An Examination of Illinois Principals Perceptions

of Servant Leadership

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AN EXAMINATION OF ILLINOIS PRINCIPALS PERCEPTIONS

OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

by

Paul Joseph Enderle

has been approved

February 26, 2014

APPROVED:

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Paul Sims, Ph.D., Dissertation Chair

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L. Arthur Safer, Ph.D., Committee Member

_____

Angela Tagaris, Ed.D., Committee Member

Abstract

Because effective principal leadership is important to the future state of K-12 education, it is of great value that principals adopt leadership practices that contribute to the success of their schools. Servant leadership may be one such vehicle for positive systems change within school organizations, however little research has been conducted on servant leadership within the field of educational leadership in the State of Illinois as it pertains to the role of principal. The purpose of this mixed-method research study was to examine the servant leadership perceptions and practices of active Illinois principals. The initial quantitative phase of the study measured the self-perceptions of Illinois school principals on the construct of servant leadership by administering Page and Wong's (2003) Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR) and a demographic survey to 310 Illinois school principals. This data was triangulated with qualitative data gathered in a second phase through conducting 10 semi-structured one-on-one interviews and a focus group discussion with Illinois school principals. Interviews and the focus group discussion were based on a series of synthesis questions derived from themes identified in Page and Wong's Seven Factors of Servant leadership (2003) and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (CCSSO, 2008). Results emerged from both the quantitative survey data and qualitative interviews and focus group discussion to indicate that Illinois principals are likely to perceive themselves as servant leaders, who demonstrate practices that align to the servant leadership construct. The study helped operationalize the construct of servant leadership in an educational setting by identifying 50 servant leadership practices principals use to lead their schools. It is recommended that future researchers use the results from this study to identify new dimensions of

servant leadership within the field of education and explore other practical facets of this

leadership paradigm as a viable construct for effective leadership practice in schools.

Dedication

To my family

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the faculty and staff at Concordia University for their assistance and direction in building my understanding of servant leadership and enhancing my knowledge of the field of education. I wish to express my distinct appreciation to Dr. Paul Sims, my dissertation supervisor, as well as Dr. Arthur Safer and Dr. Angela Tagaris for serving on my dissertation committee and providing me both guidance and encouragement throughout the dissertation writing process. I am also grateful for the example and guidance of Dr. Susan Bridge, one of my faculty advisors at Concordia University.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The success or failure of any school organization or initiative within an organization can be traced to effective leadership (Collins, 2001; Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood, Anderson, Mascall, & Strauss, 2010). Educational research has shown that most school variables, considered independently, have a minor effect on the success of a school. However, real impact can occur in school systems when individual variables unite to reach a critical mass (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Wahlstrom, Louis, Leithwood, Anderson, & Educational Research, S., 2010; Wallace, 2012). Principals have the potential to unify and unleash latent school-level capacities and conditions under which this fusion of variables can occur in a way to foster success in schools (DuFour & Mattos, 2013; Lockheed & Levin, 2012). Wahlstrom et al. (2010) found principal leadership to rank only second to teaching as among school influences that most impacted student achievement. Marzano et al. (2005) discovered that the characteristics of school leaders have a statistically significant relationship with school success. Simply stated, effective principal leadership is important to the future state of our educational system.

At a time that effective leadership is essential, the job of the principal has become increasingly more complex and constrained (Darling-Hammond, Meyerson, LaPointe, & Orr, 2009; Fullan, 2001; Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010). Over the past decade Illinois public school principals have been faced with an assortment of state and federal mandates that have made the challenge of leading a public school progressively more demanding. Responsibilities associated with the accountability of the No Child Left Behind Act of

2001 (NCLB); maintaining the school safety protocols and anti-harassment policies by means of the School Safety Drill Act (2005) and the Safe Schools Improvement Act (2011); providing high quality student-driven instruction through the Illinois State Response to Intervention (RtI) Plan (2008); adopting and implementing of the Common Core State Standards (2011); upholding eligibility and entitlement procedures related to amendments of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1975, 2006, 2011); and most recently, efforts to consistently evaluate teacher performance, as well as develop measureable personal growth goals based on the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) of 2010. These demands coupled with overwhelming situations of increased diversity, poverty, and conflicting social values impact no one more than the school principal (Clayton, 2011; Harris, 2002; Lockheed & Levin, 2012; Theoharis, 2010). Improving leadership practices of the school principal must rank high on the list of priorities for educational reform (DuFour & Mattos, 2013; Marzano et al., 2005; Miller, 2013) in order to support and improve the regularly transforming school system.

Because of the challenges facing today's principals and due to the need for effective principal leadership, the State of Illinois under the Performance Evaluation Reform Act of 2010, has mandated that principal leadership be evaluated each year. This is the first time in Illinois history that all public school principals will be evaluated using a common framework to assess effective leadership performance. To thrive in this age of accountability, school principals must embrace effective leadership practices that contribute to the success of their schools and the regularly transforming educational system (Finnigan, 2010; Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

It is of great value to educational systems that principals adopt effective leadership practices that contribute to the success of their schools (Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi, 2010; Hallinger, 2011; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Research has indicated that traditional top-down managerial styles no longer provide adequate leadership in an era of informational technology and continuously change found in 21st century education systems (Davies, 2002; Harris, 2010; Wagner, Kegan, Lahey, Lemons, Garnier, Helsing, & Rasmussen, 2010). Since most school systems are faced with continual changes, it is difficult to predict which leadership practices will emerge as most effective in best serving school leaders (Leithwood et al., 2010; Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson, & Jinks, 2007). Senge (1990) found that organizations, such as school systems, that experience regular change require a variety of leadership types at different times in organizational development.

Servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1970) may be one such vehicle for possible systems change within educational organizations (Cerit, 2009; Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Sendjaya & Pekerti, 2010). The servant leadership model supports key shifts in leadership ideology within the field of education, due to a focus on service first, as a means to build capacity, unity, and culture within the entire learning community (Covey, 2002). Sergiovanni (1992) found that staff members in schools systems are hungry for a leadership model that places service ahead of management. A servant leadership approach for a principal has tremendous potential at a time when schools are under intense pressure to produce student-outcome-based results, much like that of the business world (Clarke, 2011). Educational research studies have found the servant leadership style to have a positive impact on school-based variables such as student achievement,

job satisfaction, and school climate (Drury 2004; Girard, 2000; Lambert, 2004; Laub, 1999). Bolman and Deal (2008) emphasized that the artistry and architecture of leadership required to lead successful schools requires influence, credibility, trust, vision, and service. As educators seek deeper purpose in meeting the challenges found in the changing world of education, the practice of servant leadership has never been more applicable to school systems, than today; and may serve as one key element in the overall formula for total school reform (Blanchard, 2007; Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

Therefore, since there is a need for effective principal leadership in schools and educational research supports servant leadership as a potentially valuable leadership construct, further examination of Illinois principal's perceptions and practices associated with servant leadership is warranted.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study will be to examine servant leadership as self-perceived by Illinois school principals, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that effectively align to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). By exploring principal perceptions of servant leadership, this study will seek to disclose:

1. How Illinois school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders based on Page and Wong's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR)?

2. What servant leadership practices do Illinois school principals use based on Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL)?

To examine servant leadership as a leadership approach of Illinois principals, a mixed-method sequential explanatory design (Creswell, 2003) will be utilized. The initial quantitative phase of the study will measure the self-perceptions of Illinois school principals on the construct of servant leadership by administering Page and Wong's (2003) Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR) and a demographic survey. The results of this data will be triangulated with qualitative data gathered in a second phase through conducting semi-structured personal interviews and a focus group with Illinois school principals. Synthesis questions will be used to determine specific servant leadership practices principals take in effectively leading their schools, derived from themes identified in Page and Wong's Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework in support of this study is the concept of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1970, 1977; Page & Wong, 2003; Sergovanni, 1992; Spears, 1995), which is grounded in the belief that a person's natural desire to serve other people emerges into an aspiration to lead others by investing in their development and well being for the benefit of accomplishing tasks and goals for the common good (Greenleaf, 1977; Page & Wong, 2003). Therefore the construct of servant leadership can be viewed as an attitude toward the responsibilities of leadership as much as it is a style of leadership (Page & Wong, 2000). It is most often understood in juxtaposition to autocratic or hierarchical styles of leadership, where the power of the leader is command-orientated and obeyed by those lower in the organization (Davies, 2002; Harris, 2010; Senge, 1990; Wagner et al., 2010). Servant leaders maintain power through public service and

stewardship, where a leader is identified as being first among equals or *primus inter pares* (Greenleaf, 1977). Sergiovanni (1992) referred to servant leadership as being an upside down leadership practice. Whereas conventional leadership models portray subordinates serving their leaders, in servant-led organizations the leaders serve the organization. This paradoxical ideology of servant leadership is inclusive of personal service to society regardless of position (Rinehart, 1998; Spears, 1994; Wong, 2004). Therefore, a servant leader may be characterized as a leader whose primary purpose for leading is to serve others.

McGregor (1960) postulated two theories of work motivation. Theory X views workers as apathetic and in need to be motivated by reward and punishment. Theory Y views work as intrinsically motivating. Additionally, Ouchi (1981) propose Theory Z, which incorporates a combination of both X and Y theories. Theory S, the theoretical framework of servant leadership, goes beyond Theory Z. It focuses on the vital role of leadership in work motivation and suggests that a serving, caring, and understanding leader is best able to optimize worker motivation through (a) developing workers' strengths and intrinsic motivation and (b) creating a positive workplace (Davey & Wong, 2007).

To provide a conceptual framework for understanding servant leadership, Page and Wong (2000) developed a multidimensional model (see Figure 1) called "Expanding Circles of Servant leaders." It is comprised of expanding concentric circles, with a servant's heart at the core. From this core, the model recognizes 12 servant leadership attributes conceptually classified into four orientations, which are represented by a sequential outward expansion of the circles. Page and Wong used expanding concentric

circles, with character orientation as the innermost circle, followed by people-orientation, task-orientation, and process-orientation to visually represent the sequence in the development, practice, and influence of servant leadership. It is the fundamental attitude of servanthood that influences how leaders work with followers and how they carry out the task of leadership.
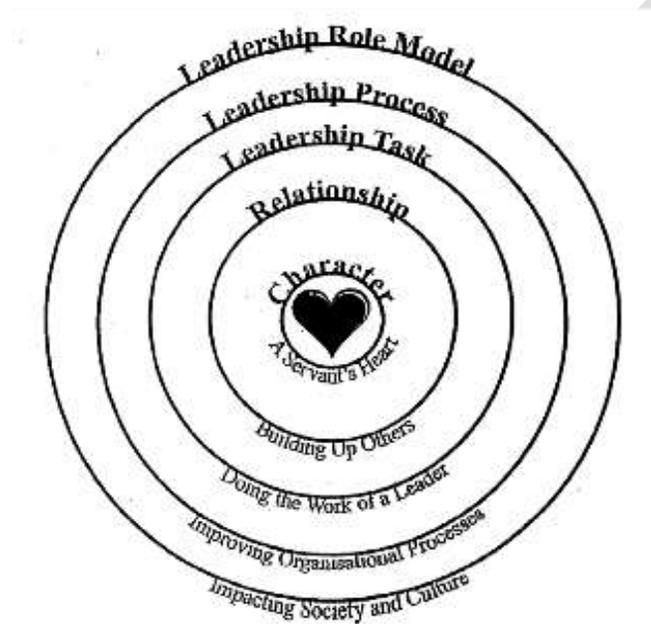
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

To test the validity and reliability of the servant leadership construct, Wong and Page (2000) developed the Self-Assessment of Servant leadership Profile (SASLP), a 99-item instrument that measured both the characteristics and the process of servant leadership. Later, Page and Wong (2003) developed a shortened version of the SASLP called the Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR) based on empirical research. Page and Wong identified authoritarian hierarchy and egotistical pride as the opposing forces to servant leadership, and wanted their new instrument to reflect these two new

factors. By rearranging and modifying some of the original 99 items, the SLPR contains

62 items divided into the following 7 factors:

Factor 1: Empowering and developing others

Factor 2: Power and pride (Vulnerability and humility, if scored in the reverse)

Factor 3: Serving others

Factor 4: Open, participatory leadership

Factor 5: Inspiring leadership

Factor 6: Visionary leadership

Factor 7: Courageous leadership (Integrity and authenticity)

Servant leadership practices are reflective of participative leadership (McMahon,

1976) and share some of the characteristics of transformational leadership (Norman,

Avolio, & Luthans, 2010; Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004). These approaches

emphasize a more democratic and humanistic style which build community, embrace

diversity, and create a shared sense of responsibility for action through collective

learning. Servant leadership is also similar to steward leadership (Block, 1993), because

both models accentuate the need to replace self-interest with service to others as the basis

for using power. Thus, servant leadership incorporates various relationship-oriented

leadership practices (DuFour & Mattos, 2013; Hallinger, & Heck, 2010; Harris, 2010)

and is opposite of traditional command and control types of autocratic leadership.

Furthermore, servant leadership takes into account the fact that traditional, dictatorial

forms of leadership are inadequate for motivating people to follow (Page & Wong, 2000;

Wagner et al., 2010). Modern management theorists (Bennis, 1990; Rinzler & Ray,

1993; Senge, 1990) share the same position that autocratic leadership needs to be replaced by leadership that empowers people in today's school systems.

Servant leadership theory relates to the role of the school principal, as primary school-level leader, since it requires a high level of responsibility to others. As the role of the principal has become more demanding, efforts have been made to define characteristics of effective principal leadership and how to best evaluate principal leadership in schools. The State of Illinois has developed the new Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL) for evaluating principal performance with respect to each of the subsequent leadership strands:

1. Living a Mission and Vision Focused on Results

2. Leading and Managing Systems Change

3. Improving Teaching and Learning

4. Building and Maintaining Collaborative Relationships

5. Leading with Integrity and Professionalism

6. Creating and Sustaining a Culture of High Expectations

The performance standards developed for each of these strands are grounded in the 2008 Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Educational Leadership Policy Standards that have been adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education. Although the ISLLC Standards have provided a solid policy foundation to guide school leadership reform in Illinois, they are not outcome-based, or specific enough to guide principal evaluation. The new IPSSL Standards are more detailed and outcomes-based specifically developed for the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) by an Illinois Principals Association Evaluation Design Team in 2007. The work of the

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Design Team in developing the IPSSL Standards was performed in coordination between ISBE, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), and New Leaders for New Schools.

The IPSSL Standards are designed to capture what is essential about the role of a school leader and what constitutes success in a school community. The essential aspects of leadership delineated in the IPSSL Standards are congruent to the many of the attributes associated with servant leadership theory. Each IPSSL Standard includes specific performance indicators, outcomes-based examples of evidence, and a rubric rating system that contain characteristics and themes that embrace the seven servant leadership factors (Page & Wong, 2003).

A servant leadership approach for a principal has incredible potential, especially at a time when schools are under intense pressure to produce more with less. The school leader does not improve student achievement alone, and the principal must share authority by empowering other members in the organization to also lead. Greenleaf (1996) shared that the role of the servant leader is to serve the needs of others, as a primary motivation for facilitating change within a complex culture. The principal's role will continue to become more multifaceted with a responsibility for facilitating educational change through building community, capacity, and culture of the school community. Servant leadership can provide a dynamic framework that will aid principals to meet the challenges of today's schools.

Research Questions

The guiding research questions will measure Illinois principal self-perceptions of leadership, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and

what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that effectively align to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL).

Research Question 1

How do Illinois school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders based on Page and Wong's (2003) Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR)?

Research Question 2

What servant leadership practices do Illinois school principals use based on Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL)?

Significance of the Study

Educational research has deduced that principal leadership is the most important factor influencing a school's environment, and is second only to the classroom teacher, as having the most influence on student achievement (Black, 2010; Marzano et al., 2005; Wahlstrom et al., 2010). Nearly 60% of a school's total impact on student achievement is attributable to principal and teacher effectiveness. Moreover, a comprehensive review of the research on school leadership found that the quality of the principal alone accounts for 25% of a school's impact on student achievement (Marzano et al., 2005). This evidence coupled with the reality that school systems are now becoming more collegial, cooperative, transformative, and service-oriented makes the leadership role of principal increasingly complex, when the need for effective leadership in our schools is greater than ever (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Fullan, 2001, 2010; Hattie, 2009; Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010; Sergiovanni, 1992; Wagner et al., 2010).

This necessity for effective school leadership has resulted in states creating more rigorous and authentic approaches to principal performance evaluation. In the State of Illinois, the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) was passed in 2010 to provide direction for developing performance evaluation systems for principals that are valid, reliable and contribute to the development of staff and improved student achievement outcomes. This paradigm shift in both the role of the principal and how they are evaluated make it imperative that public school leaders adopt a leadership style that will be effective in contributing to the success of their schools. Servant leadership, as a leadership construct, has a formidable place in educational organizations because it is based on teamwork and community, shared decision-making, ethical and caring behavior, as well as developing growth mindsets of people in the learning community (Blanchard, 2007; Drury 2004; Girard, 2000; Lambert, 2004; Laub, 1999; Wagner et al., 2010).

The significance of the study lies in its potential to contribute to the examination of servant leadership practices of Illinois school principals. If school success is directly proportional to the presence of effective principal leadership and servant leadership has the potential for being a valuable leadership approach for principals, it is of educational value to further study principal's perceptions of the servant leadership construct and practices they use that align to this construct. The results of this study could contribute to the growing body of literature regarding servant leadership practices, especially as it pertains to the effective leadership of the school principal. The analysis of the data from this study could provide a research basis for how Illinois school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders and disclose what practical servant leadership practices Illinois principal's use aligned to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders

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(IPSSL). These practical implications of how principals apply servant leadership may provide insight that could assist in the construction of coursework based on the concept of servant leadership. Therefore, this research may provide examples of best practices implemented by principals that provide a framework for higher education institutions or leadership training programs to teach characteristics of servant leadership, as a credible branch of learning to those who aspire to be educational leaders.

Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions will be made for this study:

1. Participants will be practicing Illinois school principals during the 2013-2014 academic year, have satisfied state of Illinois administrative certification requirements, and are active members of the Illinois Principal Association.

2. A sufficient number of subjects responded to the survey to yield statistically significant data.

3. Participants chose, without duress or coercion, to participate in the study and provide honest responses.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations are the restrictions associated with the particular methods the researcher used to gather and analyze data (Creswell, 2003). The researcher acknowledges that the following limitations exist in the present study:

1. The respondents will be practicing school principals in Illinois, and therefore, the results of the study cannot be generalized beyond the State of Illinois.

2. In spite of the purposive selection of active Illinois principals, participation will be a voluntary process. Only those who will agree to respond to the

survey and engage in the interview process and focus group will be included in this study.

3. Responses will be based on self-reported perceptions of the respondents' and will not address skills, abilities, and/or insights as perceived by their school boards, school district employees, students, or any other partnering entity.

4. The study will be designed to investigate self-perceptions of the concept of servant leadership and how principals view practices and behaviors associated with servant leadership based on their own experiences within their particular school communities.

5. The study will include participants that are governed by the same standards of certification, statutes, regulations, which might have the potential to influence the participants.

Delimitations of a study are the contextual specifics that limit the relevancy of the study for all people at any given time in any given place. In a quantitative study, delimitations are factors that restrict researchers from claiming that their findings are true for other populations in other settings (Creswell, 2003). The delimitations for this study included the following:

1. The respondent population will be delimited to principals in the State of Illinois who held their positions during the 2013-2014 academic year and are active member of the Illinois Principals Association.

2. The data will represent the perceptions of respondents at the time of data collection.

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3. The data will represent the perceptions of Illinois principals willing to
   participate in the study and respond to an emailed survey.

Definition of Terms

Focus Group – Sets of individuals with similar characteristics or having shared experiences who meet with a moderator and discuss a topic (Hatch, 2002).

Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL) – The standards framework used by the State of Illinois to evaluate principal practice under PERA (2010).

Illinois Principal Association (IPA) – An educational membership organization currently serving over 4,500 educational leaders throughout the state of Illinois committed to advancing learning in schools through effective educational leadership.

Illinois Principals Association Evaluation Design Team (2007) – The group assembled to create the Illinois Performance Standards and Rubric for School Leaders developed in coordination between ISBE, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), and New Leaders for New Schools. This faction is responsible for the creation of the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL).

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) – The Illinois State educational agency responsible for providing state-level leadership, assistance, resources and advocacy for districts, schools and educators in the State of Illinois.

Leadership – The skill of influencing people to enthusiastically work toward goals identified as being for the common good (Hunter, 2004).

Mixed-method Study − A research study where both quantitative and qualitative data are analyzed.

New Leaders for New Schools – A national non-profit educational leadership organization committed to the recruitment, preparation, and support of public school principals.

Perceive – To become aware of through the senses (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 2013)

Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) – A special advisory group of more than 30 members, including teachers, administrators, and union leaders charged with providing input from educators to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and monitoring PERA development and implementation.

Phenomenological Study − A phenomenological study is a study that describes the meanings of experiences for individuals regarding a concept or phenomenon. The researcher collects data, develops categories of information, and creates a general description of the experience.

Practice – To be professionally engaged in (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 2013).

School Principal − For the purpose of this study, a school principal is any principal of an Illinois school, ranging in levels from prekindergarten through twelfth grade, including private and charter schools.

Quasi-experimental Study − A quasi-experimental study is one in which the researcher does not give treatments and participants are not strictly chosen at random.

Semi-structured Interview − For the purpose of this study, the semi-structured interview was utilized. Semi-structured interviews are much more flexible than structured

interviews in that semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to achieve more depth

through probing and ex5.

Sequential, Explanatory Design − A sequential, explanatory design analyzes both

quantitative and qualitative data to examine a phenomenon by first analyzing quantitative

data and then following up with gathering qualitative data in a second distinct phase.

Servant leadership − Greenleaf (1977) defined servant leadership as a person's

natural desire to serve other people developing into an aspiration to lead others.

Servant Leadership Profile - Revised (SLPR) − The SLPR is a survey that

measures self-perception of servant leadership. The survey yields a continuous interval

mean score (possible range of 1.0 to 7.0) for overall self-perception as well as a mean

score for each of seven servant leadership categories.

Servant leadership Factors − Page and Wong (2003) created the Seven Servant

leadership Factors: Empowering and Developing Others; Power and Pride; Serving

Others; Open, Participatory Leadership; Inspiring Leadership; Visionary Leadership; and

Courageous Leadership.

Organization

This dissertation study contains five chapters. Chapter One includes a statement

of the problem and purpose of the study; the theoretical framework informing this study;

research questions; significance of the study; assumptions, limitations, and delimitations;

as well as definitions of key terms central to the dissertation topic.

Chapter Two will examine current literature connected to servant leadership and

the role of the principal in Illinois schools. This chapter will further provide an analysis

for measuring servant leadership practices of Illinois school principals that will reveal

commonalities between the characteristics of servant leadership based on Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership, with the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL).

Chapter Three will describe a blueprint for conducting a mixed methods quasi-experimental research study relevant to Illinois principal perceptions of servant leadership. This chapter will include research design elements; sampling procedures and rationale; validity and reliability of the instrumentation; as well as data collection strategies and methods of data analysis

Chapter Four will analyze quantitative data collected from Page and Wong's (2003) Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR) using descriptive statistics for the participants' self-perceptions of servant leadership. The qualitative data derived from the semi-structured interview questions and focus group will be based on Page and Wong's Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). The researcher will use this data to assess and further analyze patterns and themes across servant leadership characteristics and practices reported by Illinois school principals.

Chapter Five will contain an explanation of the results and in-depth descriptions of how Illinois school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders and what servant leadership practices Illinois principals use. The final chapter will present conclusions of the study in context of the literature review, implications based on strengths and limitations, as well as recommendations for future research derived from the conclusions and implications.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

To further study Illinois principals perceptions of servant leadership, specifically how Illinois school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders and what practices they demonstrate that support a servant leadership approach, the review of literature will be organized into three main sections:

1. Servant Leadership

2. Measuring Practices of the Servant Leader

3. Measuring Principal Performance in Illinois

The first section, Servant leadership, will provide a theoretical basis for the study by examining the origins of servant leadership and its advantages as a leadership construct within an organizational and educational context. The second section, Measuring Practices of the Servant leader, will reveal how past research studies have evaluated and measured servant leadership qualities and practices based on a variety of instruments and methodologies. The final section, Measuring Principal Performance in Illinois, will provide a brief synopsis of educational reform efforts made to standardize the effective practices of school leaders and specifically address the approach used by the State of Illinois to measure principal performance.

Servant Leadership

The Origin of Servant Leadership

The concept of "servant leadership" was originated by Robert Greenleaf (1904-1990) in his first, and most influential essay entitled, *The Servant as Leader*, written in

1970. In that privately published essay, Greenleaf developed the central philosophy of

servant leadership when he said:

> The servant leader is servant first… It begins with the natural feeling that one
>
> wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead.
>
> That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of
>
> the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material
>
> possessions…The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types.
>
> Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of
>
> human nature. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-
>
> first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. (pp.
>
> 7-8)

Greenleaf's (1970) fundamental message in this seminal treatise was that "the great

leader is seen as servant first, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness" (p. 2).

Greenleaf's belief that true leadership emerges out of an inherent desire to help others has

served as the foundational premise for the servant leadership philosophy for almost a half

a century. Even today the very notion of a servant as leader contradicts long-standing

assumptions about the relationship between leaders and followers in an organization. By

combining two seemingly paradoxical terms, servant and leader, Greenleaf questioned

the very nature of traditional leadership approaches. He spent much of his adult life

working to turn the established perceptions about the organizational pyramid upside

down (Jacobson, 2013), and drive modern thinking into a new paradigm of leadership.

Greenleaf worked first as a lineman and eventually spent most of his professional

life in the field of management research, development, and education at AT&T. As an

executive with AT&T, Greenleaf conceptualized the theory of servant leadership and introduced it to the organizational context. Following a 40-year career at AT&T, Greenleaf initiated a second career that lasted 25 years, during which he served as an influential consultant to a number of major institutions, including Ohio University, MIT, the Ford Foundation, the R. K. Mellon Foundation, the Mead Corporation, the American Foundation for Management Research, and the Lilly Endowment (Spears, 2004). In 1964 Greenleaf founded *The Center for Applied Ethics*, which was renamed *The Robert K. Greenleaf Center* in 1985. This international nonprofit organization works to serve individuals and organizations seeking to become better servant leaders.

Greenleaf (Spears, 1998a) originally discovered the concept of servant leadership by reading a book called, *Journey to the East: A Novel* (Hesse, 2003). The book tells the story of a group of men who are commissioned by wise elders to set out on a long journey. Accompanying the group was a man named Leo; his job was to care for the group by doing their chores and providing for their comfort. The journey progressed well until Leo disappeared. At this point, the travelers fell into disorder and ultimately aborted the journey. Years later, one of the party, encountered Leo and realized he was the nominal head of the order that sponsored the journey. It was then he realized that Leo, who he knew as a servant, was in fact a great and noble leader. He was the leader, but his nature was that of a servant. Greenleaf's primary leadership belief grew from this story; that one has to first serve society and through one's service a person will be recognized as a leader. Blanchard (1999) held a similar position as Greenleaf that servant leaders are first servants before they become leaders when he stated, "Strong natural servants…will assume leadership only if they see it as a way in which they can serve" (p. 129).

Though Greenleaf was first to coin the term servant leadership and work to further apply it within modern organizational structures, he was certainly not the first to introduce or practice the idea of servant leadership within the human endeavor. Christianity's founder, Jesus Christ, taught and practiced this concept over 2,000 years ago as referenced in many narrative accounts of his life in the Bible. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus Christ said to his disciples, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45, New International Version). The moral premise of servant leadership theory can be traced back to the example Jesus set for his disciples, where he modeled the style of leadership he taught by washing the disciples' feet and called them to serve others (John 13:1-17 New International Version). Jesus illustrated leadership as care and service rather than strength and power.

Greenleaf (1970) acknowledged that the concept of servant leadership originated from Christian ideology, though much of his writing remained secular in nature. In his notable work, *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness* (1977), Greenleaf reaffirmed his central leadership principle, to lead one must first serve, which corresponds directly with actions demonstrated by Jesus Christ in the Bible. More recently, Russell (2000) identified 15 servant leadership attributes from the life of Jesus Christ:

1. Vision/Mission
2. Prayer
3. Obedience
4. Holiness

5. Truth

6. Trust

7. Forgiveness

8. Love

9. Modeling

10. Sacrifice

11. Pioneering

12. Confrontation

13. Empowerment

14. Teaching

15. Delegation

These Christ-like attributes of servant leadership parallel the seven virtuous constructs

presented by Patterson (2003), who suggested that the servant leader is guided by

attitudes, characteristics, and behavior that "demonstrate (a) agapao love; (b) acts of

humility; (c) altruistism; (d) vision for followers; (e) trust; (f) empowerment of followers;

and (g) service" (p. 8). After studying the life and leadership model of Jesus Christ, Ken

Blanchard (2003), a major contributor to both popular and research-based leadership

initiatives stated, "servant leadership is the foundation for effective leadership" (p. ix).

Though the concept of servant leadership certainly has roots in the Judeo-

Christian tradition, it is also evident in other religious mores and societal beliefs.

Advocates for the servant leadership movement are detectable in both Jewish and

Buddhist customs, as well as in the writings of Confucious and the Dalai Lama (Spears,

1998a). Spears (1995) cited the Chinese philosopher, Lao Tzo, who in 604 B.C. offered

an accurate clarification of servant leadership in saying, "Go to the people, learn from them, live with them, start with what they know, build with what they have. But of the best leaders, when the job is done, when the task is accomplished, the people will all say, 'We have done it ourselves'" (p. 242).

In more recent history, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mother Teresa are well-known examples of leaders who have exemplified the servant leader philosophy in their actions and life's work (Blanchard, 2003).

Mahatma Gandhi is widely acknowledged as a servant leader of non-violent political movements in India during the early 1900's. As a pioneer of Satyagraha (Shridharani, 1939), which is resistance through non-violent civil disobedience, he became one of the major political leaders of his time by defending the rights on immigrants and fighting for India's independence from Great Britain (Barnabas & Clifford, 2012). He believed in the voluntary abandonment of one's self to others by becoming a servant and through acts of service (Sendjaya, 2005). According to Nair (1994), Gandhi was a symbol of service to mankind. While most leaders identify with symbols of power to elevate themselves above the people they lead, Gandhi represented the people he was trying to serve, by committing to voluntary poverty and starvation (Nair, 1994).

Nelson Mandela can also be portrayed as a more contemporary leader who practiced a servant leadership philosophy (Covey, 2006). Rather than compromising with the apartheid regime in South Africa, he was imprisoned for 27 years due to his belief in a free and just society. When released he led a movement for multi-racial democracy and equality, becoming South Africa's first Black president and a world

leader in peace and social change (Kalungu-Banda, 2006). Mandela made clear his orientation as a servant leader immediately after getting out of prison (MacLeod, 1990). In his first speech upon being released from prison, he said, "I stand here before you not as a prophet but as a humble servant of you, the people" (Davidson, 2013, ¶10).

Another modern example of a servant leader is Dr. Martin Luther King. From 1955-1968, he assumed a servant leadership role during the Civil Rights Movement against racial discrimination in America. Dr. King's desire to not be remembered for personal accolades, but for his responsibility in helping America campaign towards social justice personified the true meaning of servant leadership (Perry, 2010). In one of his last speeches before his assassination, Dr. King affirmed,

> Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know about Plato and Aristotle to serve. You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love. And you can be that servant. (King, 1968, ¶34)

An Achilles' heel of servant-leadership is what Martin Luther King, Jr. called the "drum major instinct" a desire to be out front and lead the parade, instead of seeking value in being a servant first. Dr. King firmed believed that one's ego short-circuited the worth of being a servant leader (McGuire & Hutchings, 2007).

Mother Teresa is a further compelling example of an authentic servant leader. She was not only a nun who reached out to the sick and downcast, but created an organization of over 4,000 missionaries operating in nearly 100 countries. Her organization, Missionaries of Charity, began in Calcutta and has spread to 450 centers

around the world (Egan, 1997). Its mission is "to reach out to the destitute on the streets, offering wholehearted service to the poorest of the poor" (p. 14). Not only did Mother Teresa have a servant's heart, but possessed a purposeful disposition, clear values, and compassion, she also created intimate relationships with people and exercised self-discipline, all dimensions of a servant leader. The followers of Mother Teresa have successfully continued to expand her work with the poor and destitute throughout the world today (Egan, 1997).

The origins of servant leadership have certainly contributed to a common set of actions, practices, and examples associated with the servant leadership construct. Though never defining servant leadership, Greenleaf's primary intent was to view leadership as a responsibility and obligation to serve others first, requiring leaders to see beyond themselves and prioritize the growth, development, and well being of other people, as well as the communities to which they belong (Greenleaf, 1970, 1972). This core theme of building others up, being actions-oriented and sharing authority is pervasive throughout organizational literature associated with servant leadership, and greatly contradicts traditional leadership models that involve the accumulation and exercise of power by one in a "top-down" hierarchy (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). The concept of thinking of others, ahead of yourself is congruent with Jesus' teachings in Luke 22:26, when settling a dispute between his disciples he reverses the usual order of authoritarian leadership by saying, "But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the least, and the one who rules like the one who serves" (New International Version). Jesus' life and teachings illustrate that a leader has a responsibility to serve people in both a humble and caring manner, not making position

of power a priority. Laub (1999) insisted that servant leadership was more than merely a leadership style, but, "a different way of thinking about the purpose of leadership, the true role of a leader, and the potential of those being led" (p. 30). Laub also stated, "Servant leadership is an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader" (p. 81). Therefore, the construct of servant leadership can be viewed as an attitude toward the responsibilities of leadership as much as it is a style of leadership (Page & Wong, 2000).

Greenleaf's concept of the servant leader has influenced numerous writers in the field of leadership (Collins, 2001: Senge, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1992) and has found wide acceptance in the field of school leadership (Frick, 2004; Kasch, 1995; Kelley & Williamson, 2006). After compiling an anthology of writings about servant leadership, Hamilton (2005) agreed stating, "during the past four decades, the practitioner literature has given due attention to servant leadership" (p. 876). Bass (2000) asserted, "the untested theory (servant leadership) will play a role in the future leadership of the learning organization" (p. 31). Greenleaf (1977) acknowledged that his views on leadership are not entirely based on academic theories or extensive research, but rather on decades of experience and observation in the workplace, in and among the institutions that are actually providing services to society. Purkey and Siegel (2002) report two significant implications in Greenleaf's viewpoint of servant leadership. First, that leadership without service is less substantial, more ego-driven and selfish, instead of being community centered, altruistic, and empathetic. Second, "that leadership involves teaching and mentoring, as one of the major requirements of leaders to invite others toward service" (p. 181). The real uniqueness of studying servant leadership within the

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field of education lies in investigating how servant leaders carry out the responsibilities of teaching and mentoring others within the school setting. Examining how active school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders and the effective practices they use to serve their schools, can ultimately contribute to the growing landscape of research that supports servant leadership as a plausible leadership construct for educational leaders concerned with developing people for the common good of each individual, the total organization, and those served by the organization.

Servant Leadership in the Organizational Context

According to *Developing 21st-Century Leaders* (Perrin, Daniels, Jefferson, Blauth, Marone, O'Sullivan, & Moran, 2010), a multi-level analysis of global trends in leadership challenges, leadership in the 21st century will require "a complex matrix of practices, which vary by geography, organizational level, and individual circumstances" (p. 1). Effective leaders in future organizational structures will be challenged to recognize their own leadership strengths and weaknesses, adjust strategies, implement new strategies, and recognize strengths and weaknesses in other people (Astroth, Goodwin, & Hodnett, 2011; Blanchard, 2007; Schleicher et al., 2012). Within corporate structures leadership has been suggested to be a key factor for improving employee engagement (Luthans, 2002) and in developing innovation within organizations (García-Morales, Lloréns-Montes, & Verdú-Jover, 2008). The importance of leadership appears to have shifted to enhancing motivation and social responsibility to secure success in the complex and vacillating modern organization. In this respect the theory of servant leadership may be of great value to a variety of organizations. Since being introduced by Greenleaf (1970), servant leadership has been characterized as a more ethical (Clegg, Kornberger, &

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Rhodes, 2007; Searle & Barbuto, 2011), flexible, and people-centered theory of leadership, establishing a moral component (Graham, 1991; Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008) and placing emphasis on the needs of followers (Patterson, 2003).

One of the greatest differences between servant leadership and other modern leadership constructs is that servant leaders are genuinely concerned with followers (Greenleaf 1977), rather than hierarchical lines of authority or organizational objectives (Graham 1991; Stone et al., 2004). Patterson (2003), in her theory-building dissertation on servant leadership, described the Seven Virtuous Constructs of Servant leadership, which emphasize the needs of followers in the leader-follower relationship that is apparent in all organizational structures:

1. Agapao Love – Love is the cornerstone of the servant leader-follower relationship. Servant leaders see followers as whole persons with different skill-sets and talents. They are able to focus on followers first, then on their talents, and how those talents benefit the organization.

2. Humility – Servant leaders are able to keep their accomplishments and talents in perspective. They have an authentic desire to help others, and search for ways to serve others through staying in touch with their followers.

3. Altruism – Servant leaders help others just for the sake of helping. They have an unselfish concern for others, which often involves personal sacrifice. Servant leaders' behaviors are directed toward the benefit of others even when those behaviors are against their own personal interests.

4. Vision – Servant leaders have a vision for their individual followers. They help others to see the big picture by enabling them to develop a clear sense of purpose and

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direction. Servant leaders develop within others the mission to serve and encourage

followers to become more than they thought possible.

6. Trust – Servant leaders develop trust through demonstrating integrity and

concern for others. They create open environments where people have voice and work

collaboratively.

6. Empowerment – Servant leaders empower others with the best interest of those

being served in mind. They teach and develop people as leaders through shared decision-

making and shared responsibility. Servant leaders make it a priority to grow new servant

leaders.

7. Service – Servant leaders choose the interests of others over self-interests.

They see leadership as a calling, or life mission. Servant leaders accept the responsibility

for serving others; and they are committed to an authentic, personal involvement with

followers through the giving or their time, energy, care, and compassion.

Robert Greenleaf recognized that organizations as well as individuals could be

servant leaders. In his second major essay, *The Institution as Servant,* Greenleaf (1972)

articulated what is often called the "credo." There he said:

> This is my thesis: caring for persons, the more able and the less able serving each
>
> other, is the rock upon which a good society is built. Whereas, until recently,
>
> caring was largely person to person, now most of it is mediated through
>
> institutions – often large, complex, powerful, impersonal; not always competent;
>
> sometimes corrupt. If a better society is to be built, one that is more just and more
>
> loving, one that provides greater creative opportunity for its people, then the most
>
> open course is to raise both the capacity to serve and the very performance as

servant of existing major institutions by new regenerative forces operating within them. (p. 9)

Greenleaf's (1972) leadership credo is applicable to both organizations and individuals striving to create a "better, more just and loving society" (p. 9). Similar to Patterson (2003), Greenleaf saw humility as a key virtue driving the ideal of service through the leader-follower relationship. He called humility "the rock upon which any good society is built" (p. 9). Although Greenleaf had concerns that institutions were becoming increasingly complex and overly impersonal, he nonetheless realized that these organizations are mediating forces necessary to increase the capacity to serve. Greenleaf (1972) argued that servant leaders inside institutions are capable to provide a kind of moral authority necessary to build creative opportunity for people and further develop capacity for followers to serve.

Larry Spears became CEO of *The Greenleaf Center* shortly before Greenleaf's death in 1991. His definition of servant leadership is grounded in organizational concepts such as teamwork, sense of community, participative decision-making, strong ethical and caring behavior, and concern for growth of people (Spears, 2004). Based upon his studies and experiences with Greenleaf, Spears expanded the concept of servant leadership by determining 10 specific characteristics akin to those individuals or organizations that practice a servant leadership philosophy. A servant leader's focus on these characteristics can provide a context and approach that make the difference between ordinary and extraordinary organizational performance (Spears, 1998b):

1. Listening – Communication skills are enhanced through a deep commitment to listening intently to followers. Servant leaders seek to identify and clarify the will of the

group. Receptive listening and reflection are essential to the growth of a servant lead organization.

2. Empathy – Servant leaders strive to understand and empathize with others. They accept and recognize followers for their unique spirits; and they assume others have good intentions, even if they disagree with behavior or performance.

3. Healing – Servant leaders are skilled at healing others as well as themselves. They help make others whole by facilitating the healing of broken spirits and building others up.

4. Awareness – Servant leaders exhibit a general awareness of what is happening in the organization. They possess a keen sense of self-awareness and an understanding of issues involving ethics and values.

5. Persuasion – Servant leaders employ persuasion rather than position authority when making decisions within the organization. They prefer to convince rather than coerce followers. Servant leaders are very effective with building consensus within the group.

6. Conceptualization – Servant leaders are able to stretch their thinking to encompass broader-based conceptual thinking, and are not overly concerned with short-term goals. Servant leaders can nurture the abilities of others to think beyond day-to-day realities.

7. Foresight – Servant leaders are capable of understanding lessons from the past, seeing the realities of the present, and predicting likely consequences of decisions. They are skillful intuitive thinkers.

8. Stewardship – Servant leaders are dedicated to holding their institutions in trust for the greater good of society. They are committed to serving the needs of others.

9. Commitment to the Growth of People – Servant leaders believe in the intrinsic value of people beyond their tangible contributions as workers. They feel responsible for nurturing the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of employees.

10. Building Community – Servant leaders are dedicated to building a sense of community within organizations.

In her case study, Contee-Borders (2002) examined how Spears' 10 Servant Leadership Characteristics were operationalized in a business selected for its servant leadership reputation. She chose one company self-identified as servant-led to be the focal point of her study. Her research question inquired, "How has Freedom Motors operationalized servant leadership characteristics throughout its organization?" (p. 16-17). She interviewed a cross-section of employees, as well as the top leaders identifying 12 themes that were clearly consistent with Spears' 10 Servant leadership characteristics:

1. On-going and Frequent Training

2. Frequent Communication

3. Focus on Premium Customer Service

4. Building Trusting Relationships

5. Leading by Example

6. Positive Attitude/Personality

7. Respecting Employees' Ideas

8. Listening Openly to Opinions

9. Actively Involving Employees within the Organization

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10. Being Visible

11. Being Connected to People

12. Caring about People in General

Other researchers have followed Greenleaf and Spears in supporting servant leadership as a viable style of leadership applicable in managing organizations effectively. Burkhardt and Spears (2000) stated:

> Public interest in the philosophy and practice of servant leadership is now higher than ever before. Many books and articles on servant leadership have appeared in the 1990s, and dozens of organizations have begun to incorporate servant leadership internally. Servant leadership has slowly but-surely gained thousands of practitioners over the past thirty years. (p. 17)

Servant leadership has the potential to create high-performing organizations due to its emphasis on the empowerment and development of others throughout the organization. Blanchard (2007) stated that servant leadership is more that a leadership style or management technique; servant leadership is a way of life. Servant leaders establish an action-orientated and value-centered organizational culture, striving to bring out the best in others. They know that when all stakeholders are involved with decisions that affect their lives they are happier, have a greater sense of ownership and commitment in the organization (Patterson, 2003).

A number of noted leadership authors such as Peter Block (1993), Ken Blanchard (2007), Jim Collins (2001), Max DePree (1997), and Peter Senge (1990) have all acclaimed the servant leader concept as an overarching framework that is compatible with, and enhances, other leadership and management models (Spears, 2004). In their

meta-analysis of the attributes of servant leadership, Russell and Stone (2002) reviewed

the existing literature to develop a working model of the servant leadership theory built

upon the actions and behaviors of leaders. They identified nine functional attributes and

eleven accompanying attributes of servant leadership. Functional attributes were defined

as "operative qualities, characteristics, and distinctive features belonging to leaders and

observed through specific leader behaviors in the workplace" (Russell & Stone, p. 148).

Accompanying attributes are those that are complementary and augment the functional

attributes. The nine functional attributes identified were:

1. Vision

2. Honesty

3. Integrity

4. Trust

5. Service

6. Modeling

7. Pioneering

8. Appreciation of others

9. Empowerment

The accompanying attributes include:

1. Competence

2. Communication

3. Delegation

4. Encouragement

5. Persuasion

6. Listening

7. Stewardship

8. Credibility

9. Visibility

10. Influence

11. Teaching

Using these attributes, a hypothetical model of servant leadership was developed to serve

as a "working model" (Russell & Stone, p. 153) that supports servant leadership as an

effective and pliable construct shaped by the actions and behaviors of those serving.

Experts in leadership and management have described an effective leader as a

servant leader without using the words "servant leader." Jim Collins (2001) in *Good to*

Great described the highest level of executive as a Level 5. He wrote:

> Level 5 leaders channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger
>
> goal of building a great company. It is not that Level 5 leaders have no ego or
>
> self-interest. Indeed, they are incredibly ambitious, but their ambition is first and
>
> foremost on for the institution, not themselves. (p. 21)

Collins found that Level 5 leaders did not talk about themselves; rather, they spoke of

their companies and the contributions of their employees. Level 5 leaders were found to

have a determination to do whatever needed to be done to make the company great. This

similarity in description was so strongly relate to servant leadership attributes that some

of the researchers working with Collins suggested using the name "servant leader"

instead of Level 5 leader (Keith, 2008).

Despite having the support of many well-respected authors and theorists, like all theories, servant leadership it is not absent of opposition. Leaders and researchers have identified notable obstacles that challenge the success of servant-led organizations. Page and Wong (2003) identified organizational problems such as power relations, oppressive or coercive outcomes, and lack of emphasis on collective growth as potential barriers that challenge the integrity of effectively applying a servant leadership approach. Similarly, Foster (2000) discovered that organizational problems such as a lack of trust, paternalism, personal agendas, and inadequate listening inhibited successful leadership efforts.

Anderson (2009) criticized the servant leadership theory for lacking empirical usefulness, as well as finding servant leaders to be overly concerned with subordinates rather than customers, and subsequently not meeting organizational goals. Page and Wong (2003) found that a major difficulty in practicing servant leadership in the American organizations is the culture of individualism and competitiveness, which tend to promote egotistical pride and power. Leaders motivated by self-interest put their own agenda and position above that of those who are affected by their actions (Blanchard, 2005; Block, 1996).

Page and Wong (2000) realized that the construct of servant leadership needed to be operationalized if it were to be viewed as an effective leadership theory within organizations. They emphasized the importance of understanding practices of servant leaders, to ultimately build a service-oriented organizational culture when they stated, "Servant leadership begins with an attitude of serving others and then adds practices and structures to make this happen" (p. 2). They also added, "Getting people to serve others

and the group's wellbeing rather than selfish ambition is crucial in a servant-led organization" (p. 5).

Page and Wong (2000) combined the work of Spears (1998b) to create a values-based conceptual framework for describing servant leadership. Their original model, which recognizes 12 exclusive servant leadership attributes, classified into four orientations:

1. Character-orientation (integrity, humility, and servanthood)
2. People-orientation (caring for others, empowering others, and developing others)
3. Task-orientation (visioning, goal setting, and leading)
4. Process-orientation (modeling, team building, and shared decision-making)

Page and Wong (2000) used expanding concentric circles, with character orientation as the innermost circle, followed by people-orientation, task-orientation, and process-orientation to visually represent the sequence in the development, practice, and influence of servant leadership. Additionally, Page and Wong (2003) developed an opponent process model of servant leadership that takes into account the two opposing motivational forces of serving others and self-serving. Power and pride characterize self-seeking leadership, while humility and self-denial characterize servant leadership.

After creating the conceptual framework and descriptors, Page and Wong (2000) created the earliest servant leadership survey, the Self-Assessment of Servant leadership Profile (SASLP), to develop a valid and reliable measure for servant leadership. After creating the conceptual framework, Page and Wong (2003) identified power and egotistical pride as the opposing forces to servant leadership, and wanted their new

instrument to reflect these two new factors. By rearranging and modifying some of the original items, Page and Wong created the Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR). The SLPR contains 62 items divided into seven factors. These seven factors are based upon leaders' actions, and they have allowed researchers to operationalize servant leadership by exploring specific actions that leaders take to act upon their servant leadership beliefs. Four of the factors involve a leader's personal character and actions.

1. Humility

2. Serving Others

3. Courageous Leadership

4. Visionary Leadership

Three of the factors involve a leader's interactions with others.

1. Empowering and Developing Others

2. Open, Participatory Leadership

3. Inspiring Leadership

Senge (2002) stated, "In an era of massive institutional failure, the ideas of servant leadership point toward a possible path forward, and will continue to do so" (p. 345). Page and Wong (2003) agreed and tendered two reasons for future interest in servant leadership: (a) servant leadership is part of the larger movement away from command-and-control leadership toward the IT-based economy's participatory and process-oriented leadership style, and (b) servant leadership appears to hold the promise of being a solution to the corrupt-ridden corporate scandals.

Since schools are complex organizations, it is difficult to predict which leadership practices will emerge as most effective in best serving school leaders (Leithwood et al.,

2010; Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson, & Jinks, 2007). Senge (1990) found that

organizations, such as school systems, that experience regular change require a variety of

leadership types at different times in organizational development. It is of educational

value to investigate servant leader leadership in the context of the school principal to

unveil how this leadership construct can contribute to the needs of those served within

school organizations.

The Principal as Servant Leader

Subsequent to Robert Greenleaf (1977) first recognizing that a relationship

existed between servant leadership and education, researchers have examined how

servant leadership theory is present and practiced in the field of education. In his

reflections of Greenleaf's viewpoints on servant leadership, Spears (1996) found servant

leadership as a credible leadership method for the public service sector; suitable for either

non-profit organizations or educational institutions. While studying assessment of

servant organizations, Laub (1999) stated, "…there are opportunities to apply the

concepts of servant leadership to other fields of study beyond organizational life. For

instance the relationship of servant leadership to teaching children or adults…" (p. 105).

As the research base for servant leadership has increased, studies have called for deeper

exploration of how servant leadership theory is practiced within the educational setting.

Taylor-Gillham (1998) stated that, "little has been done to translate these [servant]

leadership practices from the business world, where they originated, to that of education"

(p. 3). In her study of servant leadership qualities of Illinois educational superintendents,

Girard (2000) acknowledged that a need existed to conduct more research on servant

leadership within public schools. More recent studies have called for additional research

to be completed in the area of correlating servant leadership to teacher effectiveness, practicing servant leadership within online educational communities, and analyzing the role of principal as servant leader (Bliss, 2006; Drury, 2005; Metzcar, 2008; Nichols, 2010; Stewart, 2012).

Spears (2004) found the concept of servant leadership to be a practical, hands-on ideation, capable of developing individuals within an organization by using teamwork, shared decision-making and ethically caring behavior to improve organizational culture. The role of principal almost naturally fits the servant leadership mold due to the comprehensive nature of their work in valuing and developing people, displaying authenticity, and sharing control in the leader-follower relationship (Greenleaf, 1977; Kelly & Williamson, 2006; Patterson, 2003). Therefore, when seeking to study servant leadership within a school environment, principals stand out as the most viable group of people to examine.

In a study conducted to determine the relationship between principal servant leadership qualities and school effectiveness, Herbst (2003) explored whether or not schools with a higher level of servant leadership performed better than schools with a lower level of servant leadership. The findings of his study indicate that a positive relationship does exist between the servant leadership qualities of school administrators and student achievement. Likewise, research by Lambert (2004) using Laub's (1999) Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA) "…to ascertain whether there are correlations between the servant leadership behaviors and attitudes of secondary school principals … and student achievement," (pp. 7-8) found that "Servant leadership actions of principals clearly correlated with both student achievement and school climate" (p.

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66). In a comparative study of leadership in high and low performing schools, Jacobs and Kristanis (2006) observed that higher performing schools maintained influential principals with more servant leadership characteristics than principals in lower performing schools. In a study that used the Revised – Servant leadership Profile: 360 (SLP-R: 360), developed by Page and Wong (2003), principals' perceptions of their servant leadership behavior found that a positive relationship existed between the servant leadership behavior and school climate and student achievement (Cunningham, 2008).

School climate is a critical area of importance for the success of students and is typically linked with principal servant leadership behavior in educational research. Studies on school climate usually report extensive leadership effects not only on student learning but on an array of school conditions as well (Leithwood et al., 2010). Since particular facets of school climate have been connected to student achievement, investigating how servant leadership qualities of a principal impact the school climate would be a logical starting point for measuring a school's success. Mooney (2003) conducted a study to determine the relationship between transformational leadership style, which has some similar characteristics as servant-leadership, and climate in elementary schools. Mooney identified a positive correlation between this leadership style and some of the dimensions of the elementary school climate. Kelley and Williamson (2006) found that a positive school climate and servant leadership behavior from high school principals positively impacted student achievement. Independently, school climate and servant leader factors had a minimal effect but when both were present, the impact was greater. Black (2010) conducted a mixed-method research study to identify a relationship between principals' and teachers' perceived practice of servant

leadership and school climate. The data revealed a significant positive correlation

between principals who were self-perceived servant leaders and school climate.

Research has indicated that student success may be directly related to the

leadership traits of a principal (Leithwood et al., 2010; Marzano et al., 2005). Since

variables such as student achievement, school climate, and principal leadership contribute

to the success of educational systems, these finding help substantiate Greenleaf's (1977)

theoretical perspective on the applicability of servant leadership within school

organizations. Moreover, they help reinforce the value of the principal as servant leader,

and need for continued research of leaders more likely to practice servant leadership and

the actions they demonstrated in leading their school communities.

As the research for servant leadership in the field of education continues to evolve

and become wider, more studies have been conducted that specifically delve into the role

of principal as servant leader. Stephen (2007) conducted a mixed-methods research study

involving servant leadership practices of Texas public school principals nominated for

Principal of the Year and those not nominated. The Servant leadership Profile-Revised

(SLPR) instrument created by Page and Wong (2003), revealed no significant differences

in self-perception of servant leadership between principals nominated for Principal of the

Year and those not nominated. However, the study did find that significant differences in

self-perceptions of servant leadership were discovered between male and female

principals, elementary and secondary principals, and among principals of different ethnic

backgrounds. The study concluded that female principals were more likely to be servant

leaders than male principals. Elementary school principals were found to be more prone

to practice humility and serving others than secondary school principals, and African

American principals are more likely to be servant leaders than their Anglo and Hispanic counterparts.

Kasun (2009) used one-on-one interviews to study common themes of how principals apply Spears' (1998b) ten characteristics of servant leadership in their practice as educational leaders. The data discovered these servant principals had a similar belief system and approach to leadership. Themes such as the regular use of the word "trust," (p. 77) involving others in decision-making, and being an active listener surfaced with regularity during the interview process. Another theme that was evident in the qualitative analysis of this study was the common way the principals used language to speak about the accomplishments of their schools. They seldom used the word "I" and instead used the word "we" (p. 79), sharing credit for success with the entire school community.

In a mixed-methods study of elementary school principals, Williams (2009) found 95% of her sample reported they were engaged in six of the seven factors of a servant leader found in the conceptual framework designed by Page and Wong (2003). Williams (2009) noted a trend in the data for years of experience as a principal within each factor. The mean scores of the principals with more years of experience as a school administrator typically yielded the highest mean scores for each factor of the servant leadership profile. Follow-up interviews reinforced the survey results indicating that Principals perceived themselves as regularly engaging in participatory leadership, authentic leadership, courageous leadership, developing and empowering others, inspiring leadership, and visionary leadership. The interviews also disclosed barriers to the practice of servant leadership by principals, which included issues related to trust and

power relations, as well as a lack of collective growth, poor communication, and the presence of paternalism (Foster, 2000; Page & Wong, 2003).

In his quantitative study on the importance of servant leadership characteristics found in principals, as reported by high school teachers, Brown (2010) surveyed teachers in two diverse communities. The study found that principals in more urban settings were found by their teachers to be more prone to practice characteristics of servant leadership. A key implication of this study, which parallels other research findings (Clegg et al., 2007; Graham, 1991; Patterson 2003; Searle & Barbuto, 2011), is that school leaders may be capable to more effectively lead their school communities if they adapted their practice of servant leadership to the particular characteristics of their communities.

The review of the literature from this section revealed common descriptions of leaders more likely to practice servant leadership and the actions they demonstrated in leading their schools. Sergiovanni (1992) supported the practices of a servant leader by stating, "The leadership that counts…is the kind that touches people differently. It taps their emotions, appeals to their values, and responds to their connections with other people. It is a morally based leadership – a form of stewardship" (p. 270). Sergiovanni (1995) further elaborated on his leadership position asserting that schools are a reflection of the type of leadership provided by the principal, "When principals practice leadership as stewardship, they commit themselves to building, to serving, to caring for, and to protecting the school and its purposes" (p. 37). Research studies support that gender, ethnicity, experience, and school level of leaders influence the degree to which leaders practice servant leadership. Principals who practice a servant leadership approach have similar value systems, share common language, and flexibly adapt to the diverse qualities

of their learning communities. An overarching goal of this study will be to investigate

the application of servant leadership practices by school principals, analyzing how

Illinois principals perceive themselves as servant leaders and how they implement

characteristics of servant leadership. In order to further examine Illinois principal

practices associated with servant leadership it is essential to review literature connected

to how servant leadership and principal performance has been and is currently measured

to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of servant leadership on the educational

system.

Measuring the Practices of the Servant Leader

Over the past quarter century servant leadership has grown into a recognized

theory of leadership in a variety of organizational contexts, including systems of

education. Proportionate with the emergence of servant leadership as a viable leadership

theory, interest has also developed in creating effective measures to accurately determine

the reliability and validity of the servant leadership construct. Greenleaf (1970) argued

that the best way to identify servant leaders was by evaluating the effects of this

leadership style on their followers. Greenleaf described the "best test"' of servant

leadership:

> The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant – first to make sure
>
> that the other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and
>
> difficult to administer, is this: 'Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while
>
> being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely
>
> themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in
>
> society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived?' (p. 7)

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Greenleaf theorized that the unequivocal test of servant leadership is measured in the overall growth and development of followers. He believed that "growth" is to be assessed by increasing evidence of four outcomes, determining if followers become servant leaders themselves:

1. Health

2. Wisdom

3. Freedom

4. Autonomy

Covey (2002) supported Greenleaf's outcomes-based test of servant leadership by stating, "You don't just serve. You do it in a way that makes them independent of you, and capable and desirous of serving other people" (p. 31). Therefore, studying the servant leader's perspective on how they practice servant leadership in a way to help create opportunities for followers to help them grow is warranted.

According to Taylor (2002), "Prior to 1998 there was no instrument that explicitly measured servant leadership" (p. 90). Page and Wong (2000) stated in their study:

> While descriptions of servant leadership abound, to our knowledge there are no
> quantitative measures of this construct. One of the main reasons for this gap in
> the literature is the fear that of operationalizing servant leadership runs the risk of
> reductionism and trivialization of the concept. (p. 12)

Page and Wong (2000) were responsible for creating one of the earliest servant leadership surveys, the Self-Assessment of Servant leadership Profile (SASLP). Page and Wong's objective was to develop a valid and reliable measure of servant leadership based on their conceptual framework. Through a study of the literature, they first

generated a list of 200 descriptors of servant leadership. By eliminating redundant descriptors and combining like items, they were able to reduce the descriptors to 100 items. They classified the descriptors into 12 original categories:

1. Integrity

2. Humility

3. Servanthood

4. Caring for Others

5. Empowering Others

6. Developing Others

7. Visioning

8. Goal-Setting

9. Leading

10. Modeling

11. Team-Building

12. Shared Decision-Making

These 12 categories have been given serious attention in the field of servant leadership literature over the past decade and can be directly linked to the characteristics of servant leaders identified by Spears (1998b). Page and Wong (2000) later conceptualized the 12 categories of servant leadership attributes into four orientations:

1. Character-Orientation

2. People-Orientation

3. Task-Orientation

4. Process-Orientation

The final version of the SASLP contained 99 items employing a Likert scale of (1) Strongly Disagree to (7) Strongly Agree.

Page and Wong (2000) piloted the SASLP by administering the self-assessment instrument to a sample of 24 educational leaders. The mean scores for the group of 24 participants within the 12 categories ranged from 5.32 to 6.14. Due to the small size of the pilot group, inferential statistics were not run, but a test for reliability was conducted. The total Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.937 and individual categories were as follows:

1. Integrity (.796)

2. Humility (.656)

3. Servanthood (.761)

4. Caring for Others (.714)

5. Empowering Others (.765)

6. Developing Others (.916)

7. Visioning (.569)

8. Goal-setting (.768)

9. Leading (.837)

10. Modeling (.763)

11. Team-building (.815)

12. Shared Decision-making (.802)

As a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .70 or higher indicated acceptable levels of internal reliability, all sub-scales had acceptable reliability with the exceptions of humility and visioning (Page & Wong, 2000).

Taylor (2002) created a shorter version of the SASLP and further validated the reliability of the instrument. The purpose of his study was to compare leadership practices of principals who utilized servant leadership and those who did not. To do this, Taylor created the Self-Assessment of Servant leadership (SASL), which was a shortened version of Page and Wong's SASLP. Taylor reduced the items on the survey from 99 to 24. The new survey was designed to equally represent the twelve categories from the SASLP (Taylor, 2002).

Page and Wong (2003) eventually discovered that it was possible for someone to score high as a servant leader on the SASLP by simply predetermining how they wished to be viewed as a servant leader. To contend with this problem they developed an opponent-process model of servant leadership that takes into account the two opposing motivational forces of authoritarian hierarchy (power) and egotistical pride as the opposing forces to servant leadership. By rearranging and modifying some of the original 99 items, Page and Wong created the Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR). The SLPR contains 62 items divided into seven new categories:

1. Empowering and Developing Others

2. Vulnerability and Humility

3. Serving Others

4. Open, Participatory Leadership

5. Inspiring Leadership

6. Visionary Leadership

7. Courageous Leadership

These seven factors are based upon leaders' actions and have allowed researchers to better operationalize servant leadership by exploring specific actions that leaders take to act upon their servant leadership beliefs. Four of the factors that comprise a leader's personal character and actions are:

1. Humility

2. Serving Others

3. Courageous Leadership

4. Visionary Leadership

The other three of the factors encompass a leader's interactions with others:

1. Empowering and Developing Others

2. Open, Participatory Leadership

3. Inspiring Leadership (Page &Wong, 2003)

Since its inception, the SLPR has been used expansively by organizations and universities to measure and further research the characteristics and process of servant leadership. Most recently, Davey and Wong (2007) have continued to collect valid and reliable data on the SLPR, suggesting five new factors:

Factor 1: A servant's heart (humility & selflessness) – Who we are (Self-identity)

Factor 2: Serving and developing others – Why we want to lead (Motive)

Factor 3: Consulting and involving others – How we lead (Method)

Factor 4: Inspiring and influencing others – What affects we have (Impact)

Factor 5: Modeling integrity and authenticity – How others see us (Character)

This newly developed five-factor theory of servant leadership captures the vital aspects of servant leadership that have transcended the research pipeline for 30-years and provides a

further conceptual framework for practice and leadership training (Davey & Wong, 2007).

Near the same time Page and Wong were developing the SASLP, Laub (1999) began developing his 66-item Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA), an instrument that would measure both the leaders and followers perceptions of servant leadership. Laub used a collection of servant leader characteristics from literature that were examined by a panel of experts through a three-round Delphi process. The instrument targets three perspectives: the organization, the leader, and each follower's personal experience; while covering six areas of servant leader characteristics:

1. Valuing people

2. Developing people

3. Building community

4. Displaying authenticity

5. Providing leadership

6. Sharing leadership

Laub (1999) field-tested the SOLA with 828 participants from 41 organizations and found an estimated Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.98. Statistical results of the field test confirmed that the SOLA is a reliable instrument for measuring characteristics of servant leadership in an organization. Since its creation, the SOLA has been used extensively by researchers in their studies of servant leadership (Yukl, 2010).

Dennis and Bocarnea (2005) presented the Servant leadership Assessment Instrument (SLAI) to measure Patterson's (2003) construct of servant leadership. The

researchers used three separate data collections to reduce a 71-item scale to 42 items yielding five factors:

1. Empowerment
2. Love
3. Humility
4. Trust
5. Vision

Empirical results of the study established both criterion-related and construct-related validity. Finally, Cronbach coefficient alphas ranged from 0.92 to 0.94, thus validating the reliability of the study.

Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) introduced the Servant leadership Questionnaire (SLQ) to clarify what they believed to be overly intuitive characterizations of servant leadership in literature. Based upon an earlier framework of ten characteristics (Spears, 1998b), the SLQ defined five dimensions of servant leadership:

1. Altruistic calling
2. Emotional healing
3. Wisdom
4. Persuasive mapping
5. Organizational stewardship

The SLQ was deemed reliable after the data analysis on the five dimensions confirmed Cronbach's coefficient alpha ranging from 0.82 to 0.92 (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006).

Most recently, Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora (2008) published their Servant leadership Behavior Scale (SLBS) believing that existing measurement instruments failed

to properly account for the dimensions of morality and spirituality when characterizing

servant leadership. Attempting to develop a more constructive measurement inclusive of

a spiritual and moral foundation as defined by Mahatma Gandhi, the SLBS measures:

1. Voluntary subordination

2. Authentic self

3. Covenantal relationships

4. Responsible morality

5. Transcendental spirituality

6. Transformational influence

No convergent or divergent validity data was provided, although a confirmatory factor

analysis was performed (Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008).

Servant leaders are those who view themselves first as servants, putting the needs

of others before their own, making a deliberate choice to serve others (Sendjaya &

Sarros, 2002). This approach to leadership has been described as "a long-term,

transformational approach to life and work, in essence, a way of being" (Spears, 1995, p.

4). Since being introduced to the field of leadership theory by Robert Greenleaf (1970),

servant leadership has gained noted attention in academic literature. This interest has

included the introduction of several new conceptual models and instruments for

measuring servant leadership (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Dennis & Bocarnea, 2005;

Laub, 1999; Page & Wong, 2003; Sendjaya, Sarros, & Santora, 2008; Taylor, 2002).

<div align="center">

Measuring Principal Performance in Illinois

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As challenging as it is to measure a holistic concept like servant leadership, it

pales in comparison with assessing school principal performance. Because the role of a

school principal has become increasingly complex (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Fullan, 2001; Horng et al., 2010), creating an effective tool to best measure the multifaceted nature of principal practice in an accurate and developmental manner is crucial to future educational reform efforts. Measuring principal performance is necessary because it can offer school systems additional mechanisms to ensure accountability and reinforce the importance of strong leadership practices. Since research has indicated that school principals are second only to classroom teachers as the most influential school factor in student achievement (Black, 2010; Marzano et al., 2005; Leithwood et al., 2004; Wahlstrom et al., 2010), effectively measuring principal leadership performance must rank high on the list of priorities for educational systems interested in generating formative information with which to build professional learning and growth for principals. Measuring principal performance correctly is challenging due to the numerous variables that exist within the various educational communities and because principal influence on instructional practices is sometimes not easily determined (Stronge, Xu, & Leeper, 2013).

Goldring et al. (2009) found that school districts often use antiquated local instrumentation and inconsistent measures for principal performance assessment. These instruments may not be aligned with existing professional standards, and often lack valid justification or documentation of psychometric rigor (Heck & Marcoulides, 1996). This variance opens up the possibility of inaccuracy and ambiguity, resulting in evaluations absent of research-based standards of practice.

Since the early 1990's school reform efforts have called for effective leadership performance standards designed to measure the success of school leaders and improve

educational leadership quality (Levine, 2005; Murphy, 2003; Young, Fuller, Brewer,

Carpenter, & Mansfield, 2007). As a result, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure

Consortium (ISLLC) (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996) developed six

comprehensive school leadership standards that have been endorsed and adopted by the

majority of the 50 states (Murphy, 2003). In addition, the Educational Leadership

Constituent Council (ELCC) standards (NPBEA, 2002) were developed for the National

Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) with the support of the

National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA, 2009). The ELCC

standards parallel the ISLLC standards, with the exception of a seventh standard that

require an internship for aspiring school leaders. The ISLLC standards were updated in

2008 (CCSSO, 2008) and the ELCC standards subsequently were revised in 2008

(NPBEA, 2009) to incorporate the ISLLC revisions.

      The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) is grounded in the

belief that educational leaders are accountable for improved student learning. This

commitment was reinforced by the six ISLLC standards for educational leaders

developed in 1996. According to these standards, "a school administrator is an

educational leader who promotes the success of all students by developing a shared

vision within schools, creating cultures that support learning, ensuring safe, efficient, and

effective learning, collaborating with the broad community, acting in a fair and ethical

fashion, and understanding the socioeconomic, legal, political, and cultural in the

contexts of school setting" (CCSSO, 1996, p. 8). The six current ISLLC (2008) standards

are:

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Standard 1: An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.

Standard 2: An education leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth

Standard 3: An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Standard 4: An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

Standard 5: An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

Standard 6: An education leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context. (CCSSO, 2008, pp. 14-15)

The six ISSLC standards appear to include many of the same concepts as Greenleaf's servant leadership characteristics. The use of the word "stewardship" in standard one has an obvious servant leadership connotation, as stewardship is one of the ten characteristics of servant leadership as introduced by Greenleaf (1970). In standard two, the term "nurturing" aligns with Greenleaf's servant leadership characteristic of healing, empathy and foresight. In standard four, "responding to diverse community

interests," parallels Greenleaf's ideas of building community and awareness. Standards five and six can arguably be viewed as the standards aligned to servant leadership due to the expectation to promote success of students by understanding the larger context while acting in an ethical manner. All the standards include the following stem statement, "An educational leader...promotes the success of every student…" (pp. 14-15). The very emphasis of a leader promoting success of "every student," not seeking personal success or advancement, clarifies that the standards are intended to develop unselfish, servant-oriented school leaders.

States additionally have the ability to set guidelines for evaluating performance of their school leaders. Many states have successfully implemented assessment structures to ensure that there are resources in place to continually evaluate leaders' performance using common, research-based expectations (CCSSO, 2008). The Performance Evaluation Reform Act of 2010 was passed in Illinois to provide direction for developing performance evaluation systems for teachers and principals that are valid and reliable, contributing to the development of staff and improved student achievement outcomes. Some of the key requirements for complying with this Act as it pertains to principal evaluation after September 1, 2012 are the following:

1. The principal must be evaluated in writing at least once every school year.

2. The evaluation must take into consideration the principal's specific duties, responsibilities, management, and competence as a principal.

3. The evaluation must specify the principal's strengths and weaknesses with supporting reasons.

4. The principal must be rated as *excellent, proficient, needs improvement,* or *unsatisfactory.*

5. The evaluation must provide for the use of data and indicators on student growth as a significant factor in rating the principal's performance. (ISBE, 2012)

A unique aspect of the Illinois Principal Evaluation Plan is the introduction of student growth component. Within the context of current school reform efforts, principal effectiveness is usually defined as the ability of the principal to raise student achievement or to facilitate student growth (NAESP and NASSP, 2013). Therefore, a primary focus of principal evaluation should be to determine how the principal is effectively improving instruction and student growth (NAESP and NASSP, 2013).

If the focus of principal evaluation is to determine how effective the principal is as a capacity builder who facilitates meaningful and productive systems change, then school leaders should be held accountable for performance standards that define excellence within this domain (NAESP and NASSP, 2013). As a result, the State of Illinois in coordination between the Illinois Board of Education, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), and New Leaders for New Schools developed the new Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). The IPSSL Standards have been developed for the Illinois State Board of Education to be used primarily for principal evaluation. Although the ISLLC Standards (CCSSO, 2008) provided a solid policy foundation to guide school leadership reform, they are not outcome-based or specific enough to guide the principal evaluation process in Illinois. The IPSSL standards are more specific, outcome-based standards, aligned to the ISLLC Standards,

which includes a performance rubric with descriptors and outcomes, as well as examples

of evidence for evaluators to use in measuring effective principal performance. The six

IPSSL standards are:

1. LIVING A MISSION, VISION, AND BELIEFS FOR RESULTS – The

Principal works with the staff and community to build a shared mission, and

vision of high expectations that ensures all students are on the path to college and

career readiness, and holds staff.

2. LEADING AND MANAGING SYSTEMS CHANGE – The principal creates

and implements systems to ensure a safe, orderly, and productive environment for

student and adult learning toward the achievement of school and district

improvement priorities.

3. IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING – The principal works with the

school staff and community to develop a research-based framework for effective

teaching and learning that is refined continuously to improve instruction for all

students.

4. BUILDING AND MAINTAINING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS –

The principal creates a collaborative school community where the school staff

families and community interact regularly and share ownership for the success of

the school.

5. LEADING WITH INTEGRITY AND PROFESSIONALISM – The principal

works with the school staff and community to create a positive context for

learning by ensuring equity, fulfilling professional responsibilities with honesty

and integrity, and serving as a model for the professional behavior of others.

6. CREATING AND SUSTAINING A CULTURE OF HIGH EXPECTATIONS

– The principal works with staff and community to build a culture of high

expectations and aspirations for every student by setting clear staff and student

expectations for positive learning behaviors and by focusing on students' social-

emotional learning. (ISBE, 2012, pp. 10-21)

Effective principal evaluation systems are grounded in clear and common

standards that define the types of practices and outcomes that will be assessed by the

evaluation system. Measures are the methods that are use to determine principals' levels

of performance and typically include evidence of principal practice and outcomes. In the

State of Illinois and across the country, states and school districts are designing principal

evaluation systems as a means of improving leadership, learning, and school

performance. Principal evaluation systems hold potential for supporting professional

learning and sense of accountability for instructional excellence and student performance.

Principal evaluation also serves as an important part of state and school district systems

of leadership support, especially when newly designed evaluation systems work in

conjunction with principal certification, hiring, and professional development (NAESP

and NASSP, 2013).

Conclusion

This literature review described the practice of servant leadership in the context of

educational leadership, namely examining the role of the school principal. Servant

leadership is an approach to leadership that is applicable in a variety of different

organizational and individual contexts with a sound historical backdrop. Servant

leadership studies have evolved from theoretical literature reviews and case studies to

more recently, quantitative studies derived from various statistical instruments developed to measure servant leadership perceptions and practices. Educational research studies largely support servant leadership as a successful and positive leadership construct for school and educational leaders.

Researchers recommend that further studies, both quantitative and qualitative, be conducted regarding the presence of servant leadership within the educational context (Brown, 2010; Girard, 2000; Kasun, 2009; Laub, 1999; Page & Wong, 2000; Stephen, 2007; Taylor, 2002; Taylor-Gillham, 1998; Williams, 2009). This study is designed to contribute to the body of literature on educational theory through a mixed-method design. The quantitative portion of the study will examine how Illinois school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders based on Page and Wong's (2003) Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR) and the qualitative component will study what servant leadership practices Illinois school principals use based on Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). Specific practices employed by the principals based upon their servant leadership beliefs will be identified and categorized.

Greenleaf (1996) shared that the role of the servant leader is to serve the needs of others, as a primary motivation for facilitating change within a complex culture. It is a research-based leadership construct that is practical and applicable to many organizational contexts, including schools. A servant leadership approach for a principal has incredible potential, especially when providing leadership in schools becomes increasing more complicated. Servant leadership can offer an effective model to help

principals meet the leadership needs and accountability structures that exist in current

school system structures.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Research has decisively indicated that effective principal leadership is critical to the culture, achievement, and success of a school (Black, 2010; Cunningham, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2010; Marzano et al., 2005; Williamson, 2006). As the review of literature developed, it became evident that servant leadership can be considered a viable and effective leadership construct for school principals (Brown, 2010; Herbst, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1995; Williams, 2009). In fact, the newly developed Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL), which serve as the primary criterion in the State of Illinois for effective principal practice, draw numerous commonalities to servant leadership characteristics. Therefore, it is beneficial to examine how Illinois principals perceive themselves as servant leaders and further what servant leadership practices they utilize in effectively leading their schools.

The purpose of this study will be to examine servant leadership as self-perceived by Illinois school principals, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that effectively align to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). Although past studies have researched servant leadership in the field of education, this study specifically centers on Illinois school principals and their perceptions related to servant leadership characteristics and practices. The significance of the study lies in its potential to contribute to the examination of effective leadership practices of Illinois schools principals. If school success is directly proportional to the presence of effective principal leadership and servant leadership has the potential for being a valuable

leadership approach for principals, it is of educational value to further study principal's

perceptions of the servant leadership construct and practices they use that align to this

construct.

This chapter will be divided into the following categories: research questions,

research design, procedures, data analysis, and instrumentation.

<div align="center">**Research Questions**</div>

The guiding research questions will measure Illinois principal self-perceptions of

leadership, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and

what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that effectively align to the

Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL).

Research Question 1

How do Illinois school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders based on

Page and Wong's (2003) Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR)?

Research Question 2

What servant leadership practices do Illinois school principals use based on Page

and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance

Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL)?

<div align="center">**Research Design**</div>

To examine servant leadership as a leadership approach of Illinois school

principals, a mixed-method sequential explanatory design (Creswell, 2003) will be

utilized. A mixed-method is a research model where both quantitative and qualitative

data are analyzed as part of the study. According to Rudestam and Newton (2001), there

are various ways to mix research methodologies, one of which is "to use both quantitative

and qualitative methods and data to study the same phenomenon within the same study"
(p. 45). Rudestam and Newton stated that they are advocates of mixed-method studies
because:

> In our experience, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies is
> often a good choice of method. This approach combines the rigor and precision
> of experimental (or quasi-experimental) designs and quantitative data with the
> depth understanding for qualitative methods and data. (p. 45)

This mixed-method study will be designed to analyze both quantitative and qualitative
data to examine servant leadership of school principals by first analyzing quantitative
data using a survey instrument and then gathering qualitative data through conducting
semi-structured one-on-one interviews and a focus group interview in a secondary phase.

Quantitative Design

The initial quantitative phase of the study will measure the self-perceptions of
Illinois school principals on the construct of servant leadership by administering Page and
Wong's (2003) Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR) (see Appendix C) and a
demographic survey (see Appendix D). The SLPR will be utilized to generate descriptive
statistics and measures of central tendency using a total mean score for each participant
and each survey question, as well as mean scores for each of Page and Wong's (2003)
Seven Factors of Servant Leadership. A brief set of demographic questions will
accompany the survey to provide further data for quantitative analysis.

Qualitative Design

The qualitative component of the study will be phenomenological in nature
utilizing narrative inquiry to examine the servant leadership practices of Illinois school

principals based on a series of semi-structured one-on-one interviews and a focus group interview. A phenomenological study describes the meaning or essence of lived experiences for individuals about a concept or phenomenon (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 2002). Creswell (2003) further clarified narrative inquiry as "gathering data through a collection of stories, reporting individual experiences, and discussing the meanings of those experiences…" (p. 512). This phase of the study will examine how principals experience the phenomenon of servant leadership, by collecting data, developing themes of information, and creating a general description of principal practices based on a series of questions asked through the semi-structured one-on-one interview process and focus group interview.

Semi-structured one-on-one interviews can be regarded as a highly effective way to gather qualitative data using participants who are not hesitant to speak, are articulate, and who can share ideas comfortably (Creswell, 2003). According to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) semi-structured interviews are much more flexible than structured interviews and are more favored by educational researchers because it allows the interviewer to achieve more depth through probing and expanding the interviewee's responses. The semi-structured interviews will help the researcher examine servant leadership practices of Illinois principals through alignment of Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL), especially in using an interview protocol and questions that target servant leadership factors that involve a leader's personal character and actions (see Appendix H).

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Focus group interviews can be used to collect shared understanding from several individuals, as well as gain insight from the group dynamic (Hatch, 2002). Focus groups are designed to engage a group of four to six people in a discussion based on a series of prescribed questions eliciting responses from individuals who take turns talking, sharing ideas, and engaging in a dialogue around a common phenomenon (Creswell, 2003). Morgan (1997) stated that, "the hallmark of focus groups is their specific use of the group interaction to produce data and insight that would be less accessible without the interaction found in the group" (p. 2). Focus group interviews are often used to supplement other qualitative data strategies to provide greater validity to a research study (Hatch, 2002). The focus group interview will help the researcher examine servant leadership practices of Illinois principals through alignment of Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL), especially in using questions and protocol that target servant leadership factors that involve a leader's interactions with others (see Appendix I).

Procedure

The preliminary research proposal was first approved by the dissertation committee from Concordia University in April of 2013, and all initial writing of the problem statement, literature review, and methodology were composed the summer of 2013. The researcher hopes to gain Concordia University Internal Review Board (IRB) approval in the fall of 2013 in order to begin collecting data. Other preliminary work such as determining the participants, collecting permission to use the survey instrument, generating the online survey, and creating the questions for the one-on-one interviews and focus group have been taking place since May of 2013.

Selection of Participants

   The researcher will gain access to the Illinois Principal's Association (IPA) email list of active school principals in K-12 school districts across the State of Illinois as the sample (see Appendix K). Currently the IPA has a membership of approximately 4,300 school administrators. The sample will consist of K-12 school principals throughout the State of Illinois who respond to the quantitative survey, are certified school administrators, and active building principals during the 2013-2014 academic school year. The sample will be valid since each respondent will be equally certified through the State of Illinois and an active school principal.

Data Collection Procedures

   Quantitative data collecting procedures started with obtaining permission from Page and Wong (see Appendix A) to use their copyrighted Servant Leadership Profile-Revised (SLPR) instrument (see Appendix C). The data collection process will commence in the fall of 2013 by sending an introductory email message to those in the sample. The email will contain an explanation of the study and assurance of confidentiality, a consent request (see Appendix B), a demographic survey (see Appendix D), an electronic version of the SLPR (see Appendix C), and directions for completing the survey (see Appendix B). All survey information will be numerically coded into an excel spreadsheet to assure anonymity when submitted.

   Qualitative data collection procedures will begin as results from the quantitative phase arrive. Illinois principals from within a 25 mile radius of the Chicagoland area will be sent an email invitation to participate in the qualitative one-on-one interview. This process will be used to recruit approximately 10 interview participants who will be

contacted via email (see Appendix L) to schedule a convenient interview time and

location, as well as to explain procedures for the 30-minute interview. A copy of the

interview questions will be send to each participant in advance to better prepare each

participant and ensure that the interview will be conducted in a timely fashion.

Data will be collected using interview and focus group questions to identify

servant leadership practices as demonstrated by the Illinois school principals who choose

to participate. This qualitative stage of the study will employ a series of interview

questions generated from developing a research synthesis of Page and Wong's (2003)

Seven Factors of Servant Leadership, with the Illinois Performance Standards for School

Leaders (IPSSL). Synthesis questions (see Appendix E) will be used to determine

specific servant leadership practices principals take in effectively leading their schools.

The performance indicators in each of the six IPSSL standards have been synthesized

into the factors of servant leadership as defined by research to create a series of 20

interview questions (see Appendix G). The original group of 20 interview questions was

than reduced to five one-to-on interview questions and five focus group questions. The

interview protocol and five questions were designed to target specific servant leadership

factors that involve a leader's personal character and actions (see Appendix H). The

focus group protocol and five questions were developed to reveal servant leadership

factors that involve a leader's interactions with others (see Appendix I). These interview

questions will be field tested by three school leaders, who use the servant leadership

style, but are not part of the sample. Input from these pilot interviews will be utilized to

adjust the probing questions for the interviews.

Each one-on-one interview will use consistent interview protocols such as using an oral script (see Appendix J), participant consent (see Appendix M), the same interview protocol and sequence of questions (see Appendix H), and a brief demographic survey (see Appendix D). Having access to demographic information will help the researcher provide context to the study through better describing the sample and providing further opportunities to identify trends in the data. Each interview will be tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim to make certain that data is preserved for analysis. Consistent with Creswell's suggestions (2003), the interviewer will take notes during the tape-recorded interview to document reaction to participant comments. The responses will be coded and analyzed for servant leadership practices and actions. It is anticipated that the interviews will be conducted individually in sessions that range from 20 to 40 minutes, over a period of two months.

After each one-on-one interview is conducted the researcher will solicit participants to further engage in a focus group interview. Hatch (2002) stated that, "focus group interviewing, as a secondary data source, can be useful in enriching the overall data sets of qualitative studies" (p. 131). The focus group interview will involve four to five participants and a moderator. Creswell (2003) observed that, "one problem with conducting focus group interviews is that the researcher often has difficulty taking notes because so much is occurring" (p. 226). In order to address this concern the moderator, a retire Illinois public school principal, will be used to help facilitate the focus group discussion, allowing the researcher an opportunity to exclusively concentrate on note taking and data collection during the dialogue. Hatch (2002) confirmed that,

Moderators are usually hired to lead discussions, while researchers help design

the focus groups, develop questions, and analyze data. The advantages of a

moderator are that this person is primarily interested in facilitating group

processes and does not have a particular interest in the outcomes of the

discussion. (p. 135)

A date, location, and time will be determined and chosen by the researcher in

collaboration with those who are willing to participate. The focus group interview will

use a protocol and sequence of questions (see Appendix I), participant consent (see

Appendix N), and include a brief demographic survey (see Appendix D). Having access

to demographic information will help the researcher provide context to the study through

better describing the sample and providing further opportunities to develop trends in the

data. Each interview will be video and audible tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim to

make certain that data is preserved for analysis. The responses will be coded and

analyzed for servant leadership practices and actions. It is anticipated that the focus

group interview will be conducted in one 45 minute session, following the completion of

all one-on-one interviews.

Data Analysis

Procedure for Quantitative Data Analysis

The researcher will measure Illinois school principals self perceptions of servant

leadership by using SPSS to generate descriptive statistics and measures of central

tendency based on Page and Wong's (2003) Servant leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR)

using a total mean score for each participant and question, as well as mean scores for

each of Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership. The quantitative

data obtained from the SLPR will be entered into the SPSS computer information system for statistical analysis. The data obtained from the SLPR will be analyzed using a comparison of the total SLPR score. As there are 62 items with a 7-point Likert scale, the scores could range from 62 to 434. The purpose of collecting this data will be to determine Illinois principal's self-perceptions of servant leadership. A frequency distribution chart will be used to illustrate the extent to which servant leadership exists among Illinois school principals.

Procedure for Qualitative Data Analysis

The researcher will determine servant leadership practices of Illinois principals by analyzing responses from a series of one-on-one interview questions and a focus group interview generated from a research synthesis of Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership, with the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). Marshall and Rossman (1989) noted that, in qualitative research, researchers dig deep to collect data and then examine it from various angles to construct a meaningful picture of a complete, multifaceted situation. Qualitative data analysis requires the conversion of raw text into evidence-based interpretations, generally involving two steps, first preparing the transcripts and then coding the data (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Preparing the transcripts will involve transcribing the interview and focus group recordings and summarizing each interview and the focus group discussion. Creswell (2003) defined coding as, "the process of segmenting and labeling text to form descriptions and broad themes in the data" (p. 251). Creswell (2003) offered a practical and clear approach to the process of developing codes and identifying themes in qualitative data analysis that will be used in this study:

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1. A preliminary exploratory analysis: Reviewing interview data at least twice in its entirety and taking notes in the margin to gain a deeper perspective of the entire body of information.

2. The coding process: Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL) will be used to identify text segments. Brackets will be placed around each text segment and a code word or phrase that accurately describes meaning will be assigned to each text segment. This process will also assist the researcher in making sense out of the data by identifying redundancy and overlap, in order to collapse the codes into broader themes. When appropriate, the researcher will list the frequency of similar responses for each characteristic found in the data being analyzed. Creswell (2003) described this process as a data analysis spiral.

3. Label the segmented information and create categories.

4. Align categorical information to start determining potential themes by grouping similar categories and reducing redundant categories.

5. Identify general themes and sub themes.

6. Develop a concise description of the data: These themes should help answer research questions, make accurate connections to quantitative data analysis, and form a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of the servant leadership practices of Illinois school principals. This final step in the process will be to integrate and summarize the data, which will be presented in the Chapter Four.

Instrumentation

Instrumentation is necessary to collect data for both the quantitative and qualitative parts of this study. Page and Wong's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR) will be utilized to collect quantitative data on the construct of servant leadership (see Appendix C). The SLPR will yield a continuous interval mean score (possible range of 1.0 to 7.0) for each participant and question. SPSS software will be used to generate a total mean score for each participant and questions, as well as mean scores for each of Page and Wong's Seven Factors of Servant Leadership. The demographic survey provided data for quantitative and qualitative analysis of the influences of gender, experience, education, ethnicity, and school level on the self-perception of servant leadership. Qualitative data for analysis of servant leadership practices will be collected through semi-structured one-on-one interviews and a focus group interview producing an analysis of responses aligned to a series of question.

Quantitative Study Instrumentation

The Servant Leadership Profile - Revised (SLPR) and demographic survey will be used to obtain quantitative data for the study. The SLPR, created by Page and Wong (2003), is a shortened version of the SASLP created by Page and Wong (2000). The SASLP consisted of 99 items using a Likert scale of (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. These 99 items were grouped into 12 categories based upon Spears' (1998b) 10 servant leadership characteristics. Page and Wong (2000) conducted a pilot study of the SASLP in which they found an alpha coefficient of 0.70 or higher for 10 of the 12 categories. This indicated an acceptable level of internal reliability.

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The SLPR, a shortened version of the SASLP, will be the instrument utilized in this study to measure self-perception of servant leadership. The SLPR consists of 62 items employing the same Likert scale of (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. The 62 items are grouped into seven factors:

1. Empowering and Developing Others

2. Power and Pride

3. Serving Others

4. Open, Participatory Leadership

5. Inspiring Leadership

6. Visionary Leadership

7. Courageous Leadership

Validity of the SLPR is evident in the face validity derived from the extensive research Page and Wong (2000) demonstrated to create its predecessor, the SASLP.

Qualitative Study Instrumentation

In the qualitative phase of this study the researcher will use a semi-structured one-on-one interview process and focus group interview. Participants will be asked a series of five synthesis questions derived from Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). Many of the probing questions have been created from SLPR question items and modified so that the answers will yield specific practices used by the principals. These questions will be reviewed and piloted with local public school principals known to be servant leaders, not part of the sample. A tape recorder will be used for the one-on-one interviews and both a tape recorder and video recorder for the focus group interview.

Once final data is transcribed by the researcher, it will be coded using statements reflected in Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). The researcher will transcribe and code all qualitative data.

Reliability and Validity

The strength of this mixed-method design is that it combines the advantages of each form of data. Creswell (2003) stated, "The rationale for the mixed-method approach is that the quantitative data and results provide a general picture of the research problem; more analysis, specifically through qualitative data collection, is needed to refine, extend, or explain the general picture" (p. 560). In this study quantitative survey data to will be used to provide generalizability and qualitative data to help validate the survey data by helping explain or elaborate on the quantitative results. In further reflections on qualitative research Merrian and Associates (2002) stated:

> A major concern in all research is the validity, trustworthiness, or authenticity of the study. But like the process of data collection and analysis, the issues around rigor and trustworthiness are best understood once you become involved in the study. In qualitative research we learn how to deal with these issues through immersion in the process and through our actions and their unintended outcomes. (p. 422)

It is the intent of the researcher to use the survey data in a general sense to measure how Illinois school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders and to become further involved in the study by using one-on-one interviews and a focus group to become more

immersed in the process of identifying servant leadership practices of Illinois school principals.

The quantitative component of this study will use the Servant Leadership Profile - Revised (SLPR) created by Page and Wong (2003), which yielded a total Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.937 indicating an acceptable level of internal reliability. Questions on the instrument are clear; the survey administration will be conducted consistently, and will only take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

The qualitative component will serve to help better explain servant leadership practices of Illinois principals by triangulating data from one-on-one interviews and a focus group discussion. The researcher will use the individual interviews, member checking of the interpretation of the interview, and the focus group responses to triangulate the data and strengthen the internal validity of the study (Merriam & Associates, 2002). During the member checking process with participants, Merriam and Associates stated that "Here you ask the participants to comment on your interpretation of the data. That is, you take your tentative findings back to some of the participants (from whom you derived the raw data through interviews or observations) and ask whether your interpretation 'rings true'" (p. 26). The researcher will share notes and summaries with participant following the interviews and focus group to provide each participant the opportunity to comment or add to the researcher's summary. Triangulation is one of the chief strategies used in qualitative research to ensure the internal validity and reliability of data (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Using both quantitative and qualitative data sources and data collection methods will help confirm emerging findings and contribute to strengthening the validity and reliability of the study.

Summary

In summation, the purpose of this study will be to examine servant leadership as self-perceived by Illinois school principals, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that effectively align to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). While there are significant research findings on servant leadership in education, there is a lack of research relating to the phenomenon of servant leadership practiced by Illinois principals. To address this void in the literature, the current study will represent an investigation of Illinois principals' perceptions of servant leadership. A mixed-method sequential explanatory design (Creswell, 2003) will utilize to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative phase of the study will measure the self-perceptions of Illinois school principals on the construct of servant leadership by administering Page and Wong's (2003) SLPR and the qualitative component of the study will be phenomenological in nature utilizing narrative inquiry to examine the servant leadership practices of principals based on a series of semi-structured one-on-one interviews and a focus group discussion.

Chapter Four will present descriptive statistics from the SLPR, designed to examine the self-perceptions of Illinois school principals on the construct of servant leadership. The chapter will continue to provide descriptive results from in-depth interviews and a focus group session with active Illinois principals to disclose effective servant leadership themes, or actions that are significant to their practice as school leaders.

Chapter Five will present an analysis and synthesis of the research findings.

Conclusions and implications for further study will also be included in the final chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine servant leadership as self-perceived by Illinois school principals, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that effectively align to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). By exploring principal perceptions of servant leadership, this study will disclose:

1. How do Illinois principals perceive themselves as servant leaders based on Page and Wong's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR)?

2. What servant leadership practices do Illinois school principals use based on Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL)?

This chapter presents the results of the analyses of data collected for the study. A mixed-method sequential explanatory design (Creswell, 2003) was utilized to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative phase of the study specifically measured the self-perceptions of Illinois school principals on the construct of servant leadership by administering Page and Wong's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile – Revised. This first phase used general descriptive statistics to explain Illinois principal's self-perceptions of servant leadership, leading to deeper exploration of servant leadership practices based on Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). The qualitative component of the study is phenomenological in nature (Lester, 1999) utilizing narrative inquiry to examine those servant leadership practices of principals based on a series of semi-

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structured one-on-one interviews and a focus group discussion that will employ the use of synthesis questions to reveal characteristics and practices that align to Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). The purpose of the phenomenological approach is to clarify the specific, to identify phenomena through how they are perceived by the main participants in a situation (Lester, 1999). In the human experience this normally translates into gathering 'deep' information and perceptions through inductive, qualitative methods such as interviews, discussions and participant observation, and representing it from the perspective of the research participants (Creswell, 1998, 2003). In the qualitative phase of this study the phenomenological approach will help disclose detailed information from principal practices, aligned to both theory and policy, about the actions they demonstrate that support a servant leadership approach.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative portion of this study examined the self-perceptions of servant leadership of Illinois principals by answering the question: How Illinois school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders based on Page and Wong's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR)?

In this phase of the study, the Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (Page & Wong, 2003) was administered via email to 4,033 Illinois principals currently employed in Illinois. The Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR) self-assessment instrument created by Page and Wong (2003) was specifically designed to measure participants perceptions of servant leadership by the using 62 items, grouped into seven categories, that Page and Wong call, "Factors of Servant Leadership." These seven factors

developed by Page and Wong are based upon leaders' actions and allow the researcher to better operationalize servant leadership by exploring specific actions that leaders take to act upon their servant leadership beliefs. The seven factors of servant leadership are:

Factor 1: Empowering and developing others

Factor 2: Power and pride (Vulnerability and humility, if scored in the reverse)

Factor 3: Serving others

Factor 4: Open, participatory leadership

Factor 5: Inspiring leadership

Factor 6: Visionary leadership

Factor 7: Courageous leadership (Integrity and authenticity)

The instrument is designed to measure both positive and negative leadership characteristics. Using a 7-point Likert scale, which is required to ensure scale validity and reliability (Dawes, 2008; Foddy, 1994), respondents determine agreement or disagreement with each of the statements in describing self-perceptions as a servant leader. Using an odd numbered ordinal scale eliminates forced choice and permits each respondent a mid-point or "undecided" option (Dawes, 2008). Of the purpose of measuring self-perception, removing forced choice can be viewed as an advantage since respondents may not feel or perceive they are being required to make a selection (Dawes, 2008). Each participant rated each question in terms of what they believe or normally do in leadership situations using a scale of:

1 = Strong Disagreement,

2 = Disagreement,

3 = Slightly Disagree,

4 = Undecided,

5 = Slightly Agree,

6 = Agree,

7 = Strongly Agree.

The researcher used a Google Form tool to convert the Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (Page & Wong, 2003) survey into an electronic survey format. The researcher then emailed the Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (Page & Wong, 2003) survey to a sample of 4,033 practicing Illinois principals, who are current members of the Illinois Principal's Association. As each data set was returned, the researcher reviewed it for completeness and adherence to the directions provided with the survey instructions. Of the 4,033 instruments that were distributed via email, 116 were returned through email as, "Delivery to the following recipient failed permanently," and a sum total of 310 were returned and completed correctly. Thus, a response rate of 7.914%, 310 of 3,917 was reported, with a usability rate of 100%, 310 of 310 usable. The Google Form electronic survey platform time stamped and extrapolated the responses to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, where they were automatically totaled in column form. The totals then were imported into SPSS (Version 20.0) raw data screen for statistical analysis.

Data Sample

The data set being analyzed uses the following six demographic variables to obtain the appropriate descriptive statistics related to the sample: (a) All Respondents, (b) Gender, (c) Administrative Experience, (d) Highest Degree Obtained, (e) Ethnic Background, and (f) Serving School Information. Using descriptive statistics will help describe trends in the data to help answer how Illinois principals perceive themselves as

servant leaders based on Page and Wong's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR). Descriptive statistics are necessary to indicate general tendencies in the data, the spread of scores, and how scores compare to each other (Creswell, 2003). Variables and relationships between variables will be analyzed using measures of central tendency and variability, as well as studying kurtosis and skewness. Data will be analyzed based on total SLPR mean scores, as well as examining the seven factors of servant leadership as proposed by Page and Wong (2003). Table 1 describes the means and standard deviations of total SLPR survey results for all participants and groups represented. The mean SLPR score of the sample is 5.646 and the range is 4.742 stretching from the minimum SLPR score of 1.871 to the maximum SLPR score of 6.612.

The SLPR survey data were represented very evenly among male (48%) and female (52%) Illinois principals, with the female group (5.688) reporting SLPR scores slightly greater than both the male group (5.600) and total mean (5.646). Seventy-one percent (71%) of the sample was represented as reporting an experience level of 0-10 years (219), with an average mean SLPR score of 5.603. The group of most experienced principals, with 16 years or more (42), reported the highest SLPR scores of 5.882. Within the highest degree obtained demographic group, 61 principals who were identified as having a Doctorate level of education reported the highest SLPR score of 5.741, with the greatest group represented as having a Master's degree (248) reporting a SLPR average score of 5.624. Ethnically, the sample was represented greatest by White (278) principals however the Hispanic (7) ethnic group reported out the greatest SLPR mean score of 5.726. Elementary school principals (226) rounded out the greatest percentage of respondents to the survey at 73%.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of SLPR Results for All Participants

Group	*n*	*M*	*SD*
All	310	5.646	0.497
Male	149	5.601	0.463
Female	161	5.688	0.525
Administrative Experience			
0-5 years	103	5.621	0.497
6-10 years	116	5.585	0.577
11-15 years	49	5.694	0.361
16+ years	42	5.823	0.344
Highest Degree Obtained			
Bachelor's degree	1	5.403	0.000
Master's degree	248	5.624	0.530
Doctorate	61	5.741	0.325
Ethnic Background			
American Indian	0	0.000	0.000
Asian	1	5.451	0.000
Black	21	5.690	0.872
Hispanic	7	5.726	0.353
Multiracial	3	6.043	0.025
White	278	5.637	0.465
Serving School Information			
Elementary (K-8)	226	5.656	0.337
Secondary (9-12)	60	5.555	0.592
All levels (K-12)	24	5.785	0.337

Note: Maximum Score = 6.612.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are used to summarize a collection of data in a clear and

understandable manner. They are used to present quantitative descriptions in a

manageable and organized way, allowing the researcher to perform various analyses

using both numerical and graphical approaches to help summarize and examine data

(Pallant, 2007). By using descriptive statistical techniques in this study, the researcher will present a complete overview of the data sample, consider basic assumptions, and identify possible errors, or outlier values to help set a path for further investigations (Salklind, 2008). In this research study, simple summaries about the sample and survey outcomes, using numerical and graphical representations, will help to organize, describe, and interpret principal's perceptions of servant leadership derived from the SLPR (Page & Wong, 2003).

Graphical methods of analysis are typically better suited for identifying patterns in data, visually clarifying trends, distributions, and relationships between variables (Pallant, 2007). Figure 2 illustrates how descriptive statistics can be represented graphically, using the SLPR total mean score from the data set analyzed. This description specifically shows the frequency distribution of the SLPR total mean scores from the sample using a basic histogram.

The distribution of SLPR scores is uneven, demonstrating a higher than normal, or negatively skewed distribution. Skewness measures the lack of symmetry of a distribution (Salkind, 2008). Using a histogram to show the distribution provides information on how frequently SLPR mean scores were dispersed throughout the range. The graph shows that the greatest distribution of SLPR scores fall between the mean range of 5.0 and 6.5. Since the maximum score was 6.612, it could be interpreted from this data that the majority of respondents are self perceived servant leaders since the greatest frequency of SLPR scores were clustered nearest the maximum score. This clustered distribution of SLPR scores and negative skewness is also evident on the stem and leaf plot in Figure 3. A stem and leaf plot is another manner for

organizing quantitative data in a graphical format, similar to a histogram, to assist in

visualizing the shape of a distribution (Pallant, 2007).
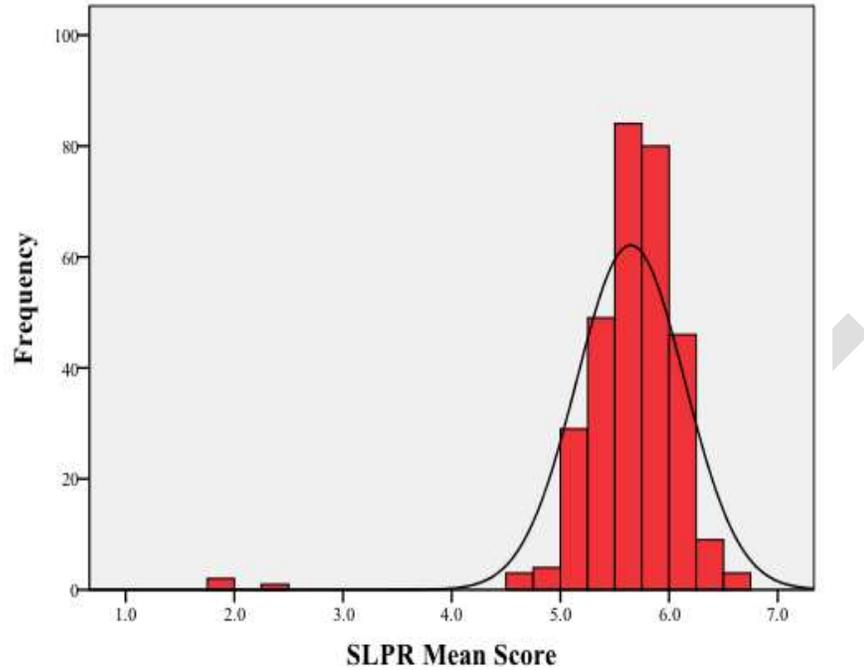
Figure 2. Histogram of SLPR Mean Score Distributions

```
          Frequency      Stem &  Leaf

          6.00 Extremes (=<4.74)
          1.00           48 .  5
          3.00           49 .  688
          6.00           50 .  388999
          15.00          51 .  111122224666677
          14.00          52 .  00224444577779
          21.00          53 .  00000222333355557788
          22.00          54 .  00000113333555566668888
          45.00          55 .
0000000000000011113333344444666666688889999999
          21.00          56 .  11222444466667779999
          35.00          57 .  000022222222244444555777777779999999
          35.00          58 .  000000000222333333555555777777777888
          28.00          59 .  00000011133355556888888888888
          29.00          60 .  00000111113333334444466688999
          12.00          61 .  111124666999
          9.00           62 .  002245577
          3.00           63 .  355
          2.00           64 .  56
          2.00           65 .  49
          1.00           66 .  1

          Stem width:  .10
          Each leaf:     1 case(s)
```

Figure 3. Stem and Leaf Plot of SLPR Score Distributions

Numerical approaches are more precise and objective, typically organizing

mathematical values in a chart or table format to order or rank data (Salkind, 2008).

Table 2 provides numerical information about the sample that shows the total population

(N) being 310, as well as clarifying the measures of central tendency in the clear and

accurate manner. The mean SLPR score of the sample is 5.646 and the range is 4.742

stretching from the minimum SLPR score of 1.871 to the maximum SLPR score of 6.612.

The skew of the curve was calculated at -3.770, which indicated a negative skewing of the normal curve.

Table 2

Numerical Table of Descriptive Statistics from the SLPR Mean Score

SLPR		
N	Valid	310
	Missing	0
Mean		5.646
Std. Error of Mean		0.028
Median		5.710
Mode		5.500
Std. Deviation		0.497
Variance		0.247
Skewness		-3.770
Std. Error of Skewness		0.138
Kurtosis		26.159
Std. Error of Kurtosis		0.276
Range		4.742
Minimum		1.871
Maximum		6.612

The negative skewness of the curve is also evident in analyzing the histogram in Figure 2. The SLPR mean score data would be considered slightly more negatively skewed since the high end of the curve is more lopsided to the right. A negatively skewed distribution is one whose elongated tail extends to the right end of the range (Salkind, 2008). This represents that a larger number of occurrences appear at the higher end of the distribution, which demonstrates that the mean SLPR scores for most respondents falls greater than the mean of 5.646, indicating again that the majority of principals are self perceived servant leaders, due to the concentration of high mean scores reported on the SLPR. Numerically, it is also important to note that the median was

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found to be 5.710 (see Table 2) and according to Salkind (2008), "If the median is greater than the mean, the distribution is negatively skewed" (p. 60). This negative skewing of the distribution is accurately represented numerically (see Table 2), as well as graphically in the histogram (see Figure 2) and stem and leaf plot (see Figure 3).

As a measure of variability, the standard deviation is defined as the average distance each score varies from the mean (Salkind, 2008). The standard deviation of the mean SLPR score is 0.497. In terms of the normal "bell" curve the standard deviation measures of how spread out the bell is. Variability describes the amount of spread or dispersion in a set of data (Salkind, 2008). In Figure 2, the variability in the distribution is clustered tightly around the mean, creating a curve that is peaked high around the mean score, and not spread out evenly as in a normal bell curve. Kurtosis is defined as a measure of the "peakedness" or "flatness" of a distribution (Salkind, 2008). Flatness is further defined as playkurtic, and curves that are higher peaked as leptokurtic (Salkind, 2008). The graphical data provided in Figure 2 is leptokurtic compared to a normal, bell shaped distribution since it has a greater "peak". This demonstrates that the SLPR mean score data is less variable or dispersed across the score range, and is more clustered around the mean score of 5.646. Numerically, a kurtosis value near zero indicates a shape close to a normal curve (Salkind, 2008). From the numeric data in Table 2, kurtosis is figured at 26.159, which indicates a statistical distribution that is leptokurtic, where the points along the X-axis are clustered, resulting in a higher peak than the curvature found in a normal distribution (Salkind, 2008). This high peak and corresponding fat tails means the distribution is more grouped around the mean, and will have a relatively smaller standard deviation (0.497). This yet again, helps validate that

principals who participated in the SLPR survey are self-perceived servant leaders based on distribution of scores clustered toward the greater end of the range.
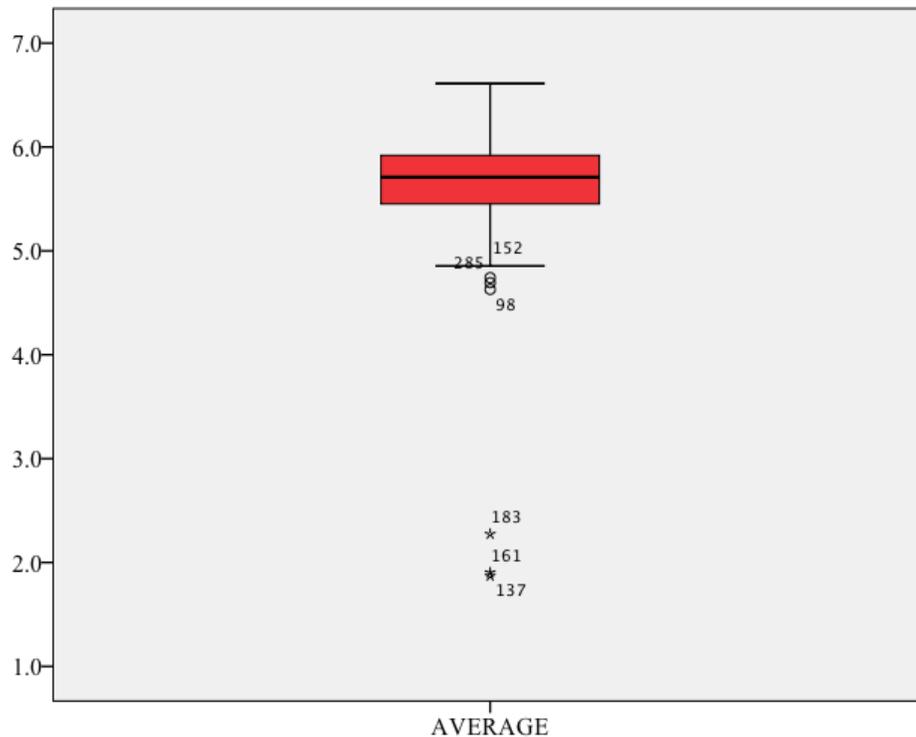

Figure 4. Box Plot of SLPR Mean Score Distributions

   The range of scores is 4.742 with the lowest score of 1.871 and the highest score of 6.612. Six (6) outliers were identified through the Box Plot (see Figure 4) and the Stem and Leaf Plot (see Figure 3), though the greatest distribution of SLPR mean scores are grouped around the mean score of 5.646.

   The box plot represented in Figure 4 provides information about the distribution of the SLPR mean scores of all respondents. The box plot shows each distribution of data in a box with protruding lines, called whiskers. The length of the box defines the continuous variables interquartile range and the line inside the box represents the median value. The whiskers illustrate the greatest and least mean values (Pallant, 2007). It is visually evident that the cluster of mean scores in the box is concentrated around the

median score of 5.710. This demonstrates that 50% of the data, the interquartile range, as shown by the red boxes is distributed around both median and mean SLPR scores.

Another significant aspect of using a box plot is how it illustrates outliers. Outliers are scores that are atypical to the sample, either much lower or higher from the reminder of the data. These extreme values are represented with small circles, or if more extreme from the sample asterisks (Pallant, 2007). The stem and leaf plot (see Figure 3) shows evidence of 6 outliers, however the box plot (see Figure 4) more specifically illustrates the outliers as 3 positioned near the low whisker and 3 that rest on the lower end of the sample. Removing the 6 outliers from the sample would only slightly change the total mean score from 5.646 to 5.691. These 6 outliers in the data do little to impact skewing of the SLPR total mean data, however does slightly lessen the total mean score (5.646) in comparison to the medium (5.710).

In order to delve more deeply into examining servant leadership perceptions of Illinois school principals each factor of servant leadership derived from Page and Wong's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile – Revised instrument was analyzed in a categorical fashion. Table 3 illustrates the combined mean scores and standard deviations of each servant leadership factor, based on a select group of questions from the SLPR that specifically address characteristics associated to each of the seven factors of servant leadership. Highest in rank order, Factor 4: Open, Participatory Leadership yield the greatest mean score (6.440) compared to other factors examined in the survey. Factor 7: Courageous Leadership (6.293) and Factor 3: Serving Others (6.189) generated mean scores nearest Factor 4: Open, Participatory Leadership. Factors with mean scores that ranked in the middle of the sample were Factor 1: Empowering and Developing Others

(6.064), Factor 6: Visionary Leadership (5.957), and Factor 5: Inspiring Leadership

(5.891). Though identified as in the middle of the sample, it is important to note that

these mean scores were clustered near the top of the range and each factor had a mean

score greater than the total mean of 5.646 (see Figure 5). Factor 2: Power and Pride

(Vulnerability and humility, if scored in the reverse) produced the least mean score

(2.261), indicating that the surveyed sample of principals were largely in agreement that

factors such as maintaining power or making ego driven decisions were viewed as

negative leadership practices.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of SLPR Results for Each Factor of Servant Leadership

Group	n	M	SD
All	310	5.646	0.497
Factor 1: Empowering and developing others	310	6.064	0.655
Factor 2: Power and pride	310	2.261	0.988
Factor 3: Serving others	310	6.189	0.681
Factor 4: Open, participatory leadership	310	6.440	0.631
Factor 5: Inspiring leadership	310	5.891	0.688
Factor 6: Visionary leadership	310	5.957	0.722
Factor 7: Courageous leadership	310	6.293	0.691

Note: Maximum Mean Score = 6.612

The bar graph represented in Figure 5 inspects the SLPR mean scores of each of

Page and Wong's (2003) factors of servant leadership. This illustration provides a simple

graphical representation to show how the mean score of each servant leadership factor is

compared to the SLPR total mean score. As the bar graph demonstrates, 6 of the 7

servant leadership factors are represented as having mean scores that rise above the total

mean score, with only one factor, Power and Pride, reporting a mean value less than the

total mean score. In addition, the graphical representation demonstrates the slight

variance between each servant leadership factor mean score that fall greater than the total

mean score. The factors of Open, Participatory Leadership and Inspiring Leadership

show the greatest variance between mean scores that fall greater than the total mean
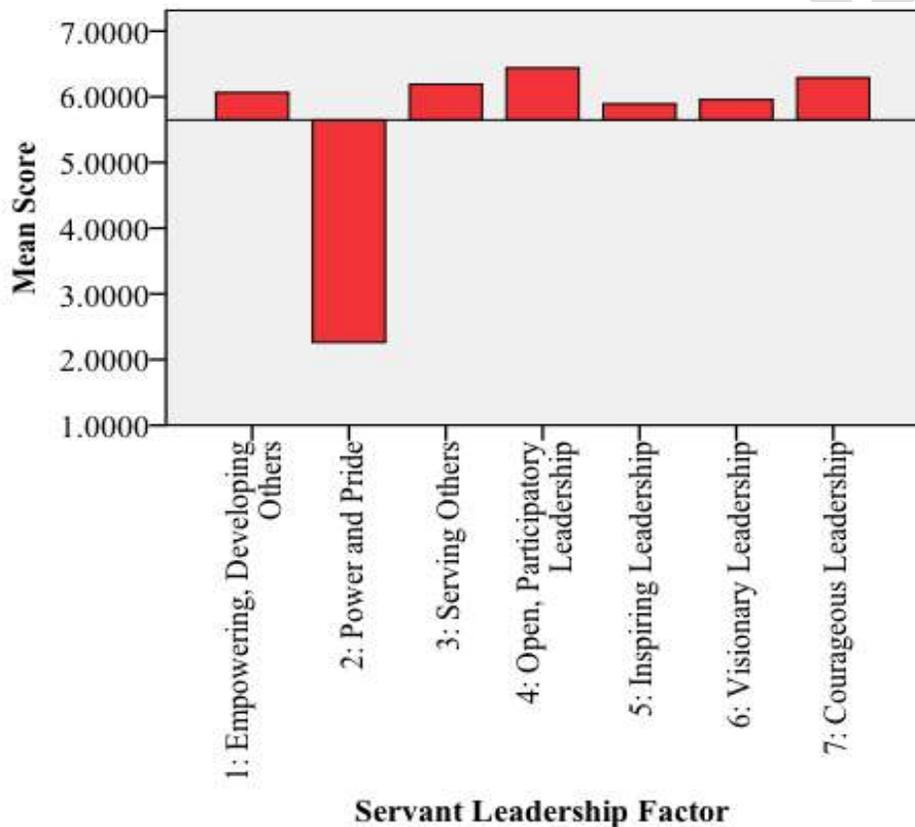
score.

Figure 5. Bar Graph of Servant Leadership Factor Mean Scores

The quantitative results from the first phase of the data analysis strongly suggest

that Illinois principals' perceive themselves as servant leaders based on the SLPR survey

sample; however to better understand Illinois principal's practices associated with servant

leadership further examination is warranted. Although the use of descriptive data does

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not show statistical significance, it does provide information that will help raise additional questions about characteristics and practices of servant leadership aligned to theoretical frameworks and policy-driven performance standards, such as Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). For example, further investigation of how principals carry out Participatory Leadership, or refrain from using Power and Pride will help paint a more complete picture in better understanding how Illinois principals perceive servant leadership as a viable and effective leadership construct.

Qualitative Data Analysis

In the qualitative portion of the study, a phenomenological narrative inquiry approach (Creswell, 1998, 2003; Lester, 1999) was used to examine servant leadership practices of Illinois school principals by answering the following question: What servant leadership practices do Illinois school principals use based on Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL)? In order to generate data in relation to this question, Illinois principals engaged in semi-structured one-on-one interviews and a focus group discussion that employed a series of synthesis questions (see Appendix E). Questions were developed to reveal servant leadership characteristics and practices align to Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL).

Qualitative data collection procedures began after the results from the quantitative survey were recorded and analyzed. For geographical convenience purposes, Illinois principals from within a 25 mile radius of the Chicagoland area were sent an email

invitation to participate in the qualitative one-on-one interview. The first ten principals

who expressed interest became part of the sample, were scheduled for an interview, and

sent the predetermined interview protocols (see Appendix J). Each interview was tape-

recorded and transcribed verbatim to make certain that data was preserved for analysis.

Consistent with Creswell's suggestions (2003), the interviewer took notes during the

tape-recorded interviews to document responses and participant reactions. To improve

dependability of the findings, member checks were also conducted with each participant

(Merriam & Associates, 2002). Approximately three to five days after each interview,

the researcher emailed each principal the completed transcription to do a member check.

This was implemented in order for participants to review the transcriptions and make sure

the data was accurately presented, obtain possible feedback, and see if any changes were

necessary. Each participant was satisfied with the accuracy of the transcriptions and no

further input was provided. The responses were then coded and analyzed for servant

leadership practices and actions.

After the ten one-on-one interviews were conducted, the researcher solicited

participants to further engage in a focus group discussion to better triangulate the data.

Hatch (2002) stated that, "focus group interviewing, as a secondary data source, can be

useful in enriching the overall data sets of qualitative studies" (p. 131). The focus group

discussion involved four active Illinois principals, who were not involved in the interview

process, and a moderator. Creswell (2003) observed that, "one problem with conducting

focus group interviews is that the researcher often has difficulty taking notes because so

much is occurring" (p. 226). In order to address this concern, a retire Illinois public

school principal, was used as a moderator to help facilitate the focus group discussion.

This allowed the researcher an opportunity to exclusively concentrate on note taking, observation, and data collection during the dialogue. Hatch (2002) confirmed that,

> Moderators are usually hired to lead discussions, while researchers help design the focus groups, develop questions, and analyze data. The advantages of a moderator are that this person is primarily interested in facilitating group processes and does not have a particular interest in the outcomes of the discussion. (p. 135)

The focus group discussion was video and audible tape-recorded, and transcribed verbatim to make certain that data was preserved for analysis. Following the member check, responses were coded and analyzed for servant leadership practices and actions.

Participants

Fourteen Illinois principals participated in the qualitative phase of the study, ten principals engaged in one-on-one interviews and four principals in the focus group discussion. Table 4 describes the 14 principals interviewed for the qualitative portion of the study.

Principal gender was split evenly among male and female participants. Their experience in educational administration ranged from 1 to over 16 years. All 14 principals had earned a master's degree level education, and three had received their doctorate in education. Ethnically, the majority of participants were white and 12 principals worked at the elementary school level.

Table 4

Demographic Information of the Principals Who Participated in the Qualitative Phase

Group	Number of Principals
All	14
Male	7
Female	7
Administrative Experience	
0-5 years	2
6-10 years	5
11-15 years	5
16+ years	2
Highest Degree Obtained	
Bachelor's degree	0
Master's degree	11
Doctorate	3
Ethnic Background	
American Indian	0
Asian	0
Black	1
Hispanic	0
Multiracial	0
White	13
Serving School Information	
Elementary (K-8)	12
Secondary (9-12)	2
All levels (K-12)	0

Nine interviews took place in the principals' offices within their schools during regular school hours, one interview was conducted at a local restaurant over lunch, and the focus group was conducted in an office space designated by the researcher at a convenient location and time following a school day. All offices were designed and

decorated uniquely, however all were typically furnished with a desk or table, chairs, bookshelves, telephones, and computers.

Each principal's body language indicated that they felt comfortable as the interview and focus group discussion began. All used eye contact with the interviewer or each other, sat back in a still fashion their chairs, and smiled appropriately, demonstrating relaxed facial expressions. During the interviews four of the ten Principals had notes in front of them, however only two Principals appeared to refer back to the notes during the conversation. Those principals who participated without notes appeared to be initially more at ease at the onset of the interview. Each principal participating in the focus group activity had prepared brief notes to reference during the discussion.

In all cases the principals were dressed in a professional manner and prepared. The principals were ready at the arranged time for all interviews and the focus group discussion. Since the majority of the interviews were conducted during regular school hours, it was confirmed in advance that phone calls and other distractions were held only to emergencies. Each interview, as well as the focus group dialogue proceeded without interruption. Conversations progressed successfully for a suitable amount of time needed to fully discuss each question. All interviews were held to approximately 30 minutes and the focus group discussion just under one-hour. All principals appeared genuinely interested in sharing their knowledge and opinions through the interview process and during the focus group discussion. The principals' names have been given numeric and letter pseudonym in order to respect and maintain their confidentiality. Each principal who conducted an interview has been assigned a random numeric alias and those who were involved in the focus group a letter alias.

Data Analysis Procedures

      The researcher used inductive analysis (Rubin & Rubin, 2005) to determine servant leadership practices of Illinois school principals. The analysis was conducted through close examination of responses from the one-on-one interviews and focus group discussion. The questions for both the interviews and focus group were derived from a synthesis of Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). Marshall and Rossman (1989) noted that, in qualitative research, researchers dig deep to collect data and then examine it from various angles to construct a meaningful picture of a complete, multifaceted situation. The inductive qualitative analysis in this study required the conversion of raw text into evidence-based interpretations, involving two steps, first preparing the transcripts and then coding the data (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Rubin and Rubin stated, "Analysis in the responsive interviewing model proceeds in two phases. In the first, you prepare transcripts; find, refine, and elaborate concepts, themes, and events; and then code the interviews to be able to retrieve what the interviewees have said about the identified concepts, themes, and events" (p. 201). Preparing the transcripts involved transcribing each interview and focus group recording verbatim, and conducting a follow-up member check. After the transcripts were checked and prepared, the coding process ensued. Creswell (2003) defined coding as, "the process of segmenting and labeling text to form descriptions and broad themes in the data" (p. 251). The process presented by Creswell was used to develop codes and themes in this study through the following six steps:

1. Preliminary Exploratory Analysis: The researcher reviewed interview and focus group transcripts and notes at least twice in their entirety, noting comments in the right margin of the transcripts to gain a deeper outlook of the entire body of information.

2. Coding: Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL) were used to identify text segments. Brackets were placed around each text segment and a code word or phrase that accurately described meaning was assigned to each text segment. This process also assisted the researcher in making sense out of the data by identifying redundancy and overlap, in order to collapse the codes into broader themes. When appropriate, the researcher listed the frequency of similar responses for each characteristic found in the data being analyzed. Creswell (2003) described this process as a data analysis spiral. Table 5 represents Creswell's (2003) steps of the coding process that was utilized in this study.

Table 5

A Visual Model of the Coding Process

Initial read through text data	Identify specific segments of information	Label the segments of information to create categories	Reduce overlap and redundancy among the categories	Create a model incorporating most important categories
Many pages of text	Many segments of text	30-40 categories	15-20 categories	3-8 categories

Note: From Creswell (2003), Figure 9.4, p. 251.

3. Labeling: The researcher read and re-read looking for themes and events in the raw data, ultimately creating 34 labeled categories or codes. Table 6 illustrates the

categories that emerged and how each was coded to represent servant leadership practices

and actions of Illinois principals.

Table 6

Coding System Categories for Analyzing Qualitative Data

#	CATEGORY	CODE
1	Modeling/Leading by Example	MODEL
2	Presence/Visibility	PRES
3	Teamwork	TW
4	Service	SER
5	Empowerment	EMP
6	Shared Decision Making	SDM
7	Democratic	DEMO
8	Collaboration	COLL
9	Communication	COMM
10	High Expectations	HE
11	Improving Teaching and	TL
12	Vision	VIS
13	Listening	LIST
14	Cultural Leader	CULT
15	Professional Growth	PG
16	Student-centered	SC
17	Building Relationships	RELA
18	Trust	TRU
19	Courageous Leadership	CL
20	Time	TIME
21	Feedback	FB
22	Instructional	IL
23	Ethics/Values	ETH
24	Professionalism	PROF
25	Positive Reinforcement	PR
26	Confronting Conversations	CC
27	Value Followers	FOL
28	Humility	HUM
29	Empathy	EMT
30	Reflection	REF
31	Organization	ORG
32	Celebration	CELE
33	Active Leadership	AL
34	Inspiring Leadership	INS

4. Theme Alignment: The researcher aligned categorical information to Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL) in order to start determining potential themes by grouping similar categories and reducing redundant categories (see Appendix G).

5. Theme and Sub-Theme Identification: From the analysis of the data, five major themes emerged with sub-themes as represented in Table 7.

Table 7

Qualitative Themes and Sub-Themes

THEME	SUB-THEMES
1. Living A Vision and Mission	1.1 Student Centered 1.2 Serving Others 1.3 Humility 1.4 Active Leadership
2. Empowerment	2.1 Collaboration 2.2 Professional Growth 2.3 Improving Teaching and Learning
3. Organizational Culture	3.1 Governance and Time 3.2 Teamwork 3.3 Celebrating High Expectations
4. Trusting Relationships	4.1 Shared Decision Making 4.2 Empathy, Ethics, and Valuing Followers
5. Communication	5.1 Courageous Conversations 5.2 Listening 5.3 Leading by Example

6. Description of the Data: These themes will help answer the research question, make accurate connections to the quantitative data analysis, and form a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of the servant leadership practices of Illinois school principals.

Qualitative Results

Using the aforementioned coding process, the qualitative interviews and focus group discussion yielded information on specific practices principals utilize to support a servant leadership approach based on Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). The practices were categorized into 5 themes: Living Vision and Mission, Empowerment, Organizational Culture, Trusting Relationships, and Communication. Fifteen Sub-Themes were created based upon the principals' responses and experiences. Rubin and Rubin (2005) stated, "The goals of the analysis are to reflect the complexity of human interaction by portraying it in the words of the interviewees . . . and to make the complexity understandable to others" (p. 202). The themes and sub-themes are listed below with words taken from interview and focus group responses that have been transcribed and organized to fit within each theme and sub-theme. These responses give voice to the lived experiences of those Illinois principals who serve others through their leadership experience.

Theme 1: Living a Vision and Mission. Servant leaders are able to develop and articulate a personal "service-oriented" vision for themselves and a professional vision for their organization. Page and Wong (2000) emphasized that servant leaders are able to gain support for their vision through reason and persuasion. They are skilled at not only articulating a vision, but also empowering others to attain that vision. The principals who participated in this study supported Page and Wong's (2003) servant leadership factor of Visionary Leadership, as well as the IPSSL Standard 1: Living a Mission, Vision, and Belief for Results through their statements about being student-centered, maintaining a

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personal vision based on service to others and humility, as well as embracing an actions-orientated leadership style. Furthermore this theme provided reaction to how principals address a primary criticism of the servant leadership construct; that servant leaders are overly concerned with the day-to-day needs of their followers, thus reducing focus on big picture needs and long-term organizational goals (Anderson, 2009).

1.1 Student Centered. The Illinois Principals in this study embraced the servant leadership philosophy of focusing on the best interests of others, especially the interests of their students. During each interview principals conveyed a strong conviction to being "student-centered" in their leadership practice, and regularly reiterated the sense that everything they do is "what is best for the students and the school." Several principals shared that they work hard to support teachers because "first and foremost" it affects students. They consistently shared that promoting what is best for students is a priority that drives their decisions making and focus of their leadership.

Principal #1 remarked, "What's best for the organization, is best for our kids" while reflecting on his commitment to being student centered as a necessary attitude of effective principal leadership. Principal #9 expressed a similar feeling by saying, "If people see the you have a true desire for helping children, and do not vacillate, it has a positive effect of building trust and doing what's best for everyone." Principal #6 extended this line of thinking by connecting "student centeredness" to her vision for the school. She expressed the importance of being firmly focused on a student centered school vision when making decisions by stating:

> I have to be firm sometimes, but also very focused. I think that kind of authority, as long as you are focused on the vision, people will understand that you are being

firm for reason. It is not because you are promoting your own agenda. I am
promoting the school's agenda, one for kids.

Four other principals made a direct connection to maintaining a student centered
school mission statement. Principal #5 was the only principal, however, that specifically
mentioned his school's mission statement in a response by stating:

Our mission statement is 'We prepare learners for the future.' So when I need the
courage to do what is right, I think about that, as a leader, to facilitate what is best
for kids; is to prepare them for the challenges of the future.

Additionally, principals expressed that school leaders needed "courage" to remain
"student-centered" and that this "courageousness to advocate for kids" was a critical
practice in making sound school-based decisions. Principal #1 simply stated that, "Its
just doing what's right by kids. I always try to keep in mind, 'true to the kids.' Let's do
what is right on behalf of those kids, not what's easiest. It means standing up for the
kids." Principal #10 felt that making the right decisions was not difficult because, "when
you are doing the right thing, you are always advocating for children." A middle school
principal reaffirmed this thinking by asserting, "the bottom line is that at the end of the
day; how are we impacting a student's ability to learn and grow. Every decision we
make should be grounded in the knowledge that it's going to have some benefit for our
kids."

The focus group feedback suggested a comparable position on theme of being
student centered. One discussion question asked, "What specific practices do you
demonstrate that promote the success of every student?" This question was designed to
specifically address the practices associated with being student centered and aligns

directly to each ISSLC Standard (CCSSO, 2008) which includes the following stem statement, "An educational leader...promotes the success of every student…" (pp. 14-15). The very emphasis of a leader promoting success of "every student," not seeking personal success or advancement, clarifies that the standards are intended to develop unselfish, servant-oriented school leaders that are primarily focused on what is best for students.

During the discourse Principal D shared an example of how being student centered was effective when dealing with complacent teachers. Here he stated how he dealt with a "mediocre" teacher not putting forth enough effort:

> And I made her my project in terms of bringing some joy back into her. And I had to have some difficult conversations with her about rigor and just the lack of rigor that I was seeing. I said you know, we're all in it for the same reason; we're all in it for the students.

Principal A discussed the importance of building relationships with students and how she demonstrates a student centered approach to counseling at risk students who appear in her office occasionally. When discussing issues related to behavioral or academic deficiencies with a child she normally "reverses" the conversation and places ownership back to the student by stating, "Isn't it time we start looking at how we can make this (school) work for you?"

The principals in this study supported the need for a leader to develop courage to do what is right, and generally, believed that "doing what is right" is firmly grounded in the practice of following your school mission, which must be shaped around being child-centered when making decisions. They shared their philosophy of promoting what is best for students as the "bottom line" of their leadership practice.

1.2 Serving Others. A servant leader leads in order to serve. Page and Wong (2000) stated that servant leaders do not aspire to gain control over their followers; their primary objective or mission in leadership is to serve them. Principal #7 upheld this belief by expressing that principals must be able to embrace a service "mindset" to ease the burden of others by asserting, "It's always having the mindset that you're not going to ask somebody to do something that you wouldn't do yourself."

Principals in this study shared similar feelings toward the mindset of "leading to serve," by indicating that "service" was part of a greater personal core belief associated with their leadership style, whereas they have a intuit sense of responsibility for the welfare of their followers. This was specifically articulated by three of the ten school principals interviewed who explicitly indicated that their leadership style involved that of being a "servant leader" or having "servant style" of leadership. A middle school principal articulated that his primary leadership responsibility was to serve by helping others be successful at their job. He stated:

> My job is to serve and support the educational staff in this building, whether it be stepping into a classroom for a teacher or answering phone calls in the office. It's truly about making sure that everyone has what the need in order to be successful and productive in their jobs because it focuses on their well being.

During the focus group discussion Principal C verified these related comments about "serving others," and additionally reinforced the responsibility of developing other servant leaders by saying:

I feel like the vast majority of educators that come into the business with a belief

that they want to help and support others. So the next step is to work to inspire

and empower that passion of service in others.

Data from the study demonstrated that principals look after the best interests of

others by embracing a "service mindset" through their desire to genuinely serve others

within their school communities, and ultimately transform followers into servant leaders

as well. They spoke often of the leadership practice of "service" when referencing how

they support staff and students.

1.3 Humility. Principals do not become school leaders in order to gain power,

heighten their egos, or exercise authority; quite the opposite, they are able to exhibit

humility without fear of losing authority or influence of others. Page and Wong (2000)

asserted that servant leaders empower followers by lessening themselves and their own

accomplishments in favor of building others up. Servant leaders take risks, learn from

their mistakes, and use those experiences as examples to encourage their followers to do

the same. Servant leaders exhibit humility through their willingness to delegate and

allow others to lead, as well as openly giving credit and praise to others for their success.

These attributes of "humility" emerged as principal's in the study discussed the practices

associated to "living a vision and mission" in their school communities.

Feedback from principals on practices related to demonstrating humility united

IPSSL Standard 6: Creating and Sustaining a Culture of High Expectations (CCSSO,

2008), with the Servant Leadership Factor (Page & Wong, 2003) of Humility and

Vulnerability. The emergence of this theme helped take into account the opposing

motivational forces of authoritarian hierarchy and egotistical pride as the conflicting

forces to servant leadership. The researcher found that qualitative feedback greatly paralleled quantitative survey finding in this study, namely that principals found more leadership value in practicing "humility," then asserting power or authority.

One High School Principal identified that practicing "humility" was her greatest strength and indicated that simply using specific "we" language helps her "remain humble" as a leader:

I do not talk in terms of "I." I do not use the word "I." I use "we" all the time. I talk about "our" school, not "my" school. It is not "my" staff, it is "our" staff. It is "our" students. I think it is very noticeable to others.

Principal #10 shared related sentiments, specifically supporting the practice of remaining humble by being habitual in the type of language a leader uses when speaking publically, concentrating on using "we" statements publically instead of "I" statements. Principal #6 reported that remaining humble meant sharing "good news" stories and being cognizant of, "remembering to always focus on 'we' and not 'I.'" She further commented that practicing humility entailed, "Doing what others are doing, making sure I don't ask others to do something I would not do myself. Highlighting the good things going on, sharing stories of 'our' success."

Principals also commonly shared that practicing humility involved being respectful, open, and honest when leading people in their schools. The following response from a middle school principal helped encapsulate much of what others felt about the practice of humility in a school leadership position by being respectful and honest:

Not being afraid to take on the challenges that are going to come up. Not being

afraid to address the issues when they do come up, whether it be staff issues,

student issues, personnel issues. But, doing it in a way where you're always

respectful and honest to whoever you're dealing with. Sometimes obviously in

being respectful you still have to be direct. But you have to remain

professional… You have to remain honest. You have to remain constructive even

if you have to be direct.

Page and Wong (2003) coupled the servant leadership factor of Humility, with the

characteristic of Vulnerability. This association became evident in this study as

principals as well. Principals shared practices related to demonstrating vulnerability by

asking for help, admitting mistakes, and modeling the value of risk-taking through

learning from mistakes. A middle school principal in the study regularly referenced the

value of practicing vulnerability in the face of followers, especially in relation to building

trust and facilitating effective dialogue. She emphasized, "I think the key component of

the relationship building is modeling vulnerability. I think that being vulnerable and

asking for support, help's all of those tough conversations become way easier."

During the focus group discussion, Principal D expressed similar feelings toward

the practice of "vulnerability" and its value in fostering a "safe" and growth minded

school environment by stating:

You can only fulfill your vision as much as you can inspire others and allow them

a safe place to feel vulnerable. I think that a lot of personal growth has to do with

vulnerability and looking to those that really have skills in the area of where

you're going and learning from them. So I think that knowing where you want to

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go is important, but also establishing a school culture where it's okay to be vulnerable is just as necessary.

1.4 Active Leadership. In reference to the theme of Living a Vision and Mission, data from this qualitative analysis produced evidence to support the idea that principals who practice a servant leadership style and "live their mission," are very "actions-orientated" in their approach to school leadership. They value not only being "present" and "visible" within their school communities, but "actively" involved in the programs, conversations, and routine operational aspects of the school. The principal's insistence on being constantly active and "walking the talk" within their school communities paralleled the theoretical servant leadership attribute of practicing "stewardship." The use of the word "stewardship" in ISLLC Standard One (CCSSO, 2008) has an obvious servant leadership connotation, as stewardship is one of the ten characteristics of servant leadership as introduced by Greenleaf (1970).

A high school principal shared that he demonstrated active stewardship by regularly supervising lunch periods, so that teachers could be freed up to work with students. Several principals related stewardship to being "visible, accessible, and 'there' for the school community." One principal described time as a key element to stewardship by claiming, "Time is an important aspect of my leadership. I often have to put aside my own agenda and priorities, so that I can support the needs of others first." Principal #3 felt strongly that support and visibility are fundamental to being "active" in the school setting as a practicing servant leader. He recommended the practice of "management by walking around" to carry out this purpose:

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I think that again the willingness to be down in the trenches, and be involved; to

be completely supportive. No job is too big. No job is too small. Part of my

leadership style is walking the building, that whole idea of management by

walking around. It's not so much management as it relationship building, and

making sure, touching base with the staff members. So you're feeling stressed?

What's going on? Are you feeling overwhelmed? What can I do to help? Do you

need some plan time or some release time. You want me to come cover a class

for you? What can I do to help ease that burden, so you're not feeling so stressed?

Principal #6 provided a strategic approach to organizing staff meetings in an

"actions-orientated" manner by making sure all participants are aware of "action-items"

and responsibilities:

I run my leadership meetings as if I would like them to run theirs. We always

have an agenda that has the items, a discussion column and an action column. We

always go over that action column before we leave, so that everybody knows what

he or she is responsible for. I have left meetings before not knowing who was

doing what.

The concept of practicing "stewardship" or being actions-orientated attends to how

principals manage the day-to-day operations of their schools, which has carried with it

some criticism of the servant leadership approach. A major criticism of servant

leadership theory is that leaders tend to be overly concerned with subordinates and

management of menial task rather than focus on vision or outcomes, and subsequently

not meeting organizational goals (Anderson, 2009; Foster, 2000; Page & Wong, 2003).

To some extent this "criticism" was corroborate in this study, as three principals stated that balancing the management of the "day-to-day operations" while supporting the visions for the future is one of the biggest challenges they face. Several principals commented that, with increased state mandates and a focus on accountability tied to annual tests results, principals had to make a concerted effort to focus on a school's future vision. An elementary principal shared that it is easy to get wrapped up with management issues, but emphasized the importance of regularly "revisiting what the vision and mission are in order to be able to keep everybody moving forward in the right direction." Principal #6 stated that she regularly questions her staff by asking, "What value have we added?" to enrich the conversations and draw focus from menial day-to-day tasks to more "big picture" issues. Most principals in the study referenced the importance of continually sharing, discussing, and measuring progress toward the goals, as a means to go beyond management and "look at the bigger picture." Nine principals discussed the importance of using faculty meetings or collaborations to endorse vision, professional development, and growth rather than focus on operational issues. Four principals noted that they sent weekly memos or regular emails to update the staff regarding the day-to-day managerial items, so that the majority of the staff meetings were more about vision with a focus on student learning.

Seven principals further indicated that empowering others was the key that allowed the principals to have time to focus on a vision and planning for the future. Several of these principals commented that they needed to rely on others to help with the management of daily operations, so the leaders could set a course of action for future goals. One principal shared, "You have to have confidence in the people you are

working with, your team. You have to be able to divide the workload up. That's

important." Another middle school principal articulated the value of developing highly

collaborative governance structures, that empower others by stating, "All this

collaborative structure really leads to complete empowerment of teachers to be apart of

the decision making process at all levels." He continued by asserting:

> I think that you set up a course that allows you to share the mission and vision,
>
> and how it links together to what the teachers are doing on a daily basis in the
>
> classrooms, so you can see the vision come alive in the classroom and assess its
>
> effectiveness.

Five other principals agreed that fostering collaborative environments in schools allowed

leaders the routine opportunities to be visible and present to review and revisit the

mission and vision routinely with teachers in an instructional manner.

Practices revealed through interview responses and the focus group discussion

demonstrated how Illinois principals carry out Greenleaf's (1997) notion of joining an

organization around a common purpose. Data supported that principals who practice a

servant leadership approach uphold "service to others" or "stewardship" as their primary

vision for their school community, and place importance on not only having a vision, but

"living" it on a daily basis by remaining humble and being active participants. Principal

A supported the value of having a consistent direction as a school leader by stating, "if

you don't have a vision of where you're going you're not going to go anywhere."

Principal B offered comparable feelings about "vision" being the most important servant

leadership practice for a Principal, and extended the idea further by proposing that vision

needs to be "fulfilled" by inspiring and empowering others.

Theme 2: Empowerment. Servant leaders place great emphasis on empowering and developing their followers (Greenleaf, 1977). This outlook has tremendous value for school principals within an educational environment interested in promoting effective teaching skills and maximizing learning opportunities. Page and Wong (2000) claim that servant leaders motivate their followers through investing in them and empowering them to do their best. This empowerment and development is fostered through sharing responsibilities and collaboration within the organization. The principals who participated in this study supported Page and Wong's (2003) servant leadership factor of Empowering and Developing Others and the IPSSL Standard Three: Improving Teaching and Learning and Standard Four: Building and Maintaining Collaborative Relationships (CCSSO, 2008) through their statements about fostering collaborative school environments, and maintaining focus on professional growth intended to improve teaching and learning.

2.1 Collaboration. The practice of collaboration with staff as part of the principal's leadership approach was a common theme embedded across principal responses during both one-on-one interviews and the focus group discussion. A principal at the middle-school level shared that in order to empower people effort must be made systemically to organize time for regular conversations. He contended:

> I also think specifically how to encourage participation and decision-making is
> creating structures in place within the organization where we can talk about
> specific issues that have come up whether it's related to teaching and learning, or
> systems. Having groups that come together at regularly scheduled times and
> being able to talk about things that come up is important. But having those

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structures in place to support the conversations so it isn't always just stopping in, you know, having only one on one conversations. Those things are critical for empowering the group to talk and solve problems.

Another middle school principal viewed the collaborative approach, as a method to manage school issues and help people become more independent problem solvers. She acknowledged that, "If I don't have the time to make a solid decision, I throw it back to them for discussion." She asserted that at certain times, "I can't make the decision, it has to be a team decision." She admitted that leading collaboratively can be "frustrating" and time consuming, but maintained that it serves a greater purpose in "empowering" followers to be independent thinkers and better problem solvers.

In further describing the value of creating a collaborative school environment, eight of the ten Principals interviewed commented that using a collaborative approach was crucial to "empowering" teachers and staff members. Principal #8 used the word "empower" explicitly four times in responding to a question about "leadership style," more times than any other participant. She noted that, "I am a big believer in trying to empower teachers." Her leadership style is build around more than just asking for input or feedback, but giving teachers and staff members ownership over decision making. She affirmed this commitment to empowerment by stating:

I just kind of need to facilitate the process. I need to step out of the way. Give them permission. Empower them. I think what that does a lot of time is really get some great ideas on the table. Somebody once said, 'you get a bunch of good people around you, then you get out of the way.' I try to do that but still keep a handle on what is going on.

Principal #9 also endorsed the idea of empowerment through using a highly collaborative

leadership style. She believed that empowering teachers helped contribute to an

organization that shares common beliefs and builds leadership capacity throughout the

entire system. Her belief is embodied through, "collaboration, collaboration,

collaboration, and capacity building amongst staff." She continued by affirming that this

approach to leadership further develops a school-wide "team of leaders."

Principal #10 made reference to reversing the top-down hierarchy of authority

using a collaborative, team structure in meetings to promote a professional learning

communities model (DuFour & Mattos, 2013). She believed that a collaborative

structure helps her remain humble, yet exercise authority if necessary. She clarified her

position by stating, "When you get people to problem-solve together, you empower them

in the direction they are making, versus just having it come down from me."

Focus group feedback evoked similar servant leadership practices of being

committed to supporting others and developing collaborative structures. The principals

explained that school-based decisions must have the input of those persons affected by

the decisions. Principals supported the practices of "really listening" and including

others being paramount to their leadership style. One principal suggested that "it is

essential to increase active participation through providing structures that support regular

collaboration." One elementary school principal stated, "I realize that people need to

have ownership on the outcomes and they need to feel invested in it, so I do my best to

develop that collaborative nature across the faculty."

2.2 Professional Growth. As the data related to "empowerment" emerged,

principals routinely emphasized the practice of developing others through professional

growth. Spears (1998b) supported that servant leaders recognized the responsibility to do everything possible to nurture the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of employees. Principals discussed that truly knowing their staff and using student data were crucial to professional growth. This coupled with working collaboratively to develop "thoughtful" professional learning contributed to the principals' efforts to model "learning" and help each individual grow. One elementary school principal commented, "We need to see growth in our students and teachers, and to model that learning ourselves." Principal A supported this by citing the importance of first analyzing needs and then setting growth goals accordingly:

> I guess I would say that to start with I truly believe that all children can learn and encourage my teachers to look at a child and establish where they are and then look at where they want to take them. And you can apply that as well to your teachers, you look where your teachers are and you want to get them to a higher level of performance and so you've got to start where they are and set goals.

Four of the ten principals interviewed referred to having a sound approach to professional development as being a vital way to serve staff and ultimately help students. A middle school principal in the study acknowledged:

> I'm there to listen, to hear concerns, to help to support, to provide resources and to hear what they need. Sometimes it's professional development. I'm there to serve. I want them to know that they can come to me with anything even if they're concerned that the request might be somewhat self serving or self centered. If it in some way, shape or form is going to lead to a benefit for the students, I'll do my best to find the resources whether it's monetary or physical

resources of some type. So I think that being present in the building, being

present at meetings, asking the questions, listening and kind of keeping your

finger on the pulse of what's going on in the building. I think that those are

probably the hallmarks of how I operate, and how I try to make sure I'm serving

others in the building.

In reaction to focus group Question 2, "What practices do you demonstrate to

show a commitment to the growth of all individuals?" the discussion endorsed the servant

leadership practice of valuing followers and being committed to their growth. Analysis

of the principals' responses revealed concentrated efforts to further "grow" their followers

professionally. Principals conveyed a sense that everyone in the organization needed to

develop perseverance and be more reflective. Principal D articulated the value of

cultivating a school culture of perseverance, by imparting:

I think that that's really helpful for students and staff to see that failure can be

looked at as a learning opportunity and its okay not to do things well the first time

or the second time or the third time. But that perseverance is important.

Principal A reinforced how "reflection" can serve as a "growth" practice during the

learning process by maintaining, "encouraging both teachers and students to be reflective,

is how they learn from those trials and errors."

2.3 Improving Teaching and Learning. Extending the theme of "empowerment"

both interview and focus group responses affirmed the significance of focusing school

leadership efforts in the area of teaching and learning. Principals in the study believed

that being knowledgeable about instruction ranked high among educational leaders

concerned with the practice of empowering teacher followers. The idea of having a role

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in helping teachers grow and "increase their instructional expertise" was evident most principals' responses. Seven of the ten principals interviewed made some reference to using best practices in instruction with their faculty, and five of those principals remarked on their leadership responsibility of implementing teaching and learning strategies as "school improvement" initiatives. Four of the principals shared that they spent time "modeling" learning and strived to be an "instructional leader." A high school principal asserted, "I want teachers to say I lead by example. He's a learner, and can help make me a better teacher." This leadership focus on instruction was also articulated by an elementary school principal who spoke to the value of assuming the role of "instructional coach" as being critical to providing teachers support. He affirmed, "One of the key things that I've learned is the importance of the coaching, side-by-side conversation with teachers. It's not me behind the desk, it's me sitting with the teacher, coaching, looking at data, going into depth of knowledge."

Principal #7 conveyed similar thoughts on being mindful of "improving teaching and learning" in order to best serve students by expressing:

Always remembering what your main focus as an educator, as a leader, is to meet the needs of the students, to do what is best for the students, and to support the staff so they can do their best in teaching students and helping them learn and grow.

The principals in the focus group discussion also provided evidence to support the practice of improving teaching and learning, as a way to "empower" teachers. They spoke of practical approaches used to promote this "instructional leadership" frame of mind. Three principals made reference to demonstrating dedication to their own growth

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and the growth of their followers by to encouraging instructional dialogue among teaching staff. Principal A emphasized the importance of instructional goal setting with teachers by stating, "You look where your teachers are and want to get them to a higher level of performance, so you've got to start where they are and set goals." Principal D upheld that instructional leaders had an obligation to providing professional development through introducing new instructional methods and helping teachers become comfortable in "trying different (instructional) things in the classroom" and monitoring improvement by conducting classroom "walkthroughs."

The results from this study support that Illinois principals who practice servant leadership strive to empower their followers through fostering collaborative and growth-minded school environments. Data reflect practices that align with the servant leadership factor of Empowering and Developing Others (Page & Wong, 2003), as well as IPSSL Standard 3 and 4, which call school leaders to concentrate on teaching and learning while cultivating collaborative environments.

Theme 3: Organizational Culture. The organizational culture of a school has been defined as a set of norms or expectations that are a part of the very fabric of the building, an infrastructure akin to the foundation (Fullan, 2001). Past research has indicated that there is a direct correlation between the culture of a school setting and the leadership style of the principal (Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2010; Waters et al., 2003). Data from this study strongly supported this relationship and further demonstrated that Illinois principals maintain a highly organized school culture built around practices associated with governance, teamwork, high expectations, and the commemoration of success. One principal, #6, specifically defined her leadership style as that of being a

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"cultural leader," responsible for developing a school culture of teamwork, high expectations, and leadership capacity in those who have roles that are "closer" to teachers and staff. This principal felt that a servant leadership style is better suited for department chairs or teacher leaders, who assume a more tertiary leadership role in a school because they are more directly responsible for meeting staff needs on a daily basis. Five of the principals used the word "family" to exemplify their feelings toward their school's culture, and nine of the principals eluded to developing purposeful governance structures that allow staff time to work in teams, committees, or smaller learning communities.

 3.1 Governance and Time. As data associated with a Principal's responsibility toward a school's culture emerged, it was evident that participants in this study found value in the practice of developing structures of governance in their schools. Principal #2 supported this notion by using the analogy:

 We (principals) are the head, but there is also a body involved. We all have roles

 here, and I think it is important, very important, vitally important to make sure

 that no one is less, that we are all equal here and all play a major role.

 Consistent with servant leadership research (Block, 1993; Graham 1991; Greenleaf 1977; Stone et al., 2004), other principals in this study expressed a similar willingness to be accountable for the well-being of the larger organization culture by operating in a service orientation, rather than that of a control or top-down hierarchy. These responses demonstrated a sense of teamwork with a focus on collective synergy from all members in the school community. Principals also indicated that servant leaders understand that effective governance structures help build "trusting" relationships,

cultivated with support and encouragement in a collaborative culture. Principal C

reaffirmed this by asserting:

> I think we're working to a culture of continual improvement that can sustain
>
> itself, it becomes the quencher of excellence, kids are supporting each other,
>
> encouraging each other. The teachers are doing the same, working together and
>
> complimenting each other on doing good things. That can be a very powerful
>
> thing this sort of institutionalize purpose, rather than just sort of isolated.

Outside the development of a supportive "team" atmosphere that is conducive of

effective dialogue, school governance puts people in situations that maximize their

strengths and prioritizes time in a manner that draws focus on support and school

improvement. One of the greatest gifts a servant leader can give is time and support for

others to learn, to serve, and to have the opportunity to grow (Greenleaf, 1996). This

emphasis was communicated clearly through the words of the principals in this study

who consistently mentioned easing the "stress" levels of teachers by giving them time to

execute managerial tasks and being willing to just "roll up your sleeves and jump in"

when needed. Similarly, Principal #8 reiterated this message by further emphasizing the

value of being approachable. She asserted, "They need to be able to come to us. Taking

things off their plate sometimes, let's them think we are here to support them." Four

other principals practiced "easing the burdens of others," by evaluating the "stress" levels

of followers and providing "time" and support. Principal #3 reiterated Greenleaf's

(1996) notion that providing time was a "gift," when he said:

One of the things you can do, the gift you can never take back is the gift of time.

When people see that you're willing to give your time, they appreciate and take

that to heart, because they know how busy things are.

3.2 Teamwork. Exactly half of the principals interviewed specifically noted that

promoting "teamwork" helped foster success in their schools. The word "team" was used

49 times during the interview process, by nine of the principals. They spoke of their

efforts to create a team spirit through inclusion of students, staff, and families in activities

that take place in their schools, as well as in using the a "team" approach to making

school decisions. It was evident from discussions that word "team" has replaced more

traditional governance vocabulary for official school groups such as "committee," or

"council." A seasoned High School Principal spoke to the importance of annually

establishing a school wide focus, and stated that this focus typically involves a

"teamwork" theme. She further concluded,

My focus is on teamwork here. Whenever we go to tackle a project, nobody is

doing it on their own. We have a theme every year that focuses on

teamwork…working together, staying together, and keeping together, so that it is

always on the minds of everybody. Then I make sure that every team member has

what he or she needs.

Comparably, Principal #10 spoke to the value of instilling a team atmosphere by using

careful terminology and making teamwork a core mission for the school. She affirmed:

It's not about me. It really is about the team, the school, and it's not "I." I try to

take the "I" out of it as much as I can. I like to always use "we, we, we." That is

just the core of a true mission and vision statement for our school because you are

working as a team, and really defining a school team.

Fostering this "teamwork" approach was common to other principal responses as

well. Principal #1 declared, "I'm also a big believer in teamwork, we have a system

where this person does this and this person does that, but in the end it's all about being a

team. Principal #2 concurred, "I definitely believe in a teaming approach; I think that's

very important. We can't do what we do here on our own." Principal #4 believed that

school leaders had an obligation to model a collaborative teamwork mentality in order to

get others to buy into the overall school vision. He stated:

> One of the things I also model is the importance of being able to work together as
>
> a team, showing them what collaboration is about, giving them a voice with in the
>
> school and at the same time, moving them in the direction and vision of what the
>
> school is going to be able to accomplish.

Principal #6 embraced the practice of regularly organizing teambuilding activities

for staff members during faculty meetings and institute days with the aim of building

community and having fun. She indicated:

> One of the other things we do at any institute day is a team building activity. We
>
> always do a team building activities. It is no longer than an hour, but a way to
>
> cheer each other on and come together. It is also a way to stay focused on having
>
> fun and doing things as a team.

The "teamwork" discussion continued to evolve during the focus group

conversation, which delved more particularly into positive outcomes related to

developing a teamwork mentality within the school organization. Principal C connected

"working together" with school success in being child-centered and building relational

trust by stating:

> Success for everyone in a school, in an organization, is promoted through the idea
>
> that we're working together. There may be times that individuals or groups
>
> disagree with the decision, but they certainly have the feeling that the decision is
>
> made for the best interest of kids and the school. So trust is developed through
>
> relationships and conversations.

Another principal expressed similar feelings toward the positive benefits of cultivating

teamwork, "by working together as a team, a leader creates a supportive and positive

environment that is not based on power." This notion of teamwork and shared power

expanded as principals discussed their efforts to endorse a school-wide "vision."

Principals avowed that in order to "fulfill" a school-wide vision the entire learning

community needs ownership of the vision. Principal B articulated this position

accurately by stating:

> It should not be my vision, or the student's vision; it should be our vision. The
>
> only way to have it become ours is to have the parents and everyone have some
>
> ownership, to have a voice. We need to cash in at some point. If I'm the only one
>
> cashing in and cashing out then, it won't have value or be effective. It needs to be
>
> a team effort.

3.3 Celebrating High Expectations. Data revealed during the interview process

revealed that principals in this study believed in not only setting high expectations, but

also celebrating the attainment of these high expectations within their school

communities. Eight of the ten principals interviewed made mention to the positive

impact of sharing school accomplishments, reporting out the "good news," and "regularly celebrating success" within their schools. Focus group feedback also supported the practice of celebrating achievement. Principals noted that they rely on not only developing a culture of continual improvement that is supportive and collaborative, but regularly celebrates accomplishments as a method to get the best of others and provide strong examples.

Principal D revealed that a leader must "set the bar high" in order to get the best from their followers by contending:

Having the expectation that everybody can achieve and be their best and then that we won't settle for anything less, whether that be students, staff, teachers, or myself or the other administrators; we're all going to constantly be in a state of reflection to meet our own expectations and exceed them.

Two other principals supported this belief that leaders need to "push" and "question" followers in doing their best and improve, however voiced caution about not "overwhelming" them or causing "anxiety." In addition, the principals revealed the importance of providing evidence of progress and celebrating improvement. Principal C's response encapsulated some thoughts associated with the practice of celebrating progress:

I think it's a matter of documenting, showing and talking about the progress that we're making with kids, whatever area that is…maybe the social/emotional domain, maybe a specific aspect of literacy or math, but it's being able to talk with individuals and groups about the progress that we're making. Celebrating

what we did and how we accomplished this together, to show them the improvement.

The entire group demonstrated agreement with Principals C when he stated, "I think that's a very significant job of the leader to get people to continue to strive to improve by recognizing the accomplishments that they've made."

Practices revealed through interview responses and the focus group discussion demonstrated how Illinois principals support the organizational culture of their schools. Data derived from this analysis supported that Principals who practice a servant leadership construct are interested in developing school cultures around organized governance that provided time, collaboration, and promoted a team-oriented atmosphere. Principals also indicated that "having" or "setting" high expectations for was paramount to their leadership practice. These leaders expressed high value in "celebrating" attainment of these expectations or outcomes when focusing on a school's culture of improvement and in building positive relationships.

Theme 4: Trusting Relationships. The practice of building "trusting" relationships was greatly emphasized by all principals throughout the study, and resides as one of Contee-Borders' (2002) 12 Themes of Servant Leadership, which align with Spears' (1998b) 10 Servant Leadership characteristics. The practice of building "trusting" relationships with followers was also articulated by Covey (1991) who wrote:

If you really want to get servant leadership, then you have to have

institutionalization of the principals at the organizational level and foster trust

through individual character and competence at the personal level. Once you

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have trust, then you lead people by coaching, empowerment, persuasion, example,

and modeling. That is servant leadership. (p. 17)

The word "trust" was used 23 times in association to relationship building

throughout the principal interviews and focus group discussion process of this study.

During the interview process six principals referred directly to the importance of

developing "trusting" relationships within their school culture. They pointed out their

effort to connect and build relationships with all constituents within the organization,

including staff, students, and parents. "Building trusting relationships" was named as key

outcome demonstrated by principal #10, who uses "listening, empowerment, and

collaborative problem solving" to promote "trust" and "relationship building" among

staff.

The value of building trusting relationships was further substantiated during the

focus group discussion as well. Principal D expressed the importance of being present

and "available" for teachers as a way to foster strong relationships. He stated:

I think they really respond to you being available, whether it be a text or email at

night or whenever your teachers feel that they need some guidance. I think it's

important to be available to celebrate their initiative, ideas and creativity with the

things they want to do for their students.

Three of the four principals who participated in the focus group discussion specifically

indicated that they focus on the practice of building relationships to effectively promote

the success of every student. Principal D denoted the significance of knowing the

strengths and weaknesses of both staff members and students in order to promote school-

wide success and reinforced that building trusting relationships with staff required,

"being vulnerable and asking for help" every once and awhile with staff. Principal A concurred by maintaining, "one on one attention, greeting people by name, using eye contact, and really getting to know your teachers and students is critical." Principal C felt the merit of relationship building was entrenched in the practice of how educators talk and act with people, noting that, "every conversation matters," and "we need to be as positive and supportive as we can." This principal used a banking analogy, of making "deposits" and withdrawals" with students and staff in order to build trust and balance the easy conversations, with those that are more difficult. He stated:

> It's almost like a bank. You have to make a deposit before you make a withdrawal; at some point the relationship is going to be poisoned. And just by the nature of education, there's going to be times you're going to have to have conversations with your staff, so you have to make some deposits in them before you start making those withdrawals. Not to chastise them or tell them what they're doing wrong, but you're also praising what they're doing well.

Developing ways to know and understand each person allows principals to demonstrate a genuine care and better serve each person. Data from this study revealed that maintaining "trusting relationships" was a key cornerstone to the application of servant leadership as a school principal. Practices disclosed from this research study that contribute to how principals build trusting school relationships include using shared decision-making, valuing followers, being ethical, and demonstrating empathy.

4.1 Shared Decision Making. Page and Wong (2000) described servant leaders as leaders who are caring of others and constantly interacting with people around them. Servant leaders create an "open door" atmosphere for their organizations through

encouraging input and feedback, as well as open discussion. They seek to understand and listen to others before making a decision. Servant leaders are open to learning from anyone, and they respect co-workers and treat them as colleagues and teammates. The principals who participated in the interviews supported Page and Wong's (2003) servant leadership factor of Open, Participatory Leadership through their statements regarding the practice of shared-decision making at their schools.

During the interviews, each of the ten principals resoundingly mentioned the value of shared decision making at their schools. Seven principals explicitly indicated that their leadership style involved collaborative decision making with staff, and the three principals who did not specify a "shared decision making" style, did referred to many of the essential components of collaboration in their responses. The principals suggested that acquiring input for school-based decisions and being an effective communicator and listener was crucial to being a successful school leader. Principal #5 affirmed this point by maintaining, "I facilitate decision making in a manner that includes stakeholders in the entire school community, providing staff and parents an opportunity to provide input." Principal #7 stated that, "listening" and including others was vital to his leadership style and key to being "approachable in helping others feel comfortable and more willing to ask questions or seek out support."

During the focus group discussion, the principal group explicitly indicated that their leadership styles involved collaboration between individuals and groups, in order encourage shared decision-making. The principals explained that school decisions must have the input of those persons directly affected by the decisions. One principal strongly suggested that "input from others is essential to increasing active participation and group

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problem solving." Another school principal drew a direct parallel to the participation of teachers in school-based decisions, to that of active student participation in classroom-based decisions. Principal A felt that staff members needed to have ownership over decision making to feel invested in the school by stating:

> One of the things that I do is value the ideas of others and by valuing them I encourage them. I encourage creativity and if someone comes to me with an idea instead of saying "This will work" or "This won't work," more encouraging them "How would you develop it," "What can you do with it," "How would it work," "What would you need" all of those things, and then let them develop the idea on their own.

The discussion also emphasized a more democratic leadership approach that promoted group problem solving and "brainstorming" sessions. Principal B affirmed this by stating, "everyone has a voice," and suggested that "you brainstorm off each other and it's not your idea, it's not her idea; it's our idea."

4.2 Empathy, Ethics, and Valuing Followers. A servant leader is not only committed to practicing democracy and shared decision-making, but sincerely values and understands people (Page & Wong, 2000). Greenleaf (1977) highlighted empathy as an important quality of servant leaders and believed that servant leaders needed to trust their employees to organize work in ways that create conditions in which employees learn to respect, trust, and value one another. Within the school setting, this compels the principal to cultivate an environment that contributes to all individuals feeling valued.

Data from this study found that principals who seek to build trusting relationships truly value those who follow them and try to "serve" them through empathy and ethical

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leadership. Principal #4 felt that "influence" was a vital practice or skill that effective principals use to lead in a meaningful manner. He believes that being "influential" as the school leader far outweighed the use of authoritative power, especially when trying to build "respect and rapport." He stated that in order to influence followers, "You have to understand where they are coming from; their map and model of the world." Principal #1 suggested developing the reputation of being ethical or "fair" and listening to followers helped build trust by asserting, "They may not always like decisions that are made, but say, 'he's fair, he listens, and allows us to do want we need to help kids."

Six of the principals interviewed indicated that their experience as a teacher or parent was of tremendously impactful to them in demonstrating empathy when a decision needed to be made. With regard to the practice of empathy, one elementary principal stated, "There are not many problems that come along that somebody has not experienced before. The thing about empathy is just putting it into perspective, and seeing things through their eyes."

The data gather from the focus group discussion also supported the need for school principals to practice empathy and value followers. Principal B was most concerned with listening and better understanding each child's background in order to promote success. She stated:

> You have the listen, you have to really listen to your students because things
> change, everything is not always the same; you really have to be aware of
> understanding the outcomes, and getting the backgrounds and different
> experiences, and different strengths and weaknesses and you just have to make
> sure that you place those individuals in a situation for success.

Principal C conveyed a similar empathic perspective with his statements about understanding "followers" and using collective decision making to promote professional growth:

> …Always being respectful and thoughtful, working to understand an individual's position, their beliefs and situations. So really understand that we come to issues from different perspectives and it's important to me to be able to know why somebody or a group has certain feelings. Understanding where they're coming from and then being able to present my ideas as well. But not just approaching it from the position that you know, this is the way it's going to be because this is a decision that I'm making. It's primed to understand and whenever possible come to a common decision that everyone can support.

Practices revealed through interview responses and the focus group discussion demonstrated how Illinois principals build trusting relationships within their schools. The data collected through interviews and focus group discussion confirmed the need for principals to practice empathy and ethics, when trying to establish trust as an essential servant leadership quality that values followers and builds strong relationships within the school community.

Theme 5: Communication. Servant leaders are open and honest communicators, particularly a good "listeners" (Contee-Borders, 2002; Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 1998b). Spears included receptive "listening" as essential to the growth of servant lead organizations, seeking to identify and clarify the will of the group. Contee-Borders (2002) concurred, finding that respecting employees' ideas and listening openly to opinions were common characteristics found in effective servant-lead organizations.

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Data from this study support that effective communication is a practice that Illinois principals hold in high regard and aim to consistently improve upon. Being an open and honest communicator helps principals lead their school by having courageous conversations, listening, and leading by example.

5.1 Courageous Conversations. Half of the Principals interviewed, five in total, commonly responded that school leaders must be adept at having the "courage" to engage in "difficult" conversations in an open, honest, and respectful manner. Principals indicated that maintaining courage to communicate the "bad news" begins with your educational beliefs and personal value system. Principal #2 spoke about remaining true to oneself when confronting difficult conversations by stating:

Well, I think personally it starts with your own inner compass; I mean that's just the truth, your own belief system, your own value system; I mean for me anyway. And I think that the courage to do what is right means not always making the most popular decision, but having the immense responsibility to be the advocate and focus of what needs to be right, even if it is something that not everyone agrees to. You need to confront the conversation and hold true to your values.

Principal #3 reiterated the notion of having a strong "inner compass," however also placed emphasis on having the "courage" to take ownership over making mistakes. He contributed:

Maintaining courage just goes to the core of your ethics, and your willingness to make mistakes and take ownership for those (mistakes). And then to, in some cases, apologize and ask forgiveness and help in moving forward. Were in this together, we live and learn together. I'm going to make mistakes just like

everyone else. Taking ownership for your decisions gives you courage to know

that you have modeled responsibility and this helps build relational trust with your

colleagues.

Principal #8 observed that courage to hold difficult conversations resides in

confronting the issue respectfully, developing parameters, and being an honest

communicator. He added:

> I have found that to be very helpful in dealing with difficult conversations. That's
>
> kind of how I approach it. It's not about showing authority. It's about okay,
>
> we're going to have a difficult conversation here, developing the parameters, and
>
> remaining clam and respectful. I'm going to listen, but we're going to be honest
>
> with each other. It can be challenging. It can be challenging because what
>
> happens is sometimes you have to fight your natural urges when somebody is
>
> either being unreasonable or flat out dishonest.

5.2 Listening. The principals who participated in the interviews supported Page

and Wong's (2003) servant leadership factor of Open, Participatory Leadership through

their statements regarding supporting effective communication through listening. The

principals recognized that through proper "listening" staff members ask more questions,

feel validated, and are more willing to approach the principal in an "open" manner.

Principal #2 felt that listening to people and allowing them opportunities to question

decision-making, was an example of "good" communication by stating:

> It is important to maintain communication. I'm okay with people asking me
>
> specifically, 'Can you tell me why you made that decision?' I think it just creates
>
> camaraderie, a balanced team feel. For me, when people ask questions, I don't

see it as they're questioning my authority, but buying into the 'team' philosophy

and listening to each other.

Principal #5 agreed and further deduced that "listening" helps provide followers with

validation, thus resulting in more productive collaboration, "You don't want to tell people

they're wrong, instead you remain humble and say, 'let me listen and validate' what is

being said." A middle school principal spoke of the importance of being "approachable"

and found that being a good "listener" was crucial to this endeavor by sharing:

 One of the main things I try to demonstrate is listening. So when I'm interacting

 with students and staff I want them to know that I'm somebody that's going to

 listen to them so they can be comfortable. That doesn't mean we don't hold them

 to expectations, but I want them to understand that I know everybody is a human

 being and that they are going to make mistakes. One of the best compliments I've

 ever received was when one of the teachers told me, 'you know what's really

 good about you is that you have a way of letting us know when we screw up, but

 not making us feel bad about it.'

During the focus discussion Principal C conveyed that it is in the best interest of

the organization that a leader listens and communicates issues that arise openly in order

to best move the school forward. Below he outlines his strategy for rebuilding

relationships within a school:

 Their collaboration wasn't going well and so I made a point to stop in privately

 with the two of them and really just listen and say I was there to support them. I

 understood that there were some issues in communication and trust between the

 two of them and wanted to make sure that they knew that it was important to me,

and it's important to what we do. That as a grade level and school we need to

treat each other professionally and have those conversations about the work that

we do, which is working with kids.

5.3 Modeling/Leading by Example. A final practice that permeated the data in

relation to effective communication was how principals communicate through their

actions and lead by the "example" they set. This paradoxical notion of communicating

without "words" or "speaking" was supported by principals who advocated for being

visible or "present," and modeling high expectations in how they go about "performing"

their daily duties. Principal #4 referenced that he felt that modeling high expectations

was key to having a strong leadership influence as a school principal. He said, "when the

staff sees that I'm willing to do almost any job or duty in the school, it helps model the

expectation I have for them in what they are doing." Principal #1 also validated this

practice of "leading by example," by regularly posting, "Be visible, lead by example, and

rebuild relationships" on the header of his school meeting agendas.

Practices revealed through interview responses and the focus group discussion

demonstrated how Illinois principals practice the servant leadership quality of being an

effective communicator and listener (Contee-Borders, 2002; Greenleaf, 1977; Spears,

1998b). The data collected through interviews and focus group discussion supported the

Servant Leadership Factor of Courageous Leadership (Page & Wong, 2003) and

confirmed the need for principals to lead by example.

Summary

Data from the quantitative and qualitative sections of the study have been

presented in this chapter. The quantitative results from the first phase of the data analysis

used SPSS software to generate descriptive statistics from the Servant Leadership Profile-Revised Survey (Page & Wong, 2003) to strongly suggest that Illinois school principals' perceive themselves as servant leaders. The qualitative results from the second phase of the data analysis used a phenomenological narrative inquiry approach (Creswell, 1998, 2003; Lester, 1999) to produce five emerging themes that demonstrated how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership approach. The practices were categorized into five themes: Living Vision and Mission, Empowerment, Organizational Culture, Trusting Relationships, and Communication. Fifteen Sub-Themes were created based upon the principals' responses and experiences. Qualitative findings have been presented following the use of a comprehensive coding process (Creswell, 2003) with the support of direct quotes from ten one-on-one interviews and a focus group discussion. Conclusions, implications, and recommendations will be created and presented in Chapter Five to answer the research questions posed for this study.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine servant leadership as self-perceived by Illinois school principals, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that effectively align to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL).

Although past studies have researched servant leadership in the field of education, this study specifically centered on Illinois school principals and their perceptions related to servant leadership practices. The significance of the study lies in its potential to contribute to the effective leadership practices of Illinois principals. Since school success is directly proportional to the presence of effective principal leadership (Black, 2010; Marzano et al., 2005; Wahlstrom et al., 2010) and servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1996) has the potential for being a valuable leadership approach for principals, it is of educational value to study principal's perceptions and practices of servant leadership.

The study used a mixed-method sequential explanatory design (Creswell, 2003) to provide better understanding of servant leadership as a leadership approach of Illinois principals. This mixed-method design analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data to investigate servant leadership perceptions and practices of principals by first examining quantitative data using the Servant Leadership Profile-Revised (Page & Wong, 2003) survey instrument and then gathering qualitative data through conducting semi-structured one-on-one interviews and a focus group discussion.

Summary of Study

The aim of this study was to examine servant leadership as self-perceived by Illinois school principals, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that align to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). By exploring principal perceptions and practices of servant leadership, this study will seek to answer the following two research questions:

1. How do Illinois school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders based on Page and Wong's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR)?

2. What servant leadership practices do Illinois principals use based on Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL)?

This chapter presents discussion of the results presented in Chapter Four. The discussion is designed to provide findings and conclusions to the aforementioned research questions and recommend ideas for further study. The first section presents a summary of the study in relation to the two research questions created for the study. The second section presents discussion regarding the theoretical and practical implications of the study. The third and final section presents recommendations for further research and practice based on the study.

Summary of the Findings and Conclusion

The research questions developed for this study were based upon the research of servant leadership literature. In support of the first research question, statistical data has been generated to provide summaries about the sample and survey outcomes, using

numerical and graphical representations, to organize, describe, and interpret principal's

perceptions of servant leadership derived from the SLPR (Page & Wong, 2003). For the

second question, qualitative interviews and a focus group discussion yielded information

on specific practices principals utilize to support a servant leadership approach based on

Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois

Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). Findings and conclusions presented

for each research question are based upon the quantitative and qualitative data derived

from this mixed-method study.

Research Question 1

"How do Illinois school principals perceive themselves as servant leaders based

on Page and Wong's (2003) Servant Leadership Profile – Revised (SLPR)?" The

quantitative results from the first phase of the data analysis suggest that Illinois

principals' perceive themselves as servant leaders. The SLPR self-assessment instrument

created by Page and Wong was specifically designed to measure participant's perceptions

of servant leadership using 62 items to assess both positive and negative servant

leadership characteristics on a 7-point Likert scale. The greater the SLPR scale score, the

more each respondent was in agreement with the characteristics describing their own

attitude as a servant leader.

The following quantitative findings helped demonstrate that Illinois principals,

overall, perceived themselves to be servant leaders. Three hundred of 310 principals who

responded to the study had a mean SLPR score of 5.0 (agree) or greater. This indicates

that 97% of the principals agreed or strongly agreed with the concepts of servant

leadership from the SLPR survey. Of the ten respondents who reported mean SLPR

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scores of less than 5.0, seven responded with within the "undecided" range of 4.0-4.9 and

the remaining three principals retained mean SLPR scores that fell less than 3.0, within

the "disagree" range. Therefore, as evidenced through analysis of mean SLPR sores,

97% of the principal participants agreed or strongly agreed with the servant leadership

concepts and most likely perceive themselves to be servant leaders, with only 1% of the

principals over the entire sample disagreeing with servant leadership characteristics.

This high level of servant leadership perception among Illinois principals was also

indicated through interpreting the total mean score of 5.646 through the entire sample

(N=310). Due to the mean score being so close to the high end of the 7-point scale, it can

be interpreted that the majority of Illinois principals in the sample were self-perceived

servant leaders.

Additionally, the statistical findings of the distribution helped substantiate high

rates of servant leadership self-perception among the Illinois principals. The greatest

distribution of SLPR scores fell between the mean range of 5.0 and 6.5. Since the

maximum score was 6.612, it could be interpreted that the majority of respondents are

self perceived servant leaders since the greatest frequency of SLPR scores were clustered

nearest the maximum score. Another factor from the study that supports positive servant

leadership tendencies is the negative skewness of the curve evident in analyzing the

histogram. This represents that a larger number of occurrences appear at the higher end

of the distribution, which demonstrates that the mean SLPR scores for most respondents

falls greater than the mean of 5.646, indicating again that the majority of principals are

self perceived servant leaders.

As a measure of variability, the standard deviation of the mean SLPR score is

0.497. The variability in the distribution is clustered tightly around the mean, creating a curve that is peaked high around the mean score, and not spread out evenly as in a normal bell curve. This graphical data is leptokurtic compared to a normal, bell shaped distribution since it has a greater "peak". This demonstrates that the SLPR mean score data is less variable or dispersed across the score range, and is more clustered around the mean score of 5.646. This high peak and corresponding fat tails means the distribution is more grouped around the mean, and will have a relatively lesser standard deviation (0.497). This yet again, helps validate that principals who participated in the SLPR survey are self-perceived servant leaders based on distribution of scores clustered toward the greater end of the range.

It is also interesting to note that demographic data from the SLPR survey found that respondents who were more experienced and had earned higher degrees demonstrated a higher tendency to be self-perceived servant leaders than their colleagues. Seventy-one percent (71%) of the sample was represented as reporting an experience level of 0-10 years (219), with an average mean SLPR score of 5.603. Comparatively the group of most experienced principals, with 16 years or more (42) reported the highest SLPR scores of 5.882. Within the highest degree obtained demographic group, 61 principals who were identified as having a Doctorate level of education reported the highest SLPR score of 5.741, with the greatest group represented as having a Master's degree (248) reporting a SLPR average score of 5.624. This data demonstrates that Illinois principals with more administrative experience and higher educational degrees are more prone to be self-perceived servant leaders. This data has also been found to be consistent with another servant leadership study using the SLPR by Williams (2009).

This study found the mean scores of principals with more years of experience as a school administrator, yielding the highest mean scores for each factor of the servant leadership profile.

In order to delve more deeply into examining Research Question 1, the data from the SLPR instrument was analyzed in a categorical fashion, based on the Seven Factors of Servant Leadership (Page & Wong, 2003). Findings from this study produced mean SLPR scores for each factor in the following rank order, greatest to least:

1. Factor 4: Open, Participatory Leadership (6.440)

2. Factor 7: Courageous Leadership (6.293)

3. Factor 3: Serving Others (6.189)

4. Factor 1: Empowering and Developing Others (6.064)

5. Factor 6: Visionary Leadership (5.957)

6. Factor 5: Inspiring Leadership (5.891)

7. Factor 2: Power and Pride (2.261)

Based on the mean scores from each of the Factors of Servant Leadership, excluding Factor 2, each was grouped near the top of the range and had a mean score value greater than that of the total mean SLPR score of 5.646. In addition, the principals surveyed were largely in agreement that Factor 2: Power and Pride, represented as an opposing force to servant leadership, was viewed as a negative leadership practice. These quantitative findings presented in categorical fashion, help further demonstrate that Illinois principals are self-perceived servant leaders and positively support a servant leadership approach to leading their schools.

Although, the quantitative phase of this study was designed to primarily addressed Research Question 1, a number of key qualitative findings emerged through data analysis process, from both one-on-one interviews and the focus group discussion. The following qualitative findings also helped support that Illinois school principals' perceive themselves as servant leaders.

Three of the ten school principals interviewed explicitly indicated that their leadership style involved that of being a "servant leader" or having "servant style" of leadership. During the focus group discussion, the principals engaged in conversation over the value of "serving others," and additionally reinforced the responsibility of developing other servant leaders by supporting "work to inspire and empower that passion of service in others."

The themes of Empowering followers, cultivating growth, and promoting teamwork and trust within an organization are all essential practices associated with the servant leadership construct (Greenleaf, 1996; Page & Wong, 2003; Spears, 1998b), all of which were cited regularly throughout the qualitative aspect of this study. During the interview process, seven principals indicated that "empowering others" was the part of their practice when planning school-based in-service activities and though collaborative structures. In further describing the value of creating a collaborative school environment, eight of the ten Principals interviewed commented that using a collaborative approach was crucial to "empowering" teachers and staff members. Each of the ten principals interviewed referred to the value of shared decision making at their schools. Seven principals explicitly indicated that their leadership style involved collaborative decision making with staff.

Four of the ten principals interviewed referred to having a sound approach to professional development as being a vital way to serve staff and ultimately help students. The principals in the focus group discussion also provided evidence to support the practice of improving teaching and learning, as a way to "empower" teachers. They spoke of practical approaches used to promote this "instructional leadership" frame of mind. Three principals made reference to demonstrating dedication to their own growth and the growth of their followers by to encouraging instructional dialogue among teaching staff. Nine of the principals spoke of developing purposeful governance structures that allowed staff time to work in teams, committees, or smaller learning communities.

Exactly half of the principals interviewed specifically noted that promoting "teamwork" helped foster success in their schools. The word "team" was used 49 times during the interview process, by nine of the principals. During the focus group discussion, principals spoke of their efforts to create a team spirit through inclusion of students, staff, and families in activities that take place in their schools, as well as in using the a "team" approach to making school decisions. It was evident from the interviews and discussion that that word "team" has replaced more traditional governance vocabulary for official school groups such as "committee," or "council." One principal expressed feelings toward the positive benefits of teamwork in creating trust, "by working together as a team, a leader creates a supportive and positive environment that is not based on power, but trust." The word "trust" was used 23 times in association to relationship building throughout the principal interviews and focus group discussion. During the interview process, six principals referred directly to the importance of

developing "trusting" relationships within their school culture. Three of the four

principals who participated in the focus group discussion specifically indicated that they

focus on the practice of building trusting relationships to effectively promote the success

of every student.

Based on these qualitative findings, as well as the quantitative survey results this

study has determined that Illinois principals are self-perceived servant leaders.

Research Question 2

"What servant leadership practices do Illinois school principals use based on Page

and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance

Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL)?" The qualitative interviews and focus group

discussion yielded information on specific practices and actions Illinois principals utilize

to support a servant leadership approach based on Page and Wong's (2003) Seven

Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders

(IPSSL). During the qualitative data analysis process, information was examined and

organized into five emerging themes. Following the qualitative data analysis, specific

principal quotations were extracted from the interviews and focus group discussion to

form 50 principal servant leadership practices. For the purpose of aligning each of the 50

servant leadership practices to one of the five major qualitative themes, as well as with

Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership and the Illinois

Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL), the researcher developed a

Qualitative Theme Alignment table (see Table 8). This table helps demonstrate that the

emerging qualitative themes align to Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant

Leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL), which in

turn help validate the credibility of each principal servant leadership practice that

surfaced during interviews and the focus group discussion.

Table 8

Qualitative Theme Alignment

THEME	Seven Factors of Servant Leadership (Page &Wong, 2003)	Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (CCSSO, 2008)
1. Living A Vision and Mission	Factor 2: Power and pride (Vulnerability and humility, if scored in the reverse) Factor 3: Serving others Factor 6: Visionary leadership	Standard I: I. Living a Mission and Vision Focused on Results Standard II: Leading and Managing Systems Change Standard III: Improving Teaching and Learning Standard VI. Creating and Sustaining a Culture of High Expectations
2. Empowerment	Factor 1: Empowering and developing others Factor 4: Open, participatory leadership	Standard I: I. Living a Mission and Vision Focused on Results Standard III: Improving Teaching and Learning Standard IV: Building and Maintaining Collaborative Relationships
3. Organizational Culture	Factor 1: Empowering and developing others Factor 5: Inspiring leadership	Standard I: I. Living a Mission and Vision Focused on Results Standard II: Leading and Managing Systems Change Standard VI: Creating and Sustaining a Culture of High Expectations
4. Trusting Relationships	Factor 1: Empowering and developing others Factor 4: Open, participatory leadership Factor 5: Inspiring leadership	Standard I: I. Living a Mission and Vision Focused on Results Standard IV: Building and Maintaining Collaborative Relationships Standard V: Leading with Integrity and Professionalism
5. Communication	Factor 7: Courageous leadership (Integrity and authenticity) Factor 5: Inspiring leadership	Standard I: I. Living a Mission and Vision Focused on Results Standard V: Leading with Integrity and Professionalism Standard VI. Creating and Sustaining a Culture of High Expectations

Listed below is each of the 50 principal servant leadership practices acquired from this research study that help address Research Question 2.

Illinois school principals practice servant leadership by…

Living a Vision and Mission

1. Preserving "stewardship" as a primary vision for themselves and their school community.

2. Using "reason" and "persuasion" to gain support for their vision.

3. Exercising a "student-centered" approach to school vision and decision-making.

4. Providing "help and support" to followers in being successful at their job of upholding the school's mission.

5. "Doing what followers are doing" and highlighting their good deeds.

6. Demonstrating "vulnerability" by asking for help, "admitting mistakes," and modeling the value of "risk-taking" through learning from mistakes.

7. Committing to an "actions-orientated" approach to school leadership and accomplishing tasks.

8. Being "present" and "visible" within their school communities.

9. "Sharing, discussing, and measuring progress toward the goals," as a means to go beyond management and "look at the bigger picture."

10. Uses faculty meetings, collaborations, or written correspondence to endorse "vision," professional development, and "growth" rather than focus on operational issues.

11. "Delegating" responsibilities and "relying on others to help" with the management of daily operations.

Empowerment

12. Developing and "empowering other servant leaders" through collaborative governance structures.

13. Sharing school responsibilities in order to empower and "build ownership in others."

14. Using collaboration to "teach" followers how to effectively make decisions and "problem solve."

15. Using shared-decision making to further develop other "servant leaders."

16. Maintaining a "growth" mindset and commitment to "growing" followers.

17. Cultivating a sense of "perseverance" and "reflection" as a means to empower and develop others.

18. Developing the "instructional expertise of teachers" through the school improvement process.

19. Assuming an "instructional leader" or "coaching" role by engaging teachers in instructional dialogue, employing regular "walkthroughs," and introducing new approaches to teaching.

Organizational Culture

20. Utilizing an "organized school culture build around teamwork" and purposeful governance.

21. "Organizing time for staff to work in learning communities" and problem solving groups.

22. Using the words "family" and "team" to exemplify their feelings toward their school's culture.

23. Seeking to "ease the burden of others" by providing time and support when possible.

24. Using language that promotes teamwork by concentrating on "we," in place of "I" statements.

25. Teaching followers the value and techniques of "good collaboration."

26. Organizing "teambuilding activities" for staff members during faculty meetings and/or institute days.

27. Using teamwork to promote "trusting relationships" and develop "group ownership in the school."

28. "Setting high expectations" and "celebrating" the attainment of high expectations within their school communities.

29. "Reflecting" with followers when setting and evaluating school expectations.

30. "Pushing" and "questioning" followers to do their best and improve performance.

31. Using "goal setting" and "progress monitoring" processes in order to continually improve.

Trusting Relationships

32. Building "trusting" relationships with followers.

33. Being present and "available" for teachers as a way to foster strong relationships.

34. Greeting people by using "names and eye contact."

35. Remaining "positive, constructive, and supportive" when faced with "difficult" situations or conflicts.

36. Providing people with one-on-one attention and using "open door" policies.

37. Eliciting "regular feedback and input" from followers before making decisions.

38. Facilitating decision making in a manner that involves "stakeholders" in the entire school community.

39. Helping others feel "comfortable" and willing to ask questions or "seek out" support.

40. Using "democratic leadership" approaches to develop ownership and help followers feel "invested" in the school.

41. Creating conditions in which "empathy" is a common practice and people "respect, trust, and value one another."

42. Being ethical and "fair" when making school-based decisions.

Communication

43. Making "effective communication" a leadership priority.

44. "Listening" before speaking or making decisions.

45. Maintaining the "courage" to engage in "difficult" conversations in an "open, honest, and respectful" manner.

46. Employing collaborative structures that allow followers opportunities to "question decisions" and "participate openly" in school decision-making.

47. Rebuilding relationships by facilitating "open and honest communication."

48. Leading by example and through "modeling" high expectations.

49. Using "listening" to help followers feel "validated."

50. Using effective communication to become more "approachable" to followers.

<div align="center">**Implications**</div>

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical framework in support of this study is the concept of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1970, 1977; Page & Wong, 2003; Sergovanni, 1992; Spears, 1995), which is grounded in the belief that a person's natural desire to serve other people emerges into an aspiration to lead others by investing in their development and well being for the benefit of accomplishing tasks and goals for the common good (Greenleaf, 1977; Page & Wong, 2003). Therefore, the construct of servant leadership can be viewed as an attitude toward the responsibilities of leadership as much as it is a style of leadership (Page & Wong, 2000). Therein the following theoretical implications have emerged.

The first theoretical implication confirmed that servant leadership, as established by research, was evident in the perceptions and practices on Illinois school principals in this study. The data from the SLPR instrument (Page & Wong, 2003), the ten one-on-one interviews, and focus group discussion demonstrated that Illinois principals perceive themselves as servant leaders and use servant leadership practices as defined theoretically in research. This was validated by the high mean scores recorded from the quantitative SLPR findings, as well as the low SLPR mean score recorded from the one opponent factor of servant leadership, Pride and Power. These quantitative results coupled with the alignment of qualitative findings to the Seven Factors of Servant Leadership (Page & Wong, 2003) helped endorse that Illinois school principals perceive themselves and practice a servant leadership approach. If Illinois school principals from this sample view

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themselves as servant leaders and use servant leadership practices, it could be implied that non-participating principals and school leaders in Illinois, as well as in other states and countries share similar perceptions and practices. Increasing the sample size of this study to include more principals from a greater geographical distribution and a more diverse cultural or socioeconomic backdrop could better reveal findings to support the theoretical construct of servant leadership through a wider lens of educational leaders.

Secondly, while a mixed method approach was used to examine servant leadership in this study, and these multiple measures provided data to support both servant leadership perceptions and practices of active Illinois principals, the study lacked findings from the viewpoint of followers. One of the greatest differences between servant leadership theory and other modern leadership constructs is that servant leaders are genuinely concerned with followers (Greenleaf, 1970). Greenleaf theorized that the unequivocal test of servant leadership is measured in the overall growth and development of followers. This study did not examine the theoretical construct of servant leadership through the perspective of the follower, thus limiting the finding of this study to self-perceptions of school principals or that of the leader's perceptions. If the best way to study servant leadership is through evaluating the effects of this leadership construct on followers, it would be beneficial to extend this study by including followers in the sample. Utilizing a range of instruments both quantitative and qualitative to measure the construct of servant leadership, while considering both leader and follower perceptions and reactions, would help to establish findings to better support Greenleaf's (1970) "true test" of servant leadership.

Third, findings related to the SLPR survey instrument indicated that the mean scores of the principals with more years of experience as a school administrator and holding higher educational degrees yielded the highest mean scores for each factor of servant leadership. If Illinois principals with more administrative experience and higher educational degrees are more prone to be self-perceived servant leaders, it could open up a pathway for further exploring the relationship between servant leadership and the experience or educational level of the school principal. From the findings of this study, it could be implied that servant leadership is an accepted approach to effective school leadership and institutions of higher learning are embracing servant leadership as a viable model for educational leadership programming. Similarly it can be implied that states have adopted standards for school leadership, such as the six ISLLC (CCSSO, 2008) standards, which include many servant leadership characteristics as introduced by Greenleaf (1970). This helps clarify that state and nation wide educational systems are interested in developing servant-oriented frameworks for school leadership. Future research is needed in order to confirm the findings of this study that more experienced and educated school principals are servant leaders. Additionally, since the variables of experience and education were found to influence servant leadership perception in this study, it could be inferred that other variables might be important influences on the relationship between servant leadership and principal practice.

Practical Implications

Educational research has deduced that principal leadership is the most important factor influencing a school's environment, and is second only to the classroom teacher, as having the most influence on student achievement (Black, 2010; Marzano et al., 2005;

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Wahlstrom et al., 2010). Sergiovanni (1992) referred to servant leadership as being an upside down leadership practice. Whereas conventional leadership models portray subordinates serving their leaders, in servant led organizations the leaders serve the organization. This research supports the importance of principal leadership within a school environment and calls school leaders to be practical in their approach to serving the organization. Consequently, practical implications from this study help delineate new insights for schools and those called to be educational leaders, that support a servant led approach. Therein the following practical implications have emerged from this study.

The first practical implication of this research study is that Illinois principals who are self-perceived servant leaders demonstrate leadership practices that are focused on the development of followers. Therefore, if school leaders are servant leaders, they must be cognizant of individual needs of followers and seek to act in ways to help them grow and develop. Given the servant leadership priority of developing and "growing" others, it is critical that principals and school leaders are selected and trained on the basis of leadership capacities that promote empathy toward better addressing the needs of others. When selecting potential servant leader principals, school systems should use carefully drafted interview questions and make reference checks that specifically target leadership qualities necessary to help followers continually grow. Additionally, school systems must take into consideration the type of leadership training or university level leadership program of a prospective or developing principal. Given that school systems are increasingly interested in building human capital, fostering a servant leadership approach could be useful in building a school culture in which employee development is valued and encouraged.

Secondly, this study found that Illinois principals support the practices of collaboration and teamwork, through using open participatory leadership, as viable servant leadership factor to empower followers. Page and Wong (2000) asserted that servant leaders invite and expect others to participate in active leadership roles within structures that promote a collaborative culture and "team" orientation within their organization. Illinois principals in this study reported that Servant Leadership Factor 4: Open, Participatory Leadership produced the greatest mean SLPR score (6.440) in comparison to the other six servant leadership factors, moreover the themes of teamwork and collaboration emerged as primary practices used by Illinois principals to help further advance their school's organizational culture. While this study found that Illinois principals demonstrated their belief of empowering followers through participatory leadership, further research is needed to help explore this finding of why the relationship between servant leadership and open, participatory structures exist, as well as how teacher empowerment can ultimately lead to overall school improvement and more positive student outcomes.

Third, this study provided practical information regarding the application of servant leadership practices used by active school principals. Marzano et al. (2005) discovered that the practices of school leaders have a statistically significant relationship with school success. If educational research has denoted that effective principal leadership is important to school success and servant leadership characteristics have helped improve both academic achievement and positive school climates (Cunningham, 2008; Herbst, 2003; Jacobs & Kristanis, 2006; Lambert, 2004), it could be of benefit for principals and school leaders to further develop practical approaches to servant leadership

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in better serving their school communities. As evidenced in this study, an abundant

number of themes emerged in relation to how servant leadership could be applied in an

educational setting. This study produced 50 servant leadership practices that can be used

by principals, as well as other school leaders to promote success for their school systems.

The 50 servant leadership actions will also help principals apply Greenleaf's (1977) test

for servant leadership, as they seek to help followers grow and become servants

themselves. These common servant leadership practices will be useful focal points for

servant leaders in their current practices and for maturing servant leaders as they choose

and adapt their leadership style.

Recommendations

1. This study was limited to practicing school principals in the State of Illinois,
   and therefore, the results are not generalizable beyond Illinois. This study
   should be replicated in other states or countries, possibly targeting a wider and
   larger sample to provide additional information about servant leadership in the
   field of education. Determining how servant leadership is perceived and
   practiced by educational leaders in other states and countries would
   demonstrate if the servant leadership approach is truly a viable leadership
   construct across broader populations. Further, examining how principals and
   school leaders from other states or countries apply servant leadership practices
   would add to and enhance the practical approaches shared by the principals in
   this study.

2. This study examined the servant leadership perceptions and practices of
   Illinois school principals. Research has indicated that the most effective way

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to measure the value of servant leadership is through the perspective of the follower. If this is correct, studying the relational aspects of the leader-follower dynamic, or developing a survey instrument or qualitative inquiry to solely focus on follower perceptions of servant leaders may warrant consideration for future research.

3. This study was limited to practicing school principals in the State of Illinois and did not show a relationship between principal servant leadership perceptions and school performance. This study should be replicated using a sample of school leaders in high or low performing schools to provide more information regarding the impact of servant leadership on school success or achievement. Determining the effect of servant leadership on school effectiveness would provide further data to support the validity of servant leadership in the field of education and as an impetus for school improvement. Furthermore, examining how principals and school leaders from identified high performing schools perceive and apply servant leadership practices would enhance the practical approaches shared by the principals in this study.

4. This study resulted in the collection of 50 servant leader practices that Illinois school principals utilize in leading their schools. It is recommended that future research identify servant leaders and obtain more detailed information associated with these leadership practices. This information would enable school leaders to more effectively develop servant leadership strategies and embrace servant leadership as a primary leadership style, as well as provide

colleges and universities content for servant leadership curricula or course design in undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs.

5. This study maintained that servant leadership is more greatly self-perceived by school principals with more experience and higher educational degrees. Future research could examine the significance of this relationship between servant leadership and the variables of experience and education. Results could provide colleges, universities, and leadership training programs research to support the relevance of servant leadership as a valuable construct for educating future school leaders.

6. The descriptive statistics in this study revealed that the servant leadership factor of Open, Participatory Leadership reported the greatest mean SLPR score in comparison to the other servant leadership factors. Future research could examine the dynamic between servant leadership factors and whether or not this finding is consistent within different educational settings. For example, such research could be better positioned to address the dynamics of collaboration in schools that practice a professional learning communities model with those that do not. While this recommendation for future research does not provide specific suggestions, it does provide direction for those interested in following up in this research pathway.

7. This study provides an analysis of the relationship between servant leadership and Illinois principals within school organizations. Future studies could compare educational leaders with leaders in other organizations to determine if servant leadership is trending in the field of education compared to other

industries. Additional research that extends the scope of servant leadership from the educational setting to leadership in other team-based or collaborative organizational contexts into would be valuable.

Summary

In conclusion, the mixed-method sequential explanatory design of this research study achieved the outcome of providing evidence of servant leadership perceptions and practices of active Illinois principals. Results emerged from the quantitative survey data and qualitative interviews and focus group discussion to indicate that Illinois school principals are self-perceived servant leaders, who demonstrate practices that align to the servant leadership construct. Furthermore, the results from this study are consistent with past educational research and the servant leadership theoretical framework. The future challenge for researchers will be to use the results from this study to identify new dimensions of servant leadership within the field of education and to explore other practical facets of this leadership paradigm as a viable construct for effective leadership practice and in fostering continual improvement within the educational context and beyond.

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APPENDIX A: PERMISSION EMAILS FROM PAUL WONG, PH.D.

AND DON PAGE, PH.D.

APPENDIX B: QUANTITATIVE SURVEY EMAIL/CONSENT

October 2013

Dear Colleague:

I would like to invite you to be part of a brief doctoral research study. I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership Program at Concordia University Chicago, and I am studying servant leadership as a leadership style for school principals. You were selected to be a part of this study because you are or have been a practicing principal in the State of Illinois.

The purpose of this study will be to examine servant leadership as self-perceived by Illinois school principals, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that effectively align to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL).

Your participation may reveal some valuable information regarding the development of servant leadership practices. If you choose to be a part of this study, I ask you to click on the link below and complete the survey. Your participation should take approximately 10 minutes.

CLICK HERE: Servant Leadership Profile – Revised

By taking and submitting the electronic survey you agree to participate in the research project, *An Examination of Illinois Principals' Perceptions of Servant Leadership*, which is being conducted by Paul Enderle, a doctoral student at Concordia University Chicago.

By choosing to be a part of this study, you are agreeing to the following:

1. My participation is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time.
2. All information gathered during this study will remain confidential.
3. If I have any questions or concerns regarding this study, I may contact any of the following:
   - Paul Enderle at 708-785-5024
   - Dr. Paul Sims at 773-552-2591
   - Concordia University Chicago Institutional Review Board at *IRB@CUChicago.edu*

YOU ARE MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE. YOUR CONSENT INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED AND HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE.

Thank you for your consideration,
Paul Enderle
Email: crf_enderlpj@cuchicago.edu
Phone: 708-785-5024

Servant Leadership Profile - Revised (SLPR)

© Paul T. P. Wong, Ph.D. & Don Page, Ph.D.

Leadership matters a great deal in the success or failure of any organization. This instrument was designed to measure both positive and negative leadership characteristics. Please use the following scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements in describing your own attitudes and practices as a leader. If you have not held any leadership position in an organization, then answer the questions as if you were in a position of authority and responsibility. There are no right or wrong answers. Simply rate each question in terms of what you really believe or normally do in leadership situations.

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Strongly Disagree			Undecided			Strongly Agree	
(SD)						(SA)	

For example, if you strongly agree, you may select 7, if you mildly disagree, you may choose 3. If you are undecided, choose 4, but use this category sparingly.

1. To inspire team spirit, I communicate enthusiasm and confidence.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. I listen actively and receptively to what others have to say, even   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   when they disagree with me.

3. I practice plain talking – I mean what I say and say what I mean.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. I always keep my promises and commitments to others.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. I grant all my workers a fair amount of responsibility and latitude   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   in carrying out their tasks.

6. I am genuine and honest with people, even when such transparency   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   is politically unwise.

7. I am willing to accept other people's ideas, whenever they are better   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   than mine.

8. I promote tolerance, kindness, and honesty in the work place.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. To be a leader, I should be front and centre in every function in   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   which I am involved.

10. I create a climate of trust and openness to facilitate participation in   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

decision making.

11. My leadership effectiveness is improved through empowering others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. I want to build trust through honesty and empathy. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. I am able to bring out the best in others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. I want to make sure that everyone follows orders without questioning 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    my authority.

15. As a leader, my name must be associated with every initiative. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. I consistently delegate responsibility to others and empower them 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    to do their job.

17. I seek to serve rather than be served. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. To be a strong leader, I need to have the power to do whatever I 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    want without being questioned.

19. I am able to inspire others with my enthusiasm and confidence in 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    what can be accomplished.

20. I am able to transform an ordinary group of individuals into a 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    winning team.

21. I try to remove all organizational barriers so that others can freely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    participate in decision-making.

22. I devote a lot of energy to promoting trust, mutual understanding 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    and team spirit.

23. I derive a great deal of satisfaction in helping others succeed. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. I have the moral courage to do the right thing, even when it hurts 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    me politically.

25. I am able to rally people around me and inspire them to achieve 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    a common goal.

26. I am able to present a vision that is readily and enthusiastically 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    embraced by others.

27. I invest considerable time and energy in helping others overcome 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    their weaknesses and develop their potential.

28. I want to have the final say on everything, even areas where I don't have the competence.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

29. I don't want to share power with others, because they may use it against me.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

30. I practice what I preach.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

31. I am willing to risk mistakes by empowering others to "carry the ball."   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

32. I have the courage to assume full responsibility for my mistakes and acknowledge my own limitations.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

33. I have the courage and determination to do what is right in spite of difficulty or opposition.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

34. Whenever possible, I give credits to others.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

35. I am willing to share my power and authority with others in the decision making process.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

36. I genuinely care about the welfare of people working with me.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

37. I invest considerable time and energy equipping others.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

38. I make it a high priority to cultivate good relationships among group members.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

39. I am always looking for hidden talents in my workers.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

40. My leadership is based on a strong sense of mission.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

41. I am able to articulate a clear sense of purpose and direction for my organization's future.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

42. My leadership contributes to my employees/colleagues' personal growth.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

43. I have a good understanding of what is happening inside the organization.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

44. I set an example of placing group interests above self interests.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

45. I work for the best interests of others rather than self.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

46. I consistently appreciate, recognize, and encourage the work of others.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

47. I always place team success above personal success.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

48. I willingly share my power with others, but I do not abdicate my authority and responsibility.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

49. I consistently appreciate and validate others for their contributions.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

50. When I serve others, I do not expect any return.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

51. I am willing to make personal sacrifices in serving others.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

52. I regularly celebrate special occasions and events to foster a group spirit.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

53. I consistently encourage others to take initiative.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

54. I am usually dissatisfied with the status quo and know how things can be improved.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

55. I take proactive actions rather than waiting for events to happen to me.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

56. To be a strong leader, I need to keep all my subordinates under control.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

57. I find enjoyment in serving others in whatever role or capacity.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

58. I have a heart to serve others.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

59. I have great satisfaction in bringing out the best in others.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

60. It is important that I am seen as superior to my subordinates in everything.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

61. I often identify talented people and give them opportunities to grow and shine.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

62. My ambition focuses on finding better ways of serving others and making them successful.   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Coding Key

Factor 1: 16, 21, 23, 27, 31, 37, 38, 39, 42, 46, 48, 49, 53, 59, 61, 62
Factor 2: 9, 14, 15, 18, 28, 29, 56, 60
Factor 3: 6, 17, 30, 44, 45, 47, 50, 51, 52, 57, 58
Factor 4: 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 34, 35, 36
Factor 5: 1, 13, 19, 20, 22, 25, 26
Factor 6: 40, 41, 43, 54, 55
Factor 7: 3, 4, 24, 32, 33
Factor 1: Empowering and developing others
Factor 2: Power and pride (Vulnerability and humility, if scored in the reverse)
Factor 3: Serving others
Factor 4: Open, participatory leadership
Factor 5: Inspiring leadership
Factor 6: Visionary leadership
Factor 7: Courageous leadership (Integrity and authenticity)

APPENDIX D: DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Gender

_____ Male
_____ Female

Administrative Experience

_____ 0-5 years
_____ 6-10 years
_____ 11-15 years
_____ 16+ years

Highest Degree Obtained

_____ Bachelor's degree
_____ Master's degree
_____ Doctorate

Ethnic Background

_____ American Indian
_____ Asian
_____ Black
_____ Hispanic
_____ Multiracial
_____ White

School Information

_____ Elementary (K-8)
_____ Secondary (9-12)
_____ All levels (K-12)

APPENDIX E: QUESTION SYNTHESIS

Question Synthesis: Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL)

IPSSL Standard (2008)	IPSSL Indicator (2008)	Page and Wong (2003)	Synthesis Questions
I. Living a Mission and Vision Focused on Results The principal works with the staff and community to build a shared mission, and vision of high expectations that ensures all students are on the path to college and career readiness, and holds staff accountable for results	a. Coordinates efforts to create and implement a vision for the school and defines desired results and goals that align with the overall school vision and lead to student improvement for all learners	6. Visionary Leadership	How do you articulate a clear sense of direction and purpose for your school? How do you maintain focus on the school's mission and vision while managing day-to-day responsibilities?
		1. Empowering and Developing Others	What practices do you demonstrate to show a commitment to the growth of all individuals?
	b. Ensures that the school's identity, vision, and mission drive school decisions	5. Inspiring Leadership	How do you get others to buy into a common goal or vision?
	c. Conducts difficult but crucial conversations with individuals, teams, and staff based on student performance data in a timely manner for the purpose of enhancing student learning and results	6. Visionary Leadership	How do you know what needs to be improved in your school?
		4. Open Participatory Leadership	How do you ensure that you are listening to others?
		7. Courageous Leadership	How do you maintain the courage to do what is right?
II. Leading and Managing Systems Change The principal creates and implements systems to ensure a safe, orderly, and productive environment for student and adult learning toward the achievement of school and district improvement priorities	a. Develops, implements, and monitors the outcomes of the school improvement plan and school wide student achievement data results to improve student achievement	6. Visionary Leadership	How do you maintain focus on the school's mission and vision while managing day-to-day responsibilities?
		1. Empowering and Developing Others	What practices do you demonstrate to show a commitment to the growth of all individuals?
	b. Creates a safe, clean and orderly learning environment	3. Serving Others	How do you focus on the best interests of others? How do you act as a steward for the community?

	c. Collaborates with staff to allocate personnel, time, material, and adult learning resources appropriately to achieve the school improvement plan targets	4. Open Participatory Leadership 1. Empowering and Developing Others 3. Serving Others	How do you get others to participate in decision-making? How do you encourage teamwork among colleagues? How do you act as a steward for the community?
	d. Employs current technologies	3. Serving Others	What practices do you demonstrate that ease the burden of others?
III. Improving Teaching and Learning The principal works with the school staff and community to develop a research-based framework for effective teaching and learning that is refined continuously to improve instruction for all students	a. Works with staff to develop a consistent framework for effective teaching and learning that includes a rigorous and relevant standards-based curriculum, research-based instructional practices, and high expectations for student performance	5. Inspiring Leadership 1. Empowering and Developing Others 6. Visionary Leadership	How do you get others to do their best? What practices do you demonstrate to show a commitment to the growth of all individuals? How do you maintain a focus on the broad perspective of education?
	b. Creates a continuous improvement cycle that uses multiple forms of data and student work samples to support individual, team, and school-wide improvement goals, identify and address areas of improvement and celebrate successes	6. Visionary Leadership 4. Open Participatory Leadership 2. Vulnerability and humility	How do you know what needs to be improved in your School? How do you get others to participate in decision-making? How do you go about putting others ahead of yourself?
	c. Implements student interventions that differentiate instruction based on student needs	1. Empowering and Developing Others	What practices do you demonstrate to show a commitment to the growth of all individuals?
	d. Selects and retains teachers with the expertise to deliver instruction that	3. Serving Others 3. Serving Others	How do you focus on the best interests of others? How do you act as a steward

	maximizes student learning		for the community?
		7. Courageous Leadership	How do you maintain the courage to do what is right?
	e. Evaluates the effectiveness of instruction and of individual teachers by conducting frequent formal and informal observations providing timely feedback on instruction as part of the district teacher appraisal system	1. Empowering and Developing Others	How do you contribute to teacher growth?
		7. Courageous Leadership	How do you maintain the courage to do what is right?
		4. Open Participatory Leadership	How do you promote honesty and openness?
		3. Serving Others	How do you exhibit behaviors that demonstrate empathy?
	f. Ensures the training, development, and support for high-performing instructional teacher teams to support adult learning and development to advance student learning and performance	1. Empowering and Developing Others	How do you contribute to your employees learning growth?
		3. Serving Others	How do you develop an awareness of self and others?
		5. Inspiring Leadership	How do you get others to do their best?
	g. Develops systems and structures for staff professional development and sharing of effective practices including providing and protecting time allotted for development	1. Empowering and Developing Others	How do you encourage teamwork among colleagues?
			How do you contribute to your employees learning growth?
		5. Inspiring Leadership	How do you get others to do their best?
	h. Advances Instructional Technology within the learning environment	1. Empowering and Developing Others	How do you contribute to your employees' personal growth?
IV. Building and Maintaining Collaborative Relationships The principal creates a collaborative school community	a. Creates, develops and sustains relationships that result in active student engagement in the learning process	1. Empowering and Developing Others	How do you encourage teamwork among colleagues? What practices do you demonstrate to show a commitment to the growth of all individuals?

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where the school staff, families, and community interact regularly and share ownership for the success of the school	b. Utilizes meaningful feedback of students, staff, families, and community in the evaluation of instructional programs and policies	4. Open Participatory Leadership 3. Serving Others	How do you get others to participate in decision-making? How do you ensure that you are truly listening to others? How do you focus on the best interests of others?
	c. Proactively engages families and communities in supporting their child's learning and the school's learning goals	1. Empowering and Developing Others 3. Serving Others	How do you go about healing others? How do you act as a steward for the community?
	d. Demonstrates an understanding of the change process and uses leadership and facilitation skills to manage it effectively	1. Empowering and Developing Others 4. Open Participatory Leadership 7. Courageous Leadership	How do you delegate responsibility to others? How do you exhibit behaviors that demonstrate empathy? How do you focus on keeping your commitments and sustaining vision?
V. Leading with Integrity and Professionalism The principal works with the school staff and community to create a positive context for learning by ensuring equity, fulfilling professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity, and serving as a model for the professional behavior of others	a. Treats all people fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect	3. Serving Others 4. Open Participatory Leadership 7. Courageous Leadership 3. Serving Others	What do you do to grow your awareness of self and others? Promote honesty and openness? How do you maintain courage to do what is right? How do you exhibit behaviors that demonstrate empathy?
	b. Demonstrates personal and professional standards and conduct that enhance the image of the school and the educational profession. Protects the rights and confidentiality of students and staff	5. Inspiring Leadership 7. Courageous Leadership	How do you get others to do their best? How do you maintain courage to do what is right?
	c. Creates and supports a climate that values, accepts	3. Serving Others	How do you exhibit behaviors that demonstrate empathy?

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	and understands diversity in culture and point of view	4. Open Participatory Leadership

1. Empowering and Developing Others | What do you do to grow your awareness of self and others?

How do you ensure that you are truly listening to others?

What practices do you demonstrate to show a commitment to the growth of all individuals? |
| VI. Creating and Sustaining a Culture of High Expectations

The principal works with staff and community to build a culture of high expectations and aspirations for every student by setting clear staff and student expectations for positive learning behaviors and by focusing on students' social-emotional learning | a. Builds a culture of high aspirations and achievement and for every student | 5. Inspiring Leadership | How do you get others to buy into a common goal or vision?

How do you get others to do their best? |
| | b. Requires staff and students to demonstrate consistent values and positive behaviors aligned to the school's vision and mission | 2. Vulnerability and Humility

5. Inspiring Leadership

3. Serving Others | How do you maintain authority, while remaining humble?

How do you get others to do their best?

What practices do you demonstrate to show a commitment to the growth of all individuals? |
| | c. Leads a school culture and environment that successfully develops the full range of students' learning capacities— academic, creative, social-emotional, behavioral and physical | 1. Empowering and Developing Others

2. Serving Others

6. Visionary Leadership | What practices do you demonstrate to show a commitment to the growth of all individuals?

How do you focus on the best interests of others?

How do you maintain a focus on the "broad perspective" of education? |

Synthesis questions will be used to determine specific servant leadership practices that effective principals take in leading their schools, derived from Page and Wong's Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL).

APPENDIX F: CODING SYSTEM CATEGORIES FOR ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA

#	CATEGORY	CODE
1	Modeling/Leading by Example	MODEL
2	Presence/Visibility	PRES
3	Teamwork	TW
4	Service	SER
5	Empowerment	EMP
6	Shared Decision Making	SDM
7	Democratic	DEMO
8	Collaboration	COLL
9	Communication	COMM
10	High Expectations	HE
11	Improving Teaching and	TL
12	Vision	VIS
13	Listening	LIST
14	Cultural Leader	CULT
15	Professional Growth	PG
16	Student-centered	SC
17	Building Relationships	RELA
18	Trust	TRU
19	Courageous Leadership	CL
20	Time	TIME
21	Feedback	FB
22	Instructional	IL
23	Ethics/Values	ETH
24	Professionalism	PROF
25	Positive Reinforcement	PR
26	Confronting Conversations	CC
27	Value Followers	FOL
28	Humility	HUM
29	Empathy	EMT
30	Reflection	REF
31	Organization	ORG
32	Celebration	CELE
33	Active Leadership	AL
34	Inspiring Leadership	INS

APPENDIX G: CODING SYSTEM ALIGNMENT

IPSSL Standard (2008)	IPSSL Indicator (2008)	Page and Wong (2003)	CODE
I. Living a Mission and Vision Focused on Results The principal works with the staff and community to build a shared mission, and vision of high expectations that ensures all students are on the path to college and career readiness, and holds staff accountable for results	a. Coordinates efforts to create and implement a vision for the school and defines desired results and goals that align with the overall school vision and lead to student improvement for all learners	6. Visionary Leadership 1. Empowering and Developing Others	VIS HE SC PG EMP PG TL IL
	b. Ensures that the school's identity, vision, and mission drive school decisions	5. Inspiring Leadership	VIS INS SDM
	c. Conducts difficult but crucial conversations with individuals, teams, and staff based on student performance data in a timely manner for the purpose of enhancing student learning and results	6. Visionary Leadership 4. Open Participatory Leadership 7. Courageous Leadership	CC COMM TIME TL CL RELA
II. Leading and Managing Systems Change The principal creates and implements systems to ensure a safe, orderly, and productive environment for student and adult learning toward the achievement of school and district improvement priorities	a. Develops, implements, and monitors the outcomes of the school improvement plan and school wide student achievement data results to improve student achievement	6. Visionary Leadership 1. Empowering and Developing Others	VIS TL EMP CEL SC
	b. Creates a safe, clean and orderly learning environment	3. Serving Others	SO TL
	c. Collaborates with staff to allocate personnel, time, material, and adult learning resources appropriately to achieve the school	4. Open Participatory Leadership 1. Empowering and Developing Others	COLL TIME PG EMP SO RELA

	improvement plan targets	3. Serving Others	
	d. Employs current technologies	3. Serving Others	PG
III. Improving Teaching and Learning The principal works with the school staff and community to develop a research-based framework for effective teaching and learning that is refined continuously to improve instruction for all students	a. Works with staff to develop a consistent framework for effective teaching and learning that includes a rigorous and relevant standards-based curriculum, research-based instructional practices, and high expectations for student performance	5. Inspiring Leadership 1. Empowering and Developing Others 6. Visionary Leadership	TL IL EMP PG HE INS
	b. Creates a continuous improvement cycle that uses multiple forms of data and student work samples to support individual, team, and school-wide improvement goals, identify and address areas of improvement and celebrate successes	6. Visionary Leadership 4. Open Participatory Leadership 2. Vulnerability and humility	VIS SC CELE HUM PR
	c. Implements student interventions that differentiate instruction based on student needs	1. Empowering and Developing Others 3. Serving Others	TL PG
	d. Selects and retains teachers with the expertise to deliver instruction that maximizes student learning	3. Serving Others 7. Courageous Leadership	SO INS TL SC
	e. Evaluates the effectiveness of instruction and of individual teachers by conducting frequent formal and informal observations providing timely feedback on instruction as part of the district teacher appraisal system	1. Empowering and Developing Others 7. Courageous Leadership 4. Open Participatory Leadership	EMP TL IL CULT FB COLL

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		3. Serving Others	
	f. Ensures the training, development, and support for high-performing instructional teacher teams to support adult learning and development to advance student learning and performance	1. Empowering and Developing Others 3. Serving Others 5. Inspiring Leadership	PG IL SC TL EMP
	g. Develops systems and structures for staff professional development and sharing of effective practices including providing and protecting time allotted for development	1. Empowering and Developing Others	PG EMP TIME
	h. Advances Instructional Technology within the learning environment	5. Inspiring Leadership 1. Empowering and Developing Others	PG EMP IL
IV. Building and Maintaining Collaborative Relationships The principal creates a collaborative school community where the school staff, families, and community interact regularly and share ownership for the success of the school	a. Creates, develops and sustains relationships that result in active student engagement in the learning process	1. Empowering and Developing Others	RELA TRU COLL SC AL LIST
	b. Utilizes meaningful feedback of students, staff, families, and community in the evaluation of instructional programs and policies	4. Open Participatory Leadership 3. Serving Others	SC FB IL SO LIST

	c. Proactively engages families and communities in supporting their child's learning and the school's learning goals	1. Empowering and Developing Others 3. Serving Others	AL EMP SO SC LIST
	d. Demonstrates an understanding of the change process and uses leadership and facilitation skills to manage it effectively	1. Empowering and Developing Others 4. Open Participatory Leadership 7. Courageous Leadership	AL COMM ORG EMP
V. Leading with Integrity and Professionalism The principal works with the school staff and community to create a positive context for learning by ensuring equity, fulfilling professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity, and serving as a model for the professional behavior of others	a. Treats all people fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect	3. Serving Others 4. Open Participatory Leadership 7. Courageous Leadership	ETH PROF VF COLL MOD
	b. Demonstrates personal and professional standards and conduct that enhance the image of the school and the educational profession. Protects the rights and confidentiality of students and staff	3. Serving Others 5. Inspiring Leadership 7. Courageous Leadership	ETH PROF CULT
	c. Creates and supports a climate that values, accepts and understands diversity in culture and point of view	3. Serving Others 4. Open Participatory Leadership 1. Empowering and Developing Others	CULT VF EMT SO
VI. Creating and Sustaining a Culture of High Expectations The principal works with staff and community to build a culture of high expectations and aspirations for every	a. Builds a culture of high aspirations and achievement and for every student	5. Inspiring Leadership	HE SC
	b. Requires staff and students to demonstrate consistent values and positive behaviors	2. Vulnerability and Humility	VF ETH PR VIS

student by setting clear staff and student expectations for positive learning behaviors and by focusing on students' social-emotional learning	aligned to the school's vision and mission	5. Inspiring Leadership 3. Serving Others	CELE
	c. Leads a school culture and environment that successfully develops the full range of students' learning capacities—academic, creative, social-emotional, behavioral and physical	1. Empowering and Developing Others 2. Serving Others 6. Visionary Leadership	CULT TL SC VIS

Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant leadership and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL)

APPENDIX H: QUALITATIVE THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

THEME	SUB-THEMES
1. Living Vision and Mission	1.1 Student Centered 1.2 Serving Others 1.3 Humility 1.4 Active Leadership
2. Empowerment	2.1 Collaboration 2.2 Professional Growth 2.3 Improving Teaching and Learning
3. Organizational Culture	3.1 Governance and Time 3.2 Teamwork 3.3 Celebrating High Expectations
4. Trusting Relationships	4.1 Shared Decision Making 4.2 Empathy, Ethics, and Valuing Followers
5. Communication	5.1 Courageous Conversations 5.2 Listening 5.3 Leading by Example

APPENDIX I: INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTION POOL

1. What is your leadership style and what impact does the style have on your school?
2. How do you delegate responsibility to others?
3. How do you encourage teamwork among colleagues?
4. What practices do you demonstrate to show a commitment to the growth of all individuals?
5. How do you maintain authority, while remaining humble?
6. What practices do you demonstrate that ease the burden of others?
7. How do you act as a steward for the community?
8. How do you exhibit behaviors that demonstrate empathy?
9. How do you ensure that you are truly listening to others?
10. How do you get others to participate in decision-making?
11. How do you promote honesty and openness?
12. How do you get others to buy into a common goal or vision?
13. How do you get others to do their best?
14. How do you maintain a focus on the broad perspective of education?
15. How do you know what needs to be improved in your school?
16. How do you articulate a clear sense of direction and purpose?
17. How do you maintain focus on mission/vision while managing day-to-day responsibilities?
18. How do you focus on keeping your commitments and sustaining vision?
19. How do you maintain the courage to do what is right?
20. Which servant leadership practice do you perceive as the most important in contributing to your success as an effective school principal? Why?

APPENDIX J: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Project: An Examination of Illinois Principals Perceptions of Servant Leadership

Interview Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____ Number Identification: _____

Position of Interviewee: _____

Introductory Protocol: To facilitate note-taking, I would like to audio tape our conversations today. Please sign the release form. For your information, only researchers on the project will be privy to information, which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed. In addition, you must sign a form devised to meet our human subject requirements. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) we do not intend to inflict any harm. Thank you for your agreeing to participate.

I have planned this interview to last no longer than 30 minutes. During this time, I have five (5) questions that I will ask. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to interrupt you in order to push ahead and complete this line of questioning.

Purpose: You have been selected to speak with me today because you are an active Illinois school principal. The purpose of this study will be to examine servant leadership as self-perceived by Illinois school principals, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that effectively align to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). You have chosen to participate in the second phase of my research study on the servant leadership practices of Illinois school principals. The study does not aim to evaluate your techniques or experiences. Rather, I hope to learn more about servant leadership through the perspective of Illinois school principals.

This is a semistructured one-on-one interview that will take approximately 30 minutes. To ensure consistency of information, I will be asking all participants the same series of questions. Depending on the participant's response, I may ask for clarification or a follow-up question to better understand the response. Please be aware that the conversation is being recorded. To ensure confidentiality, each participant will be assigned a number that corresponds to a specific interview. I will take notes, and the recording will be transcribed using the assigned number as an identification. Participants will be offered the opportunity to listen to the recordings or read the transcripts if they so choose. Before our interview, would you please take a few moments to complete a brief demographic survey.

If you are ready, I would like to begin with the first question.

1. What is your leadership style and what impact does the style have on your school? [Open-Ended]

2. How do you maintain authority, while remaining humble? [Humility]

3. What practices do you demonstrate that ease the burden of others? [Serving Others]

4. How do you maintain the courage to do what is right? [Courageous Leadership]

5. How do you maintain focus on the school's mission and vision while managing day-to-day responsibilities? [Visionary Leadership]

Derived from Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership, which involve a leader's personal character and actions.

APPENDIX K: FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

Project: An Examination of Illinois Principals Perceptions of Servant Leadership

Focus Group Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Interviewer: _____

Focus Group: _____ Letter Identification: _____

_____ Letter Identification: _____

_____ Letter Identification: _____

_____ Letter Identification: _____

Introductory Protocol: To facilitate note-taking, I would like to audio tape our conversations today. Please sign the release form. For your information, only researchers on the project will be privy to information, which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed. In addition, you must sign a form devised to meet our human subject requirements. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) we do not intend to inflict any harm. Thank you for your agreeing to participate.

I have planned this interview to last no longer than 30 minutes. During this time, our mediator will have five (5) questions that I will ask. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to interrupt you in order to push ahead and complete this line of questioning.

Purpose: You have been selected to be part of this focus group because you are active Illinois school principals. The purpose of this study will be to examine servant leadership as self-perceived by Illinois school principals, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that effectively align to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL). You have chosen to participate in the second phase of my research study on the servant leadership practices of Illinois school principals. The study does not aim to evaluate your techniques or experiences. Rather, I hope to learn more about servant leadership through the perspective of Illinois school principals.

This is a focus group interview that will take approximately 30 minutes. To ensure consistency of information, the group will be asked a predetermined group of questions to discuss and share ideas. Depending on responses, you may be asked for clarification or a follow-up question to better understand the response. Please be aware that the conversation is being recorded. To ensure confidentiality, each participant will be assigned a letter as identification. I will take notes, and the recording will be transcribed using the assigned letter as an identification. Participants will be offered the opportunity

to listen to the recordings or read the transcripts if they so choose. Before our focus group begins, would you please take a few moments to complete a brief demographic survey.

If you are ready, let's begin.

1. What specific practices do you demonstrate that promote the success of every student?

[IPSSL]

2. What practices do you demonstrate to show a commitment to the growth of all

individuals? [Empowering and Developing Others]

3. How do you encourage others to participate in decision-making? [Open, Participatory

Leadership]

4. How do you get others to be their best? [Inspiring Leadership]

5. Which servant leadership practice do you perceive as the most important in

contributing to your success as a principal? Why?

*Derived form Page and Wong's (2003) Seven Factors of Servant Leadership, which

involve a leader's interactions with others and the Illinois Performance Standards for

School Leaders.*

APPENDIX L: ORAL SCRIPT FOR ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

Researcher: "Hello. My name is Paul Enderle, doctorial student at Concordia University. It is a pleasure to speak with you and as explained in our emails you have chosen to participate in the second phase of my research study on the servant leadership practices of Illinois school principals. I greatly appreciate you taking the time speak with me today and contributing to my research study.

This is a semistructured one-on-one interview that will take approximately 30 minutes. To ensure consistency of information, I will be asking all participants the same series of questions. Depending on the participant's response, I may ask for clarification or a follow-up question to better understand the response. Please be aware that the conversation is being recorded. To ensure confidentiality, each participant will be assigned a number that corresponds to a specific interview. I will take notes, and the recording will be transcribed using the assigned number as an identification. Participants will be offered the opportunity to listen to the recordings or read the transcripts if they so choose. Before our interview, would you please take a few moments to complete a brief demographic survey.

If you are ready, I would like to begin with the first question."

After the questions are completed: "Thank you for participating in this interview. If you have any questions, concerns, or other input that you would like to add, please write them down and email then to me. I appreciate your time and have a great day."

APPENDIX M: PERMISSION EMAIL FROM THE ILLINOIS PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION (IPA)

APPENDIX N: QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW EMAIL

November 2013

Dear Colleague:

I would like to invite you to be part of a doctoral research study. I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership Program at Concordia University Chicago, and I am studying servant leadership as a leadership style for school principals. You were selected to be a part of this study because you are or have been a practicing principal in the State of Illinois and you serve in a school district that is geographically convenient to the researcher.

The purpose of this study will be to examine servant leadership as self-perceived by Illinois school principals, specifically how Illinois principals practice a servant leadership construct and what servant leadership practices principals demonstrate that effectively align to the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders (IPSSL).

Your participation may reveal some valuable information regarding the development of servant leadership practices. If you choose to be a part of this study, I will ask you to engage in a 30-minute one-on-one interview. Upon agreeing to this request, I will forward you the interview questions and we will schedule a convenient day, time, and location to meet. Please reply to this email request if you are willing to participate.

Thank you for your consideration,

Paul Enderle

Email: crf_enderlpj@cuchicago.edu
Phone: 708-785-5024

YOUR PARTICIPATION SHOULD TAKE APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES

APPENDIX O: QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW CONSENT

I agree to participate in the research project examining Servant Leadership as a leadership style for school principals, which is being conducted by Paul Enderle, a doctoral student at Concordia University Chicago.

By agreeing to participate, I am aware of the following:

1. My participation is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time without prejudice.
2. All information gathered during this study will remain confidential.
3. The session will be audio taped.
4. The interview will be transcribed by the researcher, and upon request a copy of the transcription be made available to the participant.
5. If I have any questions or concerns regarding this study, I may call any of the following:
   - Paul Enderle at 708-785-5024
   - Dr. Paul Sims at 773-552-2591
   - Concordia University Chicago Institutional Review Board at *IRB@CUChicago.edu*

YOU ARE MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE. YOUR CONSENT INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED AND HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE.

I consent to participate in this research study.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date of Consent

_____   _____

Signature of Researcher   Date

APPENDIX P: QUALITATIVE FOCUS GROUP CONSENT

I agree to participate in the research project examining Servant Leadership as a leadership style for school principals, which is being conducted by Paul Enderle, a doctoral student at Concordia University Chicago.

By agreeing to participate, I am aware of the following:

1. My participation is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time without prejudice.
2. All information gathered during this study will remain confidential.
3. The session will be audio and video taped.
4. The focus group interview will be transcribed by the researcher, and upon request a copy of the transcription be made available to the participant.
5. If I have any questions or concerns regarding this study, I may call any of the following:
   - Paul Enderle at 708-785-5024
   - Dr. Paul Sims at 773-552-2591
   - Concordia University Chicago Institutional Review Board at *IRB@CUChicago.edu*

YOU ARE MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE. YOUR CONSENT INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED AND HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE.

I consent to participate in this research study.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date of Consent

_____   _____

Signature of Researcher   Date