 visually represents the shared viewpoints of public high school principals concerning the barriers and impediments they may encounter when distributing their leadership responsibilities. *Q* Model 3 represents 2 (7%) of the participating public high school principals, and it explains about 11.63% of the variance. Both positively and uniquely loaded on *Q* Model 3, satisfied the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$), and do not load on Factor 1 or Factor 2 at the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$). This factor, therefore, represents the only positive viewpoint from participants; perceptions regarding the potential barriers and impediments of distributing leadership responsibilities to others. Thus, these cases represent *situationally based and efficiency-concerned perceptions within a culturally encouraged school system.*

Within the participant sample, *Q* Model 3 was at least a partial representation of their viewpoints. Three cases (11%) positively loaded on Factors 1 and 3 based on the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$). Ten (36%) produced factor loading scores at or above the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) on Factor 1 and 3 or on Factor 2 and Factor 3. In particular, 4 (14%) loaded at above the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) on Factor 2 and Factor 3. These data suggest that these viewpoints are a positive composite of both factors.

Table 4.6 is a visual representation of salient statements within *Q* Model 3 and meet the interpretive cut-off criterion of $Q \geq 2.0$ or $Q \leq -2.0$. Statements that are positively salient are highlighted in green, and statements that are negatively salient are highlighted in yellow. Those statements with white backgrounds are non-salient.

As discussed in Chapter II, one of the principals' primary concerns is time management and the safety of their schools (Stryon & Styron, 2011). Chapter II also examined the influences of school culture, and how situation and context can influence leadership decisions. As with *Q* Model 1 and *Q* Model 2, *Q* Model 3 underscores the importance of trust in others when distributing leadership responsibilities. In addition, similar to *Q* Model 1, *Q* Model 3 agrees with Statement 22 (*Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions*). Unlike *Q* Model 1 and *Q* Model 2, however, *Q* Model 3 is focused on school culture and climate as strong disagreement was indicated for Statements 5 and 24 (*Our district culture really doesn't encourage distributed leadership* and *Central office discourages sharing leadership beyond administration*).

Of the positive salient statements, Statement 22 (*Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions*) had the highest absolute value score within the model. In addition, Statement 34 (*Distributed leadership just doesn't work in crises or emergencies*) and Statement 28 (*Most staff want the certainty provided by a clear leadership structure*) were also among the highest positively scored salient statements within the model. In response to Statement 34, one principal noted "As I have seem [*sic*] it practiced, in certain emergency situations where a snap decision needs to be made, someone needs to be the person designated to make it, though this is referring almost exclusively to emergencies with a safety component." In addition, 2 principals responded to Statement 28 as follows, "Folks on large staffs benefit from clarity" and "Teachers like to know who to go to for a decision." See Table 4.6 for additional information regarding *Q* scores of statements within this model.

Table 4.6

Q Model 3: Situationally Based and Efficiency-Concerned within a Culturally-Encouraged School System

Item	*Z*3	ABS*Q*3	*Q*3	Statement
22	2.03	4.18	4.18	Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions
45	1.85	3.81	3.81	Distributed leadership requires a lot of trust in both directions
34	1.58	3.25	3.25	Distributed leadership just doesn't work in crises or emergencies
38	1.56	3.21	3.21	Decision making is too slow when too many people get involved
28	1.51	3.11	3.11	Most staff want the certainty provided by a clear leadership structure
31	1.45	3.00	3.00	Most teachers resent being asked to accept administrative tasks
37	1.30	2.68	2.68	Distributed leadership could lead to chaos because no one is in charge
20	.93	1.92	1.92	It is naive to think that all power can be held by a single leader
39	.92	1.90	1.90	It takes a lot of courage to share authority with teachers and staff
21	.85	1.76	1.76	Leadership requires tough decisions that most teachers couldn't make
32	.76	1.57	1.57	Principals lose power when they look like just a member of the group
23	.71	1.46	1.46	Principals cannot always share the reasons they do things with staff
47	.70	1.45	1.45	Principals have leadership skills teachers haven't been trained for
33	.58	1.19	1.19	Privacy rights often just make DL and sharing decisions impossible
16	.55	1.14	1.14	Distributed leadership overly complicates the running of schools
40	.55	1.13	1.13	We can’t share leadership with teachers regarding sensitive issues
12	.46	.96	.96	Administrators wouldn't need certification if DL could work in schools
29	.36	.74	.74	Principals lose power when they delegate too many decisions to others
25	.33	.67	.67	It's risky when principals give teachers too much power in budgeting
36	.29	.61	.61	DL is hard to implement because government policies change so quickly
17	.18	.38	.38	It's too hard to get a real decision out of a group of teachers
43	.17	.34	.34	Unions limit how teachers can get involved in distributed leadership
42	.05	.10	.10	DL would produce far too many inconsistent decisions in the school

46	-.01	.03	-.03	Rules and regulations seriously limit our ability to share authority
44	-.04	.08	-.08	DL devalues the leadership role because everyone thinks they can do it
9	-.06	.12	-.12	Distributed leadership can only work in certain situations or contexts
10	-.09	.18	-.18	Many decisions require managerial skills that teachers don't have
19	-.13	.27	-.27	Most teachers will not accept DL because it's too much of a change
26	-.29	.60	-.60	Schools are just accustomed to hierarchical processes and procedures
18	-.29	.61	-.61	Teachers are too busy to embrace a distributed leadership approach
35	-.36	.73	-.73	Distributed leadership is not all bad, but it does more harm than good
30	-.50	1.04	-1.04	I just don't think distributed leadership would ever work in schools
48	-.59	1.21	-1.21	Teacher leaders are great, but they aren't trained like principals
8	-.75	1.55	-1.55	Group decision making is good for compromise, but not for excellence
7	-.82	1.70	-1.70	Teachers don't want authority because they already have to do so much
3	-.83	1.70	-1.70	Frankly, principals want to be judged only by their own decisions
41	-.83	1.72	-1.72	Formal titles are often barriers to DL and sharing decisions
2	-.90	1.85	-1.85	DL can't work because staff have different values from administration
4	-.90	1.86	-1.86	In true distributed leadership, there's no one to take responsibility
15	-1.04	2.15	-2.15	DL can't work because it makes processes and procedures too confusing
13	-1.06	2.19	-2.19	Bureaucracy is the most common form of organization because it works
6	-1.09	2.25	-2.25	Distributed leadership blurs the lines between leaders and followers
27	-1.09	2.25	-2.25	Distributed leadership is a very inefficient way to run a school
14	-1.35	2.79	-2.79	DL cannot work because too many teachers will be opposed to change
24	-1.39	2.87	-2.87	Central office discourages sharing leadership beyond administration
11	-1.52	3.14	-3.14	It's just easier for the principal to decide which ideas will work
5	-1.60	3.30	-3.30	Our district culture really doesn't encourage distributed leadership
1	-2.13	4.39	-4.39	Principals are afraid they may lose respect when they share authority
EV	3.26			
%	11.63			

Note. EV = eigenvalue. % = % variance explained. ABS*Q*M3 = absolute value of each *Q* score. Highlighted green areas indicate positive salience ($Q \geq 2.0$), and areas highlighted in yellow indicate negative salience ($Q \leq -2.0$). Non-salient statements have a white background ($-2.0 < Q < 2.0$).

Negative salient statements within *Q* Model 3 were Statements 1, 5, and 24 (*Principals are afraid they may lose respect when they share authority*), (*Our district culture really doesn't encourage distributed leadership)*, and (*Central office discourages sharing leadership beyond administration*).

To obtain a deeper understanding as to why principals placed particular statements in the *Most Disagree* bin, they were asked to share their reasoning. In response to Statement 1, one principal explained

> It may be easier for a principal to decide, but principals have bounded autonomy and must operate within an organizational structure. Every idea, every thought is thoroughly discussed and vetted by others. It is rare that a principal makes any decision on his/her own.

Another commented "Sometimes, you get several great ideas and its [*sic*] hard to pick one and not miss out on the opportunities that the other provide." Two principals noted that they placed Statement 5 into the *Most Disagree* bin because "Many of our most important decisions such as a change in grading procedures and a change in the schedule have included all stakeholders" and "The entire basis of my district is DL....its excellence is attributed to a long history of being a DL district." Finally, in response to Statement 24, one principal noted, "Central Office expects you to lean on your team-they in turn rely on the principals."

Implementing an interpretive approach through the use of the narrative statements provided by participants, in addition to an analysis of the themes that emerged within *Q* Model 3, it can be concluded that respondents who loaded on this model believe that distributed leadership can work, but only within certain situations and contexts. Furthermore, *Q* Model 3 is concerned with efficiency and suggests that their school's culture encourages a distributed leadership

approach. Finally, the importance of trust when distributing leadership responsibilities is evident within this model as well.

Research Question 1a: What is the relative prevalence of the shared viewpoints identified?

The three *Q* models at least partially represent and describe the shared viewpoints and subjectivities of the respondents within this study. However, one participant did not load at or above the cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) on any of the three *Q* models.

The relative prevalence of the shared viewpoints identified is based on only those respondents within this study's sample. Due to the small sample size and a non-random, non-probability sample, the relative prevalence of the three models cannot be generalized to the larger population of public high school principals in New York State.

Relative Prevalence of *Q* Model 1 within the Study Sample

Q Model 1, *Situationally Based and Relationally Concerned*, explains 20.1% of the statements' variance and is shared uniquely by 3 (11%) of the respondents. In addition, *Q* Model 1 represents a hybrid or partial viewpoint of 14 (50%) (13 positive views and one negative view) respondents. Therefore, *Q* Model 1 reflects at least the partial positive views of 13 (46%) participating principals. Furthermore, in cases where cross-loading occurred across *Q* Models and hybrid viewpoints were present, it was determined (based on the interpretive cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) that *Q* Model 1 was at least partially a model viewpoint for 16 (57.14%) of the participants in this study. For more information, refer to Figure 4.7.

Relative Prevalence of *Q* Model 2 within the Study Sample

Q Model 2, *Structurally Based and Policy-Driven*, explains 17.9% of the statements' variance and is shared uniquely by 4 (14%) of the respondents. Furthermore, *Q* Model 2

represents the partial viewpoints of 13 (46%) of the respondents. Therefore, *Q* Model 2 reflects at least the partial positive views of 13 (46%) of participating public high school principals (see Figure 4.6). Additionally, *Q* Model 2 was at least a partial representation of 17 (60.71%) participants' viewpoints.

Relative Prevalence of *Q* Model 3 within the Study Sample

Q Model 3, *Situationally Based and Efficiency-Concerned within a Culturally Encouraged School System*, explains 11.6% of the variance and is shared uniquely by 2 (7%) of the respondents. In addition, *Q* Model 3 represents the hybrid viewpoints of 10 (36%) respondents. Therefore, *Q* Model 3 reflects at least the partial positive views of 10 (36%) participating principals. In addition, *Q* Model 3 was at least partially a viewpoint of 12 (42.86%) of the study participants. Figure 4.7 provides a visual representation of *Q* Model 3 as compared to *Q* Model 1 and *Q* Model 2.

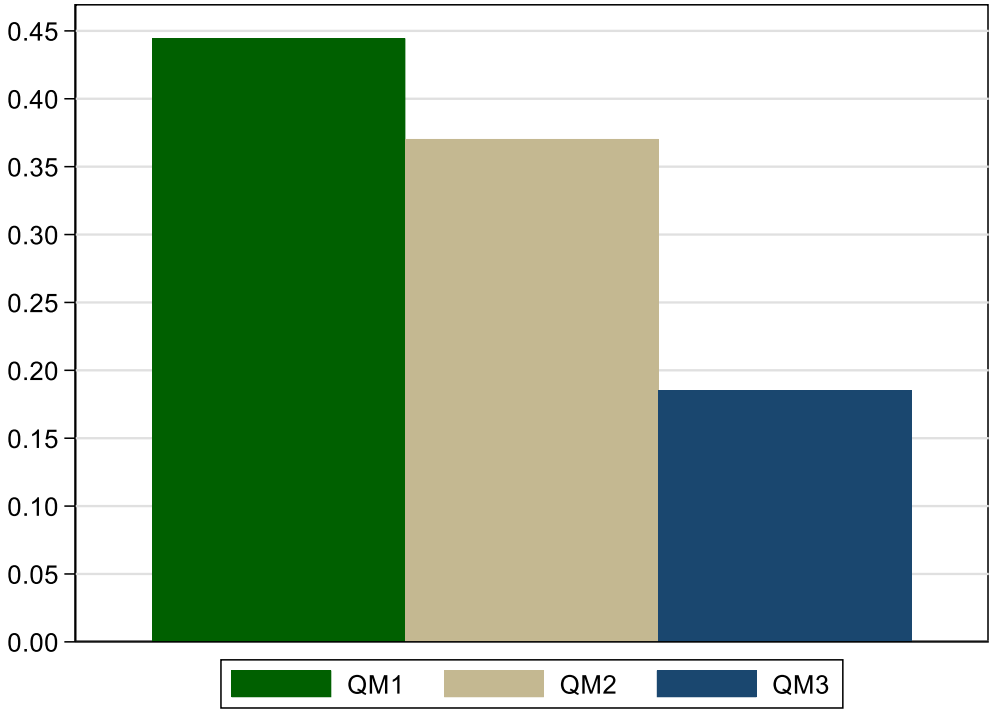

Figure 4.7. The relative prevalence of each viewpoint by model represented as a percentage. The three models account for almost half (49.6%) of participants' viewpoints.

Research Question 2: What are the main differences and similarities between model viewpoints identified?

The viewpoints represented by *Q* model 1 encompass the belief that distributed leadership is possible and can work but only based on situation and context. In addition, the viewpoints within this model, expressed that policies and regulations do not act as barriers to distributing leadership responsibilities with others, and further, believed distributed leadership can lead to consistency in decision making. Similarly, participants who loaded onto *Q* Model 2 believed that rules, regulations, and bureaucracy can act as barriers to distributing leadership responsibilities with others. Participants within this model also expressed that the hierarchical structure of school systems can act as an impediment to distributed leadership. In addition, within this model, respondents agree with those viewpoints in *Q* Model 1 regarding the need for

trust and courage in sharing leadership with others. Further, this model corresponds to *Q* Model 1 in that those respondents agree that chaos will not ensue if distributed leadership is practiced. Contrastingly however, *Q* Model 2 disagrees with *Q* Model 1 in that policies and regulations do get in the way of distributing leadership responsibilities, and further, that on the spot decisions are made possible by distributing leadership responsibilities to others. Like *Q* Model 1 and *Q* Model 2, *Q* Model 3 also underscores the importance of trust in others when distributing leadership responsibilities. In addition, similar to *Q* Model 1, *Q* Model 3 also agrees with statement 22 (Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions). However, unlike *Q* Model 1 and *Q* Model 2, *Q* Model 3 is focused on school culture and climate as strong disagreement was indicated for statements 5 and 24 (Our district culture really doesn't encourage distributed leadership and Central office discourages sharing leadership beyond administration).

Research Question 2a: In what ways are identified shared viewpoints distinguished from one another?

To determine distinguishing statements from the *Q* set, the maximum difference, Δ, was calculated to determine the largest difference in *Q* scores for each of the 48 statements within the three models. Maximum difference (Δ) can be understood as the estimated distance one statement was sorted in the three *Q* models based on the number of columns within the sorting template. Therefore, the 9-column ($\pm$ 4) as displayed in Chapter III, Figure 3.1, encompasses 8 intervals between the columns. Therefore, $\Delta = 8$, meaning full disagreement among the three models. The calculated maximum difference can be utilized to identify and interpret the *Q* statements that most distinguish the shared viewpoints of public high school principals regarding the barriers and impediments of distributing leadership responsibilities with others. Table 4.7 illustrates the three *Q* models organized by descending order of the maximum Δ. Distinguishing

statements within this study are those statements with a Maximum $\Delta > 5.0$. This cut-off was used to interpret statements. Based on this cut-off criterion, 10 statements meet this criterion and are deemed as the *most distinguishing* within this study.

As illustrated in Table 4.7, Statement 41 (*Formal titles are often barriers to DL and sharing decisions*), Statement 46 (*Rules and regulations seriously limit our ability to share authority*), Statement 37 (*Distributed leadership could lead to chaos because no one is in charge*), and Statement 43 (*Unions limit how teachers can get involved in distributed leadership*) and pertain to structure, formal titles, and a hierarchical structure. Statements 29, 1, and 32 are considered distinguishing statements as well (*Principals lose power when they delegate too many decisions to others, Principals are afraid they may lose respect when they share authority*, and *Principals lose power when they look like just a member of the group*). These statements relate to the principal as the sole leader, and they involve the possible ramifications of distributing leadership responsibilities. Two other distinguishing statements-22 (*Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions*) and 34 (*Distributed leadership just doesn't work in crises or emergencies*) the ability to address situations that require quick decisions. Finally, Statement 40 (*We can't share leadership with teachers regarding sensitive issues*) which recorded the second highest Maximum Δ, focused on adhering to confidentiality protocols and expectations. An analysis of the distinguishing statements across the three models revealed that the shared viewpoints and perspectives of public high school principals are primarily concerned with how their schools are structured, the effects distributed leadership might have on their role as a leader, and the ability to address situations in a quick and efficient manner.

Table 4.7

Comparison of Q Models Sorted in Descending Difference Order

Item	*Q*1	*Q*2	*Q*3	Δ	Statement
41	-1.99	4.85	-1.72	6.84	Formal titles are often barriers to DL and sharing decisions
40	-3.13	3.69	1.13	6.82	We can't share leadership with teachers regarding sensitive issues
22	2.67	-2.26	4.18	6.45	Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions
46	-3.89	2.47	-.03	6.36	Rules and regulations seriously limit our ability to share authority
37	-3.56	-2.72	2.68	6.23	Distributed leadership could lead to chaos because no one is in charge
29	-.25	-4.89	.74	5.64	Principals lose power when they delegate too many decisions to others
1	1.20	.40	-4.39	5.59	Principals are afraid they may lose respect when they share authority
43	-.01	5.49	.34	5.50	Unions limit how teachers can get involved in distributed leadership
34	.11	-1.98	3.25	5.24	Distributed leadership just doesn't work in crises or emergencies
32	-1.29	-3.63	1.57	5.20	Principals lose power when they look like just a member of the group
36	-3.14	1.57	.61	4.70	DL is hard to implement because government policies change so quickly
11	1.25	-1.32	-3.14	4.38	It's just easier for the principal to decide which ideas will work
6	1.92	-.53	-2.25	4.17	Distributed leadership blurs the lines between leaders and followers
5	.57	.77	-3.30	4.07	Our district culture really doesn't encourage distributed leadership
31	-.96	.41	3.00	3.96	Most teachers resent being asked to accept administrative tasks
14	1.12	-.18	-2.79	3.91	DL cannot work because too many teachers will be opposed to change
48	-2.09	1.81	-1.21	3.90	Teacher leaders are great, but they aren't trained like principals
42	-3.75	-.79	.10	3.84	DL would produce far too many inconsistent decisions in the school
13	1.64	-1.37	-2.19	3.83	Bureaucracy is the most common form of organization because it works
24	-.85	.87	-2.87	3.74	Central office discourages sharing leadership beyond administration
7	2.03	-.53	-1.70	3.73	Teachers don't want authority because they already have to do so much
38	-.16	-.35	3.21	3.56	Decision making is too slow when too many people get involved
4	1.67	-1.25	-1.86	3.53	In true distributed leadership, there's no one to take responsibility

44	-3.58	-.61	-.08	3.51	DL devalues the leadership role because everyone thinks they can do it
20	3.88	.39	1.92	3.49	It is naive to think that all power can be held by a single leader
3	1.78	-.31	-1.70	3.48	Frankly, principals want to be judged only by their own decisions
26	.05	2.83	-.60	3.43	Schools are just accustomed to hierarchical processes and procedures
2	1.42	-1.90	-1.85	3.32	DL can't work because staff have different values from administration
19	-1.39	1.63	-.27	3.02	Most teachers will not accept DL because it's too much of a change
8	1.41	-1.10	-1.55	2.96	Group decision making is good for compromise, but not for excellence
25	1.45	-1.31	.67	2.76	It's risky when principals give teachers too much power in budgeting
47	-.36	-1.23	1.45	2.68	Principals have leadership skills teachers haven't been trained for
21	-.32	-.74	1.76	2.49	Leadership requires tough decisions that most teachers couldn't make
33	-1.28	.24	1.19	2.47	Privacy rights often just make DL and sharing decisions impossible
9	2.33	1.45	-.12	2.45	Distributed leadership can only work in certain situations or contexts
16	-1.15	-1.24	1.14	2.38	Distributed leadership overly complicates the running of schools
17	-1.71	.60	.38	2.31	It's too hard to get a real decision out of a group of teachers
35	-3.02	-2.73	-.73	2.29	Distributed leadership is not all bad, but it does more harm than good
18	1.05	-1.19	-.61	2.24	Teachers are too busy to embrace a distributed leadership approach
15	.06	-.52	-2.15	2.21	DL can't work because it makes processes and procedures too confusing
28	1.50	1.06	3.11	2.05	Most staff want the certainty provided by a clear leadership structure
10	1.78	-.02	-.18	1.97	Many decisions require managerial skills that teachers don't have
27	-.53	-1.20	-2.25	1.72	Distributed leadership is a very inefficient way to run a school
30	-2.67	-1.93	-1.04	1.62	I just don't think distributed leadership would ever work in schools
12	1.52	.24	.96	1.28	Administrators wouldn't need certification if DL could work in schools
23	2.16	.97	1.46	1.19	Principals cannot always share the reasons they do things with staff
39	3.07	2.82	1.90	1.17	It takes a lot of courage to share authority with teachers and staff
45	3.41	3.29	3.81	.52	Distributed leadership requires a lot of trust in both directions

Note. Δ = Difference between *Q*1, *Q*2, and *Q*3. Numbers highlighted in green represent positive salient statements $Q \geq 2.0$, while those highlighted in yellow represent negatively salient statements $Q \leq -2.0$. Statements not highlighted, indicate non-salient statements ($-2.0 < Q < 2.0$).

Research Question 2b: In what ways do identified shared viewpoints reflect consensus?

Tables 4.8 and 4.9 illustrate the most salient statements across the three *Q* models. Table 4.8 provides an illustration of the positive salient statements, and Table 4.9 provides an illustration of the negative salient statements.

Salient Positive Statements

Positive consensus was determined based on statements that loaded at or above the cut-off criterion ($Q \geq |\pm 2.00|$) on two or more models. Salient positive consensus statements are statements that are $Q \geq 2.00$ across two or more models and do not demonstrate $Q \leq -2.00$ in any model. In Table 4.8, positive salient statements are highlighted in green. Statements 22, 39, and 45 demonstrated positive consensus across two or more models. Statement 22 (*Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions*) met the interpretive cut-off criterion on *Q* Model 1 and *Q* Model 3, while Statement 39 (*It takes a lot of courage to share authority with teachers and staff*) met the interpretive cut-off criterion for *Q* Model 1 and *Q* Model 2. Finally, Statement 45-*Distributed leadership requires a lot of trust in both directions*-was the only salient consensus statement across all three factors.

Table 4.8

Salient Positive Consensus Statements

Item	*Q*1	*Q*2	*Q*3	Δ	Statement
22	2.67	-2.26	4.18	6.45	Distributed leadership doesn't allow for on the spot decisions
39	3.07	2.82	1.90	1.17	It takes a lot of courage to share authority with teachers and staff
45	3.41	3.29	3.81	.52	Distributed leadership requires a lot of trust in both directions

Note. Δ = Difference between *Q*1, *Q*2, and *Q*3. Salient positive consensus statements are statements that are $Q \geq 2.00$ across two or more models and do not demonstrate $Q \leq -2.00$ in any model. Positive salient statements are highlighted in green.

Salient Negative Statements

Salient negative consensus statements are statements that are Q <-2.00 across two or more models and do not demonstrate *Q* > 2.00 in any model. In Table 4.9, these statements are highlighted in yellow. Negative consensus was determined in *Q* Model 1 and *Q* Model 2 regarding Statements 37 (Distributed leadership could lead to chaos because no one is in charge) and 35 (Distributed leadership is not all bad, but it does more harm than good). As previously discussed, these models represent the viewpoints of public high school principals who believe that distributed leadership is a viable strategy, but only within particular school situations or contexts.

Table 4.9

Salient Negative Consensus Statements

Item	*Q*1	*Q*2	*Q*3	Δ	Statement
37	-3.56	-2.72	2.68	6.23	Distributed leadership could lead to chaos because no one is in charge
35	-3.02	-2.73	-.73	2.29	Distributed leadership is not all bad, but it does more harm than good

Note. Δ = Difference between *Q*1, *Q*2, and *Q*3. Salient negative consensus statements are statements that are $Q \leq -2.00$ across two or more models and do not demonstrate $Q \geq 2.00$ in any model. Negative salient statements are highlighted in yellow.

Research Question 2c: In what ways do identified shared viewpoints reflect an absence of salience?

Non-salient Statements

Non-salient statements are those statements that are neutral to study participants. Nevertheless, they can be analyzed for interpretive measures. Information gleaned from this analysis allows interpretations to be made regarding those issues of least importance to study participants. Non-salient statements are defined as those statements with $Q > -2.0$ and < 2.0. Table 4.10 lists the 14 non-salient statements. These statements were consistently sorted into the neutral sections of the sorting template and were therefore deemed to be neutral to the study participants. Based on the themes that emerged within the non-salient statements, it can be concluded that a lack of certification or training on behalf of teachers is neutral in considering whether to distribute leadership responsibilities with teachers. In addition, based on the themes that emerged within the three models, shared-decision making can be accomplished through a distributed leadership perspective. Consequently, statements asserting that distributed leadership may complicate shared-decision making were neutral to respondents.

Table 4.10

Non-Salient Consensus Statements

Item	*Q*1	*Q*2	*Q*3	Δ	Statement
4	1.67	-1.25	-1.86	3.53	In true distributed leadership, there's no one to take responsibility
3	1.78	-.31	-1.70	3.48	Frankly, principals want to be judged only by their own decisions
2	1.42	-1.90	-1.85	3.32	DL can't work because staff have different values from administration
19	-1.39	1.63	-.27	3.02	Most teachers will not accept DL because it's too much of a change
8	1.41	-1.10	-1.55	2.96	Group decision making is good for compromise, but not for excellence
25	1.45	-1.31	.67	2.76	It's risky when principals give teachers too much power in budgeting
47	-.36	-1.23	1.45	2.68	Principals have leadership skills teachers haven't been trained for
21	-.32	-.74	1.76	2.49	Leadership requires tough decisions that most teachers couldn't make
33	-1.28	.24	1.19	2.47	Privacy rights often just make DL and sharing decisions impossible
16	-1.15	-1.24	1.14	2.38	Distributed leadership overly complicates the running of schools
17	-1.71	.60	.38	2.31	It's too hard to get a real decision out of a group of teachers
18	1.05	-1.19	-.61	2.24	Teachers are too busy to embrace a distributed leadership approach
10	1.78	-.02	-.18	1.97	Many decisions require managerial skills that teachers don't have
12	1.52	.24	.96	1.28	Administrators wouldn't need certification if DL could work in schools

Note. Δ = maximum difference between *Q*1, *Q*2, and *Q*3. Non-salient statements are statements with $Q > -2.00$ in two or models and no $Q < 2.00$ in any model.

Research Question 3: How and to what extent are the following factors associated with identified shared viewpoints?

Research Question 1 discussed the relative prevalence of the shared viewpoints of public high school principals regarding the barriers and impediments they might encounter when distributing their leadership responsibilities. This question further addresses this issue by examining covariates that may be used to predict particular models. The covariates examined in this study include years of experience as a public-school administrator, highest level of education, years of prior experience as a teacher, and the decade in which participants graduated from high school. Each covariate is examined at length below.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants As They Correspond to Each *Q* Model

To identify those participants who are most representative of each model, cases were identified and examined based on the interpretive cut-off criterion of $\lambda \geq |.30|$ on each *Q* factor, which, thus, correspond to each *Q* model. One participant did not positively or negatively load on any of the three models.

Research Question 3a: Years of experience as a public-school administrator

***Q* Model 1.** Of the 12 participants who met the cut-off interpretive criterion and who hold shared beliefs and viewpoints in *Q* Model 1 (*Situationally Based and Relationally Concerned*), 3 (25%) reported 11 years of administrative experience. One (8.33%) reported either 14, 15, 18, 19, or 20 years of administrative experience. In addition, 2 (16.67%) reported either 16 years or 21 years of administrative experience. The median (*Mdn*) administrative experience of participants who loaded on *Q* Model 1 based on the interpretive cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) is 16 years. See Figure 4.8 for a visual representation of these data. In addition, the median (*Mdn*) years of public-school administration for key participants within this model is 16 years.

In addition, 16 respondents partially loaded on *Q* Model 1. Of those that reported, 3 (18.75%) reported 11 years of administrative experience, 2 (12.50%) reported 12 years, an additional 2 (12.50%) noted 14 years, and 1 (6.25%) had 15 years. In addition, 4 participants (6.25%) reported either 17, 18, 19, or 20 years. Finally, 2 (12.50%) participants who partially loaded on *Q* Model 1 reported 21 years. The median (*Mdn*) administrative experience of partially loaded participants on *Q* Model 1 was 15.5 years.

Figure 4.8. Administrative experience of key participants in *Q* Model 1.

***Q* Model 2.** Ten participants met the interpretive cut-off criterion and hold shared beliefs and viewpoints in *Q* Model 2 *(Structurally Based and Policy-Driven*). Three (30%) reported 12 years of administrative experience. The other 7 participants (10% each) reported either 2, 7, 11, 15, 17,19, or 20 years respectively. The median (*Mdn*) administrative experience of participants who loaded on *Q* Model 2 based on the interpretive cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) is 12 years. See Figure 4.9 for a visual representation of these data.

Seventeen participants partially loaded on *Q* Model 2. Of these participants, 2 (11.76% each) reported either 11, 14, 19, 20, or 21 years of administrative experience. In addition, 4 (5.88% each) reported either 2, 7, 15, or 17 years. Finally, 3 (17.65%) reported 12 years. The median (*Mdn*) administrative experience of partially loaded participants on *Q* Model 2 was 14 years.

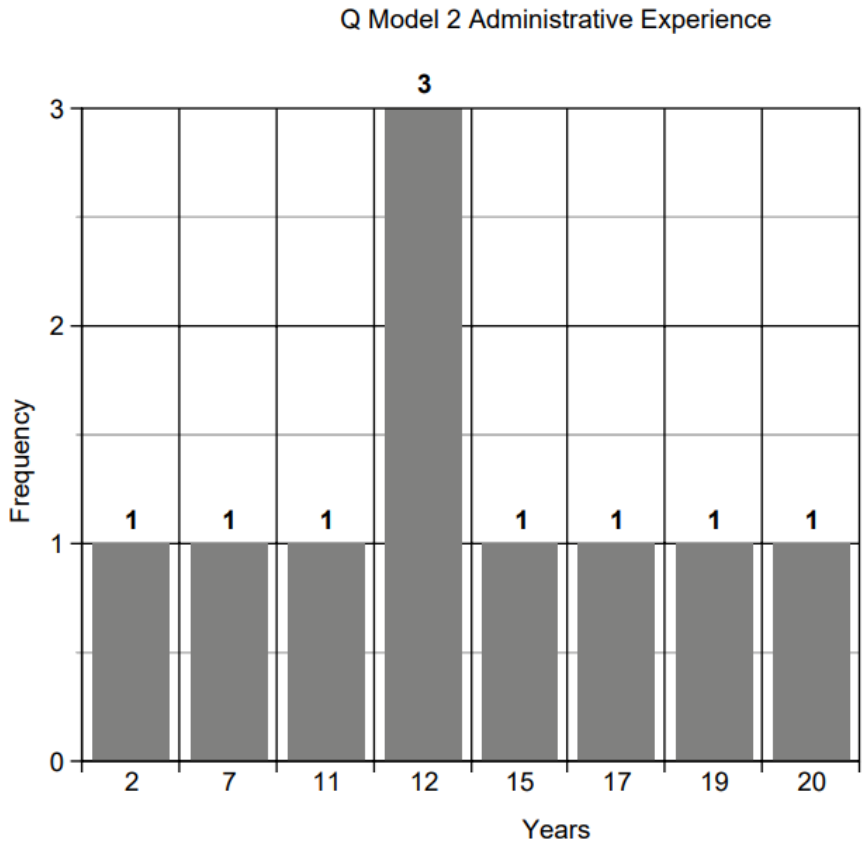

Figure 4.9. Years as a school district administrator of key participants in *Q* Model 2.

Q Model 3. Five participants met the cut-off interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) and hold shared beliefs and viewpoints in *Q* Model 3 *(Situationally Based and Efficiency Concerned within a Culturally Encouraged School System*). Participants who loaded at or above the interpretive cut-off criterion as defined earlier, reported either 7, 9, 12, 14, or 15 years of administrative

experience. The median (*Mdn*) administrative experience of participants who loaded on *Q* Model 3 based on the interpretive cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) is 12 years.

Three (25%) of the twelve participants who partially loaded on *Q* Model 3, reported 15 years of administrative experience. Four (2 each 16.67%) reported either 11 or 12 years. In addition, 5 (8.33% each) reported either 7, 9, 14, 16, or 20 years. The median (*Mdn*) administrative experience in years of partially loaded participants on *Q* Model 3 was 13 years. See Figure 4.10 for a visual representation of these data.

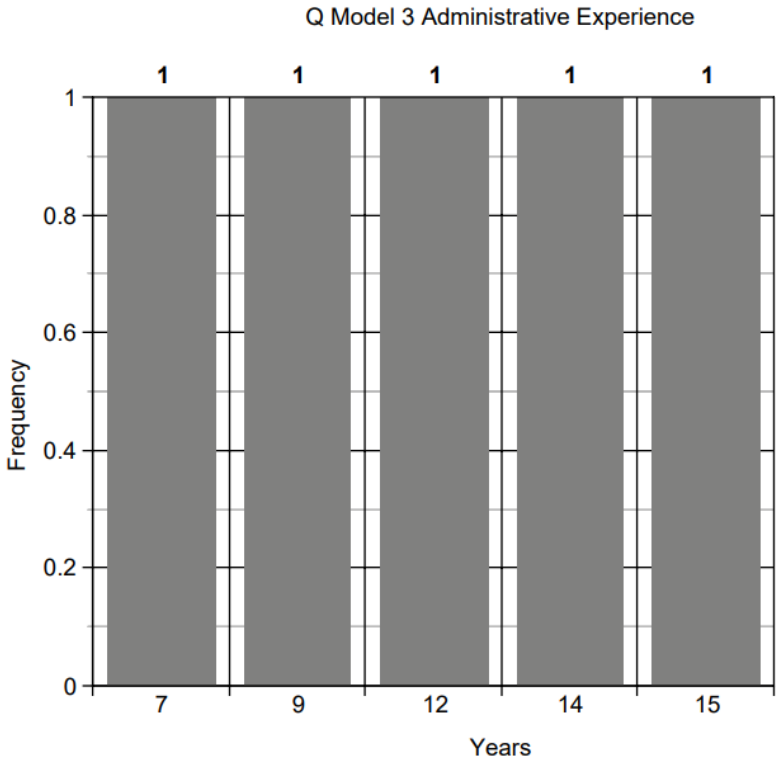

Figure 4.10. Years as a school district administrator of key participants in *Q* Model 3.

Research Question 3b: Highest level of education

***Q* Model 1.** Twelve participants who met the cut-off interpretive criterion held shared beliefs and viewpoints in *Q* Model 1 (*Situationally Based and Relationally Concerned*). Five (41.67%) reported that they hold an advanced certificate; 1 (8.3%) was in the process of completing a

doctorate; and another 6 (50%) completed their doctorate. See Figure 4.11 for a visual illustration of these data.

When analysis regarding the frequency of the highest positive *Q* models was calculated based on categorical variables, it was found that *Q* Model 1 represents the viewpoints of 5 of the advanced certificate holders within the sample. In addition, *Q* Model 1 represents 1 participant working towards a doctorate and an additional 6 participants who have completed their doctorate.

Sixteen participants partially loaded on *Q* Model 1 based on the established cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$). Seven (43.75%) self-reported holding an advanced certificate; 2 (12.50%) reported a doctorate in progress; and 7 others (43.75%) reported that they held a doctorate at the time of data collection. Therefore, *Q* Model 1 represents at least the partial viewpoints of 7 (46.67%) of the 15 participants who hold an advanced certificate. In addition, *Q* Model 1 is at least a partial representation of 2 (66.67%) of the 3 participants who are working towards a doctorate. Of the 9 participants who hold a doctorate within this study, the viewpoints of 7 (77.78%) can at least be partially represented by *Q* Model 1.

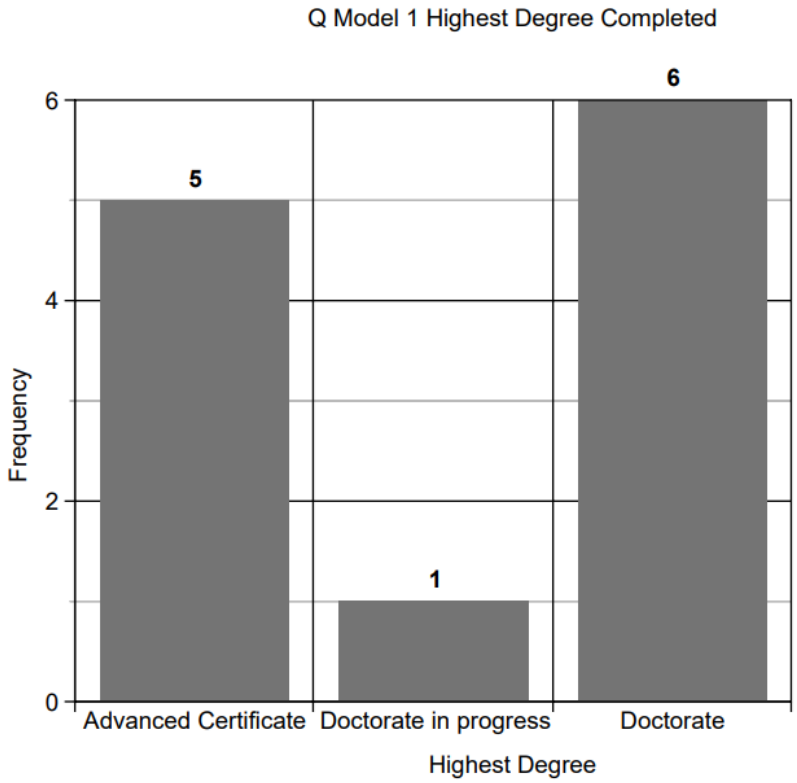

Figure 4.11. Highest degree completed of key participants in *Q* Model 1.

***Q* Model 2.** Ten participants met the cut-off interpretive criterion and hold shared beliefs and viewpoints in *Q* Model 2 *(Structurally Based and Policy-Driven*). Of those 10, 6 (60%) hold an advanced certificate, while an additional 3 (30%) have completed their doctorate. One participant in *Q* Model 2 reported holding a master's in school leadership. Refer to Figure 4.12 for a visual representation of these data.

When analysis regarding the frequency of the highest positive *Q* models was calculated based on categorical variables, it was found that *Q* Model 2 was represented by 6 of the advanced certificate holders.

In addition, 17 participants partially loaded on *Q* Model 2 based on the interpretive cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$). Eight (47.06%) reported holding an advanced certificate, and 1 (5.88%) reported a doctorate in progress. Seven (41.8%) indicated that their doctorate was complete, and

one (5.88%) reported a degree not listed. (As previously noted, this participant had a master's in School Leadership.) In addition, *Q* Model 2 represents at least the partial viewpoints of 8 (53.33%) of the 15 participants who hold an advanced certificate. Furthermore, *Q* Model 2 is at least a partial representation of the viewpoints of one (33.33%) of the 3 respondents who are working towards a doctoral degree. Of the participants who completed their doctorate, 7 (77.78%) expressed viewpoints that can at least partially be represented by *Q* Model 2.

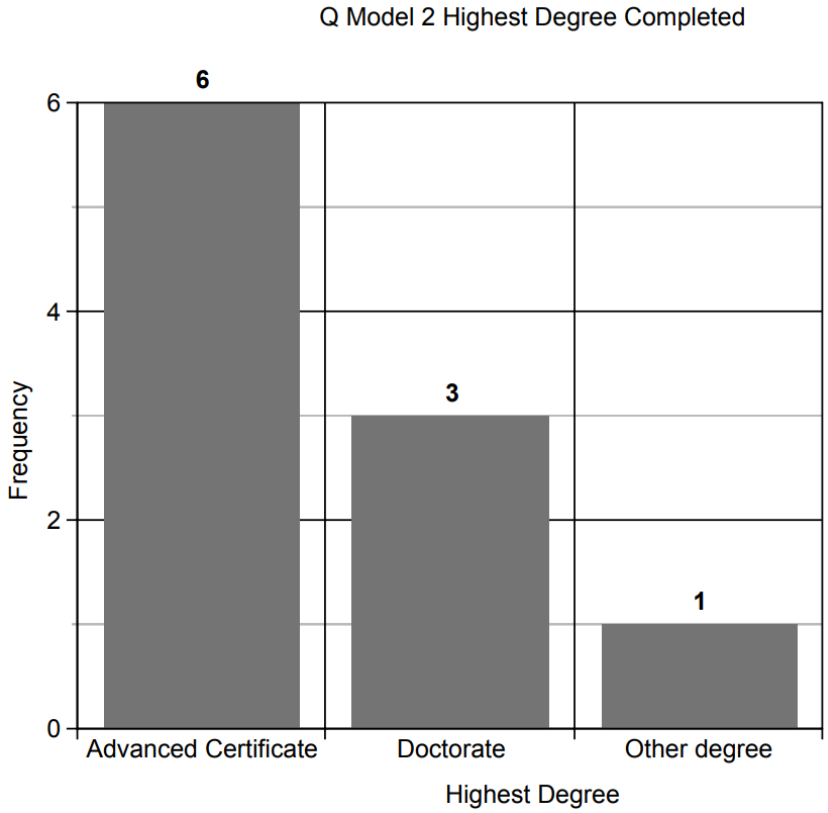

Figure 4.12. Highest degree completed of key participants in *Q* Model 2.

***Q* Model 3.** Five participants met the cut-off interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) and hold shared beliefs and viewpoints in *Q* Model 3 *(Situationally Based and Efficiency Concerned within a Culturally Encouraged School System*). Three (60%) reported holding an advanced certificate, while, the other 2 (40%) reported working towards a doctoral degree (see Figure 4.13).

When analysis regarding the frequency of the highest positive *Q* models were calculated based on categorical variables, it was found that *Q* Model 3 was represented by 3 of the Advanced Certificate holders. An additional 2 of the participants working towards a doctorate are represented by *Q* Model 3.

In addition, 12 participants partially loaded on *Q* Model 3 based on the established interpretive cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$). Seven (58.33%) hold an advanced certificate, 2 (16.67%) are working towards their doctorate, 2 (16.67%) completed their doctorate, and 1 (8.33%) reported a degree not listed (master's in school leadership). Therefore, *Q* Model 3 represents at least the partial viewpoints of 7 (46.67%) of the 15 participants who hold an advanced certificate. Furthermore, *Q* Model 3 is at least partially representative of the viewpoints of 2 (66.67%) of the 3 participants within the study working towards their doctorate degree. Two (22.22%) of the 9 participants who hold doctorates have shared viewpoints that can at least be partially represented by *Q* Model 3.

The highest degree completed by participants was wide-ranging across the models. Therefore, it can be concluded that educational background may not be a factor when principals decide whether to distribute their leadership responsibilities with others and involve others in shared decision-making processes.

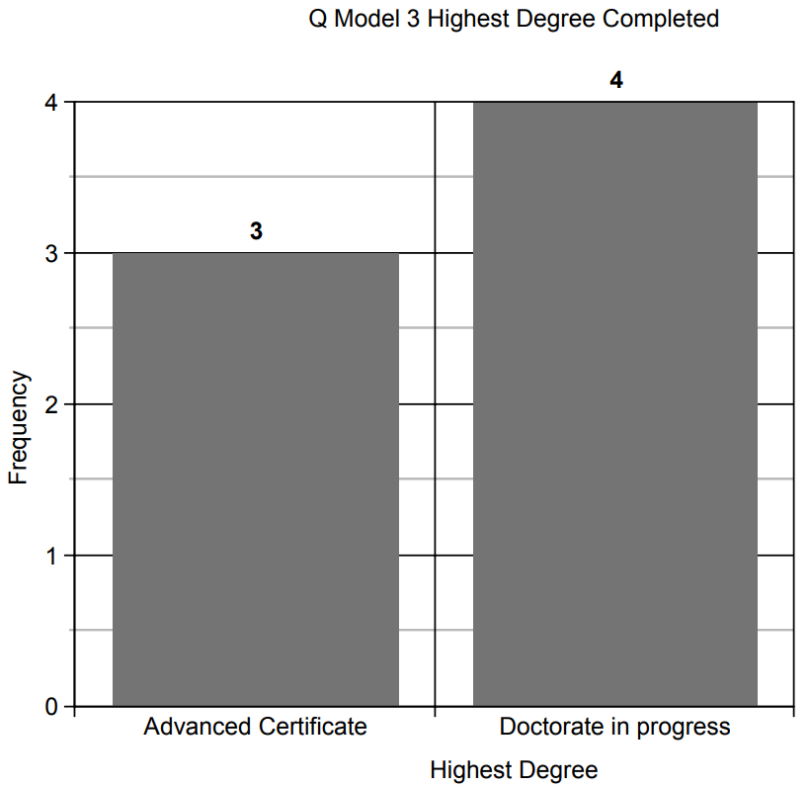

Figure 4.13. Highest degree completed of key participants in *Q* Model 3.

Research Question 3c: Years of prior experience as a teacher

***Q* Model 1.** Twelve participants met the interpretive cut-off criterion and hold shared beliefs and viewpoints in *Q* Model 1 (*Situationally Based and Relationally Concerned*). include 12 participants. Four (33.33%) reported 6 years of teaching experience, 3 (25%) reported 5 years; 2 (16.67%) reported 9 years; and 1 (8.33% each) reported either 2 years, 10 years, or 27 years. See Figure 4.14 for additional information. The median (*Mdn*) value of teaching experience within this model of key participants was 6 years.

Additionally, 16 participants partially loaded on *Q* model 1 based on the established cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$). One (6.25%) self-reported teaching for 2 years, another 3 (18.75%) for 5 years, and 4 (25%) reported 6 years. In addition, 3 (6.25% each) reported 7, 8, or 27 years.

Finally, 3 (18.75%) reported 9 years, and 2 (12.50%) reported 10 years. The median (*Mdn*) teaching experience of partially loaded participants on *Q* Model 1 was 6.5 years.

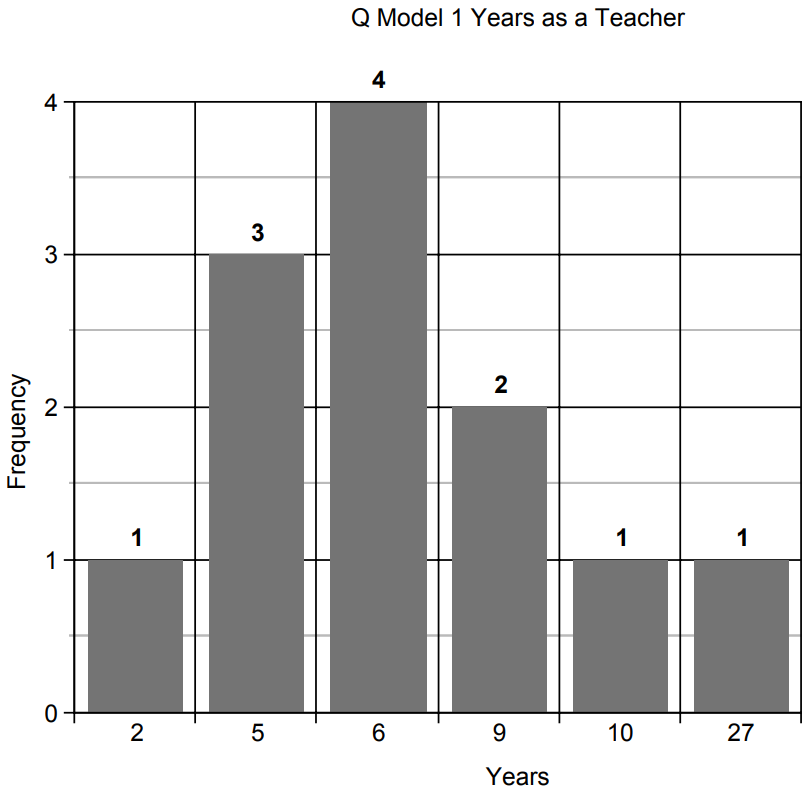

Figure 4.14. Years of prior teaching experience of key participants in *Q* Model 1.

***Q* Model 2.** Ten participants met the interpretive cut-off criterion and hold shared beliefs and viewpoints in *Q* Model 2 *(Structurally Based and Policy-Driven*). Each (10%) respondent within this model reported a different amount of prior years as a teacher. The years reported are as follows: 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 18 and 28. The median (*Mdn*) value of teaching experience within this model was 10.5 years. Refer to Figure 4.15 for a visual representation of these data.

In addition, 17 participants met the cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) partially loaded on *Q* Model 2. Three (17.65%) reported 6 years of prior teaching experience, while 2 (11.76%) reported teaching for either 5 years or 10 years respectively. In addition, 8 (5.88% each)

reported teaching for 2, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 18, or 28 years, respectively. The median (*Mdn*) teaching experience of partially loaded participants on *Q* Model 2 was 8 years.

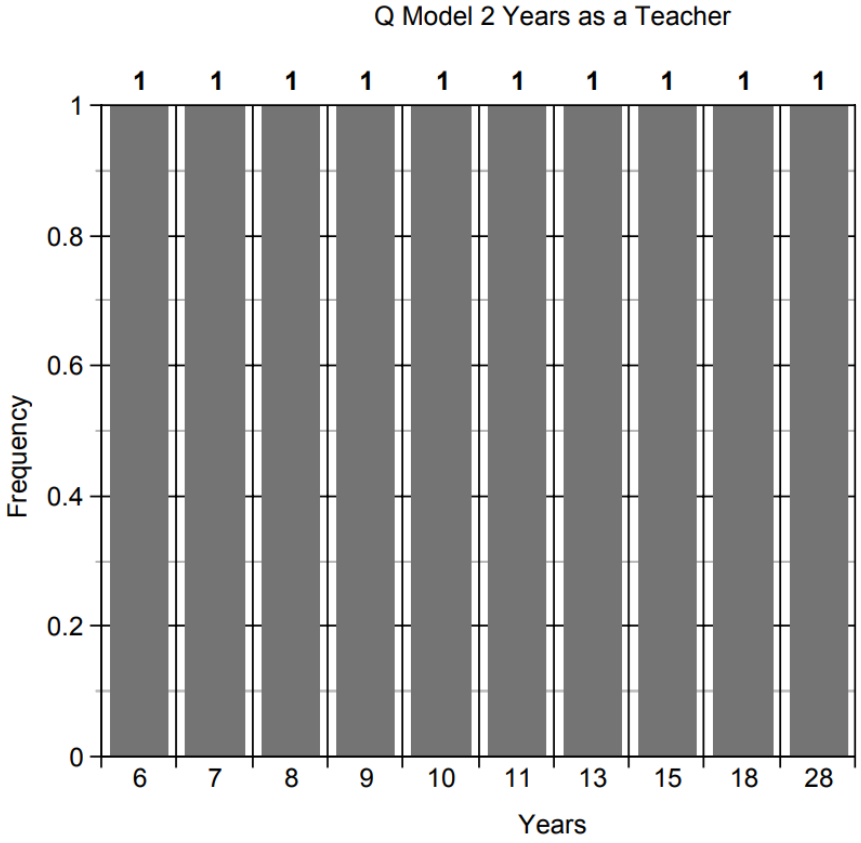

Figure 4.15. Years of prior teaching experience of key participants in *Q* Model 2.

***Q* Model 3.** Five participants met the cut-off interpretive criterion and hold shared beliefs and viewpoints in *Q* Model 3 *(Situationally Based and Efficiency Concerned within a Culturally Encouraged School System*). Two (40%) of the 5 participants reported 8 years of prior teaching experience, and the other 3 (20% each) reported 6, 10, or 17 (see Figure 4.16). The median (*Mdn*) value of teaching experience within this model was 8 years. Refer to Figure 4.17 for a comparison of *Q* Models 1, 2 and 3 regarding years of administrative experience and prior teaching experience based on the median (*Mdn*) of key participants loaded onto each factor respectively.

Three (25%) of the 12 participants who partially loaded on *Q* Model 3 reported 8 years of prior teaching experience, and 2 (16.67%) participants reported 9 years. The remaining 7 (8.33% each) reported teaching for either 5, 6, 10, 15, 17, 18, or 28 years. The median (*Mdn*) teaching experience of partially loaded participants on *Q* Model 3 was 9 years.

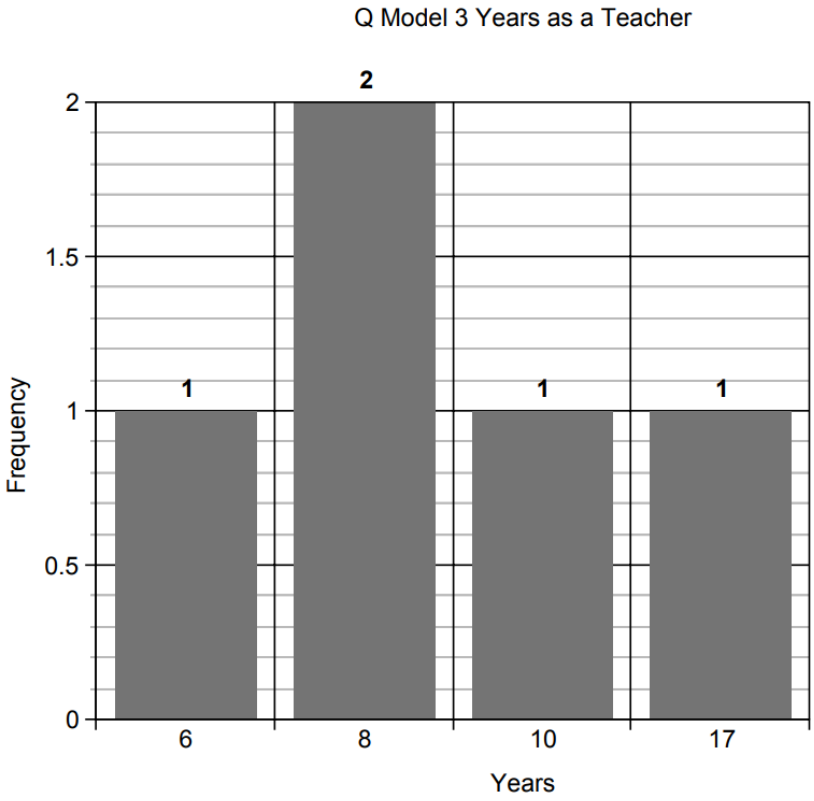

Figure 4.16. Years of prior teaching experience of key participants in *Q* Model 3.

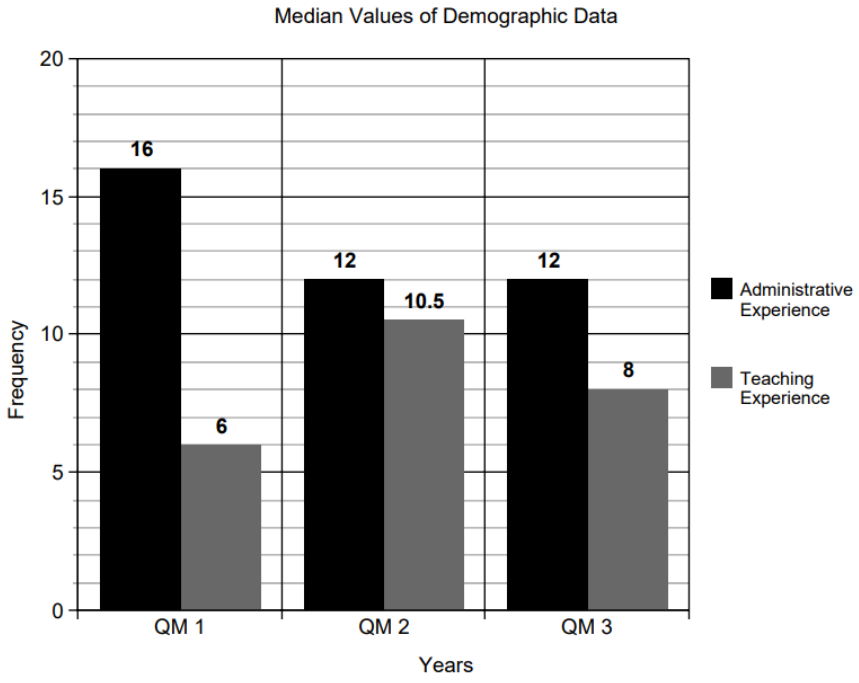

Figure 4.17. Years of administrative experience and prior teaching experience based on the median of key participants in *Q* Models 1, 2 and 3.

Research Question 3d: Decade graduated from high school

***Q* Model 1.** Of the 12 participants who met the interpretive cut-off criterion and who hold shared beliefs and viewpoints in *Q* Model 1 (*Situationally Based and Relationally Concerned*), 7 (58.33%) graduated in the 1990s from high school in the 1990s, and the other 5 (41.67%) in the 1980s. See Figure 4.18 for a visual model of these data.

When analysis regarding the frequency of the highest positive *Q* models was calculated based on categorical variables, it was found that *Q* Model 1 represented five of the participants who graduated high school in the 1980s, and an additional 7 in the 1990s.

In Addition, 16 participants partially loaded on *Q* Model 1 based on the established cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$). Seven (43.75%) graduated high school in the 1980s, and 9 (56.25%) during the 1990s. Based on a tabulation of models and the possibility of partial viewpoints represented by the models, *Q* Model 1 did not capture or represent the viewpoints of either of the

participants who graduated high school in the 1960s. Thirteen of the participants graduated in the 1980s, 7 (53.85%) of them expressed viewpoints that can at least partially be represented by *Q* Model 1. An additional 13 participants graduated high school in the 1990s, of whom 9 (69.23%) have viewpoints that can at least partially be represented by *Q* Model 1.

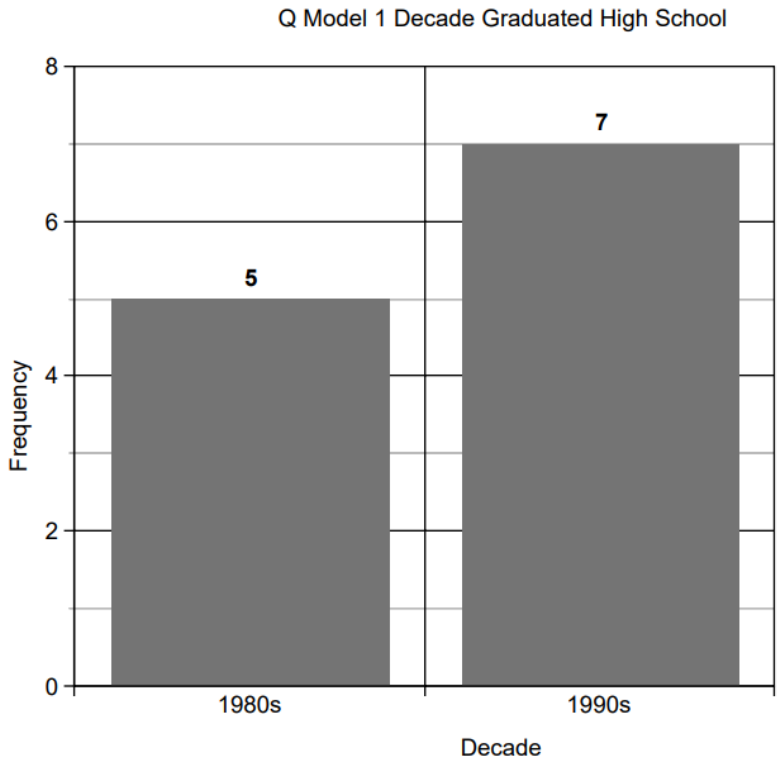

Figure 4.18. Decade graduated high school of key participants in *Q* Model 1.

Q Model 2. Ten participants met the interpretive cut-off criterion in *Q* Model 2 *(Structurally Based and Policy-driven*) and hold shared beliefs and viewpoints. Of the 10, 5 (50%) graduated high school in the 1990s, 4 (40%) in the 1980s, and 1 (10%) in the 1960s. See Figure 4.19 for additional information.

When analysis regarding the frequency of the highest positive *Q* models was calculated based on categorical variables, it was found that *Q* Model 2 represented 1 of the participants who graduated high school in the 1960s, an additional 4 in the 1980s, and 5 in the 1990s.

In addition to key participants loading fully on *Q* Model 2, 17 partially loaded. Nine (52.94%) graduated in the 1990s, 7 (41.18%) in the 1980s, and 1 (5.88%) in the 1960s. *Q* Model 2 is at least partially representative of 1 (50%) participant who graduated during the 1960s. Furthermore, of the 13 participants who graduated in the 1980s, 7 (53.85%) expressed viewpoints that can at least partially be represented by *Q* Model 2. Finally, 9 (69.23%) of the 13 participants who graduated in the 1990s have viewpoints that can at least partially be represented by *Q* Model 2.

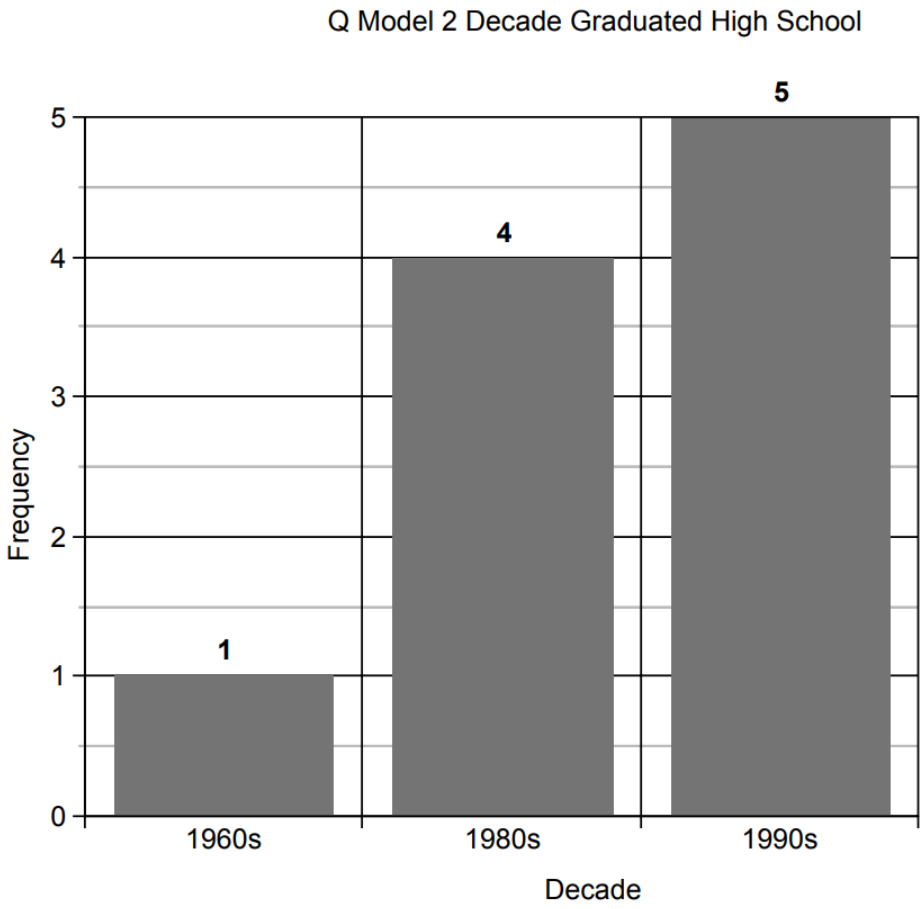

Figure 4.19. Decade graduated high school of key participants in *Q* Model 2.

***Q* Model 3.** Five participants met the interpretive cut-off criterion and hold shared beliefs and viewpoints in *Q* Model 3 *(Situationally Based and Efficiency Concerned within a Culturally*

Encouraged School System). Three (60%) reported graduating high school in the 1980s, 1 (20%) in the 1990s, and 1 (20%) in the 1960s. See Figure 4.20 for additional information.

When analysis regarding the frequency of the highest positive *Q* models was calculated based on categorical variables, it was found that *Q* Model 3 represented 1 of the participants who graduated high school in the 1960s, 3 in the 1980s, and 1 in the 1990s.

Further, of the 12 participants who partially loaded on *Q* Model 3 based on the interpretive cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$), 2 (16.67%) graduated in the 1960s, 7 (58.33%) in the 1980s, and 3 (25%) in the 1990s. Both participants who graduated in the 1960s (100%) have viewpoints that are at least partially represented by *Q* Model 3. Seven (53.85%) of those participants who graduated high school in the 1980s have viewpoints that can at least partially be represented by *Q* Model 3. Three (23.08%) of the 13 participants who graduated high school in the 1990s have viewpoints that can at least partially be represented by *Q* Model 3.

Of the three models, respondents who loaded onto *Q* model 1 represent the majority of the sample as well as the youngest of the sample, while respondents who loaded onto *Q* model 2 represent the second largest group within the sample. Participants within this model represent a wider range of ages as compared to *Q* models 1 and 3. Finally, those respondents who loaded on *Q* factor three represent both the smallest and oldest group within the sample. Therefore, it can be concluded that age may in fact be a factor in how public high school principals view the potential barriers and impediments of distributing their leadership responsibilities with others.

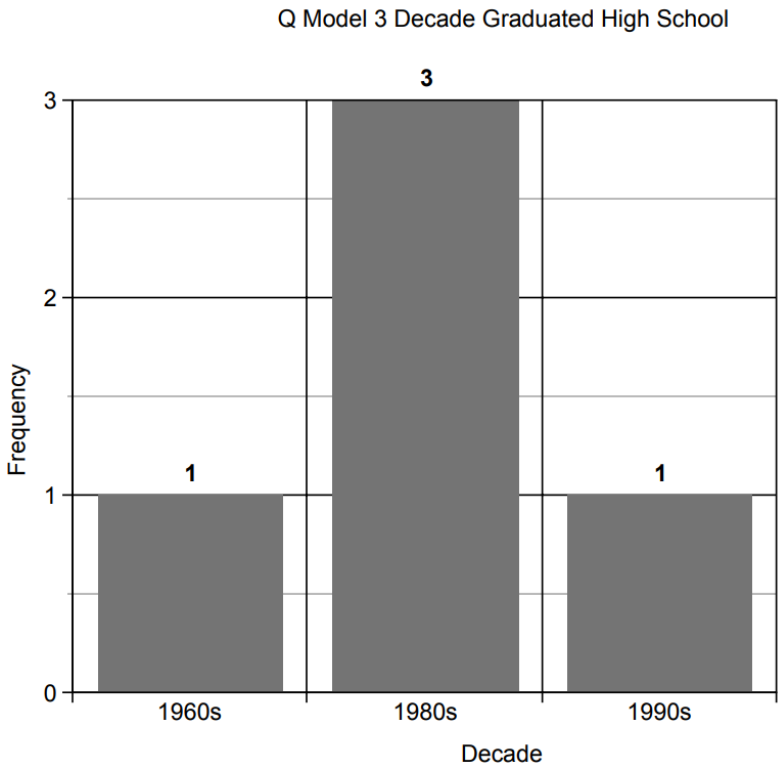

Figure 4.20. Decade graduated high school of key participants in *Q* Model 3.

Participant Beliefs Regarding the Effectiveness of Distributed Leadership

Participants were queried regarding their views on distributed leadership. Specifically, they were asked, "How effective do you believe distributed leadership can be in high schools today?" Participants were given the following choices to select from: (0) *Not effective at all*, (1) *Mostly not effective*, (2) *Not sure*, (3) *Mostly Effective*, or (4) *Very Effective.* The following discussion focuses on how participants rated the effectiveness of distributed leadership based on the feedback provided by respondents who either fully loaded on each model or at least partially loaded on each model.

***Q* Model 1.** Four (33.33%) of the 12 participants who fully loaded on *Q* Model 1 based on the interpretive cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) gave the effectiveness of distributed leadership a

score of 3, while the other 8 (66.67%) gave a score of 4. Therefore, the *Mdn* score of the distributed leadership scale for those who fully loaded on *Q* Model 1 is 4.

Sixteen participants' viewpoints partially load ($\lambda \geq |.30|$) on *Q* Model 1; therefore, *Q* Model 1 partially represents the shared viewpoints of this model. Seven (43.75%) of the 16 participants rated the effectiveness of distributed leadership 3, while 9 (56.25%) rated 4. Therefore, the *Mdn* score of the distributed leadership scale for those who partially loaded on *Q* Model 1 is 4.

***Q* Model 2.** Ten participants fully loaded on *Q* Model 2 based on the interpretive cut-off criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$). Three (30%) of the 10 participants rated the effectiveness of distributed leadership a 2, 3 (30%) assigned distributed leadership a score of 3, and the remaining 4 (40%) awarder a score of 4. Therefore, the *Mdn* score of these participants regarding the effectiveness of distributed leadership is 3.

In addition, *Q* Model 2 is at least partially representative of 17 participants. Of these, 3 (17.65%) rated the effectiveness of distributed leadership as a 2, 6 (52.94%) gave a score of 3, and the remaining 8 a score of 4. Therefore, the median (*Mdn*) score of those that partially loaded on *Q* Model 2 is 3.

***Q* Model 3.** Five participants loaded on *Q* Model 3 based on the interpretive criterion ($\lambda \geq |.30|$). Two (40%) gave distributed leadership a score of 1, 1 (20%) awarded a score of 2, and 2 (40%) a score of 3. Therefore, the *Mdn* = 2.

Further, *Q* Model 3 is at least partially representative of 12 participants. Two (16.67%) assigned distributed leadership an effectiveness score of 1, 3 (25%) awarded a score of 2, 4 (33.33%) a score of 3, and the remaining 3 (25%) a score of 4. Therefore, the *Mdn* score = 3 for participants who partially loaded on this model.

Narrative Comments from the Survey Respondents

As noted, *Q* technique is a mixed-methods approach that employs both qualitative and quantitative forms of data analysis. To elaborate further on the three *Q* Models that emerged from the *Q* factor analysis and to obtain a deeper understanding into participants' viewpoints on the barriers and impediments they might encounter when distributing their leadership responsibilities, a qualitative interpretation of narrative statements was conducted.

Analysis of the narrative responses revealed that public high school principals believe that trust and mutual respect are at the core of distributing their leadership responsibilities. Several respondents underscored the essential role of trust. As one respondent expressed, "Trust is the foundation of any and all positive relationships. This takes time and positive experiences on both ends." Another participant observed, "Trust is key in between all parties if a productive DL model is to be implemented." These statements further emphasize the importance of trust and the relational and sociological aspects within a school system.

In addition to trust, many respondents noted the importance of a shared or common value system with whom they distribute their leadership responsibilities. One respondent posited, "For DL to function, teachers, administrators, and other staff need not only to share some common values about teaching and learning but have an understanding and respect for one another." Just as trust and values are considered when distributing leadership responsibilities, many respondents noted the necessity for courage when sharing power with others. One participant explained, "Ultimately the Principal is responsible for everything in his/her school. It is our personal name/reputation/certification on the line. To share the decision making but retain the accountability takes courage." Although common values seem to be important to many respondents, one participant commented, "The members of the DL group do not, and should not,

always agree, but they have to be able to respectfully hear all perspectives to come up with the best solutions for their school." These statements underscore the importance not only of trust, but of values and mutual respect. They therefore convey undertones of moral and ethical considerations.

Many of the respondents noted the importance of giving others the opportunity to learn leadership skills through empowering teachers. As one participant observed, "It is important to engage all stakeholders in important decisions and to build leadership and decision-making capacity among your staff." Leadership programs and skills were also addressed in the narrative responses. Some participants noted that leadership programs did not provide them with the skills they would need. Rather, actual experiences prepared them for the position of the principalship. For example, one participant noted, "My graduate program was very good but just like any other course of study, the real learning and evolving happens from having the job." As demonstrated by these narrative responses, empowerment and building the leadership capacity of others was a concern and a priority of many participants.

Finally, many of the responses regarding the effectiveness of distributed leadership were positive. One participant observed, "People want to be respected and validated, DL models help do this." Another asserted, "I believe DL leads to people feeling valued as professionals." One principal emphasized that in order to be effective, distributed leadership must be enacted: "As a high school principal, you quickly learn that if you are to be effective, you have to distribute your authority. You simply can't do it all and do it effectively."

Although many of the responses regarding distributed leadership were positive, some concerns arose regarding school safety issues and emergencies. In particular, one respondent observed, "DL is a time investment....in order to gain insight into the issue, examine data,

perspectives on the approach, potential solutions, vetting each solution, etc. cannot be done in haste or on the spot. It is for long-term planning, goal-setting, etc." and

> As I have seem [sic] it practiced, in certain emergency situations where a snap decision needs to be made, someone needs to be the person designated to make it, though this is referring almost exclusively to emergencies with a safety component." Based on many of the narrative responses provided, the choice to distribute leadership responsibilities is situationally based.

Chapter Synthesis

Taken together, the three *Q* models of shared viewpoints and the narrative responses provided by participating public high school principals provide a unique and multidimensional representation of the barriers and impediments principals might encounter when distributing their leadership responsibilities. In addition, this analysis has shed light on matters of trust and the impact heightened accountability (educational policies, regulations, and performance indicators) on the role of principals.

Distributed leadership is a nontraditional way to lead a school. However, given the increasing demands on the principals it has become more necessary than ever to share power and responsibilities with others. Trust, courage, and common values are considerations principals make when deciding whether-and with whom-to share their responsibilities. In addition, principals perceive distributed leadership as a strategy to empower their teachers. Although distributed leadership seems to be viable, however, safety concerns and a lack of leadership training create some apprehension in sharing leadership with others.

The next chapter will present my concluding thoughts based on the empirical evidence gathered. In addition, it will present the implications I derived from these for application to educational policy, practice, theory, and leadership.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH, POLICY, THEORY AND PRACTICE

A historical chronology of the role of the principalship dating back to the 1800s (Mombourquette, 2013; Rousmaniere, 2013), has concluded that this role has always been a highly contentious one. Based on sociological implications, economic ebbs and flows, educational policy and regulation, and the expectations of the communities in which they serve (Goodwin et al., 2005; Kafka, 2009), principals are conspicuously placed between a position of great power and one of interdependency. This study was conducted to identify the influences of heightened accountability on the potential for public school principals to distribute leadership responsibilities within the school environment. In addition to determining these potentialities, the principals were asked to identify the possible barriers and impediments to sharing their leadership responsibilities and to involving their teachers in the shared decision-making processes. The goal of this study was to discover and identify the models of shared viewpoints about suburban public high school principals in Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland, and Westchester Counties located in New York. The findings from this study can inform policy and practice at the local, state, and federal levels as well as school leadership preparatory programs.

Chapter IV reported the empirical results from this study and further provided an analysis of the evidence gathered utilizing *Q* methodology. This mixed-methods approach intertwined qualitative and quantitative methods to evaluate and synthesize the data. It is important to note that the interpretations and findings in Chapter IV were independent of my personal beliefs and viewpoints. In contrast, this chapter will present my beliefs as how to extend these empirical findings to research, policy, theory, and practice. As a result, the suggestions and analyses that

follow are based on my professional judgment and experiences working in the educational field, the literature reviewed in Chapter II, and on the empirical results presented in Chapter IV.

The conclusions regarding the findings within this study were presented based on objective evidence. Although it is possible that alternative, or additional interpretations and implications can be offered based on this study's results, the views and subjectivities that follow will fully align with the empirical findings of this study.

The first section will include a synthesis of the viewpoints that emerged in each of the *Q* models, as discussed in Chapter IV. Although there was no expectation regarding the number of models to emerge, the three models that were discovered were not completely unanticipated. Although the combinations of what was found in these models could not previously be determined, the shared viewpoints that emerged could have been hypothetically expected based on observations, logical grounds, or a deductive approach in which my own experiences from school systems was drawn.

The second section will reference the literature reviewed in Chapter II regarding the job complexities of the role of the principalship, theoretical implications, influences of accountability and educational policy on this role, and the importance of trust and culture on distributing leadership responsibilities. In addition, the studies reviewed regarding distributed leadership acted as a stepping-stone in extending the research in this area. In addition, they assisted in providing the theoretical backdrop for this study, as a gap existed in the literature regarding the practice of distributed leadership within the domain of public high schools.

I will close by presenting my conclusions and implications of the potential barriers and impediments public high school principals face when distributing their leadership responsibilities and involving others in shared decision-making processes.

Synthesis of Shared Subjectivities of High School Principals and the Barriers and Impediments in Practicing Distributed Leadership

Based on Part 100 Regulations as found on NYSED.gov (October, 2015) Regulation 100.2 titled General School Requirements under Part a, the Administration of Elementary and Secondary Schools, states

> Within the policy guidelines of the board of education of the school district and under the direction of the superintendent, each principal shall provide leadership in the development of the educational program in the school to which he or she is assigned, including the supervision and administration of the school program, involvement with the selection and retention of staff, professional consultation, direction and assistance to the faculty and students of the school, and fostering effective home/school/community partnerships.

Although this description of the role of the principal is concise, this role is rather complex, multidimensional, and ever-changing. Further, the role of the principalship encompasses many other responsibilities and objectives aside from those listed in the regulations.

This study has developed and presented empirically-grounded findings that suggest that public high school principals hold at least three distinct viewpoints regarding the barriers and impediments to distributing leadership responsibilities. The three *Q* models that emerged were (a) *Q* Model 1: *Situationally Based and Relationally Concerned,* (b) *Structurally Based and Policy-Driven,* and (c) *Efficiency-Concerned within a Culturally-Encouraged School System*.

As reviewed in Chapter II, trust is at the crux of any relationship. Not surprisingly, then, trust was an underlying theme throughout the findings in this study. Each of the models reflected and underscored the importance of trust in distributing leadership responsibilities. In

addition, Chapter II examined context and situation. As reflected in *Q* Models 1 and 3, the situation and context dictate the feasibility of distributing leadership responsibilities. For example, participants who loaded on *Q* modes 1 and 3 believe that a distributed leadership approach is not conducive in making on-the-spot decisions. Based on the shared viewpoints in each of these models, distributed leadership is not appropriate to scenarios regarding crises or emergencies and is therefore not seen as the most efficient and viable method in addressing such circumstances. Chapter II also considered hierarchy, bureaucracy, and the structure of schools at length. As reflected in *Q* Model 2, unions, policies, regulations, and the hierarchical structure of school organizations inhibit the full practice of distributed leadership. Narrative responses from participants noted that unions often advise teachers not to take on additional responsibilities outside of their contract. In addition, formal titles and the hierarchal structure of schools expects principals to be trained in school safety measures that teachers do not receive. One participant stated, "administrators receive safety training that teachers do not." Furthermore, due to the hierarchal nature of school systems, the climate and culture influence the ways in which principals lead, teachers teach, and, fundamentally, students learn. Based on the empirical evidence found in *Q* Model 3, principals who share their viewpoints within this model believe that the culture of their school districts and the expectations of the central office influence their ability or lack thereof to share their responsibilities with others.

Significantly, none of the *Q* Models that emerged in this study completely discredited the idea of distributed leadership. Rather, each model reflected one of three views on distributed leadership: (1) fully supported distributed leadership, (2) considered distributed leadership to be mostly effective, or (3) were not completely sure of the effectiveness of distributed leadership. *Q* Model 1 reflects the views of public high school principals who determine their

implementation of distributed leadership based on situations that arise, and in terms of whom they trust. Although participants in this model believe that distributed leadership is not appropriate for making on-the-spot decisions, they still believe it is very effective in leading a school, with the caveats that it is situationally based and that those with whom leadership responsibilities are shared are highly trusted.

Q Model 2 reflected the shared views of public high school principals who perceive rules, regulations, the hierarchy of schools, and policies as barriers to distributing leadership. They also believe that courage and trust are needed to distribute leadership. *Q* Model 3 aligned with the views reflected in *Q* Models 1 and 2 regarding the importance of trust when distributing leadership. *Q* Model 3 also aligned with *Q* Model 1 in perceiving distributed leadership as inappropriate for making during on-the spot decisions. Finally, *Q* Model 3 aligned with *Q* Model 2 regarding the potential impact of school structure on distributing leadership responsibilities. However, unlike *Q* Model 1 and *Q* Model 2, *Q* Model 3 focused on the culture and climate of the schools and school districts. Central administration often sets the tone for what is expected within their schools, how their schools will run, and essentially, how their principals will lead their schools towards meeting these objectives. Within this model, participants noted that the central office and the district culture have the power to influence whether distributed leadership can be or should be practiced. One participant said, "I think culture within a school and district impact what is possible or will be accepted."

The relative prevalence of each model is consistent with what was expected as *Q* Model 1 (*Situationally Based and Relationally Concerned*) demonstrated the largest relative prevalence, *Q* Model 2 (*Structurally Based and Policy-Driven*) demonstrated the second largest relative prevalence across the three models, and *Q* Model 3 (*Efficiency-Concerned within a Culturally-*

Encouraged School System) demonstrated the smallest. More importantly, however, are these models offer pertinent data and empirical evidence of public high school principals' perceptions of the barriers and impediments they may face when distributing their leadership responsibilities within a context of heightened accountability and through an assessment of the trustworthiness of potential partners.

These highly educated professionals (holding doctoral degrees, master's degrees, and advanced certificates encompassing a wide range of years of teaching experience (2-27 years). *Q* Model 1 represents the model with the most administrative experience but the least teaching experience. Participants who loaded on *Q* Model 1 represent some of the youngest respondents, based on the $\bar{x}$ = 1985.8 decade of high school graduation. It was expected that respondents who graduated in the late 1980s and the 1990s would (a) practice a distributed leadership style based on their training and the preparation programs they attended during those times (transformational leadership was beginning to become popular during this time), and (b) believe that distributed leadership is effective. Participants in this model assigned the effectiveness of distributed leadership 4, (*highly effective*).

In contrast, participants in *Q* Model 2 had the most teaching experience. Because teachers are accustomed to working with others, sharing ideas, and looking to others for advice, it is reasonable conclude that their teaching experience explains why they assigned the effectiveness of distributed leadership a *Mdn* score of 3 (*mostly effective)*.

Finally, *Q* Model 3 contains participants with the least administrative experience. Therefore, it may be inferred that because these participants have less administrative experience, they may be less willing to distribute their leadership responsibilities due to being held personally accountable for others' actions. Hence, they exhibited the lowest distributed

leadership effectiveness score of the three models (*Mdn* = 2 (*not sure*)). Furthermore, these participants are the oldest, based on the mean decade of high school graduation ($\bar{x}$ = 1978). Consequently, they may practice a more traditional approach to leading their schools (as noted in Chapter II, traditional versus contemporary leading). It was therefore expected that those participants who graduated high school in the 1960s and 1980s would rate the effectiveness of distributed leadership at or below a 2 based on (a) a more traditional approach to leading and (b) the school leadership education and training they would have received when they were enrolled in college.

Public high school principals play a fundamental role in leading their schools. They are responsible for managing and evaluating their faculty, enforcing district policies and procedures, addressing budgetary concerns, supporting student learning, and managing public relations. In addition to these responsibilities, principals are expected to be empowering leaders who are facilitative and encouraging towards collaboration and ownership amongst their staff (Drysdale et al., 2014). Aside from the responsibilities aforementioned, they are also held accountable for their schools meeting local and state requirements. Principals must answer to intense public scrutiny and stand behind their school's performance scores on state mandated tests. Further, they must meet the expectations of a myriad of parties at varying levels while adhering to local, state, and federal mandates. Principals act as the fulcrum of the school, in which many decisions are made, actions are carried out, and objectives are met. Without their leadership and direction, a degradation in schools and school systems would occur. To best meet the ever-changing needs of this complicated and often demanding role, it is imperative that their roles as perceived by them be examined and analyzed so that this large population of professionals can be rightfully heard.

Unanticipated Findings

Although the findings that emerged from this study were anticipated at some level, what was unanticipated was the combinations of the barriers and impediments identified in the responses. It was interesting to discover, for example, that whereas some participants believe that distributed leadership cannot work during crises, emergencies, or for on-the-spot decisions, others, like those participants who loaded on *Q* Model 2, believe that it works well in those scenarios. In addition, it was interesting to learn that some participants believe that rules, regulations, unions, formal titles, the hierarchical nature of school systems, and culture can influence their decisions to distribute leadership responsibilities while others, like participants who loaded on *Q* Model 1, dismiss these factors as irrelevant.

Based on those statements identified as most distinguishing across the three models, it was discovered that the shared viewpoints and perspectives of public high school principals is primarily concerned with how their schools are structured, what effects distributed leadership may or may not have on their role as a leader, and their ability to address situations in a quick and efficient manner. Contrastingly, the statements identified as non-salient or neutral to participants across the three models were concerned with efficiency and the potential risks they take as leaders in sharing their responsibilities with others. This further supported the fact that participants within this sample are more concerned with successfully completing a job and less concerned with other factors like, teachers' lack of time or how distributed leadership may change or complicate the traditional structure of their schools.

There was no prior anticipation regarding the covariates of years of experience as a public-school administrator and prior experience as a teacher. However, it was discovered that they may in fact be an association as it relates to the years of administrative experience and how

and to what extent they perceive the barriers and impediments in distributing leadership responsibilities with others. Based on the median years of administrative experience, participants who loaded on *Q* Model 1, have had more administrative experience and therefore have had to navigate through more changing policies and regulations as compared to participants who loaded on *Q* Models 2 and 3. Further, an association between prior years of teaching experience may exist as it relates to how and to what extent principals perceive potential barriers and impediments when distributing their leadership responsibilities with others. Based on the median years of experience, *Q* Model 1 represents participants with the most administrative experience and the least teaching experience, while *Q* Model 2 and *Q* Model 3 have had the same amount of administrative experience, but more teaching experience. With this information, school districts can customize how to best meet the needs of their principals. Through a tailored approach that takes into consideration the years of prior teaching experience and administrative experience, principals can gain the support and assistance that they need.

The covariate *decade graduated from high school*, was utilized to determine the general age of participants and to glean information on whether a potential association between participants' beliefs regarding the effectiveness of distributed leadership at the high school level existed. There was no prior anticipation regarding these covariates. However, based upon the median year decade graduated from high school and the median score assigned by model, it can be inferred that an association between age and the belief regarding the effectiveness of distributed leadership may in fact exist. Of the three models, respondents who loaded onto *Q* Model 1 represent the majority of the sample as well as the youngest of the sample. The median score assigned regarding distributed leadership was a 4 (*very effective*). While respondents who loaded onto *Q* model 2 were age-wise, in between *Q* Models 1 and 3. Respondents within this

model assigned the effectiveness of distributed leadership a 3 (*mostly effective*). Finally, respondents who loaded onto *Q* Model 3 were represent the oldest of the models. Participants within this model assigned the effectiveness of distributed leadership a 2 (*not sure*). Understanding that age may be a factor in how public high school principals view the effectiveness of distributed leadership is vital information for school districts to recognize. Based on this information, school districts can make informed decisions regarding the level of support and guidance principals may need as it relates to practicing a distributed leadership approach in leading their schools.

Finally, what was most expected was the underlying need for trust when distributing leadership responsibilities and involving others in shared decision-making processes. Trust is the willingness to demonstrate vulnerability to others with the understanding that you will not be harmed or judged (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a). According to Smylie et al. (2007), "trust is an expectation that another party will not act opportunistically, will be honest, and will make a good-faith effort in accordance with previous commitments" (p. 472). However, it was surprising to see that regardless of the viewpoints these participants held, they were all in agreement that the need for trust is a requirement if, and when, they plan to distribute their leadership responsibilities (Cosner, 2010; Smylie et al., 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b).

As noted in Chapter II, accountability mandates and requirements influence the ways in which principals lead their schools (Hochbein et al., 2013; Louis & Robinson, 2012). Although the principals in this study expressed some concern regarding sharing their responsibilities and noted that principals who do distribute their leadership must have courage, many respondents nonetheless expressed an openness to practicing distributed leadership to some degree. One

principal said, “Ultimately the Principal is responsible for everything in his/her school. It is our personal name/reputation/certification on the line. To share the decision making but retain the accountability takes courage.” This conclusion is further supported by the non-salient group of statements identified within the *Q* set.

It can therefore be inferred from the preceding synopsis of the study, that a lack of leadership certification or training on behalf of teachers may be unimportant in considering whether to distribute leadership responsibilities with teachers. Furthermore, shared decision making can be accomplished through a distributed leadership perspective; therefore, statements asserting that distributed leadership may complicate shared decision making were unimportant to the respondents.

Research conducted prior to the study evidenced a gap regarding principals’ perceptions of the barriers and impediments to distributing leadership and sharing decision making under an era of heightened accountability while taking into consideration demographical information (i.e., prior years of teaching experience, decade graduated from high school, and years as a school administrator) and levels of trust.

Implications for Principals

Public high school principals are in a unique, stressful, and often overwhelming position. At times, they may feel isolated and on an island all their own. However, as educational mandates continue to increase and the communities that these principals serve have heightened expectations, principals must delegate more of their responsibilities, involve others in decision-making processes, and tap into the rich knowledge bases that exist in their schools (Camburn et al., 2003; Militello & Janson, 2007; Spillane & Kenney, 2012). Through a distributed leadership perspective and approach, principals may be able to alleviate some of the pressures and stressors

of their position while meeting the many objectives set forth for them and their schools at the local, state, and federal levels. This study underscores the importance of identifying the barriers and impediments principals face when considering whether to share their leadership responsibilities. In addition, it sheds light on the issues that must be addressed to eradicate these barriers and impediments going forward. Once principals are aware of the potential barriers and impediments of distributing their leadership responsibilities, they can further inform themselves of district polices and choose to take risks. They can cultivate trust and build relationships through additional interactions with staff. In addition, they can tap into others' strengths as they build an awareness regarding the specified knowledge and expertise their staff members have.

Implications for Theory

As noted in Chapter II, trust is the backbone of professional and personal relationships. Therefore, trust is one of the strongest indicators to determine whether public high school principals will distribute their leadership responsibilities. As posited by contingency theory, in which the environment dictates how one will behave, and also considering activity theory, in which social context influences our behaviors and actions, it is important to forge school environments that facilitate the development and maintenance of trust. Furthermore, it is essential to cultivate and consistently develop strong relationships across formal titles. Not only will this strategy help to remove some of the barriers and impediments inhibiting distributed leadership, but it will enhance the overall environment, culture, and context within which principals lead their schools (Gronn, 2000; Militello & Janson, 2007; Smylie, Mayrowetz, Murphy, & Louis, 2007; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Spillane et al., 2009; Spillane & Kenney, 2012; Timperley, 2008; Watson & Scribner, 2007).

When trust is established, the relevant parties are willing to share their ideas, and advice with others. In turn, this environment will strengthen the social networks within schools and further mobilize knowledge. This mobilization can increase the human and social capital within the school setting and help remove the barriers and impediments principals face when distributing their leadership responsibilities and involving others in shared decision-making processes.

From a theoretical vantage point, distributed leadership is a relatively new approach and perspective regarding school leadership. Some studies have examined the influences of such an approach not only on the schools in which it is implemented but on the behaviors of those working within those schools (distributed cognition theory and contingency theory). To date, however, there have been scant studies regarding the perceptions of those leaders who implement a distributed leadership perspective in leading their schools. This study illuminates the importance of making public high school principals heard and their very customized needs addressed. Understanding their unique needs during a time where accountability mandates are increasing, and their jobs are becoming increasingly complex and determining what they need in order to assist them in running their schools in the most effective and efficient ways is vital to improving schools and meeting established objectives.

Distributed leadership represents an approach to school leadership in which the complexities of the school organization can potentially be met. This study has aided in identifying the potential barriers and impediments high school principals face when determining whether, and how, they will share their leadership responsibilities with others. Identifying these barriers and impediments is the first of many steps in removing them so that a distributed leadership approach can be implemented in its fullest form. Implementing such an approach can

alleviate some of the pressures and stressors principals encounter due to accountability mandates, hierarchical (institutional theory) structures, bureaucracy, and expectations.

Implications for Educational Leadership Preparatory Programs

Just as primary, intermediate, and secondary schools are expected to change to conform to educational policies and mandates, so too should the expectations of higher education. If principals are expected to lead in ways that reflect the increasing involvement of monetary rewards systems, federal allocations, and accountability measures, then the leadership training they receive must reflect a paradigm shift in what is presented to these future school leaders. It is therefore suggested that educational leadership preparatory programs not only be theory based but also include elements of leadership style; in particular, an overview of distributed leadership and its potential benefits.

Distributed leadership takes into account the expertise of others within an organizational network. Therefore, educational leadership preparatory programs should encourage future principals to tap into the expertise of others through an assessment of the skills and knowledge their teachers and staff have.

Additionally, it is suggested that educational leadership preparatory programs develop courses in which team-building, trust-building and facilitation, and modalities for empowering teachers are addressed and considered at length. Principals need to be prepared to respond to the dynamism of the educational realm as it is not static, but, rather, goes through ebbs and flows based on myriad factors such as economic changes, sociological influences, and technological advancements. When educational leadership preparatory programs successfully address these issues, school leaders will be equipped to successfully manage their schools through an array of situations they are sure to encounter.

Implications for School Policy

Little is known about distributed leadership, and less is known about the perceptions of distributed leadership among high school principals. To date, studies that take into account the trust levels of these principals within a context of heightened accountability are lacking.

Acquiring the unique perceptions of persons within this integral role has the potential to reveal information regarding the implementation of distributed leadership and the comfort levels of principals with delegating some of their responsibilities to others within the context of heightened accountability. As previously noted, the role of principals and the responsibilities they are charged with undertaking compounds with each new policy, initiative, or goal set by their district, state, or the federal government (Brazer, Rich, & Ross, 2010; Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003; Gedik & Bellibas, 2015; Spillane & Kenney, 2012; Timperly, 2008; Wallach, Lambert, Copland, & Lowry, 2005).

At the district level, school policies should be in place in which teamwork, collaboration, and shared-decision making are encouraged. When top-down policies and procedures are implemented from central office, it can encourage more principals to take the risk in sharing their leadership responsibilities with others. When there is a culture and climate of shared-decision making, collaboration, and responsibility sharing, principals will feel more comfortable in doing so.

Further, to ensure that principals are comfortable in taking risks regarding distributing their leadership responsibilities with others, it is suggested that school policy take into consideration the role complexities of the principalship and equip these leaders with professional development training that examines and encourages the delegation of responsibilities and the empowerment of teachers (Drysdale et al., 2014). Principals should be provided with evidence-

based strategies and tactics regarding how to best carry-out a distributed leadership approach in their schools. To support a distributed leadership approach, school districts may consider coaching techniques in which principals are provided with leadership techniques and strategies, advice, and other support (Goff et al., 2014).

Finally, school districts should put in place a support system for new principals that provides them with advice, idea-sharing, and leadership techniques and strategies. New principals (whether new to the position, or new to the school) should be assigned a mentor in which advice, ideas, and support can be provided (Goff et al., 2014; Spillane, et al., 2012). Furthermore, evidence-based tactics regarding distributed leadership in tackling the many responsibilities they have should also be provided (Wallach et al., 2005). School policies and procedures have the power to enable to constrain the ways in which principals lead. When there is a climate and culture in which distributed leadership is encouraged, principals will be willing to take risks in sharing responsibilities with others and involving their staff in decision-making processes. Therefore, it is imperative that school districts reflect on their polices and consider how these may in fact influence the ways in which their principals lead.

Conclusions and Suggestions for Future Research

When I commenced this study, I believed that there would be some variation among sample subgroups regarding the effectiveness of distributed leadership and of the potential barriers and impediments to implementing this approach. The evidence analyzed and interpreted supported these expectations. The findings of this study highlight the immense influences of culture, school climate, and the hierarchical nature and structure of the educational system on the ability to distribute leadership responsibilities from the perspectives of public high school principals.

Q methodology has the power to extend current knowledge in an area, to provide insights into people's shared viewpoints on current topics of discussion, and to contribute towards the exploration of analyzed areas utilizing other research methodologies. It is therefore suggested that future research consider the perceptions of public high school principals concerning the potential barriers and impediments to distributing leadership responsibilities in urban or rural settings. Public high school principals employed in an urban or rural community may in fact have different or additional responsibilities than those of a public high school principal in a suburban area.

To extend the research conducted in this study, it is suggested that a comparative study be conducted in which *Q*-technique is employed in another suburban areas within the United States. Determining whether there are differences and/or similarities amongst suburban public high school principals as they relate the perceptions regarding the barriers and impediments they encounter when distributing their leadership responsibilities with others, can have the power to further identify what these leaders need and how to best assist them in successfully meeting the mandates and requirements set forth by accountability requirements.

A future study may consider other, or additional demographic characteristics of participants (i.e., prior content area taught, prior grade level taught, or prior experience working in a private or charter school). Identifying if there are in fact differences in how and to what extent public high school principals perceive the barriers and impediments they encounter when distributing leadership based upon other factors or covariates such as prior subject taught or prior grade level taught can further extend the research in the areas of principals' perceptions and distributed leadership practices.

Further, to extend the scope beyond public high school principals, it is suggested that future studies examine other school levels. These studies can include elementary school and middle school principals and can be conducted in private schools as well as public school systems. This research should include a component that examines the differences principals within these settings may experience regarding the potential barriers and impediments to distributing leadership responsibilities. Understanding the unique needs of educational leaders at differing school levels can provide insights regarding their experiences and subjectivities and can therefore be utilized to reflect necessary changes or needs.

Finally, I would suggest that different school administrative positions (i.e., middle school assistant principals, public high school assistant principals) be assessed to determine whether these key leaders experience the same potential barriers and impediments as principals when distributing leadership responsibilities and whether they have the ability to choose whether to do so. In determining whether these school leaders have similar or different viewpoints as it relates to the barriers and impediments faced when distributing leadership responsibilities with others and involving others in decision-making processes, it can eventually provide support for other school leaders within public high school systems as well. By providing support to all school leaders at the high school level, the ability to meet accountability mandates and requirements through efficiency and teacher involvement can be realized.

Is there one component of leading a school that complicates the role of the principalship more than others? Do principals feel the need to distribute leadership out of pressure and stress, or because they feel it is the best policy for their schools? Do public high school principals have greater responsibilities than school principals at other levels? Having conducted this research, I recognize that there is no single answer to these questions. Rather, the answers can be found in

the men and women who perform these roles each and every day. However, I state without hesitation that the findings of this study underscore the integral role of these school leaders, as they are the binding force behind their schools running efficiently and successfully.

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APPENDIX A

INVITATION LETTER AND CONSENT FORM

Long Island University
College of Education, Information, & Technology
Michelle. Maltempi@my.LIU.edu

Dear Colleague,

As an educator, I am conducting a study as part of my doctoral dissertation research to better understand the opinions of secondary principals like you, on the desirability to distribute leadership. While there is no direct benefit to you from participating in this survey, I believe that the results from this study will provide several benefits to the educational field and more specifically, educational leadership. Your expert views and experiences on this topic are extremely important to me and to the success of this study, however, your participation is entirely voluntary and anonymous.

This anonymous survey will take you only about a half-hour to complete. It includes a series of statements about distributed leadership and asks you to sort them online based upon your views about what is most agreeable or least agreeable to you.

The survey also asks you for some general information about your professional experience, which will only be reported as part of the shared views of other secondary level principals with similar backgrounds. Additionally, perhaps most important, I invite you to offer your own words and any other views or insights about your leading that you would be willing to share with me.

To protect your identity and respect your privacy, this survey is completely anonymous and voluntary. I cannot and would not attempt to identify you or any other participant in this study, so I hope you will feel free to provide your frank and candid views. You will be asked to grant me permission to use your anonymous responses in my doctoral dissertation and other publications.

Thank you so very much for your consideration and, for your participation in this survey! If you have any questions or would like to discuss the study or survey with me personally, please feel free to email me at Michelle.Maltempi@my.LIU.edu or my dissertation advisor, Dr. James Dunne, at James.Dunne@LIU.edu. If you have questions concerning your rights as a subject, you may contact the Institutional Review Board Administrator and Assistant Director of Sponsored Programs, Dr. Lacey Sischo at (516) 299-3591.

Most Sincerely,

Michelle G. Maltempi, M.S., A.B.D.
Doctoral Candidate and Study Director
Long Island University

IRB Protocol #: 18/09-129
Date Approved: 9/10/18
Long Island University
Sponsored Research

LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY/LIU POST

Introduction to the Survey and Informed Consent Form for Human Research Subjects

You are being invited to volunteer in a research study called *Principals' Perceptions of the Barriers and Impediments to Distribute Leadership and Share Decision Making Under an Era of Heightened Accountability: An Exploratory Study Using Q Technique*, conducted by Michelle G. Maltempi, a doctoral candidate in the School of Education. The purpose of the research is to identify, examine, and analyze the viewpoints of public high school principals on the barriers and impediments they may face when attempting to distribute their leadership and involve their teachers in shared-decision making processes.

As a participant, you will be asked to read and sort 48 statements into a template. The survey will take 15 to 20 minutes. You will also be asked to answer some questions about your professional background, which are not personally-identifying, and which will only be used to understand the responses from high school principals with similar backgrounds. You as the participant, will not experience any discomfort. In addition, there are no potential risks involved in participating in this study. While there is no direct benefit for your participation in the study, it is reasonable to expect that the results may provide information of value for the fields of Education and Educational Leadership.

If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will be on an anonymous basis, and you will not be asked for any information that could identify you or your school individually. Your participation in this research is voluntary. Refusal to participate (or discontinue participation) will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled.

If you have questions about the research you may contact the investigator, Michelle Maltempi, (516) 448-4896 or the department chair, Dr. James Dunne, (516) 299-4116. If you have questions concerning your rights as a subject, you may contact the Institutional Review Board Administrator, Dr. Lacey Sischo, at (516) 299-3591.

By checking the "Agree to Participate" box below, you can indicate that you have fully read the above text and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures of this study. If you choose not to participate, please check the "Decline to Participate" box below or simply close your browser.

Thank you for your consideration.

Michelle G. Maltempi
Doctoral Candidate and Study Director
Long Island University

Agree to Participate (button)
Decline to Participate (button)

APPENDIX B

Q-SORT GUIDE

Q-Sort Guide

Please use a desktop computer, laptop, or tablet to complete the survey.

STEP 1

- Read each statement.
- Either drag and drop the virtual cards into one of the three bins, or press 1, 2, or 3 on your keyboard to place them in one of the bins.
- If you change your mind about where a statement should be placed, simply drag and drop it into another bin.

STEP 2

Please sort these statements into the template in the way that best describes your view about the potential effectiveness of distributed leadership in high schools.

- Drag the virtual card over the white box of your choice. When it turns dark gray, drop (unclick) the card.
- Cards can be placed on the blank space around the template while you sort.
- Cards can be rearranged at any time. The order of boxes in the columns does not matter.
- Cards can be moved into any column regardless of their original pile or color.
- Hover over a card to read the full statement.

STEP 3

- Review the placement of the statements.

STEPS 4 & 5

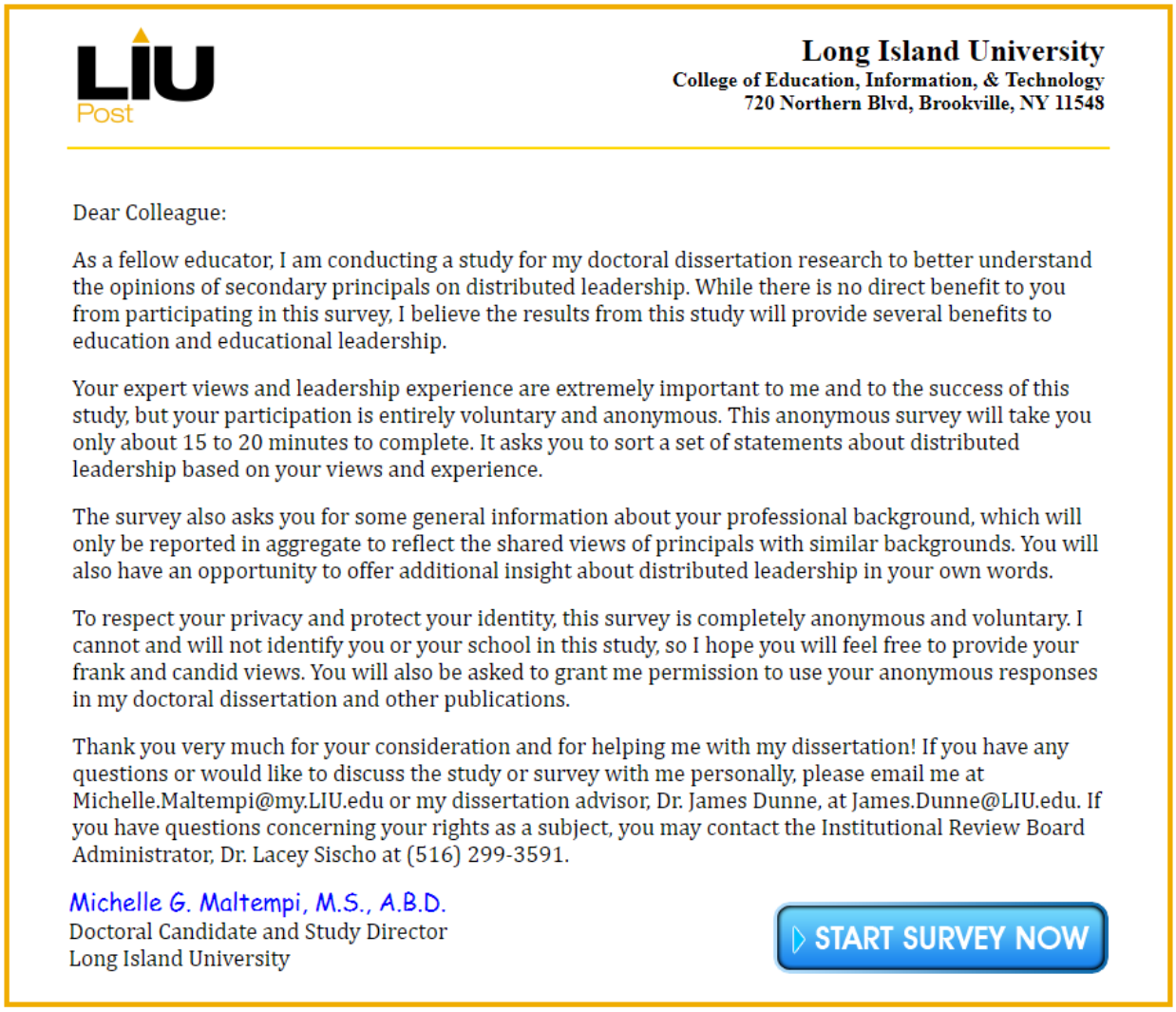
- Respond to the questions.
- When finished, click continue and submit your responses.

Thank you for your participation!

Michelle G. Maltempi, M.S., A.B.D.
Doctoral Candidate and Study Director
Long Island University

APPENDIX C

SCREENSHOTS OF THE SURVEY



LIU Post

Long Island University
College of Education, Information, & Technology
720 Northern Blvd, Brookville, NY 11548

Dear Colleague:

As a fellow educator, I am conducting a study for my doctoral dissertation research to better understand the opinions of secondary principals on distributed leadership. While there is no direct benefit to you from participating in this survey, I believe the results from this study will provide several benefits to education and educational leadership.

Your expert views and leadership experience are extremely important to me and to the success of this study, but your participation is entirely voluntary and anonymous. This anonymous survey will take you only about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. It asks you to sort a set of statements about distributed leadership based on your views and experience.

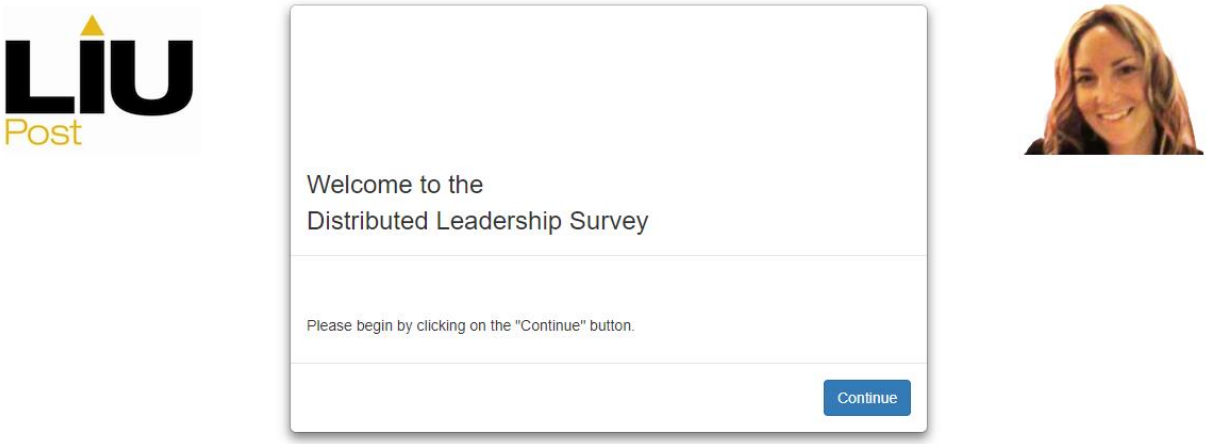
The survey also asks you for some general information about your professional background, which will only be reported in aggregate to reflect the shared views of principals with similar backgrounds. You will also have an opportunity to offer additional insight about distributed leadership in your own words.

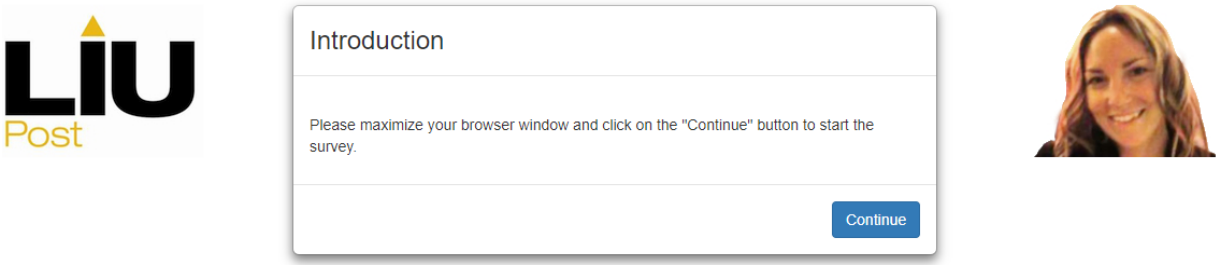
To respect your privacy and protect your identity, this survey is completely anonymous and voluntary. I cannot and will not identify you or your school in this study, so I hope you will feel free to provide your frank and candid views. You will also be asked to grant me permission to use your anonymous responses in my doctoral dissertation and other publications.

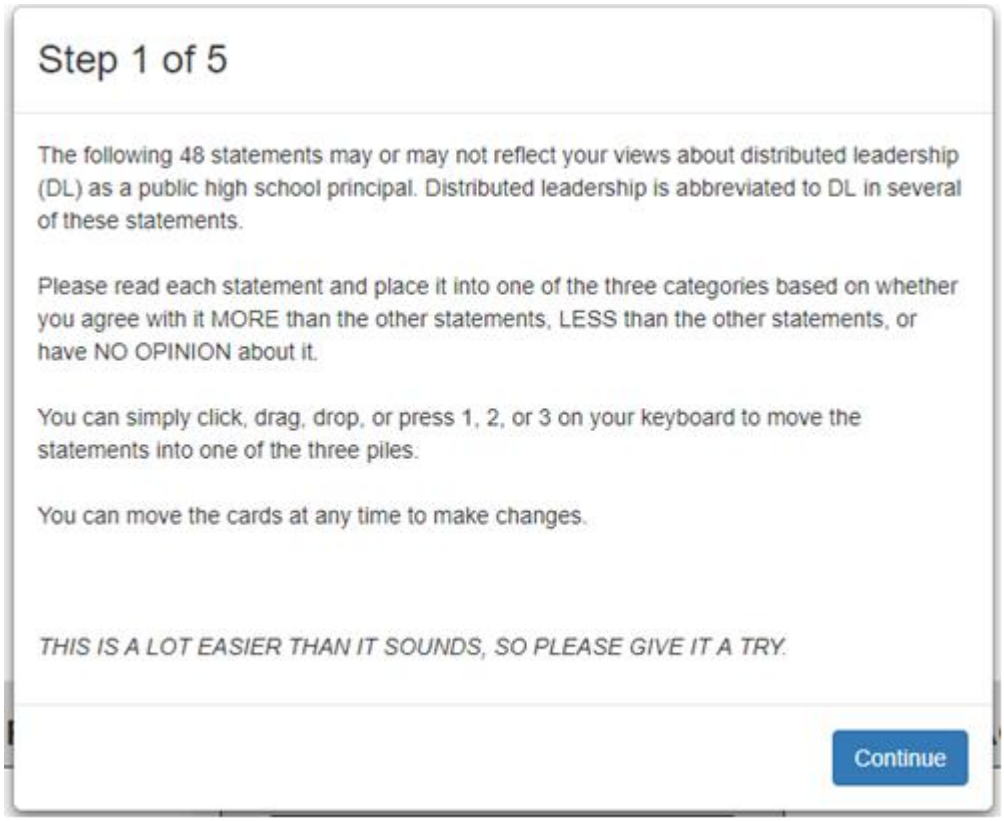
Thank you very much for your consideration and for helping me with my dissertation! If you have any questions or would like to discuss the study or survey with me personally, please email me at Michelle.Maltempi@my.LIU.edu or my dissertation advisor, Dr. James Dunne, at James.Dunne@LIU.edu. If you have questions concerning your rights as a subject, you may contact the Institutional Review Board Administrator, Dr. Lacey Sischo at (516) 299-3591.

Michelle G. Maltempi, M.S., A.B.D.
Doctoral Candidate and Study Director
Long Island University

START SURVEY NOW


Welcome to the
Distributed Leadership Survey
Please begin by clicking on the "Continue" button.
Continue


Introduction
Please maximize your browser window and click on the "Continue" button to start the survey.
Continue


Step 1 of 5
The following 48 statements may or may not reflect your views about distributed leadership (DL) as a public high school principal. Distributed leadership is abbreviated to DL in several of these statements.
Please read each statement and place it into one of the three categories based on whether you agree with it MORE than the other statements, LESS than the other statements, or have NO OPINION about it.
You can simply click, drag, drop, or press 1, 2, or 3 on your keyboard to move the statements into one of the three piles.
You can move the cards at any time to make changes.
THIS IS A LOT EASIER THAN IT SOUNDS, SO PLEASE GIVE IT A TRY.
Continue

(1) When there is trust principals are willing to share their authority

1/48

LEAST AGREE (#1)	NO OPINION OR NEUTRAL (#2)	MOST AGREE (#3)

Step 2 of 5

Please sort these statements into the template in the way that best describes your view about the potential effectiveness of distributed leadership in high schools.

Only part of the statement text will be visible after you move a statement into the template, but you can see the full text statements by hovering the mouse over them.

(*The order of boxes in any of the columns does not matter. You can move cards into any of the columns regardless of their original pile or color.*)

Continue

LEAST AGREE MOST AGREE

-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4

Step 3 of 5

Congratulations! Thank you for sorting all statements into the template. You can now review your decisions and move any statements you wish.

If you like, you can move statements out of their boxes and place them temporarily in any blank area outside the template while you're making final changes.

Continue

Step 4 of 5

To give me more insight about the decisions you made about the statements, please briefly explain why you placed the following statements in the *MOST AGREE* and *LEAST AGREE* boxes.

Continue

MOST AGREE (+4)

(4) Principals must be able to trust staff before distributing leadership

(1) When there is trust principals are willing to share their authority

LEAST AGREE (-4)

(14) Distributing authority is a very effective way to meet mandates

(43) Responsibility for instruction must be distributed to all staff

Your School Administrator Experience

As of the end of this school year, how many years will you have been a public school administrator?

Your Teaching Experience

How many years of experience do you have as a teacher?

Your Highest Degree

What is your highest level of education?

- **Advanced Certificate completed**
- **Doctoral degree in progress**
- **Doctoral degree completed**
- **Other**

Other Degree (optional)

If you responded "Other" about your highest degree, please specify your highest degree.

Your High School Background

In what decade did you graduate from high school?

- **1960s**
- **1970s**
- **1980s**
- **1990s**
- **2000s**

Your View of Distributed Leadership

How effective do you believe distributed leadership can be in high schools today?

- **Not effective at all**
- **Mostly not effective**
- **Not sure**
- **Mostly effective**
- **Very effective**

Your Other Insights About Distributed Leadership (optional)

In the space below, please add any other comments or insights you would like to share with me about distributed leadership in high schools. Your views are important, and I want to make sure you have had the opportunity to express them in your own words.

Permission to Use Your Anonymous Responses

May I have your permission to include your responses to this survey

anonymously in my doctoral dissertation and other research publications?

- **YES, you may use my survey responses on an anonymous basis.**
- **NO, do NOT consider my views and do not use any of my survey responses.**

APPENDIX D: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF SPONSORED RESEARCH
BUSH-BROWN HALL, UNIVERSITY CENTER

NOTICE TO ALL RESEARCHERS:

Please be aware that a protocol violation (e.g., failure to submit a modification for any change) of an IRB approved protocol may result in mandatory remedial education, additional audits, re-consenting subjects, researcher probation, suspension of any research protocol at issue, suspension of additional existing research protocols, invalidation of all research conducted under the research protocol at issue, and further appropriate consequences as determined by the IRB and the Institutional Officer.

TO: Dr. James Dunne
Michelle Maltempi (Student Investigator)

FROM: Dr. Lacey Sischo, IRB Administrator
LIU Institutional Review Board

DATE: September 10, 2018

PROTOCOL TITLE: Principals' perceptions of the barriers and impediments to distribute leadership and share decision-making under an era of heightened accountability: An exploratory study using Q-technique

***PROTOCOL ID NO*: P 18/09-129**

REVIEW TYPE: Exempt-Level

***ACTION:* IRB Exempt Determination/Approval**

Your application has been reviewed using the University's Institutional Review Board's (IRB) administrative review process and can be considered to be an EXEMPT methodology/approach as defined in 45 CFR 46.101.b.2:

Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior unless:

- The information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, either directly (e.g. name) or through identifiers linked to the subject (i.e., through ANY code used with the intent of being traced back to the subject.)

AND

- 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

Please note: Revisions and amendments to the research activity must be promptly reported to the IRB for review and approval prior to the commencement of the revised protocol. **If the project is amended so that it is no longer considered to be exempt research as per the federal definitions, it will be necessary for the investigators to submit an application for full committee review.**

LIU
LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY

Verification of Institutional Review Board (IRB) Exempt Determination/Approval

LIU IRB ID: P 18/09-129

Project Title: Principals' perceptions of the barriers and impediments to distribute leadership and share decision-making under an era of heightened accountability: An exploratory study using Q-technique

Signature: _____

Name/Title: Lacey Sischo, PhD, IRB Administrator

Phone: (516) 299-3591
Lacey.Sischo@liu.edu