

THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRINCIPAL AS SERVANT LEADER ON SCHOOL CLIMATE  
AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS IN A LARGE MIDWESTERN SCHOOL DISTRICT

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The Influence of the Principal as Servant Leader on School Climate as Perceived by Teachers in  
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Abstract

This study is a quantitative investigation into the impact of principal leadership on school climate. Specifically, the role Greenleaf's Servant Leadership characteristics play on school climate, as characterized by the Charles F. Kettering, School Climate Profile. Numerous researchers have found that leadership plays an important role in many aspects of the school with the principal fulfilling that primary leadership role. Research studies have identified a positive school climate as being associated with increased job satisfaction, student safety, and overall student academic achievement. This study utilized a representative sample of 260 certified school staff members from a large unit school district. The sample completed an electronic survey consisting of 64-statements regarding the staff member's perception of the principal and the climate of the school. Correlational and multiple regression analyses were performed. The study revealed a strong positive, statistically significant correlation between Servant Leadership

and school climate. Various components of Servant Leadership were analyzed for their impact on the eight categories of school climate. This additional analysis yielded unexpected results and identified characteristics of Servant Leadership that contributed negatively to certain aspects of school climate. This study concludes with the implications for practitioners, specifically school principals, as well as those who hire, evaluate, and provide professional development for school principals. Conclusions are summarized with added insights for further areas of investigation in this subject matter.

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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my dad, Edsel B. Clark, Jr.

Dad – Long before I realized, you were cultivating leadership qualities in me. Your kindness, teachings, and spiritual leadership for our family continue to have a tremendous impact on my life. Your endless pride and confidence in your son meant so much more to me than I ever was able to show you. I love you and I miss you.

“For I know the plans I have for you” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a good future.”

Jeremiah 29:11

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research Study**

Leadership has taken on many forms throughout time. Research on effective leadership in business and in education is expansive. The characteristics of effective leaders have changed over time as societal and organizational demands have changed the nature and requirements of leadership (Page & Wong, 1998). Principals, as leaders of their schools, can benefit from research outside of the educational setting. Recent works by Collins, Kouzes and Posner, and Bolman and Deal have described effective leadership characteristics among business and educational leaders. Collins (2001) defined a Level 5 leader as someone who “builds enduring greatness through a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will” (p. 20). Kouzes and Posner (2002) posit that proper leadership is the connection of service melded to a purpose and to people. Bolman and Deals’ (1991; 1995) work was consistent with current research of the time (Tichy & Devanna, 1990) and demonstrated three common characteristics among effective leaders. Leaders deemed to be effective establish a clear and concise vision, are able to communicate that vision with passion, and have the distinct ability to build trusting partnerships with those who follow.

The essence of a leader has changed over time and will continue to change as demands placed upon leaders evolve (Bennis & Goldsmith, 1997). Lopez (1995) suggested that the traditional image of a leader is changing from one who is in oversight of the organization and in control of the employees to one who possesses a compelling vision that inspires others to follow. Page and Wong (1998) believed that society is asking for leadership that serves others, is both ethical and effective, and promotes an active investment in the development of those who are led.



Public education has not been immune to this evolving change in leadership ideals. As the educational leader of the school, the principal plays a pivotal role in student academic success (Walters, McNulty, & Marzano, 2003). In positive and healthy school climates, the principals were found to exhibit behaviors that were positive, supportive and friendly, often taking extra time to develop relationships and serve to assist teachers (Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002).

The tenants of Servant Leadership have been present for centuries although it was not titled as such until Greenleaf (1970), in his seminal work, *The Servant as Leader*, described the concept of Servant Leadership.

The Servant-Leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. 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. (p. 4)

Lopez (1995) viewed the juxtaposition of a traditional image of a leader as one who is in power and in charge with the image of a submissive servant, as marked divergence from leadership theories of the time. "Servant Leadership is an action-oriented state of mind that compels leaders to provide followers with what the followers need in order that the followers might be able to do what needs to be done" (Winston & Patterson, 2005, p. 3).

The study outlined in this chapter sought to address the impact of Servant Leadership in public schools. This introductory chapter continues with a statement of the educational problem for which this study may provide a solution, a description of the purpose of this study, and a listing of the research questions that served as a guide for this study. The chapter concludes with a statement of the significance of the study as it relates to the current body of literature and the definitions of the variables that were used throughout the study.

## **Statement of the Problem**

The era of accountability in public education requires effective school leaders to establish and maintain school environments that promote high levels of student learning. A positive school climate can enhance and increase student achievement. “School climate may be one of the most important ingredients of a successful instructional program. Without climate that creates a harmonious and well functioning school, a high degree of academic achievement is difficult, if not downright impossible, to obtain” (Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 1985, p. 15). School climate was found to be an important factor in school reform and improvement efforts (Bulach & Malone, 1994). Other researchers found that ineffective leadership in schools affected the school climate and may even have negative influences on student learning (Johnson & Uline, 2005; Quinn, 2002).

The principal plays a crucial role in the establishment of the climate of a school. Numerous researchers have shown the impact of the principal on school climate. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1998) and Bulach, Boothe, and Pickett (1998) in parallel studies came to nearly identical conclusions that the staff members’ observations and impressions of the teacher-principal relationships were closely linked to school climate. Additionally, the capabilities of the principal to be an instructional leader were shown to have substantial effects on the school culture, which is closely linked with student achievement (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982). A school culture that is viewed as being positive has shown an association with decreased student emotional and behavioral problems (Kuperminc, Leadbeater, & Blatt, 2001). Additional research on urban schools in high-need environments indicated that the level of academic success can be seriously impacted by a school climate that is culturally conscious and is characterized as being positive and supportive (Haynes & Comer, 1993).

The increasing external demands on public education and the expectation of high levels of learning for every student will require principals to establish schools with a strong, positive climate (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008). With numerous theories on effective leadership, school principals have no singular set of effective leadership strategies to serve as a foundation for leading their schools.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of principals' Servant Leadership characteristics on school climate. Previous research on effective leadership in schools has focused on leadership that contains components which have only represented a partial subset of the characteristics of a Servant Leader. This research studied the relationship between the full set of Servant Leadership characteristics, as characterized by Page and Wong (1998), and school climate as defined by the Charles F. Kettering Ltd; School Climate Profile (1987).

### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by six research questions. The first question sought to establish a connection between Servant Leadership as a whole and general school climate. Research questions 2 through 6 sought to address the ideas of effective characteristics of Servant Leaders.

- 1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the degree to which staff members perceive their principal as a servant leader and their perception of the school climate?*
- 2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' character orientation and school climate?*
- 3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' people orientation and school climate?*

4. *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' task orientation and school climate?*
5. *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' process orientation and school climate?*
6. *Which Servant Leadership trait is the best independent predictor of school climate?*

### **Definition of Variables**

Greenleaf (1970) developed the construct of Servant Leadership. His writings on the topic provide detailed explanations of the Servant Leader's actions and characteristics. For the purpose of this study the operational definition and characterization of Servant Leadership was taken from the work of two leadership researchers. Page and Wong (1998) have described Servant Leadership by detailing the 12 main qualities a Servant Leader possesses. These qualities are listed in Table 1.

Table 1.

#### *Characteristics of Servant Leaders*

1. Have Integrity	7. Have a Clear Vision
2. Are Humble	8. Set Goals
3. Practice Servanthood	9. Lead
4. Are Caring Toward Others	10. Model
5. Empower Others	11. Build Teams
6. Develop Others	12. Share in Decision Making

Page and Wong grouped these 12 characteristics into four main categories of Servant Leadership: Character Orientation, People Orientation, Task Orientation, and Process Orientation. Character orientation describes the attitudinal qualities and values of the leader and

encompasses the first three characteristics of the Servant Leader: integrity, humility and servanthood. People orientation is comprised of the next three characteristics: caring for others, empowering others, and developing others. This category describes the relationships between of the leader with those around them and the commitment to the growth and development of those who are led. The task orientation category describes the leaders drive for productivity and success by combining visioning, goal setting, and leading. The final category, process orientation, encompasses the last three characteristics: modeling, team building, and shared decision-making. This category describes the leader’s ability to increase the organizational effectiveness and develop flexible and efficient systems.

For the purposes of this study, Servant Leadership was measured by the Self-Assessment of Servant Leadership Profile (SASLP). This instrument is described in further detail in Chapter 3, Methodology.

School climate can be defined as “the relatively enduring pattern of shared perceptions about the characteristics of a school organization and its members” ( Keefe, Kelley, & Miller, 1985, p. 74). At times synonymous with school culture, climate has been measured and characterized in many ways. For the purpose of this study, school climate was operationally described by the sum values of the eight categories as detailed by the Charles F. Kettering (CFK) Ltd; School Climate Profile (Howard, Howell, & Brainard, 1987). These eight categories are listed in Table 2.

School climate is the heart and soul of the school and serves as the driving force of what moves teachers and students to desire to be a part of it (Freiberg & Stein, 1999).

Table 2.

*School Climate characteristics according to The CFK Ltd. School Climate Profile*

A. Respect	E. Continuous Academic and Social Growth
B. Trust	F. Cohesiveness

C. High Morale

G. School Renewal

D. Opportunity for Input

H. Caring

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*Note.* For the purposes of this study school climate was measured by the CFK Ltd., School Climate Profile. This instrument is also described in further detail in Chapter 3, Methodology.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study provides practical implications for training and hiring school principals. School leaders looking to influence school climate may be able to use the results of this study to guide their hiring decisions when seeking principal leadership in schools. Practicing school principals may be able to use the results of this study in assessing their leadership practices and the relationship of those practices to school climate. Principals are able to use this study to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship of leadership characteristics and the impact of those characteristics on school climate. While there have been previous studies on Servant Leadership in businesses and the private school sector there is limited research in its impact on public education. Research has been done on other contributing factors that lead to the creation and sustainment of positive school climate. Only in recent years has the construct of Servant Leadership in schools been researched. The literature is lacking in its findings of the effectiveness of Servant Leadership in public schools.

### *Conclusion*

The link between school leadership and school climate has been established through research. This study enhances the body of research by detailing the specific characteristics of Greenleaf's Servant Leadership construct and their respective impacts on school climate. The next chapter of this study outlines and synthesizes the literature that is available and pertinent to this particular study.

## **Chapter 2: Review of the Related Literature**

This literature review contains four sections of review of prior research studies that focus on: leadership theories, school climate, effective leadership in schools, and Servant Leadership. This review of the literature concludes with a brief synthesis and conclusion of the findings which lay the foundational need for this study.

### **Leadership Theories**

Much of the original writings on traditional leadership during the early part of the twentieth century posited three main beliefs of leadership. The first of these beliefs was the thought that good leaders were born and not made, in essence that genetics was the leading factor that made an effective leader (Bennis & Goldsmith, 1997). Secondly, good management (leadership) was what made successful organizations and not necessarily the skill and knowledge of the workers within the organization. The third belief was the idea that leadership was primarily about avoiding failure, motivating workers by reinforcing the need to not make mistakes (Bennis, 1997; Hickman, 1998). The research of the era described leadership as being hierarchical with the leader exhibiting power, influence, wealth, and possessing the ability to coerce (Sergiovanni, 1992; Hickman, 1998).

The latter half of the twentieth century gave way to practices that promote a kinder, gentler approach to leadership. The increase in research on the effectiveness of new leadership frameworks such as transformational, situational, distributed, and laissez-faire leadership styles reflected the changing cultural demands of leadership (Barnett & McCormick, 2004). Senge (1990) provided leaders a strategy guide for leading learning organizations; his work proved to be a seminal piece of literature in the field of educational leadership as evidenced by extensive references made by researchers in studies on leadership. Collins (2001) provided an exhaustive investigation of leadership practices among companies that showed substantial, sustainable

growth. His work revealed commonalities among the leaders of these organizations. Collins described these Level 5 leaders as being humble, preferring to be backstage rather than in the spotlight. This concept of effective leadership is in sharp contrast to the traditional ideals of effective leadership from previous decades. Bolman and Deal (1991) describe the careful balance between leadership and management that effective leaders must strike. “Organizations which are over-managed but under-led eventually lose any sense of spirit or purpose. Poorly managed organizations with strong charismatic leaders may soar temporarily only to crash shortly thereafter” (p. xiii).

As research on leadership became more extensive and widespread, and as commonalities in the research findings began to surface, a select few leadership theories emerged and grew in popularity, both in research and in practice. Common characteristics of these leadership theories appropriate to this review of the literature focus on the humanistic side of leadership and de-emphasize the managerial approach to leadership. The character traits, morals, and the interpersonal abilities of the leader provide an emphasis for the leadership theories that will be described below.

### **Transformational and transactional leadership.**

The first and second leadership styles are referred to as Transformational and Transactional, respectively. These leadership styles are summarized together because the research views these two theories as being at opposite ends of a leadership continuum and demonstrating a bridge between the personal and managerial side of leadership. These leadership theories also contrast a more traditional leader with a newer way of thinking about the role of a leader. Burns (1978) defined Transformational leadership as a process in which “leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation” (p. 20).



Burns also identified leaders as being transactional. This type of leader is characterized as one who closely monitors workers to ensure work is being done properly and intervenes only when tasks or behavior is wrong. The work by Leithwood (1994) expanded upon Burns' work in characterizing transformational and transactional leadership as being at opposing ends of a spectrum of leadership. Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) went on to identify six components of transformational leadership. Those characteristics classified transformational leaders as those who foster the development of vision, develop a collaborative decision-making structure, symbolize good professional practice, provide individual support, provide intellectual stimulation, and hold high performance expectations (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997).

#### **Situational leadership.**

The next leadership theory pertinent to this review and focused on the link between management and inspiration is the idea of Situational Leadership. Originated with Hersey and Blanchard (1988), Situational Leadership is characterized by the idea that the leader changes strategies based on two main behaviors. These behaviors are described as task behaviors and relationship behaviors. The researchers identified task behaviors as those in which the leader exhibits top-down directive communication by explaining the specifics of how tasks are to be performed. Relationship behaviors are those for which the leader engages in two-way communication and provides support for the workers. Similar to the dueling theories of transformational and transactional leadership, this form of leadership shows a link from the leadership theories of the past with the new ideals of a leader that is people-oriented by contrasting the leaders whose strategies are determined by these two behavior classifications.

#### **Invitational leadership.**

Invitational Leadership stems from Invitational Education Theory (IET), which serves to establish an inviting environment in schools. Purkey and Novak (1996) described IET as a systematic approach to education that incorporates strategies for creating and maintaining an inviting school. The five tenants of IET are referred to as the five P's: people, places, programs, policies, and procedures.

From IET the idea of Invitational Leadership arose and was studied extensively by Asbill. A significant quantitative study of elementary school principals and various teacher outcomes (1994) yielded a statistically significant positive relationship between inviting behaviors and both teacher job satisfaction and the effectiveness of the administrator. Purkey and Siegel (2002) described Invitational Leadership as a system of strategies and practices that serve to address the totality of the school environment. Invitational Leaders seek to encourage those around them to pursue joyful lives, both personal and professional, by adhering to four basic guiding principles: respect, trust, optimism, and intentionality (Purkey & Siegel, 2002). Egley and Jones (2005) conducted a study of IET that proved to be consistent with previous conclusions (Purkey & Siegel, 2002; Egley, 2003) and found the components of Invitational Leadership to be effective in education. Their study of 325 Florida administrators found a connection between the inviting behaviors of the administrators and their moral commitment to co-workers. Researchers suggest the goal of Invitational Leaders should be to create a school that has an inviting climate, one that encourages and promotes both individual and institutional success (Egley & Jones, 2005).

One can see the marked distinction between the behaviors present in invitational leaders and the managerial leadership principles studied in the early part of the twentieth century. The personal connections promoted through the inviting behaviors and moral commitment present in Invitational Leadership are closely linked with the relationship behaviors of Situational

Leadership and the efforts to grow other members of the organization present in Transformational Leadership.

### **Moral leadership.**

Sergiovanni (1992) introduced the idea of Moral Leadership as a new approach for school improvement. According to Sergiovanni, “without followership, there can be no leadership; without ideas, values, and commitments, there can be no followership” (p. 85). Sergiovanni identified the most significant component of leadership as the capability of the leader to encourage and inspire others to desire to follow. Sergiovanni described leadership as containing three prongs: the heart, the head, and the hand. He stated “The heart corresponds to the values and beliefs of the leader, the head corresponds to the mind scope of how the world works, and the hands are those decisions, actions and behaviors that are carried out” (p. 8).

Moral Leadership focuses on the building of an educational community and promotes true collaboration and collegiality among the adults in the school. Sergiovanni (1992) envisioned the moral component as the growth of the school goals focused on the needs and development of the people within the school setting. His idea of changing the leadership paradigm from “doing things right to doing the right things” (p. 4) is a foundational component of Moral Leadership. In Moral Leadership the leaders are able to utilize their innate character traits, abilities and knowledge to make decisions interdependently with colleagues. At the same time the leaders are focusing on the goals of the organization developed through a strong value system of and for the members of the organization.

### **Principle-centered leadership.**

As an advocate of inside-out change, Covey (1990) created a theory of leadership called Principle-Centered Leadership. This leadership style emphasizes honesty, justice, integrity,

fairness, equity, respect, and trust as the primary characteristics that can transform leaders. Covey believed that leaders must model what they expect of their followers and that the behaviors of the leaders must exhibit trust and integrity. The idea that leaders must “reap what [they] sow” (p. 5) is at the heart of Covey’s approach to leadership.

Asbill (1994) characterized Principle-Centered Leadership as being dynamic and providing a synergistic approach to leading others. Relationship building, cooperation, and teamwork are important elements of Principle-Centered Leadership. In order for schools to change, the people within the schools must become the change; that change begins with the leader (Covey, 1990). Covey believes that this type of values-based change takes time and cannot occur overnight. Principle-Centered Leadership is a developmental process, is a life-long approach to leadership, and is closely linked to the other forms of humanistic, value-centric theories of leadership.

### **Servant leadership.**

The final leadership theory that is pertinent to this review of literature is Servant Leadership. As quoted in Kautalya (1992), the ancient Indian leader, teacher, and economist Chanakya early as the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., wrote about the leader as servant. “In the happiness of his subjects lies his happiness; in their welfare his welfare; whatever pleases himself he shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good” (p. 52). The concept of a leader finding worth and value by addressing the needs of their followers has been present for some time. As noted earlier, Greenleaf (1970), perhaps somewhat ahead of his time chronologically in relation to modern research, first characterized this leadership theory in his book, *The Servant as Leader*. Greenleaf’s inspiration came from Herman Hesse’s *Journey to the*

*East* where a group of men were led through their mythical journey by the group's servant. Greenleaf's description of a Servant Leader begins with the idea that "the servant-leader *is* servant first" (2002, p. 21). Those who can be classified as Servant Leaders begin "with the natural feeling that [he or she] wants to serve, to serve *first*. Then conscious choice brings [them] to aspire to lead" (p. 27).

Barbuto and Wheeler (2002) characterized Servant Leadership as a fundamental calling, wherein servants are called to lead. This view was consistent with the original work by Greenleaf (1970). In their more recent work, Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) describe servant leaders as being selfless, often putting employee's needs above their own personal needs. Graham (1991) characterized a Servant Leader as one who puts an emphasis on worker growth and service to others; these actions as being an end in and of itself. This is once again in sharp contrast to Transactional Leadership and the task behaviors described as a component of Situational Leadership.

Often linked closely with Burns' (1978) original conceptualization of Transformational Leadership due to shared characteristics, Servant Leadership contains distinctly unique components. Graham (1991) identified differences between Servant Leadership and Transformational Leadership as being the focus on the moral development, the adherence to service and the improvement of the common good as being characteristics present in Servant Leadership but not in Transformational Leadership. Bass (2000) described Servant Leadership as one step beyond that of Transformational Leadership in truly aligning the motives of the leader with the followers. Further distinction from Transformational Leadership came from the work of Sendjaya and Sarros (2002). They viewed servant leaders as possessing good

stewardship and as being entrusted with the development and empowerment of their followers in helping them realize their fullest potential.

Servant leaders possess the desire to transform those whom they serve by encouraging both personal and professional growth (Spears & Lawrence, 2004). Servant leaders desire that those whom they lead become more autonomous, ideally, increasing the chance of the followers eventually becoming Servant Leaders (Spears & Lawrence). Rowe (2003) further described the idea that those who follow a servant leader are most useful when their personal needs are met. An effective servant leader recognizes and prioritizes the needs of their followers (Rowe). Essentially, servant leaders seek to remove obstacles and enable followers to concentrate on their tasks (Polleys, 2002). The best way for a servant leader to succeed is to simply put the needs and interests before their own (Rowe, 2003).

The work of Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) found Servant Leadership to be a more effective leadership style than Transformational Leadership in relationships. Their research surveyed 80 elected officials ideal for a study of this sort due to the nature of the charge of their positions of servanthood to their communities. The researchers found that Servant Leadership was a better predictor of quality leader-member exchange, a theory dedicated to the relationship of leaders and their followers, than Transformational Leadership. Their work was consistent with the theory developed by Burns (1978) on Transformational Leadership in that Servant Leaders do not place the goals of the organization above that of the followers' interests.

While other leadership theories exist and have been researched, the theories described above relate most directly with the focus of this research study. The humanistic approach to leadership shown to be prevalent in recent studies is the primary focus for the remainder of the review of the literature.

## **School Climate**

School climate was initially described by Miles (1969) as organizational health for the means of measuring the environment and structure of a school setting. The idea of school climate has morphed and in recent studies, represents a multi-dimensional idea that incorporates many facets of today's schools. Freiberg and Stein (1999) described school climate as the essence of the school that draws students and teachers to want to be a part of it. Hoy and Miskel (2005) defined school climate as "the set of internal characteristics that distinguish one school from another and influence the behaviors of each school's members" (p. 185). Often related to school culture, school climate is distinct in that it is viewed from a psychological perspective rather than the view of culture from an anthropological perspective (Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991). School climate is often defined by a multi-layered collection of characteristics that are a part of the school. Those characteristics of school climate range from the physical building structure to the nature of the interactions between all persons within the school (Kuperminc, Leadbeater, & Blatt, 2001). Research on the factors that contribute to positive school climate has investigated both teacher and student perceptions of their surroundings, academic achievement (Johnson & Johnson, 1993), general feelings regarding the size and safety of the school (Freiberg, 1998), and the level of respect and trust for teachers and students present within the school setting (Manning & Saddlemire, 1996).

The importance of the impact of school climate on the educational environment has been the focus of numerous studies on school climate. The impact of school climate ranges from the health and well-being of the constituents of the school community to the impact on student achievement.

### **School climate and safety.**

A number of studies on school climate have focused on the benefits to school safety and positive student behavior. The national focus on school safety has elevated school climate to one of the top variables consistently analyzed by school staff and policy makers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005). School violence is a threat to the safety of the students and staff members in schools. In their quantitative study of 10,400 students across 162 schools in Israel, Khoury-Kassabri, Benbenishty, and Astor (2005) found that work towards positive school climate has actually reduced the number of instances of school violence. McEvoy and Welker (2000) in their quantitative study found that the positive interactions with school staff and students present in schools with a positive school climate were actually shown to reduce maladaptive behaviors in students and promote higher levels of school safety.

#### **School climate and relationships.**

Promoting and maintaining positive relationships is a goal of many school leaders. Effective school climates have been found to foster these positive relationships. In their mixed method study of middle school interdisciplinary teaming models, Manning and Saddlemire (1996) found that certain components of school climate can have powerful effects on the interpersonal relationships between students and staff members. Those particular components of school climate that were identified included concern for the welfare of others, respect, and trust within the school community. Taylor and Tashakkori (1995) in their summary of nationwide extent data concluded a positive school climate had a positive association with increased job satisfaction for educators. Their work established a link between the level of belonging to the school and the overall school climate.

#### **School climate and student achievement.**



DuFour, DuFour and Eaker (2008) posit that the main focus of schools in today's era of achievement and accountability is that of ensuring high levels learning for all students. Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1997) revealed school climate as being among the top influences in increased student learning and achievement. Manning and Saddlemire (1996) showed a strong connection between school climate with the learners' academic achievement as well as with overall school progress. A number of researchers have reached similar conclusions: a positive school climate can produce positive academic outcomes for both students and staff; conversely, a climate viewed as being negative may prevent and inhibit desired learning and the development of adolescents (Manning & Saddlemire, 1996; Kuperminc et al., 1997; Freiberg, 1998).

Recent school reform efforts have been the focus of today's school leaders and educational researchers. Felsenthal (1982) concluded school climate to be single the most important contributing factor to effective schools. Investing time and effort in improving school climate can increase overall school efficacy. Recent research supports the relationship between a positive school climate and improved student achievement (Halawah, 2005), and sustained school reform (Kelley, Thorton, & Daugherty, 2005).

The improvement in achievement and learning that comes from a positive school climate is not unique to the students in the schools. Freiberg (1998) notes, "the interaction of various school and classroom climate factors can create a fabric of support that enables all members of the school community to teach and learn at optimum levels" (p. 22). Strahan and Purkey (1992) found that school climate should demonstrate satisfaction for the persons in the school, both faculty and students. Much of the widespread research connecting school climate to student achievement found climate to be a variable that impacts other variables in the school that in turn impact student achievement (Brookover & Lezotte, 1977; Strong & Jones, 1991). Heck (2000)

concluded that the most important component to student achievement is school climate. Urban (1999) stated “unless students experience a positive and supportive climate, some may never achieve the most minimum standards or realize their full potential” (p. 69).

Consistent with previous findings a recent study showed the significance of school climate in improved student achievement. MacNeil, Prater, and Busch (2009) found that schools that demonstrated higher achievement also showed healthier climates than those with lower levels of student achievement.

School climate has been studied by numerous researchers. Much of the original research on school climate performed by Parsons is echoed in the findings of the studies described above. Parsons (1967) concluded that in schools with a healthy and positive school climate, the technical, executive, and institutional levels are in synchronization. This harmonic existence allows the school to meet its basic needs while being able to direct its energy toward achieving its school mission.

### **Effective Leadership in Schools**

A number of studies reveal the importance of effective leadership in the success of schools. Whitaker (1997) found that the key element in effective school research is an effective school principal. The next section of this literature review is dedicated to the research studies involving effective leadership in schools and the impact those leadership styles have on student achievement, the work environment, and the school climate. A brief selection of contrasting studies in the literature pertinent to this study is also discussed.

#### **Principal leadership and student achievement.**

An extensive meta-analysis of 30 years of leadership research by Walters, McNulty, and Marzano (2003) revealed the impact that school principals have on student achievement.

“Leaders can have a positive impact on student achievement; they can also have a marginal, or worse, negative impact on student achievement. When leaders concentrate on the wrong school or classroom practices, they can negatively impact student achievement” (p. 5).

### **Principal leadership and work environment.**

Numerous studies have been done seeking to describe effective leadership in schools. Leadership theories have emerged that were deemed effective in isolated situations. Many agree on the importance of leadership and the role it plays in establishing culture and motivating teachers. Perie and Baker (1997) associated teacher job satisfaction with strong leadership and administrative support. A handful of recent studies all confirm the importance of leadership in connection to teacher motivation, having found that the lack of quality of leadership, insufficient feedback, and little recognition of work efforts are more de-motivating and play a larger role in low morale than national issues in education (Sederberg & Clark, 1990; Evans, 1998; Frase & Sorrenson, 1992).

Smith (1987) found that the school principal is the professional within the building that has the most direct responsibility for the development and maintenance of positive teacher morale. Coulson’s findings revealed that the “school headship is not at root about skills, but hinges upon the personality of heads and their relationships with others, especially their capacity to lead by example and the capacity to embody key values” (Coulson, 1988, p. 254).

Bogler (2001) carried out a study in Northern Israel that compared the effectiveness of leaders perceived as transformational and/or transactional and the effect on teacher job satisfaction. Nine hundred and thirty teachers were given questionnaires with a Likert style rating system. The study found significant correlation between teacher job satisfaction and principals perceived as transformational leaders ( $r = .56, p < .0001$ ) and transactional leaders ( $r = -$

.21,  $p < .0001$ ). Essentially, the more teachers perceived their principals as transformational leaders, and less as transactional leaders, the higher their job satisfaction.

Barnet and McCormick (2004) confirmed Bogler's results regarding transformational and transactional leadership. Their study on leadership sought to determine the importance of the teacher-principal relationship. Of their major findings, two are pertinent to this review of the literature. First is the conclusion that leadership is best characterized by the one-to-one relationships between principals and teachers. Second is the idea that leadership is "implicit" and based on the allowance and acceptance of individuals. Individuals have varied perceptions of school leaders due to variances in their implicit theories regarding leadership.

In accordance with previous results on transformational leadership, Leithwood and Janzi's (2006) study succeeded in finding a correlation between leadership style and teacher motivation. Their study consisted of two random samples of the leaders of 500 schools in England. Head teachers were given questionnaires that included a Likert-type rating scale. The results of the study were three-fold. First the researchers found that transformational leadership had substantial impacts on the work setting of teachers and on teacher motivation. Their second finding showed that transformational leadership had a moderately positive and significant effect on the classroom practices of teachers. Their last conclusion was that leadership and motivation explained nearly 35% of the variation in classroom instructional and behavioral practices of teachers. Principals perceived as being transformational leaders greatly impacted teacher motivation and together played a vital role in changing teacher classroom practices.

In a study similar to Bogler's (2001) research comparing transformational and transactional principal leadership styles with organizational health and teacher job satisfaction, Korkmaz (2007) found comparable results with prior research. The extensive quantitative study

sampled 875 teachers and surveyed their perceptions of their principals in addition to their levels of job satisfaction. The researcher found that principals who were perceived as being transformational leaders led to teachers who noted increased levels of job satisfaction. The conclusion was drawn that transformational leaders sought to promote in-organization relationships among staff (Korkmaz, 2007).

### **Principal leadership and school climate and culture.**

As an extension of Leithwood and Montgomery's (1986) work on principal effectiveness, Campo (1993) conducted a secondary analysis of two Canadian studies on school improvement. His summary found key characteristics of transformational leadership as commonalities among effective principal leaders. Those principals demonstrated flexibility and vision and emphasized personal and professional growth for themselves as well as members of their organizations. These same principals served to promote high levels of collaboration, motivation, and commitment to the school mission (Campo, 1993).

Hallinger and Heck (1998) found that the school principal is the individual who has a direct influence on the culture of the school. The school leader plays a significant role in establishing and promoting the climate of the school. Both Freiberg (1999) and Sergiovanni (2001) agreed that a principal who is skilled in promoting a school climate that encourages learning is crucial in improving student achievement. Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) in their study on transformational leadership yielded a couple of key findings in relation to the school climate. The first of their findings was the idea that school leaders who produce quality work for the school was found to be the most impactful approach in the study for influencing the behaviors and actions of teachers. The researchers' second finding was in the idea of the importance of

school leaders' actions being in clear accordance with the school mission, vision, values, and strategic goals.

A similar study by Korkmaz (2007) mirrored previously generated results in relation to teacher job satisfaction, found a significant connection between leadership style and organizational health. Leaders who exhibited the characteristics of personal growth, development in others, and were supportive in improving education, had a high connection to the positive organizational health of their schools. Transformational leaders with these characteristics had “a significant effect on the organizational development” (p. 45).

### **Contrasting studies on leadership.**

In contrast to many findings on the importance of educational leaders on school climate and staff morale, Hunter-Boykin and Evans (1995) found no significant correlational relationship between the leadership style of the principal and the morale of the teaching staff. The conclusions of this study closely mirrored previous work by Helwig (1969) and Boykin (1983), which concluded a low positive relationship between the leadership styles exhibited by the principal and the general morale of the teachers. The study also found many other factors that contributed more to morale beyond the school leader.

Evans and Johnson (1990) found similar results. Their study included a stratified random sample of 166 school physical education teachers who received and completed questionnaires that contained Likert style rating scales for questions of job-related stress and satisfaction and principal leadership style. They found no significant correlation between the teachers' perceptions of the leadership behaviors of the principal and job satisfaction.

Echoing Evans and Johnsons' (1990) work, Heller, Clay, and Perkins (1993) found no significant relationship between teacher job satisfaction and principal leadership style. Their

study focused on factors relating to teacher job satisfaction and dissatisfaction and used Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership framework their basis. Their study sampled 339 teachers using questionnaires and found factors that were associated with job satisfaction (such as co-workers) and factors associated with job dissatisfaction (financial aspects of teaching) but failed to find a significant relationship between leadership style and either job satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

### **Research Studies on Servant Leadership.**

Although numerous authors have written about the concept of Servant Leadership, the quantity of research studies on the impact of Servant Leaders in the workplace is low. A select few of these studies are detailed below. The researchers in these studies sought to compare the behaviors of the school leaders with various components of teacher behaviors and practices. Out of the narrow body of research on this topic, the structure and organization of these research studies make them highly pertinent to this current research study.

Neubart et al. (2008) hypothesized that Servant Leadership would have an association with what they called helping behavior, behavior that is characterized by "small acts of consideration and an emphasis on personal harmony" (Neubart et al., 2008, p. 1222) and creative behavior, characterized by a flexible attitude, a readiness to take risks, and a desire for proposing and implementing novel ideas. Their sample of 250 workers, who completed a two stage questionnaire, provided the data for analysis that yielded significant results. The correlation between Servant Leaders and Helping Behavior was statistically significant ( $r = .245, p < .001$ ). The correlation between Servant Leaders and Creative Behavior was also statistically significant ( $r = .287, p < .001$ ). Their conclusions suggest that managers and administrators, who can be

classified as Servant Leaders, are likely to promote and encourage employees to partake in helping behaviors and promote creative behaviors.

Taylor et al., (2007) sought to determine the effects of principals as Servant Leaders when compared to five components of leadership put forth by Kouzes and Posner (1993). Those five components characterized leaders as those who challenge processes, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, model/show the way, and encourage the hearts of their followers. The study consisted of two parts, the first of which included 112 principals who completed the Self Assessment for Servant Leadership Profile (SASLP). This SASLP was a 24-item questionnaire which assessed each principal according to a previously specified trait of servant leadership. The second phase of the study involved three members of the teaching staff from each of the 112 schools. These teachers completed the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) which assessed leaders based on the five components outlined above.

The results of the 2007 study by Taylor et al. found significant differences between principals who exhibited the characteristics of Servant Leaders and those who did not, across all five leadership components. The two components with the strongest relationship were modeling the way, where the mean difference was 4.20 ( $F = 11.78$ ,  $p = .001$ ) and inspiring a shared vision, where the mean difference was 5.50 ( $F = 13.43$ ,  $p = .001$ ). The results of this study have two implications that are pertinent to this research study. The first result was that Servant Leadership was shown to be a credible and effective form of leadership for schools in particular. The second of the two pertinent conclusions is in regard to the results of the statistical analysis. Taylor et al. found two components of leadership to be statistically significant; those components being “modeling” and “enabling”. They described modeling as establishing “principles guiding the way teachers should be treated and how goals should be pursued” (p. 412). The Enabling



component of leadership was characterized by leaders who enabled others to act by promoting collaboration and “making each member of the organization feel that he/she is a vital part of the organization” (p.412). These two characteristics dovetail with previous findings on effective humanistic leadership practices.

In a recent double-stage correlational study by Black (2007) of Catholic elementary schools, the conclusions mirrored previous research. The study consisted of two different survey instruments. The Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) (Laub, 1998) measured the perceived servant leadership of the principal in six dimensions: values people, develops people, builds community, displays authenticity, provides leadership, and shares leadership. The second instrument in the study was the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire-Revised (OCDQ-RE) (Hoy et al., 1991), which measured school climate in six dimensions: supportive principal behavior, directive principal behavior, restrictive principal behavior, collegial teacher behavior, intimate teacher behavior, and disengaged teacher behavior. One-hundred-fifty-five principals and teachers completed the two surveys. The data analysis revealed significant results. The correlation between Servant Leadership and school climate was calculated to be 0.66 ( $p < .0001$ ). Schools with principals who exhibited the traits of a Servant Leader were found to have positive school climates.

### **Conclusions and Synthesis of the Literature**

Numerous studies on Transformational leadership revealed the impact on student achievement, teacher job satisfaction, school morale, and school climate. The principal has been shown to play a significant role in the school climate. Leadership traits such as empathy, caring, development of others, and servanthood have been shown as effective strategies in school improvement.

The connection between Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership has been established with many viewing Servant Leadership as creating an increased level of empathy and moral growth of the followers (Page & Wong, 1998; Spears 2001). The studies on various principal leadership theories have revealed little to no influence on teacher behaviors, discussed leadership practices in general, and failed to address the humanistic leadership theories. Studies of Servant Leadership have produced results in keeping with prior research. Leaders viewed as servant leaders had impact in promoting creativity, helping behaviors, and in maintaining and acting in accordance to the school's mission. Inherent in the main components of Servant Leadership are characteristics that are consistent with the numerous studies of effective leadership. This study will fill the gap that exists in the literature in two regards. First, this study will synthesize the components of various humanistic leadership theories described throughout the literature. Second, this study will go beyond simply assessing the impact of the principal on teachers and will assess the principal as Servant Leader specifically on school climate.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter details the methodology that was used in this study. The formal design of the study is described along with the population and the sampling techniques that were used. A detailed description of the two instruments, the Self-Assessment for Servant Leadership Profile (SASLP) and the Charles F. Kettering Ltd., School Climate Profile are provided along with a review of the reliability and validity of the instruments. The planned analysis for each of the six research questions is outlined. This chapter concludes by examining the delimitations, limitations, and assumptions of the study.

#### **Study Design**

This study was a quantitative study utilizing correlational analysis. Data was gathered via an electronic survey. For the purposes of this study, the term teachers consisted of certified staff members serving as classroom teachers, guidance counselors, school psychologists, and social workers. The survey was distributed to randomly selected teachers via electronic mail. The study utilized data gathered from participants responding to the survey instrument. The data was then analyzed according to the processes outlined within this chapter to answer each of the six research questions presented below.

1. *Is there a statistically significant relationship between the degree to which staff members perceive their principal as a servant leader and their perception of the school climate?*
2. *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' character orientation and school climate?*
3. *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' people orientation and school climate?*
4. *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' task orientation and school climate?*
5. *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' process orientation and school climate?*
6. *Which Servant Leadership trait is the best independent predictor of school climate?*

## **Population**

The population from which the sample was taken consisted of certified teachers of elementary, middle, and secondary schools located within the suburban areas of a large mid-western city. The study utilized one large suburban school district covering four municipalities. The school district is comprised of 33 schools, consisting of one pre-kindergarten facility, one

alternative school, three high schools, seven middle schools and 21 elementary schools. This district serves nearly 29,000 students with the following demographics: 66% White, 16% Asian, 9% Black, 6% Hispanic, and 3% Multi-racial. In this school district approximately 8% of students receive free or reduced lunch. Student achievement on standardized tests is above both the state and national averages.

The school district employs nearly 3,200 staff members; approximately 2,200 of these employees are certified. The certified personnel do not represent the same diversity as the student body. Teachers in the district have the following ethnic demographics: 91% White, 3% Black, 3% Hispanic, 2% Asian, and less than 1% Native American. Certified personnel in this school district have on average nearly 11 years of experience.

### **Sampling**

From the population described above, non-administrative, certified teachers assigned to schools were identified as eligible for participation in the study. One of the three high schools was not included in the study due to its affiliation with the researcher. The pre-kindergarten facility was not included as teachers at this level are not required to have certification. Additionally, the alternative school was removed from consideration due to its small staff size. These reducing factors left approximately 1,900 certified teachers representing 30 schools, eligible for participation in the study. From this group of eligible participants, 706 were randomly selected and identified as potential participants in the study. These 706 participants were contacted through electronic communication. This initial communication consisted of a brief letter of introduction about the researcher including the purpose of the study and informed the participants of an upcoming email containing the survey. The second communication contained brief instructions as to the steps necessary to complete the survey, the deadline for

completion, which was two weeks from the initial contact date, and the electronic link to the survey. A final component of the initial communication was information regarding the incentive to complete the survey. This incentive provided was the opportunity to win one of five gift cards, each worth \$40.

At the end of one week, the same 706 participants were contacted again via electronic mail. This third contact consisted of a brief reminder of the survey and the deadline. As a means of increasing participation, this third contact also provided a reminder of the incentive for those completing the survey. A fourth and final reminder was provided to all 706 participants two days prior to the deadline. This electronic reminder thanked those who have participated, reminded participants of the incentive, and indicated the deadline. Once the survey was completed, respondents had the opportunity to participate in the drawing for the incentive gift cards by indicating their email address. Respondents' names and email addresses were used for the drawing of the incentives. As a means to increase the participation rate, anonymity was maintained. The survey data was kept separate from the respondents' information.

Although it was not ultimately necessary, a plan was in place for the instance that the completion and participation rate was below 25% or 150 respondents. This plan called for the researcher to randomly select an additional 600 certified teachers from the remaining eligible pool not initially selected. This second round of staff members would have had the opportunity to complete the survey with the same communication, incentive, and timeline as the initial sample described above.

### **Instrumentation**

This study utilized a combination and modification of two survey instruments. The researcher obtained permission to use both survey instruments. The electronic format of this

study required the survey to consist of six pages. The initial page of the electronic survey was the informed consent form. The second page consisted of three demographic questions about the participants. Those three questions were in relation to the school level (elementary, middle, or high), gender (male or female), and the number of years of experience as a certified staff member.

The remaining pages of the electronic survey were comprised of the two instruments utilized in the study. The first instrument was a modified version of the Self-Assessment for Servant Leadership Profile (SASLP) developed by Page and Wong in 1998 to measure the degree of Servant Leadership present in each participant. This modified version containing 24 items, used by Taylor et al. (2007), is adapted from the original SASLP consisting of 99 items developed by Page and Wong (1998). The primary modification to the survey instrument by the researcher was that of the certified teachers assessing their principals rather than the principals self-assessing. A secondary modification by the researcher was the reduction of the scale from seven to six choices. The instrument utilized a Likert scale ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (6) Strongly Agree. The 24 items contained two statements from each of the 12 sub-categories of Servant Leadership as describe in chapter one of this study: 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, and 12 – Shared decision-making. These 12 categories can be closely linked with the work of Greenleaf (1970, 2002) and Spears (2001) and represent the characteristics discussed in the literature on Servant Leadership.

A pilot study conducted by Page and Wong (1998) utilizing the original 99-item SASLP revealed the alpha values of the instrument as follows: Integrity (0.80), humility (0.66), servant-

hood (0.76), caring for others (0.71), empowering others (0.77), developing others (0.92), visioning (0.57), goal setting (0.77), leading (0.84), modeling (0.76), team building (0.82), and shared decision-making (0.80). Hamilton (1999) found alpha values consistent with the work by Page and Wong. An analysis of the 24 item, modified version with the original 99 item instrument showed a positive correlation of 0.95 between the composite scores of each of the instruments (Taylor et al., 2007).

The remaining pages of the electronic survey were comprised of the second instrument used in this study. This instrument was a modified version of the Charles F. Kettering (CFK) Ltd., School Climate Profile. Both the original version of the survey and the modified version used for this study will contain 40 items, with 5 items pertaining to each of the 8 subcategories of school climate described in chapter one of this study: A – Respect, B – Trust, C – High morale, D – Opportunity for input, E – Continuous academic and social growth, F – Cohesiveness, G – School renewal, and H – Caring.

The original CFK Ltd., School Climate Profile served as a comparative tool wherein respondents would rate the current reality of the school climate in addition to their perceived importance of the statement as it relates to school climate (Johnson & Johnson, 1993). This study required a modification to the instrument by imploring a Likert scale ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (6) Strongly Agree.

The original format of the CFK Ltd., School Climate Profile was comprised of two columns, “What Is” and “What Should Be”. Investigations into the reliability and validity of this instrument revealed initial concerns with the format. In a study by Johnson and Johnson (1993) into the reliability of the CFK Ltd., School Climate Profile revealed Cronbach alpha values ranging from .22 to .91. While less than ideal, no modifications were made to the instrument and

it continued to prove useful in research studies (Johnson & Dixon, 1990). For this study the original CFK School Climate Profile was modified to include a Likert scale. This modification to the instrument has not been utilized in research and therefore it is unclear as to the impact this modification will have on its reliability and validity.

The two survey instruments are summarized in Table 3 and are combined as one 64–question survey in Appendix B.

Table 3.

*Summary of the Modified SASLP and the CFK Ltd., School Climate Profile*

Modified Self Assessment for Servant Leadership Profile (SASLP)			CFK Ltd., School Climate Profile	
Item Numbers	Servant Leadership Characteristics	Servant Leadership Categories	Item Numbers	School Climate Categories
1, 2	Integrity	Character Orientation	25–29	Respect
3, 4	Humility		30–34	Trust
5, 6	Servanthood		35–39	High Morale
7, 8	Caring	People Orientation	40–44	Opportunity for Input
9, 10	Empowering		45–49	Continuous Growth
11, 12	Developing Others		50–54	Cohesiveness
13, 14	Visioning	Task Orientation	55–59	School Renewal
15, 16	Goal Setting		60–64	Caring
17, 18	Leading			
19, 20	Modeling	Process Orientation		
21, 22	Team Building			
23, 24	Shared Decision Making			

### Data Analysis

This study involved two statistical analyses; the first technique applied to research questions one through five and the second technique applied to question six.

#### Data analysis for research question one.



Respondents' scores on questions 1–24 were totaled to provide an overall score for Servant Leadership. Respondents' scores on questions 25–64 were totaled to provide a school climate score. Each respondent had two scores, one indicating the degree to which they viewed the principal as Servant Leader and one indicating the strength of the climate within the school.

Correlational analysis was performed and Pearson's R was calculated between the Servant Leadership score and the school climate score to determine both the presence and the significance of the relationship. These procedures allowed the researcher to identify the size of the correlation and statistical significance of the relationship between Servant Leadership and school climate.

#### **Data analysis for question two.**

Respondent data provided a sub-score that quantified the “character orientation” of their principal as characterized by Servant Leadership. This sub-score was the sum of their raw scores from each of the first three sub-categories outlined in chapter 1 and quantified by the SASLP. These three sub-categories are 1 – *Integrity*, 2 – *Humility*, and 3 – *Servanthood*.

Each respondent also provided a sub-score in each of the eight categories of school climate assessed by the CFKSCP. This sub-score was the sum total of the responses to the items that correspond to the eight categories of School Climate.

Correlational analysis was performed and Pearson's R was calculated between the Servant Leadership “character orientation” sub-score and each of the eight individual school climate sub-scores to determine the significance of the relationships. These procedures allowed the researcher to identify the size of the correlation and statistical significance of the relationship between the staff member's perception of the “character orientation” of the principal and their perception of each of the eight categories of school climate. These eight correlation coefficients

are summarized and discussed in Chapter 4, Data Analysis. A summary of the analysis for question two is detailed in Table 4.

Table 4.

*Summary of Research Question Two*

Modified Self Assessment for Servant Leadership Profile (SASLP)			Correlational Analysis between Character Orientation and each School Climate Category	CFK Ltd., School Climate Profile	
Item Numbers	Servant Leadership Characteristics	Servant Leadership Categories		Item Numbers	School Climate Categories
1, 2	Integrity	Character Orientation	25–29	Respect	
3, 4	Humility		30–34	Trust	
5, 6	Servanthood		35–39	High Morale	
7, 8	Caring	People Orientation	40–44	Opportunity for Input	
9, 10	Empowering		45–49	Continuous Growth	
11, 12	Developing Others		50–54	Cohesiveness	
13, 14	Visioning	Task Orientation	55–59	School Renewal	
15, 16	Goal Setting		60–64	Caring	
17, 18	Leading				
19, 20	Modeling	Process Orientation			
21, 22	Team Building				
23, 24	Shared Decision Making				

**Data analysis for question three.**

Respondent data provided a sub-score that quantified the “people orientation” of their principal as characterized by Servant Leadership. This sub-score was the sum of their raw scores from each of the second three sub-categories outlined in chapter 1 and quantified by the SASLP. These three sub-categories are 4 – *Caring*, 5 – *Empowering*, and 6 – *Developing Others*.

Each respondent also provided a sub-score in each of the eight categories of school climate assessed by the CFKSCP. This sub-score was the sum total of the responses to the items that correspond to the eight categories of School Climate.

Correlational analysis was performed and Pearson’s R was calculated between the Servant Leadership “people orientation” sub-score and each of the eight individual school climate sub-scores to determine the significance of the relationships. These procedures allowed the researcher to identify the size of the correlation and statistical significance of the relationship between the staff member’s perception of the “people orientation” of the principal and their perception of each of the eight categories of school climate. These eight correlation coefficients are summarized and discussed in Chapter 4, Data Analysis. A summary of the analysis for question three is detailed in Table 5.

Table 5.

*Summary of Research Question Three*

Modified Self Assessment for Servant Leadership Profile (SASLP)			Correlational Analysis between Servant Leadership Category and School Climate Category	CFK Ltd., School Climate Profile	
Item Numbers	Servant Leadership Characteristics	Servant Leadership Categories		Item Numbers	School Climate Categories
1, 2	Integrity	Character Orientation	25–29	Respect	
3, 4	Humility		30–34	Trust	
5, 6	Servanthood		35–39	High Morale	
7, 8	Caring		40–44	Opportunity for Input	
9, 10	Empowering	People Orientation	45–49	Continuous Growth	
11, 12	Developing Others		50–54	Cohesiveness	
13, 14	Visioning	Task Orientation	55–59	School Renewal	
15, 16	Goal Setting		60–64	Caring	
17, 18	Leading				
19, 20	Modeling	Process Orientation			
21, 22	Team Building				
23, 24	Shared Decision Making				

**Data analysis for question four.**

Respondent data provided a sub-score that quantified the “task orientation” of their principal as characterized by Servant Leadership. This sub-score was the sum of their raw scores

from each of the third three sub-categories outlined in chapter 1 and quantified by the SASLP.

These three sub-categories are 7 – *Visioning*, 8 – *Goal Setting*, and 9 – *Leading*.

Each respondent also provides a sub-score in each of the eight categories of school climate assessed by the CFKSCP. This sub-score was the sum total of the responses to the items that correspond to the eight categories of School Climate.

Correlational analysis was performed and Pearson’s R was calculated between the Servant Leadership “task orientation” sub-score and each of the eight individual school climate sub-scores to determine the significance of the relationships. These procedures allowed the researcher to identify the size of the correlation and statistical significance of the relationship between the staff member’s perception of the “task orientation” of the principal and their perception of each of the eight categories of school climate. These eight correlation coefficients are summarized and discussed in Chapter 4, Data Analysis. A summary of the analysis for question four is detailed in Table 6.

Table 6.

*Summary of Research Question Four*

Modified Self Assessment for Servant Leadership Profile (SASLP)			Correlational Analysis between Servant Leadership Category and School Climate Category	CFK Ltd., School Climate Profile	
Item Numbers	Servant Leadership Characteristics	Servant Leadership Categories		Item Numbers	School Climate Categories
1, 2	Integrity	Character Orientation	25–29	Respect	
3, 4	Humility		30–34	Trust	
5, 6	Servanthood		35–39	High Morale	
7, 8	Caring	People Orientation	40–44	Opportunity for Input	
9, 10	Empowering		45–49	Continuous Growth	
11, 12	Developing Others		50–54	Cohesiveness	
13, 14	Visioning	Task Orientation	55–59	School Renewal	
15, 16	Goal Setting		60–64	Caring	
17, 18	Leading				
19, 20	Modeling	Process Orientation			
21, 22	Team Building				

**Data analysis for question five.**

Respondent data provided a sub-score that quantified the “process orientation” of their principal as characterized by Servant Leadership. This sub-score was the sum of their raw scores from each of the third three sub-categories outlined in chapter 1 and quantified by the SASLP. These three sub-categories are 10 – *Modeling*, 11 – *Team Building*, and 12 – *Shared Decision Making*.

Each respondent also provided a sub-score in each of the eight categories of school climate assessed by the CFKSCP. This sub-score was the sum total of the responses to the items that correspond to the eight categories of School Climate.

Correlational analysis was performed and Pearson’s R was calculated between the Servant Leadership “process orientation” sub-score and each of the eight individual school climate sub-scores to determine the significance of the relationships. These procedures allowed the researcher to identify the size of the correlation and statistical significance of the relationship between the staff member’s perception of the “process orientation” of the principal and their perception of each of the eight categories of school climate. These eight correlation coefficients are summarized and discussed in Chapter 4, Data Analysis. A summary of the analysis for question five is detailed in Table 7.

Table 7.

*Summary of Research Question Five*


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Modified Self Assessment for Servant Leadership Profile (SASLP)	: Leadership	CFK Ltd., School Climate Profile
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Item Numbers	Servant Leadership Characteristics	Servant Leadership Categories	Item Numbers	School Climate Categories
1, 2	Integrity	Character Orientation	25–29	Respect
3, 4	Humility		30–34	Trust
5, 6	Servanthood		35–39	High Morale
7, 8	Caring	People Orientation	40–44	Opportunity for Input
9, 10	Empowering		45–49	Continuous Growth
11, 12	Developing Others		50–54	Cohesiveness
13, 14	Visioning	Task Orientation	55–59	School Renewal
15, 16	Goal Setting		60–64	Caring
17, 18	Leading			
19, 20	Modeling	Process Orientation		
21, 22	Team Building			
23, 24	Shared Decision Making			

#### **Data analysis for question six.**

Respondent data provided a sub-score that quantifies each of the four Servant Leadership trait categories: character orientation, people orientation, task orientation, and process orientation. These sub-scores were generated using the same procedures as outlined in research questions 2 through 5 wherein the scores were the sum of their corresponding raw scores. Multiple regression analysis was performed to analyze the predictive ability of each of the four independent variables, the Servant Leadership trait categories, on the dependent variable, school climate. This process was done for each of the eight sub-categories of school climate as indicated in table 7.

#### **Delimitations**

This study was delimited to:

- Approximately 150–600 certified teachers of elementary, middle, and high schools completing the survey.
- Certified teachers for the 2010–2011 school year.

- Schools from geographic region including four suburban municipalities of one large metropolitan area in the United States.
- Staff members who had the computer access necessary to complete the electronic survey.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of this study are detailed below.

- Many schools have an administrative team consisting of the principal, assistant principals, deans and department chairpersons. This study examined the perception of the principal's impact and did not take into account the remainder of the administrative team.
- Participating schools were of primarily middle to high socioeconomic status.
- Some schools electing to participate included limited amounts of diversity within the principals, staff members, and students who attend the schools.
- This study did not take into consideration factors relating to school climate other than the principal's leadership style.
- The school climate survey collects perceptual data that may not have accurately represented the behaviors of the professionals in the building.
- Response was voluntary and therefore limited to those who responded and participated in the survey.
- Some participants who wished to participate may have lacked the technological skills to complete the on-line survey.

### **Assumptions**

The assumptions of this study are detailed below.

- Participants in the study responded with honesty to the survey instruments.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Approval from the superintendent of the school district to conduct the research was obtained by the researcher (Appendix C). Prior to conducting this study and gathering data the researcher submitted the research proposal to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Aurora University. Upon receipt of IRB approval, the researcher began the study. The initial page of the electronic instrument was an informed consent letter. This page included the purpose of the study as well as the protected confidentiality of the participants. Participants had the opportunity to review the form and consent prior to their participation in the study. Participants had the option to agree to participate in the study or elect not to participate by completing the electronic form. Participant anonymity was preserved throughout the study. Participants had the option to discontinue participation in the study and survey at any time in the process without penalty. Electronic data collected was stored in a secure password-protected location and will be retained for three years following the completion of the study.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter on methodology described the population from which the sample was taken, the design of the study, including the instrumentation, described the analysis of each of the five research questions, and concluded with a listing of the limitations, delimitations, and assumptions of the study design. This study continues with Chapter 4, which provides the detailed analysis of the data and ultimately the answers to each of the six research questions.

## **Chapter 4: Data Analysis**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of principals' Servant Leadership characteristics on school climate. The researcher began the investigation by



collecting data according to the methodology outlined in the previous chapter. This chapter will provide a brief review of the data collection process, characteristics and descriptive statistics of the sample used in the study, and a detailed analysis of each of the six research questions proposed in this study.

### Review of Methodology

As outlined in the previous chapter, the methodology utilized in this study centered on the completion of an electronic, on-line survey. The survey consisted of 64 questions, requiring respondents to utilize a six-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (6) Strongly Agree. The survey contained 24 questions on various Servant Leadership characteristics, adapted from the Self-Assessment of Servant Leadership Profile (SASLP), and an additional 40 questions relating to School Climate, adapted from the Charles F. Kettering, School Climate Profile. The characteristics and question numbers are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8.

*Summary of Survey Question Topics Related to the modified SASLP and the CFK Ltd., School Climate Profile*

Item Numbers	Servant Leadership Characteristics	Servant Leadership Categories	Item Numbers	School Climate Categories
1, 2	Integrity	Character Orientation	25–29	Respect
3, 4	Humility		30–34	Trust
5, 6	Servanthood		35–39	High Morale
7, 8	Caring	People Orientation	40–44	Opportunity for Input
9, 10	Empowering		45–49	Continuous Growth
11, 12	Developing Others		50–54	Cohesiveness
13, 14	Visioning	Task Orientation	55–59	School Renewal
15, 16	Goal Setting		60–64	Caring
17, 18	Leading			
19, 20	Modeling	Process Orientation		
21, 22	Team Building			
23, 24	Shared Decision Making			

The data collection began with an electronic letter of introduction to a random sample of 706 certified, non-administrative staff members from a large Midwestern school district. The electronic link to the 64-question survey was then sent to the same sample of individuals who were given 14 days to complete the survey. The response rate for the survey was 40.2%, representing a total of 284 responses. Initial cleaning of the data revealed 24 incomplete responses. These responses were removed from the data analysis for a number of reasons, including the failure of the respondent to check the box agreeing to consent and multiple missing question responses. This removal left 260 respondents with completed surveys as the individuals used for data analysis.

### **Sample Demographics**

In addition to the 64 questions on the survey relating to Servant Leadership and school climate, three demographic questions were asked of the survey respondents. These questions revealed that of the 260 completed survey respondents, 21% were male and 79% were female. This percentage closely resembles the overall percentage in the district with 22% male and 78% female. The unit district encompasses three different school levels, elementary, middle, and high. The sample consisted of 42% elementary teachers, 32% middle school teachers, and 26% high school teachers. The final piece of demographic information concerned the number of completed years of experience in their current assigned school. Of the survey respondents, 4% had been at their current school less than one year, 29% had been there between 1 and 5 years, 32% had been there between 5 and 10 years, and 35% had been assigned to their current school for more than 10 years.

### **Initial Data Analysis**

Utilizing the 260 complete surveys, the initial steps in the data analysis process required the researcher to create 14 new variables. These variables consisted of each of the four Servant Leadership characteristics, each of the eight school climate categories, the Servant Leadership aggregate and the school climate aggregate. Each survey question contributed a score ranging from one to six. The new variables were created by adding up the responses from corresponding questions. This is summarized in Table 9.

Table 9.

*Recoding of Variables*

Item Numbers	Variable Code	Variable Name
1–6	SL1	Character Orientation
7–12	SL2	People Orientation
13–18	SL3	Task Orientation
19–24	SL4	Process Orientation
1–24	SL	Servant Leadership
25–29	SC1	Respect
30–34	SC2	Trust
35–39	SC3	High Morale
40–44	SC4	Opportunity for Input
45–49	SC5	Continuous Academic and Social Growth
50–54	SC6	Cohesiveness
55–59	SC7	School Renewal
60–64	SC8	Caring
25–64	SC	School Climate

### Data Analysis – Question 1

- 1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the degree to which staff members perceive their principal as a servant leader and their perception of the school climate?*

To address research question one, the researcher performed a correlational analysis between two variables, Servant Leadership (SL) and School Climate (SC). This analysis revealed a moderately strong, statistically significant positive correlation between Servant

Leadership and School Climate ( $r = .66, p < .001$ ). Certified staff members who perceive their principals as exhibiting Servant Leadership traits also have a positive perception of their school climate.

### **Data Analysis – Research Question 2**

*2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' character orientation and school climate?*

To answer research question two, the researcher performed a correlational analysis between two variables, Character Orientation (SL1) and School Climate (SC). This analysis revealed a moderately strong, statistically significant positive correlation between Character Orientation and School Climate ( $r = .63, p < .001$ ). Certified staff members who perceive their principals as exhibiting integrity, humility, and servanthood (the three traits of a servant leader's character orientation) also have a positive perception of their school climate.

Additional analysis for research question two involved the researcher performing correlational analysis between Character Orientation (SL1) and each of the eight individual school climate categories. The correlation coefficient was calculated between each pair of variables and is reported in descending order. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 10.

Table 10.

*Correlations between Character Orientation (SL1) and school climate categories*

School Climate Categories	Correlation Coefficient
Cohesiveness (SC6)	.65*
Opportunity for Input (SC4)	.61*
School Renewal (SC7)	.58*
Continuous Academic and Social Growth (SC5)	.53*
Caring (SC8)	.52*
Trust (SC2)	.48*

High Morale (SC3)	.36*
Respect (SC1)	.15

\*Correlation is significant,  $p < .001$

As delineated in Table 10, Cohesiveness (SC6) was calculated as having the highest correlation coefficient ( $r = .65$ ,  $p < .001$ ) with Character Orientation (SL1). Opportunity for Input (SC4) and School Renewal (SC7) were found to have the second and third highest correlation coefficients, respectively with a Servant Leader's Character Orientation (SL1). Respect (SC1) was found to have the lowest correlation coefficient ( $r = .15$ ,  $p > .001$ ) with Character Orientation (SL1). As indicated in Table 10, all school climate categories were found to be statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) with the exception of Respect (SC1).

### Data Analysis – Research Question 3

3. *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' people orientation and school climate?*

To answer research question three, the researcher performed a correlational analysis between two variables, People Orientation (SL2) and School Climate (SC). This analysis revealed a moderately strong, statistically significant positive correlation between People Orientation and School Climate ( $r = .61$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Certified staff members who perceive their principals as being caring, empowering, and developing of others (the three traits of a servant leader's people orientation) also have a positive perception of their school climate.

Additional analysis for research question three involved the researcher performing correlational analysis between People Orientation (SL2) and each of the eight individual school climate categories. The correlation coefficient was calculated between each pair of variables and is reported in descending order. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 11.

Table 11.

*Correlations between People Orientation (SL2) and school climate categories*

School Climate Categories	Correlation Coefficient
Cohesiveness (SC6)	.65*
School Renewal (SC7)	.60*
Opportunity for Input (SC4)	.59*
Continuous Academic and Social Growth (SC5)	.52*
Caring (SC8)	.52*
Trust (SC2)	.47*
High Morale (SC3)	.33*
Respect (SC1)	.12

\*Correlation is significant,  $p < .001$

As summarized in Table 11, Cohesiveness (SC6) was calculated as having the highest correlation coefficient ( $r = .65$ ,  $p < .001$ ) with a Servant Leader's People Orientation (SL2). School Renewal (SC7) and Opportunity for Input (SC4) and were found to have the second and third highest correlation coefficients, respectively with People Orientation (SL2). Consistent with the findings in the previous research question, Respect (SC1) was found to have the lowest correlation coefficient ( $r = .12$ ,  $p > .001$ ) with People Orientation (SL2). As indicated in Table 11, all school climate categories were found to be statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) with the exception of Respect (SC1).

#### **Data Analysis – Research Question 4**

4. *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' task orientation and school climate?*

To answer research question four, the researcher performed a correlational analysis between two variables, Task Orientation (SL3) and School Climate (SC). This analysis revealed a moderately strong, statistically significant positive correlation between People Orientation and School Climate ( $r = .62$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Certified staff members who perceive their principals as

possessing visioning, goal setting, and leading skills (the three traits of a servant leader's task orientation) also have a positive perception of their school climate.

Additional analysis for research question four involved the researcher performing correlational analysis between Task Orientation (SL3) and each of the eight individual school climate categories. The correlation coefficient was calculated between each pair of variables and is reported in descending order. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12. *Correlations between Task Orientation (SL3) and school climate categories*

School Climate Categories	Correlation Coefficient
Cohesiveness (SC6)	.66*
School Renewal (SC7)	.60*
Opportunity for Input (SC4)	.59*
Continuous Academic and Social Growth (SC5)	.53*
Caring (SC8)	.51*
Trust (SC2)	.49*
High Morale (SC3)	.35*
Respect (SC1)	.14

\*Correlation is significant,  $p < .001$

As indicated in Table 12, Cohesiveness (SC6) was calculated as having the highest correlation coefficient ( $r = .66$ ,  $p < .001$ ) with a Servant Leader's Task Orientation (SL3). School Renewal (SC7) and Opportunity for Input (SC4) and were found to have the second and third highest correlation coefficients, respectively with Task Orientation (SL3). Consistent with the findings of the previous research two questions, Respect (SC1) was found to have the lowest correlation coefficient ( $r = .12$ ,  $p > .001$ ) with a Servant Leader's Task Orientation (SL3). The information provided in Table 12 revealed all school climate categories as having a statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) correlation with Task Orientation with the exception of Respect (SC1).

#### **Data Analysis – Research Question 5**

5. *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' process orientation and school climate?*

To answer research question five, the researcher performed a correlational analysis between two variables, Process Orientation (SL4) and School Climate (SC). This analysis revealed a moderately strong, statistically significant positive correlation between People Orientation and School Climate ( $r = .67, p < .001$ ). Certified staff members who perceive their principals as utilizing modeling, team building, and shared decision making (the three traits of a servant leader's process orientation) also have a positive perception of their school climate.

Additional analysis for research question five involved the researcher performing correlational analysis between Process Orientation (SL4) and each of the eight individual school climate categories. The correlation coefficient was calculated between each pair of variables and is reported in descending order. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 13.

Table 13.

*Correlations between Process Orientation (SL4) and school climate categories*

School Climate Categories	Correlation Coefficient
Opportunity for Input (SC4)	.68*
Cohesiveness (SC6)	.67*
School Renewal (SC7)	.66*
Continuous Academic and Social Growth (SC5)	.57*
Trust (SC2)	.52*
Caring (SC8)	.52*
High Morale (SC3)	.37*
Respect (SC1)	.16*

\*Correlation is significant,  $p < .001$

As revealed in Table 13, Opportunity for Input (SC4) was calculated as having the highest correlation coefficient ( $r = .68, p < .001$ ) with Process Orientation (SL4). Cohesiveness (SC6) and School Renewal (SC7) and were found to have the second and third highest



correlation coefficients, respectively with Process Orientation (SL4). It is noted that the three highest correlation coefficients were calculated as nearly equal, essentially creating a tie for the school climate category with the highest correlation coefficient with Task Orientation (SL4). Consistent with the findings of the previous research two questions, Respect (SC1) was found to have the lowest correlation coefficient ( $r = .12$ ,  $p < .001$ ) with a Servant Leader's Process Orientation (SL4). The results summarized in Table 13 indicate that all eight school climate categories were calculated as having a statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) correlation with Process Orientation (SL4).

### **Data Analysis – Research Question 6**

#### ***6. Which Servant Leadership trait is the best independent predictor of school climate?***

The analysis of question six required the researcher to perform multiple regression analysis with each of the four Servant Leadership characteristics as the independent variables (SL1, SL2, SL3, and SL4) and the School Climate (SC) as the dependent variable. This analysis revealed that together, a servant leader's Character Orientation (SL1), People Orientation (SL2), Task Orientation (SL3), and Process Orientation (SL4) explain 46% of the variance in School Climate (SC),  $F(4, 54.29)$ ,  $p < .001$ . Only one predictor, Process Orientation (SL4) was statistically significant and made the highest independent contribution to explaining variance ( $\beta = .61$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The other predictors were not statistically significant, Character Orientation (SL1), People Orientation (SL2), and Task Orientation (SL3) recorded beta values of .22 ( $p = .092$ ),  $-.16$  ( $p = .269$ ), and .01 ( $p = .94$ ), respectively. These results reveal that one of the independent predictors (SL4) carries much of the weight in predicting overall school climate (SC). Whereas the other three Servant Leadership characteristics contribute very little in predicting overall school climate, when process orientation is taken into account.

Multiple regression analysis was then performed with each of the four Servant Leadership categories as the independent variables and each of the eight school climate categories as the dependent variables. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 14 with the beta value of the variable with the largest independent contribution in bold italics.

Table 14.

*Multiple Regression Summary (Beta Values)*

	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4	SC5	SC6	SC7	SC8
Character Orientation (SL1)	.169	.097	.302	.240	.160	.104	.036	.333
People Orientation (SL2)	<b>-.255</b>	-.120	<b>-.369</b>	-.152	-.098	.075	.021	-.245
Task Orientation (SL3)	-.008	.068	.139	-.198	.052	.170	-.101	.124
Process Orientation (SL4)	.252	<b>.485*</b>	.305	<b>.781*</b>	<b>.468*</b>	<b>.358*</b>	<b>.703*</b>	<b>.338</b>
Significance of the model	0.061	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

\*Beta is significant,  $p < .01$

Several patterns can be observed through an examination of the results summarized in Table 14. The Servant Leadership variable found to be the best independent predictor of each school climate categories is characterized with the highest absolute value. In two circumstances, People Orientation (SL2) was found to have the largest independent contribution in predicting Respect (SC1) and High Morale (SC3). Of note in both of these instances is the finding that while each was found to be statistically insignificant, the beta values were calculated as negative.

In each of the six other school climate categories, a Servant Leader's Process Orientation (SL4) was found to be the variable with the highest independent contribution. Each of these contributions was calculated as being positive with only the last school climate category, Caring (SC8) as being found statistically insignificant. Among each contribution to each of the eight

school climate categories, a Servant Leader's Process Orientation (SL4) was found to have the highest independent contribution to Opportunity for Input (SC4), with beta calculated at .781.

This result is consistent with findings in research question 4.

## **Conclusion**

The data analysis of the 260 respondents revealed commonalities throughout the six research questions. In general, Servant Leadership and school climate were shown to have a statistically significant positive relationship, indicating that the overall perception of teachers was such that Servant Leadership traits were associated with positive school climates. As the four Servant Leadership traits were disaggregated and their individual relationships with the categories of school climate were examined, noticeable patterns emerged. The four school climate categories that were found consistently to be the highest correlated with each Servant Leadership characteristic were Opportunity for Input (SC4), Continuous Academic and Social Growth (SC5), Cohesiveness (SC6) and School Renewal (SC7). These characteristics remained consistent across all four Servant Leadership categories. Multiple regression analysis indicated that a principal's Process Orientation was the single highest independent contributing variable in predicting school climate. Further investigation of these findings and their relationship and implications on theory and practice are presented in detail in the final chapter of this study.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

### **Introduction**

Educational leadership is ever-changing to meet the growing needs of communities, students, and teachers. The leader as manager is no longer effective in meeting the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century public educational system (Sewell, 2003). Numerous researchers have worked to answer the question "What is effective leadership in education?" This work has found various

leadership theories to be effective at raising student achievement, staff morale, school climate, change, and transformation with no single “magic bullet” for educational leadership. Very few research studies have been conducted on Servant Leadership in the field of education, even fewer through the lens of school climate.

Research has shown positive school climate to be imperative for increased student achievement (Manning & Saddlemire, 1996; Kelley & Williamson, 2004); there has been no definitive leadership theory that is focused on improving the climate of a school. This study was conducted to provide a possible link between the theory of Servant Leadership and school climate. The principal as the leader of the school is in a position of great responsibility for the climate of the school (Hallinger & Heck, 1998).

His or her leadership philosophy, beliefs, and values are evident in the school climate, the students and staff who populate the school, and the perceived success of the school. The servant leadership model supports this shift in leadership ideology by focusing on the enrichment of the community and the growing of leaders from within the community (Jennings, 2002, p. 8).

Servant Leadership is categorized as a more personal, humanistic form of leadership in comparison to the more traditional, top-down, managerial approach to leadership.

### **Overview of the Study**

The current quantitative study examines the relationship between various characteristics of Servant Leadership and the components of school climate. Data was gathered through an electronic survey consisting of 64 Likert-style questions. A response rate of 40.2% yielded 260 completed surveys. For each of the first five research questions correlational analysis was performed. Multiple regression analysis was performed on the data in order to answer research question number six.

### **Summary of Research Findings**

**Servant leadership and school climate.**

The current study found a statistically significant, moderately strong positive correlation between Servant Leadership and school climate. Essentially, certified staff members who perceived their principals as possessing characteristics associated with Servant Leadership also perceived their school as having a positive school climate.

**Character orientation and school climate.**

The three traits of a Servant Leader's character orientation, integrity, humility, and servanthood, were found to have a moderately strong, statistically significant positive correlation with school climate. Teachers who perceived their principal as possessing these traits also perceived their school as having a positive climate. Further analysis on a Servant Leader's character orientation and the various components of school climate revealed moderately strong, statistically significant positive correlations with five out of the eight school climate components. Cohesiveness within a school had the highest correlation with character orientation. Essentially, staff members who perceived their principals as possessing the traits of integrity, humility, and servanthood also perceived their school as being cohesive. This cohesiveness is characterized by a "we" spirit within the school where staff members and administrators work collaboratively and the belief that new staff members and students are welcomed into the school.

One interesting finding of this study was in looking at the one component of school climate that was found to have the weakest relationship with character orientation. The weakest correlation was found between character orientation and the school climate component of respect. This correlation was not statistically significant and was found to be very weak. The respect component of school climate in this study is characterized by the degree of respect shown towards students, parents, community members, and fellow staff members. The results of this

study concluded that there was essentially no relationship between the leadership traits of integrity, humility, and servanthood and overall respect within a school.

#### **People orientation and school climate.**

A Servant Leader's people orientation is characterized by three traits, caring, empowering, and developing of others. This grouping of traits is essentially the manner in which a servant leader interacts with those who are led. A servant leader's people orientation was found to have a moderately strong, statistically significant positive correlation with school climate. Staff members who perceived their principals as caring for others, empowering staff members, and developing others also perceived their schools as having positive climates.

Further correlational analysis of people orientation and the various components of school climate led to similar findings as a servant leader's character orientation. Individually, cohesiveness was found to have the highest correlation with people orientation and respect was found to have the lowest correlation with people orientation. Staff members who perceived their principals as having the traits associated with a servant leader's people orientation also believed their school to be cohesive, whereas there was very little relationship between those same traits and the general level of respect present within the school climate.

#### **Task orientation and school climate.**

The third characteristic of Servant Leadership is task orientation. This characteristic encompasses the manner in which a leader is able to accomplish the many tasks associated with the position of principal. Task orientation is comprised of three traits, visioning, goal setting, and leading. Consistent with the two previous Servant Leadership characteristics, task orientation was found to have a moderately strong, statistically significant, positive correlation

with school climate. Staff members who perceived their principals as possessing the aforementioned traits also perceived their schools as having a generally positive climate.

A more detailed investigation of this particular Servant Leadership characteristic revealed consisted findings as it relates to the components of school climate. Cohesiveness was found to have the highest individual correlation with a servant leader's task orientation whereas respect was found to have the weakest correlation with a servant leader's task orientation.

#### **Process orientation and school climate.**

The fourth and final characteristic of Servant Leadership is process orientation, the manner in which the principal conducts him or herself in carrying out the responsibilities of the job. A Servant Leader's process orientation is comprised of three traits, modeling, team-building, and shared decision making. Once again consistent with the previous findings in this study, process orientation was found to have a moderately strong, statistically significant, positive relationship with school climate. Essentially, teachers who perceived their principal as utilizing modeling, team-building, and shared decision making in their processes also perceived their schools as having positive climates.

Further analysis into the correlation between process orientation and each of the eight school climate categories revealed similar, yet not identical, results to the three previous Servant Leadership characteristics. Three school climate components were essentially tied for the highest correlation with process orientation. The one school climate component with the highest correlation to process orientation was opportunity for input. Similar to the traits of a servant leader's process orientation, this school climate component is characterized by one's feeling of contribution and connectedness to the decision making process that takes place within the school. The next two school climate components were cohesiveness, classified by a "we" mentality

among the staff, and school renewal, classified by the manner in which staff and students are encouraged to improve their practices and the level of support associated with that improvement. The one school climate component with the weakest correlation to process orientation was once again, respect. Essentially, staff members who perceived their principals as possessing the traits of modeling, team-building, and shared decision making, also perceived their schools as having a cohesive school climate that promotes school renewal and allows for significant opportunity for input. There was little relationship between principals perceived as having the process orientation traits of a servant leader and the overall level of respect within the school.

#### **Independent predictors of school climate.**

The final component of the data analysis for this study was in determining which of the four Servant Leadership characteristics, character, people, task or process orientation was the best independent predictor of school climate. Multiple regression analysis revealed a servant leader's process orientation was the single best predictor of school climate. In essence, with all four characteristics intertwined, principals who were perceived to utilize modeling, team-building, and shared decision making were found to have the most impact on a positive school climate. The manner in which the principal operates and makes decisions was found to play a larger role in school climate than the manner in which the principal behaves (character orientation), interacts with others (people orientation), or completes everyday responsibilities (task orientation).

Continued multiple regression analysis of the four Servant Leadership characteristics on each of the eight school climate components revealed some notable patterns. In six out of the eight school climate components (Trust, Opportunity for Input, Continuous Growth, Cohesiveness, School Renewal, and Caring), a servant leader's process orientation was the



characteristic with the largest independent contribution. This contribution was positive and statistically significant. Essentially the more extensive use of modeling, team-building, and shared decision making by the principal, the more the school climate was characterized by the six components listed above.

In regard to the other two school climate components, respect and high morale, the one Servant Leadership characteristic that was found to make the largest independent contribution was people orientation. This contribution however, was found to be negative. Essentially, the more a principal exhibited traits of caring for, empowering, and developing others, the less the school climate was characterized by respect and high morale. A servant leader's people orientation was found to have either a negligible or negative contribution to each of the other six school climate components as well.

### **Limitations of the Study**

There are four general limitations of this study with the first relating to the ability to generalize the results of this study to multiple populations. The sample was taken from a population representing limited diversity in regard to socioeconomic status and ethnicity. The respondents were generally representative of the population with the exception of percentage of certified staff members with less than one year of service in their current school. The percentage of respondents in this category was 3.8 %. The percentage of certified staff members who have been in their current school for less than one year for the district is more than double that of the respondents, over 8%. The second limitation comes from the idea of school climate as multi-faceted. This study looks only at the influence of a principal's leadership on the school climate and does not account for the numerous other factors that contribute to a school climate.

The third limitation of the study involves the existence of administrative teams in schools. Many schools utilize administrative teams consisting of a principal, assistant principals, deans, and department chairs or course/level leaders. These teams can range in size depending on the size of the school. In larger schools with a larger administrative team structure, teachers may have limited interactions with the principal and experience more interaction with other administrative team members. These team members may or may not exhibit characteristics associated with Servant Leadership independent of the school principal. Consequently the results of this study, especially in the larger schools, may be influenced by administrative team members in addition to the principal. The current study did not address the impact of, often times, very large administrative teams.

The final limitation of this study comes from the lack of tangible observations of the principal and the school climate. Teacher perceptions can be influenced by a number of factors that relate to the principal and to the school climate (Barnett & McCormick, 2004). These perceptions may or may not accurately represent the behaviors of individuals in the schools. Consequently, the collection of quantitative perception data may be skewed.

### **Relationship to Existing Research**

The body of research on Servant Leadership and school climate in public schools is minimal. However, connections between the results of this current study and conclusions in the literature can be made. These connections can be classified into three categories: Servant Leadership and general school climate, Servant Leadership and specific components of school climate, and specific Servant Leadership characteristics and school climate.

The current study found a positive correlation between Servant Leadership and school climate. These results closely mirrored those of Black in 2007 in her study of Catholic elementary schools in Ontario. She found the correlation between principal's Servant Leadership characteristics and the general school climate to be nearly identical to the current study. In 2006, Kelley and Williamson found similar results in their study of high school principals and schools in Michigan. Their study revealed principals who exhibited traits in alignment with characteristics of a Servant Leader had schools with more open and positive climates.

Two components of school climate in this study, cohesiveness and opportunity for input, are closely linked to overall job satisfaction for teachers. In this current study these two components were discovered to be those most influenced by each of the four Servant Leadership characteristics. These results are closely aligned with the current research on Servant Leadership and teacher job satisfaction. Research by Taylor et al. (2007) found two components of Servant Leadership to be statistically significant in their relationship with teacher job satisfaction, those components being modeling and enabling. Their research described modeling as establishing "principles guiding the way teachers should be treated and how goals should be pursued" (p. 412). The Enabling component of leadership was characterized by leaders who enabled others to act by promoting collaboration and "making each member of the organization feel that he/she is a vital part of the organization" (p.412). The current study found a principal's process orientation, which includes modeling, contributed the most out of the four Servant Leadership characteristics to both cohesiveness and opportunity for input as components of school climate.

The results from this current study also mirror the research of Mears (2004) who found a strong relationship between Servant Leadership and teacher job satisfaction in Texas high

schools. These results were also replicated in the research completed by Cerit (2009) who found Servant Leadership to be a significant predictor of teacher job satisfaction in schools in Turkey. The data revealed a strong positive correlation between overall Servant Leadership practices by principals and teacher job satisfaction.

Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2004) wrote about the similarities and differences between transformational leadership and Servant Leadership. Their conclusions centered on the focus of the leader. A transformative leader possesses an intense focus on the organization, its purpose, and its goals. The transformative leader then works with the members of the organization toward the building of a commitment to the organizational objectives. The Servant Leader's focus is first toward the individuals of the organization, ensuring their needs are met and that they are empowered to realize their full potential in the workplace. The goals of the organization are secondary.

One would expect that a people focused, humanistic leadership theory like Servant Leadership would have the most impact on school climate qualities like respect, morale, caring, and trust. To the contrary, the current study revealed a Servant Leaders' process orientation to play a more significant role in the school climate than their people orientation. Process orientation is characterized by three traits: modeling, team-building, and shared decision making. These traits involve the manner in which organizational goals are met. People orientation refers to the way the principal interacts with members of the organization and is characterized by caring for, empowering, and developing others. Connecting the work of Stone, Russell and Patterson (2004) a conclusion could be made that the transformative leader's focus on the organization has more impact on the overall school climate than the servant leader's focus on the people within the organization.

Research on transformational leadership and school climate has confirmed this conclusion. Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) in their study on transformational leadership yielded a couple of key findings in relation to the school climate. The first of their findings was the idea that school leaders had the most influence on the behaviors and actions of teachers when they were able to focus their efforts on producing quality work for the school. The researchers' second finding was in the idea of the importance of school leaders' actions being in clear accordance with the organization's goals. Korkmaz (2007) found that principals who were perceived as being transformational leaders led to teachers who noted increased levels of job satisfaction. This research also concluded that principals who were seen as transformational leaders had "a significant effect on the organizational development" (p. 45) and the overall climate of the school.

Research connecting either Principle-Centered Leadership or Moral Leadership to school and school climate is limited. Based on the findings of the current study and the close connection Servant Leadership has with each of these leadership theories, one would predict Principle-Centered Leadership and Moral Leadership to have similar impacts on the climate of a school. Sergiovanni's Moral Leadership emphasizes honesty, justice, integrity, fairness, equity, respect, and trust as the primary characteristics of effective leaders. These traits closely resemble a Servant Leader's character orientation, which was shown in this study to have a moderately strong, positive correlation with overall school climate. Covey's Principle-Centered Leadership has been described by Asbill (1994) as being dynamic and providing a synergistic approach to leading others. Relationship building, cooperation, and teamwork are important elements of Principle-Centered Leadership. These characteristics closely mirror a Servant Leader's process

orientation, which was found in this study to be the best independent predictor of overall school climate.

This study revealed a low correlation between Servant Leadership and the overall level of respect that is present within a school climate. The findings from this study indicate that a servant leader can positively impact school climate in general while overall respect within a school can remain low. These findings were in contrast to the work of Manning and Saddlemire (1996) who found that certain components of school climate can have powerful effects on the interpersonal relationships between students and staff members. Those particular components of school climate that were identified included concern for the welfare of others, respect, and trust within the school community.

Purkey and Siegel (2002) in their work on Invitational Leadership described respect as one of the four guiding principles of leading people. Previous research identifies respect between teachers and between students and teachers as an important component in positive school climate (Johnson & Johnson, 1993; Manning & Saddlemire, 1996; Freiberg, 1998). The work of Evans and Johnson (1990) and Heller, Clay, and Perkins (1993) have a loose connection to the findings presented in the current study. One component of job satisfaction in each of their studies was the level of respect shown to and between teachers. Their work found no significant relationship between teacher job satisfaction and principal leadership style. The current study is in keeping with these findings as Servant Leadership was not found play a significant role in increased levels of respect within a school climate.

The unexpected finding of the relationship between overall Servant Leadership and the level of respect present within a school climate warrants possible explanation. The questions on the survey instrument that contributed and measured the respect component of school climate

can be classified in three ways: students respected by teachers, parental respect of teachers, and respect between teachers. The nature of these statements provides some possible explanation of the insignificant impact of the principal on respect. The first explanation is that no one statement addressed the level of respect shown to teachers by the principal or the administration in general. The second explanation relates to a much larger educational issue of the current era. The overall respect for the profession of teaching by the general public combined with the struggling economy of the time has left many teachers feeling undervalued and underappreciated. These issues manifested themselves in the district through reductions in benefits, salary freezes, release of staff, and forced internal transfers. Many teachers who remained in the district and participated in the study found themselves in new buildings against their wishes, surrounded by unfamiliar students and staff, and did so while receiving less compensation. There is little doubt that these issues contributed to the overall perceived level of respect within their current buildings and played a significant role in the outcome of this study.

### **Implications for Practitioners**

As noted by numerous researchers, the climate of a school is a critical component of education. A positive school climate can positively impact student achievement and enhance teacher job satisfaction (Kelley & Williamson, 2004). Educational leaders who seek higher levels of student achievement may benefit from the results of this study in a number of ways.

The primary implications of this study come from the area of team-building and shared decision making that is present in a servant leader's process orientation. Tichy and Devanna (1990) identified the ability to build trusting partnerships with followers is a characteristic of an effective leader. School principals who wish to enhance their school climate should increase

their use of shared decision making and strive to build high functioning teams among the school staff members.

The secondary implication for current school principals is that of an unyielding, relentless focus on the organization's goals and mission. This focus is in alignment with the work of Bolman and Deal (1991; 1995) in their identification of common characteristics of effective leaders. Effective leaders are able to establish a clear and concise vision for the direction of the organization and are able to communicate that vision with passion. Couple their work with the current study and practicing principals will find increased levels of positive school climate, primarily in the school climate areas of cohesiveness and school renewal.

Practicing school principals seeking to improve or maintain their school climate may look to the results of this study to focus their own professional development. Continuous improvement in the areas of process orientation, modeling, team-building, and shared decision making may serve as focus points for the development of the principal. Current principals who may find their schools to be divisive or lacking a team mentality can benefit from the results of this study. A focus on all four of the characteristics of Servant Leadership may assist this principal in developing cohesiveness among the school's staff members.

District level administrators tasked with the responsibility of evaluating and hiring building level principals may be able to use the results of this study as a guide to assist their efforts. Selecting principals for positions in schools that are in need of a climate change requires knowledge of the type of leadership necessary for that change. Principal candidates exhibiting the traits of a servant leader, specifically in the area of modeling, team-building, and shared decision making, will be the correct choice. The results of this study may also be used in



principal evaluation. Areas of growth for current principals in schools with struggling climates can be gleaned directly from the results of this study.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The current study yielded results that were significant and interesting. Enhancements to this study and recommendations for future research in Servant Leadership and school climate can be made in two distinct categories: research study logistics and research study philosophy.

Logistically, this study could be replicated looking at leadership teams within a school. Schools of larger sizes often utilize leadership teams consisting of the principal, assistant principal(s), dean(s), department chairs and course/team level leaders. Staff members in these schools often interact with these leadership team members more often than they interact with the building principal. The leadership styles of these team members may impact the school climate more so than that of the principal. One recommendation would be to assess the level of Servant Leadership present within the leadership team. A second logistical recommendation would be in the manner in which the data was collected. Teacher perceptions are often skewed by any number of factors. A modification to this research would involve the researcher actually observing both the leader and the school climate in an attempt to gain a more objective depiction of the interaction between the leader and the school. A third logistical recommendation would be to account for size of a school as smaller schools allow for more interaction between the teachers and the principal. A final logistical modification would be to conduct qualitative interviews instead of or following the quantitative collection of perceptual data. This would allow the researcher to tease out the perceptions and interactions that a staff member may have with a principal in an effort to establish why process, rather than people orientation, plays such a large role in school climate.

Philosophically, this study could be furthered by looking at a detailed comparison of Transformational leadership and Servant Leadership as they both pertain to school climate. The results of this current study showed a close connection between the effective traits of a servant leader that closely resemble the traits of a transformational leader. The effectiveness of these process orientation traits may have over emphasized Servant Leadership's role on school climate. A recommendation for future research would therefore be to conduct a study that seeks to answer the questions: "Does Servant Leadership or Transformational Leadership play a larger role in school climate?" And "Is the overlap of specific common traits of the two leadership theories the most impactful at enhancing school climate?" These recommendations would allow further investigation into the leadership theories that can truly impact the climate of a school.

### **Summary**

This chapter began with a brief introduction to the current study, a review of the data collection and a summary of the research findings of this study. These findings led to several conclusions, the first of which being the positive impact that the presence of Servant Leadership characteristics had on school climate. Further findings showed Servant Leadership to have a strong relationship with the cohesiveness of a school. A servant leader's process orientation had the most impactful positive relationship with all components of a school climate and a servant leader's people orientation had the least impactful and, at times, negative relationship with school climate. This chapter continued with the limitations of this study, the connections of the findings to the existing research, implications for current practitioners, and finally recommendations for future research studies on Servant Leadership and school climate.

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Appendix A  
Informed Consent

INFORMED CONSENT

Edsel Clark, a doctoral candidate through Aurora University, has been given permission by the Superintendent of the district to conduct a research study on the influence of Servant Leadership on School Climate.

As a certified staff member of this district you are eligible to take part in this study. You have been randomly selected out of the eligible staff members to participate in this study. Participation includes only the completion of a 67-question on-line survey that should take approximately 20 minutes of your time. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and your participation or non-participation will not be reported to any supervisory staff member. Participation in this research involves no known risks.

Furthermore, you may refuse to participate and/or withdraw at any time without any consequences to your employment. The research records, data collected, and list of participants will be held confidential. Your personal confidentiality will be guaranteed.

The results of this research study will be shared with the superintendent and may be published. At no time will the name of any participant be shared in the presentation or publishing of this

research study. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact Dr. Joan Fee, Chair, Institutional Review Board, Aurora University, [jfee@aurora.edu](mailto:jfee@aurora.edu).

**By clicking the “Proceed” button below, you indicate your agreement with the above conditions and agree to participation in the study.**

You will then be taken directly to the beginning of the survey. Further instructions regarding completing the survey will be provided at that point.

Appendix B  
Instrumentation

**Instructions:**

*This survey is for research purposes only. All information is confidential and once the study is completed and defended, the surveys will be held for three years then destroyed. This survey contains a total of 67 questions and should take approximately 20 minutes of your time. The first three questions are demographic questions and the remaining 64 questions are designed to assess two components of your school, the school principal and the school climate. Upon completion of this survey, click the submit button following the final question.*

A – School level:

1. Elementary
2. Middle
3. High

B – Gender:

1. Female
2. Male

C – Number of full years as a certified staff member:

***Please read each statement and use the following scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements.***

1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Strongly Disagree</i>					<i>Strongly Agree</i>

***For example, if you strongly agree, you may mark 6, if you mildly disagree, you may mark 3.***

**I. Principal Characteristics: The first section of questions should be answered in regard to your perception of your current principal.**

1. The principal is genuine and candid with people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. The principal appears to learn from subordinates.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. The principal is willing to make personal sacrifices in serving others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. The principal genuinely cares for the welfare of people working with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. The principal consistently encourages others to take initiative.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. The principal has great satisfaction in bringing out the best in others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. The principal's leadership is based on a strong sense of mission.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. The principal is very focused and disciplined at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. The principal usually comes up with solutions accepted by others as helpful and effective.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. The principal leads by example.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. The principal is willing to sacrifice personal benefits to promote group harmony and team success.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. The principal is willing to have their ideas challenged.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. The principal practices what they preach.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. The principal readily admits when they are wrong.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. The principal has a heart to serve others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Many people come to the principal with their problems, because the principal listens to them with empathy.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. The principal continuously appreciates, recognizes, and encourages the work of others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. The principal invests considerable time and energy equipping others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. The principal is able to inspire others with their enthusiasm and confidence for what can be accomplished.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. The principal is able to motivate others to achieve beyond their own expectations of getting a job done.	1	2	3	4	5	6



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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21. The principal tries to match people with their jobs in order to optimize productivity.                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 22. The principal often demonstrates for others how to make decisions to solve problems.                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 23. The principal encourages cooperation rather than competition through the group.                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 24. The principal places the greatest amount of decision-making in the hands of those most affected by the decisions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

**II. School Characteristics: The second section of questions should be answered in regard to your perception of your current school.**

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25. In this school even low achieving students are respected.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 26. Teachers treat students as persons.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 27. Parents are considered by this school as important collaborators.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 28. Teachers from one subject area or grade level respect those from other subject areas.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 29. Teachers in this school are proud to be teachers.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 30. Students feel that teachers are “on their side.”  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 31. While we don’t always agree, we can share our concerns with each other openly.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 32. Our principal is a good spokesperson for our interests and needs before the superintendent and the board.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 33. Students can count on teachers to listen to their side of the story and to be fair.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 34. Teachers trust student to use good judgment.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 35. This school makes students enthusiastic about learning.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 36. Teachers feel pride in this school and its students.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 37. Attendance is good; students stay away only for urgent and good reasons.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 38. Parents, teachers, and students would rise to the defense of this school’s programs if it were challenged.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 39. I like working in this school.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 40. I feel that my ideas are listened to and used in this school.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 41. When important decisions are made about the programs in this school, I, personally, have heard about the plan beforehand and have been involved in some of the discussions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 42. Important decisions are made in this school by a governing council with representation from students, faculty, and administration.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 43. While I obviously can’t have a vote on every decision that is made in this school that affects me, I do feel that I can have some important input into that decision.       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 44. When all is said and done, I feel that I count in this school.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 45. The teachers are “alive”; they are interested in life around them; they are doing interesting things outside of school.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

46.	Teachers in this school are “out in front,” seeking better ways of teaching and learning.	1	2	3	4	5	6
47.	Students feel that the school program is meaningful and relevant to their present and future needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
48.	The principal is growing and learning, too. He or she is seeking new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6
49.	The school supports parent growth. Regular opportunities are provided for parents to be involved in learning activities and in examining new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6
50.	Students would rather attend this school than transfer to another.	1	2	3	4	5	6
51.	There is a “we” spirit in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
52.	Administration and teachers collaborate toward making the school run effectively; there is little administrator-teacher tension.	1	2	3	4	5	6
53.	Differences between individuals and groups (both faculty and students) are considered to contribute to the richness of the school, not as divisive influences.	1	2	3	4	5	6
54.	New students and faculty members are made to feel welcome and part of the group.	1	2	3	4	5	6
55.	When a problem comes up, this school has procedures for working on it; problems are seen as normal challenges, not as “rocking the boat.”	1	2	3	4	5	6
56.	Teachers are encouraged to innovate in their classroom rather than to conform.	1	2	3	4	5	6
57.	When a student comes along who has special problems, this school works out a plan that helps that student.	1	2	3	4	5	6
58.	Students are encouraged to be creative rather than conform.	1	2	3	4	5	6
59.	Careful effort is made, when new programs are introduced, to adapt them to the particular needs of this community and this school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
60.	There is someone in this school that I can always count on.	1	2	3	4	5	6
61.	The principal really cares about students.	1	2	3	4	5	6
62.	I think people in this school care about me as a person and are concerned about more than just how well I perform my role at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
63.	I feel wanted and needed in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
64.	Most people at this school are kind.	1	2	3	4	5	6

This survey is a modified version of two survey instruments, the Self Assessment of Servant Leadership Profile by Page and Wong (1998) and the Charles F. Kettering School Climate Profile (1987).