Case Study of Exemplary Leadership Practices Impact on New Teacher Integration and School Culture During Change

A Dissertation submitted
to the Graduate School
Valdosta State University

In partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

In Leadership

in the Department of Leadership, Technology and Workforce Development
of the Dewar College of Education and Human Services

May 2023

Megan McLeroy Chaffin

Ed.S., Valdosta State University, 2015
M.A.T., Nova Southeastern University, 2013
B.S.Ed., University of Georgia, 2009
B.A., University of Georgia, 2009
A.A., Gainesville State College, 2007

This dissertation, "Case Study of Exemplary Leadership Practices Impact on New Teacher Integration and School Culture During Change" by Megan McLeroy Chaffin, is approved by:

Dissertation Committee Chair	Michael J. Bochenko, Ed.D. Assistant Professor of Leadership, Technology, and Workforce Development
Researcher	Regina L. Suriel, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Teacher Education
Committee Member	John D. Lairsey, Ed.D. Assistant Professor of Leadership, Technology, and Workforce Development
Committee Member	Elaine K. Reichert, Ed.D. Adjunct Professor of Leadership, Technology, and Workforce Development
Associate Provost for Graduate Studies & Research	Becky K. da Cruz, Ph.D., J.D. Professor of Criminal Justice
Defense Date:	March 28, 2023

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine how exemplary leadership practices contributed to a collaborative and empowering school culture. The study examined how Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership impacted school culture during organizational change which involved the integration of new teachers into the established culture. Building upon prior research concerning organizational theory and culture (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Schein, 2010), the study provided evidence to assist in determining if such exemplary leadership practices were critical to ensuring school cultures merged effectively through acceptance, so as to build upon an already recognized positive and productive culture. This study incorporated an embedded single-case study design (Yin, 2018) with myself as the administrator and participant-researcher. It used observations and focus group interviews from teachers in an elementary school in the Southeastern portion of the United States. After thorough data analysis, findings suggested exemplary leadership practices do have an effect on school culture among teachers where a program merger happened; however, more deliberate attention should be made on continuous teacher involvement and feedback in the process. Keywords: leadership, organizational culture, school culture, mergers and acquisitions, change circumstances.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Without Him, I would be nothing and would not have had the endurance to finish this race.

I offer my sincere thanks to Dr. Michael J. Bochenko, who served as my advisor when I started the Ed.S. program at VSU some time ago. I told you back then I wanted you to be my Chair; even when I had no idea what I would write about should I get to this point in my education journey. Thank you for humoring me and accepting the challenge when I came back to you some eight years later. Your courses, guidance, and leadership have served as a roadmap for my own leadership journey, and for that, I am eternally grateful.

Dr. Regina L. Suriel, I appreciate your willingness to serve as my Researcher after changing my topic when you initially agreed to be my Chair. Your structure, high expectations, and mentorship helped me continue on. Thank you for your positivity, encouragement, and belief in me!

My thanks also go to Dr. John D. Lairsey and Dr. Laine Reichert for your feedback and encouragement through this process. Thank you to Dr. Kathleen Lowney; although you came to my aid late in the game as my editor, you greatly helped me at the final stages of this dissertation, and I am so thankful!

Thank you to Beth and Mia for moderating my focus groups when I could not as a participant-researcher. Without your willingness to help and do the necessary training and paperwork to do so, this study would not have been possible.

Thank you to the teachers and staff at Fantasia Elementary (pseudonym) who were willing to participate in this study and offer help and encouragement in this process. Without your support, this study would not have happened. You all are amazing educators, and I am thankful to have worked alongside each and every one of you!

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my father Steve, who has been watching over me in Heaven since I was almost four years old. I know you have been there in spirit through it all. Thank you for watching over me. I know you will be there smiling as I walk across that stage!

To my husband Craig, thank you for your patience, encouragement, and support. You are truly the sole reason I was able to embark on this lifelong dream and journey, and you have been there every step of the way. Thank you for continuing to nag and push me when I felt like giving up.

To my Mama, Catherine, thank you for your encouragement and helping take care of our boys while I worked tirelessly many evenings after work and on weekends. We honestly could not have done it without you.

Thank you to my family and close friends for your understanding when I could not attend activities or hang out due to this study. You all have been extremely supportive and encouraging throughout my very long education journey. I am excited to celebrate this with you all as you have had a large part in my success.

Last but certainly not least, to my sons, Jackson Reid and Cam Eason. You were my motivation throughout this process. I never wanted you to think you were the reason I quit, so I stuck it out for you both! Take my journey as a reminder and as your own motivation to know you can be and do anything you put your heart and mind to. Trust God and He will see you through.

I **can** do *all* things through Christ who strengthens me- Philippians 4:13

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Overview

Of the various issues studied and reported in elementary and secondary education, teacher mobility and retention has been a topic of focus for many years. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) conducted a study of seven Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS) between the years of 1988 and 2013 to gain insights on various areas of education such as trends in public and private school population, leadership type, working conditions, compensation, and hiring and retention practices. From the first 1988-89 school year survey to the last one conducted in 2012-13, the percentage of teachers staying in education decreased from 86.5% to 84.4%. Both percentages increased for those who moved to different schools and those who left the profession entirely, from 7.9% to 8.1% and 5.6% to 7.7%, respectively (U.S. Department of Education, 2012-13a; U.S. Department of Education, 2012-13b). Year after year, teacher shortages and attrition across the United States are reported, especially in low-income/high-poverty schools (Lochmiller et al., 2016; Podgursky et al., 2016).

Title II, Part A of Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) provided funding for state and local education agencies to hire and retain educators through means such as teacher and leader preparatory and residency programs, routes to certification, novice induction, and mentorship programs, professional development opportunities, leadership advancement opportunities, and recruiting and retention programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Incentives were provided to place excellent educators in high-need schools and academic subject areas through monetary incentives, position advancements,

workplace condition improvement, and in-service training (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The effectiveness of such incentives in retention was limited; it might initially attract teachers but was rarely the determining factor in maintaining interest and longevity in the profession (Clotfelter et al., 2008; David, 2008; Hansen et al., 2016). These incentives could bring in teachers but rarely affected long-term retention.

Teachers' decisions to stay in education, leave a school, or leave the profession depended on various reasons. Research indicated satisfaction in school culture, as well as school leadership, had a more significant impact on longevity in the profession, commitment, as well as teacher effectiveness (Balay & Ipek, 2010; Djonko-Moore, 2015; Ingersoll, 2001; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009; Liu et al., 2021; Meyer et al., 2002; Milanowski et al., 2009; Tabak & Sahin, 2020; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995; Riveras-León & Tomás-Folch, 2020; Zhu et al., 2011). An organization's culture is a set of shared beliefs, values, and behaviors highly influenced by the organization's leader (Schein, 2010). Veeriah and Siaw (2017) discovered school culture, specifically aspects of collaborative leadership and professional development, was significantly correlated to teachers' organizational commitment. The staff's trust in leadership within the school culture through love, respect, communication, keeping promises, division of labor, and justice and equality was evident through staff interviews in Lesinger et al. (2017). Sahin (2004) studied teachers and leaders in Turkish schools and found a direct correlation between leadership practices and school culture. Peterson and Deal (2002) explained, "Strong, positive school cultures do not just happen. They are built over time by those who work in and attend the school and by the formal and informal leaders who encourage and reinforce values and

2

traditions" (p. 8). Culture and leadership have become instrumental to teacher commitment and engagement.

As with any established organizational system, the need for change occurs for a variety of reasons; for example, in the field of education, issues derived from curriculum change, adjusting for changing student populations and needs, individualizing programs, technology advancements, funding changes, leadership, staffing, etc. Organizational cultural stability is vital in maintaining structure, effectiveness, and commitment (Schein, 2010). When circumstances warrant an organizational change, the change could lead to negativity, especially among the staff. Bolman and Deal (2013) explained, "change undermines existing structural arrangements, creating ambiguity, confusion, and distrust" (p. 381). Organizational change is inevitable for various reasons; how it is planned and handled directly impacts how it was perceived and accepted. Leaders must take charge in order to implement change and ensure it was done with intentionality. Research showed leadership was the key link to influencing change and how staff engage. Atasoy (2020) found positive school culture and transformational styles of leadership may effectively reduce teacher negativity and resistance to organizational change. Kalkan et al. (2020) established that leadership styles (specifically transformational leadership practices) and school culture were significantly related. Those in the school were more open to reform when the leader and culture were strong. Mukhtar and Fook (2020) discovered a direct correlation between leadership styles and teacher attitudes toward organizational change in Malaysian secondary schools.

Problem Statement

Change in the organization must be handled diligently and carefully so as not to disrupt the established culture's flow and efficiency (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Reeves, 2009; Schein, 2010). A significant amount of research in the field showed the relationships between the importance of organizational and school culture on teacher retention, commitment, collaboration, and effectiveness (Firestone & Louis, 1999; Kotter, 1996; Leithwood et al., 1998; Schein, 2010; Shafritz & Ott, 2001; Veeriah & Siaw, 2017). There is plenty of research on the importance of leadership on culture, change acceptance, teacher retention, and teacher satisfaction (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Dunmay & Galand, 2012; Myers, 2014; Sahin, 2004; Shava & Heystek, 2021; Vaill, 1984; Van der Voet et al., 2014).

Much of the literature on the effect of organizational change on culture is related to members' attitudes, acceptance, and engagement in change initiatives (Choi, 2011; Devos et al., 2001; Devos et al., 2007; Jaffe et al., 1994; Miller et al., 1994; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). In school organizations, teachers were an integral piece of school culture and one of the most essential elements to organizational failure, stability, or improvement (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Collins, 2005; Johnson, 1999; Reeves, 2009). Teacher beliefs, attitudes, and acceptance or resistance have a great impact on culture. Research has shown interpersonal mistreatment, specifically ostracism (being ignored or excluded), as having the highest amount of variance in all of teacher burnout and turnover (Sulea et al., 2012). Peers and colleagues, as one of elements of job satisfaction, were found to have a significant impact on teacher happiness in the profession (Aziz et al., 2020). Taris et al.

(2001) found stressful colleague relationships to be related to cynicism, and in turn burnout, especially when resources were at risk.

The research suggests a connection between leadership, culture, change, and interpersonal relationships. What is missing is the relationship between specific leadership practices and organizational change in Established Teachers' capacity to accept new teachers into their school culture. Although there is research regarding the impact of mergers and acquisitions on cultures and members, most of the available literature was related to the business sector or higher education (Buono & Bowditch, 1989; Harman, 2002; Skodvin, 1999). There is value in the proposed research topic as there is little research on how teachers in an established school accept and build relationships with new teachers, how merging programs in schools affects culture among teachers, and specifically, how leadership practices could aid in building the culture of acceptance for new teachers. New teachers are hired into schools every year. How does a culture of acceptance appear when there is a distinct culture of teachers who have been isolated from the rest of the school for years and are now absorbed into a larger group of teachers? What steps can leaders take to ensure a positive culture remains during times of change while focusing on the teachers involved? This research will examine these questions at one particular school location.

This year, there is a structural change occurring at our school due to the merging of two programs ("Established" Teachers [ETs] and Specialized Programs Teachers [SPs]) and a change in leadership for the one program merging into the established culture. The problem specifically influencing this study is how to integrate new teachers into the established teacher group after they had been isolated as their own program,

separated from the rest of the faculty and school. The program has been reassigned under the leadership of our school after four years, and change was expected. Leaders have the power to create, embed, evolve, and manipulate culture (Schein, 2010). Since leaders have the power to influence organizational culture, leadership is foundational and impacts how change is perceived and approached throughout the organization. For this reason, leadership practices will be the basis of this study. Leadership actions significantly impact teacher acceptance, involvement, and the ultimate success or failure of organizational change. To ensure a smooth transition and acceptance of the Specialized Program Teachers within the established school culture, a combined conceptual framework addressing culture and change will guide the proposed research (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Schein, 2010).

Purpose and Scope

This study aims to determine how exemplary leadership practices contributed to a collaborative and empowering school culture. The study examined how Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership impacted school culture with the integration of new teachers into the established culture during organizational change. Building upon prior research concerning organizational theory and culture (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Schein, 2010), the study provided evidence to assist in determining if such exemplary leadership practices were critical to ensuring school cultures merged effectively through acceptance, so as to build upon an already recognized positive and productive culture.

Research Questions

Below are the research questions that guided the proposed case study.

RQ 1: How do Kouzes and Posner's (2017) Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership assist in integrating new teachers into a larger school culture during organizational change?

RQ 2: What are teacher perceptions on the integration of new members into the school culture during organizational change?

The definitions of organizational culture and school culture are essentially interchangeable, with the latter more specific to school life and functioning (Aslan et al., 2009; Sadeghi et al., 2013; Stolp & Smith, 1995). Peterson and Deal (2002) revealed that culture is found in the deepest parts of the school: "the unwritten rules and assumptions, the combination of rituals and traditions, the array of symbols and artifacts, the special language and phrasing that staff and students use, the expectations for change and learning that saturate the school's world" (p. 9). The conceptual framework section will describe organizational culture further, showing the similarities. Kouzes and Posner's Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership will be further defined in the next section on the conceptual framework.

Teacher perceptions were instrumental to the study. Ott (1989) described all cultures as having certain beliefs, values, and truths as established by members' agreed upon perceptions. As organizational members, the teachers in this study lived the culture day in and day out; therefore, they were the best source of data to determine leadership practice's influence on culture and new member acceptance.

Significance of Study

Effective leadership in schools can be a challenging task in general, but especially during a significant change initiative. Per Bolman and Deal (2013), people are an

organization's most important asset. According to Firestone and Louis (1999), in addition to students and academics, how teachers related to each other shaped the school culture. People can make an organization functional, productive, effective, and operational. If educational leaders do not ensure that teachers were considered central to instituting change, they might not stick around to help make the change a reality. For Kouzes and Posner (2017), "It's about [effective] leadership that makes a positive difference in the workplace and creates the climate in which people turn challenging opportunities into remarkable successes" (p. xi). Research studies shed light on various effective leadership practices and how important they were for many reasons, such as teacher morale and retention, student academic success, teacher collaboration, etc. This study was unique in using myself as the researcher-participant, where the researcher acts as a participant in the case study (Throne, 2019). The hope is that educators, researchers, and school leaders will benefit from this study by assessing how exemplary leadership practices addressing the four-frame model influenced staff accepting of the change. In addition, how intentional use of such practices helps maintain or change school culture.

Conceptual Framework

In studying organizational theory and change, numerous theorists and studies are consequential; most used structure, process, relations, networks, external factors, and learning as key concepts (Argyris & Schön, 1996; Armenakis et al., 1999; Burke & Litwin, 1992; Galpin, 1996; Isabella, 1990; Jaffe et al., 1994; Judson, 1991; Kotter, 1995; Lewin, 1997; Oakland & Tanner, 2007; Pettigrew, 1990; Pettigrew et al., 1992; Vollman, 1996; Waterman et al., 1980; Wildavsky, 1987). The conceptual framework for the study involved three theories and concepts related to organizational culture and leadership: the

organizational culture and leadership theory of Schein (2010), the reframing

organizations theory of Bolman and Deal (2013), and the transformational leadership

practices of exemplary leadership from Kouzes and Posner (2017). By combining these

three theories, this study focused on elements of organizational culture, how change

impacts culture, focusing on frames to ensure successful transition, and how leadership

plays a, if not *the* major role in the whole process.

Schein's (2010) organizational culture model was most appropriate for the goals

of this study as he focused on culture in organizations as the catalyst for change and

leadership in influencing such change. Schein (2010) defined culture in an organization

as

> a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems
>
> of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to
>
> be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct
>
> way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p. 18)

Culture was studied at three levels: *artifacts* (visible behavior, structures, and processes),

espoused values and beliefs (ideologies, values, aspirations), and *basic assumptions*

(unconscious beliefs and values which determine members' thoughts and behaviors).

Leaders must understand these basic assumptions to understand the deeply embedded

aspects of culture for influencing change (Schein, 2010).

When new members enter the established culture, the already entrenched

members must teach entering members the culture to ensure it will survive. As Schein

(2010) stated, "The strength and stability of culture derives from the fact that it is group

based–that the individual will hold on to certain basic assumptions to ratify his or her

membership in the group" (p. 197). External adaptations to the culture and internal integration are both important and interdependent. External adaptations concern expectations of external stakeholders and must be addressed internally to survive. Consensus must be reached regarding the mission, goals, measurement, and how problems in those areas will be addressed. Internal integration relates to the issues within the established culture that must be addressed; common language, group boundaries (member inclusion), distributing power, developing relationship norms, awards/punishments, and explaining the unexplainable (Schein, 2010). In organizational mergers and acquisitions, the leader must manage cultural change to avoid culture clashes. Leaders may determine if it is best to leave each culture alone to function independently, or allow one culture to dominate, or blend the two cultures with elements of both (Schein, 2010).

With transformative change, where the group must unlearn and learn something new to function in the organization, Schein (2010) suggested that unlearning the old culture and way of doing things has the potential to create anxiety to both learn (fear of loss, incompetence, identity, and membership) and survive (we must change or something bad will happen). To combat this, the leader must create conditions for this transformation to include creating psychological safety through a compelling vision, training, learner involvement, training on groups, opportunities for practice and feedback, provided role models, suggested support groups, and consistent systems and structures (Schein, 2010). For all of this work to be effective and endure, the members must see actual results from the change.

Schein (2010) believed organizational cultures could be deciphered through research and evaluated at the most deeply embedded level through high researcher involvement in action research or clinical inquiry where the researcher and members of the organization are highly involved in solving a problem. For this study, I was an active participant as the researcher and as the assistant principal, a member of the organization under study. In this way, I impacted the change while simultaneously analyzing the school's organizational culture shift in incorporating new members into the established culture.

Bolman and Deal's (2013) four-frame model for reframing organizations during change or conflict described four perspectives leaders should take: *structural, human resource, political,* and *symbolic*. Frames are considered a "set of ideas or assumptions" the leader uses as "windows on a territory and tools for navigation" (Bolman & Deal, 2013, pp. 11, 13). To deter the risk of being ineffective, the leader or the organization should address all four frames, each with a different focus. The *structural frame* focuses on strategy and the logistics of making change. The human resource (HR) frame focuses on the organization's people, their needs, power to perform, growth opportunities, and satisfaction in their position or job. The *political frame* focuses on competition and struggles for resources, interests, and power. Lastly, the *symbolic frame* addresses ways leaders can establish a sense of purpose in the organization; through motivation, vision, and celebrations. All four frames are essential to consider and use at different times, and all are interrelated to some degree, depending on the need or circumstance (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

The structural frame was not the focus of this study, as it was already addressed through the change and merger in program and leadership for Specialized Programs (program explained in detail in Chapter III). The district leadership and our leadership team worked out the logistics for integrating teachers, students, and program changes before the shift. The purpose, goals, roles, and coordination for integrating the program into the established school were thought out, planned, and executed before the plan for this study. All the Specialized Programs Teachers integrated into the school maintained their position, classroom, and grade level, as did all the established teachers (except for one special education teacher who became the team lead for both the established and Specialized Programs Teachers). Leadership communicated formal goals for integration to the staff during pre-planning meetings for the 2021-22 school year. For the proposed study, the *HR, political,* and *symbolic frames* are at play, and leadership needed to be conscious of the influence needed in each frame. According to Bolman and Deal (2013), change often leads to conflict and loss but they could be headed off when by focusing on human, political, and symbolic elements rather than focusing only on structure.

Bolman and Deal (2013) pointed out when reframing parts of the organization, it was important the leader used skills and processes in each frame to make effective change. In the HR frame, the leader should express his or her strong beliefs in the people of the organization, should be visible and accessible, and empower others. As a political leader, one should clarify the goal, assess power distribution and interests, link in key stakeholders, and use the power of influence to get the job done. Lastly, the symbolic leader should lead by example, should use symbology, interpret and communicate hope

12

through experiences, instill a vision, communicate through stories, and respect the organization's history (Bolman & Deal, 2013, pp. 361-369).

Bolman and Deal (2013) addressed the concept of culture (using definitions from Schein [2010] and Deal and Kennedy [1982]) through the frames and how new members adapted and reinforced culture. The authors see culture in two dimensions, as both a product and process. Experiences produce wisdom while newcomers learn the established process and eventually become teachers themselves. Bolman and Deal (2013) explained existing relationships and/or agreements were altered during organizational change, and foundational elements were disrupted, such as symbols, traditions, rituals, and values. Each frame encountered barriers, and the authors suggested strategies leaders may use to combat conflict, as seen in Table 1, adapted from Bolman and Deal's (2013, p. 378) exhibit 18.1. Bolman and Deal's (2013) frames are an important resource for leaders' use in restructuring during change,

> ...when things start to shift, people become unsure of what their duties are, how to relate to others, and who has the authority to decide what. Clarity, predictability, and rationality give way to confusion, loss of control, and a sense that politics trumps policy. To minimize such difficulties, innovators must anticipate structural issues and work to redesign the existing architecture of roles and relationships. (p. 382)

Table 1

Reframing Organizational Change.

Frame	Barriers to Change	Essential Strategies
Human Resource	Anxiety, uncertainty; people feel incompetent and needy	Training to develop new skills; participation and involvement; psychological support
Structural	Loss of direction, clarity, and stability; confusion, chaos	Communicating, realigning, and renegotiating formal patterns and policies
Political	Disempowerment; conflict between winners and losers	Developing areas where issues can be renegotiated, and new coalitions formed
Symbolic	Loss of meaning and purpose; clinging to the past	Creating transition rituals; mourn the past, celebrate the future

Note: Adapted from Bolman & Deal (2013), *Reframing Organizations*, p. 378.

Kouzes and Posner's (2017) book *The Leadership Challenge: How to make extraordinary things happen in organizations* focuses on transformational leadership by exploring five key practices and ten commitments leaders could implement to get people on board to make a successful change.

Through inspiration and influence from transformational theory, Kouzes and Posner (2017) conducted numerous studies centered on what thousands of workers and leaders in various occupations worldwide considered their personal-best leadership experiences. Since 1987, Kouzes and Posner continued to study exemplary leadership practices and behaviors proven effective in inspiring the team to get on board and work towards a common purpose. They narrowed down   exemplary leadership to five key practices and ten commitments (shown in Table 2) which became the main framework and practice for the study.

Table 2

The Five Practices and Ten Commitments of Exemplary Leadership

Five Practices	Ten Commitments
Practice 1: Model the Way	Clarify values by finding your voice & affirming shared values.
	Set the example by aligning actions with shared values.
Practice 2: Inspire a Shared Vision	Envision the future by imagining exciting and enabling possibilities.
	Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations.
Practice 3: Challenge the Process	Search for opportunities by seizing the initiative and looking outward for innovative ways to improve.
	Experiment and take risks by consistently generating small wins and learning from experience.
Practice 4: Enable Others to Act	Foster collaboration by building trust and facilitating relationships.
	Strengthen others by increasing self-determination and developing competence.
Practice 5: Encourage the Heart	Recognize contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence.
	Celebrate the values and victories by creating a spirit of community.

Note: Adapted from Kouzes & Posner's (2017) *The Leadership Challenge,* p. 24.

Kouzes and Posner (2017) claimed leadership is about behavior and relationships rather than personality. They charged leaders to use the behaviors and actions outlined to gain trust, commitment, and action from constituents in order to influence the development for change and growth. Although Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices have been proven effective across various disciplines, businesses, and for the profit and non-profit sectors, they were used for non-profit public school leadership in this study.

The first practice, *model the way*, focuses on leaders who must first understand their values and principles, convey those through finding their voice and modeling the expectations, and helping the team by identifying its shared values. The practice works towards defining goals and getting everyone's goals and actions to align. This will be especially important regarding the present study in that two programs are merging, and the purposes of this merger need to be established and communicated from the beginning. The second practice, *inspire a shared vision*, is crucial for showing the staff why the goals are influential and inspiring passions to give them a reason to buy-in to the changes. By telling stories of the past where change worked and connecting the vision for the future to the staff in some way, the leader could make the goal meaningful and worthwhile to pursue (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Challenging the process, the third practice focuses on overcoming challenges and embracing improvements and innovation. It is vital as a leader to create a climate where staff feels comfortable taking risks and learning from experiences. This practice is essential for the study since our school is merging programs, and we will be trying something new and different from the status quo from the prior. The fourth practice, *enabling others to act*, prioritizes team efforts and holds everyone accountable to the goal. Collaboration is built on trust and relationships, and it is the leader's responsibility to build competence and ensure others feel comfortable voicing their concerns and opinions. *encouraging the heart*, the fifth and final practice, is all about showing one cares through recognizing accomplishments and hard work and building up the comradery in staff through encouragement and celebrations. Honesty and sincerity are essential for the team to believe in the new goals (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

As the researchers included in the conceptual framework were considered experts in the field, they all shared similarities on effective and best practices for leaders. Most of what they proposed overlapped and provided a comprehensive and consistent framework for the proposed study. Bolman and Deal (2013) explained that managers'/innovators' strategies often fail because they limited their thinking to limited lenses. For the purposes of this research, to ensure I addressed all four frames during a time of change/restructuring in the school and used exemplary leadership practices to address all frames, Figure 1 served as my guide and framework for this study, as well as providing specific commitments from Kouzes and Posner (2017) into each frame.

Figure 1

Exemplary Leadership Practices

Exemplary Leadership Practices	HR Frame	Political Frame	Symbolic Frame
Practice 1: MODEL THE WAY	Forge unity; Give reasons to care for empowerment.	Clarify values to influence commitment; Seek feedback.	Tell stories.
Practice 2: INSPIRE A SHARED VISION	Listen deeply to others; Make it a cause others will commit to; Connect to what's meaningful to others.	Practice positive communication.	Reflect on pass, attend to present, and prospect future; Express passion; Look forward in change; Align dreams; Use symbolic language.
Practice 3: CHALLENGE THE PROCESS	Encourage initiative in others; Listen and promote diverse perspectives; Be an active learner.	Challenge with purpose; Break it down and accentuate progress; Strengthen resilience and grit.	Treat every job as an adventure; Create a climate for learning.
Practice 4: ENABLE OTHERS TO ACT	Invest in trust; Show concern for others; Share knowledge and information; Support reciprocity; Encourage authentic interaction.	Develop cooperative goals and roles; Structure jobs to offer latitude; Foster accountability; Educate and share information; Structure projects for joint effort; Coach.	Be the first to trust.
Practice 5: ENCOURAGE THE HEART	Show them you believe; provide feedback; Provide social support; Show you care; Just say "Thank you"; Provide creative incentives; Get to know your constituents.	Be clear about goals and rules.	Celebrate accomplishments in public; Have fun together; Share the stories; Make celebrations a part of organizational life.

Note: Adapted from framework elements of Bolman and Deal (2013) and Kouzes and Posner (2017).

Summary of Methodology

The proposed research study will employ a qualitative case study design. Stake (2000) clarified that a case is the researcher's choice of what is being studied, not the method. Through this approach, an elementary school will serve as an instrumental case (Stake, 2000). This case will provide a glimpse into merging two programs within a school and using exemplary leadership practices and frames to influence the acceptance of the new members (teachers) and the school's changing overall culture.

To examine the effects of exemplary leadership practices on our school culture throughout the 2021-2022 school year, collection and analysis of multiple data sources will be acquired through qualitative data, such as participant-observation field notes, checklist, analytic memos, and focus group interviews gathered throughout the school year. Focus groups, including volunteers from the already established school-teachers and the teachers from the merged program, will be conducted to analyze the shift in school culture and assess the implementation of exemplary leadership practices and frames on said cultural change.

Limitations

Case study research may be limited in several areas, including generalizability, reactivity, and researcher bias (Maxwell, 2013; Yin, 2018). Generalizability in case studies, according to Yin (2018), is "generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes" (p. 20). Therefore, although the study is valuable to understanding the case and applying organizational culture and leadership theory, it does not necessarily generalize well to other populations, especially since the case and issue in this study are quite specific. Researcher bias and reactivity (as addressed in the validity

section in Chapter III) were limitations in that I am a participant researcher in the study, and my inherent biases may come to the surface during analysis.

Excluding students from the study could also be considered a limitation. Including students was not feasible since they are elementary-age. The abstract concept of culture may be difficult for them to recognize and understand enough to actively and effectively participate. Having input from the students from specialized programs and students from Fantasia Elementary discussing how they viewed one another or acceptance in the school might be insightful if they were older or were taught explicitly about organizational culture before the study.

Considering the research participants are my staff at Fantasia Elementary and I am their superior, reactivity could pose a problem in getting accurate interview data. Therefore, I will be using moderators to conduct the focus group interviews to limit the reactivity. A limitation will be for me to not witness the interactions, facial expressions, or inflections myself, but to rely on my moderators' observations. I will train the moderators and ask them to review my initial interpretation as a member check. Patton (2015) explained focus groups as having limiting factors, such as restricting responses by the number of questions, the need for the moderator to facilitate in such a way others in the group are heard and not dominated by others, the fact that some participants may not speak up for fear of having a point of view in the minority, that strangers sometimes work better than those who know one another, and a lack of confidentiality in the group.

My own biases may play a part as a limitation in that I am directly involved in the study and research site and may look at data through my lens as the participant researcher. I address how I limit those potential biases in Chapter 3.

Definition of Terms

Below are terms used throughout the study based on the conceptual and theoretical framework foundations and research questions.

Five practices of exemplary leadership: Model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Four-frame organizations model: Perspectives through which organizations can be viewed and addressed in change and restructuring; structural, human resource, political, and symbolic (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Organizational culture: "A pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems" (Schein, 2010, p. 18).

School culture: "...historically transmitted patterns of meaning that include the norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and myths understood, maybe in varying degrees, by members of the school community" (Stolp & Smith, 1995, p. 13).

Perception: The way you think about or understand someone or something (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Organization of the Study

The remainder of the study is organized into chapters, concluding with the bibliography and appendices. Chapter II consists of a related literature review covering relevant studies and research concerning culture, leadership, and how the two constructs

influence change and member acceptance. Chapter III presents the case study research design and methodology, including instruments, population and participants, and data collection procedures. Data analysis and findings will be described in Chapter IV. And finally, Chapter V will contain the conclusions, interpretations, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature relevant to the theoretical and conceptual framework, multiple elements of culture, change, and leadership, are presented in this chapter. To understand the implications and interconnections between the three, one must read literature regarding each area and its interactions. The underlying themes are essential to understand as all are separate in their importance but together provide the scope for which the topic was examined. As mentioned in the problem statement in Chapter 1, there was a plethora of research on each of these elements and how interactions among them yield various results and implications for research. There was literature missing about how merging different groups of people (veteran employees and merged employees) in a school setting affected the culture and how leadership played a role in the process. The literature review included studies and data from the business and education sectors. As explained by Collins (2005), the culture of discipline is a principle of greatness and is not reserved for only businesses. Therefore, as the good to great principles may be used for businesses and nonprofits, the below studies apply to culture, change, and leadership in both businesses and education sectors.

In using the Galileo Access Anywhere portal through the University System of Georgia, I searched various databases related to education. I narrowed my search to full-text articles, journals, books, and reports within the last ten years in an effort to access current studies related to keywords and various combinations such as leadership, administration, school culture, mergers and acquisitions, climate, environment, organizational change, teacher attitudes, and teacher perceptions. When I did not find

enough within those years, I expanded the search parameters beyond ten years. I left the

search open to literature beyond the United States as I felt it was essential to gather

information on this phenomenon beyond the confines of American culture to establish

commonality. Concluding the literature review, the following themes are addressed

below: individual and group elements of culture, disruptions in the group culture,

leadership role in organizational culture and change, leader influence on culture and

change in schools, and prior research using Kouzes and Posner's exemplary leadership

practices.

Individual and Group Elements of Culture

As addressed in the conceptual framework, culture is a key element for

organizational success, as well as employee happiness, retention, and effectiveness.

Schools with negative cultures have been places where people are insecure, reluctant to

change, thrive on negativity, and tell failure stories (Deal & Peterson, 1998; Terzi, 2016).

School culture has been found to influence motivation, school improvement, leadership

effectiveness, and achievement (Stolp & Smith, 1995). Multiple theorists have proposed

differing typologies of culture to get at the "essence" for better understanding, ranging

anywhere from typologies based on the organization's focus (Handy, 1978; Harrison,

1979; Harrison & Stokes, 1992), archetypes (Corlett & Pearson, 2003), character (Goffee

& Jones, 1998), task and group building (Blake et al., 1989), examining individuals'

contributions to organization (Etzioni, 1975), etc. Schein (2010) stressed understanding

the current culture before instituting change as to head off potential problems with

resistance and conflict. Cameron and Quinn (2006), using the Competing Values

Framework (CVF), identified four culture types: hierarchy, market, adhocracy, and clan,

each with differing priorities on flexibility/stability and an inward or outward focus. The hierarchy culture is inward-looking and centered on control, with leaders focusing on efficiency, structure, order, and control. The market culture has an outward focus, functioning with stability and control through competition and achievement. An adhocracy culture is outward-looking and flexible, focusing on being innovative and dynamic. The clan culture is inward-looking and flexible, focusing on collaboration, support, and teamwork (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

Cameron and Quinn (2006) stated that it is important to examine the culture your organization has and what leadership actions could be taken to adjust the culture based on the priorities and goals of the leadership team and organizational members. They provided an assessment, the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI), to assess and compare where the organization was currently with the direction leadership wanted it to go. Multiple studies were conducted in education showing a clan culture was most prevalent and effective (Berkemeyer et al., 2015; Kheir-Faddul et al., 2019; Selvaraja & Pihie, 2015) or the preferred culture typology in a school environment (Cieciora et al., 2021). Clan cultures had a stronger positive association with employees' attitudes and quality of product and service than adhocracy and market cultures did (Hartnell et al., 2011). Ellonen's (2005) study showed clan and adhocracy cultures had more effect on organizational trust over the negative effects of a hierarchy culture. Clan culture values "cohesion, high levels of employee morale, satisfaction, human resource development, and teamwork" (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 48). Terzi (2016) studied whether the prevalent culture type could influence organizational trust. The researcher identified four culture types: support (emphasis on relationships and trust), duty (work is

central and purposeful), success (organizational goal achievement and task

accomplishment focus), and bureaucratic (importance of structure and roles). He found

support and duty cultures were significant predictors of organizational trust, while

success and bureaucratic were not, likely due to focus on structure and accomplishment

rather than on relationships and purpose (Terzi, 2016).

Multiple researchers focused more on the collective personality and behavior of

members in a culture than the overall typology. Schein (2010) explained, "just as our

personality and character guide and constrain our behavior, so does culture guide and

constrain the behaviors of members of a group through the shared norms that are held in

that group" (p. 14). Van Maanen and Barley (1985) stated culture implies human

behavior was partially prescribed by a collectively created and sustained way of life

which cannot be personality-based because diverse individuals share it. On the contrary,

Neville and Schneider (2021) argued organizational culture was based on the personality

homogeneity of cultural members, and therefore, was resistant to change efforts. They

proposed culture does not shape employee behaviors, but rather culture was a reflection

of the members. If change was to happen and be effective, a change in the organizational

members was imperative (Neville & Schneider, 2021). Employees often attributed human

relationships and institutional attributes of openness to change and justice to contributing

to their school's culture (Aslan et al., 2009). Spillane and Shirrell (2017) indicated

changes within the school (specifically teachers' changes in grade level and therefore

interaction frequency) were directly related to a break in social ties relationship within

the school community. Changes were determined to possibly have lasting cultural effects

within the school, such as vertical aligning in curriculum planning, teacher turnover, lower teacher performance, and innovation in social capital (Spillane & Shirrell, 2017).

Perception impacts on culture

As revealed by Kalman and Balkar (2017), changing member perceptions was the first way to change the culture. Hart and Marina (2014) found that by using Bolman and Deal's framework, faculty in the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) conveyed a supportive organizational culture was most effective towards job satisfaction. Too, *structural frame* elements were the best predictor of job satisfaction, with the *human resources frame* coming in second. Mosser and Walls (2002) conducted a study on nursing chairpersons' use of Bolman and Deal's frames *(structural, human resource, political*, and *symbolic)*, leadership behaviors in nursing departments, and connection to organizational climate as perceived by faculty. Climate domains included consideration, intimacy, production emphasis, and disengagement. The researchers indicated a positive correlation of all four frames with organizational climate on all domains, except disengagement. Data showed using multiple frames had a more significant impact on climate than only using one or no frame. The cultures' whose chairpersons did not use frames had a higher association of disengagement. The frame most used in this study was the symbolic frame (Mosser & Walls, 2002). Sasnett and Clay (2008) found healthcare leaders in various disciplines in 6 studies were perceived by their employees as most using the human resource frame, which aligned with the frame associated most with the needs of individuals.

Changing employees' understanding of culture in the organization through informing and educating may impact their views of culture and the leaders' actions in the

institution more positively (Choi, 2011; Kalman & Balkar, 2017). Teachers' perception of school culture influenced their commitment to the organization (Lok & Crawford, 1999; Sinden et al., 2004; Yavuz, 2010; Zhu et al., 2011). Terzi (2016) studied whether organizational culture was a predictor of organizational trust through a descriptive survey design and found if teachers had a positive perception of the school culture, it increased trust. Supportive school cultures resulted in collaboration, building relationships, and perceptions of trust (Kosar et al., 2016).

Yavuz (2010) studied the effects of teachers' perceptions on how organizational justice and organizational culture affect commitment in Turkish schools. Organizational justice encompassed fair distribution of resources, decisions affecting relationships, and treatment received. Commitment was broken down into three types: affective commitment (desire to continue work as a result of identifying with the organization), continuous commitment (staying with the organization for fear of suffering financially or for opportunities), and normative commitment (staying with the organization for moral obligation). Scales for all three areas were used, and regression analysis was compared. Results indicated that the perception of a supportive culture increased affective and normative commitment. Additionally, results suggested principals should share power and authority so that teachers may have an effective commitment (Yavuz, 2010).

Elements of group culture, or cohesion, have been found to have a significant impact on perceptions of culture and cynicism towards change (Lau & Ngo, 2001; Lau et al., 2002; Mullen & Copper, 1994; Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Wu et al., 2007). Rentsch (1990) studied cultural meaning-making for organizational events and how employees' social-interaction group determined how they perceived the event through the action-

theory perspective. The researchers determined, using interviews and questionnaires, that individuals from the same group or subculture interpreted events similarly. In contrast, different groups within the same organization, experiencing the same event, had different interpretations (Rentsch, 1990).

Employee perceptions potentially have a significant influence on readiness for change. Eby et al. (2000) demonstrated through a survey scale that preference for teams, perceived organizational support, trust in peers, perceived participation, flexible policies and procedures, and logistics and system supports were all factors related to employees' perceptions of organizational change readiness. Specifically related to the human resource element of organizations, the researchers found employees' preference for working in teams and trust among their peers was correlated with their belief the organization was prepared and ready for change (Eby et al., 2000). Change events in an organization could disrupt the structure, status quo, and employee support. Therefore, understanding how change may occur and the effect on employees was essential for organizational leaders, so that they could plan accordingly to limit problems and disruptions as much as possible.

Disruptions in the group culture: Change factors

Robbins and Coulter (2018) explained there are four types of change in an organization: strategy, structure, technology, and lastly, people; "changes in individual or group attitudes, expectations, perceptions, and behaviours" (p. 213). An increasing number of researchers have argued change efforts in organizations were unsuccessful because they underestimated the importance of individuals in the organization and their key role (Choi, 2011). Employees' perceptions and beliefs in culture, as well as change

circumstances, might be influenced by a range of issues, such as cynicism about change, loss of faith in the leader instituting the change, pessimism about if the change will be successful, blaming leadership for change failure, and lack of trust (Albrecht, 2008; Bernerth et al., 2007; Bommer et al., 2005; Brown & Cregan, 2008; Reichers et al., 1997; Stanley et al., 2005; Wanous et al., 2000; Wu et al., 2007). School culture and capacity for change were significantly correlated (Kosar et al., 2016). When employees believed benefits for change outweighed the costs, they were likely to be more committed (Bernerth et al., 2007; Devos et al., 2001; Fedor et al., 2006).

Choi (2011) conducted a literature review on change and the impact of employees' attitudes towards change initiatives. When it came to predictors for whether employees would support change, the researcher showed specific attitudes such as commitment or cynicism to the change situation better-predicted support or resistance than attitudes towards the organization in general (Choi, 2011). When change circumstances arrived in an organization, employees often resisted the change for multiple reasons. Fear of the unknown, concern for change in status, misunderstandings on reasons for change, uncertainty, and the need to preserve the status quo were influential (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Enders et al., 2020; Robbins & Coulter, 2018; Srivastava & Agrawal, 2020).

Acculturation, socialization, and enculturation

Louis (1990, as cited in Vukotich, 1995) defined acculturation as "the process by which new members come to appreciate cultures and climates indigenous to work settings and organizations" (p. 24). Redfield et al. (1936) explained acculturation as the result of two groups coming into continuous contact with one another and the resulting

changes from one or both groups' cultures involved. Berry and Sam (1997) studied

acculturation and suggested it happened through four strategies: assimilation,

marginalization, separation, and integration. Integration allows for the members to

maintain their personal identity while maintaining relationships in the organization.

Through assimilation, the members lose their personal identity but could maintain

relationships within the organization. When members were separated, they retained their

identity at the expense of developing relationships with others in the organization. When

members were marginalized, they no longer maintained their identity nor developed

relationships with others. Ultimately, the goal for new members in an organization was to

integrate as much as possible while participating in socialization into the organizational

culture (Berry & Sam, 1997).

Socialization is "the process by which an individual comes to appreciate the

values, abilities, expected behaviors, and social knowledge essential for assuming an

organizational role and for participating as an organizational member" (Louis, 1980, pp.

229-230). Schein (2010) explained studying what new members were taught was a

productive way to begin understanding elements of the organization's surface-level

culture. Once the new members began to socialize into the culture and were considered to

have permanent status, they were allowed access into the group's inner circles and the

deeper elements of culture (Schein, 2010). Socialization allowed opportunities for new

members to learn the culture.

Reichers (1987) found early on in his research that interactions between

newcomers and insiders within the organization were influential on the rate at which they

socialized into the organization. The researcher takes the symbolic interactionist

perspective where newcomers engage with others in the organization through role

negotiation, identity development, and understanding organizational realities; therefore

"meaning arises out of interaction between people, and individuals transform their

perceptions of events in response to interactions they have with others in a setting"

(Reichers, 1987, p. 279). Reichers (1987) concluded that organizations [leaders] can

speed up the socialization process by providing opportunities requiring interaction

between insiders and newcomers. Feldman (1981) proposed an integrated model for the

socialization of different process and outcome variables. During the change and

acquisition stage of socialization into a group, process variables include resolution of role

demands, task mastery, and, most importantly, adjustment to group norms and values or

group culture. The three effective outcomes were general satisfaction, internal work

motivation, and job involvement or commitment (Feldman, 1981).

Bauer et al. (2007) analyzed various socialization theorists (Feldman, 1981;

Fisher, 1986; Louis, 1980; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979) and

indicated newcomers to an organization go through a process of newcomer adjustment

where they seek information regarding job role requirements and nature of relationships

to succeed in the position. Additionally, they looked at socialization tactics for training

and receiving feedback and information from the insiders in the organization. Newcomer

adjustment resulted in role clarity and understanding of role demands, self-efficacy or

task mastery, and social acceptance into the group (Bauer et al., 2007; Feldman, 1981).

Outcomes for successful newcomer adjustment were an increase in employee job

performance, satisfaction, commitment, retention, and less turnover (Bauer et al., 2007;

Bauer & Green, 1994). While all adjustment outcomes were significant to some degree, social acceptance was related to all outcomes (Bauer et al., 2007).

Once new members were allowed in and socialized into the culture, the final step was enculturation, which went beyond the acquisition of knowledge to include "the process in which one embraces (or not embraces) the core organizational beliefs and values as part of his/her self concept" (Soh, 2000, p.ii). As Srivastava et al. (2018) illustrated, enculturation was not a threshold or endpoint but a process or journey to cultural fit and attainment through peer acceptance and individual attachment. When employees felt accepted by their peers and had a sense of belonging, they were more likely to accept and behave in a way fitting the organization's cultural expectations. The researchers found when the process of enculturation was slow, the newcomer was less likely to be accepted and more likely to be involuntarily pushed out. In contrast, if the employee obtained cultural fit previously but has now declined or failed to maintain it, they were likely to feel detached and exit voluntarily (Srivastava et al., 2018).

Concerning the field of education, the literature is full of research about the struggles of new (or novice) teachers to the profession, building relationships with fellow teachers, and what leaders should focus for providing support for those teachers new to the many professional and cultural demands they faced (Alhija & Fresko, 2010; Cherubini, 2009; Flores, 2004; Flores & Day, 2006; Kardos et al., 2001; Moir, 2003; Pogodziński, 2012; Staton & Hunt, 1992). New staff and staff turnover in a school have implications to affect the professional culture in the school through network development and stability (Mowrey, 2020). The literature lacks examples specifically of veteran

teachers' (and groups of those teachers) experiences being successfully transitioned into an established faculty and school culture.

Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A)

As Schein (2010) explained regarding change, "the change goal must be defined concretely in terms of the specific problem you are trying to fix, not as a 'culture change'" to ensure the need for a change indeed involves some aspect of culture (p. 311). With such a mindset, the literature review regarding organizational change focuses on the change explicitly in this study, integrating members new to the established culture; a merger or acquisition (M&A). M&As are prevalent in the business world, and research is abundant in this area, along with the effect on culture (Bansal, 2019; Febriani & Yancey, 2019; Gill, 2012; Meglio et al., 2015; Sapkota et al., 2019).

Schein (2010) found, in times of mergers (two organizations are merged) and acquisitions (one organization acquires the another), culture clash was inevitable as it was highly unlikely the two organizations would have the same culture. He explained leaders must determine if the cultures will be left alone, allow one culture to dominate the other, or blend the two for a new culture. Febriani and Yancey (2019) studied opposing approaches to M&As by studying two mining company divisions in Indonesia; they analyzed the transformational approach (combining the two cultures) and the perseverance approach (minimal change). In addition, they looked at the relationship between organizational culture, engagement, commitment, and HR (human resource) initiative's effectiveness. Using Pre- and Post-surveys with employees during change initiatives, the researchers discovered more employee commitment and perceptions of minor change using the perseverance approach rather than transformational one. Through

Cameron & Quinn's (2006) OCAI survey, organizational culture was perceived as changing less. A limitation to this study was that the researchers used one approach at the mining location and the other at the headquarters, limiting the researchers' ability to assess the impact of the intervention versus the difference between locations. They also found HR initiatives (identifying the mission, promoting the new culture, training, planning, working with leaders for the change process, serving as mentors and facilitators) were effective at minimizing the adverse effects of a transformational approach, including cultural change and employee attitudes (Febriani & Yancey, 2019).

Bansal (2019) researched the concept of organizational justice through a mixed-methods design using surveys and semi-structured interviews with M&A survivors (acquired employees who remained with the merger) in India. In interview data, task integration, human integration, and a newer construct, cultural integration, were identified as antecedents to justice perceptions. Cultural integration deals with the cultural (beliefs, practices, rituals) exchange from the two companies involved in M&As. Results indicated employee perception of fairness and justice led to positive outcomes, employee satisfaction, and employee commitment. Organizations focusing on human integration tended to have employees with positive perceptions of justice and high satisfaction. Further, employees told in advance of the changes in their roles had higher commitments to and trust in the organization and leadership. Lastly, when management support was provided, employees in both locations experienced change more positively (Bansal, 2019).

Meglio et al. (2015) studied improving acquisition outcomes through contextual ambidexterity, addressing both social/human integration and economic/task integration.

Integration mechanisms were explored in both areas, including restructuring, planning, management information systems, using transition teams, socialization, mutual consideration, and human resources management. They also stressed the need for leadership, an integration manager to ensure the right mix of mechanisms were used based on the organization's goals, although the researchers recognized the growing literature support for focusing their efforts on human integration (Meglio et al., 2015). In the same frame, King et al. (2020) studied how Chinese employees react to the human/task integration process with management involvement. The researchers found statistically significant results showing task integration had higher rates of employee resistance than human integration, less employee resistance when middle management was involved with slow human integration and quicker task integration, and how managers (both high and middle level) influenced employee reactions to change (King et al., 2020). Employee reactions and perceptions can have great impacts on M&A implementation and effectiveness.

Employee perceptions on M&A

Mergers and acquisitions (M&As) can cause a range of reactions, thoughts, and/or emotions from those in the acquiring or acquired organization. Employee support is paramount in the success of organizational change (Bansal, 2019; Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). A change in function and routine in the organization can spark feelings such as anger, shock, denial, helplessness, threat, uncertainty, lack of connection or identity with the new organization or members, and even depression (Ashford, 1988; Birkinshaw et al., 2000; Cartwright & Cooper, 1993; Coff, 2002; Schweiger et al., 1987; Van Knippenberg et al., 2002). Marmenout (2011) conducted an experimental study on collective

rumination where employees could discuss an announced merger among their peers. When those peers were given the time to discuss, they had adverse reactions to the merger, including an unwillingness to collaborate with the new people. Suggestions for leadership to head off such issues are to announce challenges upfront, actively involve employees in problem-solving, institute distractions (work-related or activities for personal development), or use positive leadership by using activities such as creating a positive climate, building relationships, open communication and promoting a shared vision (Marmenout, 2011).

Giessner et al. (2006) conducted a series of three studies on employee perceptions and support for mergers based on their pre-merger status and merger pattern. The team predicted the employees would support the merger based on their pre-merger identity; for the low-status organization assimilating into the high status one (assimilation), an equal blending of both organizations' identities (integration-equality), pre-merger culture/status remains (integration-proportionality), or completely new, transformed identities in the whole organization (transformation). After participating in a series of imaginative scenarios with university students and employees, the researchers discovered those in the higher status group favored mergers where they maintained their dominance (integration-proportional and assimilation). The lower status groups favored mergers which protected them from being dominated by the other group (integration-equality and transformation). Finally, to confirm their findings, Giessner et al. (2006) conducted a study with students involved in an actual university merger and found the same results. Implications from the study suggest leaders should design merger interventions to help employees understand

the reasons for the merger and involve employees in the development/process (Giessner et al., 2006).

Weber and Camerer (2003) conducted another experimental design which simplified culture to "shared meanings" among three participants; one serving as the "manager," one as the "employee," and the other as the "acquired employee." After the manager and employee (two teams) worked with a set of office-related images to describe the picture elements to the other for 20 images, then switching roles, the employee from the acquired company joined the two members from the acquiring company. The manager then performed ten additional rounds involving both the employee and the acquired employee. The researchers found those working together pre-merger had developed short-cuts to describe images both parties could easily relate to, such as a word, the name of a professor looking like one of the people in the image, etc. Task completion time was more efficient for the established pair to describe and guess the images than when one was paired with the newly acquired participant. Additionally, the time-to-guess the images increased for all participants once the new/acquired employee was added to the mix. Relationally, the pre-merger participants would often get frustrated or speak negatively to or about the acquired employee when they struggled to identify the described picture, rating them lower than the other. The researchers concluded cultural conflict influenced coordination and merger failure issues and the problem was often underestimated by firms who participated in mergers (Weber & Camerer, 2003). Mergers may lead to productivity decrease, as well as conflict and blame from cultural differences.

Employees' view of justice in the merger process and trust in management during M&As was studied by Kaltiainen et al. (2017). The researchers studied two civil service organizations in Finland through a series of three online employee surveys one year apart to follow the merger process. The surveys addressed justice through procedural fairness, information quality, and interpersonal (respect and concern) and studied trust in top management through items focused on competence and reliability. Results showed merger process justice and trust having reciprocal relationships over time. A more significant data relationship suggested leadership trust may have had more influence on justice perceptions than the reverse. The researchers suggested leaders work to instill trust in their employees by showing competence and justice throughout the entire merger process to keep everyone on board (Kaltiainen et al., 2017).

Role of leadership on M&A

Schein (2010) offered insight into how leadership was pivotal in assessing and managing culture and change in organizations:

> But if the elements of culture become dysfunctional, it is the unique function of leadership to perceive the functional and dysfunctional aspects of the existing culture and to manage cultural evolution and change in such a way that the group can survive in a changing environment. (Schein, 2010, p. 22)

Harman (2002) viewed mergers as a socio-cultural issue on Australian college campuses and found leaders were instrumental in ensuring the cultures were integrated with elements from all parties to avoid the merger being a barrier to change. Addressing loyalties, building a sense of community, appreciating both cultures, and dealing with conflict were all ways leaders could intervene for a successful and positive merger.

Vasilaki et al. (2016) studied the role of leadership on human integration and organizational identification when companies were involved in M&As. Leaders who practiced communication, employee involvement, teamwork, and training/development could positively affect employee attitudes, identity, and behavior towards post-acquisition organizations. Duvall-Dickson (2016) did a case study on company M&As and discovered the need for transparency to build trust, especially with those in the acquired company. Being transparent and keeping promises made for maintaining elements of culture or tradition was essential. Van der Voet (2013) studied transformational leadership practices' impact on employees' willingness to change during a company merger. The researcher found when the change was highly planned, high and low degrees of transformational leadership had the same effect on willingness to change; when change was emergent, transformational leadership practices affected willingness to change in non-bureaucratic contexts (Van der Voet, 2013). M&As had great potential for failure. If organizational leaders were diligent in intervening, this change circumstance might positively affect the organization.

Leadership's role in organizational culture and change

James MacGregor Burns created transformational leadership theory in the early 1970s. He examined history's great leaders and how they used their power (Burns, 1978). Bernard Bass (1999) is most known for developing transformational leadership further, defining it as "behavior [which] raises the consciousness of followers about what is important, raises their concerns for higher-level needs on Maslow's hierarchy and moves followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of their group, organization, or society" (p. 5). Through the Four I's (idealized influence, intellectual stimulation,

individualized consideration, and inspirational motivation), leaders can model and build

followers to better individual growth and group achievement (Bass & Riggio, 2005).

Bolman and Deal (1991) studied and developed frames of reference through

which leaders could operate (*structural, human resources, political*, and *symbolic*;

elements of the conceptual framework for this study). Their studies addressed how

leaders used the frames, which were used and how many are used, and the consequences

of their use. Through qualitative research using responses from the United States higher

education administrators, school administrators from Florida and Minnesota, and school

principals from Singapore, the researchers sought descriptions of challenging situations

and how these leaders used effective leadership in response. The researchers found

leaders rarely used more than two frames. Administrators in America and Singapore used

the *human resources frame* most, while education administrators at the higher levels of

the bureaucracy used the *political frame* most often. Across all areas, the *structural frame*

appeared in about 60% of cases, but less than 20% used the *symbolic frame*, likely due to

the more political nature of the environment (Bolman & Deal, 1991). Rodriguez and

Freites (2013) studied the leadership style of 80 managers in Venezuela using Bolman

and Deal's frames by assessing self, peers, coordinators, and partners. Researchers

determined through data analysis that managers over-evaluated themselves on using all

frames while others (peers, coordinator, collaborators) rated the managers as using

structural or symbolic styles the most.

Cameron and Quinn (2006) claimed the most effective leadership styles used

usually matched the organization's culture. If one built an organizational culture based on

people, one's leadership practices would likely match the culture and the cultural

direction the organization was moving. For some time, researchers have studied

leadership practices during times of change. Researchers have shown that certain

behaviors of the leader during change circumstances could curtail employee cynicism

toward change, such as developing trust, involving employees in decision-making, and

information sharing (Brown & Cregan, 2008; Ertürk, 2008; Hartge et al., 2019; Miller et

al., 1994; Qian & Daniels, 2008; Stanley et al., 2005; Wanberg & Banas, 2000).

Employees' trust, effective leadership practices, and the quality of employee-manager

relationships influenced their willingness and readiness for change (Bommer et al., 2005;

Devos et al., 2007; Herold et al., 2008; Michaelis et al., 2010; Parish et al., 2008; Qian &

Daniels, 2008; Rafferty & Simons, 2006; Wanous et al., 2000; Wu et al., 2007).

    Wu et al. (2007) studied the effect of leadership practices on employee cynicism

towards change in a large Chinese organization. The researchers showed leadership

behaviors (Bass & Riggio's [2005] Four I's) were negatively related to employee

cynicism towards change. Additionally, they found interpersonal and informational

justice perceptions mediated the relationship between leadership and perceptions of

change. Further, they revealed these leadership practices to be more effective for group

cohesion (culture) than individuals specifically (Wu et al., 2007). They furthered the

scholarship on leader effects on groups when they felt the leaders were being truthful and

supportive during times of change. Podsakoff and colleagues in 1990 identified six

transformational leadership behaviors effective in shaping employees' views towards

change: articulating a vision of the future, fostering the acceptance of group goals,

communicating high-performance expectations, providing intellectual stimulation,

modeling appropriate behavior, and displaying supportive leader behavior (Bommer et

al., 2005). Bommer et al. (2005) found leaders who engaged in transformative leadership behaviors could reduce employee cynicism on change. Rubin et al. (2009) concluded leader cynicism to organizational change significantly impacted their leader behavior ratings and their employees' organizational commitment and cynicism to change. The researchers suggested using transformational leadership behaviors such as inspiration, influence, and considering individual needs, to rectify such issues (Rubin et al., 2009).

Several studies contradicted the majority of literature on the behaviors of leaders and their impact on change circumstances. Herold et al. (2008) found transformational leadership and change leadership (how the leader handles the current change situation) behaviors were not significantly correlated, nor was change leadership behaviors linked to change commitment. Transformational leadership behaviors and employee commitment to change were related, especially when the change initiative was seen as highly impacting the employee's job. Ultimately, Herold et al. (2008) asserted employees' reactions to change were based more on their relationship with the leader than on their actions towards the current change. However, Choi (2011) explained that "individuals' reactions to change are expected to be based on their experience of the more immediate change situation rather than on the master plan the leaders have established" (p. 492).

Leadership influence on culture and change in schools

Leadership practices have been found to have a direct influence on areas impacting cultures such as teacher and staff perceptions, satisfaction, performance, improvement, and collaborative practices (Choi, 2011; Duvall-Dickson, 2016; Kalman & Balkar, 2017; Kaltiainen et al., 2017; Lesinger et al., 2017; Stewart-Banks, et al., 2015;

Stolp & Smith, 1995; Vasilaski et al., 2016). Transformational leadership practices traditionally used in the business sector have been researched and proven effective in schools since 1978 (Anderson, 2007). Peterson & Deal (2002) explained the school leader's role in shaping culture to be: reading the culture, uncovering and articulating core values, and fashioning a positive context by reinforcing cultural elements that are beneficial. Sinden et al. (2004) found principals' leadership greatly impacted how teachers perceived the school's organizational structure and commitment to the school and goals. Spillane and Shirrell (2017) asserted that school leaders play significant roles in providing opportunities for teachers to develop social ties with their peers by assigning grade levels and leadership positions for developing social capital.

Orphanos and Orr (2014) studied innovative leadership preparation and exemplary leadership practice's effect on teacher job satisfaction and collaboration. Surveys and Likert rating scales were done with 175 teachers whose principals were prepared using exemplary leadership practices and 589 teachers whose principals were traditionally prepared. The researchers found exemplary leadership practices directly affected teachers' job satisfaction and collaboration (Orphanos & Orr, 2014). Cann et al. (2021) studied leaders' actions affecting overall teacher well-being. Researchers discovered teachers felt leaders who habitually ensured teachers felt valued through voice, work, and effort, provided meaningful professional development, and allowed teachers to participate in decision-making enhanced well-being among teachers (Cann et al., 2021).

Lee and Li (2015) studied school leader's impact on overall school culture in Taiwan. The researchers revealed the principal in the study practiced empathy and

communication with the faculty and had developed a trusting rapport characterized by patience, high expectations, and service. Inspirational leadership practices of recognition, rewarding, encouragement, and communication were practiced. Collaborative cultures established through teacher mentors served as examples. Suggestions were to form collaborative teaching teams with carefully chosen leaders, leadership focus on care and service, and honor high-quality and experienced teachers with praise and recognition (Lee & Li, 2015). Dunmay and Galand (2012) studied 660 teachers from French-speaking Belgian primary schools for the impact of transformational leadership practices on teacher commitment through school culture and teacher efficacy. The study's teacher questionnaire results revealed transformational leadership (charisma, consideration for individuals, and intellectual stimulation) was significantly related to teachers' organizational commitment and collective efficacy. It contradicted other studies indicating leadership practices were the key influence on organizational school culture, instead, it noted culture strength and group dynamics/efficacy/motivations determined the effect of transformational leadership practices on culture (Dunmay & Galand, 2012).

Research has shown leadership practices impact school culture and school change (Atasoy, 2020; Morris et al., 2020; Shava & Heystek, 2021; Van der Voet, et al., 2014). Stolp and Smith (1995) described school leaders as culture builders and must be seen as designers, teachers, and stewards of change. They explained culture change begins with leaders who take responsibility personally, within themselves, and connect with others (Stolp & Smith, 1995). Morris et al. (2020) conducted a participatory action research case study in Australia focusing on leadership style as related to school culture change in a secondary school. The researchers used questionnaires, post-test surveys, and qualitative

45

focus group data. They concluded that four factors of school organizational climate (appraisal and recognition, participative decision-making, professional growth, and supportive leadership) were important in developing positive school culture. Another effect of practicing those behaviors was a significant increase in staff morale (Morris et al., 2020). In South Africa, researchers Shava and Heystek (2021) studied instructional and transformational leadership models and six principals who used these models to change/improve underperforming schools. Through qualitative interviews, the researchers found that "transformational leadership approaches have the potential to restructure, develop a shared vision and distribute leadership and at the same time build[ing] a culture and climate that promotes school improvement" (Shava & Heystek, 2021, p. 1057).

Myers (2014) studied one Pennsylvania high school principal's leadership practices implemented during times of turbulence resulting in instability in the school. The researcher found utilizing practices such as using a team approach, reframing, systems operations, crisis operations, and experience helped maintain stability and helped staff feel safe and trusted his leading capabilities. Myers (2014) concluded,

> Taken together, the aptitudes and conduct of the school principal promote the idea that a particular leadership acuity that transverses the rational, emotional, social, technical, and moral domains is necessary to constrain turbulence while creating a resonant, trustful, and highly functioning organizational state. (p. 13)

Jeong et al. (2016) studied the role of transformational leadership in principals defining relationships between teachers' work engagement to professionalism and openness to change. The researchers examined 1,886 teachers in 59 schools in South Korea through

survey use and employed multilevel path analysis. The results indicated a significant relationship between teachers' work engagement and their professionalism and openness to change. However, a significant relationship between teachers' work engagement and their principal's transformational leadership practices was not found. The researchers suggested the results might indicate that when there was higher professionalism among the teachers, leadership practices might stifle professionalism; taking the initiative might be decreased when principals exhibited higher levels of control, or governing. The researchers do consider Korean culture as a possible reason for leadership practices, although transformative, to be highly bureaucratic (Jeong et al., 2016). Song et al. (2013) performed a similar study in the United States analyzing the relationship between transformational leadership, teachers' work engagement, knowledge practices, and perceived support. The researchers showed school support had a positive relationship with transformational leadership and work engagement, as well as transformational leadership affecting knowledge creation practices. Also, transformational leadership and teachers' work engagement were directly related to school climate. These same researchers found transformational leadership practices did not significantly impact teachers' work engagement (Song et al., 2013).

Navickaite and Janiunaite (2012) conducted a case study in Lithuania using surveys, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews. They studied internal and exterior barriers to change principals may face with implementing transformational leadership. Barriers identified throughout the change process (initiation, implementation, and after) included teacher disapproval, not preparing new teachers for change, teacher unwillingness to grow or take responsibility, negative attitudes towards work, teacher

disapproval of change, fear of change, skepticism, reluctance to change, etc. The

researchers inferred transformational leaders who were careful to build positive

relationships and school culture were less likely to encounter barriers or handle them

diligently (Navickaite & Janiunaite, 2012).

Bolman and Deal (1991) quantitatively studied how colleagues rated their

manager's use of the four frames using a sample of school administrators, higher

education administrators, Singapore school administrators, and corporate managers.

Survey scale analysis revealed several key pieces of information: *political* and *symbolic*

frames were key to effective leadership across the sample, school administrators rated

effective managers highest on *structural* and *symbolic frames,* effective leaders used

multiple frames more than effective managers, and there was a strong relationship

between manager effectiveness and frame orientations. Oddly, the two groups of school

administrators rated the *human resource frame* less important for leader effectiveness,

even though it was the dominant mode in the organization. Ultimately, Bolman and Deal

(1991) asserted managers and leaders needed to rely on all four frames to be the most

effective.

Prior research using Kouzes and Posner's exemplary leadership practices

Numerous studies have been conducted using Kouzes and Posner's (2017)

exemplary leadership practices (*model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the*

process, enable others to act, and *encourage the heart*) in organizations and businesses

(Bhandari et al., 2011; Eigsti & Davis, 2015; Grivol et al., 2020; Hallock, 2019;

Jackowski & Burroughs, 2015; Johns & Watson, 2006; Jumoke Ajanaku & Lubbe, 2021;

Mancheno-Smoak et al., 2009; McFarlane, 2011; Popa, 2012; Posner, 2016; Strack et al.,

2008; Summer et al., 2006; Vito, 2020). Regarding those practices in schools, few were found which studied the effect of those practices on perception, commitment, and culture. Below those studies are examined.

Exemplary leadership practices effect on employee perception, commitment, and culture.

Emmanuel and Valley (2021) conducted a qualitative case study on how principals in three high-performing U.S. Virgin Islands schools effectively used Kouzes & Posner's exemplary leadership practices. Principals, teachers, and staff were given a questionnaire, and researchers conducted three sets of semi-structured interviews and a 30-item questionnaire to gather data on leader use of such practices. Results were categorized by the five exemplary practices, with multiple themes emerging. Researchers found leaders who *modeled the way* were seen as role models and influenced a shared purpose among the staff. Those who *inspired a shared vision* used evidence-based information in decisions and collaborative leadership efforts. Those leaders *challenged the process* by providing opportunities for professional development and leading the school in being reflective. Effective leaders helped develop collaborative structures allowing for productive dialogue and autonomy. Lastly, the principals *encouraged the hearts* of their team members by recognizing hard work and effort and making sure they knew that they were confident in their team's abilities. Researchers determined effective leaders used exemplary practices and the U.S. Virgin Islands should train leaders in those practices (Emmanuel & Valley, 2021). Leech and Fulton (2008) studied teachers' perceptions of leadership behaviors and shared decision-making using Kouzes & Posner's Leadership Practices Inventory (1997, as cited in Leech & Fulton, 2008)

through surveys taken by secondary school teachers. Although the researchers indicated little relationship between leadership behaviors and shared decision-making, the most substantial relationship found which was linked to shared decision-making was the *challenge the process* practice (Leech & Fulton, 2008).

Lingham and Lingham (2015) studied teacher perceptions of school leaders' use of Kouzes and Posner's exemplary leadership practices in Niue, a small island northeast of New Zealand. Niue schools needed educational reform, and in turn, strong leadership to guide changes. In using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) developed by Kouzes and Posner, results indicated leaders were more likely to practice *encouraging the heart* but not the other four practices. Stewart-Banks et al. (2015) studied leadership styles of school principals' impact on employee performance, commitment, and morale in northeastern Georgia, United States. The researchers used Kouzes & Posner's (2013, as cited in Stewart-Banks et al., 2015) Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) survey to assess the five exemplary leadership practices and a Likert assessment tool with a ten-point rating scale, as well as qualitative interview questions. One of the five practices, *model the way*, had the highest mean and median scores. Principal characteristics of communication, relationships, open-mindedness, approachability, enjoyment of education, and being knowledgeable were found directly related to school staff commitment (Stewart-Banks et al., 2015). Through a correlational quantitative research design study in Turkey using Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Practices Inventory and a school culture inventory, Turan and Bektas (2013) established positive and significant relationships between teacher's scores of school culture and leadership practices

(guidance, creating a vision, questioning the process, encouraging personnel, and encouraging audience).

Exemplary leadership practices effect on change

After researching literature related to Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices on culture and change in schools, little was found. After finding this gap exists in the literature, this study will contribute to research and the education profession, especially geared towards leaders in schools dealing with situations of mergers, socialization, and enculturating new members to a school.

Other gaps in research include those using both Bolman and Deal (2013) and Kouzes and Posner (2017) as a linked framework, socializing/enculturating new teachers into established school culture, case studies using a participant researcher in this context, as well as focus group research in the proposed context.

Conceptual Framework

For the purposes of this study, as mentioned in Chapter 1, I used Schein's (2010) organizational theory, Bolman and Deal's (2013) theory, and Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices to guide the study. Combining the three approaches is imperative to understand the scope and implications of this study. To first unveil the cultural factors defining the school site being studied, the researcher must understand the elements of the culture at play and how to assess and strategically plan for cultural change. Schein (2010) addressed the leader's role in the organization's culture as a change agent. Second, understanding the leader's role as essential in organizational change was necessary. Transformational leadership was addressed through the lens of Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices and commitments, which

were the guiding "operating system" (p. 13) used during an organizational change in this study.

Chapter Summary

Organizational culture, change, and leadership were the areas guiding this research. All three areas were intertwined and interdependent to ensure change circumstances were handled by leadership in such a manner to influence culture in a productive and positive light. Change can negatively influence an organization if the employees in the organization do not perceive the change as needed and leadership does not handle it diligently. When change involves employees, as does in mergers and acquisitions (M&As), the leader must ensure strategies such as acculturation, socialization, and enculturation are at the forefront of planning. Further, leaders must use specific research-proven leadership practices to impact change successfully by focusing on the employees. Focusing on Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices and Bolman and Deal's (2013) organizational frames are promising for the research problem guiding the proposed study.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

As all organizations are made up of people, all organizations have an underlying culture. According to Schein (2010), our interactions with others, as well as our own behavior, impacts culture. In the setting of the proposed study, Fantasia Elementary was going through an organizational change which had the ability to greatly impact the school culture. Program mergers or acquisitions could disrupt the established culture, and leaders are powerful and influential in shaping how the change is accepted (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Schein, 2010). The purpose of this qualitative study is to determine how Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices could assist in integrating new teachers into a collaborative and empowering school culture. For Merriam (2002), "the key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world" (p. 3). Qualitative research is most appropriate for the proposed study in that I will be studying my leader interactions/practices and how this impacts teacher interactions with newcomers. The various elements of methodology will be specifically explored in the below sections.

Research Design

Maxwell (2013) explains qualitative research as:

    Research that is intended to help you better understand (1) the meanings and

    perspectives of the people you study-seeing the world from their point of view,

rather than simply from your own; (2) how these perspectives are shaped by, and

shape, their physical, social, and cultural contexts; and (3) the specific processes

that are involved in maintaining or altering these phenomena and relationships. (p.

viii)

For the purposes of the proposed research, a qualitative design is best suited as I am

seeking to find how exemplary leadership practices assist in managing employee changes

and interactions and how the teachers in the school perceive the integration of new

teachers from the Specialized Programs.

I have chosen to do a qualitative case study because it allows the opportunity to

study a specific case in context. Yin (2018) clarified that a case study "is an empirical

method that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within its

real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context

may not be clearly evident" (p. 15). This study investigated the connection between

exemplary leadership practices and the impact on elements of school culture, as in the

acceptance of new teachers, therefore, the research used a qualitative case study design.

Patton (2015) asserted in-depth single cases can have value and were important

because every discipline has had "breakthrough insights" from a single case (p. 276). Yin

(2018) described the five rationales for single-case study design, with this one being the

critical case; the case representing a test to theory. In this case, studying exemplary

leadership practices impacts on a significant change in the school and the effect on school

culture would be considered critical to organizational and leadership theory in the school

context. Patton (2015) explains:

The weight of evidence from a single critical case permits logical generalization

and maximum application of information to other highly similar cases because if

it's true of this one case, it's likely to be true of all other cases in that category.

(pp. 275-276)

This study is important because it allows readers to better understand what kind of

leadership practices influenced culture change and gain insight into how teachers'

perspectives of culture and integrating new teachers were impacted. Just like groups of

people, every organization and school have a culture. And every organization has

leadership, whether a single person or group. Through analyzing a single case where

organizational culture change is occurring, this study can better inform and educate

school leaders on (1) how change in teachers can impact organizational culture, (2) how

leader practices can influence change and culture, and (3) how teachers view and live

their organization's culture. My direct involvement and membership in the group being

studied was inevitable as immersion in the culture as a participant-observer was required.

Lewin (1997) explained it is (1) not possible to study a human system without

intervening in it, and (2) we can only fully understand a human system by *trying* to

change it (as cited by Schien, 2010, pp. 185-186).

Additionally, Yin (2018) described further how single-cases may be holistic or

embedded. This study is an embedded single-case study where multiple units of analysis

were inherent; analyzing culture as a whole through the lens of two different programs at

Fantasia Elementary. The first and larger program is the one established for all students

and designed for the general student body. The other is a specific program with

Specialized Teachers for a particular set of students. Using a theoretical basis of

transformational leadership through exemplary leadership practices and organizational

culture and leadership theory, this study used a single case format to analyze an

instrumental critical case, provide insight into issues, or redefine a generalization (Stake,

2000). Exemplary leadership practices can be used in any school culture and/or change

situation.

Research Questions

The following questions will guide this dissertation study.

RQ 1: How do Kouzes and Posner's (2017) Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership

assist in integrating new teachers into a larger school culture during organizational

change?

RQ 2: What are teacher perceptions of the integration of new members into the school

culture during organizational change?

<div align="center">

Research Setting

</div>

The setting of this qualitative case study will be Fantasia Elementary, where I was

the assistant principal at the time. It is an elementary school serving grades kindergarten

through 5th grade in the Southeast region of the United States. According to the National

Center for Education Statistics, the locale is considered "rural: fringe"; only two other

middle schools within the district have this distinction, as all other schools in the county

are characterized as "city" or "suburb." As of the 2019-2020 school year statistics, the

school enrollment was 299 students and 33 classroom teachers (USDOE, 2019). In the

school's October 2021 full-time equivalent (FTE) count, 81.69% of the students in the

school qualified for free and reduced-price eligibility, meaning they lived in households

with incomes 130% below the federal poverty level (reduced meals) or between 130%

and 185% below (free meals) (Georgia Department of Education, 2021; USDA, 2021).

Table 3 shows the race/ethnic and gender enrollment from the October 2021 FTE count

(Georgia Department of Education, 2021).

Table 3

Fantasia Elementary Student Enrollment by Ethnicity/Race and Gender; October 2021

	Hispanic	Indian*	Asian*	Black	Pacific*	White	Multi-racial
	n	*n*	*n*	*n*	*n*	*n*	*n*
Gender							
Males	29	*	*	70	*	33	*
Females	38	*	*	71	*	27	19
Total	67	*	*	141	*	60	19

Note: n = 287; * indicates less than 15 students in the category.

Specialized Programs (SP) within the school is the group of unique programs in

the school district that have been housed in our school but run by a program coordinator

hired at the district level. The school district places programs focused on various needs

throughout the district and bus students from around the county. The group of programs

at Fantasia Elementary School is the only elementary program of this type offered in the

district. The Specialized Programs portion of the school houses four programs; (a) a Pre-

Kindergarten (Pre-K) serving students in the special education program, (b) a behavior

program for students served in special education with emotional/behavioral needs related

to their disabilities not being met in the general education classroom, (c) a behavior

intervention program for students identified in the Multi-Tiered System of Supports

(MTSS) for behavior needs at their previous school, and (d) a program for students with

Autism run by the local university.

The Special Education Pre-K program was the only program the school administration had some control of prior to the program merge. Because it was a program within the Early Learning Center (ELC) of the district, it was ultimately overseen by the ELC as was the case for all Pre-K programs in the district. Students in the program were in a self-contained model, which is "instruction for students with disabilities in one area of exceptionality for four or more segments in an instructional day" (Official Code of Georgia [O.C.G.A.], 2007). Except for the Autism program and special education Pre-K, the students in the remainder of the programs attend special classes (physical education, art, and music) within the general population with all academics in their program class until successful inclusion in the general education setting could be accomplished. The goal of both behavior programs was for students to learn and effectively practice skills needed to be successful in the least restrictive environment; a general education classroom. Having a transition plan in place where students could show success along a continuum of phasing back into the general education population was a key element to programmatic success.

This program in the school came under our administration to oversee beginning in the 2021-2022 school year. Students included in Specialized Programs were unique since their data were not reported within the school. Because these students were bused in from around the county and were still considered a part of their home school for FTE purposes, their data were not included in any public access reports. Due to the small program size, I calculated our enrollment based on my access to the school records and the Infinite Campus student information system program. The total number of students in Specialized Programs was 43 (as of September 2021). Student gender included seven females and 36

58

males in all four programs. The student demographics by race/ethnicity are represented in Table 4.

Table 4

Fantasia Elementary Specialized Programs Enrollment by Ethnicity/Race and Program

Program	Hispanic	Black	White	Multi-racial
	n	*n*	*n*	*n*
SpEd Pre-K	3	4	1	N/A
Autism	2	13	2	2
SpEd Behavior	N/A	12	N/A	2
GenEd Behavior	N/A	2	N/A	N/A

Note: n=43; * Race terms used in Infinite Campus program based on State Race/Ethnicity reporting.

Population Sample

For the purposes of this study, the participants who were directly involved include the school principal, the Special Education Team Lead, teachers in Fantasia Elementary (including Specialized Programs), and me. The term "teachers" will be used to represent instructional staff in the school, both teachers and instructional paraprofessionals. The total number of teachers in this school is included in Table 4 (L. Chatham, personal communication, November 15, 2021). The established Fantasia Elementary teachers are referred to as "Established Teachers," and the teachers in the Specialized Programs (SP) are referred to as "SP teachers." The established program serves students in grades pre-K to 5th grade, including special education co-teachers, instructional paraprofessionals, Early Intervention Program (EIP) teachers, a gifted teacher, an English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher, and specials teachers (physical education, art, music, and STEM). The Specialized Program Teachers include 16 teachers; eight in the special education behavior program, two for the general education behavior program, three for

the special education Pre-K, and three certified teachers in the Autism program hired by

the local university through a grant with the school district. Through the partnership with

the local university, college students are assigned to the Autism program to fulfill

practicum field experience requirements for graduation from the School of Psychology

and Special Education. Those college students were not participants of this study.

Table 5: Fantasia Elementary Educators Population Sample for the 2021-2022 School

Year

	Established	Specialized Programs
	n	*n*
Administration/Leadership	2	1
Teachers	31	8
Paraprofessionals	5	8

Note: n=55

For participating teachers, with approval from Valdosta State University's

Institutional Review Board (IRB) seen in Appendix A, a survey was utilized to gather

their demographic information. Likewise, for focus groups, participating teachers were

asked to volunteer and information would be collected from participants, including years

taught, years at Fantasia Elementary, and whether they were a part of the teachers of the

Established or Specialized Program. More information on the selection of focus group

participants is included in the data collection and methods section below.

Data Collection and Methods

Yin (2018) provided six sources of evidence for case study research, with two

being used for the purposes of this study: observations and interviews. Schein (2010)

explained that the reliance on behavior observation cannot be the sole source for

determining culture as behavior could occur for other reasons based on varying

situations. Observing such behavior might only address the surface level of culture and might not reveal established beliefs or assumptions. Therefore, focus group interviews with members of the organization were used to attempt to gain access to a deeper cultural analysis. Phase one of the case study research included a survey interview and observations as exemplary leadership practices were implemented throughout the school year. Phase two included the focus group interviews towards the end of the school year to gain insight into school staff experiences and beliefs about any organizational culture changes as a result. The advantage of engaging in data collection in two phases is two-fold. First, the observation data would be collected simultaneously as I implemented the exemplary leadership practices to gather information while in present circumstances. Secondly, the focus group interviews would, for participating teachers, occur at the end of the school year as a culminating collection of teacher perspectives compared to my researcher's perspective from phase 1. This comparison inherently served as a check to my data through triangulation of sources as I am a participant researcher in the case study and may interpret events or interactions through my biases rather than from a teacher perspective (Patton, 2015).

Survey Interview

Yin (2018) categorized the type of instrument I used as a survey interview. A survey interview was used to collect quantitative data as part of an embedded case study to supplement other data collection (Yin, 2018, p. 121). The survey consisted of seven questions to gather demographic data as well as teacher perceptions or understandings of the current culture at Fantasia Elementary (Appendix B). It was developed and distributed through Qualtrics, a survey tool used for creating surveys and collecting data

available free for use through Valdosta State University. Participation remained

anonymous, and responses were extracted through Qualtrics for analysis. The purposes of

survey data collection and analysis were to report on school demographics and to gather a

baseline for teacher perceptions of the current school culture at Fantasia Elementary.

Consent to participate was provided to the participants (Appendix C). The limitation to

this data was that it was being collected mid to late in the school year of the program

merger. Optimally, it would have been collected before the start of the 2021-2022 school

year in order to gather school cultural perceptions prior to the structural change.

However, I feel it was still relevant to know where our teachers' understanding of culture

was prior to focus group participation. The demographic data will be presented in the

population section of this chapter and the data from the school culture explanation will be

included in the data analysis chapter.

Participant-Observations

According to Yin (2018), observations may take two forms: direct researcher

observations by an outside, uninvolved perspective, or as is the case for the present study,

participant-observation. Participant-observation is a type of observation extending

beyond passive observance to involvement and interaction (Yin, 2018). As captured by

the observer or researcher, reality is viewed from the perspective of the inside rather than

observing the phenomena from the outside. Participation of the researcher varies, from

being a member of the case studied to active involvement in decisions. The direct

participation needed in this case involved practicing exemplary leadership to influence

the cultural shift, which could only be achieved through participant-observation (Yin,

2018). For the present case study, I was a participant-observer as an administrator in the

school and as the researcher. Observations were conducted physically or in person and recorded through field notes, a checklist, and analytic memos (Maxwell, 2013; Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2018). All data will be maintained in a password-protected folder on my university-issued account in Microsoft OneDrive for three years after the study, at which case it will be deleted.

Patton (2015) provided a list of limitations to observations, including that the observer's presence might affect the situation in ways that might be unknown; people who know they are being observed may behave in atypical ways; the observer's biases or perceptions might influence the data, and observation could not capture the true feelings or thinking since data collection was centered on external behaviors (p. 390). Patton (2015) suggested triangulating the data with other sources, as I intend to do and show in the sections below.

Field Notes

Field notes, according to Patton (2015), are "rich, detailed descriptions, including the context within which the observations were made" through descriptions of "activities, behaviors, actions, conversations, interpersonal interactions, organizational or community processes, or any other aspect of observable human experience" (p. 36). Emerson et al. (1995) explained the researcher in the field must actively participate in the daily affairs and be immersed to get close enough to understand underlying assumptions in social ties. As the participant-researcher, I was a member of the social group and would have more readily available access to those being studied and observed. Such field notes were taken throughout the school year based on my observations of occurrences and interactions with established and SP teachers. As opportunities occurred for my deliberate practice in

63

exemplary leadership, I took notes on how I did such practice, notes on when an occasion occurred in the school providing the opportunity to do such practice, or as a result of the practice. Inevitably, what I recorded in my field notes would be a product of what I deemed relevant or essential to my purpose. My attempts at capturing participants' experiences, feelings, and emotions during observed situations included direct quotations, observed body language, and emotional reactions.

As Emerson et al. (1995) illustrated, there are two modes of participation for those researching and taking field notes; those who seek events specifically and purposefully for writing first, and those who engage in "participating-in-order-to-write" fieldwork, where full immersion is the priority and writing comes secondary. For the purposes of this study, I mainly engaged in the latter. While participation as a priority means writing was not at the forefront of every observation, it was essential to take notes or *jottings* of keywords to jog my memory when sitting down to do a full write-up after the observation. I carried a small spiral notebook with me, as I regularly moved about the school as part of my position as assistant principal, to take notes or make lists for responsibilities or items to be addressed. Since the teachers knew I carry this and often took notes, this action would not interfere with normal school activities or relationships. I jotted down keywords or quotations to use when I went back to my computer at the end of the school day to type my observation.

Emerson et al. (1995) offered procedures to better participate-in-order-to-write which I heeded while making jottings: (1) take note of my own initial impressions, (2) focus my observations on key events or incidents I deemed important to the purpose of my study, and (3) move beyond my own reactions and focus on what others I am

observing reacted to as a focus. Further, the authors suggested several recommendations to make jottings useful for descriptive field notes: (1) jotting details the researcher can see as key for interactions, (2) avoiding making generalizations, (3) jot details on words spoken or specific actions, (4) jotting key sensory details possibly forgotten later, but potentially significant, and (5) jotting general impressions or feelings that may be important later, even if unknown how in the moment (Emerson et al., 1995).

After taking field notes when the opportunity arose, I converted my fieldnote jottings to "expanded write-ups" by typing specific occurrences and quotes in preparation for data analysis. Raw field notes are only understandable to the researcher; therefore, it is crucial to write an observation in such a way for others to read, edit, code, and/or analyze (Miles et al., 2014). Member checking, or respondent validation, was used to validate the data I collected from fieldnotes and interpret the data. Member checking was used for data validation purposes through having a person in or involved in the study review the data and provide feedback on conclusions made (Maxwell, 2013). After data collection as a member check, I consulted with the school principal as she was the most familiar with the teachers, the situation, and would be the one ablest in the school to assist in interpreting or validating what I saw and interpreted. Data analysis will be expanded upon further in the chapter.

Windshield Survey Checklist

Yin (2018) referenced Miles and Hubberman's (1994) *windshield survey* as a way to keep track or count of "various observed phenomena " in a case study (p. 133). To keep track of which exemplary leadership practices I used in various observation field notes during data collection, I used a checklist in which I marked off which of the five

practices I used during a specific event or observation (Appendix D). Subjectivity may be a limitation to this data collection as I may have believed my own actions or a specific occurrence in observational data were directly related to exemplary leadership practices. I was diligent in re-reading the practices and examples in the Kouzes and Posner (2017) text to compare them to my observations. I was open to multiple practices potentially being used in each event. Further, as I was the participant researcher and was deliberately practicing exemplary leadership based on my thorough examination of Kouzes and Posner (2017), I was more apt to be aware of and intentional in the leadership practice than an outside researcher observing my practices. This data collection checklist aimed to record my intentional practices and connected them directly to events or interactions with Fantasia Elementary teachers.

Analytic Memos

Either after expanding my field notes or concurrently with doing so, I added analytic memos or researcher reflections to the data. According to Miles et al. (2014), memos are "brief or extended narrative[s] that documents the researcher's reflections and thinking processes about the data...typically a rapid way of capturing thoughts that occur throughout data collection, data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, conclusion testing, and final reporting" (pp. 95-96). Maxwell (2013) suggested using this writing to reflect and comprehend and that they can be written on anything from issues, encounters, ideas, or reactions; they should be a "tool for thinking" (p. 20). Emerson et al. (1995) explained the researcher should document their own activities, attitudes, and feelings from observations impacting the process and interpretation of ethnographic

observations. Analytic memos complemented the field notes to provide my interpretation or impressions from the observations.

Maxwell (2013) pointed out the value of the memos depends on: (1) the researcher engaging beyond the mere recording of events to reflect and analyze, and (2) the memos are logically organized in such a manner they can be easily retrieved during research and analysis. Limitations to memos are that they are subjective to the researcher's view and beliefs, but if triangulated with other data, could have the potential to complement or strengthen data collected in the study (Patton, 2015).

Focus Group Interviews

Yin (2018) asserted that interviews are the most important source used in case studies because they target the primary source of the case: human action or perspective. Interviews might be with a single person at a time or in a group depending on the rationale for providing the best data for the purposes of the study. Since culture is based on *shared* assumptions, it is best to conduct group interviews rather than individual interviews (Schein, 2010). According to Patton (2015), a focus group was "an interview with a small group of people on a specific topic" through a "social experience" to increase "meaningfulness and validity of findings because our perspectives are formed and sustained in social groups" (p. 475). As Stake (2000) explained with case study research, "qualitative researchers have strong expectations that the reality perceived by people inside and outside the case will be social, cultural, situational, and contextual-and they want the interactivity of functions and contexts be well described as possible" (p. 452). Schein (2010) concluded the best way to gather cultural data in the organization is

to gather representatives from the group together to discuss the "shared group phenomena" (p. 191).

With this in mind, focus group interviews were chosen as an additional means of data collection for several reasons. First, conducting additional focus groups with staff would bring differing yet complementing data which could then be compared to my participant researcher's viewpoints from observations and field notes. Second, the nature of focus grouping provides a unique perspective of participants feeding off one another's responses, allowing for a deeper understanding of issues at hand through social interaction. Third, participants may be more willing to engage, knowing others around them express similar or opposing views (Patton, 2015).

Advantages to focus groups are: a) they are a more cost-effective alternative to individual interviews, b) they can showcase diverse perspectives in one sitting, c) participant interactions are able to enhance data quality by not only analyzing answers but assisting in analyzing people's responses to interactions amongst each other, d) topics avoided or participants being silent is insightful, e) shared views offer insight, and f) participants tend to enjoy the social interaction (Patton, 2015, pp. 477-478). Limitations to interviews may include barriers such as biases, anger, anxiety, recall issues, reactivity, or being unaware, which may influence or misrepresent reality (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Specifically, there are additional limitations to the focus group interview, including a limit on the number of questions that can be asked, individual response time is restrained, must be carefully managed by the moderator to limit participator domination, those who feel they are in the minority may not speak up, dynamics are different between

participants who know one another versus strangers, lack of confidentiality among the group, and taking place outside the natural setting (Patton, 2015, p. 478).

For this study, two focus group interviews occurred in the summer after the 2021-2022 school year, one with teachers from Specialized Programs and the other with established teachers. Krueger and Casey (2009) suggested several focus group designs based on purpose, with the one chosen for this study being a Multiple-Category Design (pp. 25-26). This design was chosen as I had two focus groups with two types of participants occurring simultaneously. This grouping aimed for each group member to feel comfortable with freely discussing their interactions with the other group in the organization. Schein (2010) suggested when the organization members come together to discuss culture, it is best to ensure members of different subcultures are considered.

To reduce participant reactivity to my presence as the researcher and administrator using the leadership practices being studied, I recruited moderators to lead the focus groups. Krueger and Casey (2009) suggested using two moderators in a focus group to split the responsibilities. One moderator led the group with questions and guidance. At the same time, the other operated the audio recorder, addressed the refreshments or any environmental issues that may arise, and took note of facial expressions, body language, etc., to aid in my data analysis. Factors to be considered which could also be limitations if not addressed were that the moderator respected the participants and their views, the purpose and topic of the study were understood, the moderator was able to communicate clearly, they be open and not defensive, and they were someone the participants feel comfortable talking to or around (Krueger & Casey, 2009). These limitations will be addressed through careful planning, as seen below.

Krueger and Casey (2009) explained in some instances, it was good to have an outside moderator, so participants felt they needed to explain the context more deeply. In other cases, when it was someone they knew and was a part of the culture, they might speak more freely and openly. Because they suggested the decision be based on the members (in this case, teachers) of the group, I decided to have the two moderators conduct all focus groups; both were members of Fantasia Elementary. One of those moderators was newer to the school and one was someone who knew more people due to their tenure in the school. Because the moderators are not seasoned, it would be best to include moderators not as likely to influence the group or steer off the moderating path and interject. I developed a moderator guide based on Krueger and Casey's (2009) focus group guide and trained the moderators on how to question participants (Appendix E). Appendix F includes the Focus Group prompts for each group which guided the interview.

Krueger and Casey (2009) suggest using five to eight participants for focus groups. I offered participation to all teachers in the school. I sent out a Google Form via my Valdosta State University email to the teachers to gather the number who intended to participate. The results from this form were sent to the two moderators, to keep anonymity. Since more than eight teachers volunteered for each teacher group, the moderators were instructed to randomize the volunteers by choosing the "*n*th" systematically based on the number of teachers who volunteered (Krueger & Casey, 2009). The remaining participants were told they were on call should volunteers not show for the scheduled focus group or if more information was needed. This process was followed for both teacher groups. All teachers who volunteered to participate in this study

were provided the Consent to Participate- Focus Groups form (Appendix G) in the email asking for volunteers and was again read by the moderator at the beginning of the focus group interview.

Krueger and Casey (2009) suggested the length of a focus group to be one to two hours. I negotiated this suggestion to an hour and a half to allow for introductions and getting comfortable with one another while still having enough time to address the planned prompts. As a former teacher myself, and due to work-related time commitments, I believe participating teachers may feel more inclined to volunteer if the focus group was scheduled for less than 2 hours. The focus group interviews occurred after the end of the school year; early in the summer. The focus group was held in the school's conference room out of (1) convenience, so the participants do not have to travel, (2) comfortability in it is a place they regularly engage in meetings and planning, and (3) so the environment may be arranged into a circle (Krueger, 2002; Schein, 2010). Using focus group interviews rather than individual interviews might have helped the participants feel more at ease in offering their perspectives and strengthening their anonymity should the past coordinator or those involved in the program prior to the merger read the study (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Krueger and Casey (2009) suggested eating together as a way to make members feel comfortable and more likely to converse or communicate with one another. As the groups were mid-morning and not during mealtime, I provided light refreshments such as cookies or chips and bottled water and soda.

The focus groups were video/audio recorded using Zoom teleconferencing software with program-generated transcription prior to my ability to access them. This

information was explained in the consent form provided in the email asking for participants and again read before participation. Because I am the administrator in the school and have had many interactions with the teachers, I would know faces and be likely to recognize voices; this might have influenced the focus group members' willingness to be completely open and honest. The lead moderator for the focus group recorded the session with their Zoom account and only provided me with the text transcription. After receiving the transcript and attempting to edit based on inherent program errors, I provided the edited transcript to my moderators to member-check for accuracy. The moderators then highlighted the transcript with different colors for each participant response as to aid in my analysis. The Zoom program default is set to delete recordings after seven days. I ensured that I had obtained the text transcription from the lead moderator prior to seven days and that it was password protected in my Valdosta State University account issued Microsoft OneDrive. I ensured the moderator did not alter the setting to save indefinitely.

<center>**Data Analysis Procedures**</center>

Data Analysis Strategies and Techniques

Yin (2018) suggested having an analytical strategy in mind when preparing to conduct and analyze data from a case study, directing your efforts. Four strategies were recommended: relying on a theoretical proposition, starting analysis from the ground up, developing case descriptions, and examining rival explanations (Yin, 2018, pp. 168-174). Of the four suggested strategies, the one most appropriate for the present study was using theoretical propositions. The proposed study was guided by Kouzes and Posner's (2017) leadership theory of exemplary leadership practices, skills, and abilities making

<center>72</center>

organizations extraordinary. Additionally, organizational cultural theories related to change and merging new programs and people into the established culture were the basis for the study (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Schein, 2010). As discussed in the next paragraph, the conceptual framework and theories mentioned guided all aspects of the study and the analysis plan.

In an effort to be deeply entrenched in the data analysis process, I forwent using data analysis software and opted to use the process and strategies for coding manually from Saldaña (2016). Saldaña (2016) suggests using manual coding for first-time and small scale studies, first coding on hardcopy print outs before using the computer. I did as suggested and color coded and wrote notes on my print copies of the focus group transcripts. I then went in on my Microsoft Word processor and used the comments function to type in codes alongside the words or passages. Finally, I created a separate document listing the first and second cycle codes I found in the transcription. I used Miles et al. (2014) and Saldaña's (2016) coding strategies as my guide for data analysis. I evaluated how using Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices influenced and assisted in integrating new teachers into the established school culture.

Survey data provided participant demographics but also were used to analyze teacher perceptions of culture. I used in vivo coding, using the participants' words as codes (Saldaña, 2016). This coding strategy was best suited for this analysis as it allowed for the words teachers used to describe school culture to convey their meaning based on various cultural levels (Schein, 2010). I then used pattern coding for the second cycle to organize the codes based on culture perceptions. I used this information to show what their perceptions were about the culture at Fantasia Elementary and compared what

information was collected during the focus groups. The windshield survey checklist data was used to validate my use of Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices. Checklist data analysis showed which strategies were used in which circumstances and assisted in my analysis of situational observations resulting from such practice.

As for analyzing the fieldnotes and analytic memos, I feel using a combination of provisional and in vivo coding in the first cycle and pattern coding in the second cycle allowed me to deeply analyze the data (Saldaña, 2016). Phase 1 analysis of the first coding cycle was from observations throughout the school year and utilized a deductive coding technique of provisional coding. Provisional coding begins with a list of predetermined codes the researcher believes may appear after investigating theory, prior data, prior knowledge, conceptual framework, etc. (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016). I analyzed the data from observations into the five exemplary leadership practices: *model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act,* and *encourage the heart* (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). I coded observations based on the leadership practices used (if it was a practice I did intentionally) and what practice may have influenced a particular event or situation I observed. I then used this coding strategy for topics/actions I felt were not easily coded with provisional codes, but still warranted analysis. I used in vivo coding and pattern coding for the second cycle.

Phase 2 analysis of the first coding cycle included data from focus group interviews which initially in vivo coding. Looking for language patterns alluded to how the group members collectively viewed the SP teachers' integration into the established culture. For focus group questions and discussion focused on school culture and

74

leadership practices, I used provisional coding in addition to in vivo in order to align to predetermined themes. For focus group questions regarding perceptions and experiences, I used in vivo coding for the first cycle and pattern coding for the second. Once the second cycle coding was complete, I allowed those findings to guide how I presented my findings in Chapter V.

Validity

According to Maxwell (2013), validity in qualitative research referred to the "correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account" (p. 122). He identified two specific threats to validity in qualitative studies: (1) researcher bias and (2) reactivity. As a participant researcher and being a part of the educational community in the setting being studied, it was paramount I was continuously aware of and worked to address both throughout the study. In the below sections, I identify how I kept both at bay.

Researcher bias

Researcher bias refers to the researcher's subjectivity: the ideas, perceptions, beliefs, or theories that may influence the interpretation of the data (Maxwell, 2013). It is important to be aware of and develop a plan for addressing your potential biases and how they may influence interpretation. There are two apparent areas of bias having the potential to tempt subjectivity. If I reflect on these, make them known, and work against this lens throughout my study, I can be diligent in addressing those biases. First, as a participant researcher and assistant principal in the school I studied, I was aware I could observe and interpret the data to be more favorable or critical of teachers and their actions towards one another. I was an alternative school special education teacher and program

director at one point in my educational career. I am empathic and understanding of teachers who work in special education and programs designed for students with problematic behaviors. I understand the difficulty in feeling a part of a school community and supported when the students you serve are viewed as a hindrance to other students in the learning community. My family and friends often asked why I would subject myself to such a difficult job when I could work with "easier" students. Other candidates were often chosen for leadership positions in public schools over myself because, as one principal told me, "You are specialized in that area and don't have experience working in more mainstream schools." I know my past experience has the potential for me to favor the teachers in such a program or view the Established Teachers as too critical or unaccepting. I worked hard to view and record my observations through a generic lens. One way I did this was to debrief with my principal after writing my observations to compare her interpretation with my own in order to seek a more objective view while writing my reflections.

Another potential bias was working through the lens as an administrator and leader in the research setting. My potential bias of looking at every teacher interaction and situation as a result of my influence or exemplary leadership practice I used may have affected my judgment of whether the practice was effective. I could conclude there was a strong connection between the two because of my intentionality in practice and assumption the practices were what made the change. I addressed this potential bias in my observations by including the focus group interviews to hear views from participants in the study on how they perceived integrating new members affected the culture. Using

both types of data in my analysis helped check the other and work against my subjectivity.

Reactivity

Reactivity referred to how the researcher might influence those being studied and/or the setting (Maxwell, 2013). Maxwell (2013) explained it was imperative that the researcher understand how you might be influencing and how it could have affected the study's validity. I acknowledged and understood as an administrator in the school and research setting, a certain level of reactivity from the teachers was likely inevitable. As a previous teacher myself, I know an administrator's presence in some situations, such as classroom observations, influenced how teachers reacted or responded to certain situations. Intimidation or fear of correction or reprimand might have affected how open or honest teachers were. I attempted to address potential reactivity in two ways.

First, my research observations did not occur during official district-mandated walkthroughs or observations for evaluation purposes as those situations had the most potential for reactivity. My observations happened during grade-level planning, informal interactions with teachers, various lines of communication, etc. Since these instances are normalized interactions throughout the school, reactivity may not be as influential. Second, as mentioned in the data collection section above, moderators were used during focus group interviews to limit reactivity to me as the participant researcher and supervising administrator. Additionally, as teachers were informed their participation would be anonymous and the recordings were transcribed before my access to maintain confidentiality, the reactivity of being known will be minimized or limited.

Maxwell (2013) provided a validity test checklist of eight strategies to consider for testing the validity of the conclusions interpreted. Of the eight, those I felt were relevant to my study were (1) intensive, long-term involvement, (2) rich data, (3) intervention, (4) triangulation, and (5) comparison.

Intensive, long-term involvement. Intensive, long-term involvement is inherent in this study. First, as a participant researcher, I was fully involved in the process of collecting, analyzing, and writing. My study reflects my 11 years in education as a teacher in times of organizational change and as an administrator in the current school year, working through recent changes in my school. Through this long-term involvement in organizational change, I intend to provide a thorough representation and interpretation of the data. One disadvantage is the proposed study is only from one year of implementation.

Rich Data. During my research, I collected a variety of rich data in the form of reflections, observations, analytic memos, and focus group interviews. Having very detailed data from multiple sources ensured I had provided a descriptive and complete representation of the case being studied. The above section on data collection explained how I did so.

Intervention. Maxwell (2013) asserted qualitative studies may include interventions that were not to the extent of a "treatment" in a quantitative study (p. 127). In the proposed research, I implemented exemplary leadership practices and research during this entire 2021-2022 school year as an intervention to target including the

merging program teachers into the school culture. Additionally, Maxwell (2013) explained in field research, the researcher being present was considered an intervention.

Triangulation. Triangulation refers to making comparisons and cross-checking information gained through multiple sources such as observations, interviews, or documents (Patton 2015). Miles et al. (2014) explained that there can be different kinds of triangulation. For my study, I triangulated by method, data type, and data source (as seen above in the data collection section) (Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2018). Maxwell (2013) explained how triangulation must occur based on validity threats as method sources might all have the same biases. I address the two main types of validity threats in the section on validity above.

Comparison Checks. Maxwell (2013) disclosed multicase or multisite studies have the opportunity for more thorough comparisons than a single-setting qualitative study such as mine. Having the focus group participants compare teacher inclusion in the school culture to how it was in previous years can serve as a comparison check. Additionally, comparison checks were used throughout the focus group analysis and compared with the observations. Since the initial focus groups were separated by the established and Specialized Program Teachers, I compared the responses to assess how both groups felt the integration may have gone. Through my data analysis, I compared the results of my researcher observations to the focus group analysis to determine if my own interpretation and that of the others in the school had similarities or differences.

Ethical Issues

As a researcher, I have the ethical duty to keep participants safe during the course of the study. I used Patton's (2015) Exhibit 7.18 ethical issues checklist as a guide to

ensure I was thorough in addressing ethical concerns (pp. 496-497). First and foremost, before beginning the study, I gained approval from the dissertation committee and submitted an application for approval to Valdosta State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and waited to conduct the study until I received its approval (Appendix A). I submitted an application to the school district to gain permission to conduct research within the school involving district employees. My researcher memos and observations on Valdosta State University's assigned Microsoft OneDrive remained in the private setting. Once the study was complete, the data will be deleted/destroyed after three years through shredding or deleting digital documents.

Although I observed all human subjects in the school and minors were a part of observations and descriptions of how staff interacted with one another, no names will be used, and no minors were involved in the focus group interviews. Adult participants in the focus group were provided informed consent (Appendix G) for participating in the study. In keeping my participants and setting confidential, I will use pseudonyms for names and locations in my data collection and analysis. Using focus groups rather than individual interviews was more likely to aid in keeping the staff in Specialized Programs more confidential since they are a small program, and interviews might have divulged information which would be more identifiable.

Summary

The present study is a qualitative case study design using observations and focus group interviews as the primary methods for data collection. The study examined how Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership impacted school culture with the integration of new teachers into the established culture during

organizational change. Participants in the study were teachers from Fantasia Elementary, characterized as either established teachers, those before the program merger, Specialized Programs Teachers, or those who were new to the school staff. As the participant researcher, I implemented Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices throughout the 2021-2022 school year and recorded my observations of teacher interactions and situations through field notes, a checklist, and analytic memos. Additionally, I gathered teacher perspectives on integrating new teachers into the established school culture through focus group interviews. The qualitative data was coded and analyzed through several coding types: in vivo, provisional, and pattern coding (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016).

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS & ANALYSIS

Purpose and Scope

This study aimed to determine how exemplary leadership practices contributed to a collaborative and empowering school culture. As the researcher-participant (Throne, 2019), I examined how Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership impacted school culture with the integration of new teachers into the established culture during organizational change. Building upon prior research concerning organizational theory and culture (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Schein, 2010), I sought evidence to determine if such exemplary leadership practices were critical to ensuring school cultures merged effectively through acceptance in order to build upon an already recognized positive and productive culture.

Approach

The conceptual framework for this study incorporated the theoretical foundations of Kouzes and Posner (2017) and Bolman and Deal (2013) (Figure 1) in regard to leadership practices/frames and Schein's (2010) levels of culture. Through exemplary leadership practices and addressing three of the four organizational frames, I sought to employ the framework (below) to assist in integrating the new teachers into the established culture. Figure 1 was referenced while assessing practices and frames used throughout the 2021-2022 school year (as seen in the Windshield Survey explained below).

Figure 1
Exemplary Leadership Practices

Exemplary Leadership Practices	HR Frame	Political Frame	Symbolic Frame
Practice 1: MODEL THE WAY	Forge unity; Give reasons to care for empowerment.	Clarify values to influence commitment; Seek feedback.	Tell stories.
Practice 2: INSPIRE A SHARED VISION	Listen deeply to others; Make it a cause others will commit to; Connect to what's meaningful to others.	Practice positive communication.	Reflect on pass; attend to present, and prospect future; Express passion; Look forward in change; Align dreams; Use symbolic language.
Practice 3: CHALLENGE THE PROCESS	Encourage initiative in others; Listen and promote diverse perspectives; Be an active learner.	Challenge with purpose; Break it down and accentuate progress; Strengthen resilience and grit.	Treat every job as an adventure; Create a climate for learning.
Practice 4: ENABLE OTHERS TO ACT	Invest in trust; Show concern for others; Share knowledge and information; Support reciprocity; Encourage authentic interaction.	Develop cooperative goals and roles; Structure jobs to offer latitude; Foster accountability; Educate and share information; Structure projects for joint effort; Coach.	Be the first to trust.
Practice 5: ENCOURAGE THE HEART	Show them you believe; provide feedback; Provide social support; Show you care; Just say "Thank you"; Provide creative incentives; Get to know your constituents.	Be clear about goals and rules.	Celebrate accomplishments in public; Have fun together; Share the stories; Make celebrations a part of organizational life.

Note: Adapted from framework elements of Bolman and Deal (2013) and Kouzes and Posner (2017).

The first research question assessed my intent and use of exemplary leadership practices as described by Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership to determine how those practices aided, if they did, in merging the Specialized Programs teachers (SPs) into the established school culture. The second research question aimed to understand teachers' perceptions of the integration of new members into the school culture during organizational change. To address each of the research questions, various qualitative measures were used which are listed in Table 6.

Qualitative measures used to answer the first research question included participant-observation, windshield-survey (Appendix D), and analytic memoing. Participant-observations, as explained by Yin (2018), are those observations extending beyond passive observance to interaction and involvement with the study's participants. Participant-observations and analytic memos were used to complete a windshield survey of my practice for various situations throughout the 2021-2022 school year, including interaction between the Established Teachers (ETs) and the SPs. As explained in Chapter III, the term "teachers" was used to include both teachers and instructional paraprofessionals within Fantasia Elementary School. I used participant-observation data as recorded in the Windshield Survey (Appendix D) and analytic memos to assess my intentional use of Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five exemplary leadership practices, as well as Bolman and Deal's (2013) frames used in the study.

Qualitative measures used to answer the second research question included participant-observations and a set of two focus groups; one with ETs and the other with SPs (focus group questions in Appendix F). Focus group interview data from both ETs and SPs were used to examine teacher perceptions of new teacher integration during the

programmatic/staff change. Both a demographic and school culture survey were employed to gather teacher information and perceptions of school culture. All data were analyzed using Saldaña's (2016) coding techniques such as In Vivo, Provisional, and Pattern codes. Findings from data analysis are shared in the next sections.

Table 6

Data Collection Measures

Participant-Observations and Analytic Memos	Demographic and School Culture Survey	Focus Group Interviews
Observation Fieldnotes	Demographic Information- Multiple Choice	Established Teachers (ETs)
Observation Write-Ups	Perceptions of School Culture- Text Entry	Specialized Programs Teachers (SPs)
Windshield Survey Checklist Analytic Memos		

Participant-Observations and Analytic Memos

Over the course of the 2021-2022 school year, I intentionally worked to use Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices in situations involving both the ETs and SPs. These circumstances were initially recorded as fieldnotes in a notebook and in turn, transferred to a computer log at the end of the school day. I typed participant-observation notes (Yin, 2018), wrote analytic memos, and then filled out the windshield survey based on recorded information. After recording each of the participant-observations as they were completed, member checking was utilized with the school principal to further examine my interpretations and views of each situation. Through discussion we found no disagreements; however, the principal contributed a few insightful perceptions added to the observation notes. I recorded how often I used each of the five exemplary leadership practices, as well as which of Bolman and Deal's (2013)

frames were addressed and whether the situation included a direct leadership action (action), a teacher action (result), or both. Over the 2021-2022 school year, 60 situations were recorded where I intentionally used one or more exemplary leadership practices in instances involving both ETs and SPs, considered which frames were used and if the situation was due to my direct involvement or a result of what a teacher did in the situation.

Practicing Exemplary Leadership; Easier Said Than Done: Windshield Survey Results

Through the Windshield Survey (Appendix D), my use of exemplary leadership practices (Kouzes & Posner, 2017) and organizational frames (Bolman & Deal, 2013) were documented to assess the frequency of use and whether the outcome was due to a leadership action or result. The Windshield Survey provided both qualitative and quantitative measures. Table 7 provides a summarized version of the Windshield Survey; while Appendix D presents the raw data. The percentages show how often each practice, frame, or action was used within the 60 participant-observations, some situations warranting the use of multiple frames at a time. In analyzing and determining which practices and frames were used, I looked back to Figure 1 and referenced both Kouzes and Posner (2017) and Bolman and Deal's (2013) texts.

After 60 participant-observations, the top two leadership practices employed most frequently were *enable others to act* 65% of the time and *encourage the heart* 58.33% of the time. The other three practices, *model the way, inspire a shared vision,* and *challenge the process* were used approximately the same amount of times or about 30% (see Table 7). Those practices used most frequently were more related to actions towards, and focused on, people rather than on the goals at hand. Of Bolman and Deal's (2013) four

frames for restructuring organizations, I chose to address three of the four frames, *human resource, political,* and *symbolic*. As explained in Chapter I, the *structural frame* was not a part of the focus of the study. Of the 60 recorded participant-observations, I found I used the *human resource frame* in 36 situations, the *political frame* in 34, and the *symbolic frame* 51 times, with some instances relating to multiple frames at a time. These findings are consistent with the exemplary leadership practices results in that I used more practices related to working with people consistent with the *human resource* and *symbolic frame's* focus on people's needs and recognition. My intentional and direct leadership actions were noted in 26 of the 60 situations (43.33%), while I discerned that 49 of the 60 (81.67 %) included teacher actions due to my leadership and their ability to work with one another.

Table 7

Windshield Survey Summary Chart: Percentage of Practices and Frames Used

Model the Way	Inspire a Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Others to Act	Encourage the Heart	Bolman & Deal's Frame(s)	Leadership Action (A) or Result (R)
%	%	%	%	%	%	%
31.66	33.33	36.66	65*	58.33*	HR: 60 Political: 57 Symbolic: 85	A: 43.33 R. 81.67

Note: Percentages derived from 60 participant-observations, with some warranting the use of multiple practices in one situation. Asterisks indicate Practices with the highest codes.

When Leadership and Member Actions Align: Participant-Observation Findings

In addition to recording and assessing my own actions as a researcher-participant, staff actions and interactions within the participant-observations were analyzed. First, after using Saldaña's (2016) In Vivo coding, codes were categorized by Established Teacher Action (ET. A), Specialized Programs Teacher Action (SP. A), or together (T.

A). While coding, trends surfaced in the types of actions the teachers were doing in these situations and found most of the codes directly related to their own use of exemplary leadership practices with one another. Kouzes and Posner (2017) explained exemplary leaders used these practices when *modeling the way* for their constituents to use the same practices and, in turn, developing leaders. Due to recognizing a trend in the data aligning with exemplary leadership practices, I performed a second round of first-cycle coding to use provisional codes based on the five exemplary leadership practices (Table 8). For the ETs, the most frequently modeled practices were *encourage the heart* and *inspire a shared vision*, while for SPs the most frequently modeled practices were *enable others to act* and *encourage the heart*. When working with one another, the practice most used was *encourage the heart*, with *inspire a shared vision* and *enable others to act,* coming in a tie for second.

Table 8

Participant-Observation: Exemplary Leadership Practices Comparison Between Established and Specialized Programs Teachers

Five Practices	Leader Use	ET Use	SP Use	Use Together
	%	%	%	%
Model the Way	31.66	16.67	20.69	5.26
Inspire a Shared Vision	33.33	22.22*	10.34	21.05*
Challenge the Process	36.66	11.11	6.89	5.26
Enable Others to Act	65	16.67	34.48*	21.05*
Encourage the Heart	58.33	33.33*	27.59*	47.37*

Note: Percentages derived from 60 participant-observations, with some warranting the use of multiple practices in one situation. Asterisks indicate Practices with highest codes.

The data gathered and analyzed from the windshield survey provided an interesting comparison. The two leadership practices used most were the same as those

coded for SPs (*encourage the heart* and *enable others to act)*. In contrast, the ETs used *inspire a shared vision* and *encourage the heart* most frequently. Both teacher groups used *challenge the process* the least (see Table 8).

Summary

Participant-Observations and analytic memoing were this study's first data collection phase. As a participant researcher, I intentionally used Kouzes and Posner's (2017) Exemplary Leadership Practices in an effort to influence new teacher integration into the school culture. Analysis conducted of the participant-observations and memos unveiled several key findings. First, I unintentionally used two of the five practices more than the others: *enable others to act* and *encourage the heart*. Second, Bolman and Deal's (2013) frames were addressed most frequently, with the *symbolic frame* used the most. Third, the findings from the majority of participant-observations included teacher actions over leader actions.

When coding and analyzing teachers' actions throughout the participant-observations, I found those actions aligned with the five Exemplary Leadership Practices. After coding and comparing my practices, mine and the SPs' highest-used actions aligned: *encourage the heart* and *enable others to act*. Conversely, although ETs' actions aligned with *encourage the heart* as well, their second highest use was *inspire a shared vision.* For both teacher groups, *challenge the process* was used the least, although, for myself, it was my third-highest practice (Table 8). In the next section, the demographic and school culture survey findings will be discussed.

Demographic and School Culture Survey

The Qualtrics program was used to collect demographic information from the teachers at Fantasia Elementary and was sent at the end of the 2021-2022 school year. The demographic and school culture survey included 10 multiple-choice questions and one text entry response for teacher views on the school culture at Fantasia Elementary. Fifty-four surveys were emailed to teachers with 40 staff members completing the survey, a 74.07% participation rate. The below sections present the results in further detail.

Survey Demographic Data of Teachers at Fantasia Elementary

Data analysis of the demographic and school culture survey provided a representation of the teachers at Fantasia Elementary. Table 9 presents the demographics of those who voluntarily participated and completed the survey. The results of the demographic and school culture survey highlighted several key findings: first, the majority of teachers at Fantasia Elementary were White females between the ages of 25 to 44, and second, the majority of the teacher population have been teaching for less than ten years. 70% of the teachers have been at Fantasia Elementary for under six years. Below is detailed demographic information about the teachers who answered the survey.

Table 9

Demographic Data of Fantasia Elementary Teachers

Demographic Category	Groups	Percentage (%)	N participants
Age	18-24	3	1
	25-34	32	12
	35-44	32	12
	45-54	16	6
	Over 55	16	6
Gender	Male	19	7

	Female	76	28
	Non-Binary/3rd	3	1
	Prefer Not to Say	3	1
Race/Ethnicity	White	78	29
	Black	22	8
Years in Education	0-5	33	12
	6-10	25	9
	11-20	19	7
	20+	22	8
Years at Fantasia Elementary	0-5	70	26
	6-10	16	6
	11-20	5	2
	20+	8	3
Program	Established	71	24
	Specialized	29	10

Note: Non-binary is defined as genders that are not solely male or female.

Demographic and School Culture Survey Free-Response Findings: Teachers Perceived Fantasia Elementary School Culture as Supportive and Professional

In addition to collecting demographic data, the survey included one text entry response question: *School culture is defined by Fullan (2007) as the guiding beliefs and values evident in the way a school operates, encompassing all the attitudes, expected behaviors, and values. How would you describe the culture at [Fantasia] Elementary?* For data analysis of this question, Saldaña's (2016) In Vivo coding technique for the first cycle and pattern coding for the second cycle were employed. The findings emerging from the second cycle coding were: *supportive* (31.42%), *professional* (21.42%), *trust* (17.14%), *positive* (12.85%), and *team* (11.42%). One survey response proved to be an outlier, calling for the need for *improvement* (0.43%) in the area of discipline being "unhandled."

Summary

The demographic survey was used to gather demographic information from the teachers of Fantasia Elementary and their perceptions of school culture. Due to the focus group interviews being only the reflections of a select group of teachers whose participation was voluntary, I discerned it was important to gather as many perceptions of school culture from the teachers as possible to provide a more complete reflection of the overall view of Fantasia Elementary School's culture. Using In Vivo coding, I was able to derive several codes relating closely to literature on organizational culture. The *supportive, professional, trust, positive*, and *team* codes were all fairly close percentage-wise and aligned closely with Cameron and Quinn's (2006) clan culture, Terzi's (2016) support and professional cultures, and Kouzes and Posner's (2017) practice of *enable others to act.* In the next section, I discuss those findings from the focus group interviews, complementing the participant-observation data, analytic memos, and survey.

Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews were used to collect data on years of experience (Table 10) as well as ask questions to gather insight on teacher perceptions of leadership actions and interactions with fellow teachers. Focus group interviews were conducted in the summer of 2022; with both groups of teachers (ETs and SPs) at separate times at 90 minutes each. Both were moderated by Fantasia Elementary staff members: the school counselor and the librarian as to decrease reactivity (Maxwell, 2013). The groups were recorded via Zoom teleconferencing technology and transcribed using the transcription feature available on the program. The moderators downloaded the transcription, reviewed and edited it for accuracy, and emailed the final transcription to me for analysis. Three

participants participated remotely between the two groups, while the others joined in person at the school. After the focus groups were completed, I met with both moderators to discuss the results and gain insight into their own impressions and perceptions of trends and essential pieces of important findings they gained from leading the focus groups.

Both focus group transcriptions were coded using Saldaña's (2016) In Vivo coding for the first cycle. For questions regarding culture and leadership practices, the second round of first-cycle provisional coding was employed; using exemplary leadership practices (Kouzes & Posner, 2017) and levels of culture (Schein, 2010) as codes. All responses were then coded using pattern coding for the second cycle. Table 10 provides the participants' information noting years in education and years at Fantasia Elementary. Participants' careers in education ranged from three to 24 years in education and two to 10 years at Fantasia Elementary.

Table 10

Focus Group Participant Educational Experience, Years of Teaching, and Program Assignments at Fantasia Elementary School

Participant	Program	Years in Education	Years at Fantasia Elementary
P1	ET	24	2
P2	ET	6	6
P3	ET	11	10
P4	ET	3	3
P5	ET	13	6
P6	SP	3	3
P7	SP	8	4
P8	SP	3	3
P9	SP	16	3
P10	SP	11	2

The focus group questions (Appendix F) included prompts addressing the leader's use of exemplary leadership practices, the school culture, and teacher experiences with the programs before and after the merger. Participants were asked to respond to questions about their experience prior to the merger in an effort to help them reflect and compare to this past school year when leadership changed. The focus group interviews were used to help answer Research Question 2: *What are teacher perceptions on the integration of new members into the school culture during organizational change?* addressing perceptions during and after the change. Therefore, the majority of the analysis focused on the questions focused after the merger took place. Some responses regarding perceptions prior to the merger are used in this analysis for context.

Isolated Program: Established Teachers' Perceptions Prior to Merger

Using Saldaña's (2016) In Vivo coding for the first cycle and Pattern coding for the second cycle aided in determining how Specialized Programs were viewed prior to the merger. When attempting to gather a basic perception of Fantasia Elementary and Specialized Programs before the year in question, SPs had little to say about the school or Established Teachers, as they had very little interaction at that time. ETs did articulate how they deemed the Specialized Programs were viewed. The primary observation indicated the programs were *isolated,* and *negative perceptions* emerged as to the purpose of the program (Table 11). Overall, the program was seen as separate, isolated, and not as integrated or a part of Fantasia Elementary.

Table 11

Established Teachers' Perceptions of Specialized Programs Prior to Merger

Pattern Code	Participant Responses
Isolated	"It felt like it was an isolated program…"
	"It just seemed like they were housed basically here; They didn't seem like a part of the actual school"
	"They were over there in their own entity."
Negative Perceptions	"Didn't feel like they belonged."
	"Knew all of them as, 'Oh, you're from the 300 hall', like there was that stigma with being located in that hallway…"
	"I had multiple people say, 'Oh, that's the bad school', so they really thought that hall was like the whole school, so there was that perception…"

School Culture Changes

Focus group questions (Appendix F) asked for participants to describe Fantasia Elementary and its culture. After Saldaña's (2016) In Vivo coding, the Provisional codes used were from Schein's (2010) levels of organizational culture: *artifacts*, *espoused values and beliefs*, and *basic assumptions*. In order to organize the Provisional codes, the codes were then sorted into second-cycle Patterns to analyze and compare to the other focus group's data (Table 12).

Table 12

School Culture Codes: Provisional and Pattern Coding

Levels	ET: Culture Before	ET: Culture After	SP: Culture Before	SP: Culture After
Artifacts	Size/Location*	A Part Of*	Size/Interaction*	A Part Of*
Espoused Values & Beliefs	Comfortable	Included*	Supportive/ Welcoming	Included*
Basic Assumptions	Community/Family*	Opportunity not taken	Family*	*Inconclusive*

Note: Asterisks indicate similar cultural codes among both teacher groups.

Welcoming and Included: Artifacts and Espoused Values and Beliefs. Both

the ETs and SPs had similar interpretations of the culture at Fantasia Elementary prior to

and after the merger concerning *artifacts* and *espoused values and beliefs*. Many

explained the *small size and location* of the school contributed to the culture being

welcoming and supportive of others. Both groups expressed the teachers and students of

the specialized program were now *a part of and included* in the overall culture of

Fantasia Elementary since the merger (see Table 13).

Table 13

School Culture: Artifacts and Espoused Values & Beliefs Responses

Culture Level	Pattern Code	Participant Responses
Artifacts	Size/Interaction/ Location	"I would say it's a non-clique school"- SP
		"I like the small size. Great place."- ET
		"We have this unique ability of being out here, left alone."- ET
	Part Of	"Previously we were completely separated, completely isolated, and that was done on purpose"- SP

		"They are definitely [Fantasia] Elementary staff. I think that was definitely a solid change in that."- ET
		"...even in our verbiage. I guess we weren't calling it like, a separate thing you know?…"- ET
		"I do feel like we got a chance to merge together, and our staff isn't separate anymore…"- ET
Espoused Values & Beliefs	Comfortable	"I'll describe it as relaxing, welcoming, good environment."- ET
	Supportive/ Welcoming	"...really friendly, really close-knit small school."- SP
		"...the support is good as you said, we could easily go to another teacher as well and get some input, so I think everyone was just, open arms and welcoming into the building"- SP
		"I would say it's a very positive vibe. Very positive team environment."- SP
		"...big thing for me was the inclusiveness, I think that's huge. It didn't happen when I was there before, but it needed to happen."- SP
	Included	"There is a better sense of 'we are one, we are here for yall too.'"- ET
		"We understand more of the togetherness, just like, we are collectively together as one…"- ET

We Are Family…When We Want to Be: Basic Assumptions. The *basic assumptions* of the culture, in general, were similar in explaining the culture as a *community* or *family.* ETs used verbiage such as "welcoming," "community type environment," and "real relaxed family vibe." One participant stated, "We treat each

other as family within the halls, which is nice." SPs even described the culture prior to the merger the same way, explaining it was "family-oriented" and a "very welcoming place for a new and incoming staff member."

When asked about the change in culture after the merger, the assumptions between the teacher groups were different. ETs perceived the opportunity to be a part of the culture of Fantasia indeed was not fully taken by the SPs, as one participant stated,

>...if you're not going to be a part of something, then say that you're not going to be a part of something. I firmly believe if you want to be a part of something, you, you are going to be a part of it. I almost felt like it was like teetering the fence, because it was like, 'I can still take part of things that allow me to be separate, and it's okay 'cause I can justify them', but then still make a fuss about it.

One ET noted having excellent communication with an SP when her student integrated into the general education classroom, but the others told of situations where they sensed they were not communicated with in a way to make the students and staff successful with the merger. The team lead, the special education teacher leader between the ET's and SPs special education teachers to the administration, was mentioned as being a barrier on several occasions. Statements reflected a "disconnect with the Team Lead," "no one was talking to me," "wasn't structure and communication in place," "you're not communicating with me where I can help him be successful,' "no collaboration," indicating knowledge and enforcement of expectations were absent. Two ETs shared instances where the SP did not include them in the special education meetings, did not collaborate to make a plan that would be successful for the students to integrate into the class, nor explain their needs. Others again shared issues with the Team Leader not

including them in IEPs, not seeking their input for student needs, nor helping support the transition and communication with the SPs. Lack of communication, involvement, collaboration, or addressing concerns were the issues mentioned which made clear that some ETs were frustrated with SP involvement.

As the researcher, it was difficult to understand the SP's *basic assumptions* of the culture after the merger. It was challenging to find codes tied to the deeper assumptions of culture, as most were related to artifacts or basic assumptions and values. The few codes observed as giving a glimpse into the SPs groups' assumptions were still related to their own unique microculture in that they perceived some paraprofessionals within the program took advantage of the group and the others were left to pick up the slack; they discerned leadership did not hold them accountable. Another member expressed that the past school year was a year everyone "bloomed," referencing the positive transformation of paraprofessionals, teachers, and students' growth. The inability to decipher the basic assumptions for a new group of members is consistent with cultural explanations from Schein (2010) in that it takes time and intense studying to understand the deeper layer of culture.

Leadership Actions and Influence Matter

For analyzing teacher perceptions concerning leadership actions, I used Saldaña's (2016) In Vivo and Provisional coding for the first cycle and pattern coding for the second cycle. Although only one question in the focus group directly asked the participants to discuss leadership actions influencing the SPs transitioning to the established culture, participants discussed leadership throughout the prompts, offering

experiences working with the other teacher group. In the following sections, coding

related to administrative actions is discussed.

Leadership Neglected: Established Teachers. In relation to administrative

actions throughout the merger during the school year, ETs focused on areas of neglect

rather than times administration adequately addressed needs. Although ETs expressed the

desire to work with SPs and have them be a part of the school culture, they described

situations where administrative action was lacking and did not aid in a successful

transition. Table 14 shows the pattern codes derived from participant responses related to

Exemplary Leadership Practices. ETs identified the areas not addressed or neglected were

communication, focus, preparation, inclusion, and *recognition.* ETs expressed

frustrations with being unaware of a plan, not being consulted nor asked for input, and

not being appreciated for their involvement.

Table 14

Leadership Practices Neglected According to Established Teachers

Provisional Code	Pattern Code	Participant Responses
Model the Way	Communication*	"... it seems like admin knew it was going to happen, but teachers didn't know it was going to happen."
		"It felt like it wasn't an action, it was an inaction."
Inspire a Shared Vision	Focus	"...seemed like a very top down, like, everyone's just told this is happening…there was no say, so no prep, no like, 'let's talk, let's meet about how this should look and act'."
Challenge the Process	Preparation	"There was like an active push to consolidate the programs before we put the work in to make us ready…"

Enable Others to Act	Inclusion/Team*	"...seemingly left to the gen ed teacher without the general ed teacher having been a part of the conversation."
Encourage the Heart	Recognition	"...and then they came back at the end of the day, and kind of took credit for the successes that were made inside your classroom…"

Note: Asterisks indicate Practices with highest codes.

In situations involving the Special Education Team Lead, who was an in-between or liaison for the SPs and ETs in issues involving special education, the ETs perceived administration not doing their part in facilitating the relationship and accountability. In focusing on the administration's role, one ET said,

> …most of the frustration was with the Team Lead, but I wish administration had stepped in and helped make that a better relationship. You know, it felt as though we were saying it over and over again, and there was like, no follow through, no like, 'yeah, okay, we hear you', but kind of just, no follow up with 'okay, let's either have a conversation, let's create a dialogue', 'let's do something where these two entities of general education and SPED Team Lead aren't frustrated with each other. Let's resolve this issue'. It was kind of, I don't wanna say ignored, it just, you know, was not visibly addressed to us. If they were doing something behind the scenes, it was just again, no communication about it.

In the focus group, the ETs expressed the administration's lack of action, especially regarding issues with the Team Lead, "At the end of the day, I feel like the buck stops with the administration" and the feelings of "nothing was addressed to make it better from the administration," which was perceived as "inaction." Rather than the Exemplary

Leadership Practices aiding in building the relationship between ETs and SPs, based on the data, it appeared this was an area of neglect.

Supportive Leadership: Specialized Programs Teachers. Unlike the ETs in the previous section, data analysis of SPs' experience with administrative actions was mainly positive and aligned with Exemplary Leadership Practices. After the program merger, SPs discussed positive changes for themselves and their program, resulting from actions taken by the current administration. They explained the change as "good," allowing students to improve their integration into the general education population and facilitate increased social interaction among the students and staff. One SP explained their relationship with the administration as "great" and things were consistent. Table 15 below provides coding and participant responses. Pattern codes emerged: *helped, change, guidance, freedom & inclusion,* and *support.*

Table 15

Leadership Practices According to Specialized Programs Teachers

Provisional Code	Pattern Code	Participant Responses
Model the Way	Helped	"So, I think that's why she came in and helped us out a little bit, and you know, took a special liking to some of our students and helped out a lot."
Inspire a Shared Vision	Change	"I think the program is going in, going in a good direction, and that's due to the administration."
Challenge the Process	Guidance	"I think it was a huge positive change in the right direction."

Enable Others to Act	Freedom & Inclusion*	"They gave us a lot of freedom to, you know, adjust or adapt however we needed to, but also with supervised and kind of support decisions we made. You know, there's nothing better as a teacher than the freedom to do that and then having support also."
Encourage the Heart	Support*	"...bringing up you know, 'hey! I think this might work versus this' and just they, they were just like, 'Yeah! Go ahead, try it!'"

Note: Asterisks indicate Practices with the highest codes.

There was some negativity expressed concerning SPs' interaction and relationship with the Special Education Team Leader, similar to the ETs. The SPs described the communication as "still a little one-sided," and their expertise and knowledge as a veteran SP was not valued or respected. Trust was non-existent to assist in planning for their students in the program. Other SPs mentioned other problems with the current administration, primarily pertaining to structure and the Team Lead. One SP said, "I don't think administration knew it was quite to that extreme…I don't think they liked it, but they thought they didn't wanna, I guess, ruffle any feathers either…didn't wanna cause a big ruckus about it." For one SP who saw herself as a "glorified babysitter" the majority of the day with one particularly challenging student, said about administration,

> ...I know that the administration, trying to do the best they could with what we
> had, and I know, you know, the Team Lead tried to help as much as they could,
> but I still felt like there was no constant or consistent plan in place.

The data suggests SPs have negative perceptions of leadership actions similar to ETs in the areas of communication, focus, and inclusion/team to some extent.

Summary

Focus group interviews were the concluding data collection strategy, providing an extra check and triangulation of data. To ensure the entire data collection and analysis would not be considered subjective, I used the focus group interviews to check my participant-observational data and analysis. Focusing on Research Question 2, the analysis provided a wealth of information on teacher perceptions and their inadvertent feedback on my use of Kouzes and Posner's (2017) Exemplary Leadership Practices.

Before merging the programs, the ETs reported the Specialized Programs as an isolated entity with negative perceptions among the staff and community. SPs perceived they were excluded from the rest of the school, by the fault of their past supervisor who kept them and their students separate from the rest of the school. Although Specialized Programs was not a part of Fantasia Elementary prior to the 2021-2022 school year, both teacher groups did have similar views of Fantasia Elementary School's culture being *small, comfortable, supportive, welcoming*, and like that of a *family*. After the programmatic merger, both teacher groups noticed the school culture was inclusive of SPs. When it came to the culture's *basic assumptions*, ETs expressed the SPs did not fully take the opportunity to be a part of the greater school culture. In contrast, the SPs' views of the deeper levels of culture were inconclusive, as I was unable to decipher their *basic assumptions*.

When it came to leadership actions and influence on the merger, data and analysis showed the ETs suggested the administration neglected to intervene appropriately and did not communicate or include ETs in the planning process. *Communication, focus, preparation, inclusion,* and *recognition* were areas within Exemplary Leadership

Practices seen as neglected or unaddressed. SPs, on the other hand, expressed they were more supported than they had been by their previous administration, especially in the areas of *help, change, guidance, freedom/inclusion,* and *support.* Both groups expressed frustration with the lack of administrative support and intervening with the issues related to the Special Education Team Lead who served in a liaison capacity between the special education teachers in the building.

Chapter Summary

Saldaña's (2016) research and suggestions on coding guided the data analysis for this research through participant-observations and analytic memoing, demographic and school culture surveying, and focus group interviews. Several coding techniques were used to analyze the data at various cycles in the process: In Vivo coding, Provisional Coding, and Pattern Coding. Provisional codes were used. Through coding and analysis, I found several themes to emerge, which were listed in the headings and then explained in the analysis that followed: (1) *Practicing Exemplary Leadership; Easier Said Than Done,* (2) *When Leadership and Member Actions Align,* (3) *Supportive and Professional Culture,* (4) *Isolated Program Perceptions,* (5) *Welcoming and Included,* (6) *We Are Family…When We Want to Be,* (7) *Leadership Neglected: ETs,* and (8) S*upportive Leadership: SPs.* The themes will be discussed in greater detail and connected with the study's research questions in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS, INTERPRETATIONS, & RECOMMENDATIONS

According to Schein (2010), culture comes from three sources: "(1) the beliefs, values, and assumptions of founders of organizations; (2) the learning experiences of group members as their organization evolves; and (3) new beliefs, values, and assumptions brought in by new members and leaders" (p. 219). Numerous researchers have focused on various elements of culture, strategies for improving culture, and the effects of negative and positive culture on the overall environment of the workplace (Blake et al., 1989; Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Choi, 2011; Corlett & Pearson, 2003; Deal & Peterson, 1998; Etzioni, 1975; Goffee & Jones, 1998; Handy, 1978; Harrison, 1979; Harrison & Stokes, 1992; Hart & Marina, 2014; Kalman & Balkar, 2017; Kosar et al., 2016; Lok & Crawford, 1999; Schein, 2010; Sinden et al., 2004; Stolp & Smith, 1995; Terzi, 2016; Yavuz, 2010; Zhu et al., 2011). Two critical elements cited throughout the literature for a positive school environment were school culture and school leadership. Employee/teacher satisfaction with their leader, the school environment, and culture have a significant impact on commitment, tenure in the profession, and overall effectiveness (Balay & Ipek, 2010; Djonko-Moore, 2015; Ingersoll, 2001; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009; Meyer et al., 2002; Milanowski et al., 2009; Stolp & Smith, 1995; Tabak & Sahin, 2020; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995; Zhu et al., 2011). If not handled properly, organizational change can have significant adverse effects on an organization's culture and stability, leading to confusion, cynicism, issues among the members, blaming leadership, ambiguity, and distrust (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Eby et al., 2000; Lau & Ngo, 2001; Lau

106

et al., 2002; Mullen & Copper, 1994; Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Wu et al., 2007). Mergers and acquisitions (M&As) inevitably lead to conflict in some way, whether it be through member perceptions of one another or the change, logistics of how to handle the structure change, and/or how the members work together after the change (Ashford, 1988; Bansal, 2019; Birkinshaw et al., 2000; Cartwright & Cooper, 1993; Coff, 2022; Giessner et al., 2006; King et al., 2020; Marmenout, 2011; Meglio et al., 2015; Schweiger et al., 1987; Van Knippenberg et al., 2002; Weber & Camerer, 2003). During organizational change, leadership styles, and strong school culture can curtail teacher negativity and influence readiness (Atasoy, 2020; Bommer et al., 2005; Brown & Cregan, 2008; Devos et al., 2007; Duvall-Dickson, 2016; Ertürk, 2008; Harman, 2002; Hartge et al., 2019; Herold et al., 2008; Jeong et al., 2016; Kaltiainen et al., 2017; Michaelis et al., 2010; Miller et al., 1994; Myers, 2014; Navickaite & Janiunaite, 2012; Parish et al., 2008; Qian & Daniels, 2008; Rafferty & Simons, 2006; Shava & Heystek, 2021; Song et al., 2013; Stanley et al., 2005; Van der Voet, 2013; Vasilaki et al., 2016; Wanberg & Banas, 2000; Wanous et al., 2000; Wu et al., 2007).

This study aimed to determine how exemplary leadership practices contributed to a collaborative and empowering school culture. As the researcher-participant (Throne, 2019), I examined how Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership impacted school culture with the integration of new teachers into the established culture during organizational change. Building upon prior research concerning organizational theory and culture (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Schein, 2010), I sought evidence to determine if such exemplary leadership

practices were critical to ensuring school cultures merged effectively through acceptance in order to build upon an already recognized positive and productive culture.

A qualitative embedded single-case study was employed in an attempt to understand the teacher perspectives at Fantasia Elementary School, how those perceptions shaped the cultural context of the school, and influence leadership had on the teachers and culture (Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 2015; Stake, 2000; Yin, 2018). The following research questions were explored in this study through participant-observations, analytic memoing, surveying, and focus group interviews (Emerson et al., 1995; Kruger & Casey, 2008; Throne, 2019; Yin, 2018).

RQ 1: How do Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership assist in integrating new teachers into a larger school culture during organizational change?

RQ 2: What are teacher perceptions on the integration of new members into the school culture during organizational change?

Fantasia Elementary School teachers, specifically Established Teachers (ETs) and Specialized Programs Teachers (SPs), were the participants in this case study, along with myself as a participant-researcher implementing Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices. Data were analyzed using Saldaña's (2016) coding strategies: In vivo, provisional, and pattern coding. Through first and second-cycle coding techniques, several themes were discovered and are explained in further detail in the following sections:

- *Practicing exemplary leadership: Easier said than done.*
- *When leadership and member actions align.*

- *Supportive and professional culture.*

- *Isolated program perceptions.*

- *Welcoming and included.*

- *We are family…when we want to be.*

- *Leadership neglected: ETs.*

- S*upportive leadership: SPs.*

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the study involved three theories and concepts related to organizational culture and leadership: the organizational culture and leadership theory of Schein (2010), the reframing organizations theory of Bolman and Deal (2013), and the transformational leadership practices of exemplary leadership from Kouzes and Posner (2017). Figure 1 below was used as a framework for incorporating both Kouzes and Posner's (2017) practices and Bolman and Deal's (2013) frames as a guide for practice. Schein's (2010) organizational culture and leadership theory was used to decipher the culture of Fantasia Elementary School and the change in culture after the program merger with ETs and SPs.

The exemplary leadership practices, *model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act,* and *encourage the heart* were the primary focus of the first phase of the study. Throughout the school year, I used these practices in various situations involving both ETs and SPs. Three of the four Bolman and Deal's (2013) frames were used as a frame through which the practices were applied to interactions between ETs and SPs throughout the 2021-2022 school year. Phase two of the study included focus group interviews with ETs and SPs separately to gather their

perspectives on the school culture, leadership actions, and interactions. Schein's (2010) three levels of culture, *artifacts, espoused values and beliefs,* and *basic assumptions* were examined through coding and closely examined in an effort to reveal the true culture among the two teacher groups in Fantasia Elementary School.

Figure 1
Exemplary Leadership Practices

Exemplary Leadership Practices	HR Frame	Political Frame	Symbolic Frame
Practice 1: MODEL THE WAY	Forge unity; Give reasons to care for empowerment.	Clarify values to influence commitment; Seek feedback.	Tell stories.
Practice 2: INSPIRE A SHARED VISION	Listen deeply to others; Make it a cause others will commit to; Connect to what's meaningful to others.	Practice positive communication.	Reflect on pass, attend to present, and prospect future; Express passion; Look forward in change; Align dreams; Use symbolic language.
Practice 3: CHALLENGE THE PROCESS	Encourage initiative in others; Listen and promote diverse perspectives; Be an active learner.	Challenge with purpose; Break it down and accentuate progress; Strengthen resilience and grit.	Treat every job as an adventure; Create a climate for learning.
Practice 4: ENABLE OTHERS TO ACT	Invest in trust; Show concern for others; Share knowledge and information; Support reciprocity; Encourage authentic interaction.	Develop cooperative goals and roles; Structure jobs to offer latitude; Foster accountability; Educate and share information; Structure projects for joint effort; Coach.	Be the first to trust.
Practice 5: ENCOURAGE THE HEART	Show them you believe; provide feedback; Provide social support; Show you care; Just say "Thank you"; Provide creative incentives; Get to know your constituents.	Be clear about goals and rules.	Celebrate accomplishments in public; Have fun together; Share the stories; Make celebrations a part of organizational life.

Note: Adapted from framework elements of Bolman and Deal (2013) and Kouzes and Posner (2017).

Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this section is to answer the research questions that guided the study by discussing themes that emerged in data analysis. Participant-observations, surveying, and focus group interviews provided a well-triangulated set of data which was used and expanded upon to provide a thorough evaluation. The results of this study revealed themes and a variety of findings to aid in answering the below research questions.

Research Question 1:

How do Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership assist in integrating new teachers into a larger school culture during organizational change?

The following themes developed: *practicing exemplary leadership; easier said than done, when leadership and member actions align, leadership neglected: ETs,* and s*upportive leadership: SPs.* This research question was assessed through participant-observations and focus group interviews.

Practicing Leadership: Easier Said Than Done

One potential bias I listed in Chapter III was my assumption the exemplary leadership practices I used were impactful and influential to the study's results. Like the results Rodriguez and Freites (2013) found with managers tending to over-evaluate themselves on how often they used frames and leadership practices, I found after analyzing the focus group data, teachers did not describe my use of practices in the ways I did. As seen throughout the literature cited in Chapter II regarding leader practices and actions' impact on organizational culture, intentional use of all exemplary leadership practices may prove difficult (Emmanuel & Valley, 2021; Lingham & Lingham, 2015;

Stewart-Banks et al., 2015). Even during the study where I planned to use all the practices, I found my use varied depending on the practice and situation. I also found my own tendencies and biases came into play with which exemplary leadership practices I used most frequently throughout the study (for a more detailed explanation see the limitations section). I discovered through data analysis the tendency to use two exemplary leadership practices more frequently than others; *enable others to act* and *encourage the heart*. According to Kouzes and Posner (2017), leaders who *enable others to act* build relationships through trust, listening, showing concern for others' problems, providing resources, and getting to know the staff. Those who *encourage the heart* recognize others' contributions, provide non-threatening feedback and encouragement, and celebrate successes (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Consequently, the frames I used the most were the *human resource* and *symbolic frames.* These frames, per Bolman and Deal (2013), placed emphasis on people's needs, provided opportunities for growth and power, afforded means for purpose and meaning in their work, and inspired others through motivation and vision.

Even in a study where I intentionally used the practices and frames and made an effort to use them as much as possible, the findings still showed my tendency to revert to using practices closest to my inherent abilities and tendencies as a leader. Strengths-based leadership has value by focusing on the assumptions everyone has strengths and growth and development resides in those strengths (Ding & Lin, 2020; Rath & Conchie, 2008). Rath and Conchie (2008) suggested no leader can be great at everything, and a focus should be on using the leader's strengths and work to build a team complementing one another's strengths and weaknesses. Strengths-based leadership is an interesting concept

for consideration in further research. My unique perspective as a participant-researcher is it is difficult using these practices consistently and equally as a current practicing leader in a school. Many researchers used an experimental design to intentionally manipulate and observe the cause and effect (Patton, 2015). Other times, direct researchers (Yin, 2018) who are uninvolved and observe from an outside perspective are more able to focus on the research at hand and determine effects in real-time. As a leader who was trying to implement with fidelity while performing position duties and responsibilities, it is difficult to objectively evaluate one's own performance and make adjustments. Therefore, it is important to thoroughly plan and seek feedback throughout the study, as will be explained in the suggestions for future practice and research section. Another theme discovered from coding explained how the leadership and member actions can align in organizational culture and is described below in the next section.

When Leadership and Member Actions Align

Kouzes and Posner (2017) indicated leadership is a position and practice not to be done in isolation;

> ...leadership must be everyone's business. The most lasting test of your leadership effectiveness is the extent to which you bring forth and develop leadership abilities in others, not just yourself. You have the capacity to liberate the leader within everyone. (p. 298)

An unexpected result and theme I found within the research was teachers themselves used exemplary leadership practices. While coding the observations, I noticed a trend in the teachers' actions, acting as leaders themselves in various situations. Although this was not the intended result of the study, it seems using the practices impacted the

teachers' actions. The Windshield Survey (Table 7) showed teacher actions in situations

were more frequent than even my own actions. The two exemplary leadership practices I

used most often per the windshield survey, *enable others to act* and *encourage the heart,*

were the same practices SPs indicated administrators used most when asked about

leadership practices in the focus group. Interestingly, the same results were gathered from

coding for the SPs' actions during observations. Another finding from this study was the

least used practice among the ETs and SPs being *challenge the process*. As subordinates

in the school, it makes sense that the teachers would not be the ones to *challenge the*

process and rather look to leadership to encourage or implement it within the

organization. Other neglected exemplary leadership practices, according to ET responses

in focus group interviews, are described in the next section.

Leadership Neglected: Established Teachers

One big "ah-ha" moment I had when analyzing the data was in not focusing

enough on addressing the ETs. I believe this may have had something to do with my own

biases and unintended favoritism of the SPs. Because of my professional past and

experience working in an alternative education-type program, I empathized with those

teachers. Feeling left out, ostracized, and not belonging were routine feelings I had as an

educator in an alternative setting. With the SPs joining Fantasia Elementary staff for the

first time, I wanted to make sure they felt supported, which in hindsight, I believe

subconsciously pushed me to cater to them more than the other teachers. Conducting a

focus group with the ETs brought this issue to light, as their discussion did not show I

had addressed their needs, quite the opposite, actually. The ETs discussed issues with

communication, preparation, recognition, or *inclusion*. From the findings, I derived I had

115

done a poor job of including them in the planning and discussions on adding new members to *their c*ulture. The focus group transcripts made it evident these ETs had certain high expectations for their school culture and how things should be done, *basic assumptions*.

After analyzing the data, I felt horrible as a leader. I was so focused on the SPs and the task at hand, I had not considered the impact my neglectful actions would have on the established members of the culture. Rather than focus on the things I did not do, I decided to look further into the data to reflect on those leadership practices I can improve upon. The exemplary leadership practices I rated myself lowest in on the Windshield Survey were *model the way, inspire a shared vision*, and *challenge the process.* This aligned with the ETs' feedback on areas mentioned they indicated were not addressed. Kouzes and Posner (2017) described ways leaders can encourage such behaviors. With *challenge the process*, I did not ask questions of the ETs enough to receive feedback and reflect on my own practices throughout the year. We never discussed further the goals of the program merger except in the pre-planning meeting before the school year began. As mentioned in Chapter IV, one ET said in the focus group, "There was an active push to consolidate the programs before we put the work in to make us ready…." In the practice, *inspire a shared vision*, I reflected back and realized my principal and I never had a meeting with the ETs prior to school starting to discuss purpose and vision as we did with the SPs. Nor did we revisit the goals for the merger throughout the year. One ET mentioned they believed everything was "top-down" and there was "no prep" to include all the teachers in the vision and planning. With *model the way*, after reflecting I realized I did a poor job of this practice with ETs, ensuring those teachers had voices included in

116

decision-making and planning, and communication. Although I did clarify my own

values for the SPs and the program merger, I did not promote the goals of the merger

throughout the school year. In fact, because we did not include the teachers in goal

planning, I do not believe there was a clear understanding of the goals in the first place.

The pattern code which came under this exemplary leadership practice was

communication, and ETs expressed feelings of being in the dark about what was going to

happen and was an "inaction" from the administration. The ETs perceived the

administration's inaction with issues involving the Special Education Team Lead

hindered progress with SPs, who served as the liaison between the program and the ETs.

Even some SPs described issues with the Team lead, noting their expertise was not

valued, and the administration "didn't want to ruffle any feathers" to address the issue.

As an administrator, I should have been more proactive in order for that relationship to be

communicative and successful; however, I did not seek feedback as I should have (which

will be addressed in the implications section). As for the SPs, the findings suggested a

different experience than the ETs had, one with support and improvement for their

program and well-being in the school. The findings are addressed below.

Supportive Leadership: Specialized Programs Teachers

Although I attempted to reduce my researcher-bias during this study, I found that

my own past experience with alternative and special education clouded my perceptions

and preference towards the teachers in the Specialized Programs. Although the

discrepancy in results with each teacher group was not planned nor desired, I did see the

difference in my practices had a favorable result for the SPs. The SPs discussed how

much more supported they were with our current administration. They recognized we

helped them, were making positive changes for their program, and allowed them to be professionals and not micromanage everything they did. As mentioned in Chapter IV, one SP said they believed the "program is going in the right direction…due to administration." The difference in results between the ETs and SPs did provide valuable information on the impact of leadership focusing on one group in the culture rather than all members. I do consider, however, whether the positive results from the SP focus group interview were more of a result of my exemplary leadership practices working, if our leadership in comparison was so much better than their leader in years prior, or my own bias and tendency to cater to their needs influenced their views of the administration. Below summarizes the above results into an answer to Research Question 1.

Summary

Research Question 1: *How do Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership assist in integrating new teachers into a larger school culture during organizational change?* was answered through this study, yet not in the way I initially thought. Although I feel I did not do justice to all five of the exemplary leadership practices (as explained in the limitations section), the results seemed to indicate my actions did have a direct impact on the SP teacher group. The SPs described administration's actions as being helpful, giving them freedom as professionals, and supporting them through the change. Through first and second-cycle data analysis, I found codes showing both teacher groups were practicing their own version of the exemplary leadership practices in their interactions with one another. Although the ETs described leadership actions as being more of an "inaction" and they were not a part of conversations and planning, the findings showed the ETs used *encourage the heart* most

118

in their interactions with the SPs, a leadership practice I frequently used during the school year. The SPs' highest-used practices, *enable others to act* and *encourage the heart*, mirrored my own. When participant-observations showed times when both teacher groups worked together, they used *encourage the heart* most frequently.

Had I used all five of Kouzes and Posner's (2017) leadership practices more evenly and frequently, I may have seen more practices used among the staff. Using the practices more intentionally with the ETs, the results of the focus group may have yielded more positive feedback regarding leadership actions in regard to the program merger. Although limitations to this study prevented accessing a full picture of how the exemplary leadership practices assisted in integrating the SPs into the Fantasia Elementary School culture, the findings provide a promising outcome should a leader exercise intentional leadership practice use in times of change.

Research Question 2:

What are teacher perceptions on the integration of new members into the school culture during organizational change?

The following themes emerged: *supportive and professional culture, isolated program perceptions, welcoming and included: artifacts and espoused values and beliefs,* and *we are family…when we want to be: basic assumptions.* Through participant-observations, the school culture free-response survey question, and focus group interviews, I was able to decipher key findings related to Schein's (2010) organizational culture levels to help determine ETs' and SPs' views of the culture after the program merger and uncovered interesting findings on the deeper levels of culture at Fantasia Elementary School.

Revisiting Schein's (2010) definition of organizational culture:

> a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems
> of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to
> be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct
> way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p. 18)

We see the issues of internal integration; group boundaries, member inclusion, power distribution, and developing relationship norms between the two teacher groups come into play through findings in the focus group interviews.

Supportive & Professional: Teacher Perceptions of School Culture

As seen in the literature review in Chapter II, teacher perceptions of school culture have a substantial impact on the organizational culture (Choi, 2011; Kalman & Balkar, 2017; Kosar et al., 2016; Lok & Crawford, 1999; Mosser & Walls, 2002; Sasnett & Clay, 2008; Sinden et al., 2004; Terzi, 2016; Yavuz, 2010; Zhu et al., 2011). In studying ETs' and SPs' perceptions of the culture at Fantasia Elementary, the findings showed several key concepts. In the free-response survey on what the teachers felt the school culture was, the top second cycle codes were *supportive* (31.42%), *professional* (21.42%), *trust* (17.14%), *positive* (12.85%), and *team* (11.42%), with one outlier being *improvement* (0.43%). These results aligned closely with Cameron and Quinn's (2006) clan culture, Terzi's (2016) support and professional cultures, and Kouzes and Posner's (2017) practice of *enable others to act* (as seen in Chapters I and II). These results mirrored those basic levels of culture (supportive/welcoming and community/family) described in the focus group interviews expanded further in the next three sections.

Isolated Program: Established Teachers' Perceptions Prior to Merger

Prior to the merger, the SPs were seen as outsiders to the overall culture of Fantasia Elementary. Because the program was only housed in Fantasia Elementary and run as a completely separate entity within the walls of the school, the program was seen by ETs, understandably, as *isolated.* Berry and Sam (1997), as described in Chapter II, explained acculturation (two groups within an organization coming together, resulting in culture change) happened through four strategies: assimilation, marginalization, separation, and integration. Before the programs merged together under one administration, the SPs were *separated*, each retaining their identities at the expense of developing relationships with one another. It is hard to determine whether that was solely due to the preference of the previous administrator over Specialized Programs or some combination of the SPs holding on to their identity and not being fully accepted into the deeper levels of the ETs' culture. As described in the next two sections, even after being merged, it appears the SPs had not been fully immersed in the *basic assumptions* of Fantasia Elementary's culture. Whether their lack of immersion be due to the recentness of the merge, the SPs resisting assimilation, or the integration process not being fully refined, is unknown and would likely be a suggestion for further exploration. In the next section, the basic levels of Fantasia's culture are explained through the lens of the teachers in the school and their interactions with one another.

Welcoming & Included: Artifacts and Espoused Values and Beliefs

Schein (2010) described the two surface levels of organizational culture as *artifacts* (visible behavior, structures, and processes) and *espoused values and beliefs* (ideologies, values, and aspirations). Interestingly, the *artifacts* and e*spoused values and*

beliefs were compellingly similar between the ETs and SPs, both before and after the merger (Tables 10 & 11). *Size* and *location* of Fantasia Elementary School offered the opportunity for easy interaction between the staff, students, and family members. After the merger of the programs, both ETs and SPs expressed the Specialized Programs were *a part of* the culture of Fantasia Elementary, feeling it was a "solid change" that SPs were now a part of the school, and the staff were no longer "separate." The *espoused values and beliefs* of the two groups showed a "supportive" and "positive team vibe" which allowed for "inclusiveness." Two ETs described the inclusion as "we are one" and "collectively together as one."

Based on the literature, group culture and cohesion have an impact on perceptions of culture and change acceptance (Lau & Ngo, 2001; Lau et al., 2002; Mullen & Copper, 1994; Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Rentsch, 1990; Wu et al., 2007). As the literature provides, leadership practices directly influence culture and teacher perceptions and collaborative practices (Choi, 2011; Duvall-Dickson, 2016; Kalman & Balkar, 2017; Kaltiainen et al., 2017; Lesinger et al., 2017; Stewart-Banks, et al., 2015; Stolp & Smith, 1995; Vasilski et al., 2016). Findings on culture, derived from the focus groups imply the two groups had some elements of group culture, as they had strikingly similar impressions on what the culture was at Fantasia Elementary, at least in the most basic levels. Since the SPs felt they were now included in the culture and ETs feelings of unity among both teacher groups suggested leader practices encouraging acceptance and collaboration may have helped to influence this culture shift. The next section addresses the *basic assumptions* of the culture and the turning point in cultural consistency.

We Are Family…When We Want to Be: Basic Assumptions

Basic assumptions, the deepest level of organizational culture according to Schein (2010), encompassed the tried-and-true beliefs and values of culture which have been "taken for granted" and become the normal function of the organization (p. 28). Schein (2010), in explaining the three levels of organizational culture, concluded *basic assumptions* are not only the hardest to decipher in general but are hardest when in the midst of change. Prior to the merger, both ETs and SPs described deeper elements of the culture as being a "welcoming" "community type" place where the staff treated each other as "family." Interestingly, the idea of "family" was never truly defined among the focus group participants, implying this was an element of culture that may be taken for granted and assumed members of the organization would behave according to the culture's definition of family. The second-cycle pattern code derived from the focus group with ETs was an *opportunity not taken* and referred to the SPs not taking the opportunity to truly be a part of the ETs. ETs made comments about the SPs, noting they "still linger[ed] on the separation of the program," and taking advantage only of opportunities to collaborate when beneficial to them. It appeared, based on In Vivo and Pattern coding, the ETs' values or beliefs they assumed the SPs would know or enact were related to a lack of communication, involvement, collaboration, and expectations. Their acceptable idea of this family-type working relationship kept them at the center, making comments like, "would be nice of you to tell me that," "took my own lead," "there wasn't any, 'let's work together' on this," "I am just doing things on my own," "no one was talking to me, no one was communicating with me," "I was never made aware," and "I had my expectations." I believe this showed the ETs' expectation that the SPs

would be assimilated or absorbed into the already established culture of Fantasia Elementary. ET's possible presumptions to not change their existing expectations nor have a willingness to adjust to make a blending of the two cultures or a transformation to a whole new culture may have negatively impacted their working relationship with SPs. (Giessner et al., 2006).

Several questions could be drawn from this. Is the reason the basic assumptions for SPs were inconclusive because they had not gained "permanent status" among the teachers of Fantasia Elementary and did not have access to this deep element of culture (Schein, 2010, p. 32)? Or is it because, as Schein (2010) explained and I mentioned above, times of change are the hardest times to decipher culture and I was just not able to as the participant-researcher? Was it because they were still in Berry and Sam's (1997) separate or marginalized stage of acculturation and had not fully integrated into Fantasia Elementary's culture? Had the newcomer adjustment process not concluded, so the SPs had not found their place in the school's culture (Bauer et al., 2007; Feldman, 1981)? Schein (2010) explained during M&As (mergers and acquisitions), a culture clash is inevitable until the leader makes a decision on whether the culture will be left alone, allowing cultural domination, or a blending of the two. Were the problems with deciphering the basic assumptions because I had not deliberately set out to have any of the three options happen? It may even be a combination of the theories and studies explored in the literature review. The below section provides a summary and answer to research question 2.

Summary

Research Question 2: *What are teacher perceptions on the integration of new members into the school culture during organizational change?* was answered through findings gathered from teacher discussions in the focus group interviews. Choi (2011) proposed organizational members' reactions to the change experience were more so related to the change itself rather than based on leadership's plans for change. In this study, ETs' reactions and statements about SPs joining Fantasia Elementary's school culture showed a willingness to welcome the new staff, and a disappointment in how the process was carried out through leadership and SPs' choices and involvement. As found in Duvall-Dickson's (2016) study, those acquired by a new organization are generally expected to give up their culture and traditions to assimilate into the acquirer's culture. Although the ETs welcomed SPs into the culture, it was apparent they had cultural expectations for the SPs which were not met to the standard they believed should have been. Their *basic assumptions* alluded to expectations for a family-type environment valuing communication, involvement, collaboration, and adherence to their expectations. Ultimately, going back to elements of the first research question on Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices effect on the transition, ETs believed leadership should have stepped up and played a more involved and active role in the process of integrating a new program with new students and teachers into their culture. The findings from exploring these two research questions provide valuable information for organizational leaders and school administrators and insight into the importance of leader actions impact on school culture during change. Below are the research implications related to the present study.

Implications

The findings from the present study have several key implications for future

researchers and practitioners in the field of organizational leadership and education.

Though this study had an initial focus on the impact of using Kouzes and Posner's (2017)

exemplary leadership practices on new teacher integration into an established culture, as

well as teacher perceptions of this change, the findings provided a more in-depth analysis

of the process of change, deeper levels of school culture, and leading within the

organization on multiple levels. The below sections further explain the implications: the

importance of addressing all exemplary leadership practices and organizational frames,

the impact of deeper levels of culture during change, and *the importance of member*

involvement and feedback.

Importance of Addressing All Exemplary Leadership Practices

Kouzes and Posner (2017) explained intentionally using leadership practices

makes a positive difference in the organization, with members having a greater

commitment, motivation, performance, and success. Using findings from over three

million *Leadership Practices Inventory (*LPI) surveys, Kouzes and Posner (2017) found

95.8% of direct reports (or members) in the organization were highly engaged in the

goals and work when their leader used the five practices "very frequently" or "almost

always" versus the 4.2% engagement when practices were used only "once in a while" (p.

21). My intent when conducting this study, as shown in Research Question 1, *How do*

Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership assist in integrating

new teachers into a larger school culture during organizational change? was to use all

five of the leadership practices as much as possible when dealing with situations

126

involving the ETs and SPs at Fantasia Elementary. Through studying Kouzes and Posner (2017), as well as studies using those practices (Emmanuel & Valley, 2021; Leech & Fulton, 2008; Lingham & Lingham, 2015; Stewart-Banks et al., 2015), I knew the value of all five practices and to not limit myself to only a few.

Even so, confirmed with the observation/windshield survey findings, I found myself gravitating towards using two exemplary leadership practices more than the others, *enable others to act* and *encourage the heart*. Focus group findings, especially from ETs, showed a need for using the other Kouzes and Posner (2017) practices. ETs expressed frustrations with leadership not communicating, not involving them in planning and decisions with SP students pushing into their classes, and not stepping in to mediate issues between the two teacher groups nor with the team lead. All of their perceptions aligned with the three practices I used least; *model the way, inspire a shared vision,* and *challenge the process*. The implications of these findings suggest using all of the five exemplary leadership practices is important, and leaders should strive to do so to maximize the impact on their organizational cultures, employee satisfaction, and success/performance. Additionally, relating specifically to the present study, practices use (or disuse) can have a significant impact on change circumstances in a school setting and culture, positively or negatively, as explored in the next section.

Importance of Addressing All Organizational Frames

When I set out to conduct this study, I developed a conceptual framework to include elements of Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership practices and Bolman and Deal's (2013) organizational frames (Figure 1). The focus, I felt at the time, should have been on the *human resource, political*, and *symbolic frames*, as I believed the

structural frame had been addressed during the summer planning involving administration/leadership. As described in the Conceptual Framework section of Chapter I, district and school-level leadership met the summer before the 2021-2022 school year and planned the structure, purpose, roles, and goals of the Specialized Programs and the logistics of integrating the teachers and students as part of Fantasia Elementary. Because I believed everything had been worked out organizationally, there was no need to address the *structural frame*, and therefore did not include it in my conceptual framework or focus on it in the present study.

Through data analysis, I found the *structural frame* also needed attention. Focus group interview analysis showed ETs expressed concerns around including Specialized Programs students in their classrooms and working with SPs revolved mostly around expectations and structure. Bolman and Deal (2013) described the *structural frame* as being important for putting members in the right positions and collaboration opportunities with other members. They explained how basic structural tensions could be addressed through employing methods to coordinate efforts, both individually and in groups and connecting initiatives and goals. According to the researchers, there are two ways to accomplish this: vertically, with a chain of command structure addressed in our pre-planning meeting, and laterally, where I feel the issues in this study may have happened. Addressing structural issues laterally includes "meetings, committees, coordinating roles, or network structures" (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 51). Bolman and Deal (2013) specifically noted, "lateral communications work best when a complex task is performed in a turbulent, fast-changing environment" (p. 58). Rather than only structuring the change process, it is important to include organizational members in

128

planning meetings, to give them a voice and opportunities through collaboration and leadership, and simply allow the members to have a key role in making the restructuring happen.

Referring back to the previous section highlighting the three minimally used exemplary leadership practices, *model the way* and *inspire a shared vision* being the least used, directly correlated with my neglect of addressing the *structural frame*. Referencing Table 1 adapted from Bolman and Deal's (2013) text, barriers to change in the *structural frame* included loss of direction, clarity, stability, confusion and chaos. They suggested essential strategies to combat those barriers, including communicating and realigning and renegotiating formal patterns and procedures with staff; some practices ETs pointed out were not adequately addressed by leadership throughout the change. The findings and relevant literature lead me to the conclusion that intentional leadership practices and analyzing a change situation through certain lenses, or frames, is imperative to effectively impact culture at the deepest levels, as will be explained further in the next section.

The Impact of Deeper Levels of Culture During Change

As Schein (2010) explained:

> The most central issue for leaders is to understand the deeper levels of a culture, to assess the functionality of the assumptions made at that level, and to deal with the anxiety that is unleashed when those assumptions are challenged. (p. 33)

Basic assumptions are the third and deepest level of organizational culture (Schein, 2010). Schein (2010) stated "if a basic assumption comes to be strongly held in a group, members will find behavior based on any other premise inconceivable" (p. 28). Focus group findings from the ETs showed they noticed there were multiple actions from SPs

129

that did not align with the ETs' previously held *basic assumptions* of *community* or *family*; not taking advantage of the opportunity to be a part of this assumption with one another (as explained in Chapter IV). These actions and ETs' feelings that SPs were not communicating, not fully participating, and lacked true collaboration frustrated the ETs and impacted their working effectively with one another. Schein (2010) acknowledged a changing culture leads to "anxiety and defensiveness" among the group (p. 29). He explained these assumptions during challenging or changing circumstances can distort reality, leading members to assume certain actions indicated a more negative explanation. ETs feeling the SPs did not want to be fully a part of the culture could have possibly been explained by SPs' hesitance to entirely trust the unknown or because they were not sure if participating in such a way was allowed, considering the past expectations of their previous administrator. Their lack of collaboration or communication could have been explained by leadership's neglect to mediate the newly established relationships between the teachers, rather than their intentional disconnect or disregard for ETs' feelings or expectations. Yet another explanation could be the SPs, who were not yet fully accepted into the culture did not gain full access to shared assumptions and, therefore, were still operating as separate microcultures within the teacher subculture at Fantasia Elementary (Schein 2010). Further research would be needed to delve deeper into the underlying "why?'" for the way ETs felt and why some SPs were not participating in the established *basic assumptions.* Future researchers, practitioners, and leaders need to ensure they understand the basic assumptions of not only the organizational culture, but subcultures and microcultures as well to successfully plan and impact culture shifts during merging or change circumstances.

Importance of Member Involvement and Feedback

All three components of my conceptual framework express the importance of seeking feedback and involving others as an organizational leader. Bolman and Deal (2013) proposed using surveys as feedback to assist leaders in organizational improvement. Kouzes and Posner (2017) suggested providing and seeking feedback while practicing all five exemplary leadership practices and 10 organizational commitments. Leaders must seek feedback in order to help themselves grow. Schein (2010) advocated for creating psychological safety, or making organizational members feel secure and capable, during change circumstances through eight activities, one of which was practicing providing and accepting valid feedback. Had I not included focus group interviews as an additional piece of triangulation data to my observations, I likely would not have come to the same results and conclusions. Using focus group data from the teachers themselves highlighted the practices I was doing right and those I neglected. As leaders, it is imperative we continuously seek frequent feedback from the organization's members, especially throughout change circumstances. Seeking feedback only at the beginning or once problems begin to arise is not effective. Leaders need feedback throughout the process to monitor how things are going, to know when to make adjustments, and help members feel valued and important to the organization. Had I sought feedback throughout the school year of this study, I would have realized I was putting most of my efforts into the SPs while neglecting the ETs and, in turn, prompting me to make adjustments to my practices and interactions with my staff. In the next section, I address various limitations which arose during the study.

Limitations of the Study

Referring back to the validity section in Chapter III, the two main validity threats indicated by Maxwell (2013) and also for the purposes of the present study, were *researcher bias* and *reactivity*. In addition to the two main limitations, time, generalizability, and limited research on the topic are included in the sections below.

Researcher Bias

As I expected and communicated in Chapter III, researcher bias did play a major role as a limitation in the present study. As I tried to be objective, I was aware of the fact my past experience as an alternative school educator might impact my participation in the study. Through the data analysis, I learned I subconsciously favored the SPs in my actions and leadership practices throughout the school year. Through focus group interviews, SPs described leadership actions' influence on the program merger and transition as positive, indicating leadership "gave us a lot of freedom," "supported decisions we made," and "came in and helped us out…." Conversely, ETs' descriptions of leadership actions did not align with exemplary leadership practices, but, on the contrary, painted a picture of neglect and inaction in each of the practices. A lack of *communication, focus, preparation, inclusion,* and *recognition* were codes derived from data analysis and showed a need for more direct leadership action. My bias and empathy towards SPs impacted the results of my study, and this shed light on the fact that all researchers have a bias in some way and even with careful planning, bias could affect the results of a study.

Reactivity

Reactivity, as defined by Maxwell (2013), is the "influence of the researcher on the setting or individuals being studied" (p. 124). Initially, when reactivity was addressed in Chapter III, I assumed the reactivity issues I would face as a school administrator who was the participant-researcher, would be in conducting observations and focus groups. I attended to this by using moderators for the focus group interviews and ensured the observations I wrote did not involve situations of district-mandated formal walkthroughs or observations. Although these efforts did help to positively impact the data collection process, I did not conceive of another issue with the validity threat of leadership influence as a researcher. This issue with reactivity was unique in that as the participant-researcher and as an administrator, participants (or teachers) expected me to be the person to intervene and address issues among the ETs and SPs. When I did not, they did not express their concerns to me or the principal at Fantasia Elementary. This sort of reactivity influenced the teachers to react to their surroundings in a way a subordinate in an organization or school naturally would. Had I not been the administrator or participant researcher in the school, and just an outside researcher observing and interviewing teachers, I may have obtained earlier data and insights alluding to the cultural issues happening during the program merger due to leader neglect. Although conducting a study as a participant-researcher provides an insider perspective and a cultural understanding an outside researcher would not have, it has the possibility of inhibiting validity to a certain extent.

Time

Two limitations in this study related to time issues; the length of the study and surveying on school culture after the intervention. Maxwell (2013) listed *intensive, long-term involvement* as a validity check to qualitative studies, explaining the incorporation of repeated observations/interviews and the researchers' time studying the setting helps to "rule out spurious associations and premature theories" and provides more time to test the hypothesis (p. 126). The length of time for this study was over the course of one school year. This ultimately was a short amount of time to see the results of exemplary leadership practice use as well as, assess a school culture undergoing very recent change circumstance. As evident by the findings, it was difficult to determine the basic assumptions of culture for the SPs, possibly due to the short time they were a part of Fantasia Elementary's culture, but could have reflected the limited amount of leadership intervention which was implemented. To truly assess leadership practice impact on a merged culture, more opportunity for research and studying the culture would be needed to collect *rich data*, detailed and done long enough to reveal a more complete picture. In addition to preferably having more time to conduct this study, collecting survey data on the staff's view of Fantasia Elementary's school culture prior to implementation would have been ideal, especially to see how SPs viewed the culture prior to being immersed. Nevertheless, the perceptions collected were still valuable to the findings and analysis of this study.

Generalizability

As the methodology used in this research was a single embedded single-case study, generalizability is limited. Although the single-case study may not be

generalizable to other school populations (given the specific and unique circumstances at Fantasia Elementary), the theoretical propositions are valuable and may be generalized to other leaders and schools (Yin, 2018). Maxwell (2013) explained internal generalizability may be at risk when only focusing on certain players within the case. My observations with ETs were limited to only a select number of teachers having interactions with SPs due to uncontrollable circumstances (grade level of Specialized Programs students pushing into classes, grade level meetings dependent on the student's grade, teachers selected based on class dynamics which would be more conducive to including students with behavior needs, etc.). This issue limited the population of ETs who interacted with SPs and in turn, narrowed those included in observations and those who qualified to volunteer for the focus group interviews. Because of this, the participants in the case were inherently limited. External generalizability was limited as it is less likely there would be another elementary school with a similar teacher population and demographics while being given the opportunity to merge a Specialized Behavior Program into the school after their administrator, who previously kept them separated, was no longer leading the program. Although readers may not be able to directly connect with all the components of this case, Maxwell (2013) explained cases like the one presented here can be an example of an "extreme case" contributing to research on "the development of a theory of the process operating in the case studied, ones that may well operate in other cases, but that may produce different outcomes in different circumstances" (p. 138). This appears true in this particular case study as the current literature on this topic was limited, as described in the next section.

Limited Research on the Topic

There is an abundance of literature and studies in isolation on effective leadership, school and organizational culture, mergers, and change; however, little research was found with all these pieces combined together. Research on culture types in organizations (Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Cieciora et al., 2021; Kheir-Faddul et al., 2019; Selvaraja & Pihie, 2015), culture perceptions (Choi, 2011, Lok & Crawford, 1999; Yavuz, 2010), the influence of school culture on satisfaction and teacher burnout (Deal & Peterson, 1998; Hart & Marina, 2014; Kalman & Balkar, 2017; Terzi, 2016), the impact of change circumstances on organizations (Albrecht, 2008; Bernerth et al., 2007; Bommer et al., 2005; Brown & Cregan, 2008; Reichers et al., 1997; Spillane & Shirrell, 2017; Stanley et al., 2005; Wanous et al., 2000; Wu et al., 2007), and mergers and acquisitions (Bansal, 2019; Buono & Bowditch, 1989; Harman, 2002; Marmenout, 2011; Skodvin, 1999) are all well covered within research. When it came to the specifics of this study, using Kouzes and Posner's (2017) leadership practices to positively impact the culture of a school during a staff/program merger, I was unable to find any comparable literature or studies. Although the lack of literature did impact the study in not having any other studies from which to compare or build upon, it could provide valuable insights to future researchers and practitioners, as well as to suggest or provide opportunities to further the research.

Despite limitations in this study, valuable information was gathered regarding varied leadership practices, the impact of mergers on culture, and leader impact on culture during change circumstances. Although there were several key findings having implications on research and best practices in education and organizations, there is more

to be discovered. The section which follows includes my recommendations for future

research and practice based on the lessons I learned throughout this research.

Recommendations for Practice & Future Research

The research presented in this study provides valuable information for

practitioners as well as areas and topics where future research is warranted. The final

sections presented below include recommendations for future practice and

recommendations for future research.

Recommendations for Future Practice

Conducting this study has changed my mindset as a current practitioner, leader,

and organizational member in the educational system. Although I feel much of what I

learned in the study related specifically to reflection on my own practices and how I can

improve, there were lessons other school and district leaders could heed when working

with teachers and other school staff in times of change and when helping to build a

collaborative and supporting culture. Those suggestions are to include organizational

members in planning, execution, and feedback, and deciphering the culture prior to

implementing change.

Including organizational members in planning, execution, and feedback. One

of my greatest regrets in this study was not seeking feedback more frequently throughout

the duration of implementation. Since I waited until the end of the school year to conduct

the focus group interviews, I had not engaged in adjusting practices to make my

intervention more effective. I was naive to think my intervention was working. It was not

until after the focus group interviews did I discover I was not intervening in the right

ways, especially with the ETs. If I had sought frequent feedback throughout the school

year, I may have seen how I was neglecting the ETs, noticed the need for the *structural frame*, and ensured all practices were being adequately used. Teachers likely would have been more engaged in the change process as they would have felt more connected to the goals and initiatives and had taken ownership of the undertaking.

My recommendation to fellow administrators is to continuously seek feedback from your teachers and staff. Ask how things are going, what needs improvement, and how administration can help. Communicating with staff and involving them in the process leads to more positive attitudes and behavior (Vasilaki et al., 2016) and curtails cynicism (Brown & Cregan, 2008; Ertürk, 2008; Hartge et al., 2019; Miller et al., 1994; Qian & Daniels, 2008; Stanley et al., 2005; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). Include them in the process; train them on school culture and leader practices. Provide opportunities for teachers who show leadership capabilities to participate and lead more in the process. Kalman and Balkar's (2017) and Choi's (2011) studies showed the value of training teachers on culture and the impact on their attitudes and how they saw leaders' actions from a different perspective. Leaders who engage staff based on their strengths and abilities build a more effective staff and in turn, build a stronger organizational culture.

Deciphering culture prior to implementing change. Schein (2010) explained an internal analysis of culture is needed when an organization is working to understand strengths, and weaknesses, solve issues, and make choices for change. Incorrect assumptions made based on only espoused values could be potentially threatening to the organization and might lead to serious cultural problems. In the present study, I do not believe I took the time and action needed to dig deep enough into each microculture at Fantasia Elementary to better lead and intervene when the merger happened. I do not

believe this lack of true understanding created major harm, as the ETs and SPs still functioned separately as programs while collaborating in some instances. However, without any interventions, this separateness could create miscommunication and misunderstanding that could be detrimental. My suggestion to practitioners and administrators is to take the time and commitment to understand the school's current culture to better equip the members to be ready and active in change.

Schein (2010) provided several suggestions in his book on how leaders can decipher their own organizational cultures. They could use surveys to help develop the culture typology working in the organization, conduct interviews and focus groups with the staff to better understand culture and utilize the staff's expertise and input in the process. Calling in consultants to evaluate the organization's culture and provide insight and suggestions is another way to address culture without the leader or insider being blamed or disregarded.

Lastly, several theories provide a process by which organizations can learn more about their cultures. As mentioned in Chapter II, Cameron and Quinn (2006) developed an organizational assessment, the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI), to help leaders examine their cultures and compare them with their own plan or direction for the organization. Schein (2010) provided a process for cultural assessment during organizational change to include the following steps: (1) obtaining leadership commitment, (2) selecting groups for self-assessment, (3) selecting an appropriate setting for the self-assessment, (4) explain the purpose of the group meeting, (5) a short lecture on how to think about culture, (6) eliciting descriptions of the artifacts, (7) identifying espoused values, (8) identifying shared underlying assumptions, (9) identifying cultural

139

aids and hindrances, and (10) decisions on next steps (pp. 317-325). If using these instruments and processes, a researcher would have the opportunity to gather pertinent information on the levels of culture and intervene in such a way to make a lasting impact on changing cultures.

Another cultural element leaders should be aware of and work to understand prior to implementing change is the influence of different leadership levels within the organization. It is imperative to determine who are in positions of leadership, how is their role defined, how they function, and interplay within all the levels of leadership. Schein (2010) explained the impact of external adaptations and internal integrations on culture. First, balancing the expectations and needs of the members in the school as well as outside stakeholders, such as the district-level leadership and community is crucial for buy-in and success. Integrating and maintaining the expectations of the school for common norms, boundaries, power and authority and explanations is also essential for ensuring those within the organization are invested and participating in the developed goals. In this study, I found through focus group interviews that different members with leadership roles within the school (other than administration) had an impact on the teachers' perceptions and experiences with the merger. Both ETs and SPs expressed frustrations with the special education Team Lead, who, as explained in Chapters III and IV, acted as a liaison between the administration and the special education department and Specialized Programs. Prior to the program merger, not much thought was given to the new role of the Team Lead; nor was she prepared or instructed on how her position should function under the change circumstances. My suggestion to practitioners and leaders is to analyze and address all levels of leadership and the roles they play in the

culture as well as the functional role in the workings of the organization. In the next section, I unpack recommendations for future studies to further research in the area of leadership practices, school culture, and change.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Limitations and lessons learned throughout the present study present opportunities for further research to better understand leadership and cultural impact through changing circumstances in school settings. The following sections provide such recommendations:

- *School characteristics*

- *Teacher demographics and geographical region*

- *Qualitative or mixed-methods study*

- *Focus on all organizational frames*

- *Facilitating change with more member involvement*

- *Longitudinal study*

- *More intense study on theories in the conceptual framework.*

School characteristics, teacher demographics, and geographic region. It would be interesting to conduct a similar study involving change circumstances in a larger school to see if school size has an effect on the culture based on teacher and staff interactions. Doing a similar study in a school with different teacher demographics would be compelling, as Fantasia Elementary staff consisted mostly of young White women. On a similar note, it would be interesting to conduct a study at a different school level, such as middle or high school, to see if the interactions changed and made a difference. Studying schools in other areas of the United States, or even abroad, may provide a

different perspective than this study conducted in the Southeastern portion of the United States.

Quantitative or mixed-methods study. The present study was a qualitative case study. I would recommend doing a study involving more surveying among the staff, possibly more aligned with staff views of leadership practices. The study could assess teacher's knowledge or views of the administrations' specific practices which were used, rather than alluding to one based on culture as the present study did.

Focus on all organizational frames. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, through focus group analysis and findings, I found, due to my intentional removal of this frame in my study, I had not addressed components of Bolman and Deal's (2013) *structural frame* which would have provided the evolving structure needed with the help of the teachers in Fantasia Elementary. Bolman and Deal (2013) suggested changes in the organization require some sort of structural adaptation. Future studies could be more cognizant of the *structural frame* and intentionally use it when studying any organizational frames and structure within business or schools while ensuring organizational members are a part of planning. Table 16 shows a suggested addendum to Figure 1, this time including the *structural frame* as a lens for the five exemplary leadership practices.

Table 16
Exemplary Leadership Practices within the Structural Frame

Exemplary Leadership Practices	Structural Frame
Model the Way	Let your values guide you; Find commitment through clarifying values; Reinforce through systems and processes.
Inspire a Shared Vision	Look forward in times of rapid change.
Challenge the Process	Break it down and accentuate progress.

Enable Others to Act	Share knowledge and information; Develop cooperative goals and roles; Structure projects to promote joint effort; Structure jobs to offer latitude; Organize work to build competence and ownership.
Encourage the Heart	Be clear about the goals and the rules.

Note: Adapted from framework elements of Bolman and Deal (2013) and Kouzes and Posner (2017).

Facilitating change with more member involvement. All the theorists included in the conceptual framework for this study suggested including organizational members in the process to gain buy-in, foster collaboration, and satisfaction, and promote success (Giessner et al., 2006; Lee & Li, 2015; Marmenout, 2011). Interestingly, during the school year, in using the exemplary leadership practices, I truly believed I was doing a great job and using those practices worked wonders; however, the focus group interview data provided different insights. The feedback and examples provided in the focus group aligned with the windshield data, revealing I had not been as thorough as I had perceived. Had I included the teachers in the planning and feedback process throughout the school year, I would have gained better insight, made adjustments to better the process, and potentially sped up the newcomer process for the SPs.

Some suggestions for future research to promote more involvement in the change process on school culture would be to include department chairs or other members in the initial planning stages for the merger, use Schein's (2010) cultural assessment for managed change strategies (outlined in the recommendations for future practice section above), utilize the discovery process to gather rich data, participant involvement and feedback, and find structured ways to involve the staff in the process. Seeking feedback from participants throughout the study may limit misconceptions or confusion otherwise gathered from a researcher perspective.

Longitudinal study. The last suggestion for future research is to conduct a similar study for a longer period of time. Schein (2010) suggested multiple ways for leaders to decipher culture and impact culture change, which all take time. Additionally, any intervention to make adjustments affecting culture based on observations, analysis, and member feedback takes time to process and implement. Because being accepted into a new culture as a newcomer depends on when the Established members feel they have gained "permanent status" and are allowed into the inner circles of the group where "group secrets are then shared" (Schein, 2010, p. 19). Due to the focus group interview findings showing ETs and SPs did not share the same basic assumptions in their culture yet, it would be interesting to follow this study longer to determine how long it took for the SPs to gain permanent status in Fantasia Elementary's culture to where *basic assumptions* matched. A possible research project would be to do a similar study where the researcher followed a group of teachers over time to assess length of time and other predictors for how the school culture evolves with newcomers.

More intense study on theories in the conceptual framework. Both Kouzes and Posner (2017) and Schein (2010) provided a comprehensive view and suggestions for practice on leadership actions and organizational culture. For the purposes of a dissertation study, it was impossible to undertake a study which would test all the elements discussed by these theorists. My final suggestion for further research would be to conduct a study that thoroughly implements all the practices, suggestions, and maps for better assessing organizational culture and leadership actions' impacting upon schools. It is evident through prior research by both these theorists and others in the field that these practices are effective and relevant. If further research is done and presented to

144

districts and schools, leadership could have the power to change not only the culture, retention rate, and satisfaction among staff, but the research could show implications concerning school effectiveness, progress, and achievement.

Conclusion

To quote Kouzes and Posner (2017), "sometimes challenges find leaders, and sometimes leaders find the challenges…" (p. 147). The nature of business in organizations is there will be leaders and others who are led as well as some sort of challenge. The challenge may be the establishment of goals, acquiring both material and professional resources, procuring vital funding, hiring trained personnel, or crafting a product. Inevitably, it will be a situation for change. Change is foreseeable in organizations for a multitude of reasons. In the case of this study, the change circumstance involved programming and people. It was a tough situation for me as a new leader, but I chose to rise to the challenge in a way to help our school culture; through learning and growth. Through the two research questions in this study, I found more than what I sought to discover. I wanted to know if exemplary leadership practices could assist in integrating new teachers into the established culture and how the teachers would perceive this change. Although I did find exemplary leadership practices are able to help the process and teachers have their own perceptions of newcomers, judgments on how leadership handles a change circumstance were at the heart of this story. As it turned out, I went about the process in the wrong way. Feedback and collaboration are key to knowledge for improvement.

If someone asked me what my most profound takeaway from this study would be, I would say it is two-fold. First and foremost, leaders must include their teachers and staff

in the planning, execution, and reflection of any change effort. Leaders working in isolation on a change initiative will likely be unsuccessful. Secondly, seeking feedback from the cultures' members is paramount. Schein (2010) provided a process leaders can use to deeply understand the culture while acknowledging how the members can be instrumental in the workings of the organization, especially in times of change, through seeking frequent feedback. Teachers who feel they are a vital part of the organization are likely to be more satisfied and productive. They are more likely to collaborate with one another. If leaders are sure to include members in planning, execution, and feedback, they will be happier in their job and more apt to collaborate on the organization's goals. Kouzes and Posner (2017) wrote:

> ...*leadership must be everyone's business*. The most lasting test of your leadership effectiveness is the extent to which you bring forth and develop the leadership abilities in others, not just yourself. You have the capacity to liberate the leader within everyone. (p. 298)

Throughout the process of this study, I found renewed dedication and perspective on the impact of leadership and culture in organizations, particularly in the school setting. My hope is other organizational and school leaders may read my work and consider diligent, deliberate and continuous practice and reflection in helping the members of their organization feel important and be successful, even when change occurs. After much self-reflection, had I the opportunity to do this study again I would have done a more intentional and thorough job of (1) using Kouzes and Posner's (2017) practices aimed at member inclusion, involvement, and feedback- *inspire a shared vision* and *challenge the process*, (2) shared more with teachers on the vision and goals throughout the process-

model the way, and (3) used and revisited the *structural frame* with teacher input and collaboration among the groups throughout implementation. Kouzes and Posner (2017) provided many pivotal suggestions in their books, with two I now want to leave with leaders: learning leadership takes practice and "mastery is a lifelong pursuit" (p. 301-304) and, in the end, "...leadership makes a difference" (Kouzes & Posner, 2017, p. 300).

References

Albrecht, S. (2008). Measuring cynicism toward organizational change- One dimension or two? *Journal of Applied Measurement, 9*(4), 374-386.

Alhija, F. N., & Fresko, B. (2010). Socialization of new teachers: Does induction matter? *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26*(8), 1592-1597. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.06.010

Anderson, M. (2007). Transformational leadership in education: A review of existing literature. *International Social Science Review, 93*(1), 1-13. https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/issr/vol93/iss1/4

Argyris C., & Schön D. A. (1996). *Organizational Learning II: Theory, Method and Practice*. Addison-Wesley.

Armenakis, A., Harris, S., & Feild, H. (1999). Paradigms in organizational change: Change agent and change target perspectives. In R. Golembiewski (Ed.), *Handbook of organizational behavior* (pp. x-y). Marcel Dekker.

Ashford, S. J. (1988). Individual strategies for coping with stress during organizational transitions. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 24*(1), 19-36.

Aslan, M., Ozer, N., & Bakir, A. (2009). Administrators and teachers' views on school culture: A qualitative study. *Elementary Education Online, 8*(1), 268-281. https://www.ilkogretim-online.org/

Atasoy, R. (2020). The relationship between school principals' leadership styles, school culture and organizational change. *International Journal of Progressive Education, 16*(5), 256-274. https://doi.org/10.29329/ijpe.2020.277.16

Aziz, R., Mangestuti, R., & Wahyuni, E. N. (2020). What makes the teacher happy? In *Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Recent Innovations (ICRI 2018)* (pp. 1458-1463). Science and Technology Publication https://doi.org/10.5220/00009929614581463

Bansal, A. (2019). Thinking of mergers and acquisitions? Think of justice: A people perspective. *International Journal of Manpower, 41*(4), 435-456. https://doi.org/10.1108/IKM-02-2019-0087

Bass, B. M. (1999). Current developments in transformational leadership: Research and applications. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, *3*(1), 5-21. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0095852

Bass, B. M, & Riggio, R. E. (2005). *Transformational Leadership* (2nd ed.). Psychology Press.

Balay, R. & Ipek, C. (2010). Teachers' perception of organizational culture and organizational commitment in Turkish primary schools. *Journal of World of Turks, 2*(1), 363-384. https://doaj.org/article/6cf3d3b64fd14880b5a4e1715c122741

Bauer, T. N., Erdogan, B., Bodner, T., Truxillo, D. M., & Tucker, J. S. (2007). Newcomer adjustment during organizational socialization: A meta-analytic review of antecedents, outcomes, and methods. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*(3), 707-721. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.3.707

Bauer, T. N., & Green, S. G. (1994). The effect of newcomer involvement in work-

related activities: A longitudinal study of socialization. *Journal of Applied*

Psychology, 79(1), 211-223. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.79.2.211

Bennis, W., & Nanus, B. (1985). *Leaders: Strategies for taking charge*. Harper and Row.

Berkemeyer, N., Junker, R., Bos, W., & Muthing, K. (2015). Organizational cultures in

education: Theory-based use of an instrument for identifying school culture.

Journal for Educational Research Online, 7(3), 86-102.

https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/organizational-cultures-education-

theory-based/docview/1785515910/se-2

Bernerth, J. B., Armenakis, A. A., Feild, H. S., & Walker, H. J. (2007). Justice, cynicism,

and commitment: A study of important organizational change variables. *Journal*

of Applied Behavioral Science, 43(3), 303–326.

https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886306296602

Berry, J. W., & Sam, D. L. (1997). Acculturation and adaptation. In J. W. Berry, M. H.

Segall, & C. Kagitcibasi (Eds.), *Handbook of cross-cultural psychology* (2nd ed.),

3, 291–326. Allyn and Bacon.

https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Z0L7dwJKel8C&oi=fnd&pg=P

A291&ots=hFlPK8pmfQ&sig=GxJQ8BNixSikDEZ149d9zix1PhA#v=onepage&

q&f=false

Bhandari, G., Tiessen, B., & Snowdon, A. (2011). Meeting community needs through

leadership and innovation: A case of virtual psychiatric emergency department

(ED). *Behaviour & Information Technology, 30*(4), 517-523.

https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2011.553745

Birkinshaw, J., Bresman, H., & Håkanson, L. (2000). Managing the post-acquisition

    integration process: How the human integration and task integration processes

    interact to foster value creation. *Journal of Management Studies, 37*, 395–425.

Blake, R. R., Moutron, J. S., & McCanse, A. A. (1989). *Change by design.* Addison-

    Wesley.

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1991). Leadership and management effectiveness: A multi-

    frame, multi-sector analysis. *Human Resource Management, 30*(4), 509-534.

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2013). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and

    leadership* (5th ed*).* Jossey-Bass.

Bommer, W. H., Rich, G. A., & Rubin, R. S. (2005). Changing attitudes about change:

    Longitudinal effects of transformational leader behavior on employee cynicism

    about organizational change. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 26*(1), 733-753.

    https://doi.org/10.1002/job.342

Brown, M., & Cregan, C. (2008). Organizational change cynicism: The role of employee

    involvement. *Human Resource Management, 47*(4), 667-686.

    https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20239

Buono, A. F., & Bowditch, J. L. (1989). T*he human side of mergers and acquisitions:

    Managing collisions between people, cultures, and organizations.* Jossey-Bass.

Burke, W., & Litwin, G. (1992). A causal model of organizational performance and

    change. *Journal of Management, 18*(1), 523–545.

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. Harper & Row.

Cameron, K. S., & Quinn, R. E. (2006). *Diagnosing and changing organizational

    culture: Based on the competing values framework* (Rev. ed.)*.* Jossey-Bass.

Cann, R. F., Riedel-Prabhakar, R., & Powell, D. (2021). A model of positive school

    leadership to improve teacher wellbeing. *International Journal of Applied*

    Positive Psychology, 6(1), 195-218. https://doi.org/10.1007/s41042-020-00045-5

Cartwright, S., & Cooper, C. L. (1993). The role of culture compatibility in successful

    organizational marriage. *The Academy of Management Executive, 7*(1), 57–70.

Cherubini, L. (2009). Reconciling the tensions of new teachers' socialisation into school

    culture: A review of the research. *Issues in Educational Research, 19*(2), 83-99.

    https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/reconciling-tensions-new-teachers-

    socialisation/docview/2393185680/se-2

Choi, M. (2011). Employees' attitudes toward organizational change: A literature review.

    Human Resource Management, 50(4), 479-500.

    https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20434

Cieciora, M., Pietrazak, P., Debski, M., Kandefer, K., & Bolkunow, W. (2021).

    Differences in the perception of organizational culture in non-public universities

    in Poland by academic and administrative staff- A study on Cameron and Quinn's

    model. *Foundations of Management, 13*(1), 131-144.

    https://doi.org/10.2478/fman-2021-0010

Clotfelter, C. T., Glennie, E. J., Ladd, H. F., & Vigdor, J. L. (2008). Teacher bonuses and

    teacher retention in low-performing schools: Evidence from the North Carolina

    $1,800 teacher bonus program. *Public Finance Review, 36*(1), 63-87.

    https://doi.org/10.1177/1091142106291662

Coff, R. (2002). Human capital, shared expertise, and the likelihood of impasse in

    corporate acquisitions. *Journal of Management, 28*(1), 107–128.

Collins, J. C. (2005). *Good to great and the social sectors: Why business thinking is not the answer: A monograph to accompany Good to great: Why some companies make the leap--and others don't.* Jim Collins.

Corlett, J. G., & Pearson, C. S. (2003). *Mapping the organizational psyche.* Center for Application of Psychological Type.

David, J. L. (2008). What research says about...Teacher recruitment incentives. *Educational Leadership, 65*(7), 84-86.

Deal, T. E., & Kennedy, A. A. (1982). *Corporate cultures: The rites and rituals of corporate life.* Harper Collins.

Deal, T. E., & Peterson, K. D. (1998). How leaders influence the culture of schools. *Educational Leadership, 56*(1), 28–30.

Dent, E. B. & Goldberg, S. G. (1999). Challenging "resistance to change." *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 35*(1), 25-41. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886399351003

Devos, G., Buelens, M., & Bouckenooghe, D. (2007). Contribution of content, context, and process to understanding openness to organizational change: Two experimental simulation studies. *Journal of Social Psychology, 147*(6), 607–630.

Devos, G., Vanderheyden, K., & Van den Broeck, H. (2001). A framework for assessing commitment to change: Process and context variables of organizational change. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Washington, DC.

Ding, H., & Lin, X. (2020). Exploring the relationship between core self-evaluation and

strengths use: The perspective of emotion. *Personality and Individual*

Differences, 157, 109804.

Djonko-Moore, C. M. (2015). An exploration of teacher attrition and mobility in high

poverty racially segregated schools. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 19*(5), 1063-

1078. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2015.1013458

Dunmay, X., & Galand, B. (2012). The multilevel impact of transformational leadership

on teacher commitment: Cognitive and motivational pathways. *British*

Educational Research Journal, 38(5), 703-729.

https://doi.org/10.1080/01411926.2011.577889

Duvall-Dickson, S. (2016). Blending tribes: Leadership challenges in mergers and

acquisitions. *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, *81*(4), 16-22.

Eby, L. T., Adams, D. M., Russell, J., & Gavy, S. H. (2000). Perceptions of

organizational readiness for change: Factors related to employees' reactions to the

implementation of team-based selling. *Human Relations, 53*(3), 419-442.

https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726700533006.

Eigsti, H. J., & Davis, A. M. (2015). Impact of a leadership thread on doctor of physical

therapist education. *Journal of Physical Therapy Education, 32*(4), 376-381.

https://doi.org/10.1097/JTE.0000000000000066

Ellonen, R. (2005). *The relationship of organizational culture, trust and innovativeness*

[Unpublished master's thesis, Lappeenranta University of Technology, Finland.]

Emmanuel, S., & Valley, C. A. (2021). A qualitative case study of exemplary leadership

in the United States Virgin Islands: An application of Kouzes and Posner's five

practices of exemplary leadership. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education,*
17(3). 1-22. https://doi.org/10.1177/1942775121990054

Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*.
University of Chicago.

Enders, T., Martin D., Sehgal G. G., & Schüritz, R. (2020). Igniting the Spark:
Overcoming organizational change resistance to advance innovation adoption –
The case of data-driven services. In H. Nóvoa, M. Drăgoicea, & N. Kühl (Eds.).
Exploring Service Science. IESS 2020. Lecture Notes in Business Information
Processing, vol 377 (pp. 217-230)*.* Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-
38724-2_16

Ertürk, A. (2008). A trust-based approach to promote employees' openness to
organizational change in Turkey. *International Journal of Manpower, 29*(5), 462–
483. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437720810888580

Etzioni, A. (1975). *A comparative analysis of complex organizations.* Free Press.

Febriani, D. M., & Yancey, G. B. (2019). The effect of integration approaches and human
resources initiatives on changes in organizational culture and employee attitudes
during a merger. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal, 22*(2), 108-131.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/mgr0000084

Fedor, D. B., Caldwell, S., & Herold, D. M. (2006). The effects of organizational changes
on employee commitment: A multilevel investigation. *Personnel Psychology,*
59(1), 1–29. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2006.00852.x

Feldman, D. C. (1981). The multiple socialization of organization members. *The*
Academy of Management Review, 6(2), 309-318. https://doi.org/10.2307/257888

Firestone, W., & Louis, K. (1999). Schools as cultures. In J. Murphy & K. Louis (Eds.),
  Handbook of research on educational administration (2nd ed., pp. 297-322).
  Jossey-Bass.

Fisher, D. C. (1986). Organizational socialization: An integrative review. In K. M.
  Rowland & G.R. Ferris (Eds.), *Research in personnel and human resources
  management* (Vol. 4, pp.101-145). JAI Press.

Flores, M. A. (2004). The impact of school culture and leadership on new teachers'
  learning in the workplace. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 7*(4),
  297-318. https://doi.org/10.1080/136031204000226918

Flores, M. A., & Day, C. (2006). Contexts which shape and reshape new teachers'
  identities: A multi-perspective study. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 22*(2),
  219-232. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.09.002

Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change* (4th ed.). Teachers New
  College Press.

Galpin, T. (1996). *The human side of change: A practical guide to organization redesign.*
  Jossey-Bass.

Georgia Department of Education. (2021). *Student enrollment by ethnicity/race and
  gender.* https://oraapp.doe.k12.ga.us/ows-
  bin/owa/fte_pack_ethnicsex_pub.entry_form

Giessner, S. R., Viki, G. T., Otten, S., Terry, D. J., & Tauber, S. (2006). The challenge of
  merging: Merger patterns, premerger status, and merger support. *Personality and
  Social Psychology Bulletin, 32*(3), 339-352.
  https://doi.org/10.1177/014616720528251

Gill, C. (2012). The role of leadership in successful international mergers and

    acquisitions: Why Renault-Nissan succeeded and DaimlerChrysler-Mitsubishi

    failed. *Human Resource Management, 51*(2), 433-456.

    https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21475

Goffee, R. & Jones, G. (1998). *The character of a corporation.* Harper Business.

Grivol, D. E., Bernardes, A., de Moura A. A., Zanetti, A. C. B., & Gabriel, C. S. (2020).

    The exemplary leadership from the perspective of pre-hospital care nurses: A

    descriptive study. *Online Brazilian Journal of Nursing, 19*(2), 1-3.

    https://doi.org/10.17665/1676-4285.20205974

Hallock, A. B. (2019). A case for leadership development in nursing practice.

    Nephrology Nursing Journal, 46(3), 325-328.

Handy, C. (1978). *The gods of management.* Pan Books.

Hansen, M., Backes, B., & Brady, V. (2016). Teacher attrition and mobility during the

    Teach for America clustering strategy in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

    Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 38(3), 495-516.

    https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373716638441

Harman, K. (2002). Merging divergent campus cultures into coherent educational

    communities: Challenges for higher education leaders. *Higher Education, 44*(1)

    91-114. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3447554

Harrison, R. (1979). Understanding your organization's character. *Harvard Business*

    Review, 57(5), 119-128.

Harrison, R., & Stokes, H. (1992). *Diagnosing organizational culture*. Pfeiffer.

Hart, B. S., & Marina, B. L. H. (2014). An assessment of faculty job satisfaction in

    Georgia's technical college system using Bolman and Deal's Four Organizational

    Frameworks. *Georgia Journal of College Student Affairs, 30*(1), 28-42.

    https://doi.org/10.20429/gcpa.2014.300104

Hartge, T., Callahn, T., & King, C. (2019). Leaders' behaviors during radical change

    processes: Subordinates' perceptions of how well leader behaviors communicate

    change. *International Journal of Business Communication, 56*(1), 100-121.

    https://doi.org/10.1177/2329488415605061

Hartnell, C. A., Ou, A. Y., & Kinicki, A. (2011). Organizational culture and

    organizational effectiveness: A meta-analytic investigation of the competing

    values framework's theoretical suppositions. *Journal of Applied Psychology,*

    96(4), 677-694. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0021987.

Herold, D. M., Fedor, D. B., Caldwell, S., & Liu, Y. (2008). The effects of

    transformational and change leadership on employees' commitment to a change:

    A multilevel study. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*(2), 346–357.

    https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.93.2.346

Herscovitch, L., & Meyer, J. P. (2002). Commitment to organizational change: Extension

    of a three-component model. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*(3), 474–487.

    https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.3.474

Ingersoll, R. M. (2001). Teacher turnover and teacher shortages: An organizational

    analysis. *American Educational Research Journal, 38*(3), 499-534.

    https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312038003499

Isabella, L. (1990). Evolving interpretations as a change unfolds: How managers construe key organizational events. *Academy of Management Journal, 33*(1), 7–41.

Jackowski, M. B., & Burroughs, B. M. (2015). Relationships between self-reported leadership practices, job satisfaction, and demographics of radiology administrators. *Radiologic Technology, 87*(1), 10-20.

Jaffe, D., Scott, C., & Tobe, G. (1994). *Rekindling commitment: How to revitalize yourself, your work, and your organization*. Jossey-Bass.

Jeong, S., Hsiao, Y., Song, J. H., Kim, J., & Bae, S. H. (2016). The moderating role of transformational leadership on work engagement: The influences of professionalism and openness to change. *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 27*(4), 489-516. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.21265

Johns, L., & Watson, J. (2006). Leadership development of women preparing for ministry. *Journal of Research on Christian Education, 15*(2), 111-142. https://doi.org/10.1080/10656210609484999

Johnson, S. (1999). *Who moved my cheese? An amazing way to deal with change in your work and in your life*. Vermillion.

Judson, A. 1991. *Changing behavior in organizations: Minimizing resistance to change*. Basil Blackwell.

Jumoke Ajanaku, O., & Lubbe, W. (2021). Applying transformational leadership in nursing through the lens of Kouzes and Posner leadership practices. *Gender & Behaviour, 19*(2), 17788-17794.

Kalkan, Ü., Aksal, F. A., Gazi, Z. A., Atasoy, R. & Dağli, G. (2020). The relationship between school administrators' leadership styles, school culture, and

organizational image. *SAGE Open,* 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1177/21582-
44020902081

Kalman, M., & Balkar, B. (2017). Shifting teachers' perceptions of school culture in
Turkey: A mixed methods study. *Forum of International Research in Education,*
4(2), 39-65. https://preserve.lehigh.edu/fire/vol4/iss2/3

Kaltiainen, J., Lipponen, J., & Holtz, B. C. (2017). Dynamic interplay between merger
process justice and cognitive trust in top management: A longitudinal study.
Journal of Applied Psychology, 102(4), 636-647.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/apl0000180

Kardos, S. M., Johnson, S. M., Peske, H. G., Kauffman, D., & Liu, E. (2001). Counting
on colleagues: New teachers encounter the professional cultures of their schools.
Educational Administration Quarterly, 37(2), 250-290.
https://doi.org/10.1177/00131610121969316

Kheir-Faddul, N., Bibu, N., & Nastase, M. (2019). The principals' perception of their
values and the organizational culture of the junior high schools in the Druze
sector. *Review of International Comparative Management, 20*(3), 210-225.
https://doi.org/10.24818/RMCI.2019.3.210

King, D. R., Bauer, F., Weng, Q., Schriber, S., & Tarba, S. (2020). What, when, and who:
Manager involvement in predicting employee resistance to acquisition integration.
Human Resource Management, 59(1), 63-81. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21973

Kosar, D., Kilinc, A. C., Kosar, S., Er, E., & Ogden, Z. (2016). The relationship between
teachers' perceptions of organizational culture and school capacity for change.

*Journal of Educational Sciences Research, 6(*2), 39-59.

https://doi.org/10.12973/jesr.2016.62.3

Kotter, J. (1995). Leading change: Why transformation efforts fail. *Harvard Business Review, 73* (2), 59–67.

Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading change.* Harvard Business School Press.

Kouzes, J. M. & Posner, B. Z. (2017). *The leadership challenge: How to make extraordinary things happen in organizations* (6th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Krueger, R. A. (2002). *Designing and conducting focus group interviews.* https://www.eiu.edu/ihec/Krueger-FocusGroupInterviews.pdf

Krueger, R.A., & Casey, M. A. (2009). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (4th ed.). Sage.

Kukla-Acevedo, S. (2009). Leavers, movers, and stayers: The role of workplace conditions in teacher mobility decisions. *The Journal of Educational Research, 102*(6), 443-452. https://doi.org/10.3200/JOER.102.6.443-452

Lau, C. M., & Ngo, H. Y. (2001). Organizational development and firm performance: A comparison of multinational and local firms. *Journal of International Business Studies, 32*(1), 95-114. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3069512

Lau, C. M., Tse, D. K., & Zhou, N. (2002). Institutional forces and organizational culture in China: Effects on change schemas, firm commitment and job satisfaction. *Journal of International Business Studies, 33*(1), 533-550. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3069529

Lee, H. H., & Li, M. F. (2015). Principal leadership and its link to the development of a school's teacher culture and teaching effectiveness: A case study of an award-

winning teaching team at an elementary school. *International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership, 10*(4), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.22230/ijepl.2015v10n4a555

Leech, D., & Fulton, C. R. (2008). Faculty perceptions of shared decision making and the principal's leadership behaviors in secondary schools in a large urban district. *Education, 128*(4), 630-644.

Leithwood, K., Leonard, L., & Sharratt, L. (1998). Conditions fostering organizational learning in schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 34*(2), 243-276.

Lesinger, F. Y., Altinay, F., Altinay, Z., & Dagli, G. (2017). Examining the role of leadership, trust for school culture and policy. *Quality & Quantity, 52*, 983-1006. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0553-0

Lewin, K. (1997). *Resolving social conflicts and field theory in social science.* American Psychological Association.

Lingham, G. I., & Lingham, N. (2015). Are they fit for leading? Teacher' perceptions of leadership practices of Niuean school principals. *International Studies in Educational Administration (Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration & Management (CCEAM)), 43*(1), 35-47.

Liu, Y., Bellibaş, M. S., Gümüş, S. (2021). The effect of instructional leadership and distributed leadership on teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction: Mediating roles of supportive school culture and teacher collaboration. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 49*(3), 430-453.

Lochmiller, C. R., Sugimoto, T. J., & Muller, P. A. (2016). *Teacher retention, mobility, and attrition in Kentucky public schools from 2008 to 2012* (REL 2016-116). U.S.

Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for

Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory

Appalachia.

Lok, P., & Crawford, J. (1999). The relationship between commitment and organizational

culture, subculture, leadership style and job satisfaction in organizational change

and development. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 20*(7), 365-

374. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437739910302524

Louis, M. R. (1980). Surprise and sense making: What newcomers experience in entering

unfamiliar organizational settings. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 25*(2), 226-

251. https://doi.org/10.2307/2392453

Mancheno-Smoak, L., Endres, G. M., Polak, R., & Athanasaw, Y. (2009). The individual

cultural values and job satisfaction of the transformational leader. *Organization

Development Journal, 27*(3), 9-21.

Marmenout, K. (2011). Peer interaction in mergers: Evidence of collective rumination.

Human Resource Management, 50(6), 783-808.

https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20458

Maxwell, J. A. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (3rd ed.).

Sage.

McFarlane, D. A. (2011). Impressed and inspired: Encountering genuine leadership with

Dr. Barry Posner and Dr. Agueda Ogazon. *E-Journal of Organizational Learning

& Leadership, 9*(2), 26-48.

Meglio, O., King, D. R., & Risberg, A. (2015). Improving acquisition outcomes with contextual ambidexterity. *Human Resource Management, 54*(1), 29-43. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21721

Merriam, S. B. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. Jossey-Bass.

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Perception. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/perception

Meyer, J. P., Stanley, D. J., Herscovitch, L. & Topolnytsky, L. (2002). Affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization: A meta-analysis of antecedents, correlates, and consequences. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 61*(1), 20-52. https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2001.1842

Michaelis, B., Stegmaier, R., & Sonntag, K. (2010). Shedding light on followers' innovation implementation behavior: The role of transformational leadership, commitment to change, and climate for initiative. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 25*(4), 408–429. https://doi.org/10.1108/02683941011035304

Milanowski, A. T., Longwell-Grice, H., Saffold, F., Jones, J., Schomsch, K., & Odden, A. (2009). Recruiting new teachers to urban school districts: What incentives will work? *International Journal of Education Policy & Leadership, 4*(8), 1-13.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Miller, V. D., Johnson, J. R., & Grau, J. (1994). Antecedents to willingness to participate in a planned organizational change. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 22*(1), 59–80.

Moir, E. (2003). *Launching the next generation of teachers through quality induction.*
National Commission on Teaching & America's Future.
http://www.nctaf.org/whatsnew/index.html.

Morris, J. E., Lummis, G. W., Lock, G., Ferguson, C., Hill, S., & Nykiel, A. (2020). The
role of leadership in establishing a positive staff culture in a secondary school.
Education Management Administration & Leadership, 48(5), 802-820.
https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143219864937

Mosser, N. R., & Walls, R. T. (2002). Leadership frames of nursing chairpersons and the
organizational climate in baccalaureate nursing programs. *Southern Online
Journal of Nursing Research, 2(*3), 1-11.

Mowrey, S. C. (2020). Triangulating social networks and experiences of early childhood
educators in emergent professional cultures. *Early Childhood Education Journal,
49*(1), 527-537. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-020-01096-8

Mukhtar, N. A. & Fook, C. Y. (2020). The effect of perceived leadership styles and
emotional intelligence on attitude toward organizational change among secondary
school teachers. *Asian Journal of University Education, 16*(2), 36-45.
https://doi.org/10.24191/ajue.v16i2.10295

Mullen, B., & Copper, C. (1994). The relation between group cohesiveness and
performance: An integration. *Psychological Bulletin, 115* (1), 210-227.
https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.115.2.210

Myers, E. L. (2014). Taming turbulence: An examination of school leadership practice
during unstable times. *Professional Educator, 38*(2), 1-16.

Navickaite, J., & Janiunaite, B. (2012). Barriers of school principal's transformational

    leadership in change process: Case study of Lithuanian schools. *Social Sciences,*

    77(3), 52-64. https://doi.org/10.5755/j01/ss/77/3/2771

Neville, L., & Schneider, B. (2021). Why is it so hard to change a culture? It's the people.

    Organization Development Review, 53(1), 41-46.

Oakland, J. S., & Tanner S. J. (2007) A new framework for managing change. *The TQM*

    Magazine, 19(1), 572–589.

Official Code of Georgia (O.C.G.A.), Class Size, 160-5-1.08, 29 Aug 2007.

    https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/State-Board-of-

    Education/SBOE%20Rules/160-5-1-.08.pdf

Orphanos, S. & Orr, M. T., (2014). Learning leadership matters: The influence of

    innovative school leadership preparation on teachers' experiences and outcomes.

    Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 42(5), 680-700.

    https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143213502187

Ott, J. S. (1989). *The organizational culture perspective*. Dorsey Press.

Parish, J. T., Cadwallader, S., & Busch, P. (2008). Want to, need to, ought to: Employee

    commitment to organizational change. *Journal of Organizational Change*

    Management, 21(1), 32–52. hhttps://doi.org/10.1108/09534810810847020

Pawar, B. S., & Eastman, K. K. (1997). The nature and implications of contextual

    influences on transformational leadership: A conceptual examination. *Academy of*

    Management Review, 22(1), 80-109. https://doi.org/10.2307/259225

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (4th ed.). Sage.

Peterson, K. D. & Deal, T. E. (2002). *The shaping school culture fieldbook.* Jossey-Bass.

Pettigrew, A. M., Ferlie E., & Mckee, L. (1992) *Shaping Strategic Change: Making*

    Change in Large Organizations: The Case of the National Health Service. Sage.

Pettigrew, A. (1990). Longitudinal research on change: Theory and practice.

    Organization Science, 1(3)*,* 267–292.

Podgursky, M. Ehlert, M., Lindsay, J., & Wan, Y. (2016). *An examination of the*

    movement of educators within and across three Midwest Region states (REL

    2017-185). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences,

    National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional

    Educational Laboratory Midwest.

Pogodziński, B. (2012). Socialization of novice teachers. *Journal of School Leadership,*

    22(1), 982-1023. https://doi.org/10.1177/105268461202200507

Popa, A. B. (2012). A quantitative analysis of perceived leadership practices in child

    welfare organizations. *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 6*(5), 636-658.

    https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2012.723974

Posner, B. Z. (2016). Investigating the reliability and validity of the Leadership Practices

    Inventory. *Administrative Sciences, 6*(4), 17-23.

    https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci6040017

Qian, Y., & Daniels, T. D. (2008). A communication model of employee cynicism

    towards organizational change. *Corporate Communications: An International*

    Journal, 13(3), 319-332. https://doi.org/10.1108/13563280810893689

Rath, T., & Conchie, B. (2008). *Strengths-based leadership: Great leaders, teams, and*

    why people follow. Gallup Press.

Rafferty, A., & Simons, R. (2006). An examination of the antecedents of readiness for fine-tuning and corporate transformation changes. *Journal of Business & Psychology, 20(*3), 325-350. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-005-9013-2

Redfield, R., Linton, R., & Herskovits, M. J. (1936). Memorandum for the study of acculturation. *American Anthropologist, 38*(1), 149-152. https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1936.38.1.02a00330

Reeves, D. B. (2009). *Leading change in your school: How to conquer myths, build commitment, and get results*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Reichers, A. E. (1987). An interactionist perspective on newcomer socialization rates. *The Academy of Management Review, 12*(2), 278-287. https://doi.org/10.2307/258535

Reichers, A. E., Wanous, J. P., & Austin, J. T. (1997). Understanding and managing cynicism about organizational change. *The Academy of Management Executive (1993-2005)*, *11*(1), 48–59.

Rentsch, J. R. (1990). Climate and culture: Interaction and qualitative differences in organizational meanings. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 75*(6), 668–681. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.75.6.668

Riveras-León, J. C., & Tomás-Folch, M. (2020). The organizational culture of innovative schools: The role of the principal. *Journal of Educational Sciences, 21*(2), 21-37. https://doi.org/10.35923/JES.2020.2.02

Robbins, S. P., & Coulter, M. (2018). *Management* (14th ed.). Pearson Education.

Rodriguez, L., & Freites, Z. M. (2013). Leadership perspectives considered by Bolman
and Deal: An analysis of Venezuelan managers. *Revista Telos, 15*(1), 49-63.

Rubin, R. S., Dierdorff, E. C., Bommer, W. H., & Baldwin, T. T. (2009). Do leaders reap
what they sow? Leader and employee outcomes of leader organizational cynicism
about change. *The Leadership Quarterly, 20*(5), 680–688.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2009.06.002

Sadeghi, K., Amani, J., & Mahmudi, H. (2013). A structural model of the impact of
organizational culture on job satisfaction among secondary school teachers. *Asia-
Pacific Education Researcher, 22*(4), 687-700. https://doi.org./10.1007/s40299-
013-0074-0

Sahin, S. (2004). The relationship between transformational and transactional leadership
styles of school principals and school culture (the case of Izmir, Turkey).
Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 4(2), 387-395.

Saks, A. M., & Ashforth, B. E. (1997). Organizational socialization: Making sense of
past and present as a prologue for the future. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,
51*(1), 234-279. https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1997.1614

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Sapkota, R., Ivanov, A., Bachman, P., Vermillion, L., & Goyal, T. (2019). Issues and
analysis of leadership, strategy, behavior, and accounting of mergers and
acquisitions: A case study of a merger of two mega-corporations. *International
Journal of Organizational Innovation, 12*(2), 180-191.

Sasnett, B., & Clay, M. (2008). Leadership styles in interdisciplinary health science

    education. *Journal of Interprofessional Care, 22*(6), 630-638.

    https://doi.org/10.1080/13561820802293006

Schein, E. (2010). *Organizational culture and leadership* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Schweiger, D. M., Ivancevich, J. M., & Power, F. R. (1987). Executive actions for

    managing human resources before and after acquisition. *Academy of Management*

    Executive, 1(1), 127–138.

Selvaraja, K., & Pihie, Z. L. (2015). The relationship between school culture and school

    innovativeness among national type Tamil primary schools, SJK(T)S in Kuala

    Langat District, Selangor. I*nternational Journal of Humanities Social Sciences*

    and Education, 2(1), 126-137. https://www.arcjournals.org/pdfs/ijhsse/v2-

    i1/17.pdf

Shafritz, J. M., & Ott, J. S. (2001). Organizational culture and sense making. In J.

    Shafritz & J. Ott (Eds.), *Classics of organization theory* (5th ed., pp. 361-368).

    Harcourt.

Shava, G., & Heystek, J. (2021). Managing teaching and learning: Integrating

    instructional and transformational leadership in South African schools context.

    International Journal of Educational Management, 35(5), 1048-1062.

    https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-11-2020-0533

Sinden, J., Hoy, W. K., & Sweetland, S. R. (2004). Enabling school structures: Principal

    leadership and organizational commitment of teachers. *Journal of School*

    Leadership, 14(1), 195-201. https://doi.org/10.1177/105268460401400204

Skodvin, O. (1999). Mergers in higher education-success or failure? *Tertiary Education and Management, 5*(1), 65-80.

Soh, S. (2000). *Organizational socialization of newcomers: A longitudinal study of organizational enculturation processes and outcomes* (Publication No. 9982981). [Doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University]. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Song, J. H., Bae, S. H., Park, S. & Kim, H. K. (2013). Influential factors for knowledge creation practices of CTE teachers: Mutual impact of perceived school support, transformational leadership, and work engagement. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 14*, 467-482. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-013-9283-8

Spillane, J. P., & Shirrell, M. (2017). Breaking up isn't hard to do: Exploring the dissolution of teachers' and school leaders' work-related ties. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 53*(4), 616-648. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X17696557

Srivastava, S. & Agrawal, S. (2020). Resistance to change and turnover intention: A moderated mediation model of burnout and perceived organizational support. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 33(7), 1431-1447. https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-02-2020-0063

Srivastava, S. B., Goldberg, A., Manian V. G., & Potts, C. (2018). Enculturation trajectories: Language, cultural adaptation, and individual outcomes in organizations. *Management Science, 64*(3), 1348-1364. https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2016.2671

Stake, R. E. (2000). Case studies. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln, *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed, pp. 443-466). Sage.

Stanley, D. J., Meyer, J. P., & Topolnytsky, L. (2005). Employee cynicism and resistance to organizational change. J*ournal of Business and Psychology, 19*(4), 429-459. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-005-4518-2

Staton, A. Q., & Hunt, S. L. (1992). Teacher socialization: Review and conceptualization. *Communication Education, 41*(2), 109-137. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03634529209378875

Stewart-Banks, B., Kuofie, M., Hakim, A., & Branch, R. (2015). Education leadership styles on work performance and morale staff. *Journal of Marketing and Management, 6*(2), 87-105.

Stolp, S., & Smith, S. C. (1995). *Transforming school culture: Stories, symbols, values & the leader's role.* ERIC Publications.

Strack, J. G., Fottler, M. D., & Kilpatrick, A. O. (2008). The relationship of health-care managers' spirituality to their self-perceived leadership practices. *Health Services Management Research, 21*(4), 236-247. https://doi.org/10.1258/hsmr.2008.008004

Sulea, C., Filipescu, R., Horga, A., Ortan, C., & Fischmann, G. (2012). Interpersonal mistreatment at work and burnout among teachers. *Cognition, Brain, Behavior: An International Journal, 16*(4), 533-570.

Summer, M., Bock, D., & Giamartino, G. (2006). Exploring the linkage between the characteristics of IT project leaders and project success. *Information Systems Management, 23*(4), 43-49. https://doi.org/10.1201/1078.10580530/46352.23.4.20060901/95112.6

Tabak, H., & Sahin, F. (2020). Investigating the relationship between school

    effectiveness, professional learning communities, school culture and teacher

    characteristics. *Education Reform Journal, 5*(2), 45-59.

    http://dx.doi.org/10.22596/erj2020.05.02.45.59

Taris, T. W., Schreurs, P. J. G., & Van Iersel-Van Silfhout, I. J. (2001). Job stress, job

    strain, and psychological withdrawal among Dutch university staff: Towards a

    dual process model for the effects of occupational stress. *Work and Stress, 15*,

    283–296. https://doi.org/10.1080/02678370110084049

Taylor, D. L., & Tashakkori, A. (1995). Decision participation and school climate as

    predictors of job satisfaction and teachers' sense of efficacy. *The Journal of

    Experimental Education, 63*(3), 217-230. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220973

Terzi, A. (2016). Teachers' perception of organizational culture and trust relation.

    International Journal of Organizational Leadership, 5(1), 338-347.

Throne, R. (2019). *Autoethnography and heuristic inquiry for doctoral-level researchers:

    Emerging research and opportunities*. IGI Global.

Turan, S., & Bektas, F. (2013). The relationship between school culture and leadership

    practices. *Egitim Arastirmalari-Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, 52*(1),

    155- 168.

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for

    Education Statistics, CCD Public school data 2018-2019, 2019-2020 school years.

    (2019). *Name redacted Elementary School*.

    https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/school_detail.asp?Search=1&DistrictID=130

    1170&ID=130117002102.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS), "Current and Former Teacher Data Files". (2012-13a). https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/TFS1213_20170808001_cf1n.asp

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS), "Current Teacher Data Files". (2012-13b). https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/tfs1213_21031103_c1n.asp

U.S. Department of Education. (2016, October 7). *Non-regulatory guidance for title II, part A: Building systems of support for excellent teaching and leading.* https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essatitleiipartaguidance.pdf

U.S. Department of Agriculture/Food and Nutrition Service; Child nutrition programs: Income eligibility guidelines, 86 Fed. Reg. 41 (March 4, 2021) https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-03-04/pdf/2021-04452.pdf

Vaill, P. B. (1984). The purposing of high-performing systems. In T. J. Sergiovanni & J. E. Corbally (Eds.), *Leadership and organizational culture: New perspectives on administrative theory and practice* (pp. 85-104). University of Illinois Press.

Van der Voet, J. (2013). The effectiveness and specificity of change management in a public organization: Transformational leadership and a bureaucratic organizational structure. *European Management Journal, 32*(1), 373-382. http://dx.doi.org/10.1026/j.emj.2013.10.001

Van der Voet, J., Groeneveld, S., & Kuipers, B. S. (2014). Talking the talk or walking the walk? The leadership of planned and emergent change in public organization. *Journal of Change Management, 14*(2), 171-191. https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2013.805160

Van Knippenberg, D., Van Knippenberg, B., Monden, L., & De Lima, F. (2002).
Organizational identification after a merger: A social identity perspective. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 41*(1), 233–252.

Van Maanen, J., & Barley, S. R. (1985). Cultural organization: Fragments of a theory. In P. Frost, L. Moore, M. Louis, C. Lundberg, & J. Martin (Eds.). *Organizational culture* (pp. 31-54). Sage.

Van Maanen, J., & Schein, E. H. (1979). Toward a theory of organizational socialization. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 1*(1), 209-264.

Vasilaki, A., Tarba, S., Bahamas, M. F., & Glasister, A. J. (2016). The moderating role of transformational leadership on HR practices in M&A integration. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 27*(20), 2488-2504. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1204556

Veeriah, J., & Siaw, Y. (2017). The impact of school culture on teachers' organizational commitment in primary cluster schools in Selangor. *Educational Leader, 5*(1), 1-18.

Vito, R. (2020). How do social work leaders understand and ideally practice leadership? A synthesis of core leadership practices. *Journal of Social Work Practice, 34*(3), 263-279. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650533.2019.1665002

Vollman, T. (1996). *The transformation imperative*. Harvard Business School Press.

Vukotich, G. (1995). *Organizational culture: A view of the enculturation process and its relation to turnover* (Publication No. 3579) [Doctoral dissertation, Loyola University Chicago]. https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/3579

Wanberg, C. R., & Banas, J. T. (2000). Predictors and outcomes of openness to changes in a reorganizing workplace. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85*(1), 132–142.

Wanous, J. P., Reichers, A. E., & Austin, J. T. (2000). Cynicism about organizational change: Measurement, antecedents, and correlates. *Group & Organization Management, 25*(2), 132–153. https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601100252003

Waterman, R. H., Peters, T. J., & Phillips, J. R. (1980). Structure is not organization. *Business Horizons, 23*(3), 14-26.

Weber, R. A., & Camerer, C. F. (2003). Cultural conflict and merger failure: An experimental approach. *Management Science, 49*(4), 400-415. https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.49.4.400.14430

Wildavsky, A. (1987) Choosing preferences by constructing institutions - a cultural theory of preference formation. *American Political Science Review*, *81*(1), 3–21.

Wu, C., Neubert, M. J., & Yi, X. (2007). Transformational leadership, cohesion perceptions, and employee cynicism about organizational change: The mediating role of justice perceptions. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 43*(3), 327-351. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886307302097

Yavuz, M. (2010). The effects of teachers' perception of organizational justice and culture on organizational commitment. *African Journal of Business Management, 4*(5), 695-701. https://doi.org/10.5897/AAJBM.9000579

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (6th ed.). Sage.

Zhu, C., Devos, G., & Li, Y. (2011). Teacher perceptions of school culture and their

organizational commitment and well-being in a Chinese school. *Asia Pacific*

Education Review, 12(1), 319-328. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-011-9146-0

APPENDIX A:

IRB Approval

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
For the Protection of Human Research Participants

PROTOCOL EXEMPTION REPORT

Protocol Number: 04306-2022   **Responsible Researcher(s):** Megan Chaffin

Supervising Faculty: Dr. Michael Bochenko

Project Title: *Case Study of Exemplary Leadership Practices Impact on New Teacher Integration and School Culture During Change.*

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DETERMINATION:

This research protocol is **exempt** from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight under 45 CFR 46.101(b) of the federal regulations **category 2**. If the nature of the research changes such that exemption criteria no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator (irb@valdosta.edu) before continuing your research study.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- *Upon completion of the research study, all collected data (e.g. data set, name lists, email lists, payment log, etc.) must be securely maintained and accessible only by the researcher(s) for a minimum of 3 years. At the end of the required time, collected data must be permanently destroyed.*
- *Pseudonym lists and corresponding name lists must be kept in separate, secure files.*
- *Qualtrics platform settings must allow participants to skip questions and/or not provide answers. The settings must prohibit the collection of IP addresses.*
- *Exempt guidelines **prohibit** the collection, storage, and/or sharing of recordings. Exempt guidelines **permit** the recording of interviews provided the recording are made to create an accurate transcript. Recordings must be deleted immediately upon creation of the transcript.*
- *The research consent statement must be read aloud to participants at the start of each interview ~~session, and~~ documented in the transcript.*

  ☒ *If this box is checked, please submit any documents you revise to the IRB Administrator at irb@valdosta.edu to ensure an updated record of your exemption.*

Elizabeth Ann Olphie   05.24.2022   *Thank you for submitting an IRB application.*
Elizabeth Ann Olphie, IRB Administrator   *Please direct questions to irb@valdosta.edu or 229-253-2947.*

Revised: 06.02.16

179

APPENDIX B:

Survey Interview Questions

Survey Interview Questions

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender?
3. What is your race and/or ethnicity?
4. How many years have you been a teacher?
5. How many years have you been at Fantasia Elementary?
6. Are you a part of the Established staff or Specialized Programs?
7. School culture is defined by Fullan (2007) as the guiding beliefs and values evident in the way a school operates, encompassing all the attitudes, expected behaviors, and values. How would you describe the culture at Fantasia Elementary?

APPENDIX C:

Consent to Participate: Survey

Consent to Participate: Survey

You are being asked to participate in a survey research project entitled "Case Study of Exemplary Leadership Practices Impact on New Teacher Integration and School Culture During Change," which is being conducted by Megan Chaffin, a student at Valdosta State University. The purpose of the study is to examine how Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership impact school culture with the integration of new teachers into the established culture during organizational change. You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about leadership practices and the impact they have on teachers accepting new members into their established school culture.

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. Participation should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. This survey is anonymous. No one, including the researcher, will be able to associate your responses with your identity. Participant names and location will be replaced with pseudonyms. Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to take the survey, to stop responding at any time, or to skip any questions that you do not want to answer. Participants must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. Your completion of the survey serves as your voluntary agreement to participate in this research project and your certification that you are 18 or older. You may print a copy of this statement for your records.

Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Megan Chaffin at mmmcleroy@valdosta.edu. This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-253-2947 or irb@valdosta.edu.

APPENDIX D:

Windshield Survey Checklist

Windshield Survey Checklist

Date	Event/Situation	Model the Way	Inspire a Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Others to Act	Encourage the Heart	Frame(s)	Leadership Action (A) or Result (R)
5/24/21 to 5/28/21	Admin Post Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	Structural	A
7/19/21	SP Preplanning Professional Learning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Political, Symbolic	A
7/19/2021	SP Paraprofessional Issue	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	Political, HR	A
7/20/2021	SP Department Chair Email	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Political, HR	A
7/29/2021	Schoolwide Preplanning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Political, HR, Symbolic	A&R
8/4/2021	5th grade SP Concern	X	X	✓	X	✓	Political, HR	A
8/5/2021	SP Kudos email from Principal	X	X	✓	✓	✓	HR, Politcal, Symbolic	A
8/11/2021	PBIS Team Members	X	X	X	✓	✓	Political, HR, Symbolic	R
8/18/2021	5th grade Inclusion Discussion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Political, HR	A
8/30/2021	1st grade SP Transition & Teacher Collaboration	X	X	✓	✓	✓	Political & Symbolic	A&R
9/1/2021	Sports Flier	X	X	X	X	X	Symbolic	R

Date	Event/Situation	Model the Way	Inspire a Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Others to Act	Encourage the Heart	Frame(s)	Leadership Action (A) or Result (R)
9/13/2021	Instructional Coach Flowers	X	X	X	✓	✓	HR	R
9/13/2021	Secret Pal	✓	X	X	X	✓	HR, Symbolic	R
9/22/2021	SP Class on District Walkthrough	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	Political, Symbolic	A
9/27/2021	5th grade SP Transition Discussion	✓	X	X	✓	X	HR, Politcal, Symbolic	R
9/30/2021	4th grade Math Groups	✓	✓	X	✓	X	Political, Symbolic	A&R
10/1/2021	SP Para Taking on Bus Duty	X	X	X	✓	✓	HR, Politcal, Symbolic	R
10/2/2021	CICO Collaboration	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	HR, Symbolic	A&R
10/5/2021	Teacher of the Month- SP Teacher Selected by Peers	X	X	X	✓	✓	Symbolic	R
10/13/2021	Coteacher Reading interventions with SP	X	✓	X	X	X	HR, Politcal, Symbolic	A&R

Date	Event/Situation	Model the Way	Inspire a Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Others to Act	Encourage the Heart	Frame(s)	Leadership Action (A) or Result (R)
10/19/2021	3rd grade SP Inclusion Conversation	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	Political, Symbolic	A
10/22/2021	Interventionist Volunteering to Work With SP Students	X	✓	X	✓	✓	HR, Symbolic	R
10/26/2021	5th grade SP Full Transition	X	✓	✓	X	X	Political, Symbolic	R
11/1/2021	SP Student Included in Reading Group	X	✓	X	✓	X	HR, Symbolic	R
11/3/2021	1st grade Field Trip Collaboration	X	✓	X	✓	✓	HR, Symbolic	R
11/8/2021	Intervention Teacher working with SP	X	X	X	✓	X	HR, Political	R
11/8/2021	SP Teachers Offering to Work With Student	X	✓	✓	✓	X	HR, Political, Symbolic	R
11/11/2021	SP Teacher Sports Email	X	X	X	X	X	Symbolic	R
11/17/2021	Canned Food Drive	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	HR, Political, Symbolic	R

Date	Event/Situation	Model the Way	Inspire a Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Others to Act	Encourage the Heart	Frame(s)	Leadership Action (A) or Result (R)
11/29/2021	Baby shower Invite	X	X	X	X	X	Symbolic	R
12/2/2021	Restorative Circle	X	X	✓	✓	X	HR, Political, Symbolic	R
12/6/2021	3rd grade SP Transition	X	X	X	✓	X	Political, Symbolic	A&R
12/10/2021	Pop-in Baby Shower	✓	X	X	X	✓	Symbolic	R
12/17/2021	SP iReady Data Announcement	✓	X	X	X	✓	Symbolic	A
12/17/2021	After School Clubs Volunteer	X	X	X	✓	X	HR, Symbolic	R
12/27/2021	Principal Email to District About SP	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	Political, Symbolic	A
12/30/2021	Staff Email on Sports	X	X	X	X	X	Symbolic	R
01/07/2022	Offering College Football Signs	X	X	X	X	X	HR, Symbolic	R
01/07/2022	SP Program Collaboration with Specials Teachers	X	X	X	✓	X	HR, Political, Symbolic	A&R
01/11/2022	Kindergarten SP Student Collaboration	X	X	X	✓	X	HR, Political, Symbolic	R

Date	Event/Situation	Model the Way	Inspire a Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Others to Act	Encourage the Heart	Frame(s)	Leadership Action (A) or Result (R)
01/15/2022	Custodians Email	X	X	X	X	X	HR, Symbolic	R
01/19/2021	District Email on Results to SP	X	X	✓	X	✓	HR, Political, Symbolic	A
01/25/2022	4th grade SP Student Transition	✓	✓	✓	X	X	HR, Political, Symbolic	R
01/31/2022	Interventionist working with SP Student	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	HR, Political, Symbolic	A&R
02/08/2022	4th grade SP Student Collaboration	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	HR, Political, Symbolic	A&R
02/17/2022	Willingness to Help with SP Testing	✓	X	X	X	✓	HR, Symbolic	R
02/18/2022	Bus Driver Appreciation	X	X	X	✓	✓	Symbolic	R
02/25/2022	SP Teacher of the Month Need	X	X	X	✓	✓	Political, Symbolic	R
03/02/2022	5th grade SP Student Meeting	X	X	X	✓	X	HR, Political, Symbolic	R
03/13/2022	Music Teacher Plan for Student Behavior	X	X	X	✓	✓	HR, Symbolic	R

Date	Event/Situation	Model the Way	Inspire a Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Others to Act	Encourage the Heart	Frame(s)	Leadership Action (A) or Result (R)
03/16/2022	After School Program Collaboration	X	X	X	✓	✓	Political, Symbolic	A&R
03/17/2022	Welcome Back! Sign Collaboration	X	X	X	X	X	Symbolic	R
3/22/2022	3rd grade Field Trip	X	X	X	X	✓	HR, Symbolic	R
03/23/2022	Technology Help Request	X	X	X	X	X	Symbolic	R
03/24/2022	SP Assistance in 1st grade	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	HR, Political, Symbolic	A&R
03/30/2022	5th grade Invite SP to Field Trip	X	X	X	X	X	Symbolic	R
04/14/2022	SP Para of the Month	X	X	X	✓	✓	Symbolic	A&R
04/14/2022	SP Assisting with Behavior	✓	X	X	X	✓	HR, Political, Symbolic	R
04/19/2022	5 Year Reflection Meeting	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	HR, Political, Symbolic	A&R
05/18/2022	SP teachers included in EOY Awards	X	X	X	✓	✓	HR, Symbolic	A&R
	TOTALS	19	20	22	39	35	HR: 36	Action: 26
							Political: 34	Result: 49

							Symbolic: 51	
	PERCENTGE %	31.66%	33.33%	36.66%	65%	58.33%		

APPENDIX E:

Focus Group Moderator Guide

Focus Group Moderator Guide

Moderator

Good afternoon and welcome. Thank you for taking the time to talk about school culture and integrating new staff. My name is _____ and with me is ____. Ms. Chaffin asked us to assist her in gathering information regarding school culture and leadership practices for her dissertation. She believes your input and insight are valuable to understanding these topics.

You were invited to participate because you are an integral part of the school community at Fantasia Elementary. There are no wrong answers, only differing points of view. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said. Keep in mind we're just as interested in negative comments as positive comments, and at times the negative comments are the most helpful.

You've probably noticed the recorder here and have already signed consent to participate knowing this will be recorded. Remember Ms. Chaffin will only receive the transcribed version and will not see or hear the video. We will keep your name confidential in the shared transcript.

I've got a number of questions I want to ask, but my job is really to listen. This will be more interesting and helpful for all of us to treat it like a conversation. If someone says something, feel free to follow up on it or share a different point of view. You don't need to address all your comments to me. I may need to interrupt to get through all the questions. I apologize ahead of time if I need to do this.

If you have a cell phone, please put it on silent mode. If you need to take a call, please step out and then return as quickly as possible. This focus group is informal, please feel free to get up and get refreshments as you wish.

Let's begin. Let's find out more about each other by going around the table. Tell us your name, years in education teaching, how many years you have been at Fantasia Elementary, and if you identify as an Established Teacher or Specialized Programs Teacher.

Adapted from Krueger and Casey (2015)

APPENDIX F:

Focus Group Questions

Focus Group Questions

Established Teachers

1. Please share with the group your name, the grade level you teach, and how long you have been teaching at Fantasia Elementary.
2. How would you describe Fantasia Elementary to others?
3. Close your eyes and take a moment to think about Fantasia Elementary in regard to school culture. On the index card provided, write three words that come to mind when you think about the culture of Fantasia Elementary.
4. Think back to when Specialized Programs was only housed here and was not run by Fantasia Elementary administrators. What were your first impressions of the program?
5. Using another index card, write down three experiences or interactions you had with the program then. You will share at least one with the group to discuss.
6. Now, think back to the most recent school year when Specialized Programs was brought in under the Fantasia administrators. Again, write three interactions or experiences you have had with Specialized Programs. You will share at least one with the group.
7. How do you feel the school culture has changed or remained since Specialized Programs was brought under Fantasia Elementary?
8. Do you feel any actions by administrators had an impact on this transition? Give examples (positive or negative).
9. Is there anything you would like to add that has not already been said today?

Specialized Programs Teachers

1. Please share with the group your name, the grade level you teach, and how long you have been teaching in the Specialized Programs.
2. How would you describe Specialized Programs to others?
3. How would you describe Fantasia Elementary to others?
4. Close your eyes and take a moment to think about Fantasia Elementary in regard to school culture. On the index card provided, write three words that come to mind when you think about the culture of Fantasia Elementary.
5. Think back to when Specialized Programs were only housed in and not run by Fantasia Elementary administrators. Using another index card, write down three experiences or interactions you had then. You will share at least one with the group to discuss.
6. Did you feel like you and the program were a part of Fantasia Elementary?
7. Now, think back to the most recent school year when Specialized Programs was brought in under the Fantasia administrators. Again, write three interactions or experiences you have had involving Fantasia Elementary staff. You will share at least one with the group.
8. How do you feel the school culture has changed or remained since Specialized Programs was brought under Fantasia Elementary?
9. Do you feel any actions by administrators had an impact on this transition? Give examples (positive or negative).
10. Is there anything you would like to add that has not already been said today?

APPENDIX G:

Consent to Participate: Focus Groups

Consent to Participate: Focus Groups

You are being asked to participate in a focus group as part of a research study entitled, "Case Study of Exemplary Leadership Practices Impact on New Teacher Integration and School Culture During Change", which is being conducted by Megan Chaffin, a student at Valdosta State University. The purpose of the study is to examine how Kouzes & Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership impact school culture with the integration of new teachers into the established culture during organizational change. You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about leadership practices and the impact they have on teachers accepting new members into their established school culture.

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. Participation should take approximately two hours. The focus group will be audio or videotaped in order to accurately capture concerns, opinions, and ideas offered by the group. Once the recordings have been transcribed, the tapes will be destroyed. No one, including the researcher, will be able to associate your responses with your identity. Participant names and location will be replaced with pseudonyms. Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, to stop responding at any time, or to skip any questions you do not want to answer. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate. Your participation in the focus group will serve as your voluntary agreement to participate in this research study and your certification you are 18 years of age or older.

Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Megan Chaffin at mmmcleroy@valdosta.edu. This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-253-2947 or irb@valdosta.edu.