Gender and Generational Differences in the Self-Ratings of Leadership Practices
by Elementary School Administrators Within Four Florida Counties

by

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Gender and Generational Differences in the Self-Ratings of Leadership Practices by Elementary School Administrators Within Four Florida Counties

Michele Elaine Polk

ABSTRACT

Considerable research has been conducted over time on possible gender differences, with varying results regarding the existence and/or degree of differences. In particular, research on differences in leadership practices of men and women have abounded since the 1970’s as women began to make their way into management and supervisory positions.

In today’s work force, several generations can be found working together within a single work setting. Possibly, differences in leadership may be more generational than gender related; however, little research has considered both gender and generation as variables. This study adds to literature relating to the existence of gender and/or generational differences in leadership through a quantitative study enhanced with follow-up interviews conducted within four Florida counties.

Quantitative results revealed no statistically significant gender or generational differences in perceived leadership practices of elementary school administrators. However, interviews revealed that perception of both gender and generational differences exists among practicing school administrators.
The results suggest that school districts have succeeded in “teaching old dogs new tricks.” This implication is supported in the interview responses whereby all of the participants indicated that in-service training and professional development were key factors that influenced their leadership practices, possibly minimizing gender and/or generational differences in leadership practices. The differing results from the interview responses imply that school districts may need to provide more opportunities for school leaders to engage in dialogue about their practices, thus providing peer administrators with a more accurate picture of their colleague’s practices.

Further research on the opportunities school leaders are afforded to engage in dialogue with their peers about their practices may provide further insight into the interview responses in this study. The size of the school district should be a variable of interest in further research on this topic. Continued research on gender and generational leadership differences may include a larger sample population, secondary school leaders, peer perceptions, and subordinate perceptions.
Chapter One

Introduction

The existence of differences in leadership practices between men and women has long been debated, and gender comparisons have been and continue to be controversial. The interest in possible differences in leadership related to gender has often been reflected in researchers’ desire to understand why relatively few women occupy major administrative roles in schools (Fay, 1988).

It is possible that reported gender differences have been clouded by generational differences. Since women have only recently begun to advance into leadership positions, their leadership practices are often compared to the mostly male leaders who preceded them. Gender norms, as society has come to understand them in predominantly white American culture, have been changing in the last 30 years with unprecedented speed (Eliman & Taggart, 2002). Comparisons between leadership practices of previous generations of male leaders with current female leaders may produce an inaccurate picture of the current environment.

Feminists have naturally been interested in the findings of gender differences in leadership, but interestingly stand on two opposing sides of the issue (Eliman & Taggart, 2002). Walsh (1997) and Eliman and Taggart (2002) explain those differing views. One
school of thought suggests that there are no inherent differences in the leadership practices of men and women, and poses that perpetuating such a theory damages the potential of women seeking to advance into the higher ranks of administration. Their argument rests on historical practices that discriminated against women because they were perceived to be different from men, and therefore believed to be incapable of the same kinds of work.

On the other hand, there is the school of thought that fosters the belief that differences do indeed exist, and acknowledging those differences will result in a greater understanding of individual and organizational needs (Eliman & Taggart, 2002; Walsh, 1997). Celebrating what are considered special qualities of women as empathy, caring, and consensus building, proponents of this theory argue that the goal should be the creation of a better world built on traditional feminine values (Kimball, 1995).

The first major objective of gender comparisons was to keep women in a subordinate position (Walsh, 1997). The perception that females are not tough enough to handle the difficult situations leaders are often faced with can provide a serious obstacle for females seeking to advance into higher paying leadership positions with more power and responsibility than they currently have. Acceptance of the idea that a woman’s capabilities are equal to those of a man is actually a rather recent phenomenon, and the concept is still debated in some fields of work (Walsh, 1997).

In a 2001 article found in the Employee Assistance Professionals Association Exchange, Douville discusses generational differences in the workplace. She points out that for the first time in history, four generations are present in the workplace: Veterans, Baby-boomers, Generation Xers, and Generation Nexters (more commonly referred to as
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As a result, the workplace consists of many differing attitudes, values, and expectations about work and the work place (Douville, 2001; McCampbell, 2002). It is possible that differences in leadership practices may be more generational than gender related. As a library director, Euster (1994) maintains that today’s women library directors in general lead very differently from the male directors that women succeeded. However, she maintains that it is not clear that they differ so greatly from the current generation of men directors.

Many studies have been conducted which compare the leadership practices and styles of men and women (Boone, 1997; Burke & Collins, 2001; Carless, 1998; Carr, 1995; Eagly, Karau, & Johnson, 1992; Griffen, 1992; Helgesen, 1990; Lakoff, 1990; Lewis, 1998; Mertz & McNeely, 1995; Moss & Jensrud, 1995; Rice, 1993; Tesar & Snell, 1995). However, upon conducting a review of the research, the researcher was not able to find any noteworthy studies that include both gender and generation as variables of interest, using the same group of leaders. The present study expands on previous gender studies of leadership by including generation as a variable, thus, hopefully making a unique contribution to the field.

**Background**

In his book, *Sex and Education; Or, A Fair Chance for the Girls*, in the late 19th century, Clarke (1873) argued that unlike the male who developed into manhood through a continuous process of growth, females experienced a sudden and unique spurt during which the development of their reproductive system took place. He suggested that if any outside force interfered with the process, the result could be devastating for the young girl. For example, he posited that educating girls would result in their developing
monstrous brains and puny bodies; abnormally active cerebration and abnormally weak digestion; flowing thought and constipated bowels.

Walsh (1997) refers to another example of an effort to underestimate women’s capabilities, which can be found in the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal of 1897. The journal’s editors who were opposed to the education of female physicians suggested that women could not become doctors because the strain of constant house calls would be more than their system could bear.

Other researchers, of course, objected to such ideas proposing that the distortions and misuse of research invariably reinforced the view that women’s capabilities were inferior to those of men. Among those whose work reflected their opposition were Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi (Park, 1991), Louise Marvel (Walsh, 1997), and Hellen Thompson Woolley (Fissell, 1999). All three of these women conducted research that supported the theory that women were equally as capable in academic rigors as men, without sustaining the health effects described by Clarke (Fissell, 1999; Park, 1991; Walsh, 1997). Walsh (1997) reports that Marvel, in fact, found that college life had resulted in a stronger physique and a more perfect womanhood.

The 1974 publication by Maccoby and Jacklin, *Psychology of Sex Differences*, marked a major breakthrough in research on gender differences (Walsh, 1997). Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) found few significant gender differences. They concluded that gender differences had been demonstrated to exist only in aggression and in spatial, verbal, and mathematical aptitude, but that a number of ideas were unfounded, such as the belief that boys are better at higher-level cognitive tasks and that girls are more suggestible. Their findings were widely hailed as a major contribution to psychology, and welcomed by
feminists and social scientists who viewed the results as ammunition in their battle to shatter existing sex stereotypes (Walsh, 1997).

Despite the growing research of the 1970’s that should have impacted gender biases, perceptions about male and female abilities changed little among the general public. In a report by Hollander and Yoder (1978), research is outlined which supports or implies that people generally expect the leader role to be filled by a male. They cite a study by Schein (1973) where male middle managers rated women in general, men in general, and successful middle managers on their general characteristics, attitudes, and temperaments. On 60 of the 86 items, men and managers were similarly rated, while women were rated as being similar to successful middle managers on only 8 of the 86 items. Such was the prevailing attitude of the 1970’s, despite the growing initiatives of women to overcome stereotypes.

An awareness and interest in gender issues related to education have increased significantly over the last decade (Davis, Crawford, & Sebrechts, 1999). Davis, Crawford, & Sebrechts (1999) remind us of the Anita Hill - Clarence Thomas hearings that took place in the early 1990’s, and which brought gender discrimination directly into the living rooms of the broad American public, thus creating a greater awareness of the problem. Before that time, gender issues and discrimination practices had been topics for the feminists and academics (Davis, Crawford, & Sebrechts, 1999). The reality of the under-representation of women in the Senate and the hearings themselves sparked a political run for office that included women as never before (Davis, Crawford, & Sebrechts, 1999).
Along with the increase in the number of women who are attaining leadership positions, management practices and gender-based stereotypes have begun to evolve. In the last 10 to 15 years, the practice of administration has shifted from a focus on management to an emphasis on leadership. Administrators have been expected to move beyond the technical aspects of their role and their reliance on control through the power of positional authority to using leadership in a relationship-oriented way (Moss & Jensrud, 1995). For example, recognition has been given to those who practice leadership in a non-coercive way that creates smooth, responsive working relationships (Moss & Jensrud, 1995).

At the close of the 1984-85 school year, only 21.4% of principals were female (NCES, 1985). Today, approximately 35% of principalships are held by women (Blackman & Fenwick, 2000). The improvements, however, still remain disproportionate with the number of females in the teaching ranks where females hold 70% of the jobs (Blackman & Fenwick, 2000; Gardiner, Enomoto, & Grogan, 2000). The imbalance may be attributed to gender stereotypes clouded by generational differences.

**Rationale For The Problem**

A review of the research on gender-related differences in leadership practices has uncovered two different findings. Some studies indicated clear-cut gender differences while other studies determined the existence of few, if any, significant differences in male and female leadership. Research has produced largely mixed results.

Prospective leaders enrolled in today’s colleges are encouraged to use leadership practices which vary greatly from those taught 30 to 50 years ago. It is possible that differences in leadership practices of today’s younger administrators do not cut across
gender lines, and that leadership differences within a school system lie more along generational lines.

Given the research, which appears to be balanced in regard to gender-related differences in leadership practices, a study that includes both gender and generation as independent variables could contribute knowledge to the subject area. Such knowledge can assist in the day-to-day practice of educational administration at many levels of the schooling system: (1) An understanding of gender and generational differences can guide district personnel responsible for placing leaders in principal and assistant principal positions. Considering the relative strengths and weaknesses of administrative candidates is an important step in creating productive administrative teams in schools. Understanding what, if any, differences in male and female leadership practices exist is also an important first step in the task of leveling the playing field for women, (2) understanding the relative strengths and weaknesses of practicing administrators, including gender and/or generational differences, can guide district personnel when deciding leadership training needs, and (3) findings may assist colleges in reviewing existing leadership theories taught in today’s leadership programs. Most current preparation programs and leadership theories are based on the research of leaders/administrators that were predominantly white males (Gardiner, et al., 2000; Helgesen, 1990; Hollander & Yoder, 1978; Mertz & McNeely, 1995; Neumann & Peterson, 1997). Such programs and theories may not be successfully generalized to a population that includes a growing number of female administrators.
**Problem and Purpose**

Serious questions need to be addressed regarding today’s education systems rooted in the belief that the potential for leadership effectiveness can be drawn along gender lines. Gender differences in leadership practices are among the possible causes of the sparse representation of women in school administration, despite the presence of large numbers of women in the teaching profession (Eagly, Karau, & Johnson, 1992). Data on equality of opportunity in educational administration reveal that gender, more than age, experience, background or competence determines the role an individual will be assigned in education (Whitaker & Lane, 1990). In order for district personnel to make informed recruiting, training, and promotion decisions, it is essential that they know whether or not differences in leadership practices cut across gender and/or generational lines.

**Problem:** The lack of representation of women in leadership is often attributed to gender stereotypes. In order to address this overall problem, there is a need to clarify the possible confusion between perceived gender stereotypes and generational differences among male and female school administrators.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to examine the existence of gender and/or generational differences in the self-perceived leadership practices of elementary school administrators within four Florida counties.

**Research Questions**

To address the problem, this causal-comparative study has focused on the following questions:
1. Are there differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of male and female administrators in today’s elementary schools?

2. Are there generational differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of elementary school administrators between the ages of 25 and 44 (generation group 2) as compared to those between the ages of 45 and 70 (generation group 1)?

3. Are there differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of men who belong to generation group 1 when compared to men from generation group 2?

4. Are there differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of women who belong to generation group 1 when compared to women from generation group 2?

Hypotheses

Four null hypotheses were formulated to address the issues previously outlined:

*Hypothesis 1*: There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of males and females.

*Hypothesis 2*: There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of generation 1 and generation 2.

*Hypothesis 3*: There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of men from generation 1 and men from generation 2.

*Hypothesis 4*: There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of women from generation 1 and women from generation 2.
Prior to the collection and analysis of the data, a review of the research coupled with personal experience in the field of teaching and administration led the researcher to believe that the results of the study would conclude with failure to reject Hypothesis 1, and rejecting Hypotheses 2, 3 and 4.

**Delimitations and Limitations**

This study was conducted in the state of Florida. Participants were drawn from four Florida school districts. In the largest county from which participants were drawn, most principals fall into generation 2. Thus, in order to determine generational differences among educational leaders, it was necessary to include both assistant principal and principal participants in the study. While there are some differences in the leadership responsibilities of assistant principals and principals, the leadership competencies to which they are held accountable remain the same for both groups. Thus, the researcher does not believe that using both groups of leaders impacted the results.

**Assumptions**

The researcher assumed that participants provided honest responses on the survey instrument that reflect their true perceptions about their leadership practices as they relate to the Florida Principal Competencies.

**Terms and Definitions**

For the purpose of this study, terms and definitions are as follows:

**Elementary School Level**: Consists of grades kindergarten through fifth grade.

**Generations**: (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Taylor 2002)

*Veterans or pre-Boomers*: individuals between the ages of 60 and 81 years.

*Baby Boomers*: individuals between the ages of 45 and 60 years.
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*Generation Xers:* individuals between the ages of 24 and 44 years.

*Generation Y or Nexters:* individuals between the ages of 3 and 23 years.

**Generation groups:**

*Generation group 2:* individuals between the ages of 23 and 44 years. This generation group combines generation X and generation Y as defined above.

*Generation group 1:* individuals between the ages of 45 and 70 years. This generation group combines the veteran and baby-boomer generations as defined above.

**Leadership:** (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2003).

The process of influencing group activities toward the achievement of goals.

**Management:** (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2003).

The process of carrying out the day-to-day functions, activities, routines and policies of an organization.

**Summary**

The belief that differences in leadership practices cut across gender lines is a long standing question that has been highly researched, and that research has produced mixed results. The long held assumptions that men and women were inherently different have given men an advantage in achieving leadership roles, with women believed to be better suited for support roles. The belief that men and women practice leadership differently has been the basis for much of the discrimination that women have faced in their efforts to attain higher paying positions with increased responsibility. The disproportionate number of female administrators as compared to female teachers indicates that long held beliefs about gender differences remain a problem for women seeking to advance their career in school leadership.
Because the practice of educational leadership has evolved over time, it is necessary that research on this topic include leadership practices that are relevant to today’s working school administrators. It is also important that related research include men and women of all ages that are represented in the workplace. This study was designed for the purpose of determining if gender and generational differences in leadership practices exist.

The findings of a study on gender and/or generational based leadership practices may be a useful tool for district personnel and leadership colleges. An understanding of gender and generational differences can guide district personnel in their hiring practices as well as in determining needs for professional development. Findings may also assist colleges when reviewing existing leadership theories taught in today’s leadership programs.

**Organization of the Study**

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the study, which sets forth the need for conducting this research project. Chapter 1 discusses the background of the issue and proposes the purpose and rationale for studying gender and generational differences in the leadership practices of elementary school administrators. The hypotheses are provided along with a section on delimitations and limitations associated with the proposed research. Assumptions related to the research procedures are stated, and a list of definitions is provided for reference purposes. A summary completes the first chapter.

Chapter II reviews the literature related to the topic of gender and generational differences in leadership practices. The chapter opens with a brief introduction stating the main areas of the literature review. Four areas of literature are then addressed:
Formulations of leadership, advancement of women into leadership, gender studies related to leadership theory, and generational differences in the workplace. The chapter then closes with a summary.

Chapter III discusses the method by which the research study was carried out. After a brief introduction, key variables and population sample are discussed. The survey instrument is then discussed in detail, followed by the data collection procedures. This chapter concludes with a description of the statistical analysis procedures that were used in the study.

Chapter IV discusses the results of the study. Potential participants and actual participants are outlined in detail with a variety of graphs and charts. The processes of data collection are described in detail. Descriptive statistics and results of the two-factor anova conducted for data analysis are reviewed for each principal competency surveyed. Post-hoc tests are detailed along with results.

Chapter V summarizes the study and provides a review of the results. Conclusions and limitations to the study are discussed, and recommendations for further researcher are provided.
Chapter Two

Review of Literature

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine gender and generational differences in the leadership practices of school administrators at the elementary school level. This chapter will review literature related to the study topic, addressing the history of leadership hiring practices, current practices, and needs for the future. This chapter is divided into four sections: (1) formulations of leadership, (2) the advancement of females into leadership, (3) gender studies related to leadership theory, and (4) generational differences in the workplace.

Formulations of Leadership

When a person hears the term, leader, most likely an image of powerful and dynamic individuals will come to mind. The term, leadership, has been incorporated into the technical vocabulary of various organizational studies, and the result is a concept that has been defined in many ways. Bennis (1989) suggested that leadership is like beauty: it is hard to define, but you know it when you see it. More specific definitions of leadership follow:

- Fiedler (1967) defined a leader as the individual in the group given the task of directing and coordinating task-relevant group activities.
Katz and Kahn (1978) define the essence of organizational leadership as the influential increment over and above the mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization.

Gardner (1990) described leadership as the process of persuasion or example by which an individual induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader and shared by leader and his or her followers.

The diversity of the definitions above makes clear how elusive and controversial the definition of leadership remains. Hoy and Miskel (1996) remind us that early conceptualizations of leadership typically relied on two distinct categories of leader behavior: One concerned with people and interpersonal relations and the other with production and task achievement.

One of the earliest and most widely cited leader research inquiries are the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) studies which were started at Ohio State University in the 1940’s (Hoy & Miskel, 1996). The LBDQ was originally developed by John Hemphill and Alvin Coons (1950), but later refined by Andrew Halpin and B. J. Winer (1952). It measures two basic dimensions of leader behavior:

- initiating structure - includes any leader behavior that delineates the relationship between the leader and subordinates and, at the same time, establishes defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedure.

- consideration - includes leader behavior that indicates friendship, trust, warmth, interest and respect in the relationship between the leader and members of the work group.
Using the LBDQ, subordinates, superiors, or the individual himself or herself can describe the leader behavior. After participant responses are tallied, a leadership style can be identified. Four different leadership styles are possible: structured leaders, considerate leaders, dynamic leaders, and passive leaders. While widely used, the original instrument was gender specific and each question used male pronouns. A review of the research did not produce any studies that examined the instrument for its internal validity for female administrators.

Hoy and Miskel (1996) discuss new approaches to leadership that have emerged in the last two decades, such as transformational and transactional leadership. Both of these concepts have evoked great interest among practitioners and theorists.

Burns (1978) first introduced the idea of transformational leadership. His ideas of transactional and transformational political leaders serve as a basis of the theory. According to Burns, transactional political leaders motivate followers by exchanging with them rewards for services rendered. In schools, transactional leaders recognize what employees want from work and try to provide them with what they want, if their performance warrants it.

Transformational leadership goes beyond exchanging inducements for desired performance. Hoy and Miskel (1996) describe transformational leaders as those who develop positive relationships with subordinates in order to strengthen employee and organizational performance. Managers who display transformational leadership encourage employees to look beyond their own needs and focus on the interests of the group overall (Burke & Collins, 2001; Hoy & Miskel, 1996). Transformational leaders are expected to:
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- Define the need for change
- Create new visions and muster commitment to the visions
- Concentrate on long-term goals
- Inspire followers to transcend their own interests for higher-order goals
- Change the organization to accommodate their vision rather than work within the existing one.
- Mentor followers to take greater responsibility for their own development and that of others. Followers become leaders and leaders become change agents, and ultimately transform the organization.

The basis of transformational leadership is in the personal values and beliefs of leaders (Hoy & Miskel, 1996). Carless (1998) and Burke and Collins (2001) researched the use of transformational leadership, comparing male and female leadership practices. Both studies found that women leaders were more likely to practice transformational leadership than males.

One early attempt to classify and study the effects of different styles of leader behavior on the group was conducted at the University of Iowa in 1939 (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939). For the study, leadership was classified into three different types according to the leader’s style of handling several decision-making situations during the experiments:

- Authoritarian leadership: Leaders were very directive and allowed no participation in decisions. They structured the complete work situation for their subordinates. Leaders took full authority and assumed full responsibility from initiation to task completion.
Democratic Leadership: Leaders encouraged group discussion and decision making. Subordinates were informed about conditions affecting their jobs and encouraged to express their ideas and make suggestions.

Laissez-faire leadership: Leaders gave complete freedom to the group and left it up to subordinates to make individual decisions on their own. Essentially leaders provided no leadership.

The results of the study indicate that subordinates preferred the democratic style the best, and Laissez-faire was the next preferred. In the initial studies, productivity was slightly higher under the authoritarian leader than under the democratic one, but it was lowest under the laissez-faire leader. However, later studies indicate a sharp increase in productivity initially under authoritarian leadership, but this was followed by drastic decreases in productivity over the long run for authoritarian-led groups (Bowers, 1977).

Eagly, Johnson and Karau (1992) and Helgesen (1990) found that women tended to lead using a more democratic style of leadership, whereas men tended to exercise a more authoritarian style.

Lunenburg and Ornstein (2003) discuss a different view of leadership that refers to effective leadership behavior as “contingent” on the situation. This view of leadership is called the contingency theory. Fiedler and his associates (Fiedler & Chemers, 1984) spent two decades developing and refining a contingency theory of leadership.

According to the contingency theory, the effectiveness of a leader in achieving high group performance is contingent on the leader’s motivational system and the degree to which the leader controls and influences the situation. The three situational factors include leader-member relations, task structure, and the leader’s position power. The
theory implies that leadership should not be thought of as either good or bad, but rather a more realistic approach is to view an administrator’s leadership style as effective in one set of circumstances but ineffective in another (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2003). Daly (1995) writes of some researchers who have suggested that men and women have similar “behavioral repertoires” but tailor their actions to the situation at hand as a function of social expectations. For example, gender differences tend to be more pronounced in group settings but much less so in individual assignments (Deaux & Major, 1987).

**Advancement of Women into Leadership**

The student population in this country is diverse, and becoming more so with each passing day (Blackman & Fenwick, 2000). Despite the fact that the student population is extremely diverse, the school administrative population is most definitely not. In short, the typical principal in today’s public K-12 school is a 50-year old white male (Blackman & Fenwick, 2000; Gardiner, et al., 2000). A possible reason for the imbalance described was forged in the theories developed by men, about men. As few as 40 years ago, Bowman Worthy and Greyser (1965) reported that women were not perceived as possessing the necessary qualities for success in management outside of the classroom.

In the last 50 years, there has been some improvement in the balancing of administrative positions by gender (Brandon, 2002; Carless, 1998). For example, 40 years ago, 95% of all principals were white males. At the close of the 1984-85 school year, only 21.4% of principals were female (NCES, 1985). Today, approximately 35% of principalships are held by women (Blackman & Fenwick, 2000). The advancement of females into school administration has improved even for high school principalships and
school superintendencies, two positions that have been particularly resistant to the advancement efforts of females (Mertz & McNeely, 1995; Gardiner, et al., 2000). Despite the headway, the imbalance remains obvious, and women remain on the borders, with “outsider” status in educational leadership (Gardiner, et al., 2000; Brandon, 2002).

While women are advancing in greater numbers to administrative positions, the reality is that since the mid-1980’s, more than half the students in educational administration preparation programs have been female, yet more than 15 years into that trend, men still dominate the field (Carr, 1995). The perception that women are not tough enough to handle the political environment or the discipline problems of a high school remains strong (Restine, 1993). When one delves into the ranks of superintendents, one finds that today’s statistics are similar to those found for principals fifty years ago - 96% of the nation’s public school superintendants are white males (Blackman & Fenwick, 2000). At the postsecondary level of education, 50% more men than women hold leadership positions that provide greater monetary and political opportunities such as campus executives, administrators, and managers (Neumann & Peterson, 1997).

A variety of explanations may be formulated for the disproportionate allocation of administrative opportunities for males as compared to females. One school of thought proposes that fewer females aspire to managerial level positions because of their family role and responsibilities. Spencer and Kochan (2000) also cite tradition, hiring practices, unwillingness or reluctance to seek administrative roles, or issues related to family needs as factors that influence the low number of females in principal’s positions relative to their numbers in the teaching force.
Riehl and Byrd (1997) discovered that female and male teachers possessed different levels of qualifications and aspirations for school administration. Fiore and Curtin (1997) compared the educational backgrounds of male and female leaders and discovered that a number of differences exist. They found that more female administrators than male administrators held college degrees in elementary or special education. Men were more likely than women to hold degrees in physical education or in social studies. Athletic coaching remained a common characteristic of the resumes of more than one-third of the male administrators, and was a rare experience for women. Female principals were more likely to have been curriculum specialists when compared to males. Females also had more years of teaching experience before stepping into an administrative position than did their male colleagues (Erickson, 1985; Fiore & Curtin, 1997).

Holloway (2000) refers to differences in the family backgrounds of male and female teachers that may affect their socialization into administration. The family has been the primary arena for the socialization of each generation (Eliman & Taggart, 2002). Eliman & Taggart (2002) cite gender norms as the culture’s list of prescriptions and proscriptions considered appropriate to that sex, and individuals are assessed as properly “feminine” or “masculine” in terms of their attitude toward, and degree of compliance with these social expectations.

Young girls are traditionally taught to please and to nurture. By the time they reach adulthood, girls believe that they will be considered unfeminine if they confront conflict assertively (Erickson, 1985). Erickson (1985) believes it is this kind of internal conflict, rooted in the process of socialization, which female school administrators
struggle with on the job. Men and women are subtly rewarded for conformity to
traditional behavioral expectations, and women in management can be sanctioned for
violating expectations of female-appropriate behavior (Daly, 1995). The presumption that
management requires the male-oriented, tough-minded approach to problems has only
recently begun to change (Daly, 1995).

One issue that must be addressed if a greater number of women are to advance
into the administrative ranks is the perceived costs that women face to themselves and
their personal goals in life. In the advancement of a career in administration, women
naturally face greater difficulties by the mere fact that women bear the responsibility of
childbirth and pressures of child rearing (Eliman & Taggart, 2002). Single mothers with
toddlers are at a disadvantage for career advancement from the onset.

Gardiner, et al., (2000) outline a number of women who struggled with conflicts
between their public role of leadership and the desire to preserve their personal priorities
and values, particularly family obligations. They suggest that changes need to be made to
the workplace setting to accommodate women leaders of all situations, including those
with small children. The new century must not allow women to struggle with minimizing
disruptions to the system by avoiding high-level leadership roles due to inadequate
support services available to them.

It is possible that older women who hold administrative positions may need
themselves to rethink their thinking about such issues. Often times, these experienced
women may assume that because their generation did not provide services to them, that
such conditions are also acceptable today. Such attitudes will not help to open the doors
to today’s aspiring female administrators.
For the most part, it appears that grooming our leaders begins at the college level. However, leadership skills begin developing long before women enter the work force. It is possible that planned preparation for leadership can take place at a much earlier age, and may be particularly important for developing female leaders.

One initiative, which hopes to generate greater success for females in the area of leadership, is a return to single-sex classrooms and schools for females, a practice that was not uncommon before the civil rights movement of the 1960’s (Vail, 1997). With reform of schools moving up the chart of hot topics, the idea is re-emerging.

One such initiative has taken place in New York City. There, a public school for seventh grade girls is located on the top three floors of a commercial office building in Harlem. The founders and employees believe that seventh grade is a crucial period when we begin to see the math and science scores of confident and high achieving females plummet along with their self-assurance. They believe that girls at this age are undermined by teachers who do not encourage them in academics and pay more attention to their boisterous male classmates.

Girls are often influenced by the pressures to conform to gender stereotypes. The founders, teachers, and administration of the Leadership School believe that all-female classes, where teachers are armed with conviction and classroom techniques designed to nurture and encourage girls, will steer their students toward the path of success which includes the attainment of leadership roles (Vail, 1997).

Restine (1993) refers to socialization theories about women in education. She reminds us that inherent in those theories is the assumption that women are unsuited for administrative work and that administration is a distinctly separate career from teaching,
rather than an extension of it. She goes on to say that the gender-role stereotypes that pervade our culture continue to produce people who function within the parameters of their socialization, which is more often than not restrictive and narrow. The historically rooted belief that the role of a leader calls for characteristics that are generally thought of as masculine, such as assertiveness, strength, and the ability to control one’s emotions continues to hinder the advancement of women into some school administrative positions (Erickson, 1985; Mertz & McNeely, 1995; Moss & Jensrud, 1995).

Ideas such as these beg an answer to the questions: Are there real differences in the practices of male and female leaders?

**Gender Studies Related to Leadership Theory**

Are there differences in leadership practices that can be drawn along gender lines? There are different perspectives on the issue of whether men and women have distinct leadership practices, and whether they approach management differently. Two perspectives have dominated the ongoing debate on this issue: Psychological theories and situational theories (Daly, 1995).

Daly (1995) discusses the differences in psychological and situational theories of leadership: Psychological theories emphasize the different outlook, attitudes, and values in men and women during their development and socialization. In brief, they suggest that differences between men and women stem from the different experiences the sexes have growing up. Throughout childhood, boys and girls are involved in different kinds of activities and rewarded for different kinds of behaviors. Consequently, adult men and women evince different behaviors and preferences. Proponents of this perspective suggest that widening the range of acceptable styles and pathways to success will free
people to lead in ways that play to their individual strengths and preferences. Critics of this philosophy fear that this approach may perpetuate behavioral expectations by over-valuing differences that stem from traditional views of appropriate male and female behavior (Daly, 1995).

In contrast, situational theories pose that gender differences are few. They argue that when men and women are in a similar situation, operating under analogous expectations, they tend to behave in similar ways. They believe gender differences are best explained by differences in opportunity, power, and lack of representation in business and organizational settings (Daly, 1995). Supporters of this perspective suggest that valuing diversity is simply rhetoric until women have equal access to jobs with opportunity and power, as well as to the career paths that will lead them there. For women, the implication is the need to develop strategies to counter the subtle barriers to power prevalent today. Critics of this theory maintain that the movement of women into high power positions has been hampered by an unwillingness to recognize and accept deep-rooted gender differences (Daly, 1995).

Helgesen (1990) conducted a study in the late 1980’s during which she followed the daily routines of four successful business women. She compared her observations with a study by Henry Mintzberg that depicted the leadership practices of men in 1968. The results indicated that while the men in Mintzberg’s study displayed an authoritarian, top down approach to management, the women who participated in Helgesen’s study practiced a participative approach to leadership. Because leader practices have evolved greatly over time, Helgesen’s comparisons of men in the sixties with women in the eighties may speak more to generational differences than gender differences.
In 1990, a meta-analysis was conducted by Eagly and Johnson (1990) on the question of whether female and male leaders differed in their leadership style. In 1992, Karau joined with Eagly and Johnson to synthesize the research findings based on a sub-sample of the 162 studies used in Eagly and Johnson’s original meta-analysis. The sub-sample consisted of 50 studies that examined principals of public schools within the United States. The findings of the meta-analysis substantiate to some extent the view that male and female educational administrators have somewhat different styles. Specifically, the results of their research indicated that the most substantial sex difference was the tendency for female principals to lead in a more democratic and less autocratic style than did male principals. A smaller, yet significant sex difference was also obtained regarding the tendency to lead in a task-oriented manner. The findings suggested that female principals were more task oriented than males. For example, females were more concerned than males about organizing school activities to carry out necessary tasks and to reach explicit goals.

Griffen (1992) studied the effects of leadership and gender on perceptions about managers. She compared leaders who practiced participative and authoritarian leadership behavior, having gained an interest in the topic in which the related research suggests there is a gender difference in their use, with participative being associated more with females while authoritarian is associated more with males.

The participants in the study were 102 undergraduate students between the ages of 17 and 60 years who attended a small mid-western college. A majority of the participants were employed, with 52% reporting that they held a leadership position. The study was conducted during a class, and students were asked to give their impressions
after reading a paragraph about a division manager in an organization. The manager’s
gender and leadership style were manipulated within the paragraph.

The results showed that males were rated more positively when they were
authoritarian, while females where rated more positively when they were participative.
More people said that they would prefer any classification of manager over the
authoritarian woman. Women were viewed as more sincere when they used the
participative style than when they used the authoritarian style. If perceptions of
insincerity lead others to thinking they are putting on an act, the researcher believes that
women may not be taken seriously.

The results also showed that men were seen as more knowledgeable and
competent when they used the authoritarian style than when they used the participative
style. The results suggest that male managers may be concerned that their image will be
damaged if they adopt a participative leadership style. It is also possible that expectations
of male behavior are different than expectations of female behavior.

The results of this study tend to confirm the use of gender stereotypes. Such
stereotypes can be addressed through education of children beginning at a very early age,
and practicing gender neutrality in the classroom.

Rice (1993) conducted a study to determine whether transformational and
transactional leadership differ on the basis of gender within the school administrative
population in Delaware. The population sample was selected from four school districts in
the state of Delaware, and consisted of 48 school based administrators evenly divided
into one group each of male and female leaders.
The Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was used for administrators to rate themselves, as well as for subordinate ratings. The results indicated that there were no gender differences in the perception of leadership styles; however, women did score higher than men on the transformational factors of charisma and individualized consideration. The results of the subordinate ratings showed that male and female teachers did not differ in their opinions of administrators.

A study that expands upon the findings by Rice was conducted by Carless in 1998. Carless examined gender differences in transformational leadership of banking executives. Multiple perspectives including the superiors and subordinates of branch managers were used in her sample.

Three measures of transformational leadership were used to obtain self- and other-ratings of branch managers’ leadership behavior: The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) designed to measure various aspects of transformational and transactional leadership, The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and the Global Transformational Leadership Scale (GTL). The LPI contains thirty statements for measuring five key practices of exemplary leaders: Modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart. The GTL is an eight-item scale developed by Carless which measured team cohesion. The GTL was completed by the superior, manager, and subordinates, whereas the LPI and MLQ were completed only by the manager and subordinates.

The findings varied according to the source of the data. Subordinates reported no observational differences between male and female leaders’ use of transformational leadership. However superiors and managers themselves rated female managers as more
transformational than male managers. Significant gender differences were found only for those subscales which are more interpersonally-oriented such as participatory decision making, praising individual and team contributions, and caring for individual needs.

Tesar and Snell (1995) conducted a study to examine student perceptions of gender differences regarding management functions of community college instructors. They found the vast majority of students saw the roles as being no more likely to be carried out by either male or female instructors. The “controlling” function was the closest exception, with students identifying male instructors as more controlling than female instructors. However, within that category, female instructors were rated higher than male instructors on the “planning” task dimension. One other interesting discovery from their study rated females lower than males in “motivating,” which is considered one of the people dimensions typically expected to be more feminine than masculine.

Moss and Jensrud (1995) reported on their studies to determine the extent to which gender-related differences exist among vocational education administrators. One focus of their research was in regard to the effectiveness of vocational administrators’ leadership performance and related to the following leader attributes: Energetic with stamina, insightful, adaptable, visionary, tolerant of ambiguity and complexity, achievement oriented, accountable, initiating, confident, willing to accept responsibility, persistent, enthusiastic and optimistic, tolerant of frustration, dependable, courageous, even disposition, committed to the common good, personal integrity, intelligent with practical judgment, ethical, communication, sensitivity, motivating others, networking, planning, delegating, organizing, team building, coaching, conflict management, time
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management, stress management, appropriate use of leadership styles, ideological beliefs appropriate to group, decision-making, problem solving, and information management.

Moss and Jensrud’s study consisted of 551 vocational leaders, including chief vocational education administrators to vocational teacher leaders. The researchers had each vocational leader rated by three to five subordinates who knew them well. One issue that the researchers accounted for in their study, which had been revealed in their related research, was the gender biases of rater-observers who judge administrators.

The results showed that female vocational administrators are judged to be slightly more effective leaders than their male counterparts by both male and female subordinates and/or peers. In their study, female vocational department heads were rated higher than males on the following 17 leader attributes: Energetic with stamina, achievement oriented, initiating, persistent, enthusiastic, dependable, committed to the common good, personal integrity, ethical, communication, sensitivity, motivating others, conflict management, appropriate use of leadership styles, ideological beliefs appropriate to group, decision-making, and information management. The authors pose an explanation for the difference, stating that the socialization process of females in our culture tends to develop those values and skills that support an empowering, facilitating leadership style. They determined that such a style is desired by both men and women.

Recognizing that an increase in the movement of women into administrative positions has fueled the debate over whether men and women lead differently, Mertz and McNeely (1995) present findings of a study that examined the “lived” experiences of two women as they served in the role of high school principal. The two female principal research participants were visited over a period of one year, biweekly where possible.
Interviews were also conducted with the two participants and with the students, teachers, and superiors who worked with them.

The results of the study found that the way the two female principals went about their work as school leaders seemed very similar to the way in which it is reported that high school principals think and go about their work (Mertz & McNeely, 1995). With only two participants in the study, it is impossible to generalize the findings to the general population of female high school principals. It is interesting, however, to consider the possible reasons that their behaviors did not differ from the norm. The researchers suggest the possibility that they were selected for their positions precisely because they think and operate in ways that are considered “appropriate” and consistent with the dominant office-holders.

Carr (1995) describes a research study that focused on the unique skills in communication and leadership required in schools today. In the study, the researcher audio-taped recordings of the daily activities of female principals. She “shadowed” five female principals, representing elementary, middle and high school levels, for at least 18 hours. During that time, she observed staff meetings, student and parent conferences, disciplinary conferences, parent meetings and teacher conferences.

All of the women consistently exhibited similar non-verbal and verbal behaviors including active listening, humor, extensive eye contact, questioning, expansive body position, seating choice, and positive language. According to Lakoff (1990), the behaviors that the women participants exhibited have previously been described as weaknesses in the communication of women, placing them at a disadvantage with men. However, by conducting interviews with the teachers and parents that the principals
served, the principals’ behaviors were viewed as demonstrating confidence, extending
conversation, gathering information, encouraging and supportive.

Each principal was interviewed extensively after the observation periods. The research identified the following specific leadership strategies used by the women:

Organization: employing note-taking, planning and time management skills.

Interpersonal influence: employing a team approach to one’s leadership style.

Trust building: building trust among faculty through communication and personal contact.

Gender awareness: making a conscious effort to mentor aspiring females and to encourage girls in their schools.

Carr believes that the importance of gender awareness lies in the opportunity for both men and women to be more effective leaders in schools, and more effective as communicators with one another and the public they serve. She emphasizes that males and females must get out of traditionally labeled and restricted “boxes”. Effective leadership requires administrators to broaden their communication skills and understanding. This will enable them to use a variety of behaviors for the purpose of transforming disparate groups into effectively functioning, caring teams and fulfilled individuals.

Boone (1997) conducted a study that explored the issue of gender differences in leadership in rural Texas school districts. For the study, the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) was completed by 18 male and 20 female superintendents of small rural school districts in Texas. Although the LPI consists of two instruments, the LPI-Self and the LPI-Observer, internal reliability of the LPI-self instrument ranged from .71 to .85,
thus supporting the instrument’s use as a self-reporting device. The results of the research indicated no statistically significant differences between male and female superintendents in their perceptions of their leadership practices.

Lewis (1998) examined self-perceptions of men’s and women’s leadership abilities and compared them to the perceptions made by their immediate supervisors. Randomly selected through personnel records from a Federal agency, leaders and their immediate supervisors completed the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). The LBDQ examines two dimensions of leadership: consideration and task orientation.

The results of Lewis’ study indicated that leaders’ perceptions of their own leadership behaviors were more gender role stereotypic than those of their supervisors. Male leaders rated themselves as higher in initiating structure behavior than did female leaders. The results of the study indicate a lingering presence of gender role stereotypes among leaders in organizational settings.

Street and Kimmel (1999) studied gender role preferences and perceptions of university administrators. 321 administrators and administrative heads at a large southeastern public university participated in the study. Participants were given the Sex Role Trait Inventory (Street and Meek, 1980) which was designed to measure a participants sex role attitudes and elicit perceptions of sex role traits associated with the ideal man, ideal woman, most men, most women, and self.

In comparing the male and female profiles for self, the researchers found that women saw themselves as exhibiting higher levels of compassion. The groups did not differ significantly on other traits. Another interesting finding related to male and female
perceptions about *most women* and *most men*, seeing them as sex-typed, with women being characterized by compassion and deference, and men by power. The authors reported their surprise of the findings, particularly in light of “the attention that has been given to the detrimental affects of stereotyping any group.”

Burke and Collins (2001) studied gender differences in leadership styles and management skills of male and female accountants. In their study, management style was assessed using a modified version of the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) based on self-reported data. In the study, MLQ surveys were completed by 2,800 female members of the American Woman’s Society of Certified Public Accountants and a matched sample of 2,800 male members of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants was used in the study.

The findings suggest that the management styles emphasized by female accountants differ somewhat from the management styles emphasized by male accountants. Small, but significant, gender differences were found in the self-ratings of all three management styles: transformational, contingent reward, and management-by exception. Female managers reported higher tendencies toward transformational behaviors than did male managers.

Douville (2001) reminds us that for the first time in history, four generations are present in the workplace: Veterans, Baby-boomers, Generation Xers, and Generation Nexters. As a result, the workplace consists of many differing attitudes, values, and expectations about work and the work place. Euster (1994) suggests that differences may be more generational than gender related. As a library director, she maintains that today’s women library directors in general manage very differently from the male directors that
women succeeded. However, she maintains that it is not clear that they differ so greatly from the current generation of men directors.

**Generational Differences in the Workplace**

The workplace can often be a complicated mix of personalities and work styles (Podmolik, 2001; Taylor, 2002), but it has become increasingly more complex as Generation X and Generation Y begin to move into the highly populated workplace built by the Veteran and Baby Boomer generation (Taylor, 2002). In today’s multigenerational workplace, the differences in education, motivation and job commitment are more pronounced than ever (Podmolik, 2001). Leadership is a demanding and challenging discipline, especially in the participatory, collaborative new workplace (Mazarr, 2002). It gets more complicated when generational differences in leadership and management styles come into play.

There is no clear agreement about the exact borderlines of generations (Mazarr, 2002). The definitions of a historical generation vary greatly, depending on whom you talk to. Some stress values, attitudes, and shared experiences, while others emphasize stark demographic data such as birthrates (Tolson, 2001). While it is now well accepted that generations tend to reflect certain value sets (Mazarr, 2002), it is important to understand the limitations of classifying people into age groups. For example, someone who is born in 1980 as a generation nexter may be more in tune with the generation xer born in 1977 than the nexter born in 1990.

Tolson (2001) tells the story of Jonathan Pontell, born in 1958. Pontell recalls how one of his high school teachers created a wave of hysterical laughter by referring to the class as boomers. Pontell claims the students didn’t feel that they were part of
Woodstock, but neither did he feel that he and his peers belonged to what came to be known as generation X. Later, in the mid-1990’s, Pontell heard a techno tune on the radio underlaid with Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech, and was suddenly hit by a surge of emotion. Pontell recognized at that moment that he was a child of the 60’s, and it struck him with equal clarity that the children of the 50’s were “a different kettle of fish.”

Dan Caulfield, a 34 year old senior manager of a large corporation can relate to feeling “in-between” generations. Caulfield describes his work experiences stating, “I feel like I fit in the over-40 crowd in terms of my life experience, but I feel that I also fit with the under-30 crowd because my experience was based in the go-go-tech world (Podmolik, 2001).

The perceptions of Caulfield and Pontell reflect a broad concern about what generations really are and where the lines are drawn. Tolson (2001) discusses and clarifies the differing views. Some analysts claim that the term “generation” is used to impose the experiences and attitudes of a relatively small group upon a whole generational cohort, regardless of the significant regional, class, ethnic, and other differences within it. In a discussion that Tolson (2001) had with Schewe of the University of Massachusetts, Schewe preferred to abandon the word altogether. Schewe stated, “we talk about cohorts rather than generations.” He believes that what happens to a cohort of individuals coming of age between 17 and 24, what they share in the way of defining events and experiences, can create values that remain with them for the rest of their lives.
Baldwin and Trovas (2002) agree that such factors influence the perceptions, values, and beliefs about the world in general and leadership specifically.

Tolson (2001) writes that University of Toronto’s economist, Foot, suggests that experiences, attitudes, and values matter far less than the brute fact of numbers. Foot is reported to argue that the size of a generation largely determines what those experiences and values will be. He maintains that the bigger the numbers, the flusher the economy, the happier the times, and the more optimistic the generation. In short, the numbers predispose generations to see certain experiences as their formative ones.

It has been suggested that members of generational groups develop certain cultural attitudes common to the economic, political and social events during their development years. In the workplace, these attitudes influence individuals’ behavior (Mcguinnes, 2000). Taylor (2002) describes the generational values and practices of the four groups as follows:

Veterans (or pre-Boomers)
- Dedication, sacrifice
- Hard Work
- Conformity
- Patience
- Delayed reward

Boomers
- Optimism
- Team Oriented
- Personal gratification
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- Personal growth
- Work
- Involvement

Generation X
- Diversity
- Think globally
- Balance of work, family, play
- Techno literacy
- Fun
- Informality
- Self-reliance / Independence

Generation Y (or nexters)
- Optimism
- Civic duty
- Confidence
- Sociability
- Environmental intelligence
- Diversity

Podmolik (2001) retells a conversation between Michael Arnoult Sr. and his son. The father and son have the same name, job title and employer. They claim, however, that the similarities end there. The following scenario is how Podmolik details the differences.
Mr. Arnoult Sr. started working for Walgreen Company as a stock boy while in college. Now a district manager in Memphis, the 58 year old never thought about working anywhere else. The father states, “My values were to go to work for a company, work for it and retire someday.” His son, aged 32, has a different outlook, stating, “My friends today are on their fourth or fifth company. People are more willing to change jobs.” He admits that his generation is the “me” generation looking for instant gratification and focused on how fast they can get ahead. When the conversation turns to technology, more glaring differences become evident. The son quips, “The senior Mr. Arnoult prefers to rely on his entrepreneurial skills rather than tech innovations - his VCR still flashes 12.” The younger Mr. Arnoult recognizes clear differences between him and his dad, but at the same time sees big attitude differences between himself and recent college graduates. The tricky part, he states, is “selling them on working Saturdays.”

Although many organizations can be found with four generations present, the two generational groups that are the most prevalent are the Baby boomers and Generation Xers. In a study by Mcguinnes (2000) which examined the organizational commitment levels of the Baby Boomers and Generation Xers, the findings indicated no significant differences in their levels of commitment.

**Summary**

What we know about school administration is based primarily on those experiences of the dominant office holders. Historically, that is the white male. As a result, theories of school administration rely predominately on a male-defined conceptual base (Gardiner, et al.; Helgesen, 1990; Hollander & Yoder, 1978; Mertz & McNeely, 1995; Neumann, & Peterson, 1997). As was pointed out by Shakeshaft (1989), studying
male behavior, and more particularly white male behavior is not in and of itself a problem. It becomes a problem when the results of studying male behavior are assumed appropriate for understanding all behavior.

Shakeshaft (1989) argued that, “research in educational administration is weak both on research on women in organizations and research on the impact of gender on behavior.” She believes, as does the author, that the expansion of theory and research must include non-dominant groups, namely women. Gaining a better understanding of male and female leadership practices will allow us to determine if current theories should be retained or abandoned in light of the greater influx of women into the administrative ranks.

Stereotypes and assumptions about gender have produced an educational climate that fails to foster the emotional, intellectual, and professional development of all people in schools (Restine, 1993). Practices that discriminate against the promotion of women into administrative positions will hinder the success of the entire institution. Getting more women into the field of educational administration is desirable, but more important are the vast opportunities for women to lead differently from what is traditionally encouraged, and to have a true impact on the reformation of schools and the students that they serve (Restine, 1993). Enhancing the career development of women can pay big benefits for an organization in that it provides a greater pool of leadership resource to draw on and lays the groundwork for the competitive advantage that comes from having senior management that is more diverse (Brandon, 2002).

In everyday experience, the words “woman” or “man” tend to produce conventionalized images and impressions about a person (Hollander & Yoder, 1978). In
this new century, an important goal in education must be to free educational leadership from its association with gender, color and age. Educational leaders should be not be judged on whether they are white or of color, whether they are men or women, or what generation they fall into, but rather on how good they are for all children (Gardiner et al., 2000).

The effective administrator must learn to react competently to specific situations and achieve a natural balance between what are considered male and female behaviors, or generational assumptions. The difficulty in developing such a management style lies in learning how to react to specific situations instead of to cultural demands for certain behavior (Erickson, 1985). Euster (1994) concluded that it is not a matter of being different or what is better. Thinking in those terms implies competition between sets of values and the perception that one must dominate. Instead, we must think in terms of what strengthens the organization and what makes us better able to meet the needs of the children that we serve. We can then focus on what each set of values, perspectives, and approaches adds to the total capability of the organization.

Generational differences are no different than racial, gender or ethnic differences, and should be treated the same - as a diversity issue (Gillian, 1996). The more aware that an organization is about the practices and values of older and younger people, the more productive and innovative the organization can be through careful teaming and thoughtful placement of personnel into leadership positions (Kupperschmidt, 2000).

In an increasingly competitive, global, and technology-driven world, top district personnel must recruit, train, develop, and retain people for top leadership positions. Today, a number of factors have caused a decline in the potential leaders to choose from
Gender and Generational Differences in Leadership (Baldwin & Trovas, 2002). The meteoric rise of the technology industry during the 1990’s is one factor. That industry has created new places for younger workers, spreading the workers who are qualified or have potential for leadership positions across old and new work places, thus reducing the number available to either. Basic demography also plays a part. Generations following the Baby Boomers are simply smaller.

Although some organizations create environments that encourage and enable individuals and teams to bring their full leadership potential to bear, most organizations fail to consider the characteristics of the environment and its importance in maximizing leadership resources (O’Connor & Day, 2002). According to a recent study by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), nearly half of urban, suburban, and rural districts, and more than half of elementary, middle and high schools, reported a shortage of principal candidates (Blackman & Fenwick). Such reports indicate that the shortage of principals is at a critical level in a time when schools are on the firing block for their perceived lack of performance. Schools are being held under a microscope as school reform initiatives are sent down from political leaders in the form of accountability testing, merit pay, vouchers, and privatization. The author suggests that if the goal of school reform is to improve student achievement, you must look to the leaders of those schools.

How will we fill the leadership positions that are currently open as well as the some 37,000 that will open up within the next five years (Blackman & Fenwick, 2000) as the current leaders retire in droves? With approximately 47% of the nation’s public
school teachers holding masters degrees (NCES, 1995), it appears that there are plenty of qualified educators who could take on the responsibility (Blackman & Fenwick, 2000). Women, being the dominant gender in the teaching force can be a significant resource for learning how to lead schools (Restine, 1993). That puts forth a challenge to both leadership development programs and school districts to encourage and to prepare those who are able, though currently unwilling or unaware, to serve (Blackman & Fenwick).

Changing the way we think about schools and who leads them, means challenging many of the givens (Restine, 1993). District personnel responsible for recruiting, training, and selecting school principals should have an understanding of gender and generational issues so that the best training and promotional decisions can be made for their school system.
Chapter Three

Method

Introduction

It is possible that differences in leadership practices may be more generational than gender related. Recognizing this, the present study considered both, gender and generation, as possible links to differences in the leadership practices of elementary school administrators. Gender and generation of participants was determined based on the participant’s response on the survey instrument.

Problem: The lack of representation of women in leadership is often attributed to gender stereotypes. In order to address this overall problem, there is a need to clarify the possible confusion between perceived gender stereotypes and generational differences among male and female school administrators.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine the existence of gender and/or generational differences in the self-perceived leadership practices of elementary school administrators within four Florida counties.

Research Questions: The present study addresses the following questions:

1. Are there differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of male and female administrators in today’s elementary schools?
2. Are there generational differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of elementary school administrators between the age of 25 and 44 (generation group 2) as compared to those between the age of 45 and 70 (generation group 1)?

3. Are there differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of men who belong to generation group 1 when compared to men from generation group 2?

4. Are there differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of women who belong to generation group 1 when compared to women from generation group 2?

**Hypotheses:** Four null hypotheses were formulated to address the issues previously outlined:

*Hypothesis 1:* There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of males and females.

*Hypothesis 2:* There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of generation 1 and generation 2.

*Hypothesis 3:* There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of men from generation 1 and men from generation 2.

*Hypothesis 4:* There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of women from generation 1 and women from generation 2.
Key Variables:

There are two categorical independent variables in the study:

(1) Gender
   - male
   - female

(2) Generation
   - generation group 1: educational leaders whose ages range from 45 to 70. This group contains both Baby-boomers and Veterans.
   - generation group 2: educational leaders whose ages range from 23 to 44. This group contains both Generation Y and Generation X participants.

The division of the two generational groups was determined based on the fact that the majority of school based administrators fall into either generation X or the baby boomer generation. The researcher correctly anticipated that few participants would fall under the generation y or veteran status, yet felt that it was important to include those limited populations in the study. Because there were few leaders in either of the groups, particularly generation y, it was necessary to combine the generations in a logical way. The leaders of both the veteran and boomer generations were developed under the more traditional male-oriented perceptions of leadership, whereas generation x and y experienced training that supported more democratic, relationship-oriented methods of practicing leadership. Thus, it was logical to group the generations accordingly.

The dependent variable in the study is perceived leadership practices as measured by a self-ranking survey of the eight principal competencies recognized by the state of Florida.
Population / Sample:

Elementary school principals and assistant principals practicing in four Florida school districts were asked to participate in this study. Three of the school districts are located in Central Florida. The fourth district is located in South Florida. The largest of the four counties provided 120 potential participants for the study. The smaller three counties together provided 35 more potential participants for the study.

Donnell and Hall (1980) studied male and female managers and determined that gender studies should be based on two assumptions: (1) for any study of gender differences in leadership to be valid, “the comparative dimensions should relate to and be valid indicators of managerial competence.” For example, one’s ability to sing on key would not be a comparative dimension related to managerial competence, and (2) “individuals studied should be truly comparable.” For example, hold the same type of job. The first assumption serves as the basis for using the Florida Principal Competencies as the basis for the survey instrument created for this study. The second assumption serves as the basis for the researcher’s decision to include only elementary school administrators in the study.

Survey Instrument

In the 1980’s, the Florida Council on Educational Management (FCEM) commissioned two extensive studies of the behavior of average and high performing principals. The McBer study of 1982 and the Martinko study in 1984 produced competencies of successful principals that were later refined by the work of Croghan, Lake and Schroeder (Cox, 1994). For the purpose of this study, leadership practices will be defined by a series of scores that are obtained using a self-ranking order measurement.
tool on those Florida Principal Competencies: Proactive Orientation, Commitment, Sensitivity, Analysis, Leadership, Work Standards, Management, and Communication. Definitions and examples for each principal competency are provided in appendix A.

The Principal Competency Survey is a self-assessment tool developed by the researcher for the purpose of assessing the self-perceptions of school administrators on their leadership practices as they relate to the Florida Principal Competencies. The survey focuses on areas of competency recognized by the state of Florida. The competencies are used to determine an individual’s abilities as a leader, and serve as criteria for placement into leadership positions. Several other measurement tools were considered for the purpose of this study; however, it was a goal of the researcher to use a tool that measured areas of leadership practice that are relevant to working administrators in today’s schools. Because the competencies are the basis for their employment as well as evaluation criteria, the researcher believed that leaders would have a strong understanding of their strengths and weaknesses in the principal competency areas.

In developing the survey, the researcher considered various types of instruments such as a survey by which participants rated themselves low to high on each of the principal competencies. This prospect, however, was abandoned due to a concern that responses by an individual might not reveal differences between competencies when in fact differences did exist. For that reason, a ranking survey was developed by which participants would have to identify their relative strengths on the leadership competencies, thus making it possible to determine if differences in relative strengths on the Florida Principal Competencies exist among gender and/or generational groups of elementary school administrators within the four participating Florida counties.
The survey instrument was designed to be anonymous, but does ask for position title, age, years of administrative experience and gender. Categorical response choices are provided for each of these categories, thus ensuring participants that the survey is anonymous. The survey can be completed by each participant within a 5-15 minute time frame.

Data previously collected on the survey instrument for instructional purposes provide validity data for the instrument. The principal competency survey was given to all teachers, support staff and the school administrator at an elementary school from one of the four participating counties. Each staff member rated the administrator on the principal competencies using a scale of one to eight. Eight represented what they perceived as the administrator’s strongest area of competency and one represented what they perceived to be the weakest area of competency. The principal then rated herself using the same survey and the same rating scale. The results indicated that the principal rated herself similarly to the teachers on her staff. The following table represents the results from that study:
Table 1: Comparison of Teacher and Principal Ratings for Pilot Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Teacher Ratings</th>
<th>Principal Self-Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proactive Orientation</td>
<td>5 to 6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workstandards</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>5 to 6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show that the principal and staff were in agreement on all but two competencies, those of commitment and work standards.

In the initial planning of the study, the researcher considered administering the Principal Competency Survey to administrators and their staff. In an effort to improve the validity of the instrument, a focus group of fifteen individuals was conducted which included school principals, school assistant principals, a statistician, a district superintendent, and aspiring administrators from the cluster of counties involved in the study.

The greatest concern that was identified with the instrument was the terminology used for the competencies. Although each competency was defined, with several examples given for each competency, the focus group did not believe that teachers would take the time to read the definitions and examples, and would likely rate the principal based on what they “thought” the competency meant, and not what it was actually intended to represent. Through one-on-one conversations with three other practicing
elementary administrators, they concurred with the focus group on that aspect. In addition, they expressed concern over a teacher’s ability to know the principal’s strengths and weaknesses in certain competency areas, particularly in the area of analysis. Last, members of the focus group were concerned that both the assistant principal and the principal would be rated by the staff. They felt that this could cause potential participants in the study to feel somewhat threatened. This sense, they pointed out, may lower participation response.

After considering input from the focus group and other selected administrators, it was determined that only self-evaluations by principals and assistant principals on the principal competencies would be used for the purpose of collecting data.

Instrument reliability refers to the consistency, stability, and precision of scores (Pearson, 1997). Test-retest reliability was the approached used to determine the reliability of the Principal Competency Survey. The survey was administered to ten elementary school administrators on two occasions with a two-week interval between survey administrations. A coefficient of stability was determined for each of the principal competencies. The reliability data for each competency are described in the following table:
Table 2: Coefficient of Stability by Principal Competency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Competency</th>
<th>Coefficient of Stability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proactive Orientation</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Standards</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Collection**

The data collection procedures took place by administering the Principal Competencies Survey at a general meeting conducted for elementary school administrators within each district or through a personal phone call followed by a direct mailing to each administrator. The opportunity provided to the researcher to attend administrative meetings for the purpose of data collection varied by school district.

In those cases where the researcher was not able to administer the survey instrument at an administrative meeting, the researcher made an effort to contact prospective participants and inform them about the survey purpose and request their participation. In the event that the researcher could not contact a prospective participant directly, survey information was provided to the administrator’s secretary. A survey packet which included a survey instrument, coversheet, principal competencies definitions sheet, and stamped-addressed return envelope was then mailed to each elementary school administrator within the participating district. Administrators who
selected to participate in the study completed the survey instrument, and returned it to the researcher using the non-identifiable envelope included in the survey packet.

In two instances, the researcher was permitted to administer the survey at a district-wide administrative meeting. In those situations, participants were first informed about the purpose and procedures of the study. The survey coversheet, survey, and principal competency definitions list was then distributed to the attending administrators. Upon completing a survey, each participant placed his/her completed survey in a large manila envelope titled “survey returns.”

The researcher anticipated that a number of interesting observations might result from analyzing the data collected from the Principal Competency Survey, which could be further explored through personal interviews with practicing school administrators. The researcher believed that the data analysis might reveal:

1. Differences in self-perceived leadership practices between men and women.
2. Differences in self-perceived leadership practices of generation 1 and generation 2.
3. Differences in self-perceived leadership practices between men from generation 1 and men from generation 2.
4. Differences in self-perceived leadership practices between women from generation 1 and women from generation 2.

Follow up interviews with practicing administrators working within the four participating school districts were conducted for the purpose of lending personal perspectives relating to the quantitative data collected. Feedback from interviews was used to address the following questions:
1. In what way(s) are the interviewee’s perceptions and experiences reflective of the quantitative data?

2. What personal and professional factors influence a school administrator’s leadership practices?

One practicing administrator from each subgroup was randomly selected to participate in the interview phase of the study: One male administrator from generation 1, one male administrator from generation 2, one female administrator from generation 1, and one female administrator from generation 2. Initially, the names of all female administrators were placed in one container, and the names of all male administrators placed in another. The researcher began with a random selection from the container holding the names of all female administrators within the four participating school districts, selecting administrators names from the container until one female representative from each generation had agreed to be interviewed by the researcher. The same process was then repeated using the container holding the names of all male administrators from within the four participating school districts, until one male representative from each generation had agreed to be interviewed by the researcher.

Interview questions were developed by the researcher with input from a focus group of practicing school administrators including both district and school level leaders. Questions were refined through continued dialogue with focus group members and leadership professors at a Florida University.

The following questions were posed to interview participants:

1. How long have you been a school level administrator?
2. Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences between the leadership practices of male and female administrators in today’s elementary schools?

3. Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences in the leadership practices of elementary school administrators from generation 1 and generation 2?

4. Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences in the leadership practices of men who belong to generation group 1 when compared to men from generation group 2?

5. Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences in the leadership practices of women who belong to generation group 1 when compared to women from generation group 2?

6. Based on your experiences and perceptions, is it your belief that a school administrator’s leadership practices can be influenced by their gender? If so, in what way?

7. Based on your experiences and perceptions, is it your belief that a school administrator’s leadership practices can be influenced by their age? If so, in what way?

8. What personal factors have influenced your leadership practices? For example: religion, economics, family

9. What professional factors have influenced your leadership practices? For example: mentoring, in-service training, school accountability
10. Have your leadership practices evolved over time? If so, what personal and/or professional factors influenced the change?

In addition to taking notes throughout the interview, a sound-recording device was used during interviews to ensure that all information gathered from interviewees was documented. Reflections of practicing administrators shared during interviews are included in the results section.

**Data Analysis**

Data was collected from elementary school administrators in each of the four participating counties, and then analyzed using SAS software. Data entries were double checked to ensure accuracy of results. Descriptive statistics were computed for each of the eight principal competencies for each of the following groups: Females in generation group 1, females in generation group 2, males in generation group 1, and males in generation group 2. Descriptive statistics include mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis. Stem and Leaf plots and box plots were generated and studied to provide additional insight into the data collected.

The degree to which the data met the assumptions of normality, independence and equal variances was considered and did not provide any concerns that would prevent the researcher from proceeding with a two-factor ANOVA.

A two factor ANOVA was conducted on the data collected for each competency, with the alpha level set at .05. This type of design allowed the researcher to test whether the two factors (gender and generation) operate differently, as well as whether there is an interaction between them. Post hoc methods were used to find group differences for those competencies which showed statistically significant results. Prior to conducting the study
and analyzing the survey data, the researcher anticipated that there would be an interaction on some of the competencies similar to the figure below.

Figure 1: Example of Anticipated Interaction

Upon completing the quantitative analysis of the survey data, qualitative data was collected through the process of personal interviews with practicing school administrators.

Summary

Today’s school administrators are held accountable for practicing the Florida Principal Competencies. A self-rating instrument based on the Florida Principal Competencies was developed for the purpose of determining gender and/or generational differences in the leadership practices of elementary school administrators within four Florida counties. Data previously gathered on the instrument for instructional purposes along with focus group recommendations were used to improve the validity of the survey instrument. Reliability data gathered on the survey instrument produced acceptable
reliability coefficients ranging from very strong to medium levels of reliability, depending on the principal competency.

Administration of the survey instrument required participating administrators to rank themselves from one to eight on the Florida Principal Competencies, with eight representing their perceived greatest strength, and one their perceived weakest area. Upon completion of data collection, descriptive statistics were computed on each of the eight principal competencies for each of the following groups: Females in generation group 1, females in generation group 2, males in generation group 1, and males in generation group 2. In addition, a two-factor ANOVA was conducted on the data collected for each competency, thus allowing the researcher to test whether the two factors (gender and generation) operate differently, as well as whether there is an interaction between them. Post hoc methods and interviews followed the analysis of the two-factor ANOVA results.
Chapter Four

Results

Introduction

Traditional gender based roles remain under the microscope, and continue to be redefined in a number of different arenas including sports, business, and government. We now see a growing number of males operating in what were once traditional female roles such as nursing, homemaking, and airline services. In addition, women have made their way into government, sports, and CEO positions. Despite the progress, however, there remain significantly fewer women who operate in high ranking educational leadership positions when compared to men (Blackman & Fenwick, 2000).

A variety of reasons have been proposed to explain why so many fewer women than men operate in educational leadership positions. One such theory suggests that differences in the leadership practices of men and women make men more suitable for the task (Walsh, 1997). One motivation of the researcher was to identify if such gender differences in leadership practices truly exist.

This study focused on the self perceived differences in the leadership practices of elementary principals in four Florida counties. Based on experience and a review of the research, the researcher anticipated that differences would be found to lie more along generational lines than gender lines. In order to carry out the study, a survey instrument
was created by the researcher based on the Florida Principal Competencies which outlines those practices to which all Florida school administrators are held accountable. Results from the survey were analyzed and follow up interviews were conducted with selected survey participants.

**Population Sample**

Principals and Assistant Principals from four Florida counties were asked to participate in this study. Three of the counties are located in Central Florida, and the fourth is located in South Florida. The total number of potential participants for the study was 167. The table below specifies potential applicants from the participating counties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Potential Survey Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 1 (Central Florida)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 2 (Central Florida)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 3 (Central Florida)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 4 (South Florida)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Possible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was not possible to obtain the ages of potential participants; however the potential participants are depicted according to gender and title as outlined in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Potential Survey Participants by Gender and Job Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Collection

Data collection was conducted in two ways. In those cases where the district offices of the participating counties permitted, the survey administration took place at a scheduled meeting of administrators for the district. In the event that the researcher’s attendance at such a meeting could not be scheduled, a survey packet was sent to potential participants.

The use of a direct mailing was the method most often used to collect survey data. In those instances, an effort was made to contact potential participants through a personal phone call followed by a direct mailing to each administrator. In those cases where the potential participant could not be reached, information was provided to the school secretary, and then followed up with a direct mailing. The direct mailing consisted of a survey packet which included a survey instrument, coversheet, principal competencies definitions sheet, and stamped-addressed return envelope.

In two instances, the researcher was able to administer the survey at a general administrative meeting held by participating districts. One of those meetings was conducted in the larger county (county #1) at a meeting for assistant principals. The researcher inquired about the possibility of administering the survey in the same manner for a principal’s meeting, however no such meeting was scheduled for the remainder of the school year during which the researcher was gathering survey data. In addition, the researcher inquired about the possibility of getting a list of those assistant principals in attendance in order to follow-up with a phone call and survey mailing to any assistant principal absent from the general meeting. However, the participating district declined to provide that information to the researcher, citing confidentiality concerns.
The other instance of the researcher collecting data at a scheduled meeting of administrators took place during a principals meeting in one of the smaller counties (county #2). Again, the researcher inquired about the possibility of conducting a similar administration of the survey among that county’s assistant principals. However, as with the larger district, no assistant principal meeting was planned for the remainder of the school year during which the researcher was collecting data. At that particular meeting, there was 100% participation by the elementary school principals within that district.

During those opportunities provided to the researcher to attend administrative meetings for the purpose of data collection, participants were first informed about the purpose and procedures of the study. The survey coversheet, survey, and principal competency definitions list was then distributed to the attending administrators. Upon completing a survey, each participant placed his/her completed survey in a large manila envelope titled “survey returns.”

Upon completion of the survey administration, 111 of the 167 potential participants responded to and returned the Principal Competencies Survey to the researcher. This reflects a 66.467% response rate. The following table breaks down the number of participants according to job assignment, gender and generation:

Table 5: Study Participants by Gender, Generation and Job Assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Gen 1</th>
<th>Gen 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principals</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following pie graph shows a break down of the generation subgroups by gender for study participants:

Figure 2: Study Participants by Generation and Gender Subgroups

![Pie chart showing the gender and generation distribution of study participants](chart.png)

109 of the 111 surveys returned to the researcher were useable for the purpose of data analysis. The two surveys that were removed from the data analysis process had been incorrectly completed by the participants. In both cases, participants ranked themselves on each competency using only the numbers seven and eight, as opposed to using all numbers one through eight to identify their perceived strengths and weaknesses. Both unused surveys were completed by female administrators who fall into generation 1. One was a principal, and the other an assistant principal.

Of particular interest to the researcher was the high response rate for male principals. 91% of male principals completed and returned their surveys to the researcher, as compared to 54% of female principals, 64% of male assistant principals, and 70% of female assistant principals.
Two participants provided written remarks about the survey and/or why they ranked themselves as they did. Stated below are the unsolicited written statements that were made on the survey form by those survey participants:

**Participant #48**: This was very difficult. I really wanted to use the same number 2 or 3 times! (smiley face). Of course, I might rank these a little differently at times. All of them need to be blended at all times and each situation may dictate the need for a different priority/mix. Good Luck!

**Participant #101**: Regarding Proactive Orientation – I try to be on the cutting edge of technology. Regarding Commitment – I am in DROP (smiley face) I’ll be gone in 2007!!! Regarding Analysis – I use my grade level leaders, my AP for this area. Regarding Management – I try to keep a well oiled quiet school with progress. Regarding Communication – I am pushing others to speak and to be seen. Every AP I have trained is now a principal – except one who is a district ESE supervisor. They need to be seen – not me! I push all my AP’s out of the nest! General statement written at the top of the survey – We are a “B” school with a 67% mobility rate. We are an older staff – seasoned.

**Statistical Analysis**

*Descriptive Statistics:*

There were 109 useable surveys collected for this study. Descriptive statistics for each of the competencies surveyed is outlined in the following four charts.

The following table provides the mean values for each subgroup and competency. There were no unusual mean values identified in the data. Reviewing the box and
whisker plots from the statistical output revealed no outliers for any subgroup on any competency.

Table 6: Mean Values by Subgroup and Principal Competency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Values of Ranks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female Gen 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive Orientation</td>
<td>4.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Standards</td>
<td>4.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>4.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The standard deviations were similar. Dividing the largest standard deviation by the smallest standard deviation yields a ratio of 2.54/1.54 (1.8) which indexes the size of the difference. A table of the standard deviations for each competency and subgroup follows:
Table 7: Standard Deviations for each Subgroup and Principal Competency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Deviation of Ranks</th>
<th>Female Gen 1</th>
<th>Female Gen 2</th>
<th>Male Gen 1</th>
<th>Male Gen 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proactive Orientation</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Standards</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No skewness values were outside the range of +1 and -1. This indicates a symmetric distribution of the data. In the following table, skewness values for each competency and subgroup is listed:
Table 8: Skewness Values for each Subgroup and Principal Competency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skewness Values of Ranks</th>
<th>Female Gen 1</th>
<th>Female Gen 2</th>
<th>Male Gen 1</th>
<th>Male Gen 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proactive Orientation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-0.67</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>-0.57</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.56</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Standards</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The kurtosis values indicate that the distribution may not be normal, but rather is more flattened with less extreme values. This result is not surprising given the nature of the survey instrument used in the study. The use of a ranking survey by which participants were required to rank themselves from one to eight without reusing any value would likely create a platykurtic distribution. The following table provides the kurtosis values for each subgroup and competency:
Table 9: Kurtosis Values for Each Subgroup and Principal Competency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female Gen 1</th>
<th>Female Gen 2</th>
<th>Male Gen 1</th>
<th>Male Gen 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proactive Orientation</td>
<td>-1.11</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>-0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
<td>-1.63</td>
<td>-1.25</td>
<td>-0.96</td>
<td>-0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
<td>-1.15</td>
<td>-1.57</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
<td>-1.01</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>-1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Standards</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>-1.02</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>-0.79</td>
<td>-1.16</td>
<td>-1.23</td>
<td>-1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>-1.01</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumptions:

The researchers' consideration of the important assumptions associated with a two-factor ANOVA are detailed below:

**Independence:** Although the use of ranks caused dependency within the scores for an individual, it is not believed that the assumption of independence is violated. All participants independently completed their survey, and are therefore expected to have independent scores.

**Normality:** Based on the descriptive statistics, the distributions for the individual groups indicate some degree of non-normality. Distributions were revealed to be flatter
than a normal distribution. However, the sample size of this study is large, thus making the two-factor ANOVA robust to violations of this assumption.

**Equal Variances:** The descriptive statistics revealed standard deviations that looked consistent, and therefore this assumption does not appear to be violated.

**Two-factor ANOVA:**

Based on the descriptive statistics and the belief that the assumptions outlined above have not been violated, the researcher decided to proceed with the two-factor ANOVA. A two-factor ANOVA was used to identify statistically significant differences with a p-value set at .05. Given participation and the number of variables in the study, a p-value of .05 was used for all initial tests. Because this was an unbalanced design, with unequal groups, Proc GLM was used in the statistical program. For each of the eight competencies, the four previously stated hypotheses were tested.

**Findings**

Analyzing the results for the 109 survey participants who correctly completed the Florida Principal Competencies Survey, the following observations were made:

*Proactive Orientation:*

The means of each subgroup for the principal competency proactive orientation are depicted in the following figure:
Additional descriptive statistics for the competency of proactive orientation are depicted in the following table:

**Table 10: Descriptive Statistics for Proactive Orientation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female Gen 1</th>
<th>Female Gen 2</th>
<th>Male Gen 1</th>
<th>Male Gen 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-0.67</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
<td>-1.11</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two-factor ANOVA procedure produced results for the principal competency, proactive orientation, which showed no statistically significant difference for either of the main effects, gender or generation. There was also no significant interaction between gender and generation. The results of the factorial ANOVA for this competency are displayed in the following table:
Table 11: Factorial ANOVA results for Proactive Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0541</td>
<td>2.0541</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.5086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.4614</td>
<td>11.4614</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>0.1202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.5942</td>
<td>7.5942</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>0.2050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>490.3488</td>
<td>4.6700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the statistical results for the principal competency, proactive orientation, the researcher failed to reject each of the four hypotheses.

Commitment:

The means of each subgroup for the principal competency Commitment are depicted in the following figure:

Figure 4: Means by Subgroup for Commitment

Additional descriptive statistics for the competency of commitment are depicted in the following table:
The two-factor ANOVA procedure produced results for the principal competency, commitment, which showed no statistically significant difference for either of the main effects, gender or generation. As a result, the researcher failed to reject hypotheses one and two for the principal competency of commitment. There was, however, a significant interaction between gender and generation which suggested that there may be a difference between the self-perceived leadership practices of men from generation 1 and men from generation 2 for this competency, and/or a possible difference between the self-perceived leadership practices of women from generation 1 and women from generation 2 for this competency. The results of the factorial ANOVA for this competency are displayed in the following table:

Table 13: Factorial ANOVA results for Commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.1641</td>
<td>5.1641</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.2855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5465</td>
<td>0.5465</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.7276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21.9193</td>
<td>21.9193</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>0.0292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>470.5227</td>
<td>4.4812</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Descriptive Statistics for Commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Female Gen 1</th>
<th>Female Gen 2</th>
<th>Male Gen 1</th>
<th>Male Gen 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>-0.57</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>-0.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A visual display of the interaction is depicted in the following figure:

Figure 5: Interaction for Commitment

Because the interaction was statistically significant, follow-up tests for the interaction were conducted. A one-way ANOVA with two contrasts was conducted in an effort to determine if hypotheses three and four would be rejected for the principal competency, commitment. Because two contrasts were executed, a Bonferonni adjustment was made to compare the p-values for each contrast with .025 to determine statistical significance. The results of the two contrasts are listed in the following table:

Table 14: Results of Contrast Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contrast</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Contrast SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen 1 female vs. Gen 2 female</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10.0987</td>
<td>10.0987</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>0.1363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen 1 male vs. Gen 2 male</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.94231</td>
<td>11.9423</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>0.105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results show that neither contrast produced statistically significant results (0.1363 > 0.25 and 0.105 > 0.025). Therefore, the researcher failed to reject hypotheses three and four for the principal competency, commitment.

**Sensitivity:**

The means of each subgroup for the principal competency sensitivity are depicted in the following figure:

Figure 6: Means by Subgroup for Sensitivity

![Sensitivity Bar Chart](image)

Additional descriptive statistics for the competency of sensitivity are depicted in the following table:

**Table 15: Descriptive Statistics for Sensitivity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female Gen 1</th>
<th>Female Gen 2</th>
<th>Male Gen 1</th>
<th>Male Gen 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.56</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
<td>-1.63</td>
<td>-1.25</td>
<td>-0.96</td>
<td>-0.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The two-factor ANOVA procedure produced results for the principal competency, sensitivity, which showed no statistically significant difference for either of the main effects, gender or generation. There was also no significant interaction between gender and generation. The results of the factorial ANOVA for this competency are displayed in the following table:

Table 16: Factorial ANOVA results for Sensitivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensitivity</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.1641</td>
<td>0.1641</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.8702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21.2922</td>
<td>21.2922</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.0648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9289</td>
<td>0.9289</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.6975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>642.1479</td>
<td>6.1157</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the statistical results for the principal competency, sensitivity, the researcher failed to reject each of the four hypotheses.

Analysis:

The means of each subgroup for the principal competency analysis are depicted in the following figure:
Additional descriptive statistics for the competency of analysis are depicted in the following table:

Table 17: Descriptive Statistics for Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Female Gen 1</th>
<th>Female Gen 2</th>
<th>Male Gen 1</th>
<th>Male Gen 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
<td>-1.15</td>
<td>-1.57</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two-factor ANOVA procedure produced results for the principal competency, analysis, which showed no statistically significant difference for either of the main effects, gender or generation. There was also no significant interaction between gender and generation. The results of the factorial ANOVA for this competency are displayed in the following table:
Table 18: Factorial ANOVA results for Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2250</td>
<td>0.2250</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.8450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.0300</td>
<td>0.0300</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.9431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3651</td>
<td>1.3651</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.6303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>615.0872</td>
<td>58580.0000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the statistical results for the principal competency, analysis, the researcher failed to reject each of the four hypotheses.

Leadership:

The means of each subgroup for the principal competency leadership are depicted in the following figure:

Figure 8: Means by Subgroup for Leadership

Additional descriptive statistics for the competency of leadership are depicted in the following table:
Table 19: Descriptive Statistics for Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female Gen 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two-factor ANOVA procedure produced results for the principal competency, leadership, which showed no statistically significant difference for either of the main effects, gender or generation. There was also no significant interaction between gender and generation. The results of the factorial ANOVA for this competency are displayed in the following table:

Table 20: Factorial ANOVA results for Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6792</td>
<td>0.6792</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.7045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.1974</td>
<td>9.1974</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.1647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.4765</td>
<td>3.4765</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.3916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>493.2131</td>
<td>4.6973</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the statistical results for the principal competency, leadership, the researcher failed to reject each of the four hypotheses.

Work Standards:

The means of each subgroup for the principal competency work standards are depicted in the following figure:
Figure 9: Means by Subgroup for Work Standards

Additional descriptive statistics for the competency of work standards are depicted in the following table:

Table 21: Descriptive Statistics for Work Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Standards</th>
<th>Female Gen 1</th>
<th>Female Gen 2</th>
<th>Male Gen 1</th>
<th>Male Gen 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>-1.02</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two-factor ANOVA procedure produced results for the principal competency, work standards, which showed no statistically significant difference for either of the main effects, gender or generation. There was also no significant interaction between gender and generation. The results of the factorial ANOVA for this competency are displayed in the following table:
Table 22: Factorial ANOVA results for Work Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.4813</td>
<td>4.4813</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.3517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.8828</td>
<td>2.8828</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.4548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.0855</td>
<td>0.0855</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.8974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>537.7428</td>
<td>5.1214</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the statistical results for the principal competency, work standards, the researcher failed to reject each of the four hypotheses.

*Management:*

The means of each subgroup for the principal competency management are depicted in the following figure:

Figure 10: Means by Subgroup for Management

Additional descriptive statistics for the competency of management are depicted in the following table:
Table 23: Descriptive Statistics for Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female Gen 1</th>
<th>Female Gen 2</th>
<th>Male Gen 1</th>
<th>Male Gen 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
<td>-0.79</td>
<td>-1.16</td>
<td>-1.23</td>
<td>-1.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two-factor ANOVA procedure produced results for the principal competency, management, which showed no statistically significant difference for either of the main effects, gender or generation. There was also no significant interaction between gender and generation. The results of the factorial ANOVA for this competency are displayed in the following table:

Table 24: Factorial ANOVA results for Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8244</td>
<td>3.8244</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.3810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1131</td>
<td>2.1131</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.5146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.1158</td>
<td>0.1158</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.8786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>518.8700</td>
<td>4.9416</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the statistical results for the principal competency, management, the researcher failed to reject each of the four hypotheses.

Communication:

The means of each subgroup for the principal competency communication are depicted in the following figure:
Additional descriptive statistics for the competency of communication are depicted in the following table:

Table 25: Descriptive Statistics for Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female Gen 1</th>
<th>Female Gen 2</th>
<th>Male Gen 1</th>
<th>Male Gen 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>-1.01</td>
<td>-0.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two-factor ANOVA procedure produced results for the principal competency, communication, which showed no statistically significant difference for either of the main effects, gender or generation. There was also no significant interaction between gender and generation. The results of the factorial ANOVA for this competency are displayed in the following table:
Table 26: Factorial ANOVA results for Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Pr &gt; F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0530</td>
<td>2.0530</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.5221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.3456</td>
<td>16.3456</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.0728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender*Generation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6018</td>
<td>0.6018</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.7287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>522.5076</td>
<td>4.9763</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the statistical results for the principal competency, communication, the researcher failed to reject each of the four hypotheses.

**Participant Interviews**

Follow up interviews with practicing administrators working within the four participating school districts were conducted for the purpose of lending personal perspectives relating to the quantitative data collected. Feedback from interviews was used to address the following questions:

1. In what way(s) are the interviewee’s perceptions and experiences reflective of the quantitative data?

2. What personal and professional factors influence a school administrator’s leadership practices?

One practicing administrator from each subgroup was randomly selected to participate in the interview phase of the study: One male administrator from generation 1, one male administrator from generation 2, one female administrator from generation 1, and one female administrator from generation 2. Initially, the names of all female administrators from within the participating counties were placed in one containert, and the names of all male administrators placed in another.
The researcher began with a random selection from the container holding the names of all female administrators within the four participating school districts. The initial pull resulted in the selection of a generation 1 female. The researcher then phoned the potential participant who agreed to participate in an interview, and a date and time for the interview was established. The second pull from the same container resulted in the selection of another generation one female, and could therefore not participate in the study. The third pull from the container containing only the names of female administrators resulted in the selection of a generation 2 female who, upon contact by phone, agreed to participate in the interview process and a date and time for the interview was established. Overall, one female principal and one female assistant principal were selected and agreed to participate in the interview phase of the study.

Upon completing the selection of the female participants for the interviews, the researcher began the random selection process with the container holding the names of male administrators from within the four participating school districts. The first pull from that container resulted in the selection of a generation 2 male. Upon contacting the potential participant, he agreed to take part in the interview, and a date and time for the interview was set. The second pull from the same container resulted in the selection of a generation 1 male administrator who also agreed to be interviewed, and a date and time for the interview with that participant was established. Overall, one male principal and one male assistant principal were selected and agreed to participate in the interview phase of the study.
Interview Questions

Interview questions were developed by the researcher with input from a focus group of practicing school administrators including both district and school level leaders. Questions were refined through continued dialogue with focus group members and leadership professors at a Florida University. The following questions were posed to each interview participant:

1. How long have you been a school level administrator?

2. Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences between the leadership practices of male and female administrators in today’s elementary schools?

3. Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences in the leadership practices of elementary school administrators from generation 1 and generation 2?

4. Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences in the leadership practices of men who belong to generation group 1 when compared to men from generation group 2?

5. Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences in the leadership practices of women who belong to generation group 1 when compared to women from generation group 2?

6. Based on your experiences and perceptions, is it your belief that a school administrator’s leadership practices can be influenced by their gender? If so, in what way?
7. Based on your experiences and perceptions, is it your belief that a school administrator’s leadership practices can be influenced by their age? If so, in what way?

8. What personal factors have influenced your leadership practices? For example: religion, economics, family

9. What professional factors have influenced your leadership practices? For example: mentoring, in-service training, school accountability

10. Have your leadership practices evolved over time? If so, what personal and/or professional factors influenced the change?

In addition to taking notes throughout the interviews, a sound-recording device was used during interviews to ensure that all information gathered was documented.

Interview Responses

Prior to posing the first question to the interviewee, the researcher provided the participant, in writing, with the age ranges that define generation 1 and generation 2 for the purpose of this study. This was done in an effort to ensure that the participant had a clear understanding of the questions being posed which relate to generational differences. The following are the responses obtained by the researcher during the interview process, broken down by each of the questions posed by the researcher:

**Question 1:** How long have you been a school level administrator?

**Female, Generation 1:** Ten Years.

**Female, Generation 2:** Two and one-half years. This is my third year.

**Male, Generation 1:** Fifteen years. This is my sixteenth year.

**Male, Generation 2:** This is my fourth year.
**Question 2:** Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences between the leadership practices of male and female administrators in today’s elementary schools?

**Female, Generation 1:** Yes.

**Female, Generation 2:** Yes.

**Male, Generation 1:** Yes, some. But I am not sure that I would categorize it necessarily because of being male or female.

**Male, Generation 2:** Yes, I would say there is a difference.

**Question 3:** Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences in the leadership practices of elementary school administrators from generation 1 and generation 2?

**Female, Generation 1:** Yes.

**Female, Generation 2:** Yes, vast differences.

**Male, Generation 1:** I would say in a lot of areas yes, they do. Simply because the educational system itself has changed considerably – even since I first started. If the people in generation 1 have stayed current, and have been involved in lifelong learning, then the chances are that there would not be differences between the two. However, if those in generation 1 have not stayed current, and they are basing their decisions solely on what they learned when they first became administrators, then there would definitely be differences between the two generation groups.

**Male, Generation 2:** I would say yes.
**Question 4:** Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences in the leadership practices of men who belong to generation group 1 when compared to men from generation group 2?

Female, Generation 1: No.

Female, Generation 2: You know, I don’t have much experience with men in generation 2. But, I’m going to say no. That is just based on the fact that I don’t have a lot of experience with administrators in generation 2.

Male, Generation 1: Yes. I would say that there is definitely a difference between those two groups.

Male, Generation 2: Yes.

**Question 5:** Based on your experiences and perceptions, do you believe that there are differences in the leadership practices of women who belong to generation group 1 when compared to women from generation group 2?

Female, Generation 1: Yes.

Female, Generation 2: Yes, I do.

Male, Generation 1: I think there are differences, but I don’t think that the differences are as significant with the female group as with the male.

Male, Generation 2: Yes.

**Question 6:** Based on your experiences and perceptions, is it your belief that a school administrator’s leadership practices can be influenced by their gender? If so, in what way?

Female, Generation 1: Yes. I think that their leadership practices are influenced by their gender. Men tend to be more dictatorial and less flexible. They see things more
as black and white. Women, I think, because of being a woman and having a different set of skills, they tend to be more flexible, more willing to listen, and less dictatorial.

**Female, Generation 2:** I perceive that men are a little more authoritative whereas women are more facilitative. Men are a little more direct in their approach.

**Male, Generation 1:** I don’t know if it is so much a gender issue as it is a philosophical issue and a personality issue. I think that personalities definitely influence leadership practices. In some cases, it is possible that there might be some specific instances where there is a difference in the way a male might handle a situation than in the way a female might handle the same situation. But, I think the differences might be based more on the personality of the person than their gender.

**Male, Generation 2:** I think that there are differences between the leadership practices of males and females. In my experiences, the male leaders tend to be more laid back and tend to go with the flow a little more. Whereas females may not be as laid back or find it as easy to let things go. Of course, this is generalized. I think the differences are not in certain qualities or traits, but maybe how they handle certain situations differently, or go about addressing concerns or needs differently. As far as being a charismatic leader, or what have you, I don’t think it matters whether they are male or female.

**Question 7:** Based on your experiences and perceptions, is it your belief that a school administrator’s leadership practices can be influenced by their age? If so, in what way?

**Female, Generation 1:** Yes, I do. I think that people who are in generation 1 came through the system at a time when the system was very different. It was easier and more manageable, and people did not question leaders about what they did or said. I
think that generation 2 leaders are being questioned more. They are coming in at a totally
different time – a much more diverse period of time, when parents have more knowledge,
and they are being questioned about everything that they do.

**Female, Generation 2:** Yes, I think that generation 2 individuals are more data
driven. They are, as a group, more teacher oriented and believe in collaboration, whereas
the older generation 1 has a tendency to be, maybe more dictatorial, and approach things
as the ones who make decisions. I think generation 2 leaders seek more teacher input as
morale is a bigger issue than it was in the past.

**Male, Generation 1:** I think again that it would really depend on whether
someone has stayed current. Part of that is influenced by personality as well. That
question is really ambiguous for me.

**Male, Generation 2:** Yes, for example, with technology. Generation 2 grew up
with technology, so as far as the technological advances that districts are moving to, I
think it is easier for them to adapt and go with that. Whereas, generation 1 may not have
all that experience learning excel, powerpoint, and all that. But then again, there are some
administrators in generation 1 who recognize that there is a need for learning, and they go
back and they do take the time to learn what they need to. Also, I think it depends on how
close they are to retirement. I know some who are very close to retirement and don’t
think that they’ll need this or that, so they don’t want to spend their time learning it. I
think also that there are more people in generation 2 who are working to go beyond a
bachelor’s degree. There are more of them working toward a specialist, masters, or
doctorate, and I think that will change a lot of their perceptions about how to go about
being a leader. In generation 1, you always hear how a lot of those principals were the
coaches and such, and a lot of them just went for the master’s degree and may not have been through additional training since, say twenty years ago.

**Question 8**: *What personal factors have influenced your leadership practices? For example: religion, economics, and family.*

**Female, Generation 1**: My leadership practices started when I was an army brat growing up in the military. There was a certain level of expectation for job performance. You were always expected to give 100%. At the same time, I didn’t start in education until I was 38 years old, and I had spent many years on community boards and on various committees within the community. Through that, I learned very quickly that when you are dealing with large numbers of people with very different ideas that you have to learn the art of persuasion. If you are the chairman of a committee and you need the group to look at something from your point of view, you cannot sit there and try to dictate. I think that my previous community experiences and growing up in a military family and having to move all the time, added flexibility to my leadership style. Also, the experiences of being on all different kinds of boards and working many different kinds of people prepared me to talk to any group about anything, and I never get upset. This is my job, this is not my family.

**Female, Generation 2**: I think probably the personal factors have just been that my socioeconomic status growing up was kind of middle to lower. Growing up in the school system I saw some differences just based on last name or this or that. In my leadership practices, it doesn’t matter to me what a child’s socioeconomic status is. I try to be incredibly equal – maybe too much so. Faith does also play a part because I believe
that if I am going to be an administrator then I have a responsibility and a duty to those kids. I am going to have to answer to how I treat them, and how I treat my profession.

**Male, Generation 1:** Well, I’m very driven. I’m not sure where that comes from, it is just my personality, but I do not like to fail. I am really driven to succeed. I think that really drives my own perceptions of things and my own leadership. I am very standards based. I believe in looking at data. I really enjoy looking at data and making decisions as a result of reviewing data. I am a very organized type person in all aspects of my life, not just in my professional life, but in my personal life as well. I think that high level of organization and that need to succeed really drives a lot of what I do as an administrator.

**Male, Generation 2:** Definitely my family. My parents – and their expectations. Also definitely religion – going to church and the morals built into that. I think also previous jobs and dealing with different leaders and managers. That helps you see, o.k., this is a bad leader and I don’t want to do that, versus watching a good leader and thinking o.k. – this would be good. Growing up, even in high school, going through college and having part time jobs, and working with different people helps to shape the individual. As far as myself, I would think - I don’t want that done to me so I’m going to keep that in the back of mind as something I’m not going to do when I’m a leader.

**Question 9:** What professional factors have influenced your leadership practices? For example: mentoring, in-service training, and school accountability.

**Female, Generation 1:** From 1973 until 1988 I belonged to the Junior League, and one of their main focuses for their members who were on a leadership track was to educate them on how to be a good leader. I went to many, many conferences all over the United States that dealt with leadership styles and appropriateness of how to deal with
other people. With the education system, I have had some exposure to professional development as it pertains to being an assistant principal or a principal. I think that leadership style is something that can be fine tuned, but I also think about with-it-ness, which is something that you either have or you don’t have. But I do think that professional development is very, very important, and I do not believe that there is enough of it going on right now. Especially for generation 2 administrators who are having to deal with informed, educated parents.

Female, Generation 2: Probably 2 things. One is a mentor. I have had the opportunity to work with two different administrators, and have thus been able to see two very different administrative styles. That has been good for me – because they have both served as mentors, but have been totally different. In particular, one has really gone above and beyond to go through things, and talked things through with me. So that has really been a good thing. The other thing is witnessing what I didn’t like about some administrators before I became one. When I realized that I was going to go in that direction, I truly started writing down what I didn’t like that I saw, because I wanted to make sure that those were things that I didn’t do. From time to time I still look at it, honestly, as crazy as that sounds. There were a few administrators that I witnessed become very lackadaisical in their leadership roles, and I didn’t want to do that. Especially when you hear people talk about their reputation. I didn’t want that same reputation.

Male, Generation 1: Well, school accountability issues have probably somewhat narrowed my focus, but I was data driven even before all of the high level of accountability came to be so important. So, in some respects that would be the case. But,
I have some real deep philosophical opinions about what education is and what it should be, that I think certain in-service or certain mentorship opportunities have helped define a little better. But, when I attend any kind of training or when I read professional materials, I do that with a pick and choose approach and take what I think will help enhance my beliefs and help to improve my practices, and I leave the things that I think won’t. Some things work well for certain administrators, and some things don’t. It really depends on buy in and how well you think that fits your particular setting. I think that training, professional readings, and collegial discussions do in some respect influence the decisions that I make as an administrator, and have helped define who I am as an administrator.

**Male, Generation 2:** Working on my doctorate has been a big factor - as far as going into leadership qualities as to what a good leader is, and what is not a good leader. Even with writing all of the papers, and that transferring over into writing letters. I see a big difference in going from working on my masters to working on my doctorate. It has taken me personally to a better level. As far as training – I think it depends on the training. Working at either different schools or different job sites and dealing with other colleagues and different supervisors. Whether you are an assistant manager or store manager, or this or that, I think it helps shape who you are too – because they mentor and help bring you along. I really haven’t had what I would consider a true mentorship until this semester – and it just starting.

**Question 10:** Have your leadership practices evolved over time? If so, what personal and/or professional factors influenced the change?
Female, Generation 1: I think so, if you aspire to be a leader, even as a child, which I did. I was always the head of my brownie group, and my girlscout group, and my MYF at church, the captain of the cheerleaders, and the president of the Keyettes. I have a long history through the years of being in leadership positions, and that gives you opportunities from being very young to find out how people respond to what you say, what you do, and how you act. And then, as I got older, the experience that I had in the junior league was very good. In that arena you are working with very well educated women that come from well to do households who expect their time to be used very wisely, and they expect you to be very efficient in what you are doing. The business people you are in contact with are wanting to know basically the bottom line, so you have to know your facts and how much things are going to cost. Business people deal with things from a totally different perspective than do educators. So I think that my experiences with the volunteer community and with the business community really helped me when I started as a school administrator because I brought all of those skills with me.

Female, Generation 2: Yes they have. I mean, in the first few months, I truly didn’t know what I was doing. I thought, gosh, I hardly have anything to do during the day. But now, I’m incredibly busy because I know more about what is expected. One of the professional factors that influenced changes were some very serious mistakes that I recognized I had made, or that other people pointed out to me. For example, one mistake was not giving enough feedback prior to writing someone up and seeing what that cost me both professionally and personally. So, I made some changes there.
Male, Generation 1: I would say that my practices have evolved over time, yes. Unfortunately, in many cases, all of the education that we’ve had in terms of preparation for a job do not cover all aspects of the job that we have to do. There are a lot of hidden things that I know I did not even realize until I was put in a position. So, a lot of it is trial by fire, and learn as you go, and improve your practices based on either positive or negative experiences that you have on a day to day basis. I don’t think that a week goes by that probably something doesn’t occur that makes me think a little bit differently about decisions that I might make or the path that we might be on. So, there are things that definitely do influence me, and have influenced me from the time I began in an administrative role. Some of them are things that are very positive, and some are things that are negative and you wish had happened differently. But you know, you learn by your mistakes.

Male, Generation 2: Yes I would say they have evolved. Probably what has influenced them is experience and age. When I worked at Winn Dixie and I was a manager there over certain people – I think how I was then compared to now is different. Everyone, I think, probably goes through those learning experiences, whatever age they go into it. So I think, time, dealing with different people, and learning from my experiences has affected that.

Interview Results

The researcher’s purpose for conducting interviews for this study was to obtain information that would lend a personal perspective of today’s working elementary school administrator to the quantitative results from the survey data. The researcher sought to gain insight into two questions:
1. In what way(s) are the interviewee’s perceptions and experiences reflective of the quantitative data?

2. What personal and professional factors influence a school administrator’s leadership practices?

Question 1: In what way(s) are the interviewee’s perceptions and experiences reflective of the quantitative data?

Interview questions two through five were posed for the purpose of determining how closely the perceptions of today’s working administrators reflect the quantitative results of this study. Interestingly, only 13% of responses reflect the results gathered from the self-ranking surveys. Possible causes for the differences in the results of the ranking survey and interviews include the varying size of the school districts surveyed with one large district providing the majority of participants. Differences in the results of the ranking survey and interviews are discussed in detail in the final chapter under implications and limitations to this study. The table below depicts the participant responses for interview questions two through five:
Table 27: Interviewees Responses to Questions Two Through Five

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee's Perceptions</th>
<th>Believes that differences exist between male and female leaders</th>
<th>Believes that differences exist between gen 1 and gen 2 leaders</th>
<th>Believes that differences exist between gen 1 males and gen 2 males</th>
<th>Believes that differences exist between gen 1 females and gen 2 females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen 1 Female</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen 2 Female</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen 1 Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen 2 Male</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the interviewees responded to questions two, three, and five without hesitation, giving the researcher the impression that the subject area was one that they had previously considered and given thought to. For question four, female generation 2 participant delayed briefly in her response. The researcher believes this delay was the result of minimal experience in working directly with male leaders from generation 2.

Questions six and seven were posed to permit interview participants to expand on their perceptions, providing insight related to their personal experiences with gender and generational differences. The table below depicts the keywords identified in participant responses as they relate to the questions posed:
The results of the survey data when compared to the interview responses generate further questions about the practices of today’s elementary school administrators, as well as the perceptions that those school leaders have of their colleagues. Stereotypes of male and female leadership practices, as well as generational stereotypes, whether accurate or not, appear prevalent. Suggestions for further research to address these questions are provided in chapter five.

**Question 2:** What professional and personal factors influence a school administrator’s leadership practices?
Questions eight through ten were posed for the purpose of lending a personal perspective to the factors that may influence a school administrator’s leadership practices. The table below depicts those factors which were dominant in the participant responses:

Table 29: Interviewees Responses to Questions Eight Through Ten

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee's Experiences</th>
<th>Personal Factors that influenced leadership practices</th>
<th>Professional Factors that influenced leadership practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen 1 Female</td>
<td>military family, childhood/college leadership opportunities, Junior League service</td>
<td>leadership training, professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen 2 Female</td>
<td>socioeconomic status, faith</td>
<td>mentor, learning from other leaders, on the job experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen 1 Male</td>
<td>personality, organization skills, drive</td>
<td>school accountability, inservice, mentorship opportunities, professional reading, collegial discussions, on the job experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen 2 Male</td>
<td>family expectations, religion</td>
<td>doctorate coursework, on the job experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In regard to the personal factors that had influenced their leadership practices, the responses from the interview participants were diverse, with only one theme recurring for the Male and Female Generation 2 participants – that of faith or religion. Responses from the Generation 1 Female and the Generation 2 Male support the belief that the formation
of leadership skills begins at an early age. Thus, creating opportunities for children and young adults to develop those leadership skills can provide valuable experience for developing future leaders, as suggested by Vail (1997).

In regard to the professional factors that have influenced their leadership style, three of the four respondents referred in some way to ongoing professional development or training, whether through the private sector, district training, or self-initiated leadership development. In addition, two of the interview participants also cited that mentor relationships did have an impact on their leadership practices.

Summary

For the purpose of this study, four hypotheses were posed relating to gender and generational differences among elementary school administrators. In order to test those hypotheses, a self-ranking survey based on the Florida Principal Competencies was administered to assistant principals and principals within four Florida counties, which yielded a response rate of 66.467%.

Analysis of the survey data through the use of SAS software resulted in the researcher failing to reject any of the four hypotheses tested. For one competency, that of commitment, initial tests revealed a statistically significant result for the interaction. However, through the conduction of post-hoc tests, no statistically significant results were revealed.

Follow up interviews with practicing administrators were conducted and used to identify ways in which the perceptions and experiences of practicing administrators reflect the quantitative data, as well as to identify personal and professional factors that have influenced their leadership practices. Interestingly, in comparing the results from
the survey with the responses from interview participants, differences were revealed, suggesting that further research is needed in the area of perceived gender and generational differences.
Chapter Five

Discussion: Summary of Results, Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations for Further Research

Introduction

The long debate over differences between the leadership practices of men and women will likely extend well into the future. This study serves to contribute to the extensive research on gender differences in leadership practices, as well as to the minimal research that exists on differences in leadership between the various generations represented in the workplace.

Problem

The lack of representation of women in leadership is often attributed to gender stereotypes. In order to address this overall problem, there is a need to clarify the possible confusion between perceived gender stereotypes and generational differences among male and female school administrators.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the existence of gender and/or generational differences in the self-perceived leadership practices of elementary school administrators within four Florida counties.
Research Questions

The present study addresses the following questions:

1. Are there differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of male and female administrators in today’s elementary schools?
2. Are there generational differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of elementary school administrators between the age of 23 and 44 (generation group 2) as compared to those between the age of 45 and 70 (generation group 1)?
3. Are there differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of men who belong to generation group 1 when compared to men from generation group 2?
4. Are there differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of women who belong to generation group 1 when compared to women from generation group 2?

Hypotheses

Four null hypotheses were formulated to address the issues previously outlined:

Hypothesis 1: There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of males and females.

Hypothesis 2: There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of generation 1 and generation 2.

Hypothesis 3: There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of men from generation 1 and men from generation 2.
Hypothesis 4. There are no statistically significant differences between the self-perceived leadership practices of women from generation 1 and women from generation 2.

Prior to the collection and analysis of the data, a review of the research coupled with personal experience in the field of teaching and administration led the researcher to believe that the results of the study would conclude with failure to reject Hypothesis 1, and rejecting Hypotheses 2, 3 and 4.

Method

Two extensive studies commissioned by the Florida Council on Educational Management (FCEM) in the 1980’s produced the Florida Principal Competencies. Those competencies, which defined the behaviors of successful principals, were later refined by the work of Croghan, Lake and Schroeder (Cox, 1994). Today, the Florida Principal Competencies continue to be used to determine an individual’s abilities as a leader, and serve as criteria for placement into leadership positions. Because it was a goal of the researcher to use a tool that measured areas of leadership practice that are relevant to working administrators in today’s schools, a measurement tool was developed based on the Florida Principal Competencies.

The content of the survey was defined by the Principal Competencies established by the state of Florida and include the following areas: Proactive Orientation, Commitment, Sensitivity, Analysis, Leadership, Work Standards, Management, and Communication. A variety of formats for the survey were considered, including instruments whereby participants rate themselves low to high on each behavior. It was believed that a survey by which the participant rated themselves low to high on each
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competency would result in participants rating themselves similarly on each competency, and thus not clarifying perceived strengths or weaknesses. Thus, the researcher chose to develop a ranking survey by which participants would have to identify their relative strengths on the leadership competencies.

Test-retest reliability was the approached used to determine the reliability of the Principal Competency Survey. The survey was administered to ten elementary school administrators on two occasions with a two-week interval between survey administrations. A coefficient of stability was determined for each of the principal competencies, providing results that ranged from .77 for the competency of leadership to .92 on the work standards competency.

Data previously collected on the survey instrument for instructional purposes provide validity data for the instrument. The principal competency survey was given to all teachers, support staff and the school administrator at an elementary school from one of the four participating counties. Each staff member rated the administrator on the principal competencies using a scale of one to eight. Eight represented what they perceived as the administrator’s strongest area of competency and one represented what they perceived to be the weakest area of competency. The principal then rated herself using the same survey and the same rating scale. The results indicated that the principal rated herself similarly to the teachers on her staff. The results show that the principal and staff were in agreement on all but two competencies, those of commitment and work standards. For the principal competency of commitment, the principal rated herself a seven, whereas the staff ratings averaged three to four. For the principal competency of work standards, the principal gave herself a rating of four, whereas the staff ratings
averaged seven. Thus, the reliability and validity data collected revealed no concerns over the use of the Principal Competency Survey for the purpose of this study.

Elementary school principals and assistant principals who practice in one of the four Florida school districts were each asked to participate in this study. Three of the school districts are located in Central Florida, with the fourth district is located in South Florida. The total number of potential participants for the study was 167.

The Principal Competency Survey was administered to assistant principals and principals working in the four identified Florida counties. Data collection was conducted in two ways. In those cases where the district offices of the participating counties permitted, the survey administration took place at a scheduled meeting of administrators for the district. In the event that the researcher’s attendance at such a meeting could not be scheduled, a survey packet was sent to potential participants with the completed survey returned to the researcher.

Survey data was input into the SAS program used for analysis, and descriptive statistics were computed. The results of the descriptive statistics encouraged the researcher to proceed with the study. Prior to conducting the two-factor ANOVA, the researcher considered the assumptions of independence, normality, and equal variances. Based on the descriptive statistics and the belief that the assumptions associated with the two-factor ANOVA had not been violated, the researcher decided to proceed with the two-factor ANOVA. For those competencies which revealed a statistical significant result for the interaction effect, follow-up tests were conducted.

Follow up interviews with practicing administrators were conducted in an effort to provide personal perspectives relating to the quantitative data collected. Interview
questions were developed by the researcher with input from a focus group of practicing school administrators including both district and school level leaders. Questions were refined through continued dialogue with focus group members and leadership professors at a Florida University.

One purpose of the interviews was to identify ways in which the perceptions and experiences of practicing administrators reflect the quantitative data. Interestingly, only 13% of responses reflect the results gathered from the self-ranking surveys. All of the participants indicated that they perceived that gender and generational differences do exist. The two female participants did not perceive that there are differences in the leadership practices of males from generation 1 and males from generation 2, however both male participants did perceive that differences exist. All of the participants believed that differences in leadership practices exist between generation 1 females and generation 2 females.

Another purpose for conducting interviews was to identify personal and professional factors that have influenced their leadership practices. The responses by participants were diverse, with only one recurring theme regarding personal factors that influenced their leadership. Both, the male and female participants from generation 2 indicated that of faith or religion influenced their leadership practice. The responses to questions about the professional factors that influenced their leadership practices provided one recurring theme – that of professional development or in-service training. Each of the four interview participants indicated that various professional training opportunities did impact their leadership practices.
Conclusions

The results of the two-factor ANOVA caused the researcher to fail to reject hypotheses one and two for all competencies. In addition, the results of the two-factor ANOVA caused the researcher to reject hypotheses three and four for all competencies except that of commitment, which showed a statistically significant result for the interaction. Because the interaction for gender and generation was statistically significant, follow-up tests for the interaction were conducted. A one-way ANOVA with two contrasts was conducted in an effort to determine if hypotheses three and four would be rejected for the principal competency, commitment. Because two contrasts were executed, a Bonferonni adjustment was made to compare the p-values for each contrast with .025 to determine statistical significance. The results of the follow-up test showed that neither contrast produced statistically significant results, and therefore, the researcher failed to reject hypotheses three and four for the principal competency, commitment.

Through the interview process, the researcher was able to gain information about the personal perceptions and experiences of today’s elementary school administrators, thus gaining additional insight into the topic of gender and generational differences.

Interviewee responses showed sharp differences in their perceptions as compared to the survey data collected. While all four hypotheses were rejected based on quantitative analysis, all interview participants perceived that there were differences in the leadership practices of male and female administrators, of generation 1 and generation 2 administrators, and of women who belong to generation 1 as compared to women in generation 2. The two male respondents also perceive that there are differences
in the leadership practices of male administrators who belong to generation 1 as compared to men in generation 2.

Based on the interviews conducted, perceptions about male and female leadership practices fall in line with typical gender stereotypes which describe male leadership behavior as authoritative or dictatorial, and women to be more facilitative and participatory in the way they lead.

In addition, despite the survey data which upon analysis suggest that school districts and colleges may have succeeded in “teaching old dogs new tricks,” the interview responses indicated quite the opposite. From the interviews conducted, it appears that stereotypes about the leadership practices of the “older” generation and the “younger” generation remain strong, with the perception that those who belong to generation 1 have not kept up with the changes in education.

**Implications**

If the results of the survey used in this study were to be considered alone, one implication would be obvious: Since the results of the survey showed no differences in the leadership practices of males and females or the different generations, then school districts should do whatever is necessary to ensure that job opportunities are made equally available to qualified male and female candidates, as well as candidates from all generations. If only the interview responses were taken into consideration, again, the implication of the study would be obvious: Since the results of the interviews indicate that women and men practice leadership differently, as well as do individuals from different generations, school districts should consider the needs of a school along with the gender and generation of potential candidates to determine the best pairing of leaders.
with schools. However, like the review of the research on gender-related differences in leadership practices which reflects extremely mixed findings, the mixed results of this study seem to mirror the degree to which this topic has no clear cut, black and white answers.

Prospective leaders enrolled in today’s colleges are encouraged to use leadership practices which vary greatly from those taught 30 to 50 years ago. The self-ranking survey completed by current school administrators provided data that revealed that school districts within the sample may indeed have succeeded in bring veteran administrators in line with those more recently trained. In a sense, one might say that the results suggest that these school districts have succeeded in “teaching old dogs new tricks.” This implication is supported in the interview responses whereby all of the participants indicated that in-service training and professional development were key factors that influenced their leadership practices. These two aspects of the study taken in conjunction with one another may imply that districts are providing relevant professional development opportunities that assist leaders in their day to day practices, thus allowing them to keep up with current and upcoming changes in education.

The results become gray, however, when one considers perceptions of the interviewees as they relate to gender and generational differences. Similar to the study conducted by Lewis (1998) and Street & Kimmel (1999), this study revealed that gender stereotypes persist in today’s environment. Despite the attention that has been paid in the last 10-20 years regarding the detrimental effects of stereotyping any group (Street & Kimmel, 1999), responses from both females reveal stereotypical perceptions, classifying men as authoritative, dictatorial, and less flexible, with women perceived as more
flexible and facilitative. All participants, without exception, revealed that they do believe that there are differences in the leadership practices of men and women leaders.

Participants in this study also revealed beliefs in the existence of differences between the generations.

The differing results from the interviews as compared with the survey imply that some school districts may need to provide more opportunities for school leaders to engage in dialogue about their practices, thus providing peer administrators with a more accurate picture of their colleague’s practices. Based on personal experience, the researcher believes that practicing administrators in smaller school districts may have more regular opportunities to engage in dialogue with their colleagues about their leadership practices and possibly have a more informed opinion about the leadership practices of their colleagues. Thus, had the study drawn solely on a sample of small school districts, it is possible that the survey and interview results would be more aligned.

Addressing gender and generational issues with school administrators is necessary in order to effect a change in perceptions. Research demonstrates that in-service education has gone a long way toward changing behavior (Shakeshaft, Nowell & Perry, 1992). Shakeshaft, Nowell & Perry (1992) remind us that in order to create an environment more supportive of teaching and learning, districts need only spend a small amount of time and money to reduce the negative effects of gender and generational issues and enhance the positive effects.

Furthermore, the interview process revealed that some participants believed that their leadership competencies were developed at an early age. This implies that children
and young adults may benefit when teachers and schools provide opportunities for them to take on leadership roles. Such opportunities may provide those children and young adults experiences that can help them fine tune their leadership practices that will be valuable to them in adulthood. This finding supports the efforts described by Vail (1997) about a New York City school for girls, which focuses on the development of female leaders during their 7th and 8th grade years.

**Limitations**

Limitations that arose as this study was carried out included the inability of the researcher to attend district wide meetings with principals and assistant principals, thus requiring the survey to be administered using two different methods. The ability to attend district wide meetings to collect survey data would have improved the response rate and provided a consistent method of data collection.

The use of a ranking survey about self-perceptions causes some concern. In order to ensure that the participants would provide discriminating scores relating to the Florida Principal Competencies, the use of a ranking survey was necessary. However, the results of such a ranking survey cannot be used to make comparisons about the degree of strength between two or more participants on any given competency. For example, two individuals who each perceive their strongest principal competency as communication may indeed have very different levels of communication in relation to one another. The researcher chose to use a ranking survey out of concern that individuals might be reluctant to make discriminations in their responses about their leadership practices, but recognizes that the ability to distinguish between strong and weak leaders is lost.
A further limitation includes the gray lines that exist between the generational groups make them difficult to define accurately, and thus there are no universally accepted definitions as to where one generation “begins” and another “ends.”

Another possible limitation arises from the researcher conducting face-to-face interviews. It is possible that the researcher may have encountered participants who were concerned about offending the researcher in regard to gender or generational differences in leadership practices, and may not have been completely forthcoming about their perceptions. The use of only four participants for the interviews also provides a limitation to this study, and may account for the differences between the survey results and interview results.

One limitation that may have skewed the results relates to the varying sizes of the school districts that participated in the study. One large county provided the majority of potential participants; therefore, results may be more typical of perceptions held by practicing administrators in a large school district than those held by practicing administrators in a small school district.

The geographical restrictions of the sample limit the ability to generalize the findings of this study; however, results can be used by practitioners, policy makers, and leadership development programs in their efforts to address gender and generational issues within their work setting.

The unbalanced number of prospective male (51 potential participants) and female administrators (116 potential participants) also provides a limitation. There is also some concern over the difference in the response rate of male principals (91%) as compared to female principals (54%). Survey instruments returned to the researcher were
double checked to verify the return rates, and no errors were found. It is possible that a participant or participants may have provided inaccurate information when completing the survey which would have created some error. In the event that a participant inadvertently indicated the wrong gender or job assignment on their survey, the result would be a false response rate breakdown by males/females or principals/assistant principals.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

While extensive research on gender differences exists, the results provide extremely mixed results. As society evolves, so do the gender and generational issues that today’s workers face. The negative implications for men and women who struggle to overcome gender and/or generational stereotypes make it necessary for practitioners and policy makers to maintain a dialogue about these issues, and to continue the effort to gain knowledge of the issue. The current climate of school change can be seen as an opportunity to make a difference in employment equity for men and women, as well as leaders from different generations (Logan, 1999).

Certain limitations of this study, such as the size of the geographic area from which the sample was drawn, can provide direction for future research on the topic of gender and generational leadership differences. Replicating the methods used for this study with a larger, less diverse sample may provide needed insight not only into the leadership practices of school administrators, but also into the perceptions of practicing administrators as those perceptions relate to gender differences.

The implication from this study that school districts may need to provide more opportunities for school leaders to engage in dialogue about their practices is an area
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worthy of further research. The differing opportunities school leaders are afforded to engage in dialogue with their peers about their practices may provide further insight into the interview responses in this study. The size of a school district may be a determining factor in the degree to which leaders take part in dialogue opportunities with peers, and should be a variable considered in further research on this topic. Further research on the differences between the way small and large school districts provide collaborative opportunities for leaders may generate valuable information for district leaders responsible for developing effective leaders and affecting positive change.

While this study provides insight into the practices and perceptions of today’s elementary school administrators within four Florida counties, further researcher that includes secondary school administrators should be pursued. In addition, the analysis of self-perceptions, as this study has documented, may indeed provide very different results than a study in which perceptions of colleagues and/or subordinates about the school administrator were considered, as in the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). Thus, it is suggested that an alternate, more involved approach to carrying out future studies would include peer and/or subordinate perceptions.

Through the process of conducting the interviews for this study, additional questions have surfaced for the researcher that may provide an interesting and valuable investigation. Those questions include:

- What are common factors that motivate/inspire individuals to become school leaders?
What personal and professional support systems do school leaders rely on to maintain their effectiveness? (For example: faith, family, mentor relationships, learning communities).
References


Clarke, E. (1873). *Sex in education; Or, a fair chance for the girls*. Boston: Osgood & Company.


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Appendices
Appendix A: Survey Cover Sheet

On the following page is a survey instrument titled “Principal Competencies Survey”. Completion of this survey is strictly voluntary, and your decision to participate or not participate will in no way affect your job status.

Data collected from this survey will be used to complete a dissertation study on gender and generational differences in the leadership practices of elementary school administrators. This research project is being conducted by Michele Polk, a doctoral candidate at the University of South Florida.

In order to provide anonymous responses, please do not write your name on the survey instrument. However, other general information requested on the survey is necessary in order to run the statistical analysis required for the study.

Approximate time to complete the survey is 5 -15 minutes.

Thank you for your participation!

If you have any questions regarding this study, you may contact the researcher, Michele Polk, at (863)-326-1495 or contact her faculty advisor, Dr. Arthur Shapiro, at the University of South Florida Leadership Development Department of Education. He can be reached at (813)-974-3421.
Appendix B: Principal Competencies Survey

**Principal Competencies Survey**

**Administrative Title:** (Principal or Assistant Principal): ____________________________

Please indicate your age, gender, and total years of administrative experience (as assistant principal or principal) by marking an “X” on the appropriate line:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Administrative Experience:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 yrs - 34 yrs</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1-5 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 yrs - 44 yrs</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6-10 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 yrs – 54 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td>11-15 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 yrs – 64 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td>16-20 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 yrs – 74 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td>21-25 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26-30 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31-35 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>36-40 yrs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the numbers, one (1) through eight (8), rank order the principal competencies according to your perceptions of your leadership practices. **(8 represents what you perceive as your greatest strength and 1 your weakest area).** No two competencies should be identified with the same number. A detailed description of each competency is provided for reference purposes. Upon completion, place your survey in the envelope provided for survey returns.

- **Proactive Orientation**
  - Proactive orientation
  - Decisiveness

- **Commitment**
  - Commitment to vision and mission
  - Concern for the schools reputation (image)

- **Sensitivity**
  - Interpersonal sensitivity
  - Organizational sensitivity

- **Analysis**
  - Information search and analysis
  - Concept formation
  - Conceptual flexibility

- **Leadership**
  - Managing interaction
  - Impact / persuasiveness
  - Tactical adaptability

- **Work Standards**
  - Achievement Orientation
  - Developmental orientation

- **Management**
  - Management Control
  - Organizational Ability
  - Delegation

- **Communication**
  - Self-presentation
  - Written communication
Appendix C: Principal Competency Definition List

**Principal Competencies Definitions / Examples**

**PROACTIVE ORIENTATION**

PROACTIVE ORIENTATION is the inclination and readiness to initiate activity and take responsibility for leading and enabling others to improve the circumstances being faced or anticipated.

*Examples of a principal with a PROACTIVE ORIENTATION:*
- acquires and protects needed resources (time, talent, supplies)
- provides support for teachers, staff and parents as they take initiative for school improvement
- anticipates new organizational or systems problems and initiates action

**DECISIVENESS** is the readiness and confidence to make or share decisions in a timely manner, using appropriate levels of involvement so that actions may be taken and commitments made by self and others.

*Examples of a principal who exhibits DECISIVENESS:*
- determines quickly how and by whom decisions should be made in accordance with the time available and the school's vision and mission
- recognizes the importance of sharing decisions and decision-making with stakeholders
- acts quickly to stop possible breaches of safety and/or interruptions in operations

**COMMITMENT**

COMMITMENT TO VISION AND MISSION is a pledge to develop and act in accordance with the shared vision, mission and values of the school.

*Examples of a principal who exhibits COMMITMENT TO VISION AND MISSION:*
- establishes a vision and a statement of mission for the school in collaboration with key stakeholders
- is purposeful about linking the school's mission to expected behavior
- takes difficult and unpopular actions when the mission and welfare of the school are at stake

**CONCERN FOR THE SCHOOL’S REPUTATION (IMAGE)** is caring about the impressions created by self, the students, the faculty, the staff, and parents, and how these are communicated both inside and outside the school.

*Examples of a principal who has CONCERN FOR THE SCHOOL’S REPUTATION:*
- maintains a safe, orderly and clean school and expects everyone to assume their responsibility for doing so
- builds a school culture that provides the best possible teaching/learning environment
- encourages teachers, students and staff to display their accomplishments
SENSITIVITY

INTERPERSONAL SENSITIVITY (SEARCH) is the ability to discover, understand, verbalize accurately and respond empathetically to the perspectives, thoughts, ideas and feelings of others.

Examples of a principal who evidences INTERPERSONAL SENSITIVITY:
- listens attentively and accurately describes others' behavior, expressed ideas, feelings, and perspectives
- encourages individual expression, appreciates diversity, and avoids stereotyping
- demonstrates awareness and sensitivity to the feelings, thoughts and expressions of others

ORGANIZATIONAL SENSITIVITY is an awareness of the effects of one's behavior and decisions on all stakeholders both inside and outside the organization.

Examples of a principal with ORGANIZATIONAL SENSITIVITY:
- considers the overall consequences to the school's culture before initiating changes
- keeps individuals, both inside and outside the school, informed when data are relevant to them
- develops and maintains a school climate conducive to learning

ANALYSIS

INFORMATION SEARCH AND ANALYSIS is the gathering and analysis of data from multiple sources before arriving at an understanding of an event or problem.

Examples of a principal who displays the competence of INFORMATION SEARCH & ANALYSIS:
- insists that the best available data be analyzed and used in the decision making process
- delays making decisions until pertinent data are analyzed
- keeps up-to-date, striving to gather new information from research and other sources

CONCEPT FORMATION is the ability to see patterns and relationships and form concepts, hypotheses and ideas from the information.

Examples of a principal who evidences CONCEPT FORMATION:
- processes data logically and intuitively to discover and/or create meaning
- presses self and others to define and understand issues so that problem solving techniques can be applied
- practices reflective thinking

CONCEPTUAL FLEXIBILITY is the ability to use alternative or multiple concepts or perspectives when solving a problem or making a decision.

Examples of a principal who demonstrates CONCEPTUAL FLEXIBILITY:
- values divergent thinking and considers conflicting or differing views
- demonstrates contingency planning skills
LEADERSHIP

MANAGING INTERACTION is getting others to work together effectively through the use of group process and facilitator skills.
Examples of a principal who demonstrates MANAGING INTERACTION:
- facilitates team and group membership and leadership
- intervenes, negotiates and resolves conflicts
- creates a non judgmental atmosphere in order to stimulate open communication

IMPACT/PERSUASIVENESS is influencing and having an effect upon the school stakeholders by a variety of means... e.g., persuasive arguments, setting an example or using expertise.
Examples of a principal who demonstrates IMPACT/PERSUASIVENESS:
- persists until ideas, beliefs and goals are clear to all stakeholders
- shows and builds enthusiasm for working on agreed upon goals of the school
- presents arguments and data concerning the school and succeeds in winning support from stakeholders

TACTICAL ADAPTABILITY is the ability to adapt one's interaction and behavior to fit the situation.
Examples of a principal who has TACTICAL ADAPTABILITY:
- adopts various roles of listener, facilitator, and confronter as needed
- finds ways to get around policies and procedures which interfere with the school's goals; looks at problems as if there were no rules, then decides what to do to resolve the situation tactfully
- understands how own behavior affects others and makes appropriate adjustments

WORK STANDARDS

ACHIEVEMENT ORIENTATION is having to do things better than before by setting goals that encourage self and others to reach higher standards.
Examples of a principal who has an ACHIEVEMENT ORIENTATION:
- sets standards and insists that everyone participate in reaching goals
- shows appreciation for individual and group efforts and accomplishments
- encourages moderate risk-taking by making people comfortable with trying new approaches, making mistakes and learning from them

DEVELOPMENTAL ORIENTATION is holding high and positive expectations for the growth and development of all stakeholders through modeling self-development, coaching and providing learning opportunities.
Examples of a principal who has DEVELOPMENTAL ORIENTATION:
- builds a school, community and culture that supports learning and growth for everyone including self
- looks for new or innovative ideas, methods and programs to meet developmental needs
- coaches and mentors individuals who aspire to serve as school leaders
MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT CONTROL is the establishment of systematic processes to receive and provide feedback about the progress of work being done.

- Examples of a principal who has MANAGEMENT CONTROL:
  - monitors the academic progress of students
  - visits classrooms frequently
  - asks for feedback to see how well self is doing

ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY is the "know-how" (knowledge and skill) to design, plan and organize activities to achieve goals.

- Examples of a principal with ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY:
  - recruits teachers whose goals align with the mission and goals of the school community
  - schedules and protects time for self and others, keeping deadlines in perspective
  - uses technology to maintain records and information for quick reference
  - allocates resources (money, training, materials) in accordance with school goals

DELEGATION is entrusting of jobs to be done, beyond routine assignments, to others, giving them authority and responsibility for accomplishment.

- Examples of a principal who has DELEGATION COMPETENCE:
  - determines the jobs and tasks that need to be done
  - establishes standards for task accomplishment along with time frame and check points
  - maintains accessibility and provides guidance and support in relation to individual need

COMMUNICATION

SELF PRESENTATION is the ability to clearly present one's ideas to others in an open, informative and non-evaluative manner.

- Examples of a principal that exhibits SELF PRESENTATION competence:
  - communicates in an open, honest and genuine way
  - uses effective listening skills before responding to questions by others
  - uses visual or technical media to enhance understanding

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION is the ability to write clearly and concisely using good grammar.

- Examples of a principal who has competence in WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:
  - expresses ideas in writing clearly, simply, and in correct grammatical form
  - adjusts writing styles and vocabulary to the audience being addressed
About the Author

Michele Polk received a Bachelor’s Degree in Mathematics Education from the University of Central Florida in 1985. Upon completing her Bachelor’s degree, she gained experience as a secondary mathematics teacher in both the private and public sector. In 1999 she earned a Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership from the University of South Florida.

While completing her coursework for the Ed.D. program at the University of South Florida, Ms. Polk served as a high school dean of students and an elementary school assistant principal. In 2003, while completing the dissertation phase of her doctoral program, she earned an elementary school principalship.