

2022

Identifying What Transformational Leadership Elements Principals are Utilizing to Retain Kindergarten to High School Teachers

Johnny Ray Vahalik
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Education

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Johnny Vahalik

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Robert Flanders, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Alberto Gonzales, Committee Member, Education Faculty
Dr. Ionut-Dorin Stanciu, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2022

Abstract

Identifying What Transformational Leadership Elements Principals are Utilizing to
Retain Kindergarten to High School Teachers

by

Johnny Vahalik

MA, Walden University 2007

BS, The University for Texas at San Antonio, 1995

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Walden University

January 2022

Abstract

Teacher turnover in a large urban school district exceeded the state average annually from 2016 to 2020. Previous studies and local evidence indicate a gap in practice might currently exist, consisting of principals not making the best use of the most effective transformational leadership elements to consolidate and increase teacher retention. While many researchers agree that principal leadership has had the most significant influence on teachers' decisions to stay in or leave their schools, there is a gap in the literature on what principal leadership practices influence teachers' decisions to stay or leave. The research question that guided this study addressed what transformational leadership elements principals utilize to retain teachers at their schools. Using Burns's conceptual framework on transformational leadership to guide the methodology, this study focused on the four transformational leadership elements of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. A basic qualitative study methodology was used to interview nine purposively sampled kindergarten through high school principals in the large urban school district through semi-structured interviews with questions developed around operationalizing the four elements of transformational leadership. Thematic analysis was used to analyze principal responses to identify the elements principals utilize to retain teachers. The findings of this study confirmed that principals utilized all four elements of transformational leadership to retain teachers. This study has the potential to promote social change by providing additional research toward principal leadership practices that may retain teachers and reduce teacher turnover. It may assist school districts in developing professional development and the next steps to support principals in improving teacher retention.

Identifying What Transformational Leadership Elements Principals are Utilizing to
Retain Kindergarten to High School Teachers

by

Johnny Vahalik

MA, Walden University, 2007

BS, The University of Texas at San Antonio, 1995

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Walden University

January 2022

Dedication

I would like to whole heartily dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Michelle Vahalik, and my children, Hannah, Thomas, Brittany, and Nick. You are my foundation and the joy in my life. I also want to acknowledge my father, Edmund Vahalik, my mother, Kathy Vahalik, and my brother, Jerry Vahalik. Without their love, patience, and support, I would not be the person I am today. I appreciate all your support and love throughout the years.

Acknowledgments

First, I would like to thank my dissertation committee, Dr. Robert Flanders, Dr. Alberto Gonzales, and my University Reviewer, Dr. Dorin Stanciu. Thank you for your support and for reviewing my many drafts and rewrites. I have learned so much from all of you during this process. Thank you for having faith in me and not giving up on me during this process.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	iv
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Background	3
The Problem.....	5
Purpose of the Study	7
Research Question	8
Conceptual Framework.....	8
Nature of the Study	11
Definitions.....	12
Assumptions.....	13
Scope and Delimitations	13
Limitations	13
Significance.....	15
Summary	16
Chapter 2: Literature Review	17
Literature Search Strategy.....	18
Conceptual Framework.....	20
Literature Review Related to Key Concepts and Variable	21
Teacher Turnover.....	21
Transformational Leadership	24

Elements of Transformational Leadership.....	27
Summary and Conclusions	29
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	31
Research Design and Rationale	31
Role of the Researcher	32
Methodology.....	33
Participant Selection	34
Instrumentation	35
Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection.....	36
Data Analysis Plan.....	36
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	37
Credibility	38
Transferability.....	38
Dependability	39
Confirmability.....	39
Ethical Procedures	40
Summary.....	41
Chapter 4: Results.....	42
Setting	43
Data Collection	44
Data Analysis	46

Results.....	52
Theme 1: Four Transformational Leadership Elements Practices	
Interpretation.....	52
Theme 2: COVID-19 and Social-Emotional Needs of Teachers	
Interpretation.....	56
Theme 3: Practices Varied between Participants.....	57
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	58
Summary.....	60
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	62
Interpretation of the Findings.....	64
Idealized Influence – Interpretation of Utilization.....	65
Inspirational Motivation – Interpretation of Utilization	66
Intellectual Stimulation – Interpretation of Utilization.....	68
Individual Consideration – Interpretation of Utilization	69
Limitations of the Study.....	70
Recommendations.....	71
Implications.....	71
Conclusion	73
References.....	75
Appendix: Semi-Structured Interview Questions	97

List of Tables

Table 1: Annual Teacher Turnover Percentages by School Year.....	4
Table 2: Sample of Tones and Big Ideas from Participants.....	47
Table 3: Sample Coding for Idealized Influence from Participants (P1-P3).....	48
Table 4: Intellectual Stimulation Practices by Participants	54

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The problem is that teacher turnover exceeded the state average annually from 2016 to 2020 in a large urban school district according to the State Education Agency (see Table 1 for all data pertaining to years 2016 to 2020). Teacher data from the related state agency accountability reports indicate teacher shortage persists across this large state, and more teachers will be needed as the state's student population grows (Tran, 2020). Furthermore, as many as 70% of new teachers within urban schools may leave their position within their first five years (Papay et al., 2015).

Subsequently, several studies have identified that both the support principals provide teachers and the principals' leadership style are two of the best predictors of retaining teachers (Hughes et al., 2015; Podolsky et al., 2016). Furthermore, teachers rate effective administrative support high among factors related to remaining at a school (Robinson, 2015). Ladd (2009) found that teachers' perceptions of school leadership were a greater predictor than any other factor of whether or not teachers stayed. Houchard's (2005) research suggests significant links between principal transformational leadership behaviors that increase teacher job satisfaction and high levels of teacher job satisfaction related to student achievement. Furthermore, Sun and Wang's (2017) review of research findings suggests that transformational leadership directly prevents employees from forming intentions to leave. While there are many leadership styles, many researchers agree that transformational leadership is one of the central and most influential leadership models in the field of education administration (Berkovich, 2016;

Bush, 2014; Hallinger, 2003). Transformational leadership practices support leaders in motivating subordinates to do more than they initially expected (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Sun & Henderson, 2016). Transformational leadership theory focuses on “inspiring followers to commit to a shared vision and goals for an organization or unit, challenging them to be innovative problem solvers, and developing followers' leadership capacity via coaching, mentoring, and provision of both challenge and support" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p 4).

Furthermore, the Chief Academic Officer (personal communication, June 26, 2021) that supervises school leadership for the large urban school district stated, “there has been very little district-level research, analysis or professional development around how and what elements of transformational leadership principals are utilizing on their campuses to retain teachers”. In light of the above, there is a reasonable possibility that a gap in practice currently exists, consisting of principals not making the best use of the most effective transformational leadership elements to consolidate and increase teacher retention.

This basic qualitative study identified what transformational leadership elements principals utilize to retain teachers in a large urban school district. This study has the potential to promote positive social change by providing additional research toward principal leadership practices that may retain teachers and reduce teacher turnover and assist the school district in professional development next step determination to support principals in improving teacher retention.

The first section of chapter 1 is the background of the large urban school district's problem, followed by the study's problem and purpose. These sections are followed up with the research question, conceptual framework, assumptions, and significance of the study.

Background

The problem is that teacher turnover exceeded the state average annually from 2016 to 2020 in a large urban school district according to the State Education Agency (see Table 1 for all data pertaining to years 2016 to 2020). Teacher turnover has been a national, state, and local concern. Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond's (2017) national-level research estimates that 90% of openings are replacing teachers leaving the profession, and two-thirds of teachers leave because they are dissatisfied with the profession. Furthermore, teacher turnover has been high in this large state, where the annual rate average is above 16% (State Education Agency, 2021). Furthermore, teacher turnover has been even higher for the large urban school district. From 2016 to 2020, the teacher turnover rate in this single school district that serves over 49,000 students has exceeded the state average annually, as identified in Table 1 (State Education Agency, 2021).

Table 1*Annual Teacher Turnover Percentages by School Year*

School Year	Large Urban School District Turnover	All Texas Schools Turnover
<i>Year</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
2016-2017	18.4%	16.4%
2017-2018	17.2%	16.6%
2018-2019	19.2%	16.5%
2019-2020	17.5%	16.8%

Note. Teacher Turnover Percentage Rates reported from State Education Agency (2021)

Academic Performance Reports

According to Winfield (2019), several studies have identified multiple factors that can lead to teacher turnover, including organizational policies, harmful administrative practices, unsafe working conditions, low pay, and negative relationships in the organization. Other key influences on turnover include a lack of administrative support, working in districts with lower salaries, dissatisfactions with testing and accountability pressures, lack of opportunities for advancement, and dissatisfaction with working conditions (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Furthermore, teacher turnover studies across the nation have found that leadership quality has one of the most significant effects on teacher turnover. One study found that improvements in school leadership were strongly related to reductions in teacher turnover (Kraft et al., 2016). Teachers often identify the quality of administrative support as more important to their decision than salaries (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Many researchers agree that teachers' positive perception of leadership quality leads to lower teacher

turnover rates, more so than any other school climate factors, such as quality of teacher relationships and collaboration (Grissom & Bartanen, 2018).

While there are many leadership styles, many researchers propose that transformational leadership is one of the central and most influential leadership models in the field of education administration (Berkovich, 2016; Bush, 2014; Hallinger, 2003). Additional analysis of management and leadership styles determined that the transformational leadership style emerged as the most prominent in promoting work performance and employee satisfaction (Elmazi, 2018). Furthermore, Williams (2018), through a quantitative study of self-determination theory and the leadership theory framework, found that transformational leadership practices by principals significantly predicted autonomy and improved teacher turnover. This basic qualitative study of a large urban school district identified the transformational leadership elements principals utilize to retain teachers.

The Problem

The problem is that teacher turnover exceeded the state average annually from 2016 to 2020 in a large urban school district according to the State Education Agency (2021) (see Table 1 for all data pertaining to years 2016 to 2020). Previous studies and local evidence indicate that a gap in practice might exist, consisting of principals not making the best use of the most effective transformational leadership elements to consolidate and increase teacher retention. Many researchers agree that across grade levels, contexts, and student demographics, teachers' perceptions of principal leadership

have had the most significant influence on teachers' decisions to stay in or leave their schools (Boyd et al., 2011; Ladd, 2011; Podolsky et al., 2016). Kamrath and Bradford's (2020) study suggested principal support is critical to teacher retention and identified administrator support, administrator actions, and lack of recognition from administration as the top three factors for teachers leaving. However, there is limited literature on how principal leadership influences teachers' decisions to leave their schools, and the practices that principals enact that impact teacher turnover are not clear (Scallon et al., 2021). Furthermore, Liebowitz and Porter (2019) also noted there is limited research on teacher turnover from urban school principals' perceptions, and there is a lack of research located on what transformational leadership elements principals are doing to retain teachers. At the local level, the Chief Academic Officer (personal communication, June 26, 2021) that supervises school leadership for the large urban school district stated, "there has been very little district-level research, analysis or professional development around how and what elements of transformational leadership principals are utilizing on their campuses to retain teachers", and the only district-level initiative identified to support teacher retention has been the Master Teacher Initiative that increased pay for expert teachers (School District, 2018).

Furthermore, Sutchter et al.'s (2016) research proposed that principals who create productive teaching and learning environments significantly impact teachers' decision to stay or leave the classroom. Specifically, principals who exercise or implement transformational leadership practices have shown to have less teacher turnover (Williams,

2018). Considered the most-used leadership model in education (Bush, 2017; Gumus et al., 2016), transformational leadership encourages bottom-up participation to bond teachers' individual action and the school's collective action (Leithwood & Poplin, 1992). Transformational leaders influence teachers and staff members by utilizing incentives, celebrations, and recognition (Lee, 2008; Quin et al., 2015). Furthermore, this type of leadership uses encouraging practices to increase teachers' sense of belonging, commitment, and drive to achieve the objectives (Quin et al., 2015). Transformational leadership concentrates primarily on how leaders influence staff and stakeholders to become committed to school goals and raise subordinates' inspirational motivation and dedication level by increasing awareness on the importance of institutional outcomes and how to obtain those results (Beckmann, 2017). Therefore, determining what elements of transformational leadership principals utilize to reduce teacher turnover is an important basic qualitative study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to identify the transformational leadership elements principals utilize to retain teachers in a large urban school district where teacher turnover exceeded the state average from 2016 to 2020 (State Education Agency, 2021). Policymakers and educators are interested in improving teacher turnover rates, given concerns that lower turnover rates are associated with lower student achievement. (Lochmiller et al., 2016).

Research Question

This study identified what transformational leadership elements principals of kindergarten through high school are utilizing to retain teachers. Each set of interview questions operationalized one of the four elements of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The semi-structured interview questions located in the Appendix guided the answer to the following question:

RQ: What transformational leadership elements are principals utilizing to retain teachers at their schools?

Conceptual Framework

This study's conceptual framework was based on Burns's (1978) transformational leadership theory and related elements of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. James M. Burns's work is considered the primary source of the transformational leadership conceptual framework because he was the first to introduce the concept. Transformational leadership is a set of practices that enhance followers' motivation, morale, and overall performance through collaborative and interactive approaches to situations (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Northouse, 2019). Sun and Henderson (2016) expanded on Burns's framework and identified that the positive impacts of transformational leadership on individual, group, and organizational level outcomes are well documented (Kroll & Vogel, 2014; Moynihan et al., 2012; Oberfield, 2014; Vigoda-Gadot & Beerli, 2012). In addition, Sun and

Leithwood's (2017) research further identified that transformational leadership practices significantly influence teacher competence, commitment, trust, and efficacy.

This basic qualitative study asked participants interview questions (Appendix: Semi-Structured Questions) that operationalized the four elements of transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) to answer the research question of what elements of transformational leadership principals are utilizing retain teachers at their school.

The first set of interview questions focused on the aspect of idealized influence and asked principals to describe how they have built teacher trust and support to follow them as the school leader. These interview questions aligned with research on idealized influence. The transformational leadership element of idealized influence, according to Burns (1978), refers to leadership charisma. Previous studies have argued that idealized influence affects individual performance (Abbas et al., 2020). Through idealized influence, transformational leaders inspire followers.

The second set of interview questions focused on the aspect of inspirational motivation and asked principals about what activities and actions they have implemented around building a sense of commitment and motivation in teachers around the schools' vision, mission, and annual goals. Bass and Avolio (2004) argued that inspirational motivation explains the leader's vision, and the vision is supported by a passion that is part of the leader's personality. Furthermore, the vision provides meaning and value for

the optimistic followers and is devoted to attaining the leader's vision (Bass, 1998; Lee & Lee, 2015).

The third set of interview questions focused on the aspect of intellectual stimulation and asked principals how they involve teachers in school planning and problem-solving organizational challenges. A transformational leader who displays the intellectual stimulation trait seeks different perspectives, encourages followers to look at problems differently, and encourages critical thinking (Bass, 1985). Furthermore, Lee and Lee (2015) argued that intellectual stimulation occurs with the leader makes the members optimistic and excited about working towards the vision, which contributes to the innovation and creativity of the employee (Henker et al., 2015).

The fourth set of interview questions focused on individualized consideration and asked principals what activities or interactions they engage in with teachers that allow them to get to know teachers professionally and learn about their teachers' strengths and needs. According to Bass (1998), transformational leaders focus on individual followers' needs and growth by acting as a coach or mentor. Transformational leaders lead each individual based on what is best for the individual (Estapa, 2009).

Based on this documented research, the transformational leadership conceptual framework is aligned with enhancing leadership practices and improving organizational outcomes like teacher turnover. This study sought to identify what elements principals utilized to reduce teacher turnover through the transformational leadership framework. A more thorough explanation of transformational leadership theory appears in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

As a basic qualitative study, I collected data gathered from the participants to help develop conclusions and gather inferences (Yardley, 2017). Researchers utilize a qualitative design to investigate an issue in a particular setting or context (Creswell, 2013), and qualitative research allows the researcher the opportunity to collect data from individuals or groups of individuals around a recent event (Kupers et al., 2013; Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2015). This study sought to determine what elements of transformational leadership principals utilize to retain teachers in this large urban school district through the transformational leadership conceptual framework.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), interviews are one method of collecting data in qualitative research. This study focused on a specific institution, a large urban school district, and interviewed principals at multiple levels that serve kindergarten through twelfth-grade campuses. The interviewees were at least nine kindergarten through high school grade principals at the large urban school district representing about 10% of the school district's principals. Since this research was scheduled during the outbreak of COVID-19, and there were social distancing orders in place, the interviews were held online through a face-to-face web conferencing application. The participants in the study completed online interviews and answered questions related to the individual elements of transformational leadership relating to teacher turnover.

The interview questions were based on the transformational leadership conceptual framework to reduce the risk of bias. Furthermore, I analyzed the data collected by

looking for common responses from principals during the online interviews. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the interview questions should not lead the participant and contain bias when interviewing.

Definitions

Idealized Influence: Leadership behaviors consist of modeling a high level of capabilities and work ethic (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Inspirational Motivation: Leadership behaviors such as being optimistic, enthusiastic, and communicating a shared vision (Bass, 1985).

Individualized Consideration: Leadership behaviors that develop a supportive relationship among followers and help develop the individual follower according to his/her needs (Abun et al., 2020).

Intellectual Stimulation: Leadership behaviors that promote followers to solve organizational problems and feel that they are part of and own the organization and its problems (Abun et al., 2020).

Teacher turnover: When teachers leave a school voluntarily or involuntarily (Sun et al., 2017).

Transformational leadership: A leadership approach that causes a change in individuals and social systems and creates valuable and positive change in the followers to develop followers into leaders (Burns, 1978). Transformational leadership has four dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Transformational leadership aims to align followers'

identity, values, and aspirations with the missions and values of the organizations (Bass, 1985).

Assumptions

This basic qualitative study followed the following assumptions: 1) the participants were willing to contribute and participate in the interview process with me, 2) the participants understood the interview questions and had the appropriate context to reply to, and 3) the participants provided authentic and honest responses. Burkholder et al. (2016) noted that quality in research through trustworthiness and dependability was essential because the outcomes influenced new knowledge.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope is defined as the extent that the content is covered in the study to reach logical conclusions and give conclusive and satisfactory answers to the research questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The basic qualitative study's scope focused on nine principals in a specific large urban school district. This sample size represented about 10% of the principals in the school district. Delimitations are boundaries within the researcher's control (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This basic qualitative study interviewed only nine principals within the large urban school district. Furthermore, I cannot guarantee the transferability of the findings to other school districts.

Limitations

There were limitations in this study to be considered. Limitations are potential weaknesses that could affect the study (Brutus et al., 2013; Leedy et al., 2019), and

distinguishing limitations within a study allows the researcher to monitor these limitations (Hatch, 2010). This study interviewed school principals from a large urban school district, which is a limitation. For this study, I interviewed nine principals, or about 10%, with at least one participant represented from each level: kindergarten, middle school, and high school. Willig and Rogers (2017) state that qualitative research is used to explore ideas and phenomena, the limited number and homogeneity of participants restrict the generalizability of the study results to more diverse or larger populations. This study was limited to one school district and was based on interviews of nine kindergarten through high school principals. This small sample and possible generalization of this study's findings may limit the transferability and application of this research.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic limited the interview process. I interviewed online rather than in-person to meet district safety and social distancing guidelines. Furthermore, COVID-19 may have impacted the principal responses to the study as they may have had to adapt their instructional leadership practices during COVID-19 with teachers as there were limited physical interactions during the pandemic.

Another limitation could be interview bias. I did not interview any other staff or teachers. The interviews were limited to principals only. This lack of rigor is linked to the problem of bias introduced by the researcher's subjectivity and others involved (Hatch, 2010).

Significance

This basic qualitative study is significant because the finding could contribute to the current and limited literature on what transformational leadership elements principals are using to retain teachers in a large urban school district. In this school district, teacher turnover is two to three percentage points higher than the state average from 2016 to 2020 (State Education Agency, 2021). The Chief Academic Officer (personal communication, June 26, 2021) for the large urban school district identified and noted that “there has been very little district-level research, analysis or professional development around how and what elements of transformational leadership principals are utilizing to retain teachers”. This basic qualitative study promotes positive social change by providing additional research toward principal leadership practices that may reduce teacher turnover and assist the school district in professional development for principals to improve teacher retention. According to Grissom (2011), high teacher turnover rates likely mean greater school instability, disruption of curricular cohesiveness, and a continual need to hire inexperienced teachers, who typically are less effective, as replacements for teachers who leave. In the attempt to improve teacher retention, the large urban school district could utilize research from this basic qualitative study to develop professional development and resources to assist new and experienced principals in operationalizing the elements of transformational leadership.

Summary

In the large urban school district, teacher turnover is a problem. Annually, teacher turnover exceeded the state average from 2016 to 2020, as identified in Table 1 (State Education Agency, 2021). This basic qualitative study identified the transformational leadership elements (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) principals utilized to retain teachers. Nine principals from the large urban school district were asked one set of interview questions per element. The data from these interviews provided information on what transformational elements principals are utilizing to retain teachers. The literature review section in Chapter 2 reviews literature on teacher turnover, transformational leadership, and related elements.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

From 2016 to 2020, the teacher turnover annually exceeded the state average in a large urban school district, as identified in Table 1 (State Education Agency, 2021). Many researchers agree that one of the most pressing issues facing policymakers is how to staff classrooms with stable teachers (Podolsky et al., 2016). Recurrent teacher shortages are a function of both declines in entrants to teaching and high teacher attrition rates. Subsequently, several studies have found that support from principals and other school leaders is one of the best predictors of teacher attrition (Hughes et al., 2015; Podolsky et al., 2016;) with principal leadership style being one common factor (Podolsky et al., 2016; Thibodeaux et al., 2014). Specifically, Williams (2018) proposed significant evidence that principals' transformational leadership practices directly reduce teacher turnover.

While there are many leadership styles, transformational leadership is one of the central and most influential leadership models in the field of education administration (Berkovich, 2016; Bush, 2014; Hallinger, 2003). Transformational leadership practices support leaders in motivating subordinates to do more than they initially expected (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Sun & Henderson, 2016). Williams (2018) stresses the importance of principal leadership and points out that the way principals use their leadership will influence schools' organization, culture, and working conditions, which in turn influence teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and turnover (Finnigan, 2010; Ghamrawi & Al-Jammal, 2013; Martin & Dowson, 2009). Furthermore, a school's leadership quality is

among the most important predictors of whether a teacher continues from year to year (Boyd et al., 2011; Grissom, 2011; Grissom & Bartanen, 2018; Ladd, 2011). Other researchers agree that principals need to understand how their leadership behaviors affect their teachers' job satisfaction (Damanik & Aldridge, 2017; Dou et al., 2017), as successful principal leadership is the central aspect in significantly impacting teacher job satisfaction and a great school environment (Demirtas et al., 2017; Dou et al., 2017).

In Chapter 2, I describe the iterative literature search strategies utilized to locate research for this dissertation. The literature search strategies section is followed by the conceptual framework used in this study. The final section contains a literature review of peer-reviewed journals and resources around teacher turnover and transformational leadership.

Literature Search Strategy

Hinde and Spackman (2015) proposed that conducting a systematic review of existing literature is a vital starting point for identifying all relevant articles in the literature of any reliable study. Through a systematic review process, I directed my literature review pertinent to transformational leadership, teacher turnover, and principal practices and identified common patterns across studies. I utilized several research databases, search engines, and related Walden Library resources during the literature review. Furthermore, the teacher turnover data was pulled through a State Education Agency's (2021) 2016-2020 accountability webpage. I searched over 15 databases and utilized multiple search engines, including Education Source, ERIC, Google Scholar,

Sage Journals, Sage Knowledge, Science.gov, Thoreau Multi-Database, ProQuest dissertations, and Walden University dissertations. I focused on keywords and phrases related to transformational leadership elements and included the principal's leadership style, principal practices, urban schools, leadership practices, leadership styles, perceptions, student achievement, teacher retention, teacher attrition, and teacher turnover. Furthermore, I expanded my research around the specific four transformational leadership elements: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. I reviewed studies that focused on these elements and the application of these elements in the education field.

Peer-reviewed articles and books published from 2015 to 2021 were the focus of the search. I also reviewed research and resources related to transformational leadership from before 2015. Since 1978 an abundance of transformational leadership qualitative and quantitative research articles were found in multiple disciplines when Burns (1978) published *Transformational Leadership*. Since transformational leadership transcends multiple disciplines, I had to refine my research and focus mainly on education and educational leadership. I found many quantitative and qualitative studies that focus on transformational leadership, teacher turnover, and urban schools. As a result, I have reviewed over 100 articles related to teacher turnover, transformational leadership, and urban schools. I located many research articles on these particular topics, but just a few encompassed this study's components. Through this literature review, I found that there is

still a need to study what transformational leadership elements principals utilize to reduce teacher turnover.

Conceptual Framework

I used Burns's (1978) transformational leadership framework for this study. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to gain an understanding of what transformational leadership elements principals are utilizing to retain teachers in a large school district. By applying Burns's (1978) transformational leadership framework to support this study's purpose, the research question for this study was: What elements of transformational leadership are principals utilizing to retain teachers at their schools. This research question addressed the problem in this study through semi-structured interview questions aligned with the four elements of transformational leadership (Appendix). First, to introduce transformational leadership, Burns is considered the primary source of the transformational leadership conceptual framework. In time, the theory was extended by Bernard Bass and Bruce Avolio to describe business leaders' behaviors (Berkovich, 2016). transformational leadership theory focuses on "inspiring followers to commit to a shared vision and goals for an organization or unit, challenging them to be innovative problem solvers, and developing followers' leadership capacity via coaching, mentoring, and provision of both challenge and support" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p 4). For the last thirty years, the transformational leadership framework has been the most prominent leadership theory in education (Hoch et al., 2018; Mendez-Keegan, 2019). Researchers agree that the positive impacts of transformational leadership on individual, group, and

organizational level outcomes are well documented (Kroll & Vogel, 2014; Moynihan et al., 2012; Oberfield, 2014; Park & Rainey, 2008; Sun & Henderson, 2016; Trottier et al., 2008).

Using the four elements of the transformational leadership conceptual framework, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, this basic qualitative study identified what transformational leadership elements principals utilized to reduce teacher turnover. In the Literature Review, I outlined the research around these four elements of transformational leadership.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts and Variable

Teacher Turnover

A review of teacher turnover literature identified a long history of teacher turnover and research for the last two decades. Research has identified that turnover is costly, undermines student achievement (Podolsky et al., 2016). Podolsky et al. (2016) collected extensive research on the five factors that influence teachers to enter, stay, or leave the profession: salaries, preparation, personnel management, induction and support, and working conditions encompassing school leadership support. Furthermore, Podolsky et al. (2016) identified administrative support as often the top reason teachers identify for leaving or staying in the profession, outweighing even salary considerations for some teachers.

Additional research determined multiple factors, including organizational policies, harmful administrative practices, unsafe working conditions, low pay, and

negative relationships in the organization due to a teacher leaving the profession (Winfield, 2019). In a qualitative study, Winfield (2019) identified these factors that contributed to teacher turnover in a low-income urban school with a high minority student population using Herzberg's Two-Factor theoretical framework. School environment, teacher collaborative efforts, administrative support, school climate, location, salary, classroom management, academic achievement, teacher support, and student-teacher relationships are all factors that affect teacher turnover (Robinson, 2015). Furthermore, Wilson (2019), through a qualitative study that focused on teacher perceptions, determined that factors that increase teachers' turnover in urban school settings were relationships, location, personal life, and knowledge around classroom content and data analysis.

Daily (2019), using the interview methodology, focused on teacher job satisfaction and turnover rates pertaining to principal leadership styles identified democratic leadership, being supportive, teacher autonomy, professional development, and a safe working environment were critical to teacher job satisfaction. Furthermore, Darnell's (2020) research, through a qualitative study that applied the human capital theory conceptual framework, determined that support from administration, compensation, and working conditions all contributed to teacher attrition. These researchers built on prior studies and highlighted the "why" teachers decide to stay or leave and the importance of school leadership in addressing these factors.

Subsequently, Shavers's (2018) basic qualitative study examined the effective strategies used to retain teachers in high poverty and high ethnic minority schools through teachers' perspectives. The findings determined that a supportive principal was one reason teachers were less inclined to leave. One qualitative study using the narrative inquiry method documented that administrators who understand their teachers' needs and provide a supportive environment are less likely to lose teachers to other districts or professions (Ali, 2017). Furthermore, Perrone et al.'s (2019) quantitative study used Pogodzinski et al. (2012) framework of administrative climate to job demands-resources (JD-R) model to determine administrator–teacher relations significantly predicted teacher burnout. These researchers connect the importance of administrators' relationships and leadership style to a teacher's decision to stay or leave a school.

Extensive research has identified that the quality of administrative support is often the top reason teachers identify for leaving or staying in the profession (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2013; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2007). The research has also found that support from principals and other school leaders is the best predictor of teacher turnover (Grissom, 2011; Hughes et al., 2015; Torres, 2014). Furthermore, one study of 45 urban schools in a southeastern state found that schools with the lowest teacher attrition rates tended to have school leaders that provided support through instructional resources, teaching materials, and professional learning opportunities (Cowan & Goldhaber, 2016). The study highlighted that these principals described themselves as facilitators, collaborators, team leaders, or leaders of

leaders. Podolsky et al. (2016) concluded that retaining excellent teachers is critical to future generations of students' success. This literature review of the extensive research around teacher turnover supports a qualitative study of what the principals' practices are in regards to teacher turnover in a large urban school district.

Transformational Leadership

A review of the literature on transformational leadership found a lengthy list of studies that support transformational leadership and practice in education and school leadership. Transformational leadership has become one of the central and most influential leadership models in the field of education administration (Berkovich, 2016; Bush, 2014; Hallinger, 2003). Misra and Srivastava (2018) expanded on Burns's (1978) transformational leadership model by noting that effective transformational leaders raised the inspirational motivation and dedication level of subordinates by increasing the level of awareness on the importance of institutional outcomes. Misra and Srivastava also advocated for showing people how to go above and beyond for the team or organization's sake and not their own and increasing personal need for recognition (Beckmann, 2017). Within the transformational leadership theory, a leader can get a follower to try harder and contribute more by raising the follower's self-esteem and the importance of the anticipated results (Gkolia et al., 2018). A literature review concerning teacher turnover found that school leadership is an important factor in teacher retention (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Decades of research support transformational leadership's positive impact in enhancing organizational performance (Anderson, 2017). In Kirtman

and Fullan's Key Competencies for Whole-System Change: leadership (2015), the authors share seven leadership competencies that in many ways describe transformational leadership, further making the argument for, and supporting, the importance of transformational leaders in the education setting. Also, one study identified through a mix-method study that transformational leadership is the leadership style most preferred by teachers (Heller et al., 1993; Schwartz, 2017). Williams (2018) proposed through a quantitative study of self-determination theory and the leadership theory framework that transformational leadership significantly predicted autonomy and improved teacher turnover. Singletary-Johnson's (2017) study used Kouzes and Posner's (2010) leadership practices inventory through a mixed-method to explore the principal's leadership practices and the effects on teacher turnover and found a common correlation. Furthermore, Ninkovic and Floric (2018) used hierarchical regression analysis in a quantitative study to explore the relationship between transformational school leadership, teacher self-efficacy, and perceived collective teacher efficacy. The findings suggest that transformational leadership is positively related to collective teacher efficacy. One researcher identified through a mix-method study that transformational, relative to transactional and laissez-faire, is the leadership style that is most preferred by teachers (Heller et al., 1993; Schwartz, 2017).

Using the self-determination theory and the leadership theory framework, Williams (2018) developed a quantitative study that examined the relationship between principal leadership style, teacher motivation, and teacher turnover. The findings

indicated that a principals' leadership style was related to teacher motivation and found that transformational leadership significantly predicted autonomy and improved teacher turnover. Furthermore, the effective leader uses encouraging-the-heart practices to increase teachers' sense of belonging, commitment, and drive to achieve the objectives (Quin et al., 2015). In addition, Sun and Leithwood (2017) identified that transformational leadership practices significantly influenced teacher competence, commitment, trust, and efficacy. Transformational leaders influence teachers and staff members by utilizing incentives, celebrations, and recognition (Lee, 2008; Quin et al., 2015). Furthermore, Moolenaar and Sleegers (2015) identified that transformational leaders established interdependence with teachers that involved trust in the principal and colleagues as well as collaborative practices central to a positive school climate. Subsequently, McCarley et al. (2016) developed a quantitative study that examined the relationship between teacher perceptions to the degree to which a principal displays the factors of transformational leadership and the perceived school climate. The findings indicated a statistically significant relationship between a leader's idealized behaviors, idealized attributes, inspirational motivation, the school climate dimension of supportive behavior, and teachers' engaged behaviors.

Another qualitative study by Thomas et al. (2020) used the Bakker and Demerouti's (2007) job demands-resources (JD-R) model that studies the functioning of employees well-being to examine the interplay between variables at the school level (i.e., transformational school leadership, professional, collegial support) and the teacher level

(i.e., teachers' self-efficacy) in the context of first-year teachers' job attitudes. In this study, transformational leadership's indirect effect via teachers' self-efficacy was significant for intrinsic teaching motivations and job satisfaction. Bradley and Levin (2019) confirmed that many researchers agree that principal leadership has significant implications in retaining effective teachers. Williams (2018) highlights the importance of principal leadership and points out that the way principals use their leadership will influence schools' organization, culture, and working conditions, which in turn influence teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and turnover (Finnigan, 2010; Ghamrawi & Al-Jammal, 2013; Martin & Dowson, 2009).

Elements of Transformational Leadership

Beauchamp and Morton (2011) recommended that principals follow the four elements identified by Bass (1985) as part of the transformational leadership framework. These four elements are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These elements are significant to this study as they were used to develop the interview questions.

Idealized Influence

Idealized influence places the leader as a role model with high standards of morality and respect for others (Bass, 1985). Idealized influence refers to a leader's capability to influence the behaviors of their followers (Zdaniuk & Bobocel, 2015). The characteristic of utilizing idealized influence means that the leaders act as role models, and they are highly respected because of their actions and the

way they conduct themselves (Flanagan, 2019). Subsequently, the followers are convinced to follow the leader when they see their honesty and truthfulness to what they are saying and doing (Abun et al., 2020).

Inspirational Motivation

Inspirational motivation focuses on leadership behaviors such as being optimistic, enthusiastic, and communicating a shared vision (Bass, 1985). With this transformational leadership element, the leader inspires their followers through personal skills, knowledge, and self-confidence to carry out the organization's vision and mission. The leader projects self-confidence through articulating a clear vision for the future while communicating expectations for the group and demonstrating confidence and commitment to attain the goals (Wodehouse, 2018). Furthermore, inspirational motivation is not about telling people to accept things as they are but daring followers to take the risk of accepting change and facing challenges. (Abun et al., 2020).

Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation encourages individuals to solve problems, question beliefs, create new practices, and even improve productivity (Bass, 1985). With this transformational leadership element, the leader invites volunteers to be creative, innovative and make decisions that may be out of the box (Belmejdoub, 2015). By involving followers in solving organizational problems, they feel that they are part of and own the organization and its problems (Abun et al., 2020).

Individualized Consideration

Individualized consideration is when the leader listens effectively and delegates tasks to develop followers (Bass & Avolio, 2004). These leaders establish a supportive climate where individual differences are respected. Interactions with followers are encouraged, and the leaders are aware of individual concerns (Bass, 1998). With this transformational leadership element, the leader develops a supportive relationship and offers help to develop the follower according to his/her needs (Abun et al., 2020). The leader shows concern for followers' needs and feelings and offers support to help (Belmejdoub, 2015). The purpose is to bring out the best in the people. Furthermore, Chaudhry et al. (2020) research suggested a positive relationship between individualized consideration and the organization's performance.

Summary and Conclusions

Research has shown that improvements in school leadership and teacher relationships corresponded with teacher turnover improvement (Kraft et al., 2016). Furthermore, transformational leadership behaviors can increase teacher job satisfaction and reduce voluntary turnover (Billingsley & Cross, 1992). Subsequently, research has evaluated teacher perceptions and turnover data on factors that promote transformational leadership as a common practice. However, more research was needed around principals' utilization of transformational elements. This basic qualitative study builds on this research and the connection between transformational leadership and teacher turnover. This study of a large urban school district expanded on this research by providing a more

in-depth understanding of what elements of transformational leadership principals are utilizing to reduce teacher turnover.

In Chapter 3, I outline the methodology used to gather data for this basic qualitative study. Chapter 3 includes the research design, rationale, setting, and methodology. The methodology incorporates participant selection, instrumentation, and data analysis.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to identify what transformational leadership elements principals are utilizing to retain teachers in a large urban school district where teacher turnover exceeded the state average from 2016 to 2020 (State Education Agency, 2021). Sun and Wang (2017) noted that many researchers have suggested that leadership effectiveness is related to employees' commitment to their organizations and turnover behaviors. This study is important as it identifies what transformational leaders' elements principals utilize in their schools to improve teacher retention.

Chapter 3 includes the research design and rationale of this basic qualitative study. Furthermore, this chapter includes an explanation of my role as the researcher and outlines the research methodology, the instrumentation, and the data analysis plan for this study. Additional items included in Chapter 3 are the methods I used to determine the basic qualitative study's trustworthiness and the ethical practices to protect the participants and their anonymity.

Research Design and Rationale

The phenomenon of this basic qualitative study was that a large urban school district was demonstrating a pattern of high teacher turnover compared to the state average. I utilized a basic qualitative study method because this study explored an occurrence specific to individuals' lived experiences (e.g., campus principals) to a specific phenomenon (e.g., teacher turnover).

The research question that guided this study was: What elements of Transformational Leadership are principals utilizing to retain teachers at their school? This research question was broad and aligned with understanding, explaining, and describing the phenomenon. This basic qualitative study used semi-structured interviews as the means to collect data. Berg and Luna (2013) suggest that the wording in semi-structured interviews should be flexible and facilitate different language levels to be used and clarification to be made by the interviewer. This qualitative study's semi-structured interview and questions are listed in the Appendix and based on the four transformational elements of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. This study determined if principals utilized or operationalized these elements through their work with teachers.

Role of the Researcher

As I interviewed principals through a semi-structured interview method, I assumed many roles with this study, including observer, participant, and participant-observer. My role as the researcher required that I be responsible for all the research process components, including recruitment, interviewing, transcribing, and summarizing the results. According to DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019), semi-structured interviews consist of a dialogue between researcher and participant, guided by a flexible interview protocol and supplemented by follow-up questions, probes, and comments. This method allows the researcher to collect open-ended data and explore participants' thoughts,

feelings, and beliefs about a particular topic and delve deeply into personal and sometimes sensitive issues.

In this study, I interviewed and collected responses from school principals of campuses that serve kindergarten to high school. As an assistant superintendent with a supportive role at the secondary level around college and career readiness, I do not have direct authority over school leadership. I did have any personal relationships with the study participants. The school district did not hire me to study or focus on teacher turnover or principal leadership.

I followed Creswell's (2013) six-step process of qualitative research. Rubin and Rubin (2012) proposed that it is crucial to accurately transcribe, summarize, and quote your interviewees. To address potential bias, I avoided interview questions that may cause participants to respond in a certain way. The questions were open-ended, and principals answered in any way they chose. I provided my interview transcripts and asked individual participants to confirm the information and reduce the chance of errors in my data collection process. This step of the process is supported by Babbie (2017), who believed that a researcher could avoid bias by cultivating a conscious awareness of their values and preferences and adhering to established data collection techniques and analysis techniques.

Methodology

The methodology selected for this study is a basic qualitative study that utilized the transformational leadership concept as a framework that includes Burns's four

elements of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. This basic qualitative study collected information from interviews with campus principals of a large urban school district and identified what elements of transformational leadership principals are utilizing to retain teachers. Creswell and Poth (2017) proposed that qualitative research is an inquiry process based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. Through semi-structured interviews that embed the four transformational leadership elements, I identified what elements of transformational leadership principals utilize to retain teachers at their schools.

Participant Selection

The participants represented nine kindergarten to high school principals in the large urban school district. At a minimum, two principals were selected from each level, elementary, middle, and high school, so all academic levels are represented in the research. Upon approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and permission from the school district research department, I requested volunteers for the interview process through email communications with all ninety principals. The prospective participants received my contact information in the email that highlighted the study's purpose and how it can benefit the large urban school district. A consent letter was also included with similar information.

I utilized purposeful, stratified sampling to determine which nine principals participated in this study and ensure all grade levels were represented. I interviewed a

stratified selection (elementary, middle, and high school) of nine volunteer campus principals. When creating a random selection process, Zikmund (2003) suggested that researchers consider constructing a sampling frame first and then using a random number-generation computer program to pick a sample from the sampling frame. I created a random sampling through a random number generator as this allowed every principal in the volunteer population to have an equal chance of being included in the interview process. The goal for the selection of the participants was to reach a reasonable sample size for data collection. Mason (2010) notes that the relationship between saturation and the sample size is the saturation point, which is the guiding factor for the sample size in a qualitative study. As a result, studies that are smaller in size and have modest claims could reach the saturation of the information quickly.

Instrumentation

Because of distancing restrictions related to COVID-19, I collected data for this study through individual, semi-structured virtual interviews through a web conferencing platform. The participants answered semi-structured interview questions listed in the Appendix related to the operationalism of the four elements of transformational leadership. These interview questions sought to describe the meanings of central themes being researched. The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say (Kvale, 1996).

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

After applying and receiving institutional review board (IRB) approval and prior approval from the school district's research department, I began recruitment for this study by emailing all ninety principals requesting possible volunteers to participate in this study. In the email communication with volunteers, the prospective participants received my contact information that highlighted the study's purpose and how it can benefit the large urban school district. I also included a consent letter with similar information.

Because of distancing restrictions related to COVID-19, I collected data for this study through individual, semi-structured virtual interviews through a web conferencing platform. Before beginning the interviews, the participants were allowed to ask questions related to the study. Under standardized protocols, I asked each candidate the same questions in the same order. Upon completing the interviews, I utilized Creswell's (2013) six-step qualitative research process. I began the search for themes by reading the data. The data from the interviews were stored in an electronic, password-protected file and will be held for five years. One-time interviews were completed at an agreed time with nine participants. During the interview, I asked one question at a time, encouraged responses, was neutral and careful about appearances when notetaking. I also noted any observations made during the interview.

Data Analysis Plan

As recommended by Creswell (2013) research, I followed these steps in the data analysis process: (a) organized and prepared the data for analysis, (b) read and reviewed

the data, (c) Began coding the data, (d) generated a description of the setting and categories for analysis, (e) represented the findings, and (f) interpreted the results and detailed description of the phenomenon. I followed Creswell's (2013) data analysis process by looking for codes to emerge during the data analysis process. Furthermore, as Esterberg (2002) recommended, qualitative data was analyzed line by line to identify themes and categories of interest. By utilizing the process and developing themes from the data, I answered the research question: What elements of transformational leadership are principals utilizing to retain teachers at their schools? I read and reviewed the interview transcripts multiple times and compared the answers to the transformational leadership elements. All data and research-related material has been secured for five years of data storage.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Connelly (2016) stated that trustworthiness in research "refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study" (p. 435). Furthermore, qualitative research should include criteria for guaranteeing quality and trustworthiness by setting standards for credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Connelly, 2016; Shenton, 2004). Based on data and not on the researcher's predispositions, a study's findings must be trusted by readers (Shenton, 2004). One way to build this confidence was member checking. For example, member checking allows the participants to analyze their data and comment on accuracy and meaning (Stake, 1995).

Credibility

Credibility is the equivalent of internal validity and is considered an essential criterion of a research study (Connelly, 2016). I utilized member checks and a peer review of interview questions to define and clarify wording. I asked peers to review the interview questions to help provide input on the questions' clarity. As I analyzed the interview answers and drew up the themes, I shared the themes with the participants for feedback, comments, and changes. I sought the transferability of the findings through the application of the transformative leadership theory framework.

Transferability

Transferability is a critical component to meet a high level of trustworthiness in this basic qualitative study. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), collecting data in a trustworthy manner may increase the transferability of the findings from the setting of a study to another location. Furthermore, researchers propose that transferability in a qualitative study is a process whereby a reader or another researcher decides the applicability of findings from a study that may apply in a different context (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I sought to improve the transferability of this basic qualitative study by writing a rich, detailed, and thick description through the journaling process. I collected data through semi-structured interviews utilizing the questions listed in the Appendix. I prepared interview transcription and shared them with the study's participants to clarify the participants' answers and information. I interpreted the data in a way that would enable others, if they reviewed the study, to come up with similar findings

Dependability

Another essential component of trustworthiness is dependability. Carl and Ravitch (2016) highlighted that a study's dependability refers to the stability of the study data. Furthermore, to enhance a study's dependability, Guba and Lincoln (1985) proposed that every step and procedure that occurs should be documented. To improve the data's stability, I implemented member checking and transcription to promote transparency and possible duplication of the study. I also perform an audit trail and create procedural documents that outline the steps taken in this study. The audit trail documented each step of the research process through the reporting of conclusions. Based on Grenier and Merriam's (2019) recommendation, I used reflexivity and maintained a research journal to describe my own experiences, feelings, and biases that may have influenced my interpretation of the data, reinforcing the dependability in this study. Also, to ensure data integrity, I utilized secure storage to maintain the data and code it. Altogether, I focused on ensuring there are no mistakes in the data collection, analysis, and security to maintain the trustworthiness of this study.

Confirmability

Confirmability was a significant component to build trustworthiness in this basic qualitative study. Wa-Mbaleka (2017) noted that researchers agree that confirmability is related to the objectivity of a qualitative study. Researchers also agree that objectivity may be improved by minimizing subjectivity and bias (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Johnson et al., 2016). I minimized subjectivity and bias by writing a rich, detailed, and thick

description through the journaling process. Furthermore, I utilized the member checking method to review my findings. Participants reviewed transcripts from the interviews to ensure the responses were accurate. As proposed by Yin (2016), I ensured the reliability of this basic qualitative study by adequately collecting, documenting, interpreting, and representing the findings so that others would reach the same conclusions if given the same data. In addition, I performed an audit trail that included procedural documents in this study. The audit trail documented the research process and followed through to the reporting of conclusions.

Ethical Procedures

I followed the Walden University IRB process. Upon locating participants for the study, I had each participant complete an electronic consent form agreeing to participate in the basic qualitative study. The consent document explained the study's purpose, the participants' expectations, and the methods used to maintain anonymity. Stake (2010) recommends that member checking helps protect the participants by ensuring the data is accurate. Subsequently, the participants understood: (a) the expectations and their volunteer role in the study and volunteer participation, (b) their names and their schools are kept confidential, and to ensure privacy; (c) they had the opportunity for member checking.

I obtained formal permission from my leadership and the large urban school district's research department to conduct the study per district policy. As part of this submission, I confirmed no conflicts of interest, and the school district confirmed this as

part of the approval process. I worked in the school district that this study took place. No harm or marginalization occurred to the participants in the study. As recommended by Creswell and Poth (2017), the informed consent letters contained information about myself, the purpose of the research, the benefits of participating in the study, the participants' time commitment involved with the study, the risks to the participants, a guarantee that the participants' names are confidential and the participants could withdraw at any time without harm to employees. Data has been stored and secured for five years and password protected. The participants and the school district and campuses are anonymous and confidential.

Summary

In Chapter 3, the research method for this study was outlined, the research question design and rationale was defined, the researcher's role and possible bias was addressed, and the plan for recruitment, participation, and data collection was described. Furthermore, Chapter 3 also outlined the data analysis from the study, how trustworthiness was ensured, and the planned ethical protocols in beginning this qualitative study. In Chapter 4, upon IRB approval, I outline the process of this basic qualitative study, including the setting for the study and the results.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to identify the transformational leadership elements principals utilize to retain teachers in a large urban school district where teacher turnover exceeded the state average from 2016 to 2020 (State Education Agency, 2021). Specifically, this basic qualitative study aimed at identifying a gap in practice in previous research and local evidence, consisting of principals not making the best use of the most effective transformational leadership elements to consolidate and increase teacher retention. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) recommend that the findings of a general qualitative study should be based on the themes and recurring patterns found as collecting and analyzing data collected. Through open-end interview questions centralized around the four elements of transformational leadership, common themes and recurring patterns were identified using a basic qualitative design. The semi-structured interview questions located in the Appendix were asked to address the following research question:

RQ: What transformational leadership elements are principals utilizing to retain teachers at their schools?

The data for this basic qualitative study was collected from nine kindergarten through high school level principal participants through semi-structured interviews around the four elements of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Elementary, middle, and high school grade level principals were represented in the interview process.

In Chapter 4, I present the setting, data collection, data findings, and results of this basic qualitative study and conclude with a summary of the chapter.

Setting

The setting for the basic qualitative study was a large urban school district in the United States. The large urban school district is made of 90 elementary, middle, and high schools. Upon approval from the large urban school district research department and the Walden University Instructional Review Board (Approval No. 08-30-21-0031669), I sent out a consent form to 90 principals requesting volunteers for the study. Ten volunteers replied to the request to be interviewed. I used purposeful, stratified sampling to select nine participants out of the ten volunteers.

There was a global phenomenon occurring at the time of this study. At the time of this study, a global pandemic (COVID-19) led to limitations on social gatherings for school leadership. As a result, the semi-structured interviews were completed through web conferencing. Web conferencing allowed the interviews to be in-depth and included participants sharing their best practices and examples of leadership practices through the semi-interview process.

Furthermore, another factor of the COVID-19 pandemic was that 75% of school districts in cities across the nation reported teacher shortages in 2021 (Buttner, 2021). Spencer (2021) reported that teachers across America are fleeing in record numbers because of the stresses of the pandemic. The teacher shortages in the large urban school district mirrored this issue, as Interim Superintendent stated that there were over 100

teacher openings during the data collection process of this study (personal communication, November 12, 2021). Furthermore, on November 15, the school board of this large urban school district also raised the substitute pay rates to fight substitute shortages (Large Southern City Newspaper, 2021). This phenomenon affected participants' answers to these interview questions as participants constantly referred to the current challenge of teachers considering quitting and retiring during the pandemic for various reasons, including but not limited to fear of illness, changes in workload caused by COVID-19, mandatory face masks policies and vaccination concerns. The data analysis section outlines what principal transformational leadership elements were utilized because of COVID-19 to retain teachers.

Data Collection

The data collection process started when I received the IRB approval from Walden University (08-30-21-0031669). The study followed the plans outlined in Chapter 3 to collect data for this study. I sent an email to all 90 principals in the school district and utilized the consent letter template provided by Walden University. Ten volunteers responded to the request within three days of the email. Four high school principals, two middle school principals, and four elementary principals responded. After seven days, I utilized purposeful, stratified sampling to determine which nine principals participated in this study and ensure all grade levels were represented. I interviewed nine volunteer campus principals for a stratified selection (elementary, middle, and high

school). The final study included three high school principals, two middle school principals, and four elementary principals.

Before each interview, I sent a calendar invite through an email with an agreed time and date with the web conferencing link for the interview. Web conferencing was a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and limits on face-to-face meetings. Prior to each interview, I reviewed the semi-structured interview questions in the Appendix. These interview questions aligned to the research question to identify what elements of transformational leadership principals utilize to retain teachers at their schools. Merriam (1998) suggests semi-structured open interview questions allow researchers to obtain data from participants based on their individual experiences. This interview protocol assisted me in identifying the related transformational leadership elements principals utilized to retain teachers.

Using the web conferencing software, I recorded each interview. I explained to each participant the purpose of the study, my role as the researcher, how I would maintain the confidentiality of the participant, and that I would transcribe the interviews. I also confirmed with participants the option to withdraw from the study at any time. I allotted about one hour for each interview. The interviews lasted from 36 to 65 minutes. Each participant was open and willing to share their practices around the four transformational leadership elements. I journaled and took notes during the interviews as each participant spoke and answered the open-ended interview questions. The interviews

were completed within four weeks. There were not any follow-up interviews with participants.

After each one was completed, the interviews were downloaded to an external hard drive secured in my home office. Each video was assigned a file number. I transcribed the interviews using the transcription service provided by Microsoft Word. I corrected the transcribed text with errors in Microsoft Word by reviewing the web conferencing videos and making corrections as I went along. The files were saved on an external drive with an assigned file number and secured in my home office. There were not any unusual instances during this process.

Data Analysis

As outlined in chapter 3, I utilized Creswell's (2013) six-step data analysis process for a qualitative study. Creswell believed that the validity and reliability of the research were finding the steps within the research that will enable the researcher to focus on qualitative research. According to Nowell et al. (2017), the data analysis process assigns meaning through codes, themes, or other categorization processes to answer the research question. Creswell (2013) six-step approach provided the steps to code, classify themes, arrange, and sort the data, along with the means to interpret and report the study's findings.

Step 1: Creswell (2013) recommended in step one to organize and prepare the data that was collected. For this basic qualitative study, I organized and prepared the data from nine individual participant interviews. After completing the participant interviews, I

utilized Office 365 transcribing feature in Microsoft Word to transcribe the audio files and edited any transcription errors. I scanned my handwritten journal from each interview and sorted the files into my external hard drive folders. I grouped the files by assigning an identifier for all nine participants. Participant 1 was labeled P1. Participant 2 was labeled P2, and so on. I secured the files with password protection.

Step 2: Creswell (2013) recommended in this step that the researcher reads and looks at the data to identify tone, general ideas, and credibility while reflecting on the data's overall meaning. Bengtsson (2016) suggests that the researcher reads and rereads the interview to understand and make sense of the data as part of the whole study. Accordingly, I read over and reread the data collected during the interviews during this step. I sought out tones and big ideas and a common pattern between all participants. I looked for anything that was mentioned by all nine participants that stood out. For example, one general idea that stood out is that all nine participants understood what transformation leadership was at some level. I documented these big ideas in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. After reviewing the interviews, a sample of the big ideas and tones in Table 2 illustrates how I documented this.

Table 2

Sample of Tones and Big Ideas from Participants

Big Idea or Tone	Percentage of Participant(s) Mentioned it in their Interview Responses
COVID-19 was a factor in teacher turnover for Participants.	100%
Participants believed they understood the Transformational Leadership elements.	100%
Participants believed that they were implementing actions to keep their teachers from leaving.	100%
Participants believed that they utilized the elements of Transformational Leadership in their work.	100%

Step 3: Creswell (2013) recommends placing segments and text data in categories and labeling them with a term. I started the coding process utilizing the four elements of Transformational leadership. Since my interview questions were grouped by each element, I utilized this structure in my coding. Using Microsoft Excel, I started sorting text data into categories and labeled them with a term or concept for each transformational leadership element, (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration. Table 3 illustrates a sample of the codes based on the interviews and data from participants' responses connected to Idealized Influence as an example.

Table 3

Sample Coding for Idealized Influence from Participants (P1-P3)

Participant	Interview text excerpt
P1	<p>Leading with love, grace, accountability, and a whole lot of fun. Transparent in communication. Together we came up, and we rewrote the mission in vision. I [principal] must be transparent and let them know what is going on. Give them [teachers} space to tell me [principal] what are your needs Open door policy with set hours for teachers to come to talk to me [principal] because I want to ensure I give them undivided attention. I share my goals with them. Honest conversations and being present. Going to PLCs, being in their classroom, coaching the teachers, and just letting them know that I am with them right alongside them.</p>
P2	<p>I am not willing to ask them to do something I would not do myself. I asked them to do home visits, so they would see me do home visits with them. Lead by example. Instructional Rounds. Recognizing teachers, Listening to them, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Get feedback from them[teachers]. Act and look professional. Be professional in my conduct. Use an insight survey and focus on areas of low scores in teacher perceptions. Important to ask for feedback and support teachers on that feedback.</p>
P3	<p>If it is a new challenge, a new protocol, we are going to learn it together Encourage my teachers to take on leadership roles. We make decisions together. Then together, we create a plan. Giving them [teachers] complete teacher autonomy for as much as I can. Offered open session to any teacher that was interested in giving us feedback The foundation of our discussion ...we spend time on their “Why” they [teachers] are here.</p>

Step 4: According to Creswell (2013), the coding process should generate descriptions for categories and themes to be analyzed. Bengtsson (2016) suggested connecting ideas from the coding process and categories into structures of information. I generated themes from the concepts and terms as they aligned to the research question: What transformational leadership elements are principals utilizing to retain teachers? By coding and analyzing the data from the interviews, I identified three themes related to the study's research question. I reviewed the three themes further in this section and the Results section of this chapter.

Step 5: Creswell (2013) recommended the next step to develop how the descriptions and themes represent the qualitative narrative of the study. I developed how to represent the themes and findings by seeking how they connect to each other and the research question this study has addressed. I represented the data in tables to provide support and used descriptions and examples of data collected to outline the evidence for each theme reviewed in the Results section in this chapter and Chapter 5.

Step 6: Creswell (2013) highlighted the important role of the researcher in providing the interpretations of the research. In line with Creswell's (2013) final step in research, I developed an interpretation and reported the themes and concepts from the study, along with what was learned. Chapter 5 outlines this basic qualitative study results and conclusions.

Themes

I analyzed the data and coding, the following three themes emerged in this basic qualitative study:

1. All nine participants provided examples of practices that aligned with each of the four elements of transformational leadership.
2. All participants were hyper-aware of their teachers' social and emotional wellbeing because of the stresses of the global pandemic COVID-19 and provided some level of intervention or action to keep teachers from quitting that aligned to one or more elements of transformational leadership.
3. Even though participants provided examples of practices around the four elements of transformational leadership, the examples provided were not always the same and varied from participant to participant.

Discrepant Cases

According to Bengtsson (2016), the researcher's responsibility in qualitative research is to examine any evidence of discrepancies among the data. Carl and Ravitch (2016) recommend looking for other possible explanations to ensure discrepant data that did not support the themes. I reviewed and analyzed the data multiple times to determine and evaluate if the data conflicted with the themes. I re-reviewed codes to identify any nonconforming codes. I did not identify any data provided by the participants that did not contradict the themes observed in the findings of this study. After reexamining all the

data, the data analysis methodology, coding, and themes, I did not find any discrepant data that conflicted with the themes outlined in this basic qualitative study.

Results

Qualitative research gathers participants' experiences, perceptions, and behavior. It answers the hows and whys instead of how many or how much (Tenny et al., 2021). Using Creswell's (2013) six-step qualitative research process, I interviewed nine large urban school district participants. All participants had at least one year of experience or more as a principal. The literature on transformational leadership and the related four elements, along with research on teacher retention and turnover, the conceptual framework, and the nine participants' interviews, provided a plentiful amount of data to develop three major themes. These three major themes revealed through coding and data analysis in this basic qualitative study addressed the following research question: What transformational leadership elements are principals utilizing to retain teachers at their schools? The following section analyzes the three themes from the participant interviews that addressed this basic qualitative study's research question.

Theme 1: Four Transformational Leadership Elements Practices Interpretation

Theme 1 directly answers the first research question. All nine participants provided examples of practices that aligned with each of the four elements of transformational leadership. Each of the nine participants provided at least one or more examples of practices they utilized for each of the four elements of transformational

leadership: (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration.

Around the first element of transformational leadership, idealized influence, all nine participants provided examples of how they served as role models, encouraged high moral standards, truthfulness, honesty, and built respect for others (Bass, 1985). For example, participant P6 provided the example of “having to teach a class to cover a teacher that had a personal emergency.” P6 explained that there was a substitute shortage because of the pandemic, and teachers had to cover classes during their conference periods. As a result, P6, as an instructional leader, stated he/she also “covered classes to demonstrate to the teachers that he/she is not going to ask them to do something they would not do themselves.” This practice impressed the campus teachers and promoted respect for P6’s role as a principal on the campus. While P1 and P9 highlighted examples being “present at all the professional learning community required teacher meetings”, even though it was not expected in their role as principal. Teachers appreciated and respected them for going and participating in these meetings. Subsequently, eight out of the nine participants mentioned the importance of “transparency” and gave examples of practices connected to transparency with teachers to build trust and support for their leadership role.

Inspirational motivation, the second element of transformational leadership, focuses on leadership behaviors such as being optimistic, communicating and sharing vision, communicating high expectations, accepting change, and facing challenges (Abun

et al., 2020). Again, all nine participants provided examples of practice through inspirational motivation. For example, participants P1, P5, and P6 shared how they worked with their teachers to create a shared vision for the campus. P6 highlighted how he/she brought in data that showed the school was in danger of being shut down by the state in two years if they did not improve their accountability rating. This action helped teachers understand the challenge, own it, and the teachers designed a “shared vision of the work that would need to be done” to overcome this challenge. Subsequently, five of the nine participants highlighted how they bring in all teachers to help develop the campus improvement plan annually and develop the daily campus procedures as examples of building buy-in and commitment.

As the third element of transformational leadership, intellectual stimulation encourages teachers to solve problems, question beliefs, create new practices, and improve productivity (Bass, 1985). Again, all nine participants provided examples of practice through intellectual stimulation. Participants provided multiple practices across the nine participants. Some of the main practices are listed in Table 4:

Table 4

Intellectual Stimulation Practices by Participants

Participant(s)	Practices or Actions
P4, P7, P9	Utilized Master Teacher roles with stipend funding
P1, P3, P5	Have teachers develop professional development activities for the campus
P1, P2, P6, P8	Developed Campus Teacher Leaders and Mentors

P8	Teacher choice in various professional development options
All Participants	Engaged teachers through Campus Improvement Plan
P4, P6, P7, P8	Handed over a challenge, procedure decision, and problem to the teachers to address
P2, P3, P4, P5, P8, P9	Utilized expert teachers as teacher mentors
P1, P2, P3, P6, P8, P9	Encourage teachers to try new things and highlight them for trying something new (examples: new lesson, new project, new program)

Individual consideration, the fourth element of transformational leadership, focuses on how the school leader establishes a supportive climate where individual differences are respected (Bass, 1998). Again, all nine participants highlighted practices that they promoted through individual consideration. One example, participant P3 focused on the importance of “listening to teachers' concerns”. Participant P3 highlighted many challenges with COVID-19 around the individual differences when it came to various topics, including face masks, distancing, vaccines, and safety. As policies on these subjects were established at the district level, Participant P3 noted he/she would follow up with each teacher and “be a source to listen to their concerns”. This practice helped build a relationship while navigating complicated issues. Participants P7 and P9 highlighted actions that would make “teachers feel special” and “acknowledge their great work”. Another example, participant P4 spoke that the most important thing he/she could do during the pandemic was to “always be available for teachers for not just the day-to-day tasks, but for the teachers’ social-emotional needs and problems”.

Theme 2: COVID-19 and Social-Emotional Needs of Teachers Interpretation

Subsequently, Theme 2 supports the response to this study's research question. All participants were hyper-aware of their teachers' social and emotional wellbeing because of the stresses of the global pandemic COVID-19 and provided some level of intervention or action to keep teachers from quitting that aligned to one or more elements of transformational leadership. The word "COVID-19" or "pandemic" were mentioned by participants at least 42 times during the interviews. Between the teacher shortages and substitute shortages, teacher retention was a leading concern for the large urban school district during the time of this study. Participants commented on teachers' professional and personal stress levels. Participant P2 noted that teachers are facing situations of "illness and death with their family members, along with their student's personal and family struggles with the pandemic". Participant P7 stated that it seemed even "more urgent to build relationships among the staff, so we know daily how every teacher is doing, and it requires a system of check-ins developed across the campus". Participant P9 highlighted, "giving teachers more time for planning and longer break periods seems to help teachers process, so we are working with the teachers to build this time in for all teachers". Participant P1 stated, "having an open-door policy at all times and being someone that will listen to teachers' concerns have been an important part of their task this year."

Theme 3: Practices Varied between Participants

Theme 3 provides support for this study's research question. Even though participants provided examples of practices around the four elements of transformational leadership, the examples provided were not always the same and varied from participant to participant. While participants answered the interview questions as if they understood the elements of transformational leadership and did provide examples for each of the four elements, the examples given were not aligned across all schools.

For example, even with common statements on "transparency" being an important factor for teacher retention according to multiple participants, the actual practices around providing transparency varied from participant to participant. Participant P1 noted that to be transparent, that as the principal they wanted teachers to be aware of not only the campus vision, mission, and goals, but wanted teachers to "know what goals he/she as the campus leader was being measured on by his/her leadership". While the P5 focused on transparency by "involving the teachers in organizational problems and challenges and giving them the power to help develop solutions". The approach to each element varied in practice while they understood the nature of the transformational leadership element at some level.

Another example of variances was in the area of intellectual stimulation. Participants P1, P3, and P5 utilized teacher-designed professional development as the practice for this element, while participants P4, P7, and P9 contributed teacher pay increases and master teacher title with more work as promoting teachers in this area.

These variances showed a different understanding of the element and different sets of practices implemented by participants.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Based on data and not on the researcher's predispositions, a study's findings must be trusted by readers (Shenton, 2004). As mentioned in chapter 3, Connelly (2016) stated that trustworthiness in research "refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study" (p. 435). As the researcher, I followed Creswell's (2014) six-step process of analyzing data for this basic qualitative study. From organizing the data, looking for big ideas, coding, and interpreting themes, I sought to develop an interpretation of the data that any other researcher would agree with as a reasonable set of results. I followed these steps to build trust with the readers.

Furthermore, qualitative research should include criteria for guaranteeing quality and trustworthiness by setting standards for credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Connelly, 2016; Shenton, 2004). The following sections review these areas of research for this basic qualitative study.

Credibility

Connelly (2016) noted that credibility is the equivalent of internal validity and is considered an essential criterion of a research study. As mentioned in Chapter 3, I used member checks to confirm the accurate data and clarify wording. Participants were provided a transcription of their interview. I also asked for clarity and additional information if they felt it did not cover their points or actions. Subsequently, I used

Microsoft Word to transcribe, journaling to collect my first set of observations during the interview, and Microsoft Excel to group the data and develop codes as a common procedure for manually coding data.

Transferability

Marshall and Rossman (2016) proposed that transferability in a qualitative study is a process whereby a reader or another researcher decides the applicability of findings from a study that may apply in a different context. Furthermore, collecting data in a trustworthy manner may increase the transferability of the findings from the setting of a study to another location (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I utilized Creswell's (2013) six-step process of analyzing data for this basic qualitative study. During the interview process, I sought to improve the transferability of this basic qualitative study by utilizing the journaling process. Subsequently, I prepared interview transcription and shared them with the study's participants to clarify their answers and information. I interpreted the data in a way that would enable others, if they reviewed the study, to come up with similar findings.

Dependability

To enhance a study's dependability, Guba and Lincoln (1985) proposed that every step and procedure that occurs should be documented. To improve the data's stability, I implemented member checking and transcription to promote transparency and possible duplication of the study. I also perform an audit trail and create procedural documents that outline the steps taken in this study. The audit trail documented each step of the

research process through the reporting of conclusions. Also, to ensure data integrity, I utilized secure storage to maintain the data and code it. Carl and Ravitch (2016) highlighted that a study's dependability refers to the stability of the study data. Altogether, I focused on ensuring there are no mistakes in the data collection, analysis, and security to maintain the trustworthiness of this study.

Confirmability

As proposed by Yin (2016), I ensured the reliability of this basic qualitative study by adequately collecting, documenting, interpreting, and representing the findings so that others would reach the same conclusions if given the same data. Participants reviewed transcripts from the interviews to ensure the responses were accurate. I minimized subjectivity and bias by writing a rich, detailed, and thick description through the journaling process. In addition, I performed an audit trail that documented the research process and followed through to the reporting of conclusions.

Summary

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to identify the transformational leadership elements principals utilize to retain teachers in a large urban school district where teacher turnover exceeded the state average from 2016 to 2020 (State Education Agency, 2021). The interview of the nine participants utilized the interview questions found in the Appendix to operationalize the four elements of transformational leadership. The data analysis interviews with participants provided the three themes that addressed

this basic qualitative study's research question. All nine participants utilized all four elements of transformational leadership to retain teachers. Subsequently, this study's finding was affected by the global pandemic COVID-19 as the phenomenon heightened participants' need to utilize practices aligned to the four elements of transformational leadership to keep teachers from leaving during this difficult period of time. Furthermore, while all participants answered the interview questions showed evidence of some level of knowledge about four elements of transformational leadership, participants provided varied practices in utilizing the four elements of transformational leaders to retain teachers.

In summary, three themes emerged in this study that answered the research question: What transformational leadership elements are principals utilizing to retain teachers at their schools? The three themes pointed to a pattern of all participants utilizing all four elements of transformational leadership through various ways and practices.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to identify the transformational leadership elements principals utilize to retain teachers in a large urban school district where teacher turnover exceeded the state average from 2016 to 2020 (State Education Agency, 2021). Previous studies and local evidence indicate that a gap in practice might exist, consisting of principals not making the best use of the most effective transformational leadership elements to consolidate and increase teacher retention. Kamrath and Bradford's (2020) study suggested principal support is critical to teacher retention and identified administrator support, administrator actions, and lack of recognition from administration as the top three factors for teachers leaving. However, there is limited literature on how principal leadership influences teachers' decisions to leave their schools, and the practices that principals enact that impact teacher turnover are not clear (Scallon et al., 2021).

This basic qualitative study's conceptual framework was based on Burns's (1978) transformational leadership theory and related elements of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. I obtained my data from semi-structured interviews through a web conferencing platform with nine school principals. Through the interview process, I identified what elements of transformational leadership these nine participants utilized in the large urban school district. The semi-structured interview questions located in the Appendix guided the

answer to the following question by operationalizing each of the transformational leadership elements:

RQ: What transformational leadership elements are principals utilizing to retain teachers at their schools?

I utilized Creswell's (2013) six-step data analysis process for a qualitative study, and the following three themes emerged from the data:

1. All nine participants provided examples of practices that aligned with each of the four elements of transformational leadership.
2. All participants were hyper-aware of their teachers' social and emotional wellbeing because of the stresses of the global pandemic COVID-19 and provided some level of intervention or action to keep teachers from quitting that aligned to one or more elements of transformational leadership.
3. Even though participants provided examples of practices around the four elements of transformational leadership, the examples provided were not always the same and varied from participant to participant.

The findings of this study provide qualitative evidence that principals in this large urban school district utilize the four elements of transformational leadership in their practice for retaining teachers. While the COVID-19 heightened the need for transformational leadership practices, the type of transformational leadership practices varied between participants. This chapter interprets the findings and links this study's research, the conceptual framework, and peer-reviewed literature related to teacher

retention and principal leadership. Furthermore, the chapter explores the limitations of this study, recommendations for future research, and implications for social change.

Interpretation of the Findings

The interview questions operationalized the four elements of transformational leadership to address the research question. This study sought to identify what elements of transformational leadership principals utilize to reduce teacher turnover through the transformational leadership framework and the related elements of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Many researchers agree that transformational leadership has been known as a process to develop and expand a constituency's fullest potential to adapt and commit to the organization's goals (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). According to Kramer (2007), transformational leaders communicate a precise, comprehensive, relevant, and meaningful vision so that the team members feel encouraged, optimistic, and motivated to invest efforts and energies to go beyond their abilities to accomplish the goals. Ayik and Dis (2015) research suggests that the principal's transformational leadership is the driving force of the change and determining factor of the success or failure of a school. In comparison, Eliophotou and Ioannou's (2016) research findings suggest that the significance of implementing transformational leadership practices at school increased teacher job satisfaction, trust, and commitment. Furthermore, many researchers agree that the level of support from principals and other school leaders is the best predictor of teacher turnover (Grissom, 2011; Hughes et al., 2015; Torres, 2014). Subsequently, Boyd

et al. (2011) research highlighted that teachers who have fewer positive perceptions of their school administrators are more likely to transfer to another school and to leave teaching. In comparison, Anderson's (2017) research highlights decades of research that support transformational leadership's positive impact in enhancing organizational performance. Subsequently, Williams (2018) quantitative study indicated that a principals' leadership style was related to teacher motivation and found that transformational leadership significantly predicted autonomy and improved teacher turnover.

The nine principals from the large urban school district provided through interviews their practices at their campuses. As educational leaders, these participants provided examples of practices aligned with the four elements of transformational leadership. Out of these responses, three themes were developed. I described and interpreted these themes based on this documented research, the transformational leadership conceptual framework aligned with enhancing leadership practices and improving organizational outcomes like teacher retention. This basic qualitative study confirmed that principals utilized all four elements of transformational leadership. The next sections break down this interpretation by element.

Idealized Influence – Interpretation of Utilization

Hauserman and Stick's (2013) research showed that idealized influence effectively resulted in organizational success when used by the school principals. Furthermore, Sharma and Singh's (2017) research proposes that the transformational

leader, through idealized influence, can make employees work together, trust each other, promote employee motivation and then produce the work result exceeding expectations. Theme 1 from the data reflected that all nine participants utilized idealized influence, the first element of transformational leadership. Theme 2 highlighted how the COVID-19 influenced the importance of these practices around idealized influence to retain teachers during this time of stress, while Theme 3 identified that the practices varied from participant to participant. Examples of practices provided by principals during the interview included (a) providing transparency in areas of purpose, values, beliefs, administration, challenges, and issues, (b) providing professional respect to teachers as equals, (c) leading by example in the day to day work and professionalism, (d) do not ask teachers to do something that you would not do yourself, (e) instructional rounds with teachers as a group and provide constructive feedback as a team, (f) be visible in the halls, classroom, cafeteria and everywhere teachers can see you are engaged and present, and (g) including teachers in the decision-making process around school procedures and policies. All nine participants presented one or more practices during the interview process. From the data and themes of this study, I interpreted that school principals in the large urban school district utilized the transformational leadership element, idealized influence, to retain teachers.

Inspirational Motivation – Interpretation of Utilization

Murphy (2018) proposed that leaders who utilize inspirational motivation lead with passion, enthusiasm, and inspiration can successfully communicate with the whole

school community. Ahmad et al. (2014) proposed that leaders that practice inspirational motivation motivate their followers by accepting challenges and also act as the model for them, they inspire their subordinates by achieving the goal effectively and that transformational leadership enables the leader to explain the meanings of challenges that teachers have to face and motivate them to accept them. As with idealized influence, Theme 1 from the data reflected that all nine participants utilized inspirational motivation, the second element of transformational leadership. Theme 2 highlighted how the COVID-19 influenced the importance of these practices around inspirational motivation to retain teachers during this time of stress for teachers, while Theme 3 identified that the practices varied from participant to participant. Examples of practices provided by principals during the interview included: (a) principals promoting an optimistic vision, (b) meeting one on one with each teacher weekly to check-in and make sure they were in a good place, (c) included staff in the development of the vision and mission for the campus to obtain by in and positive outlook, (d) recognizing teachers for their work individually and as a team, (e) promoting teacher leadership opportunities, (f) routinely communicating through newsletters, announcements and emails what is going on, (g) open-door policy or open communication with the principal through text and phone as needed, and (h) constantly keeping teachers focused on the future goals and moving forward routinely. From the data and themes of this study, I interpreted that school principals in the large urban school district utilized the transformational leadership element, inspirational motivation, to retain teachers.

Intellectual Stimulation – Interpretation of Utilization

Intellectual stimulation involves motivating followers by “questioning assumptions, challenging the status quo, and encouraging problem reformulation, imagination, intellectual curiosity, and novel approaches (Shin & Zhou, 2003). With intellectual stimulation, the leader invites volunteers to be creative, innovative and make decisions that may be out of the box (Belmejdoub, 2015). Furthermore, Evangelista (2014) suggested that the leaders' ability to provide intellectual stimulation greatly influenced teacher self-efficacy. As with idealized influence and inspirational motivation, Theme 1 from the data reflected that all nine participants utilized intellectual motivation, the third element of transformational leadership. Theme 2 highlighted how the COVID-19 influenced the importance of these practices around intellectual stimulation to retain teachers during this time of stress. Theme 3 identified that the practices varied from participant to participant. Some examples of practices provided by principals during the interview included: (a) utilizing master teacher roles with stipend and more duties, (b) having teachers create professional development for the campus and take ownership of the event, (c) providing opportunities to teachers to take teacher leader and mentor roles, (d) provide innovative teacher professional development choices (book study, conference, research, technical training), (e) engage teachers in developing the campus improvement plan, (f) hand over complicated issues, and problems for faculty to solve, and (g) develop mentorship roles of teachers to support other professionals. From the data and themes of this study, I interpreted that school principals in the large urban school

district utilized the transformational leadership element, intellectual motivation, to retain teachers.

Individual Consideration – Interpretation of Utilization

With individual consideration, Abun et al. (2020) suggested that the leader develops a supportive relationship and offers help to develop the follower according to his/her needs. According to Ogola et al. (2017), the individual consideration offered by the leaders tends to increase the effectiveness and satisfaction level of employees. As with idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, Theme 1 from the data reflected that all nine participants utilized individual consideration, the fourth element of transformational leadership. Theme 2 highlighted how the COVID-19 influenced the importance of these practices around individual consideration to retain teachers during this time of stress, while Theme 3 identified that the practices varied from participant to participant. Some examples of practices provided by principals during the interview included: (a) listening to teachers concerns or challenges, (b) building individual relationships with teachers and do not treat them like they are all alike, (c) making teachers feel special with small gifts of recognition or awards, (d) constantly thank them and acknowledge their work and dedication, (e) be available anytime for teachers to talk, (f) talk to your teachers about their social-emotional needs, and (g) provide time for them when issues arise, either personally or professionally. From the data and themes of this study, I interpreted that school principals in the large urban school

district utilized the transformational leadership element, individual consideration, to retain teachers.

Limitations of the Study

As mentioned in chapter 1, distinguishing limitations within a study allows the researcher to monitor these limitations (Hatch, 2010). This basic qualitative study interviewed nine kindergarten through high school in one district. As identified in chapter 1, this study was limited to one school district and was based on interviews of a small sample of principals, about 10%. This small sample and possible generalization of this study's findings may limit the transferability and application of this research.

Furthermore, I utilized a stratified sampling that captured all grade levels. The final study included interviews from three high school principals, two middle school principals, and four elementary principals.

Furthermore, I only interviewed only principals. I did not interview teachers or any other group, which can lead to interview bias. This lack of rigor is linked to the problem of bias introduced by the researcher's subjectivity and others involved (Hatch, 2010). I attempted to collect data during interviews as broad and deep as possible to obtain the best picture of principal practices from the participants of this study.

Another limitation was a result of COVID-19, as the interviews had to be initiated through web conferencing because of safety concerns and social distancing requirements. The COVID-19 pandemic affected principals' answers and practices as there was a high level of concern for teachers' social-emotional wellbeing. I recorded the interview,

transcribed the interviews, and implemented member checking to confirm the responses from participants. Participants' answers to the interview questions were often connected to challenges of COVID-19 issues, and as a result, I documented the data and kept it embedded in the coding. A theme emerged from the coding that was integrated into this study.

Recommendations

Lord and Hall (2005) proposed that leadership development is predicated on progressive skills development and that through the process of skill development, a leader advances through novice, intermediate, and expert skill levels. While the finding of this basic qualitative study determined that principals were applying practices that utilized all four of the transformational elements to retain teachers, three highlights that the data pointed toward participants applying practices in various ways. I interpreted from the data that some transformational leadership practices may be more effective than others and that not all participants had the same level of expertise in implementing the practices aligned with four elements. Further research is needed to measure the effectiveness of principal practices while utilizing transformation leadership elements to measure the level of leadership skill development of principals and their practices.

Implications

This basic qualitative survey contributes to research about what elements of transformational leadership principals utilize to retain teachers. The study identified that

principals were utilizing all four of the elements of transformational leadership to retain teachers. Furthermore, the student identified that principals were not always using the same practices across all four transformational leadership elements. During the study, it was also identified that COVID-19 brought in another layer of challenges for principals at the local level to retain teachers. For this large urban school district, this study may provide insight into training that will allow principals to share transformational leadership practices across grade levels and schools on what is helping retain teachers. This study may promote the development of professional development that creates a sharing of current practices our principals are utilizing that will help support teacher retention districtwide. Positive social change may occur by promoting teacher retention by sharing these common transformational leadership practices across campuses in this large urban school district.

The findings of this basic qualitative study may also influence research on a larger level. Several studies have identified that both the support principals provide teachers and the principals' leadership style are two of the best predictors of retaining teachers (Hughes et al., 2015; Podolsky et al., 2016). Subsequently, teacher turnover has been a national, state, and local concern. Previous studies and local evidence indicated a gap in practice might exist, consisting of principals not making the best use of the most effective transformational leadership elements to consolidate and increase teacher retention. This study has the potential to promote social change by providing additional research toward principal leadership practices that may retain teachers and reduce teacher turnover.

Conclusion

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to identify the transformational leadership elements principals utilize to retain teachers in a large urban school district where teacher turnover exceeded the state average from 2016 to 2020 (State Education Agency, 2021). Many researchers agree that principal support is critical to teacher retention. Administrator support, administrator actions, and lack of recognition from the administration have been identified as the top three factors for teachers leaving (Kamrath & Bradford, 2020). Furthermore, transformational leadership has been the most prominent leadership theory in education in the last thirty years (Hoch et al., 2018; Mendez-Keegan, 2019). For this study, I utilized Burns's (1978) transformational leadership theory and related elements of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration as the conceptual framework for this study. I conducted this basic qualitative study to address a gap in practices in previous studies and at the local level that currently exists, consisting of principals not making the best use of the most effective transformational leadership elements to consolidate and increase teacher retention. I collected data using semi-structured interviews with nine kindergarten to high school principals. The findings of this basic qualitative study indicate that principals in this large urban school district engaged in practices that utilized each of the four elements of transformational leadership: (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration to retain teachers. Furthermore, principals' practices varied

from campus to campus, but they all provided examples aligned to the four elements of transformational leadership. Another factor during this study was COVID-19. COVID-19 raised the stakes on the importance of retaining teachers during this study as teacher shortages increased. Using the results from this study, this large urban school district and other urban school districts can create educational change by developing professional development that allows principals to share practices across campuses around transformational leadership to retain teachers.

References

- Abbas, A., Ahmad, K., Batool, F., & Hassan, M. (2020). Role of human resource practices and corporate entrepreneurship: Mediation of transformational leadership and product innovation performance. *Journal of Law & Social Studies*, 2(1), 01-09. <https://doi.org/10.52279/jlss.02.01.0109>
- Abun, D., Basilio, G. J., Magallanes, T., Quadra, M. B., & Encarnacion, M. J. (2020). Transformational leadership style of supervisors/heads as perceived by the employees and the attitude of employees toward the school. *Technium Social Sciences Journal*, 13(1), 357-375. Retrieved from <https://techniumscience.com/index.php/socialsciences/issue/view/27>
- Ahmad, F., Abbas, T., Latif, S., & Rasheed, A. (2014). Impact of Transformational Leadership on Employee Motivation in Telecommunication Sector. *Journal of Management Policies and Practices*. 2. 11-25.
- Ali, F. P. (2017). *A qualitative narrative inquiry on teacher attrition*. [Doctoral Dissertation, University of Phoenix]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Anderson, M. (2017). Transformational leadership in education: A review of existing literature," *International Social Science Review*. 93(1). <https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/issr/vol93/iss1/4>
- Ayik, A., & Dis, O. (2015). Analysis of the relationship between the organizational climate and transformational leadership roles of the school administrators. *Journal of*

Theoretical Educational Science, 8 (3), 337-359.

<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/akukeg/issue/29358/314137>

Babbie, E. R. (2017). *The basics of social research* (7th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands-resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22, 309-328.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. Free Press.

Bass, B. M. (1998). *Transformational leadership: Industrial, military, and educational impact*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (2004). *Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership*. Sage, Thousand Oaks.

Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational leadership* (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Beauchamp, M. R., & Morton, K. L. (2011). Transformational teaching and physical activity engagement among adolescents. *Exercise and Sport Sciences Reviews*, 39(3), 133-139.

Beckmann, E. (2017). Leadership through fellowship: distributed leadership in a professional recognition scheme for university educators. *Journal of Higher*

Education Policy and Management, 39(2), 155-168.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2017.1276663>

Belmejdoub, A. (2015). *The leadership journey: A paradigm for developing globally responsible leaders*. Northumbria University Newcastle.

<https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.5093.9281>

Bengtsson, M. (2016). How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis. *NursingPlus Open*, 2, 8–14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.npls.2016.01.001>

Berg, B. L., & Luna, H. (2013). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences: Pearson new international edition*. Pearson Higher Ed.

Berkovich, I. (2016). School leaders and transformational leadership theory: Time to part ways? *Journal of Educational Administration*, 54(5), 609–622.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-11-2015-0100>

Billingsley, B. S., & Cross, L. H. (1992). Predictors of commitment, job satisfaction, and intent to stay in teaching: a comparison of general and special educators. *The Journal of Special Education*, 25(1), 453-471.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods*. (5th ed.) Prentice Hall.

Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Ing, M., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2011). The influence of school administrators on teacher retention decisions. *American*

Educational Research Journal, 48(2), 303–333.

<https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831210380788>

Bradley, K., & Levin, S. (2019). Understanding and addressing principal turnover: A review of the research. Learning Policy Institute.

https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/NASSP_LPI_Principal_Turnover_Research_Review_REPORT.pdf

Brutus, S., Aguinis, H., & Wassmer, U. (2013). Self-reported limitations and future directions in scholarly reports. *Journal of Management*, 39, 48 - 75.

Burkholder, G., Cox, K., & Crawford, L. (2016). *The scholar-practitioner's guide to research design*. Laureate Publishing.

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*, N.Y., Harper and Row.

Bush, T. (2014). Instructional and transformational leadership: alternative and complementary models? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 42(4), 443–444. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143214526830>

Bush, T. (2017). Transformational leadership: Exploring common conceptions. *Education Management Administration & Leadership*, 46(6), 883-887.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143218795731>

Buttner, A. (2021). The state of the teacher shortage in 2021. *Frontline Education*.

<https://www.frontlineeducation.com/blog/teacher-shortage-2021/>

- Carl, N. M., & Ravitch, S. (2016). *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Carver-Thomas, D., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). *Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.
- Chaudhry, S., Jensen, M., & Potocnik, K. (2020). A mixed-methods study of CEO transformational leadership and firm performance. *European Management Journal*, 38(1), 836-845.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0263237320300773>
- Connelly, L. (2016). Trustworthiness in qualitative research. *MEDSURG Nursing*. 25. 435-436.
- Cowan, J., & Goldhaber, D. (2016). National board certification and teacher effectiveness: Evidence from Washington state. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 9(3) 233-258. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19345747.2015.1099768>
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design (International student edition): Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

- Daily, A. (2019). *Teacher job satisfaction and principal leadership styles: A basic qualitative study*. [Doctoral Dissertation, Northcentral University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Damanik, E., & Aldridge, J. (2017). Transformational leadership and its impact on school climate and teachers' self-efficacy in Indonesian high schools. *Journal of School Leadership, 27*(2), 269–296. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105268461702700205>
- Darnell, K. B. (2020). *Interventions to address teacher attrition from low-income schools* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. ScholarWorks. <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/8375/>
- DeJonckheere, M., & Vaughn, L. M. (2019). Semistructured interviewing in primary care research: A balance of relationship and rigour. *Family Medicine and Community Health, 7*(2), e000057. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/fmch-2018-000057>
- Demirtas, H., Ozer, N., Demirbilek, N., & Bali, O. (2017). Relationship between the perceived principal support, trust in principal, and organizational commitment. (English). *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences, 9*(4), 1075.
- Dou, D., Devos, G., & Valcke, M. (2017). The relationships between school autonomy gap, principal leadership, teachers' job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 45*(6), 959–977.

- Eliophotou, M. M., & Ioannou, A. (2016). The Link between Transformational Leadership and Teachers' Job Satisfaction, Commitment, Motivation to Learn, and Trust in the Leader. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal*. Jordan Whitney Enterprises, Inc.
- Elmazi, E. (2018). Principal leadership style and job satisfaction of high school teachers. *European Journal of Education*, 1(3), 109. <https://doi.org/10.26417/ejed.v1i3.p109-115>
- Estapa, J. (2009). *The relationship between the transformational leadership characteristics of principals as perceived by teachers, and student achievement on standardized tests*. [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. ProQuest. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/305160505>
- Esterberg, K. (2002). *Qualitative methods in social research*. McGraw Hill, Boston
- Evangelista, A. B. (2014). Domains of leadership behavior of administrators as determinants of self-efficacy of faculty in engineering and ICT schools. John Paul II College of Davao.
- Finnigan, K. (2010). Principal leadership and teacher motivation under high-stakes accountability policies. *Leadership & Policy in Schools*, 9(2), 161–189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15700760903216174>

- Flanagan, E. (2019). Transformational leadership theory and characteristics of holistic coaching in sports [Master's thesis].
<https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2428&context=theses>
- Ghamrawi, N., & Al-Jammal, K. (2013). Leadership versus management: Between self-concept and actual practice of Lebanese school principals. *International Journal of Educational Research and Technology*, 4, 56-72.
<https://doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2018.71003>
- Gkolia, A., Koustelios, A., & Belias, D. (2018). Exploring the association between transformational leadership and teacher's self-efficacy in the greek education system: A multilevel SEM model. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 21(2), 176-196.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?redir=http%3a%2f%2fdx.doi.org%2f10.1080%2f13603124.2015.1094143>
- Grenier, R. S., & Merriam, S. B. (2019). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Grissom, J. A. (2011). Can good principals keep teachers in disadvantaged schools? Linking principal effectiveness to teacher satisfaction and turnover in hard-to-staff environments. *Teachers College Record*, 113, 2552–2585.
- Grissom, J. A., & Bartanen, B. (2018). Strategic retention: Principal effectiveness and teacher turnover in multiple-measure teacher evaluation systems. *American*

Educational Research Journal, 56(2), 514–555.

<https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831218797931>

Guba, E., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1985). Establishing trustworthiness. *Naturalistic inquiry*, 289, 331. Sage Publications.

Gumus, S., Bellibas, M. S., Esen, M., & Gumus, E. (2016). A systematic review of studies on leadership models in educational research from 1980 to 2014. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 46(1), 25-48. <https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1177%2F1741143213485464>

Hallinger, P. (2003). Leading educational change: Reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33, 329-352. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0305764032000122005>

Hatch, J. A. (2010). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*. SUNY Press.

Hauserman, C. P., & Stick, S. L. (2013). The leadership teachers want from principals. *Transformational Canadian Journal of Education*, 36(3), 185-197.

Heller, H. W., Clay, R., & Perkins, C. (1993). The Relationship between Teacher Job Satisfaction and Principal Leadership Style. *Journal of School Leadership*, 3(1), 74-86. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105268469300300108>

Henker, N., Sonnentag, S., & Unger, D. (2015). Transformational leadership and employee creativity: The mediating role of promotion focus and creative process

engagement. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 30, 235–247.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-014-9348-7>

Hinde, S., & Spackman, E. (2015). Bidirectional Citation Searching to Completion: An Exploration of Literature Searching Methods. *Pharmacoeconomics*, 33(1), 5-11. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40273-014-0205-3>

Hoch, J. E., Bommer, W. H., Dulebohn, J. H., & Wu, D. (2018). Do ethical, authentic, and servant leadership explain variance above and beyond transformational leadership? A meta-analysis. *Journal of Management*, 2, 501.

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0149206316665461>

Houchard, M. A. (2005). Principal leadership, teacher morale, and student achievement in seven schools in Mitchell county, North Carolina [Doctoral dissertation].

<https://dc.etsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2238&context=etdHa>

Hughes, A. L., Matt, J. J., & O'Reilly, F. L. (2015). Principal support is imperative to the retention of teachers in hard-to-staff schools. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 3(1), 129–134.

Johnson, M., Kallio, H., Kangasniemi, M., & Pietila, A. M. (2016). Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 72(12), 2954-2965.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.13031>

- Kamrath, B., & Bradford, K. (2020). A Case study of teacher turnover and retention in an urban elementary school. *Educational Considerations*, 45(3).
- Kirtman, L., & Fullan, M. (2015). *Leadership: Key competencies for whole-system change*. Solution Tree Press.
- Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2010). *The leadership challenge*. (4th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Kraft, M. A., Marinell, W. H., & Yee, D. S. (2016). School organizational context. *American Educational Research Journal and student achievement*, 53, 1411-1449.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0002831216667478>
- Kramer, T. J. (2007). Review of Transformational leadership (2nd ed.) [Review of the book *Transformational leadership (2nd ed.)*, by M. B. Bass & E. G. Riggio]. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 10(2), 152–155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10887150701451312>
- Kroll, A., & Vogel, D. (2014). The PSM–leadership fit: A model of performance information use. *Public Administration* 92(4), 974-99.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12014>
- Kupers, W., Mantere, S., & Statler, M. (2013). Strategy as storytelling: A phenomenological collaboration. *Journal of Management Inquiry*. 22(1), 83-100.
<https://doi:10.1177/1056492612439089>

Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Sage, Thousand Oaks.

Ladd, H. F. (2009). Teachers' perceptions of their working conditions: How predictive of policy-relevant outcomes. *PsycEXTRA Dataset*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/e722072011-001>

Ladd, H. F. (2011). Teachers' perceptions of their working conditions: How predictive of planned and actual teacher movement? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 33 (2), 235–261. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373711398128>

Large Southern City Newspaper. (2021). Fighting teacher shortage, large urban school district, jacks up for substitutes.

Lee, A. (2008). *Incentive Interview: An expert in rewards and recognition*. Incentive Publishing.

Lee, L. Y. K., & Lee, J. K. L. (2015). Leading and managing change in education: Putting transformational leadership into practice. *Studies and Practices for Advancement in Open and Distance Education*, 1-15.

<https://www.saide.org.za/resources/Library/Li,%20KC%3b%20Yuen,%20K%20-%20Studies-and-Practices-for-Advancement-in-ODE-%20blended%20learning%202015.pdf#page=10>

- Leedy, P. D., Ormrod, J. E., & Johnson, L. R. (2019). *Practical research: Planning and design*, (12th ed.). Pearson.
- Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2006). Transformational school leadership for large-scale reform: Effects on students, teachers, and their classroom practices. *School effectiveness and school improvement*, 17(2), 201-227.
- Leithwood, K. A., & Poplin, M. S. (1992). The move toward transformational leadership. *Educational Leadership*, 49(5), 8-12.
- Liebowitz, D. D., & Porter, L. (2019). The effect of principal behaviors on student, teacher, and school outcomes: A systematic review and meta-analysis of the empirical literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 89(5), 785–827.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654319866133>
- Lochmiller, C. R., Sugimoto, T. J., & Muller, P. A. (2016). *Teacher retention, mobility, and attrition in Kentucky public schools from 2008 to 2012*. The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.
https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/appalachia/pdf/REL_2016116.pdf
- Lord, R. G., & Hall, R. J. (2005). Identity, deep structure and the development of leadership skill. *The leadership quarterly*, 16(4), 591-615.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (2016). *Designing qualitative research* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Martin, A. J., & Dowson, M. (2009). Interpersonal relationships, motivation, engagement, and achievement: Yields for theory, current issues, and educational practice. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(1), 327–365.
<https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0034654308325583>
- Mason, M. (2010). Sample size and saturation in Ph.D. studies using qualitative interviews. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 11(3). <http://dx.doi.org/10.17169/fqs-11.3.1428>
- Mayoh, J., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2015). Toward a conceptualization of mixed methods phenomenological research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 9(1), 91–107.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689813505358>
- McCarley, T. A., Peters, M. L., & Decman, J. M. (2016). Transformational leadership related to school climate: A multi-level analysis. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 44(2), 322–342.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143214549966>
- Mendez-Keegan, M. M. (2019). *Transformational leadership practices and student achievement in diverse urban elementary schools* [Doctoral Dissertation, Walden University]. ScholarWorks. <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/7559/>
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Misra, S., & Srivastava, K. B. L. (2018). Team-building competencies, personal effectiveness, and job satisfaction: The mediating effect of transformational leadership and technology. *Management and Labour Studies*, 43(1-2), 109-122.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0258042X17753178>
- Moolenaar, N., & Slegers, P. (2015). The networked principal. *Journal of Education Administration*, 53(1), 8-39.
- Moynihan, D. P., Pandey, S. K., & Wright, B. E. (2012). Setting the table: How transformational leadership fosters performance information use. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 22(1), 143-164.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mur024>
- Murphy, C. R. (2018). Transforming inclusive education: Nine tips to enhance school leaders' ability to effectively lead inclusive special education programs. *Journal of Educational Research & Practice*, 8(1), 87-100.
- National Center for Educational Statistics. (2013). *Teacher attrition and mobility: Results from the 2012-13 teacher follow-up survey*. Schools and Staffing Survey.
<https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014077.pdf>

- National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (2007). *The high cost of teacher turnover*. National Commission on Teaching and America's Future.
- Ninkovic, S. R., & Floric, O. C. K. (2018). Transformational school leadership and teacher self-efficacy as predictors of perceived collective teacher efficacy. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 46(1), 49–64.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143216665842>
- Northouse, P. G. (2019). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (8th ed). Sage Publishing
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>
- Oberfield, Z. W. (2014). Public management in time: A longitudinal examination of the full range of leadership theory. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 24(2), 407-429. Policy Workshop, Miami, FL.
- Ogola, M. G., Sikalich, D., & Linge, T. K. (2017). The influence of individualized consideration Leadership behavior on employee performance in small and medium enterprises in Kenya. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*. Vol. 8, No. 2: p. 163-173.
- Papay, J., Bacher-Hicks, A., Page, L., & Marinell, W. (2015). The challenge of teacher retention in urban schools: Using evidence from 16 districts in 7 states to examine

- variation across sites. *Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Big Data and Public*.
- Park, S. M., & Rainey, H. G. (2008). Leadership and public service motivation in U.S. federal agencies. *International Public Management Journal*, 11(1), 109-142.
- Perrone, F., Player, D., & Youngs, P. (2019). Administrative climate, early Career Teacher Burnout, and turnover. *Journal of School Leadership*, 29(3), 191–209.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1052684619836823>
- Podolsky, A., Bishop, T. K. J., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). *Solving the teacher shortage: How to attract and retain excellent educators*. Learning Policy Institute.
<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/solving-teacher-shortage>
- Pogodzinski, B., Youngs, P., Frank, K., & Belman, D. (2012). Administrative climate and novices' intent to remain teaching. *The Elementary School Journal*, 113(2), 252-275.
- Quin, J., Deris, A., Bischoff, G., & Johnson, J. T. (2015). Comparison of transformational leadership practices: Implications for school districts and principal preparation programs. *Journal of Education Leadership*, 4(3) 71-85.
- Robinson, L. N. (2015). *The effects of teacher perceptions of administrative support, school climate, and academic success in urban schools* [Doctoral dissertation, Union University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (3rd ed.), Sage Publications.

- Scallon, A. M., Bristol, T. J., & Esboldt, J. (2021). Teachers' perceptions of principal leadership practices that influence teacher turnover. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/19427751211034214>
- School District. (2018). Master Teacher Initiative
- Schwartz, G. J. (2017). The relationship between teacher job satisfaction and principal leadership styles. *A dissertation Presented to The Faculty of the Education Department Carson-Newman University*.
- Sharma, R., & Singh, S. (2017). Transformational leadership style and self-efficacy among teaching professionals. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 4(2).
- Shavers, L. (2018). *Strategies used to retain teachers in hard to staff schools* [Doctoral Dissertation, Walden University]. ScholarWorks. <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/5123>
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22, 63-75. <https://doi.org/10.3233/EFI-2004-22201>
- Shin, S. J., & Zhou, J. (2003). Transformational leadership, conservation, and creativity: evidence from Korea. *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 46 No. 6, pp. 703-714.
- Singletary-Johnson, T. D. (2017). *An exploration on perceptions influencing teacher retention in urban school settings as gauged by Kouzes and Posner's leadership*

model on the principal's leadership style and the school climate [Doctoral dissertation, Gardner-Webb University]. ProQuest Dissertations.

Spencer, C. (2021). *Teachers across America are fleeing in record numbers*. The Hill.

<https://thehill.com/changing-america/enrichment/education/575176-teachers-across-america-are-fleeing-in-record-numbers>.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. SAGE Publications.

Stake, R. E. (2010). *Qualitative research. Studying how things work*. Guilford Press.

State Education Agency. (2021). State academic performance report.

Sun, J., & Leithwood, K. (2017). Calculating the power of alternative choices by school leaders for improving student achievement *School Leadership & Management*, 37:1-2, 80-93. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2017.1293635>

Sun, M., Saultz, A., & Ye, Y. (2017). Federal policy and the teacher labor market: exploring the effects of NCLB school accountability on teacher turnover. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 28(1), 102-122.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2016.1242506>

Sun, R., & Henderson, A. C. (2016). Transformational leadership and organizational processes: Influencing public performance. *Public Administration Review*, 77(4), 554-565. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12654>

- Sun, R., & Wang, W. (2017). Transformational leadership, employee turnover intention, and actual voluntary turnover in public organizations. *Public Management Review*, 19(8), 1124–1141. <https://doi-org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1080/14719037.2016.1257063>
- Sutcher, L., Darling-Hammond, L., & Carver-Thomas, D. (2016). *A coming crisis in teaching? Teacher supply, demand, and shortage in the U.S.* Learning Policy
- Tenny, S., Brannan, G. D., Brannan, J. M., & Sharts-Hopko, N. C. (2021). Qualitative Study. In *StatPearls*. StatPearls Publishing.Institute, <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/coming-crisis-teaching>
- Thibodeaux, A. K., Labat, M. B., Lee, D. E., & Labat, C. A. (2014). The effects of leadership and high-stakes testing on teacher retention. *Summer Internet Proceedings*, 16(1), 24.
- Thomas, L., Tuytens, M., Devos, G., Kelchtermans, G., & Vanderlinde, R. (2020). Transformational school leadership as a key factor for teachers' job attitudes during their first year in the profession. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 48(1), 106–132. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143218781064>
- Torres, A. C. (2014). Is work sustainable? Teacher turnover and perceptions of workload in charter management organizations. *Urban Education*, 51(8), 8981-914. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0042085914549367>

- Tran, C. (2020, November 16). Employee retention and COVID-19. Human Resource Exchange. <https://www.tasb.org/services/hr-services/hrx/recruiting-and-hiring/employee-retention-and-covid-19.aspx>
- Trottier, T., Van Wart, M., & Wang, X. (2008). Examining the nature and significance of leadership in government organizations. *Public Administration Review*, 68(2), 319-333. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2007.00865.x>
- Vigoda-Gadot, E., & Beerli, I. (2012). Change-oriented organizational citizenship behavior in public administration: The power of leadership and the cost of organizational politics. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 22(3), 573-596. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mur036>
- Wa-Mbaleka, S. (2017). Fostering quality in qualitative research: A list of practical strategies. *In International Forum*, 20(1), 58-80.
- Williams, W. E. (2018). *Principal leadership style, teacher motivation, and teacher retention* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. ScholarWorks. <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/6148>
- Willig, C., & Rogers, W. S. (2017). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology*. SAGE.
- Wilson, M. V. (2019). *Understanding the self-efficacy factors associated with teacher retention in urban schools* [Doctoral dissertation, Carson-Newman University].

Carson-Newman University Dissertations.

https://www.cn.edu/libraries/tiny_mce/tiny_mce/plugins/filemanager/files/Dissertations/Dissertations2019/Michelle_V_Wilson.pdf

Winfield, W. (2019). *Teacher retention in low-income urban schools with a high minority population* [Doctoral dissertation, Southern Illinois University]. PQDT Open.

<https://pqdtopen.proquest.com/doc/2240048890.html?FMT=ABS>

Wodehouse, J. P. (2018). *Inspirational leadership matters: The four I's of leadership*. Penn State Extension. <https://extension.psu.edu>

Yardley, L. (2017). Demonstrating the validity of qualitative research. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 12 (3), 295-296.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262624>

Yin, R. (2016). *Qualitative research from start to finish* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Zdaniuk, A. D., & Bobocel, R. (2015). The role of idealized influence leadership in <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2015.06.008>

Zikmund, W. G. (2003). *Business research methods*. South-Western Pub.

Appendix: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Transformational Leadership Element 1: Idealized Influence

Prompt 1

Thinking about how a principal serves as a role model to teachers by setting high standards of morality and demonstrating respect for others (Bass, 1985).

IQ1: In what ways do you promote yourself as a role model to your teachers? Any examples?

IQ2: In what ways do you encourage your teachers to set high moral standards? Any examples?

IQ3: In what ways do you encourage your teachers to build respect for others (i.e., professionalism, empathy, and support)? Any examples?

Prompt 2

Thinking about how principals influence the behaviors of teachers (Zdaniuk & Bobocel, 2015).

IQ4: What are some ways you have influenced your teachers' behavior as a campus principal? (i.e., morale, facing challenges or change, stress, loss, meet goals or actions) Any examples?

Prompt 3

Thinking about how principals build respect with their teachers through actions and how they conduct themselves (Flanagan, 2019).

IQ5: What are some actions you have taken that have helped you build respect with your teachers? Any examples?

IQ6: In what ways do you conduct yourself as a principal that you believe builds respect with your teachers? Any examples?

Prompt 4

Thinking about what principals utilize honesty and truthfulness to convince teachers to listen to them (communications) and follow them (action) (Abun et al., 2020).

IQ7: In what ways do you use honesty and truthfulness to convince teachers to listen to you as a principal? Any examples?

IQ8: In what ways do you use honesty and truthfulness to convince teachers to accomplish (do) something for you as a principal? (meet deadlines, improve attendance, work with students) Any examples?

Transformational Leadership Element 2: Inspirational Motivation

Prompt 1

Thinking about how principals utilize leadership behaviors such as being optimistic, enthusiastic, and communicating a shared vision (Bass, 1985).

IQ9: In what ways do you promote optimism, enthusiasm, and a shared vision with your teachers? Any examples?

Prompt 2

Thinking how principals project self-confidence while communicating expectations to teachers and demonstrating confidence and commitment to attain the goals (Wodehouse, 2018).

IQ10: In what ways do you communicate your expectations as a principal to teachers that demonstrate confidence and commitment to attaining campus goals? Any examples?

Prompt 3

Thinking about how principals dare teachers to take the risk of accepting change and facing challenges. (Abun et al., 2020)

IQ11: In what ways do you encourage your teachers to take on change and face new challenges? Any examples?

Transformational Leadership Element 3: Intellectual Stimulation

Prompt 1

Thinking about how principals encourage teachers to solve problems, question beliefs, create new practices, and even improve productivity (Bass, 1985).

IQ12: In what ways do you encourage teachers to engage in problem-solving, developing new practices, and/or school improvement? Any examples?

Prompt 2

Thinking about how principals encourage teachers to be creative, innovative, and make decisions (Belmejdoub, 2015).

IQ13: In what ways do you promote teachers to be creative and innovative? Any examples?

IQ14: In what ways do you encourage teachers to make decisions? Any examples?

Prompt 3

Thinking about how principals may encourage teachers to feel that they are part of the organization and its problems, including solving organizational problems (Abun et al., 2020).

IQ15: In what ways do you engage teachers in solving organizational problems and developing solutions? Any examples?

Transformational Leadership Element 3: Individual Consideration

Prompt 1

Thinking about how principals establish a supportive climate where individual differences are respected (Bass, 1998).

IQ16: In what ways do you establish a supportive climate for teachers that respects differences? Any examples?

Prompt 2

Thinking about how principals develop a supportive relationship and offer help to develop the teachers according to their needs (Abun et al., 2020).

IQ17: In what ways do you build supportive relationships with your teachers? Any examples?

IQ18: In what ways do you develop teachers based on their needs? Any examples?

Prompt 3

Thinking about how principals show concern for teachers' needs and feelings and offer support to help to bring out the best in the people (Belmejdoub, 2015).

IQ19: In what ways do you as a principal engage with your teachers' needs and feelings? Any examples?

IQ20: In what ways do you as principal offer support to bring out the best in your teachers? Any examples?