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Transforming Christian Schools Using Sustainable Model of Organizational Change and Performance Improvement

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Walden University
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Abstract

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Abraham K. Adhanom

MA, Biola University, 2001

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Management

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Abstract

Organizational failure in Christian schools is a common phenomenon affecting millions of families in the United States. In the past 2 decades alone, more than 200 Christian schools closed each year; and many continued to struggle for survival. This trend presented significant challenge for the sustainability of faith-based schools that serve over 10% of grade-level students in the country. The purpose of this study was to examine internal and external factors impacting the performance of Christian schools and analyze existing theories of institutional effectiveness leading to the development of a sustainable framework. The research question addressed what type of organizational change and performance improvement model is suitable for Christian schools. A total of 32 participants from 5 schools with roles varying from students, alumni, parents, teachers, administrators, board members, and industry experts were interviewed using purposeful sampling method based on their demonstrated leadership capacities. Grounded theory was used for data analysis in categorizing responses using keywords, and synthesizing functional themes that lead to generate the theoretical framework. The result of the study was manifested as The CONCORD Model, featuring an integration of the core attributes of efficacy including academic excellence, visionary leadership, streamlined business processes, socio-cultural diversity, dynamic resource development, and community outreach and networking initiatives. The outcome of the study fills a void in existing literature by presenting a sustainable model for organizational leadership, strategic management, and efficient operations for Christian schools. The model can also be extended to serve transformational initiatives in related nonprofit institutions to impart positive social change and a brighter future for communities that value faith-based education and service for the common good.

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Dedication

To my wife Yalem, for unending patience and support;

To my children Selam, Miriam and Manna for their love and perseverance;

To my mom, Letebrahan, a woman of prayer and the greatest mother of all,

To my late father Rev. Kidane Adhanom the greatest Theologian, Historian, Genealogist,

Linguist; and true man of God who wished to see this prior to his departure to heaven with a

Blessed Assurance!

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Enrollment in Christian schools has been on a downward trend since its peak during the 1970s through 1990s. Research and statistical data show that within the United States, every year more than 200 schools fail, and many more continue struggling to survive. More than 10% of American grade-level students attend private Christian schools where parents invest considerable amounts of resources for their children's faith-based education. However, the rate of organizational failure among Christian schools is alarming. Few scholarly studies focus on the attributes contributing to the decline and failure of Christian schools and the effect on society. Understanding the perceived cause, effects, and characteristics of failure, with a primary objective of reversing the trend, requires a unique model of organizational change involving critical strategies including leadership, management, cultural, and business process transformation frameworks.

The continuous performance decline among Christian schools presents a significant challenge to communities that regard faith-based education as a foundation for academic excellence and cultivation of social, moral, and spiritual values on the students' upbringing. Several scholars including McClellan (1992) and Jeynes (2010) argued that in today's world, the lack of faith-based personal, social, and moral values contribute to many of the problems and challenges that are evident in the broader communities and educational environments. Researchers such as Burris and McKinley (1990) and Anthony (2010) advocated that faith-based schools have a considerable positive effect in society by integrating academic principles with personal, moral, social, and spiritual values within the students. My goal in this study was to conduct grounded theory research to analyze organizational failure and thereby propose a unique

process model of organizational change and performance improvement to position struggling schools for success.

In this study, I presented perspectives on the factors that Meyer and Zucker (1989) referred as *permanently failing organizations* so that by analyzing such traits, Christian schools can avoid the pitfalls of permanent failure. Similarly, I argued that the organizational performance decline and failure in faith-based academic institutions can negatively affect society. Consequently, I proposed a unique organizational change and process transformation model that is suitable for guiding Christian schools in their quest for effectiveness and operational excellence focusing on the core principles of leadership, management and business process. The new model provides a context that integrates the distinctive mission and goals of a faith-based academic institution and components of the organizational change models that are proven to work in the corporate, public, and private business environments.

My study involved examining five active evangelical Christian faith-based academic institutions and two failed schools, as well as interviewing stakeholders to gather data and perspectives for designing theoretical model of organizational transformation. Key factors of the study included organizational leadership, process management, outreach and sustainability, academic excellence, and resource development strategies. Fullan (2007) argued that such variables present dynamic factors that affect the process of organizational change and therefore require a structured approach to plan and implement the change initiative. In addition, Deal (2003) contended that the culture of an organization plays a dominant role in achieving exemplary performance. Therefore, the newly proposed theoretical process model considered and analyzed the role of organizational culture as a key attribute for organizational effectiveness.

The process model that I proposed drew critical elements of effectiveness from what Zmuda, Kline, and Kuklis and (2004) defined as a *competent system* that focused on continuous improvement. The competent system is composed of six components as described below:

- Identifying and clarifying the core beliefs and culture of the school.

- Collecting, analyzing, and using accurate data to understand the current state and the shared vision of the school.

- Identifying innovations to close the gap between the current and desired state.

- Developing an action plan to support the change process.

- Embracing collective autonomy and accountability as the only way to close the gap.

This systems thinking approach serves as the conceptual framework for developing organizational strategies, business process redesign efforts, effective management principles, and community engagement initiatives aimed at transforming the overall performance of the schools.

Statement of the Problem

The continuous trend of failure, decline, and stagnation of Christian schools poses significant threat for the continuity and sustainable operation of faith-based academic institutions in providing services to their constituents. We do not know the possible or perceived causes and long-term effects for the problem, and there is a lack of an institutional performance improvement model that can serve to slow the decline and help to transform the struggling schools. Insufficient understanding of the possible causes and effects for the problem prevents developing appropriate treatment and delivering the right solution. Similarly, the lack of

functional business process transformation model results in carrying out organizational improvement initiatives without appropriate guidelines and structured methods.

Osterwalder and Clark (2010) argued that an effective organizational business model describes "the rationale of how an organization creates, delivers and captures value" (p. 14). The presence of a successful business process model in an organization serves as a comprehensive guideline for designing and delivering value through functional business strategies, management, and effective operations. The lack of an effective model in an institution, on the other hand, indicates shortfall of strategic and competitive frameworks that would position the organization for success.

Background of the Study

The failures, decline, and stagnation of many Christian schools presents a significant threat in communities that value private, faith-based education. The Center for American Private Education (CAPE) indicated that in the 2009–2010 school year, approximately 10% of all U.S. K–12 students were enrolled in private, Christian schools. According to the CAPE report, in the 2009–2010 school year, there were a total of 33,366 Christian schools, composing approximately 25% of the total number of schools in the United States. Grady, Bielick, and Aud (2010) presented statistical data that indicated an increase of 1% in enrollment at private, religious schools by the year 2007. Homeschooling showed significant enrollment increase by 5%, whereas Charter Schools' enrollment trended up by about 4.2%. The report also showed an increase in enrollment at School of Choice by 5%, whereas enrollment in Assigned Pubic Schools declined by 7%. The problem, however, is that many of the Christian schools function, as "high persistence, low-performance organizations" (Meyer and Zucker, 1989, p. 19). This phenomenon of failures and low performance presents significant concern and challenge to the

leaders and proponents of Christian education. It is, therefore, essential to develop new and a transformational model and strategies to position the schools to not only survive, but also to thrive in achieving their mission.

Holter and Narvaez (2011) argued that the moral philosophy of early Greek thinkers, coupled with Christian theology, morality, and practice, provided a social and educational foundation in European and American societies from the Middle Ages to the modern times. Their argument included that the intersection of moral philosophy and religion was especially evident in colonial U.S. schools; historical accounts indicate that in the 18th and 19th centuries, U.S. schools aimed to develop students with outstanding character through reading Bible stories and exhortations, what was considered traditional character education. Similarly, Engelhardt (2009) contended that lack of social and moral values in elementary education results in "moral decadence" (p. 2) and argued that Christian schools have a solemn duty to reclaim and restore the social, moral, and faith-based values in the society.

At present, most Christian schools are facing significant challenges to successfully tender their services to their communities. Various studies (e.g., Murphy and Meyers [2008], Zmuda, Kuklis and Kline [2004]) identified several variables that are impacting effectiveness of Christian schools. These include the absence of effective organizational leadership and management, market competition, economic challenges, cultural adaptation, and lack of competent systems and processes that enable the institutions gain continuous improvement. To meet these challenges, therefore, the schools need new approaches and frameworks to revive their capabilities and create effective systems and processes to successfully achieve their mission.

It is true that compared with public schools, the failure rate at Christian schools is amenable. Farrington (2014) stated that "On average, across most large U.S. cities, only about 6 in 10 entering freshmen make it to graduation. . . . That means roughly 40% of students in our nation's large cities leave school without any credentials and without the skills or knowledge necessary for productive employment" (p. 3). These are alarming statistics, and could be one of many reasons that parents are opting to make significant monetary and other sacrifices to send their students to private schools. Farrington (2014) argued that failure of such magnitude should not be blamed on students and their parents alone; rather,

> As a country, and most particularly as educators, administrators, and policymakers, we are at the controls yet we aren't taking responsibility for the ones we cast off. We systematically lose almost half the students who start high school under our care and we keep blaming it on the kids, their parents, their neighborhoods, or some larger social forces. (p. 3)

The statistical data from CAPE Outlook (2014) provided critical information that compared achievement levels between public and private schools in seven categories including math, reading, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics, and science. The report showed that in every category, the achievement levels of Christian schools was significantly higher than those of public schools. These findings suggested that Christian schools have a greater effect in the students' academic, moral, and civic engagements in preparing them for social responsibility and environmental awareness within their communities. Therefore, strong and thriving Christian schools have a greater positive effect for social change and public good in building a better future for the current and future generations. To that effect, it is necessary to address the problem of failure, decline, and stagnation among Christian schools.

Table 1

Achievement Levels of Public vs. Private Schools

School year	Testing grade	Subject	Level	Type of schools	
				Private schools	Public schools
2013	4	Reading			
			Basic	82	67
			Proficient	49	34
			Advanced	14	8
2013	8	Reading			
			Basic	91	77
			Proficient	57	34
			Advanced	10	4
2013	4	Math			
			Basic	87	82
			Proficient	48	41
			Advanced	9	8
	8	Math			
			Basic	83	73
			Proficient	47	34
			Advanced	14	8
2011	8	Writing			
			Basic	92	79
			Proficient	41	26
			Advanced	6	3
2010	8	U.S. history			
			Basic	87	68
			Proficient	29	16
			Advanced	2	1
2010	8	Geography			
			Basic	90	73
			Proficient	45	25
			Advanced	6	2
2010	8	Civics			
			Basic	91	70
			Proficient	38	21
			Advanced	3	1

(*table continues*)

School year	Testing grade	Subject	Level	Type of schools	
				Private schools	Public schools
2011	8	Science			
			Basic	77	64
			Proficient	43	31
			Advanced	3	2

Table 2

Public vs. Private Schools SAT Scores for the Class of 2012

School year	Subject	Type of schools	
		Religious schools	Public schools
2012			
	Writing	529	481
	Reading	531	491
	Math	534	505

Realizing the value of faith-based education is not just a new phenomenon. During the 16th century, the great protestant reformer Martin Luther wrote:

> Even if there were no soul, and men did not need schools and the languages for the sake of Christianity and the Scriptures, still for the establishment of the best schools everywhere, both for boys and girls, this consideration is of itself sufficient, namely, that society, for the maintenance of civil order and the proper regulation of the household, needs accomplished and well-trained men and women. Now such men are to come from boys, and such women from girls: hence it is necessary that boys and girls be properly taught and brought up. (Painter, 1889, p. 135)

As Painter (1889) stated that, Luther strongly argued against "complete secularization of schools" (p. 136), as he believed that some schools should be supported to focus on building and sustaining social welfare, moral values, spiritual awareness and character development by developing "able, learned, wise, upright, cultivated citizens who can secure, preserve and utilize every treasure and advantage" (p. 136). This theory and perspective of education serves as a strong foundation for establishing and sustaining Christian schools within society. The challenge with Christian schools in the United States is that each school operates independently and therefore has the obligation to develop and sustain creative ways of leadership, management, and resource development such as securing the operating budget, maintaining competitive academic environment, improving business processes, and upholding faithfulness to its mission of faith and spiritual development within the student body. In support of this argument, the *USA Today* newspaper published a column titled "Faith-based Education: An Option We Can't Deny" (Coons & Hanley, 2013). The column reflected an interview with U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor in which CNN's anchor Anderson Cooper asked whether she would have become who she is without the help of a faith-based school. Justice Sotomayor's response was "Doubtful," citing that her faith-based school was the "a road of opportunity" for her and students with no other opportunity.

Considering the benefits that faith-based academic institutions offer, the failure of several Christian schools each year indicates major area of concern. This is because, although statistical data support the idea that there is great demand for Christian education, the lack of effective leadership and management, dynamic business processes and resource development strategies are forcing many Christian schools to fail. According to the CAPE Outlook (2013) report, Christian schools are highly desired by the parents in the general public. The report pointed out

that "if parents were given a choice of schools – along with the financial means to exercise it—a full 55% of parents who currently send their children to public schools would want to send them to private schools" (p. 1). In reference to academic standards, Noel, Stark, and Redford (2015) found that 80% of parents who sent their children to private religious schools "were very satisfied with their school and the school's academic standards" (p. xx). Similarly, 82% "were very satisfied with the order and discipline at the school" (p. 8).

Researchers such as Ewert (2013), Drexler, (2007), Parsons (1987), and Layman and White (2003) also argued that Christian schools provide better academics, social and moral values based education as they put greater focus on the holistic development of their student population. Parsons (1987) contended "Is it that teachers in Christian schools are better, or the curriculum stronger? Not necessarily. Christian schools certainly offer a climate that is conducive to rote learning… The public school is the melting pot and the Christian school is the hothouse" (p. 173). Christian schools work hard to teach children on "how to think, to debate and to analyze. Christian education should be a bread presentation of ideas, then pointing out which ideas are in agreement and which are in conflict with scripture" (p. 174).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the internal and external attributes contributing to failure, stagnation and decline among Christian schools and thereby to develop an organizational performance transformation model with a goal of serving to reverse the downward trend and transform the struggling schools. In the study, I analyzed several external factors and internal capabilities that impact organizational effectiveness including business strategies, leadership, process management, market competition and cultural perspectives that play critical

role in developing effective business process transformation model. Identifying and transforming key elements of strategic and operational excellence that include leadership and management strategies, outreach and sustainability efforts, business process capabilities, and adaption of dynamic organizational culture, is the primary focus of the study. This was achieved by analyzing the current business processes and operations of Christian schools that generated a new framework that addressed the need for improved academic quality, competent recruiting and retention strategies, effective financial and human resource administration, and successful community relationship management that is essential for designing an effective theoretical model for Christian schools.

Theoretical Support for the Study

Many scholars have studied organizational change and transformation efforts, and extensive literature is available that focused on business improvement and organizational change initiatives for the corporate business world. There are several popular and widely adopted models of organizational change and business performance improvement frameworks currently serving the corporate business community. Some of the well-known models that served as reference include Jay Galbraith's *STAR Model*, John Kotter's 8-Step Model, Jeff Hyatt's *ADKAR Mode, a*nd the Systems Thinking theory presented by Meadows (2008), Gharajedaghi (2011) and Jolly (2015). The challenge was that these models are all oriented towards corporate, profit-based organizational setting; and therefore, may not be directly applicable and suitable for private, faith based institutions. Consequently, the need for designing a model that is ideal for small, private and faith based academic institutions becomes essential.

Ewert (2013) presented three factors that contribute to the decline in private school enrollment: affordability, charter schools and home schooling. These factors involve strategic and competitive contexts. Murphy and Meyers (2008) also identified several symptoms and causes of failing schools. Among the key attributes discussed in their study are poor strategic planning and management, cultural rigidness, lack of cohesive vision, shrinking market share, tolerance for incompetence and lack of effective marketing and client retention capabilities. Zmuda, Kuklis and Kline (2004) also argued that one of the major causes of failure in schools is the lack of *competent system,* a principle that is based on the theory of systems thinking. In addition, Stueber (2008) presented ten elements that describe an effective Christian school: "academic excellence, administrative performance, culture, finance, governance, instruction, master teacher, mission, spiritual development, and technology." (p. 26).

The theoretical basis for the proposal of new model design was based on the above discussed models including the STAR model, ADKAR model, the 8-Step model, and the Systems Thinking Theory where the key elements and critical components of the popular organizational change and performance improvement models served as a foundation for designing the appropriate model. In addition, Holter and Narvaez (2011) presented a unique framework of "Moral Education" (p. 1) that supports the model with the mission of Christian schools in their work of providing faith-based education.

The models mentioned above are undeniably great, as they have been tested and applied in the corporate business environment all over the world. However, individually, they are not fully applicable to implement organizational change and performance improvement initiatives at private, faith-based schools. Therefore, a new theoretical model that integrates some of the critical components of the proven models discussed above was necessary. This is due to the fact

that the schools have different missions, organizational structures, and operational environments. The strategic, human resources and process management perspectives of the model were based on Galbraith's STAR model (Galbraith, 2014.). The constituent engagement, communication and developing change vision aspect of the model were supported by Kotter's 8 Step Model (Kotter, 2012.). The ADKAR model (Hiatt, 2006) was referenced to define the importance of understanding the need for change, and developing capabilities to implement organizational change. Similarly, the cultural dynamics and systems thinking aspects of the model were based on the "Foundations of Systems Thinking" work by (Gharajedaghi, 2011); while the Moral Education perspectives was grounded on Holter and Narvaez (2011) .

Assumptions

As a person who is closely connected to a Christian school system, and teaching at a Christian university, I have a vested interest to see transformation and success of Christian schools and churches to compete and thrive in the current challenging educational marketplace. I work with a general assumption that the stakeholders at the school, sponsoring church administration, or the leadership of the sponsoring institutions at all levels –local, district and synod/national— have genuine understanding and concerns about the challenges posed by the realities and statistical reports reflecting the trend of stagnation, decline and failures. I also assumed that most Christian schools have similar characteristics in terms of their mission, vision, goals, strategies and operational environments. Although the research and data collection in this study focused on five Christian schools that are closer to my place of residence, I have the general assumption that the overall organizational processes, challenges and operating conditions are similar in most Christian schools across the nation because they all operate under similar

competitive and administratively demanding environment to provide faith-based education. Researchers including Ewert, (2013), Chakrabati and Roy, 2011), McMillan, (2007) and Burris and McKinley (1990) contended that critical issues such as financial challenges, stiff market competition, and lack of dynamic leadership capabilities are typical characteristics that most private and Christian schools share. McMillan (2007) argued that "often Christian schools hire great managers but fail to hire great leaders" (McMillan, 2007 p. 3). Whereas, Ewert, (2013) argued that all private Christian schools face tough administrative challenges including affordability and competitive challenge imposed by school of choice, charter schools and homeschooling

I also assume that the stakeholders have the willingness and readiness to explore ways to turn the situation around. The stakeholders referred here include school administrators, church leaders, teachers, students, parents, board members, and those who are in charge of leadership at the local, district and national levels. In addition, the model design was based on data collected from schools that are struggling to survive and schools that have demonstrated effectiveness to analyze their business strategies and business processes. I assumed that sufficient data and information were available, along with the cooperation of those in charge of the schools who were included in the study for developing an effective organizational change model.

As the research pertained to Christian institutions, I also assume that Christian values and Biblical principles of leadership and effectiveness do play a critical role in developing faith-based models of organizational change and turnaround framework. Therefore, the discussions and arguments presented in the study that pertain to Christian values are viewed as core component of the cultural and fundamental principles, and operational standards within the organization. Additionally, I assume that the higher level entities that direct or sponsor the

schools have the willingness and ability to support the organizational change and turnaround initiative at the school level.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of the study was limited to analyzing the current state and challenges of effective performance in five Christian schools. The historical perspective and impact of the Christian school movement of the 1960s and 1970s is beyond the scope of the study because of the socio-political implications of the movement. This exclusion is based on Swatos and Kivisto, (1998) argument that some of the original impetus for the earliest Christian School Movement was to avoid federally mandated racial integration. To that effect, this study did not attempt to analyze the political aspect of racial segregation and integration of those decades. Rather, the study concentrated on the decline and failures of Christian schools that occurred over the past two decades. In addition, this research focused on organizational, strategic and operational phenomena within Christian schools; and therefore, the analysis or impact of any doctrinal or theological perspectives and specific church affiliations of the schools was beyond the parameters of the study.

In terms of breadth, the study was limited to private, grade level schools ranging from elementary through high school, and only involved schools affiliated with an evangelical Christian faith. The focus of the study were three Lutheran schools, and two non-Lutheran Christian schools located in Northern Orange County and Southern Los Angeles County. Although the literature review for the study was broad in scope, the research project and model design was focused toward private, faith-based schools. In the study I interviewed about 30 participants from five schools to gather information, opinions, perspectives, concerns and

perceived solutions in connection with the research problem that served as a basis for the model design. The research participants included primary stakeholders such as, current or former students, alumni, parents, teachers and school administrators. Secondary stakeholders for the study included sponsoring churches, school boards, districts and national school system leaders, and subject matter experts. The scope of the interview questions as listed in Appendix 1, included 7-10 categories containing a total of 30 questions, ranging from basic personal experiences and perspectives of stakeholders to advanced topics involving community values and expert business strategies. Each interview was limited to one hour in length; and I personally handled all interactions with all the research participants.

Further, this study was limited to conducting a research that lead to developing an organizational transformation process model at the school level, which is at the center of the challenges and opportunities for the educational ministry of the Christian churches and sponsoring organizations. To this effect, modeling for the higher level entities at the district and national-level was beyond the scope of this study. In addition, as the goal of the study was to design a model, the actual implementation of the model was not part of this study; it will-be a subject-of another research.

<div align="center">**Limitations**</div>

Although most of the data collection and research work involving the participants were intended for theoretical model development, the size limit, lack of random sampling and the scope of framing the study within few Christian schools did have impact on the generalization of the research findings and conclusions. Another limitation was that the research participants are individuals who currently have affiliation with the schools as students, parents, teachers and administrators*;* and they may not be honest or forthcoming with their responses and their

perspectives. My goal was to address these concerns by involving appreciative inquiry, a data

collection method that is effective in "avoiding getting in the way of managers and staff as they

set about their duties" (Stowell, 2012, p. 15).

Another limitation involved the researcher's bias. As a parent of Christian school

students and a faculty member at a Christian college, I had some personal expectations and

perspectives about organizational effectiveness and ways to improve Christian school operations.

As such, I could be biased in some ways pertaining to systems and processes of efficiency and

effectiveness. Crano and Brewer (2002) argued on the researcher's "expectancy effect" (p. 104)

where the expectations of the researcher can be transmitted to the participants as "the mere

presence of the experimenter in the research setting can operate as a subtle but nevertheless

potentially powerful treatment differentially affecting participants' responses as a result not of

the experimental manipulation, but of the experimenter's own expectations" (p. 104). To control

expectancy bias, Crano and Brewer (2002) presented two procedures that I to applied in this

study. The first procedure is *monitoring*, where the experimenter-participant interactions are

recorded and compared to results obtained through an unbiased observers. The second one

involves *blind procedures* where the researcher intentionally abstains informing the participants

about the nature of the experimental hypothesis.

Maintaining objectivity is an essential component of qualitative research. To maintain

objectivity and avoid personal bias, I followed the strategy outlined by Leedy and Ormrod,

(2012) in collecting two or more different kinds of data, getting multiple and varying

perspectives and making concerted effort to look for evidence that contradict my hypothesis. I

also made a note on my final report to indicate my personal perspectives and assumptions for any

bias so that readers may take them into account when they read the final report. Although as

Singleton and Straits, (2010) argued "in the usual sense of the term (to mean observation that is free from emotion, conjecture, or personal bias), objectivity is rarely, if ever, possible" (p. 36), this strategy helped to minimize the effects of personal bias and increase the likeliness of objectivity in the research.

Nature of the Study

Grounded theory method was used for this research because of its suitability for developing a framework as presented by Creswell (2013) to "generate or discover theory, an abstract and analytical schema for a process . . . grounded in data from participants who have experienced the process" (p. 63). Creswell argued that a grounded theory approach provides an ideal platform for the researcher to systematically develop a theory that explains a "process, action or interaction" (p. 63) on a topic using appropriate data collection and analysis strategies. As the goal of this research pertained to designing a theoretical process model that integrates business strategies, processes, actions and relationships, to generate "an abstract analytical schema*"* (p. 63) the grounded theory approach was appropriately suited for the study. The data and information sources used in the study included institutional records, databases, interviews and observations where the researcher generated perspectives and interpretations about the views, values, beliefs, assumptions and ideologies in reference to the research problem.

Definitions of Terms

Appreciative inquiry: A data collection and interview methodology that is cooperative, and positive in nature search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005)

Business process analytics (*BPA*): A family of methods used for organizational decision making and problem solving focusing on systematic analysis of business data, processes, for design, and reengineering. Albright and Wayne, (2014), Deokar (2015).

Business Process Reengineering. (BPR): Business management strategy focusing on analysis and redesign of business processes. Cameron and Green (2012)

Critical Success Factors. (CSF). CSF's are activities or factors that determine Success in an organization or project to achieve the intended mission … they include key jobs that must be done exceedingly well for a company to be successful. (Gates, 2010).

Matrix Organization. A type of organizational structure that is built around two or more dimensions such as functions, products or regions and in which people have two bosses. (Galbraith, 2008).

Metrics. Quantifiable and repeatable standards of measurement.

Model. An abstraction, visual description of the static structure or dynamic behavior of an organizational system.

Organizational Transformation (OT). A process of radical and profound change that orients an organization to a new direction and superior level of effectiveness. (Washington, 2011).

Reference Model. (RM). An abstract framework for understanding significant relationships among the entities of an environment, and for the development of consistent standards or specifications supporting the environment. Osterwalder, and Pigneur (2010).

SWOT. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). A method used to determine the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats within a business project or within a company environment. (Ioannou, 2012).

Total Quality Management. (TQM). A management philosophy of meeting standards and customer needs and expectations involving continuous improvement of the quality of product or service offered by the organization. Goetsch and Davis (2013).

Research Question

This study was guided by the following critical research question:

What type of organizational effectiveness theoretical model can enable Christian schools to maintain effectiveness and sustainable performance improvement?

The research question was intended to explore the critical strategies and processes as to what makes Christian schools successful; it is further expanded into the following practical enquiries to address the organizational perspectives of the problem in detail:

1. What are the key attributes of an effective Christian school?

2. What external and internal factors lead to performance stagnation, decline and failure in Christian schools?

3. What type of organizational change model can guide Christian schools for effectiveness and continuous improvement?

The research question above was based on the fact that during the past few decades, many Christian schools have closed down; and many more are declining, or struggling to survive, while very few are thriving. Sustainable growth and effectiveness of the schools is a critical indictor that the schools are achieving their mission. Therefore, my goal in this study was to analyze the problem, and devise a systemic model that provides a turnaround framework for improving performance of the schools. In this study I proposed a theoretical model that integrated the mission of Christian academic institution, coupled with selected attributes of

effective organizational change and business process transformation frameworks that are widely accepted and proven to work in current corporate and public organizations.

Significance of the Study

Christian schools are an important part of the American educational system, and failure or continuous decline of these schools would create a void within the communities that value Christian education as a foundation of social, moral, and spiritual values in a society that has long abandoned faith-based, non-secular academic principles. The outcome of the research study had positive impact in upholding social change that is pioneered by Christian schools in outstanding academics, strong moral value, outstanding citizenship and social values within the students and families of the Christian school communities.

Analyzing the perceived cause of the problems in Christian schools is critical to developing strategies for addressing the issues and solving the problems they are facing. An organizational change model serves as a guide for planning, implementing and controlling change and business process improvement efforts. The lack of ideal and proven models that integrate the unique nature, primary mission and vision of Christian schools, and strategic business management and leadership perspectives, poses significant challenge for faith-based academic institutions. Leading organizational change and process improvement initiative without an effective model would be considered as building a structure without a master plan, or carrying out a business project without a project plan and can result in random and chaotic activities and irrational decision making outcomes. This study was intended to fill-in the gap in the lack of ideal models focusing on Christian grade-level schools to provide a framework for planning,

managing and controlling effective organizational change and sustainable business transformation efforts.

Researchers such as Engelhardt, (2009) and Burris and McKinley (1990) argued that current national and global trends indicate the need for developing moral and social values within grade level schools. Moral education helps students to make sound-judgments and avoid moral dissipation. Although moral education can be achieved outside religious academic environment, faith-based morality provides a firm foundation and conviction, as the subjects have to relate their actions and behaviors with a higher authority for accountability purposes. Engelhardt (2009) argued that "religious schools and the communities they form are favored toward the nurture of deep moral and civic identities as well as social capital" (p. 2).

In addition to their primary responsibility of offering higher quality academics and personal development of students, Christian schools also focus on teaching and cultivating fundamental social, moral and spiritual values within the student body. The CAPE Outlook (2015) report argued that Christian education Provides purpose and meaning to life. As a result, growing number of parents desperately desire the opportunity to choose schools whose primary purpose is to provide students a sound moral and religious education. The premise is that private schools are the only type of institution that can assist parents with the religious and spiritual development of their children -- a domain that is so essential for their complete and proper upbringing.

Social awareness and community engagement is also purposefully integrated in Christian schools, much more than in public schools. The CAPE report indicated that 72% of grades 6-12 students in Christian schools were involved in community service in contrast to 50% of public school students in the same grade levels. This complements the general understanding that

Christian schools are sincerely vested in the community to make positive difference in social welfare. The study also had an impact in bringing awareness about the need for maintaining efficiency and effectiveness on the design, management and leadership of school strategies, processes and operations. The theoretical model I developed in this study served as a guide for strategic and operational performance analysis and continuous improvement to maintain relevance, competitiveness and leadership in Christian schools.

Summary and Overview

Effective organizational change and business transformation initiatives require structured approach and frameworks to guide the strategies, initiatives, activities, relationships and processes required to lead successful institutional turnaround. This chapter presented a broad description of the problem as the continuous trend of failure in Christian schools and argued the need for designing a functional theoretical model that addresses the needs challenges of the schools as the purpose of the study. Theoretical support for the study for developing sustainable organizational improvement model was derived from scholarly works and models that have been proven to work in diverse industries. The scope of the study was described as focusing on evangelical Christian affiliated elementary through high schools; while and limitation section addressed the breadth of the study including the constraints of the sample size. The research question was designed to address the type of organizational transformation model needed for reversing the trend of performance stagnation, decline and failures within Christian schools.

The next chapter will focus on exploration of related literature to describe the nature and scope of the research phenomenon focusing on organizational change models, and analyze perceived cause and effect of organizational performance decline and failures pertaining to

Christian schools. A critical analysis on the value of Christian education and the role of Christian

schools was presented to support the argument relating to the organizational change and

contributions improvement of private schools within the society. A broader perspective of

organizational transformation frameworks was examined from scholarly and application oriented

literature on business process improvements and organizational change efforts at corporate,

public and small business environments. By studying diverse organizational turnaround

initiatives, the literature review provided an ideal model that was relevant for the transformation

of Christian schools.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review contains a broad analysis and perspectives on the factors that contribute to organizational failure, decline, and stagnation in Christian schools, with a primary goal of developing a turnaround model to position the schools for success. I studied the current state of faith-based academic institutions in relation to organizational change and business process transformation efforts. The objective of the literature review was to analyze existing models and lay a strong foundation for developing a new, relevant, and effective process model for transforming Christian schools. Several printed materials, scholarly articles, dissertations, and government and industry reports drawn from physical texts, journals, research studies, and online databases served as sources of information for gathering and analyzing data, developing perspectives, and drawing conclusions in reference to the research problem.

Walden University's online library was the primary interface for accessing digital resources, textbooks, peer-reviewed scholarly articles, and academic and industry journals through various research databases. The world's foremost research database EBSCOhost, the world's largest digital library of education, ProQuest, and ProQuest's ABI/Inform Complete database were primarily used for obtaining scholarly articles, journals, and dissertations for the study. Local libraries at my alma-matter, Biola University, and my work place, Concordia University, also provided resources in textbooks and research materials for the study.

In the literature review, I identified critical attributes that contribute to failure, performance decline, and stagnation among Christian schools. These served as the basis for analyzing the current issues and enduring problems in Christian academic institutions. Understanding the problems served as a platform for developing critical components of ideal

organization design, effective principles of leadership and management, strategic resource development initiatives, and efficient constituent relationship management. Several popular organizational change models including Galbraith's STAR Model, Kotter's 8-Step Model, Hyatt's ADKAR Model, Meadows (2008) and Jolly (2015) constructs on systems thinking, and similar reference models were examined in depth to provide comprehensive view of organizational change and business transformation efforts serving as benchmark for designing a framework that specifically focused on the challenges and needs of private schools. The theories, models, and industry frameworks discussed in this section served as a basis for developing a functional process model that is appropriate for transforming Christian schools.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework for the study was based on the organizational change and performance transformation models developed by Galbraith (2014), Kotter (2012), and Hiatt (2006). Organizational design framework including policies and tools needed to design an effective organization were adapted from Galbraith (2014) involving strategy, structure, processes, rewards, and people attributes of institutional effectiveness. These components focused on setting direction for organizational change, information management, and decision making principles, as well as human resource strategies including motivating and rewarding employees who have a significant effect on achieving successful organizational change.

Kotter's (2012) framework of organizational change served in developing a holistic perspective of process transformation including creating and communicating a vision, establishing a sense of urgency, forming a guiding coalition, engaging stakeholders in constructive dialogues and negotiations, celebrating milestones, and cultivating values and

incorporating change onto the culture of the organization. Similarly, Hyatt's (2006) framework supported understanding the need for change through awareness, as well as cultivating the desire for change initiatives within the stakeholders, developing knowledge through education and training, striving for capacity development to implement the change initiatives, and anchoring the changes and transformation related achievements to build a solid foundation for sustainable organizational business process improvements.

Analysis of the Models of the Conceptual Framework

Several organizational change and business process transformation models are currently in use by many organizations serving as a framework for process design, analysis, and reengineering initiatives. A broader description and analysis of the models discussed in Chapter 1 is given below. The goal of analyzing the models discussed in the this section is to present a comprehensive outlook of effective and tested models in the business world so that the prospective organizational transformation model for Christian schools that was designed in this study selectively integrated some proven and functional components from the frameworks that have direct relevance and application in Christian schools.

The STAR Model

Jay Galbraith is considered one of the leading experts on organization design, strategic business transformation and process improvement initiatives. Galbraith (2014) developed the STAR Model as an organizational change and performance improvement framework that integrates design policies to direct institutional behavior and decision making strategies. The

model is made up of five components: strategy, structure, processes, reward systems, and people policies as shown in Figure 2.

Strategy. The Strategy component of the STAR model describes the organizational direction, mission, goals, objectives and values defining the criteria for selecting organizational structure and analyzing best alternatives to define ways of making the best trade-off between alternatives. Galbraith (2014.) argued that:

> Strategy is the company's formula for winning. The company's strategy specifies the goals and objectives to be achieved as well as the values and missions to be pursued; it sets out the basic direction of the company. The strategy specifically delineates the products or services to be provided, the markets to be served, and the value to be offered to the customer. It also specifies sources of competitive advantage. (p. 13)

Structure. Structure determines the relationships, order of decision making processes, and the allocation of power within levels and networks of organizational systems. Structure is usually depicted in an organizational chart, and it can be arranged using business functions, geographic locations, product lines, and customer profiles. Kates and Galbraith (2007) argued that "structure sets out the reporting relationships, power distribution, and communication channels" (p. 10). Structure encompasses four primary building blocks that are defined as structural dimensions including function, product, geography, and customer.

Process. According to Kates and Galbraith (2007), process is "a series of connected activities that move information up and down and across the organization" (p. 17). The process component focuses on achieving integrated business activities while breaking the silos, barriers to collaboration by concentrating on the broader organizational strategies and process groups

such as planning, design and analytics, product development, research, transaction management and business portfolio prioritization, monitoring, and control. Processes that traverse across organizational boundaries compel business units to work together and gain higher level cooperation and integration of the business strategies and goals.

Rewards. Reward influences the motivation, behaviors and actions of individuals and groups to be aligned with the organizational goals and objectives. Reward is most productive when coupled with metrics. Metrics are the "measures used to evaluate individual and collective performance" (p. 21). Key considerations in designing an organizational reward system should include levels of performance and measurement mechanisms, accountability and transparency frameworks, behaviors and actions of participants, and the evaluation processes specifying who should perform the assessment, and the level of rigor involved in the performance evaluation process.

People. The final component of the STAR model involves people: the human resource structures and policies involving the hiring, training and advancement protocols that are essential for developing the capabilities and worldviews necessary to carry out the organizational mission and business strategies. The primary challenge of the people aspect of the model is that as organizations evolve, the frameworks and processes connected with human resource requirements also change. Therefore, the human resource component should include the change management strategies involving the people within the organizational systems.
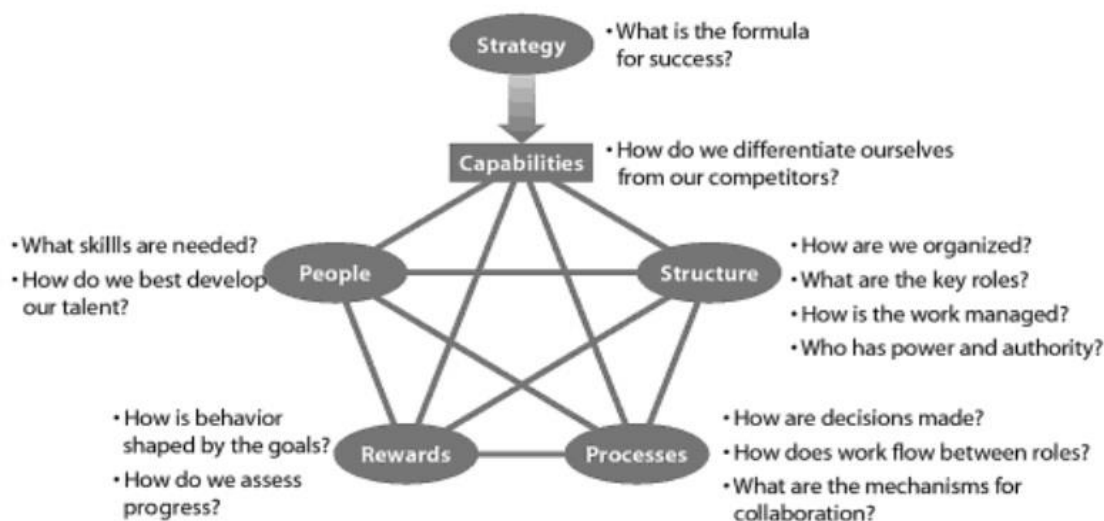
Figure 1. The STAR Model. (Used by Permission).

Employees function as the engine of any organization. Enthusiastic and motivated employees play a critical role in organizational effectiveness; while dissatisfied, demoralized and disgruntled workers drain the energy and performance of the firm. The importance of maintaining motivated, high performing, and mission oriented teachers and staff at Christian schools makes a significant positive contribution ~~for~~ to the success and effectiveness of the institution. The primary strategy for sustaining effective teachers and employees in Christian schools, as Zmuda, Kuklis and Kline (2004) argued, is to involve them in the process of strategy development to "identify and clarify the core beliefs that define the school culture" (p.18).

Galbraith (2014) listed several testimonials of organizations such as Proctor and Gamble, IBM, and Best Buy that implemented the STAR Model to transform their business strategies and operations. Similarly, Spears (2010) demonstrated on how she used the STAR Model to introduce organizational transformation at Sun Microsystems. The implementation of the model was applicable both within traditional organizational structure as well as the Matrix organization.

The five components of the STAR model are found to be critical modules of a successful organizational change and performance improvement initiative. The ideal model of organizational change and business process transformation for Christian schools should therefore include key elements of such modules, including the strategy perspective where organizational mission and vision is analyzed, structural systems and processes are addressed to determine functional relationships and workflows, and the reward systems and human resource development strategies put in perspective to bring harmony for the success of the organization.

Kotter's 8-Step Model

Kotter's 8 Step Model was developed by John Kotter, professor emeritus of Leadership at Harvard Business School. The 8-Step Model, as shown in the list below, is an organizational change framework that focuses on leadership and successful change management strategies through a sequential, integrated series of phases that requires a considerable amount of time and effort. Successful change management effort using this model demands a disciplined approach where all the steps need to be addressed. Kotter (2012) presented the eight steps of the model as:

1. Establishing a Sense of Urgency.
2. Creating the Guiding Coalition.
3. Developing a Vision and Strategy.
4. Communicating the Change Vision.
5. Empowering Broad Based Action.
6. Generating Short-Term Wins.
7. Never Letting Up.

8. Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture.

Elements of the Kotter's 8-Step Model

Christian schools that experience performance stagnation, decline or failure can consider some aspects of Kotter's 8-Step model and realize the value of such a structured approach to understand current situation of the organization and to devise a disciplined framework for improving systems and processes intended to position the schools for strategic and competitive advantage.

1. Establishing a Sense of Urgency. Developing a sense of urgency for change in an organization is normally triggered by some events such as losing customers, competitor advancements, employee turnover and similar crisis initiated by internal or external conditions. A sense of urgency can be realized when the leadership and high level management express that business as usual would not be sustainable for the organization's future. Kotter (2012) argued that establishing a sense of urgency is crucial to gaining needed cooperation.

2. Creating the Guiding Coalition. Organizational change and business transformation initiatives are normally associated with strong leadership, and some influential forces within the firm who advocate for the value of the change efforts. An effective organizational change in Christian schools is best achieved through strong cooperation of many stakeholders including individuals, groups and institutions that have vested interest for the success of the schools. Communicating the vision with the stakeholders to avoid obstacles and a sense of complacency is an essential effort for the success of the schools. A guiding coalition is essential for building individuals and teams who understand the vision and mission of the change initiative, develop a

sense of trust, shared objective and commitment needed to redesign and reposition the organization for success.

3. Developing a Vision and Strategy. Developing vision and strategy involves making the stakeholders understand the purpose of the change initiative and provide and ask for their support because of its impact on their future. The rationale for developing vision and strategy is to clarify the general objective of the need for change, motivate people to take action for moving towards the right direction; and it serves to coordinate and organize the activities and actions of all those involved in an efficient manner. With a clear sense of vision, strategy and understanding, resistance to change is significantly minimized. Kotter (2012) contended that characteristics of effective vision include

a. *Imaginable*: conveying a clear picture of the future.

b. *Desirable*: appealing to the long term interests of the stakeholders.

c. *Feasible*: developing a realistic, attainable goals.

d. *Focused*: providing clear sense of direction, guidance and decision making.

Organizational mission and vision that involves majority of the stakeholders, and enabling them to be committed to the transformation initiative can be successful if it includes a sense of relevance and compatibility with their needs and level of understanding. Christian schools that intend to implement organizational transformation should thus develop a clear mission and a vision that is imaginable, desirable, feasible and focused.

4. Communicating the Change. Developing a shared understanding and commitment for an organizational change and a new direction is quite difficult; however, making an effort to involve as many of the stakeholders as possible who share a sense of a new, better future is critical to achieve organizational transformation. Accordingly, communicating a change vision in

Christian schools is best served by integrating the previously discussed elements of the model: developing a sense of urgency, assembling a guiding coalition and developing vision and strategy.

5. Empowering Broad Based Action. Effective implementation of the first four phases of organizational transformation is great approach of empowering people to take action towards the goals of business process improvement. Empowering broad based action enables the transformation effort further by making people diligently support the initiative, and act towards achieving the mission. However, Kotter (2012) argued that there are four areas of obstacles that prevent from empowering people to act:

1. Structural constraints, where formal business structures makes it difficult for employees to take action
2. Lack of needed skills or expertise
3. Personnel and information systems restrictions
4. Discouraging managers or bosses that hinder employees from taking action that support the change initiative.

In the Christian school environment, it is therefore necessary to empower individuals and groups to take broad based action that advances the mission and goals of the institution.

6. Generating Short-Term Wins. Short term wins can have significant impact on the organizational transformation initiative. However, to be effective, such achievements need to be characterized in three ways. Firstly,*)* they must be visible, where people can realize their contribution. Secondly, they must be clear and unambiguous; where no complaints and negative remarks can be made about their impact. And finally, they must be linked to the organizational mission. Several achievements, such as academic excellence in the classroom, successful

fundraising projects, and notable school project developments, are some of the ways a school can show and promote short term wins that can bring some sense of success and pride in the school environment.

      7. Never Letting Up. Short term wins provide significant morale and proof that change efforts bring value to the organization. However, these milestones can also cause disruption in attaining the long term goal by giving the impression of accomplishment while the job is not fully done. Kotter (2012) argued that "whenever you let up before the job is done, critical momentum can be lost and regression may follow" (Kotter, 2012). Final mission accomplishment in the change initiative can be declared only when the change effort is integrated within the organizational operating systems and business culture.

      8. Incorporate changes into the culture. Whenever a change initiative in an organization is implemented, the best way to sustain the change is by anchoring the change into the organizational business systems and cultures. *Anchoring,* according to Dictionary.com is "to affix firmly". Organizational change is a significant undertaking in a business entity; and the change initiatives that are implemented in the firm can be permanently affixed within the organization by ensuring that the newly adopted approaches are integrated within the organizational systems, processes and business culture.

      It is possible that new change efforts may not always conflict with the old or existing organizational culture. However, corporate culture has the tendency to exert the routine standards and behaviors; and occasionally gets to be in discourse with the newly adopted processes. Kotter argued that "the challenge is to graft the new practices on to the old roots while killing off the inconsistent pieces" (Kotter, 2012). Therefore, for Christian schools, making intentional effort to

integrate the new processes with the cultural values would help to anchor the changes while avoiding possible regression of fragile change efforts.

Kotter's consulting website listed a client list of over 80 large multinational corporations and local organizations including 3M, General Dynamics, Nestle, Johns Hopkins etc… that experienced transformation using the 8-Step model. He argued that the STAR model transformed global organizations into leaders in their industry, and maneuvered them out of situations threatening organizational catastrophe. The testimonials of executives and business leaders also demonstrates the successful implementation of the model across diverse industrial and geographical settings.

Kotter's 8-Step model is a proven framework that has very well served the corporate business community for decades. The components of the model have significant relevance and application in the business world, but also are critically important for designing an organizational change and transformation model that serves NPOs and private schools. The new model included important concepts and constructs from the 8-Step Model so that Christian schools would also integrate components of tested model in their quest for organizational change and process transformation efforts. Although the 8-Step model as*)* is may not be totally applicable to the Christian school environment, some the components are clearly essential for change initiatives at private school setting.

The ADKAR Model

The ADKAR model (Hiatt, 2006) is a logical and progressive, five stage change management framework applicable both at an individual and organizational levels that are critically important for Christian schools to consider. The five modules are:

1. Awareness.

2. Desire.

3. Knowledge.

4. Ability.

5. Reinforcement.

The five elements of the model and their logical arrangement represent fundamental requirements to initiate and manage organizational change effort. The model and each level of the framework are described below:

Awareness.   The Awareness phase describes the understanding of the need for change. Hiatt (2006) argued that the Awareness section focusses on acquiring information about "internal and external drivers that created the requirements for change" (Hyatt, 2006 p.2), the factors influencing the need for change; and the risks associated with ignoring the call for change.   In the Christian school environment, when symptoms of stagnation, decline or failure are observed, acknowledging the reality and developing a plan to address the situation is a form of awareness. This involves communicating the goals and business case for change with all stakeholders so everyone would be aware and supportive of the initiative. Although many people in an organization have the tendency to resist change altogether, sharing and explaining the impact of the change proposal would help alleviate some of the apprehension associated with imperatives of organizational change.

Desire. The next phase of the ADKAR model is Desire. It describes the personal or group motivation and choice to support the change initiative. The desire to participate in organizational change efforts does not always come easy; however, when employees and

stakeholders get clear information and better understanding of the effort, they would have a better chance to get motivated and be part of the movement. Hyatt (2006) discussed four factors that influence an individual or group's desire to change: the nature of the change, organizational context, personal context, and intrinsic motivators. From a Christian school context, after developing awareness of the concerns and challenges associated with the symptoms of stagnation, decline or failure, developing the desire for change and performance improvement sets the schools to take action.

Knowledge. The third element in the ADKAR change model, Knowledge represents the actionable intelligence and capacity that is needed to implement change. This involves having detailed information and understanding on how to utilize new tools, systems and processes and the impact of implementing the change initiative on organizational capacity to sustain competitiveness and leadership in its product or service offerings. When a Christian school that needs performance transformation is aware of its current situation, has the desire to change, and is knowledgeable of the procedures and standards required to implement the desired improvement, the school has greater chances for success.

Ability. Ability is the fourth phase of the ADKAR model and represents the "demonstrated capability to implement the change and achieve the desired performance level" (Hiatt, 2006, p. 31). This element of the model demonstrates the actions associated with achieving the desired change so the goals of transformation initiative are realized. Hiatt discusses five factors that impact a person's ability to implement change: psychological blocks, physical abilities, intellectual capacity, time needed for developing needed skills, and availability of resources needed to develop new abilities. Considering these elements, initiating effective

organizational change efforts in Christian schools would be challenging unless the ability and the resources needed to implement the anticipated change are present within the organization.

     Reinforcement. The final phase of the model, Reinforcement, involves actions or events that are taken to affirm and strengthen the changes attained in an entity. It is the expression of affirmation to those who are involved in the change initiative that their efforts matter and that the work they do will enable the organization to move forward in achieving its objective. This can be reached in various means and ways such as formal –public or private– recognition of the efforts of employees, rewards and celebrations. The effectiveness of the reinforcement phase can be gauged by several factors including, the meaningfulness of the change initiative to the person impacted, linking the outcomes with actual progress, absence of negative consequences, and existence of accountability framework to reinforce the change in the organizational systems and business processes.

     Stewart (2009) argued for the successful implementation of the ADKAR Model both at the individual and organizational level. Prosci empowers organizations and individuals to "change more easily, more effectively and with better results by using a structured, scalable process based on research" (Prosci, n.d.). As a research firm, Prosci has conducted eight longitudinal studies since 1998 with more than 3400 organizations from 65 countries, including many of the largest companies and government organizations worldwide that led to successful organizational change and performance improvement initiatives.

     Similar to Galbraith (2014) and Kotter (2012), Hyatt (2006) presented the ADKAR model to argue for the importance of understanding, passion and knowledge for effective change efforts and the need for building the capabilities and sustainability frameworks to attain successful organizational change. The new model integrated core components of creating

awareness, interjecting the desire for the change, developing the skills and capabilities for introducing and sustaining the change efforts to make the need clear for the stakeholders, and solicit their support and engagement in the initiative.

Table 3

Summary of the three organizational change models

Model / Creator (Institution)	Components	Abstract	Remarks
The STAR Model Jay Galbraith (USC)	1. Strategy	Sets direction	Organizational design framework based on policies and tools for effective decision making
		Specifies decision-making	
	2. Structure		
		Determines flow of information	
	3. Processes		
		Methods of motivation and incentives	
	4. Rewards		
		Human resources strategy	
	5. People		
8-Step Model John Kotter (HBS)	1. Establish a sense of urgency	Engage and convince others to act	A holistic approach of change management, focus on continuous change
		Assemble influential partners	
	2. Form a powerful guiding coalition		
		Develop a focused, attainable goal	
	3. Create a vision	Ensure people accept the strategy	
	4. Communicate the vision	Remove barriers, encourage stakeholders to take charge	
	5. Empower broad-based action	Show intermediate achievements	
	6. Generate short-term wins	Consolidate changes and produce more	
	7. Never Letting up	Integrate the changes with peoples behaviors and routines	
	8. Incorporate changes into the culture		

(Table Continues)

Model / Creator (Institution)	Components	Abstract	Remarks
ADKAR Model Jeff Hiatt (Prosci)	1. Awareness	Understand why change is needed	A model for individual and organizational change, focused on outcomes, not tasks
	2. Desire	Decision to support change initiative	
	3. Knowledge	Training and education about change	
	4. Ability	Implement required skills for change	
	5. Reinforcement	Integrate measures to sustain change	

Analysis and Comparison of the Three Models

The three models have several similarities and differences. Galbraith (2014) and Kotter (2012) addressed the importance of shared vision, process and strategy on the change initiative. They also emphasized the need for involving stakeholders in the change efforts, and the value of employee rewards and recognition for sustainable organizational transformation. Similarly, Hiatt (2006) and Kotter (2012) shared the importance of awareness, desire and sense of urgency for addressing the need for change. Galbraith (2014) and Hiatt (2006) agreed on the fundamental principles of effectiveness involving organizational structure, processes and capabilities that help to implement, sustain and reinforce change.

The difference among the three models involves several perspectives. Kotter emphasized the importance of actions that leaders must take to initiate, direct and manage the change initiative. Kotter's use of action words such as establish, communicate, empower, incorporate, etc… underscores the need for leaders to be action-oriented. Galbraith seemed to focus on developing strategic and conceptual frameworks such as strategy, processes and resources. Hiatt (2006), on the other hand, emphasized the human initiatives, capabilities and intelligence to drive the needed change and anchoring the outcomes.

Critical issues and factors impacting effectiveness of Christian schools

Factors contributing to decline and failure in Christian schools

A recent study by the U.S. Census Bureau of Social, Economic and Housing Statistics Division (2015) presented three major factors that contribute to the decline in private school enrollment. These include affordability of private schools, homeschooling, and charter schools. Figure 2 depicts the impact of these critical factors in the Christian school environment.

Affordability. The recent collapse of the financial industry and subsequent economic downturn had significant impact on families in regards to the affordability of private school education. Ewert, (2013) argued that "financial considerations can be a determinant of enrolling children in private schools… If the recession that began in December of 2007 financially hurt families with children in private schools, some may have decided to transfer their children to public schools to relieve financial strain. Consequently, the recession may be associated with the decline in private school enrollment." (p. 3)

Homeschooling. Ewert (2013) argued that homeschooling also has substantial effect on the enrollment decline of Christian schools. Bauman, (2002) presented several reasons that parents choose homeschooling. The top three reasons given were better education, religious reasons, and poor learning environment at public schools. Those same reasons are also the primary attributes that parents choose to send their children to private, Christian schools. However, as Bauman (2002) argued, "home schooling may have a much larger impact on educational system, both in the short and long run" and provided statistical information that "home schooling is growing" (p.1). Ewert, (2013) also contended that the recent economic

downturn may also lead families to look into homeschooling as an alternative to private education. This argument is based on the inference that "If the economic downturn led to more families with non-working adults, families that previously sent children to private schools might now fall into the group most likely to homeschool their children"(p. 4). If both homeschooling and private school families seek an alternative to public education, then as homeschooling grows as an educational platform, it will most likely draw from the population that had previously sent their children to private schools.

Charter schools. Another likely factor to the decline of private Christian schools, according to Ewert, (2013), is the growth of Charter schools. Charter schools are publicly funded entities, however, they are "exempt from some of the regulations of regular public schools, and many focus on particular curriculum or target specific groups" (p. 4). If parents consider Charter schools as alternative to public schools while avoiding the pitfalls associated with them, and they don't have to pay substantial amount of money to enroll their children, they will most likely make the switch. Chakrabarti and Roy, (2011) contended that "if the new charter school is regarded as an improved alternative in comparison to the regular public school, then some private school households (the ones marginal or close to marginal between public and private schools) would now take advantage of this and switch from private to charter schools." (p. 2). It should be noted, however, that the move from private school to charter school "does "not necessarily imply that charters are better than public schools in terms of academic achievement and the move is primarily for financial reasons" (p. 3). The authors' conclusion is that "the introduction of charter schools negatively impacted enrollment in private schools" (p. 3).

Critical Issues Facing Christian Schools

The critical issues and problems of failure, decline and stagnation facing Christian

schools are the result of complex business dynamics relating to organizational capacity

development involving effective leadership, strategy, business process analysis, cultural

transformation, resource development, and constituent relationship management. Researchers

including Deuink and Carruthers, (2008), Deal and Peterson (2003), Ewy and Gmitro (2010) and

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) identified three critical attributes that are necessary for

school transformation and sustainable business operations improvement. These are

organizational leadership, systems and process management, and transforming school culture as

depicted in Figure 2.

Organizational Leadership

Despite the enormous challenges that schools face, experts such as Hendrickson and Lane

(2013), Lynch, (2012), Day (2011), Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) contended that

effective leadership is the basis for strategic success and operational excellence in schools. They

argued that "we can make a case that leadership is vital to the effectiveness of a school. In fact,

for centuries people have assumed that leadership is critical to the success of any institution or

endeavor" (Marzano, Waters, and McNulty, 2005 p. 4). Typical attributes of leaderships,

according to Cameron and Green (2012) include setting direction, motivating and aligning

people towards a shared vision. Two aspects of leadership that are essential for school leaders to

understand are *transformational and transactional* leadership. The transformational leader

"raises the followers' sense of purpose and levels of motivation. The aims of the leader and the

followers combine into one purpose, and the leader raises the followers' confidence and

expectations of themselves" (p. 161). The transactional leader, on the other hand, "sets goals, clarifies desired outcomes, exchanges rewards and recognition for accomplishments, suggests or consults, provides feedback and gives employees praise when it is deserved" (Marzano, Waters, and McNulty, 2005 p. 14).

Similarly, Lynch (2012) presented several characteristics of effective school leadership including transformational, instructional, distributed, ethical, emotional, entrepreneurial, strategic, sustainable, invitational and constructivist leadership approaches. Transformational school leadership in schools focusses on "developing employee commitment, which then leads to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the organization" (p. 2). Transformational leaders also tend to be charismatic, inspirational, intellectual and relational in principle and practice. The instructional leadership aspect focusses on the promotion of teaching and learning through visionary scholarship development and collaboration with all stakeholders in the school environment by making sure that "teachers have access to the curriculum and have ample resources for aligning the content with the curriculum" (21). The distributed leadership approach focuses on developing "humanistic approach to shared governance" (p. 35) where democratic and consensus based decision making is part of the organizational decision making. The ethical leadership approach is concerned with developing "commitment to a defined moral code" (p. 55). The emotional leadership perspective focusses on "using the heart to lead" (p. 72) because emotional relationships are vital ingredients of effective leadership. The principle behind entrepreneurial leadership is that school leaders should learn from successful business leaders in adopting creativity, innovation and economic growth and sustainability within the school environment. Strategic leadership approach focusses on developing long term vision and practical planning that involves "decision-making aimed at shaping the direction of the

organization" (p. 117). Whereas sustainable leadership focusses on building solid foundation that goes beyond "shallow curriculum" (p. 129) that is sustainable for the long run. The focus of the invitational leadership style is on "developing a school culture of trust, respect and hope" (p. 147). And finally, the constructivist approach is concerned on developing "a framework for building sustainable school improvement" (p. 165). All these characteristics provide critical components for the development theoretical model of organizational change and performance improvement for Christian schools.

Hendrickson and Lane (2013) contended that effective leaders focus on three essential principles for making schools ready for positive change including making decisions based on their "core mission and set of values…adaptation to environmental change is in alignment with the mission and core values, and create and foster democratic partnership[with myriad constituents" (p. 2). Successful school leaders develop and ensure proper frameworks of management principles, systems and processes, and involve stakeholders in organizational culture change initiatives needed to sustain the desired outcome. In a typical Christian school environment, the leaders confront several critical operational and management issues facing the schools. Burris and McKinley (1990) described these challenges as: institutional financing, marketing and promoting, spiritual and moral development, maintaining academic excellence; and recruiting, developing and retaining quality teachers. These are typical challenges that every Christian school faces, and designing a model that provides a framework to address the critical need is vitally important. Deuink and Carruthers, (2008) argued that effective school leadership integrates the development of guiding principles including clear organizational philosophy, goals, responsibilities, policies, business strategies, management and operational frameworks and performance metrics.

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) argued that there is direct correlation between students' academic success and effective school leadership. They contended that "students in effective schools as opposed to ineffective schools have 44 percent difference in their expected passing rate" (p. 1). One of the key attributes of an effective leader is *servant leadership*- a leadership role that is characterized by leading from the center, rather than occupying the highest position in the organizational structure. Principles of servant leadership include understanding the individual needs of the key stakeholders within the organization, being a steward of the institutional resources, developing the skills and capabilities of the followers, being effective listener, and healing wounds caused by conflict within the organization. The results of such effective leadership capabilities enable schools to develop strategies including: sustainable organizational vision, mission and goals focused on high levels of student achievements, safe and orderly academic environment, robust parent and community involvement, outstanding school culture, setting high standards, continuous improvement, and recognition of outstanding students and teachers.

Developing connections is another key trait of effective organizational leadership. Cameron and Green (2012) presented six important characteristics of connective leaders. The argued that connective leaders are ethical and politically savvy as they possess "a combination of political know-how with strong ethics. Adroit and transparent use of others and themselves to achieve goals" (p. 165). Connective leaders also are authentic and accountable. Leaders achieve authenticity by dedicating themselves to the purpose of their company; while they become accountable by "being willing to have every choice scrutinized" (p. 165). Effective leaders are also good at politics of commonalities. They search and find common ground to build respective communities. They also are experts at "thinking long-term, acting short-term" (p. 165) in

coaching and encouraging followers in building long term vision and future despite current demands. Another key attribute of effective leadership includes leading through expectation by setting high expectation and trusting stakeholders while scrupulously avoiding micromanagement. Finally, connective leaders are constantly on a "quest for meaning… calling supporters to change world for the better" (p. 165).

Effectiveness of Business Processes and Systems

Effective leaders do not only inspire people; they also focus on transforming systems and processes to ensure effectiveness of organizational endeavors. Berman (2014) stated that "a process is "a set of interrelated activities designed to transform inputs into outputs. It gets you from where you are to where you want to be" (p. 12). An effective process facilitates activities and achieved planned results. Similarly, Oz (2009) defined a system as "an array of components that work together to achieve a common goal, by accepting input, processing it and producing output in an organized manner" (p. 11). Berman (2014) introduced a critical concept on the linkage described as a "process system" and argued that a process system is model of the business showing how processes fit together to meet the goals of the company. It provides a "structure in which work instructions fit into processes, and processes fit together to describe the working of the business as a whole. A process system is a powerful tool for understanding the working of the business and improving it, by spotting gaps where work isn't getting done correctly or identifying inefficiencies where more resources are used than are needed" (p. 13).

In a school environment, there are several systems and processes that work together to sustain the school's strategies, operations and special projects. Student admission is a system; it contains several processes and sub processes such as marketing, promotion, recruiting, tuition

payment arrangements, registration and related processes. Developing sustainable academic excellence requires an effective process system, as it involves several components, including defining student learning expectations and outcomes, teaching and learning methods, and designing effectiveness metrics for student achievements. Similarly, reward systems in a school environment provide critical business principles of striving for excellence among teachers and students. Schools that design and continuously improve their systems and processes have better chances of attaining their goals.

Modern and relevant technology integration and utilization is also a critical success indicator organizational effectiveness for Christian schools. Camron and Green (2012) discussed that at the moment on average businesses are investing over 30% of their capital expenditures on information technology (IT) as they realize that effective systems and technologies are enables for gaining strategic and competitive advantage. Technology based innovation and development enables organizations to "achieve flexible, responsive production of customized goods" (p. 363). In addition, IT enables fostering new form of partnerships through needs analysis, information sharing, and delivery of products and services to customers when and where they need it using online services regardless of geographic physical and geographic restrictions. The most important contribution of technology integration in organization is its contribution towards business process change and improvement as IT enables increased efficiency and innovation. According to Cameron and Green (2012) "new or improved IT systems are brought in to either increase efficiency or to allow innovation to occur, not to simply automate what is already there, so process change almost always occurs" (p. 378).

Business process reengineering (BPR) is another strategic business transformation initiative that can be achieved through integration of IT. Cameron and Green (2012) pointed out

that "BPR is one of the best known approaches to achieving IT-based change in organizations" (p. 378). It provides rigorous approach to transforming business processes that deliver value to the customers by illuminating or minimizing unnecessary processes that are counterproductive to delivering strategic or competitive advantages. An effective BPR initiative enables organizations to develop business vision and process objectives, identify processes that need to be obliterated and redesigned, define and measure existing processes, identify IT levers, and "design and build prototype of new processes" (p. 380). Another key advantage of BPR, if carried out rightly, is that it enables "changing the information culture" (p. 385) that is necessary to create conducive for sharing information and knowledge that is stored in people within the organization.

An organization utilizes effective systems to achieve its mission and vision. Organizational strategy pertains to "frameworks designed to reach the overall mission and goals of the institution" (p. 42). Oz (2009) argued that there are two types of organizational system architecture: closed and open systems. A closed system stands alone with no connection to other business systems; it does not need input from other processes and has no output that serves as an input to other processes. Open systems, on the other hand, interface with other systems and processes within the organization and interact with other systems both inside and outside of the organization. Christian schools normally operate under open systems architecture because all the business operations are related. The admission system in a school is sustained by several processes and systems including academic excellence, financial aid, school safety, student satisfaction and retention processes. While a school's strategy is sustained by effective business systems, effective systems are dependent on efficient business processes.

Experts such as Deming (1982) and Weske, (2007) have argued that the majority of organizational performance problems are attributed to deficient processes. According to Ewy and

Gmitro (2010) "90 to 95 percent of problems are due to the process and 5 to 10 percent due to the abilities and skills of the people who work in the processes" (p. 2). A process is defined as a set of coordinated activities performed in a firm involving inputs to produce outputs. Effective business process management (BPM) enables "the achievement of an organization's objectives through the improvement, management and control of essential business processes" (Jeston and Nelis, 2008 p. 11). As a management principle, BPM includes the development of "concepts, methods and techniques to support the design, administration, configuration, enactment and analysis of business processes" (Weske, 2007 p. 5).

The importance of process management in Christian schools cannot be underestimated. Ewy and Gmitro, (2010) addressed the significance of process management in two ways. They argued that when school leaders and managers are confronted with the need to improve performance, they face two options: "they can improve the skills people use when they work, or they can improve the processes that direct people how to do the work. Which is the better choice? … Designing, measuring, deploying and improving processes will produce a much better result than focusing on the people who work on the processes" (p. 2). The problem, however, is that not all educational leaders and school administrators are skilled or knowledgeable enough about the principles and application of business process management. Therefore, designing a model that helps them conceptualize and easily understand the values of process management in the organizational transformation efforts becomes critically important.

Transforming school culture.

School culture defines the identity and value of the school and depicts "a shared sense of purpose and values, norms of continuous learning and improvement, collaborative collegial

relationships... and sharing experiences" (Haberman, 2013, p. 1). In many social environments, culture is a force of cohesiveness that pulls people together to behave and act alike. Gruenert and Whitaker (2015 described culture as a "social narcotic" (p. 5) that people are addicted to; and they argued that "culture is essentially a social indoctrination of unwritten rules and that people learn as they try to fit in a particular group" (p. 6). The most important question for school leaders to themselves is whether they can control and predict the culture, or if the culture actually controls them.

Transforming school culture is more than mere school performance improvement. Lenz, Bob, and Justin Wells (2015) argued that at the core of transforming school culture includes a mindset of "transforming the graduate" (p. 19), designing a standards-aligned performance assessment system, (p. 19), integrating "project-based learning" (p. 65), transforming school systems, and focusing on the development of deeper learning. Similar to Kotter (2012) 8-Step model, Lenz, Bob, and Justin Wells (2015) recommended the RAPID model of adopting culture and organizational change initiatives. The RAPID model consists of five critical elements: Recommend, where someone of prominent status makes a recommendation for change; Agree, where a designated leader agrees with the potential of the decision; Perform, identifying a designated leader to execute the decision; Input, where stakeholders are encouraged to provide input and express their thoughts; and Decide, where people are empowered to make decision and own it. Promoting such a mentality and progressive engagement of all stakeholders in a Christian school environment has the potential for organizational transformation.

Another core component of organizational change and business process improvement initiative involves culture change. Deal and Peterson, (2003) advocated that higher value is realized in schools that promote effective culture in today's educational environment. It is true

that much emphasis is given "to reforming schools from the outside, through policies and mandates. Too little attention has been paid to how much schools can be shaped from within…" (p. xi). School transformation and performance improvement is better achieved by transforming the institutional culture. They also contended that "highly respected organizations have evolved a shared system of informal folkways and traditions that infuse work with meaning, passion, and purpose" (p.1).

It is ironic to see that some schools are very welcoming, while others are not. Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) stated that "you walk into some schools and immediately you feel welcome; and you walk into others you feel like and you feel like an intruder" (p. 2). A school culture defines the way the administrators, teachers and staff behave and present themselves and relate to their environment. The fact of the matter is that "for schools to be effective, educators need to understand the organizational cultures in which they work and be able to modify them if necessary" (p. 3). The openness and readiness for culture change enables the school leaders to be adaptive and agile to meet the current challenges and future needs by constantly evaluating the current state of the institution, and the desired state of where the school needs to be at some point in the future.
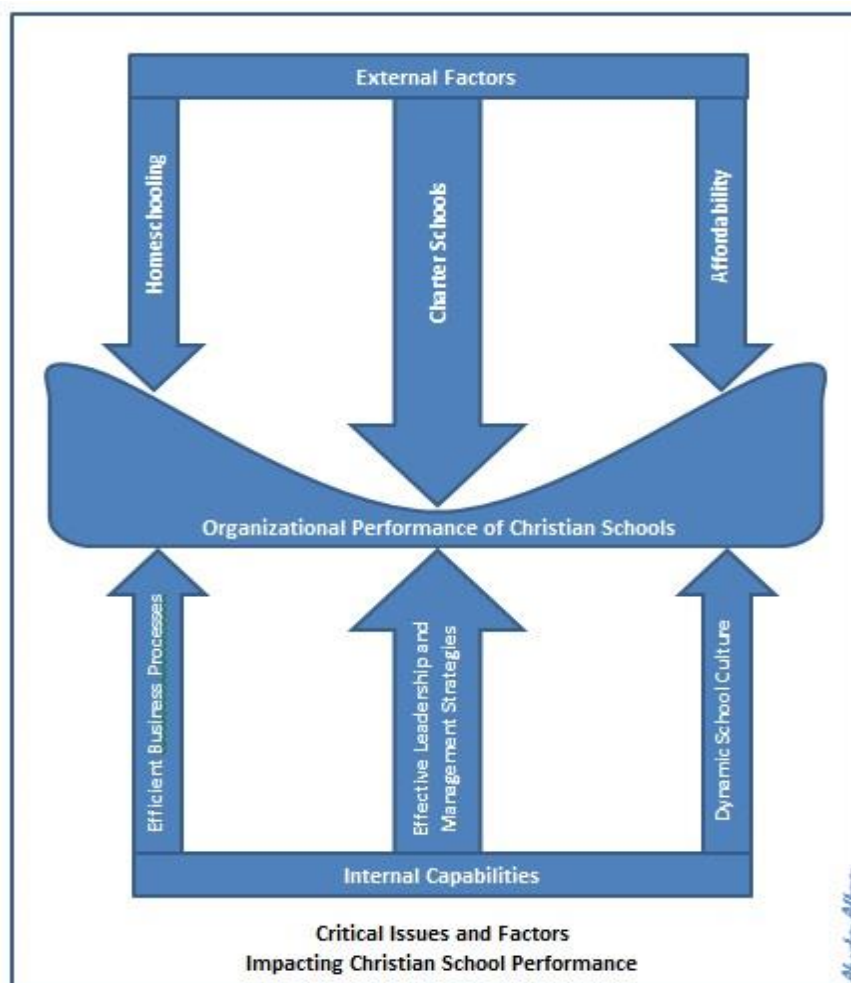
Figure 2. Analytical model of critical issues impacting Christian schools.

The concept of school culture is based on a fact that schools have distinctive behavior, complex rituals, relationships, mores, sanctions, approvals, common ways of doing things, acceptable ways of speaking, acting and behaving. Culture provides an accurate and intuitively appealing way of helping school leaders understand their schools "unwritten rules and traditions, norms and expectations that seem to permeate everything: the way people act, how they dress, what they talk about or avoid talking about, whether they seek out colleagues for help or do not, and how teachers feel about their work and their students" (Deal and Peterson, 2003, p. 2-3).

These invisible beliefs and assumptions give meaning to what people say and do; and they form the values, goals, purposes and underlying decision making principles. Changing school culture, therefore, results in transforming the core beliefs and worldviews of the stakeholders within the school environment.

Christian schools can greatly benefit from realizing the impact of effective school culture. Deal and Peterson, (2003) argued that effective culture fosters school effectiveness, productivity, and performance improvement. It also promotes collegial activities and collaboration in harboring good communication and problem solving skills. Relatedly, positive attitudes and supportive stances towards organizational change initiatives are reinforced by a shared culture that binds all stakeholders through a common worldview and values. School culture is also a strong promoter for building commitment and loyalty for a common purpose by imparting motivation, energy and vitality into the community. This is because an effective organizational culture is found to implant passion, meaning and purpose into the institution.

Understanding Organizational Failure

The answer to the fundamental question of why schools fail may not always be simple enough. However, organizational failure is not a single, random event; and entities that fail are the ones that neglect the symptoms and warnings of the looming danger. Murphy and Meyers, (2008) argued that organizational failure is preceded by apparent stages of *disintegration, decline* and *failing*. Disintegration is a period where "the organization confronts problems, begins to decline and becomes a failing entity" (p.13). It is the state where the vision, capabilities and core values of the firm begin to fade or fall apart. The sense of cohesion, shared objectives and goals dissipate in an organization that is in the state of disintegration.

The phase of decline in an organization is a situation where a pattern of substantial decrease in a firm's performance and capabilities that becomes evident by the "deterioration in an organization's adaptation to its microniche and the associated reduction of resources within the organization" (p.13). It is a stage where the internal and external needs of the business are in disarray, and warning signals from the stakeholders are ignored. The state of organizational decline can be caused by various scenarios including shrinking markets, increased competition, arduous regulations, unrealistic or changing customer demands, and weak leadership and management capabilities inside the firm.

Alongside the states of disintegration and decline, stagnation is another indicator of organizational failure. Stagnation, as described by Murphy and Meyers (2008) is the lack of steady growth in a firm. It can also serve as a precondition for decline and failure. Stagnant organizations reflect a state marked by inability to grow or move forward, lack of adaptation to changing business and market environments. The organizations become "incapable of maintaining resiliency… and unable to compete successfully for a shrinking resource base" (p.16). These phenomena are typical representations of many Christian schools that the model I designed in this study has addressed. Understanding the attributes, cause and effects of organization failure provides a platform to predict the symptoms and device intervention strategies to curb the downward trend, and reverse the course to position the schools for success.

Overview of Organizational Change and Performance Transformation

Once an organization realizes the traits of organizational failure, decline and failure, it is necessary for the firm's leaders to device ways of changing its business strategies, operations and business processes because managing organizational change is another key factor for achieving

performance transformation. Change is said to be a constant part of an organization's life; and successful organizational change and business transformation using a structured approach is critical to guide and control the change initiative. Cameron and Green (2012) discussed several OC models designed for the corporate, profit-oriented business world that serve as frameworks for organizational transformation and business process improvement. However, there is shortage of OC, business transformation or process improvement models that can serve as a guide for nonprofit organizations (NPOs) and particularly for Christian schools. Smith (2010) contended that "there is little information available about organizational change models specific to NPOs" (p. 3). As several Christian schools close their doors and many continue to struggle for survival, a relevant, focused and functional model is needed to serve as a benchmark for positioning the schools to maintain vitality and sustainable improvement.

Managing organizational change and sustainable performance management is equally important in nonprofit organizations as it is critical for large firms. Over the past decade, we have witnessed the failure of many large and once powerful companies such as Enron, WorldCom, Lehman Brothers, Washington Mutual and many other small and medium enterprises (SME's). As a result, abundant scholarly literature and models were produced that identify the cause-and-effect of such failures, and lessons learned from these catastrophes. However, despite large number of failures in the non-profit organizations and private schools, Christianity Today (2009) stated that not much literature, analytical studies, documentations and models are available to serve as lessons learned and effective turnaround frameworks. Analyzing the basic principles that lead to organizational failures can help schools learn from the fates of those institutions.

Nadler and Tushman (1990) argued that during times of organizational performance stagnation, decline or failure, "the executive is a critical actor in the drama of organization change" (p. 77) to stem the downward trend and reposition the organization for success. Leaders and sponsors of Christian schools have the responsibility for constantly monitoring the performance of their schools to maintain effective strategies and efficient operations for achieving continuous improvement and business process transformation. Deal and Peterson (2003) described several frameworks including structural, political, human resources and symbolic perspectives that help organizations assess their performance as depicted in Table 5 below. The *structural* component focused on developing organizational strategies, goals, policies and effectiveness metrics. The *political* perspective addresses the issue of scarce resources and allocation of power, managing conflicts, compromises and negotiations to make effective decisions that benefit the organization and related communities as a whole. The *human resources* component emphasizes on the people skills, shared responsibilities, reward and recognition systems to maintain caring and healthy environment. And lastly, the *symbolic* framework addresses the cultural, ritual, shared beliefs and values that are entrenched within the organizational and social infrastructure. Leveraging the power of these frameworks to improve performance, goals and strategies can have a significant positive impact in an institution.

Table 4

Deal and Peterson (2003)'s Framework for Organizational Change

Type of change	Focus
Structural	Develop strategies, goals, policies and metrics
Political	Manage resource allocation, power distribution, conflict management and decision making processes
Human Resource	Develop people skills, responsibilities, reward systems and managing health and welfare of employees
Symbolic	Managing the cultural, ritual, shared beliefs and value systems within the organization

The need for organizational change and business processes transformation is not a new phenomenon. Over the past few decades, the business world has undertaken several types of performance improvement and innovation efforts, such as business process reengineering, total quality management (TQM), business process improvement, and many similar strategies intended to cope with the changing times and customer demands to achieve strategic and competitive advantage. However, organizational transformation (OT) is a much broader leadership strategy that focuses on the integration of fundamental principles of organizational mission, vision, identity, culture and operational competencies to improve performance. OT offers a clear perspective of the current position and the desired state of the firm, to provide awareness of the Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the organization.

Many organizations have tried implementing OT. Sethi (1998) argued that "firms, in an effort to transform themselves, either succeed brilliantly or fail miserably" (p. 42) primarily due

to the drastic nature, and the breadth and depth of the initiative for organizational transformation. Washington and Hacker (2011) claimed that "Transformation… is a major change or alteration… a concept of producing and often a radical one" (p. 1). This radical change initiative involves broad perspective, clear understanding and alignment of the organizational strategies. Implementing organizational change requires effective leadership, technical plan, stakeholder engagement, and clear communication, along with a well-articulated rational for the transformation effort that specifies the impact of the change initiative for the future of the organization.

According to the Organizational change Primer (2000), OC is much broader than simple operational restructuring or business modification. OC entails an action or set of actions resulting in a change of direction or process that affects the way an organization works and behaves. Change can be driven by internal requirements, such as the need for efficiency or effectiveness, or may be imposed by external forces including market conditions, industry trends and regulatory requirements. In a business entity, organizational change is manifested in three forms: standardization, incremental improvement, and transformation.

Standardization. Standardization involves "changing a system to become better able to eliminate variations" (Washington and Hacker, 2011, p. 6) and thus ensuring consistency based on creating common, streamlined approaches to work.

Incremental improvement. Incremental improvement focuses on moving organizational performance to a new, more desirable level. From a statistical perspective, while standardization

is about reducing variations, incremental improvement is about a trend of steady increase, shifting the performance to a new, sustainable operating environment.

Transformation. Transformation entails a change phase that yields "breakthrough results, discontinuous change; and it is brought about by redesign… the primary mental model is one of creation – bringing something into existence— and not simply making something like performance problems go away, as in the case of incremental improvement" (Washington and Hacker, 2011, p.7).

Organizational transformation is a strategic endeavor that positions a firm to "regain a sustainable competitive advantage by redefining business objectives, creating new competencies, and harnessing these capabilities to meet market opportunities" (Sethi, 1998, p.43). Such strategy enables the organization to stand firm and to stay focused on its mission despite shifting market demands, changing technologies, emerging standards and aggressive competition. As much as it is true in human life, change is also a part of organizational life. Scholars asserted that in our present competitive organizational environment, status quo doesn't cut it anymore. Organizations either climb higher defying the competition, or they crash and burn. A firm that does not change, improve, or transform itself will face severe difficulties in meeting customer demands, market competition, and industry requirements. A well planned and carefully managed change initiative will sustain the organization to survive and thrive in good and tough times; the initiative can yield tangible benefits, such as improved business performance, strategic competitiveness, financial well-being, and higher level of customer and employee satisfaction. Effective organizational change and transformation efforts in schools are achieved by following a carefully designed and sensibly developed plan that is referred in this study as a *model* for organizational

transformation efforts. The following topics discuss critical elements that make organizational transformation a worthy undertaking.

According to Washington and Hacker (2011), successful organizational change and transformation efforts involve five elements:

1. Vision: Where the organization plans to be.

2. Leadership: Who will lead the organizational change initiative.

3. Technical plan: How the change efforts will be implemented.

4. Social plan: How the leaders will involve the stakeholders.

5. Burning platform: Why the organizational change and transformation efforts are necessary. (p. 2)

Whenever leaders and stakeholders have coherent and clear vision, functional understanding of the vision, a broader perspective of the value of the initiative, and capabilities of convincing the stakeholders through persuasive communication methods, it becomes easier for individuals to cooperate and support the organizational change efforts. A school that has a coherent vision, effective leadership, attainable technical and social plan, and a burning platform with clear understanding and sense of purpose for the organizational change initiative, has potential to achieve transformation.

Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness is a state of an institution that addresses the strategic and operational excellence by implementing performance metrics to help an organization maintain a successful business operation. Schwalbe (2015) argued that organizational *effectiveness* refers to doing the right thing, as opposed to *efficiency,* which focuses on doing

things right. These concepts are critically important for Christian schools to understand so that

they can first be firmly positioned to doing the right thing through well thought-out objectives,

and then work hard to focus on doing things right to efficiently execute the tasks needed to

achieve their mission and vision.

Organizational effectiveness involves a wide range of accomplishments including

successful leadership, strategy development, functional administrative systems and reliable

management of critical business objectives and activities. Among the effective strategic tasks

are: developing clear organizational mission, vision, goals, performance benchmarks, customer

and employee satisfaction, and well designed and integrated systems of operational standards,

human capabilities, technological and support infrastructures. Meyer and Zucker (1989) argued

that "an organization that both persists and performs well is most parsimoniously described as

effective… an organization that persists yet performs poorly might be described as inertial or

institutionalized, but we prefer to think of such as organization as permanently failing" (p. 19).

The following conceptual frameworks provide a foundation for designing a model that integrates

critical success factors and proven components that can result in building an effective

organizational model for change and performance improvement in Christian schools.

Organizational effectiveness is based on a well-thought out mission and is measured in

relation to both "financial efficiency and… effectiveness in meeting organizational goals"

(Epstein and McFarland, 2011 p. 28). Efficiency and effectiveness are critical components of

business performance metrics where efficiency focusses on measuring the performance outcome

in doing the right things, at the right time, in the right market and ideal environmental settings.

On the other hand, efficiency is concerned with doing things right by productive use of internal

resources to accomplish business goals on time, on budget and with appropriate quality

framework. Organizational transformation and continuous improvement, therefore, depend on the integration of organizational design strategies set for achieving effectiveness and efficiency. Developing a model of organizational change and business process transformation for Christian schools should be based on the unique needs and characteristics of the schools and the distinctive functional environments under which the schools operate. However, adopting some critical components and strategies from existing and effective models of organizational change and process improvement frameworks can serve as a benchmark for designing a relevant and functional basis for Christian schools. In the following section, I addressed three models that are widely known and successfully implemented in the corporate business communities that can effectively serve as a reference for the proposal of a new performance transformation process model for Christian schools.

The Systems Thinking approach to Organizational Change

In support of the models presented above, Jolly (2015) and Toma (2010) argued that systems thinking approach enables schools to visualize the "interrelated nature of the components of a complex organization" (Toma, 2010, p. 25) where any incompetence in one section of the institution negatively impacts the entire school performance. Jolly (2015) defined the concept of systems thinking as "the study of interactions" (p. 1) that describes how different components interact and impact each other. In an academic institution, this could translate to mean lack of academic excellence impacts enrollment; and decline in enrollment can affect attracting outstanding teachers and administrators. Similarly, Effective leadership influences culture change; while strong capabilities in resource development enables financial sustainability and program effectiveness.

In support of the systems thinking theory, Nickerson (2014) introduced a principle of leading change from the middle. This new approach of organizational change has the potential for increasing the likelihood of successfully leading change focusing on three components. First, identify all relevant stakeholders and partition them into four categories: "superordinates, subordinates, customers and complementors/blockers (those who control needed resources but over whom the leaders have no authority)" (p. 14). Next leaders should "identify communications, Strategies, and Tactics (referred to as CoSTS". Lastly, Nickerson (2014) warns that leaders should not stimulate negative emotions that make people "DEAF – Disrespect, Envy, Anger and Fear – to efforts to produce change" (p. 17). To secure the support of stakeholders and engage them in the change initiative, Nickerson (2014) argued the ABBA approach referring to CoSTS key elements "Agree-in, Bee-in, Buy-in, and Allow-in" (45).

Another critical component of effective model for Christian schools involves the principle of Systems Thinking. Gharajedaghi (2011) argued that the systems thinking theory provides framework for managing complexities and chaos; and design a successful business architecture that affords sustainability and competitive advantage while avoiding fatal mistakes in Christian schools. Gharajedaghi (2011) identified "forces that erode competitive advantage" (p. 4) including: imitation, inertia and suboptimization. Understanding the characteristics of these forces and developing strategies to avoid them would be highly beneficial to Christian schools.

Competitive advantage is gained by identifying means achieving distinction, and that is a difference involving excellence. However, successful distinction is "eroded by imitation" (p. 4). The lack of dynamic responsiveness to change and performance improvement initiatives in Christian schools is referred by Gharajedaghi (2011) as inertia, and that is responsible for "second level tendencies and behaviors that delay reactions to technological breakthroughs" (p.

5). Suboptimization refers to a situation where a process, procedure, or system yields less than the best possible outcome or output, caused by a lack of best possible coordination between different components. Therefore, integration and synthesis becomes is critically necessary for the effectiveness of Christian schools.

Westerberg (2009) argued that "significant school improvement depends first, last and foremost on improving the quality of instruction in the classroom" (p. 3). This kind of fundamental school improvement initiative is achieved through a framework that Westerberg (2009) described as Moving Schools from Good to Great (p. 1). The framework included: cultivating a we expect success attitude, developing clear instructional goals, developing a common vision of effective instruction, using frequent formative assessment, tracking student progress, providing timely intervention for struggling students, and celebrating student success.

The Case for Developing New Performance Improvement Model for Christian Schools

Organizational change and performance improvement initiatives are not just a "nice-to-have" features; rather; rather, they are critical undertakings necessary to ensure for schools all types of organizations and schools to survive and thrive in this competitive and challenging business environments. Burke (2014) discussed that Forbes magazine published its first list of 100 top companies was published in the year 1917. However, "in 1987, 61 of the original 100 no longer existed. And of the remaining 39 companies, only 18 remained in the top 100" (p. 13). Similarly out of the Standard & Poor's (S&P) list of top 500 published in the year 1957, "only 74 remained in the list, with mere 12 of those 74 outperforming the S&P index itself" (p. 13). According to Ewert (2013, p. 20) the proportion of students enrolled in private schools for grades 1-12 declined from about 12.5% in 1955 to about 8.25% in 2011. The alarming rate of statistical

decline is a result of many schools failing and closing down for various reasons as discussed in the previous reasons such as lack of effective leadership, strong competition, and socioeconomic pressures on families and communities being unable to afford private education.

The models and frameworks discussed above have various components that are critically important for transforming Christian schools not only to survive, but also to thrive and outperform the competition to achieve their mission and goals. In the Christian school environment, understanding the problems and challenges of organizational failure and developing strategies for change initiative, motivating stakeholders to accept and support the needed change, educating and training staff and concerned stakeholders on the processes and requirements of the change effort is crucial for achieving the desired organizational transformation initiatives. In addition, developing the capabilities to carry out the desired change, and encouraging and acknowledging the diligence of the participants to implement and sustain the outcome of the change endeavor results in a successful organizational transformation. An effective organization strives for continuous improvement and thus change is a constant part of its life cycle. A strategically planned and carefully executed organizational change initiative has significant positive impact on the life and mission of Christian schools.

The challenge, however, is that most of existing organizational change models as discussed above are focused toward the for-profit or corporate business environments. It is true that there are significant differences between the structures and operations of profit-oriented organization versus NPO business models that should be considered in developing an organizational change model geared towards NPOs such as private schools, churches and similar entities. Smith (2010) argued that profit driven enterprises are reciprocal, providing a good or service with the purpose of deriving monetary gain from delivering those goods or services.

However, the goal of NPOs is to meet a social need that is not measured from a profit perspective. Collins (2005) also contended that while the performance of a for-profit organizations is measured by its financial returns, the performance of social sector and NPOs should be "assessed relative to mission, not financial returns… the critical question is not how much money do we make per dollar of invested capital? but how effectively do we deliver on our mission and make a distinctive impact, relative to our resources" (p. 5).

In addition to being categorized as NPOs, Christian schools have a deeper mission and specific goals that present unique challenges. They are charged with their primary task of the regular academic and educational responsibilities; however, they also have the mission and mandate of providing spiritual leadership as they are driven by a commitment to the Gospel and focused on a mission of bringing hope and healing to students and their families. An effective OC model for Christian schools, therefore, should integrate not only excellence in academics, but also a framework that includes the development of faith and spiritual life for their constituents. Therefore, it is necessary to develop an organizational transformation process model that integrates many of the components of organizational performance improvement frameworks presented above, and new ones that integrate the core principles of Christian education, financial sustainability and academic excellence aimed at positioning the schools for effectiveness in achieving their vision and mission.

Summary

This literature review analyzed attributes, metrics and models of effective Christian schools, and some characteristics of organizational failure, the external forces impacting their performance, and internal capabilities needed to sustain effectiveness in those schools. In this literature review section I analyzed organizational transformation efforts from a broad leadership, management and operational strategies that integrate the mission, vision, culture, resources and capabilities of effectiveness to move stagnant, declining or failing schools to become vibrant, competitive, and effective entities capable of surviving and thriving in the private educational marketplace. Several popular organizational change and business transformation models, including Galbraith's STAR Model, Kotter's Eight Step Model, the ADKAR Model, and various organizational change and strategic transformation frameworks were analyzed to identify critical components effective model and utilize them for developing an effective organizational improvement model for Christian schools.

All the models and frameworks observed in this study had critical elements that were unique to the framework making them suitable for organizational change initiative in specific business environments, primarily in the profit-oriented corporate institutional settings. The models shared important attributes including effective organizational strategy, vision, objectives, processes and resource management capabilities. However, the lack of an organizational change model that is specifically designed for the nonprofit sector of the economy, and particularly the void in organizational change and process improvement model for Christian schools indicates a critical need for designing an appropriate business process transformation model that is relevant and appropriate for Christian schools.

The new model presented in Chapter 5 of this study integrated critical elements of the widely adopted reference models, and introduced new components that have unique values that are appropriate for faith-based academic institutions. The model enables the schools to analyze their internal and external challenges, perform organizational analysis, redesign process assets, gain market share, develop resources, strengthen capabilities, and innovate systems and methodologies to stand up and stand out from the competition to achieve their mission, vision and goals.

The next section, Chapter 3 focuses on selecting and describing the research methodology, data collection and analysis, instrumentation and sampling procedures.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to develop an organizational change and performance transformation model by examining the internal and external attributes contributing to failure, stagnation, and decline among Christian schools. This chapter provides description of the grounded theory method of qualitative research that was used for the study, along with the rationale for selecting the methodology as the best approach to analyze organizational change and process improvement efforts in Christian schools are presented in this section. The study focused on the research question: What type of organizational change and performance transformation model can enable Christian schools achieve sustainable performance improvement? Developing a theory and a process model of organizational change is a complex undertaking; therefore, an appropriate research methodology is required to describe, analyze, and design effective model to handle the complex processes. In addition, the target population, research design, sampling methods, data collection, instrumentation, data analysis and presentation methods are outlined in reference to the research problem. Further, I addressed the perspectives and lived experiences from the research participants as a basis for generating a theory that leads to developing a functional process improvement model.

Research Design

Grounded Theory (GT) was selected for this study because it provided an ideal platform for discovering or generating a model, theory, abstract, or analytical schema by developing categories, codes, themes, and patterns pertaining to the research problem. Grounded theory is a form of qualitative research developed "for the purpose of constructing theory grounded in data"

(Corbin and Strauss, 2014 (p. 6). The GT method was appropriate for this study because "it is designed to encourage researchers' persistent interaction with their data while remaining constantly involved with their emerging analyses" (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 1). As this research is intended to fill the gap in the lack of theoretical models to provide private schools a framework to initiate, plan, execute, monitor, and control organizational change and business process transformation efforts, the GT method was best approach for the study.

Corbin and Strauss (2014) stated that grounded theory enables the researcher to "develop substantive theories as well as more general theories" (p. 11). In grounded theory the researcher enjoys serendipity and discovery, as it offers endless possibilities to learn about social and organizational problems and needs with the intention of analyzing complex relationships to develop a theory in reference to the research phenomenon. It also provides a setting where the researcher can interact with the research participants at a functional level to determine potential cause and effect of the research problem, by engaging the stakeholders in the study. Creswell (2013) contended that "the intent of a grounded theory study is to move beyond description and to generate or discover a theory, an abstract analytical schema of a process" (p. 33). Because the primary goal of this study was to generate a theoretical model, the GT method was appropriate.

Bryant and Charmaz (2007) advocated a social constructivist perspective of grounded theory that emphasizes "diverse local worlds, multiple realities, and the complexities of particular worlds, views and actions" (p. 65). This methodology relies on the interpretive approach to qualitative research with flexible guidelines, and it focuses on the researcher's views and interpretations about the "embedded, hidden networks, situations and relationships…with emphasis on the views, values, beliefs, feelings, assumptions and ideologies of individuals" (p.65) participating in the study. This methodology enables the researcher to make decisions

about the phenomenon under consideration and the collection of data, information, events, and related experiences throughout the research study to develop a functional theoretical model. Creswell (2013) also asserted that grounded theory is an ideal design to use when a theory is not available to explain a process or if the theory and models available were developed and tested on samples and populations that are different from the ones under consideration for the study. This sustains the notion that GT design works best for this study because, although there are several organizational change and transformation models that have been widely used in the corporate business world, they are not appropriate for Christian schools due to the fact that their mission, vision, objectives, and goals are different from those of the for-profit organizations. Therefore, although many of the components of the models developed for corporate organizations are necessary for Christian schools, the models as a whole would not serve well for the target population. Consequently, it was necessary that I develop a process model that is uniquely suitable and functionally relevant for faith-based academic institutions.

One of the benefits of using the GT method for this study was that it helps generate pragmatic controls for analytical processes enabling researchers to examine all possible theoretical explanations for their findings. In addition, Bryant and Charmaz (2007) argued that the GT research method provides "iterative process of moving back and forth between empirical data and emerging analysis" making the data collection "progressively more focused and the analysis successively more theoretical" (p. 1). In this method, the researcher is expected to interact in the environment under investigation by submerging in the worlds of the subjects in the research. This provides opportunity for the researcher to "engage in a symbolic interaction… to interpret actions, transcend rich description and develop a theory which incorporates concepts of self, language, social settings, and social object" (Goulding, 2002, p. 39). This approach is best

suited because it allows the researcher to be engaged in the worlds of Christian schools for constant observation, data collection, analysis, and interpretation to develop a model that is functionally relevant and theoretically plausible for transforming Christian schools to position them for organizational effectiveness.

Methodology

There were several research methodology options available to choose for conducting qualitative study. Some of the options possible included case study, ethnography, phenomenology, and grounded theory. Grounded theory was selected primarily because it provided appropriate platform for developing a model as was the objective of the study. The following section provides review of each potential method option and explanation for selecting the appropriate research design based on research design, interview questions and the type of data gathering and analysis necessary to develop an appropriate theoretical model of organizational change and performance improvement for Christian schools.

Case Study

Case study involves the investigation of a single issue, specific entity such as one person, one group of people, an isolated event, or a single organization serving a reasonably manageable holistic project. Saldana, (2011) argued that "case study in and of itself is valued as a unit that permits an in-depth examination" (p. 8). Critics of case study contend "what can you learn by studying one thing?" Saldana's response was "all you can" (p.9). It is important to note, nonetheless, that the generalizability or transferability of a case study research is left up to the

researcher's logical interpretation, as well as the readers' conclusion on how the case study's interpretation applies to a broader contexts and populations.

Ethnography

Ethnography relates to observation and documentation of social phenomenon for the purpose of rendering an account of a social group's culture and lifestyle. Saldana (2011) stated that "ethnography refers to both the process of long-term field work and the final (most often) written product" (p. 5). Originally, ethnography was used to study foreign, ethnic groups; however, the methodology is currently used as an interdisciplinary approach and is applied to explore social dynamics and cultures in diverse settings including urban and rural social environments, as well as in business and organizational cultures.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is concerned with studying the nature and meaning of things. Phenomenological study is intended to capture the "phenomenon's essence and essentials that determine what it is" (7). The genre of the research methodology is based on hermeneutic analysis focusing on the interpretation of texts for core meanings. Saldana (2011) argued that in our current times phenomenological study is primarily oriented to studying the living experiences, concepts or events of certain human beings including mundane or behavioral routines, or major phenomenon of life events. The main objective of phenomenology, however, is to "synthesize the commonalities of their collective experiences and perceptions" (p. 8).

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory methodology provides platform for "meticulously analyzing qualitative data in order to understand human processes and to construct theory – that is theory grounded in the data or constructed from the ground up" (p. 6). Grounded theory offers analytical process of constantly comparing small units of data collected for a specific purpose. A classic grounded theory aims to achieve a core or central theme "that conceptually represents what the study is all about" (p. 7) serving as the basis for developing a theory or a conceptual model in reference to the processes and methodologies that were observed. The theory or model generated as a result of the study is simply emerging out of the study by analyzing and coding the findings of the research data collection by means of interviews, observation, document reviews and elated mechanisms.

The benefit of Grounded Theory methodology enables the researcher to construct a theory from the data collected during the research process and analyzing the data while still engaged in the data collection. Corbin and Strauss (2014) argued that "after the initial data collection, the researcher analyzes the data, and the concepts driven from the analysis form the basis for the subsequent data collection" (p. 7). The research methodology below describes a systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied pertaining to the population, research participants, sample size, sampling procedures, data collection and instrumentation methods to be employed in the study. The process of identifying the population and conducting the research through observations and interactions, defining the problem, developing a solution and presenting the outcome is coordinated through the research methodology.

In this study GT is the selected method for this study because it offers practical approach for developing a theory and a conceptual model of organizational change and performance

improvement in Christian schools. Although grounded theory is a complex methodology involving multistage processes, it serves best for the generating a theory and streamlined framework that serves as a guideline to introduce, analyze and implement change that results in transforming Christian schools from their current state of stagnation, decline, or failure, onto a future state of stronger and vibrant performance in all aspects of their organizational processes. The following diagram contains the research methodology involving the research population, selection criteria, sampling, instrumentation and data collection methods.
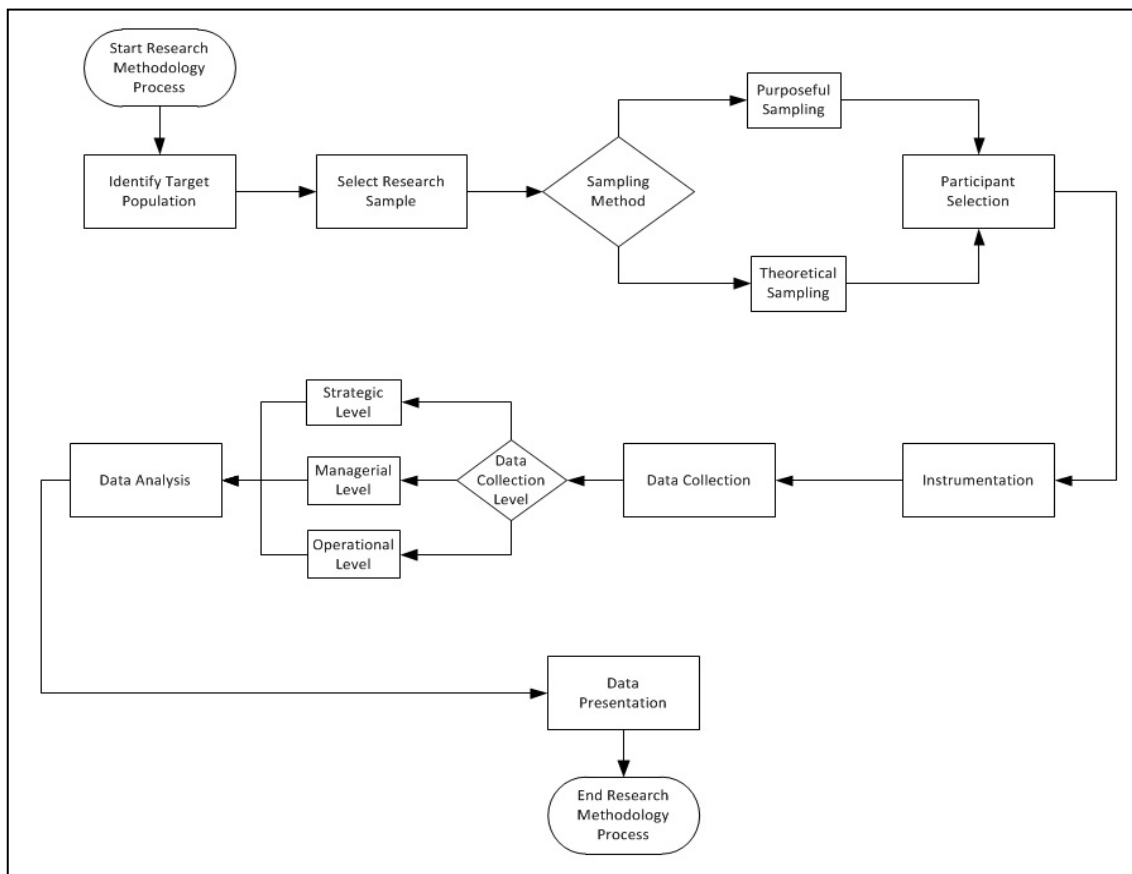
Designed by: Abraham K. Adhanom

Figure 3. Research methodology.

Population

A research population includes large number of individuals, groups or communities that serves as the main focus of a scientific enquiry with a goal of identifying understanding a specific research problem. For this study, the population of Christian schools would mean a total of about 31,000 schools, serving a total of over 5 million students (over 10% of the total number of students) in the United States alone. The research population in this study was narrowed down to include schools that are affiliated with evangelical faith-based schools excluding the larger groups such as Catholic and Jewish schools. Further, the study was concentrated along specific geographic location involving Christian schools and their stakeholders, in Southern California, within Northern Orange County and Southern Los Angeles County. There are numerous Christian schools in the region, and I chose the population location because of the proximity and accessibility to me as the researcher and having vested interest in Christian schools, primarily Lutheran schools that are affiliated with educational ministry of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS). The research population therefore includes students, alumni, parents, teachers, principals and board members associated with faith-based academic institutions.

Sampling Method

Creswell (2013) recommended that qualitative research be conducted at several levels including at participant, site, event, or process level. In a good qualitative study "one or more of these levels might be present and they each need to be identified" (126). The challenge in grounded theory study sampling is that not only does the researcher need to collect data at the participation levels, but also needs to personally be involved to get detailed analysis and understanding about each setting. In this study, I sampled at the school and district levels for

collecting and analyzing data and information resources that significant added value to the study. Creswell (2013) recommended two types of sampling methods for grounded study: purposeful sampling and theoretical sampling as discussed below.

Purposeful Sampling

Purposeful sampling is designed to intentionally seek participants who have gone through, or are currently experiencing a particular stage of the research study phenomenon. Palinkas (2013) argued that purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of "information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources" (p. 2). This is intentionally intended to identify and select individuals or groups that are knowledgeable or experiences about the research phenomenon. The intentionality also addresses the "importance of availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive and reflective manner" (p. 2). Using purposeful sampling in the study enabled me as the researcher to understand and confirm the experiences of the participants at different levels as they experienced the events relating to the research phenomenon.

Creswell ((2013) argued that some of the drawbacks of purposeful sampling are that selecting participants based on particular interests and specific needs may cause weakness in providing data that is narrowly constrained, letting the researchers hear what they want to hear, and giving them what they wanted to get. However, because of the primary objective of the study was to develop a unique model, identifying participants with specific experience and insight about organizational process and strategy development helped to obtain critical information that I used for the model design and analysis.

Theoretical Sampling

Theoretical sampling involves research process that is guided by analysis of emergent categories and clearer understanding of an evolving theory for selectively sampling participants who can "contribute to building the opening and axial coding of the theory" (Creswell, 2013 p. 128). Participants are asked to tell "their story…adding to the data set about a particular concept or category… and may also be asked targeted questions and the resulting data may be used to the theory in its entirety…participants may also be asked to supplement information about linkage between two categories, hence contributing to the emerging theory" (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007 p. 240). This method was conducive for gathering personal and pragmatic data and experiences pertaining to the study. The participants in this study were selected from the five schools, related institutions and experts or scholars in the field of Christian school administration.

The advantage of using theoretical sampling is that it is "directed towards the generation and development of conceptual theory as opposed to creating a descriptive account (Breckenridge and Jones, 2009, p. 114); and involves data collection methods based on concepts and themes derived from data and information gathered from the study environment. The primary objective of theoretical sampling is to collect data from people, places, events and researcher's casual observations "that will maximize opportunities to develop concepts in terms of their properties and dimensions, uncover variations, and identify relationships between concepts" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014 p. 143). This approach is closely related to the purposeful sampling method where participants are selected intentionally based on their knowledge and experience that contributes to the coding and theory development.

The participants in this research study were identified based on theoretical and purposeful sampling. Goulding (2002) described theoretical sampling as "purposeful selection of a sample

according to the developing categories and emerging theory" and refers the strategy as "calculated decision to sample a specific locale according to a preconceived, but reasonable set of dimensions" (p. 66-67). According to Goulding (2002), the unique advantage of grounded theory participant selection is that:

> …groups are chosen when they are needed rather than before the research. Initially, the researcher will go to the most obvious places and the most likely informants in search of information. However, as concepts are identified and the theory starts to develop, further individuals, situations and places may need to be incorporated in order to strengthen the findings. (p. 67)

Creswell (2013) provided guidelines on selecting research participants in grounded theory indicating that they should include "multiple individuals who have responded to an action or participated in a process about a central phenomenon" (p. 120). Furthermore, Bryant and Charmaz (2007) argued that an excellent participant for grounded theory is "one who has been through, or observed, the experience under investigation. Participants must therefore be experts in the experience or the phenomena under investigation" (p. 231). Although the participants in this study may not be referred as experts, they are selected because of their experience and participation in the school environment as students, alumni, parents, teachers, administrators, or institutional leaders.

Participant Selection Criteria

The following points provided guidelines for selecting research participants in this study:

Students

Current students who demonstrated academic excellence and leadership qualities in their classroom are eligible to participate in the study.

Alumni

Former students who graduated from the Christian schools participating in this research in the past 10 years who also demonstrated academic excellence and leadership qualities in their classroom.

Parents

Parents of current or former students who have vested interests in the performance of the school, who regularly participate in school activities, and who are willing and able to interact regarding academics, administrative and strategic issues are candidates to participate in the study. Additionally, parents and students who have moved away from Christian schools for various reasons are important part of the research pool to address the issues and concerns that made them decide to move out form a Christian school.

Teachers

Teachers have the first-hand information and experience of the challenges and opportunities that exist in the classroom and overall school settings. Teachers who have demonstrated academic excellence and leadership qualities in their classroom are eligible to participate in the study.

Administrators and Institutional Leaders

Administrators of local schools, district offices, and state or national Christian education institutions who have experience, knowledge and strategic vision of faith-based educational program leadership capabilities are ideal candidates to participate in this study.

Sample Size

In a grounded theory study "the researcher chooses participants who can contribute to the development of the theory" (Creswell, 2013 p.128). He recommends selecting excellent participants in order to develop a well-saturated theory. The sample size for this study included participants from five local schools based on the selection criteria outlined in the population section above. A total of about 30 participants were identified from current students, alumni, parents, teachers, administrators, experts and institutional leaders, and were provided a voluntary participation consent form to comply with the IRB (Institutional Review Board) requirements.

A key consideration in the grounded theory sampling process is that random sampling may not produce the best desired results. Charmaz and Bryant (2007) contended that "qualitative samples should always include processes of purposeful selection according to specific parameters identified in the study" (p. 234). Purposeful selection ensures saturation, replication and validation of the data and information gathered for the specific nature of the study. Otherwise, random selection can result in the normal distribution of data, with every member of the population having equal chance of being selected in the sampling. However, participants in this research study are expected, or recommended, to be excellent contributors with some specific desired characteristics of the research phenomenon including experience, knowledge and understanding of the research problem under investigation, willingness to participate, ability to interact and communicate clearly.

Instrumentation

The research instrumentation in this study focused on two dimensions of data collection: *conceptualization* and *operationalization*. Singleton and Straits (2010) indicated that conceptualization involves "the process of formulating and clarifying concepts" (p. 116) and contended that conceptualization is continuous interaction between the researcher and the participants until "concepts are refined and elaborated" (p. 116). Operationalization focuses on describing a research concept, and makes the theory clearly distinguishable and measurable in terms of empirical observations in relation to the variables in the study. In the process of data collection for this study, I involved conceptualization in formulating concepts and operationalization in describing the attributes and values of variables represented in the research phenomenon using both traditional and modern methods.

Prior to engaging in conceptualization and operationalization processes, I utilized appreciative inquiry (AI) as outlined by Watkins and Mohr (2011), and Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) as a means to interact with participants in a positive, open-ended questions, giving them a comfortable, non-threatening setting. AI is a "cooperative, co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them" (p. 8). It gives participants an opportunity to systematically express their perspectives on what makes a vibrant organization in an ideal operating environment. AI provides a platform for imagination, inquiry and innovation because the method focuses on positive interactions based on the principle that in AI "instead of negation, criticism and spiraling diagnosis, there is discovery, dream, and design" (p. 8).

The data collection instruments for this study were based on the research question, and classified into three themes: strategic, managerial, and operational in relation to the research

questions. For this research, the guiding principles for gathering data were framed around the following research question:

What type of organizational effectiveness model can enable Christian schools to maintain sustainable performance improvement?

The question was divided into subcategories, as indicated in the data collection section below. These conceptual frameworks were aligned with the operational, managerial and strategic attributes of the research and were integrated into the study using various data collection instruments primarily using formal interviews, but also including phone interviews, email communications, online group discussions, chat rooms and social media interactions as needed. The research participants for the study were categorized in into groups to share their own experiences as stakeholders, including parents of current students, former students, teachers, administrators, education scholars and leaders of Christian academic institution. The table in Appendix 1 presents metrics of the research questions in relation to the research participants. The interview metrics provide the overall perspectives, understanding and sentiments of the stakeholders about their school's performance, values, goals and strategies.

Determining validity of research instruments

The validity of research instrument is the extent in which "the instrument measures what it is actually intended to measure" (Leedy and Ormrod, 2012 p. 92). In this study I included two forms to determine the validity of my instruments. The first form is *face validity*, which "on the surface, measures an instrument *looks like* it's measuring a particular characteristic" (92). Face validity is focusses to understand the context to which a test is subjectively viewed to cover the concept it is intended to measure. It includes transparency or relevance of the test in relation to

the study participants. The second form of validity is referred as *content validity,* which is "the extent to which a measurement instrument is a representative sample of the content area (domain) being measured" (92). Content validity refers to how accurately an assessment is correlates to another assessment that is designed to measure the same construct. Ideally, content validity focusses on ensuring that the research and interview questions truly address the problem at hand. My approach for content validity involved three subject matter experts to pilot and field test the research instruments to determine the two forms of validity as indicated above.

Data Collection

I conducted most of the data collection interviews and document reviews on site at the schools. This venue provided a favorable opportunity to meet with students, teachers, parents, school administrators and institutional leaders to discuss the challenges and opportunities in the schools in reference to the research question. For those who are not on site, I utilized other data collection tools such as phone, email, online chat and audio-video conferencing applications. The target population was narrowly defined to represent the primary stakeholders of the schools, affiliated churches and school systems including students, alumni, parents, teachers, administrators, industry leaders and experts involved in the process of learning, teaching, administration, support and leadership of those schools.

As indicated above, the interview questions were categorized into the three levels and themes: strategic, managerial and operational as shown in Appendix 2. Each category is briefly described below.

Strategic/leadership level

These questions involved high level organizational frameworks and strategies in order to understand the research phenomenon and the implications for the effectiveness of Christian schools from a leadership and executive perspectives. Questions at this level focused on the role of organizational capabilities, leadership, and strategic initiatives such as program effectiveness, cultural dynamics, diversity and spiritual well-being of the stakeholders to address critical components and metrics that are above and beyond the operational issues and problems that Christian schools face on a daily basis.

Managerial level

These research questions addressed the issues and challenges each school faces in recruiting, retention, academic quality and stakeholder satisfaction oriented activities and interactions on each campus. Questions at this level involved management and administrative issues such as academic excellence, student engagement, campus safety, and the internal and external forces impacting the performance of each school. The challenges of managing and directing schools addressing the tests of competition, resource limitations and improving academic performance was included in this category.

Operational/application level

These questions focused on achievements, learning objectives, outcomes, evaluation, and standardization metrics at the student level. Addressing individual student needs, experiences, preferences and perspectives. Questions at this level were intended to capture stakeholder views and expectations in reference to organizational effectiveness and operational efficiencies. The

above discussed approach was necessary to direct the interaction towards theory generation from multiple viewpoints focused on developing a theoretical model. Document reviews and observations enabled me to get a clear picture of the core principles, mission statements, business strategies and actual trends of recruiting and retention in the schools. The modern data collection methodologies, including social media conversations, email interactions, online chats and hosted discussions enabled me to accommodate the meeting time and place restriction that some participants may face.

Table 5

Levels and Assigned Number of Interview Questions

Level	Number of questions
Leadership	22
Management	26
Operational	9

Data collection methods I employed for this study were categorized into two major strategies: *traditional* and *modern* approaches. The following section provides the description, advantages and disadvantages of the methods I used for data collection and how each method was utilized in this research study.

Traditional data collection. Following the guidelines that Creswell, (2013) provided, the traditional data collection methods I used in this research study included observation, interviews, and organizational document review and analysis.

Interviews. I conducted interviews with individuals using various communication mediums, including face-to-face, written and phone interviews. For the face to face interviews, I

used digital audio recorder to capture and transcribe the conversations. I conducted the face to face interviews on site at the schools, primarily in school conference rooms and classrooms. The meetings were limited to one hour each. About half of the interviews were conducted in a face-to- face setting. The interview sites were at the participating schools' offices or conference rooms. In situations where meeting on school grounds were not possible, I arranged other venues to meet with the interviewees at sites that were convenient for them.

Observations. Although I am familiar with the overall organizational settings of the Christian school environment, serving as board member at a Lutheran church that operates a school, I observed the research phenomenon both as an insider and an outsider. My observation focused on stakeholder sentiments about their experiences at Christian schools, strategic initiatives, management and operational frameworks that contribute to the effectiveness of a faith-based academic institution.

Document reviews. I researched organizational documents, statistical reports including journals, newsletters, and archived materials that provided deeper insights and relevant information about the research phenomenon.

To maintain objectivity in my research, I followed guidelines outlined by Leedy and Ormrod (2012) in collecting two or more different kinds of data, getting multiple and varying perspectives on any single issue or event, and making concerted effort to look for evidence that contradicts my beliefs. I also acknowledged the personal relationships and preconceptions that I have so that I can keep those in mind during my research, and the readers can also take them into account when reading my report.

Modern data collection. Modern approaches of data collection in grounded theory research include online questionnaires, email interviews, social media interactions, focus group debates, chat rooms, and online discussion boards. Social media can be used to bring participants from various locations and perspectives for the participants to share experiences and opinions about their specific social phenomena. The only time I used modern data collection methodologies was when I needed to connect with the school alumni and other stakeholders who had firsthand experience about the schools, but were at the time of the research unavailable for a face-to-face interview.

Data Analysis Plan

Miles and Huberman, (1994) argued that there are no specific formats required for a grounded theory study and for qualitative research in general. However, it is ideal that data presentation in grounded theory study be well organized and well-presented so clear conclusions can be deducted. Typical qualitative research presentation formats include "metrics, graphs, charts and networks" (p. 11). In addition, referring to the use of diagrams to explain and illustrate the patterns that exist during axial coding process, Strauss and Corbin (2014) contended that diagramming can help focus the research toward theoretical explanations of the phenomenon under study. Jones and Alony (2011) also argued that "the final result of research using grounded theory as a method of qualitative analysis is a model depicting the basic social process" (p. 109). My ultimate goal in this study is to symbolize the theory and findings of this research using a named model, summarized and presented in a diagram format that is generated from the observations, insights, data collection, analysis and my personal and professional experiences as an educator, and expert in business process analytics and organizational strategy consulting work.

Once the data collection process was completed, I proceeded with data analysis. Strauss and Corbin ((2014) asserted that "analysis is the interplay between the researcher and the data" (p. 13). Data analysis involves the process of manipulating data so that the "meaning and bearing of the problems and hypotheses that initiated the inquiry can be extracted" (Singleton & Straits, 2010 p. 110). There are several types of data analysis methods, many of which involve qualitative data. I utilized three types of data analysis strategies that Creswell (2013) described as; preparing and organizing the data; reducing the data into themes through the process of coding; and condensing and presenting the data into tables, diagrams or presentation materials. The crucial notion to understand here is that data analysis is not an *off-the-shelf* solution; rather, it is a "custom built, revised and 'choreographed'" (p. 150) process designed to gain a clear insight into a unique social phenomenon under investigation.

Data analysis is often intertwined with the data collection process as the researcher has to revisit with the participants to follow-up and clarify data and information. Data collection is often integrated into a cyclical, broader process of observation, pattern examination, information analysis, and presentation and reporting routines. Based on Creswell's (2013) description of the process using the "data analysis spiral" (p.151), I included managing and organizing data into units and files; recoding, reflecting and writing notes; describing, classifying and interpreting data using contextualization, categorization and comparisons; and representing and visualizing data using matrix, diagrams and models.

I utilized an effective data analysis and management software system called NVivo for data classification, organization, storage and retrieval capabilities to simplify the data analysis and representation process. The system afforded pointed data analysis by making data readily available for presentation, manipulation and interpretation. Straus and Corbin (2014) provided

three types of coding phases that can be used in grounded theory research: open coding, axial and selective coding.

Open coding is used to analyze the gathered data for developing a "salient categories of information supported by the text" (Creswell, 2013 p. 160). The purpose of categorizing the data was to help saturate the collected information and to keep looking for new ideas and trends until no unique perspective is discovered. Creswell (2013) described this process as organizing the data into a small set of themes or categories that characterize the process or action being explored in the grounded theory study. The second type of coding, called axial coding involves analyzing the data sources to provide insight within the specific coding categories that are pertinent to the core research phenomenon, the strategies needed to address the research question, and the implications of implementing the chosen strategies. The information and insight gained from the axial coding is useful to analyze and design a theoretical model representing the study. The last type of coding is known as selective coding. Creswell (2013) argued that selective coding enables developing theoretical model where the researcher "generates propositions (or hypotheses) or statements that interrelate the categories in the coding paradigm" (p. 161). Selective coding is my choice to use for this study because it allowed me to create a "conditional matrix"; that is, "an analytical aid—a diagram—that helps the researcher visualize the wide range of conditions and consequences (e.g. society, world) related to the central phenomenon" (p. 161).

The Role of the Researcher and Protection of Participants

As a researcher, my goal was to maintain objectivity and openness during my research project. However, as person who values Christian education, and as a faculty member at

a Christian university, I had vested interest in developing a model of organizational effectiveness and process transformation framework for Christian schools. Based on Straus and Corbin's (2014) argument, the mission and core responsibility of the researcher is to demonstrate a positive social change as a result of the study. The model I proposed in this study, was designed to exert positive impact for analyzing the current state of Christian schools and for providing a valid framework to initiate, plan and carryout effective organizational change.

Similarly, all the stakeholders and participants in this research study have personal or community interests in Christian schools, due to the fact that they have relationship with one or more of the schools in the study. Their connection could be as parent of a current or former student, a church member who advocates for quality Christian education, a faculty or staff member, an administrator or strategic leader. Participation in the study was strictly voluntary, and I provided all participants with a consent form to sign expressing their willful participation. I personally handled all the research related contacts, observations, interactions, interviews, online discussions and social media information exchanges to protect the privacy of the participants and integrity of the data and information obtained in the data collection process.

I ensured that the identity of all research participants was kept confidential. In addition, I also ensured that the data and information collection, and the interactions between the participants and me was protected at the highest possible professional level of protection using physical and technological security measures. To maintain compliance and academic requirements, I obtained approval for the research project participation guidelines and framework from the Walden University Internal Review Board (IRB) and complied with all requirements and expectations for the quality and integrity of the study. I attended carefully to any potential

conflicts of interest and biases that may arise during the research project, and addressed any-such issues appropriately.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

The credibility of a study also known as internal validity is concerned with the extent to which a study accurately reflects the phenomenon it is intended to investigate. Garson (2013) argued that "a study is valid if its measures actually measure what they claim to, and if there are no logical errors in drawing conclusions from the data" (p. 1). Reliability is concerned with the extent to which an experiment, test or any measuring procedure yields the same results on repeated trials. The overall conclusion of Leedy and Ormrod (2012) is that a qualitative research is valid if there are enough controls associated with the study to ascertain that the data produces valid conclusion, and if the observed phenomenon can be used to make generalization considering other situations outside of the study.

The credibility of this study was based on a thorough review of relevant literature and ensuring the research participants have experienced the research phenomenon and as a result have gained a broad and deep understanding of the problems associated with the decline, stagnation and failure of Christian schools. Considerable effort was made to in drafting the interview questions to capture relevant and accurate data was gathered from the research participants. Achieving reliability in the study focused on asking the same interview questions to multiple participants for the purpose of achieving the same or related results that would help draw a conclusion based on the gathered data.

Similar to Leedy and Ormrod (2012), Litwin (1995) also presented five types of validity including face, content, concurrent criterion, predictive criterion, and construct validity (p. 45). Face validity focusses on how good an item or group of items appear; and does not require formal training to assess the subject under study. Content validity describes formal expert review of how good an item or series of items appear, and usually requires formal training or expertise in the subject matter. Concurrent criterion validity measures "how well the item or scale correlates with 'gold standard' measures of the same variable; and is dependent or a generally accepted standards. Whereas, predictive criterion measures how well the item or scale predicts expected future observations" (p. 45) and is used to predict outcomes or events of significance that the item is intended to forecast. Construct validity is concerned with theoretical measure of how meaningful a survey instrument is and is normally determined after many years of experience by researchers.

Achieving validity and reliability in a research study also includes demonstrating that the data collection process was free from any form of researcher's bias. Williams (2015) stated that "Researcher bias is a common risk in face-to-face interviewing when the researcher inadvertently influences the participant's responses through their facial expression, tone of voice or use of wording when asking a question. The participant may then provide an answer that they feel is acceptable or expected by the researcher but does not accurately reflect their own belief or view" (p. 88). Similarly, using purposeful sampling method may cause bias simply because the participants are selected based on their knowledge and experiences of the research phenomenon, and therefore, may have pre-conceived conclusion about the study results. The research instruments were carefully designed to address the issues of bias and improve credibility by

clearly communicating the ultimate goal and value of the study so participants can respond candidly.

Transferability

Transferability refers to a research criterion in which the processes and findings of a study can be applied in another phenomenon different from the original research environment. The focus of transferability is to check on the degree to which the results of a qualitative study can be generalized or applied in other contexts or settings. Williams (2015) argued that "qualitative research findings are not strictly transferable beyond the sample of research participants, due to the small numbers and nonrandom sampling methods usually involved, it is important that a qualitative study should generate results that have wider significance and implications for understanding of the phenomenon being studied" (p. 88). Transferability is defined by the researchers and readers of the study, by providing a thorough description of the research context and the assumptions that were central to the research. The reader notes the specific details of the research situation and methods, and compares them to a similar situation that they are familiar with. If the specifics are comparable, the original research would be deemed more credible. It is essential that the original researcher supplies a highly detailed description of their situation and methods so the research can be deemed reliable.

Dependability

In qualitative study dependability ensures that the research findings are consistent and could be repeated in other research environment. Dependability is based on the assumption of replication and repeatability of the results if the same observation was conducted in two

instances. This is measured by the standard of which the research is conducted, analyzed and presented. Each process in the study should be reported in detail to enable an external researcher to repeat the inquiry and achieve similar results enabling researchers to understand the methods used and their effectiveness. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) noted that dependability can be achieved using triangulation and respondent validation. Triangulations involves the use of more than one source data such as interviews and internal document reviews to validate the researcher's hypothesis. In this research I used triangulation in asking the same interview questions to different participants that in most cases seemed to have yielded the same result.

Confirmability

Confirmability validates if the research findings are supported by the data collected by different researchers in different settings. Confirmability can be enhanced in various ways including by the documenting the processes and procedures of the research for checking and rechecking the data throughout the study. In another settings, a different researcher can verify the outcomes of the study by playing devil's advocate and questioning the previous outcome of the research. This process is used to check if researcher's bias is evident during the study. Although it is true that qualitative research allows the research to bring a unique perspective to the study, confirmability ensures the objectivity of the researcher in conducting the study. An external researcher can judge whether this is the case by studying the data collected during the original inquiry. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) argued that in qualitative research, one uses reflexivity because the collection of data is unavoidably affected by one's own preconceptions; for this reason, qualitative researchers should disclose their biases and discuss how the latter may have

influenced the research. In this study I disclosed my personal connection to Christian schools as a parent of Christian school students, and as a faculty member at a Christian university.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical treatment of research participants is a critical component of social study and qualitative research especially when the study involves personal interaction such as face to face interviews. As Denscombe (2014) noted, it is important for social researchers to respect the rights and dignity of the individuals involved in their studies, ensure that they face no harm for their participation in the research, and act with honesty and integrity towards the participants at all times regardless of their age, gender social, religious and any other protected status. In the consent form sent to participants, I clearly communicated the voluntary participation and options for withdrawal at any stage of the research; as well as ensuring their emotional and physical comfort during interviews for those who chose to meet face to face.

Another important ethical consideration for research participants is to minimize any sense of undue obligation and pressure. To ensure that participants made informed decision prior to their agreement to take part in the study, the purpose and scope of the study as well as the roles and responsibilities of the participants was clearly communicated using the consent forms, and formal IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval was obtained as referenced in Appendix I, J, and K. The consent form included any potential risks, actions to take in case of any discomfort or regrets for participation, and statement of confidentiality. I stated in the consent form that participants can withdraw their participation at any stage of the research should they choose to. After the data collection procedures using interviews and email communications, I sent an email to the participants with transcription or summary of their responses to verify that what I captured

reflected the views and expressions of the participants. I assured the participants that their personal information will be securely kept, and their responses will be treated as strictly confidential.

Summary

In this section I presented a comprehensive description of the research method and the case that grounded theory research methodology was appropriate for this study. I stipulated the rational that the need for the analysis and development of a theory that leads to a conceptual model design for organizational business process transformation and continuous performance improvement in stagnant, struggling or failing Christian schools is best served using grounded theory research. I identified plausible data collection methods, including observations, interviews, document searches and audio-visual information gathering, valid sources of collecting data. I specified that the study included a total of 30 research participants who have experienced the research phenomenon and who have vested or functional interests in the Christian school system. I specified that participation was voluntary, and participants had the freedom to withdraw at any time. I also informed participants that, as researcher, I obtained approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to conducting data collection and any interaction with participants.

Finally, I noted that data analysis in this study was conducted as the continuous interplay between the researcher and the data collection processes, using qualitative data analysis technique that is intuitive, agile and systemic. I applied the NVivo data analysis software system as the primary tool given its facility for proper data classification, information organization, analysis, simplification and presentation. I ensured the validity, reliability, transferability and dependability of the study through using triangulation, asking the same interview question in

different form, and to different participants. I also described the ethical considerations and fair treatment of participants throughout the entire data collection process, while ensuring the privacy of the participant identity and confidentiality of their responses and expressions. I also described my own role as a researcher, disclosed any personal interests and beliefs that might potentially influence the research and its findings, and highlighted the ways in which I attempted to minimize researcher bias.

The next chapter provides the results of the data collection and analysis. Research setting, demographics and the detailed description of the analytical tools and techniques used for data analysis, as well as the data presentation methodologies using tables and charts is given in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Research Results

Introduction

This research study was conducted to examine the internal and external factors that contribute to failure, stagnation, and decline among Christian schools with the goal of developing an organizational change and performance transformation model. The study was guided by the research question: What type of organizational effectiveness model can enable Christian schools to maintain sustainable performance improvement? The research question was presented in three parts: (a) What are the key attributes of an effective Christian school?; (b) What external and internal factors lead to performance decline and failure in Christian schools?; and (c) What type of organizational change model can guide Christian schools for effectiveness and continuous improvement? To answer these questions, I conducted scholarly research and literature reviews, and used interviews to gather data and perspectives from participants who had personal experiences in Christian schools as students, alumni, parents or guardians, teachers, administrators, board members and Christian education industry experts or scholars.

This chapter describes the research setting, demographics of research participants, categorization and codding of the participants, data analysis and the methodologies, tools and processes used to analyze the data. Presentation of the actual responses in the form of keywords and contexts those keywords from the participant expressions was also included in this chapter along with aggregation of the keywords into themes and trends that were used to stipulate a framework for developing a named model of organizational change and performance improvement for Christian schools.

Research Setting

This qualitative research and data collection was conducted in Southern California. The main site for the research was Christ Lutheran School, an elementary through middle school located in Brea, California. Persons from four additional schools within the region were invited to participate and were selected based on the research participation selection criteria outlined in Chapter 3. The intent of the data collection was to gather perspectives, personal experiences and perceptions on the attributes of effectiveness in Christian schools in relation to the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. Data was collected from a total of 32 participants from the five Christian schools with roles ranging from current students, alumni, parents or guardians; teachers, principals or administrators; board members or executives; and industry experts or scholars.

I sent a total of 40 email requests soliciting participation based on the purposeful sampling method outlined in Chapter 3. I asked school principals and board members for their cooperation in identifying and recommending participants that are believed to provide valuable inputs and perspectives from students, alumni, parents, teachers and board members. I also identified and invited industry experts and scholars to participate in the study. My persistence, intentionality and recommended selection of participants resulted in securing a total of 32 participants including 4 students, 5 alumni, 8 parents, 4 teachers, 4 principals, 4 board members and 3 industry experts as indicated on Table 6 below.

The data collection and participant interviews focused on gathering organizational effectiveness metrics and conceptual perspectives of Christian schools from three levels involving operational, management and leadership. As listed in Appendix A, a total of 30 interview questions were prepared and assigned to participants based on their roles. The validity

of the interview instruments was tested by three teachers who volunteered to conduct the reliability and validity of the research interview questions.

The interview questions for the operational perspective focused on students, alumni, parents or guardians and teachers. The questions pertaining to management perspective focused primarily on principals and teachers. The leadership oriented research questions were primarily directed towards the industry experts, principals and board members or executives. However, the research participant responses were not strictly restrained towards their specific roles or participation categories. For example, some students responded with high level and strategic perspectives; while some board members and scholars' responses covered operational aspects. Therefore, the responses spanned across different categories, and therefore were coded accordingly.

Demographics

As indicated above, research participants were grouped into three categories based on their participation roles as described in the Table below:

Table 6

Participant Role Classification

Participation level	Participant role	Number of participants
Operational		(17)
	Students	4
	Alumni	5
	Parents / Guardians	8
Management		(8)
	Teachers	4
	Principals / Administrators	4
Leadership		(7)
	Board Members / Executives	4
	Industry Experts / Scholars	3

The interviews were conducted using face-to-face on campus meetings, email forms, and phone calls as per the preference of the participants. All face-to-face interviews lasted 30-60 minutes. The face-to-face interviews included audio recording and note-taking, where the recordings were transcribed to maximize the accuracy of the data collection. Prior to the face-to-face and phone meetings, the interview questions were emailed to the participants to give them time to think and prepare about their experiences in responding to the questions.

The email forms were sent directly to the participants with instructions to answer the interview questions and return the forms back to me within one week which most of the participants were able to do. . The phone interviews took place at a time that was convenient for the interviewees. After conducting some interviews, some minor explanations and editing was added to the interview questions for the purpose of clarity and simplicity for the participants, and question number 26 was omitted from the list because it was identified as a duplicate of another question.

The participants answered interview questions as to their level of comfort and degree of confidence. The following table describes the number of questions that were assigned to the participants based on their roles and the feedback received for the validity testing:

Table 7

Participation roles and assigned interview questions

Participant Roles	Total # of Questions Assigned to Roles	Question Numbers (Q#)
Students	7	#1, 2, 3,4, 5, 27, 28
Alumni	7	#1, 2, 3,4, 5, 27, 28
Parents / Guardians	13	#1, 2, 3, 6, 10, 18, 20, 21, 23, 27, 28, 30
Teachers	16	#2, 3, 4, 6, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 29, 30
Principals / Administrators	25	#2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 29, 30
Board Members / Executives	24	#2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30
Industry Experts / scholars	16	#5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 29

Maintaining confidentiality and privacy of the research participants was taken seriously.

The following table outlines the codes used to mask the identity of the participants:

Table 8

Participation roles and their assigned codes

No	Category	Code
1	Student	S1
2	Student	S2
3	Student	S3
4	Student	S4
5	Alumni	A5
6	Alumni	A6
7	Alumni	A7
8	Alumni	A8
9	Alumni	A9
10	Parent	P10

(Table Continues)

No	Category	Code
11	Parent	P11
12	Parent	P12
13	Parent	P13
14	Parent	P14
15	Parent	P15
16	Teacher	T16
17	Teacher	T17
18	Teacher	T18
19	Teacher	T19
20	Teacher	T20
21	Administrator / Principal	T21
22	Administrator / Principal	T22
23	Administrator / Principal	T23
24	Administrator / Principal	T24
25	Executive / Board Member	E25
26	Executive / Board Member	E26
27	Executive / Board Member	E27
28	Executive / Board Member	E28
29	Industry Expert / Scholar	X29
30	Industry Expert / Scholar	X30
31	Industry Expert / Scholar	X31

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted based on the data gathered from research interviews and literature reviews. For the interview data analysis, the NVivo 10 software was used to facilitate identification and categorization of themes, concepts, most frequently used terms, interconnected phrases, keywords and trends using nodes. The data analysis from the literature review involved aggregating the keywords used in the organizational change and performance improvement models presented by Galbraith (2007; 2014) STAR Model, Kotter (1996; 2012) 8-Step Model, and Hiatt (2006) ADKAR Model and many others. The first data analysis strategy used was word frequency for all the interview questions. The method used for the word search and word frequency included the actual word, and synonyms that stem from the root word. The words

selected were keywords involving verbs or adjectives that substantiate description, action, emotion, opinion or perspective in reference to Christian school performance and experiences. The literature review data analysis summary is given following the interview data analysis section.

The Data Analysis Process

The process of data analysis included using the NVivo 10 application to query the top 5 keywords, based on word frequency and themes associated with response of the participants for all the interview questions. Once the keywords for each response were aggregated, the next step was clustering the keywords and their synonyms into related themes using a spreadsheet to calculate the frequency of the aggregate sum of the keywords. After the aggregation, NVivo was again used to generate word tree analysis to observe the context and usage of the words, phrases and connected themes. The word tree diagrams for the first six interview questions are included in this study to show the methodology.

The following section provides the list of interview questions and the frequency of the top 5 keywords and their synonyms that participants used to express their perspectives regarding their experiences, opinions, feelings and recommendations in connection to Christian schools. The related word-tree map describes the contexts in which the keywords were used by participants as presented in the context of keywords tables.

Interview questions and participants' responses along with the frequency of the top keywords are listed below:

Q1. How would you describe your experiences at your Christian school? Discuss in terms of personal satisfaction in academic and personal experiences…

Table 9

Keyword Frequencies in Q1.

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Experience	25
	Prepared	13
	Positive	9
	Academic	8
	Value	7

A sample context of the keywords as used by the participants is listed below:

Table 10

Context of Keywords in Q1.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Prepared	A5	I felt prepared for high school challenges
Experience	A5	My experience at a Christian school had a great impact on my life.
Positive	P14	My two children had positive experiences
Academic	P13	We are very pleased with our children's academic achievements.
Value	S1	Christian school did establish the foundation for my work ethic and values

The responses from students, alumni and parents seem to indicate that most students and their parents enjoyed their experience in developing academic excellence, personal and social values, and more importantly establishing a firm foundation for their faith and work ethic.

Few participants expressed that they would prefer to see change and improvement involving academic excellence at their Christian schools.
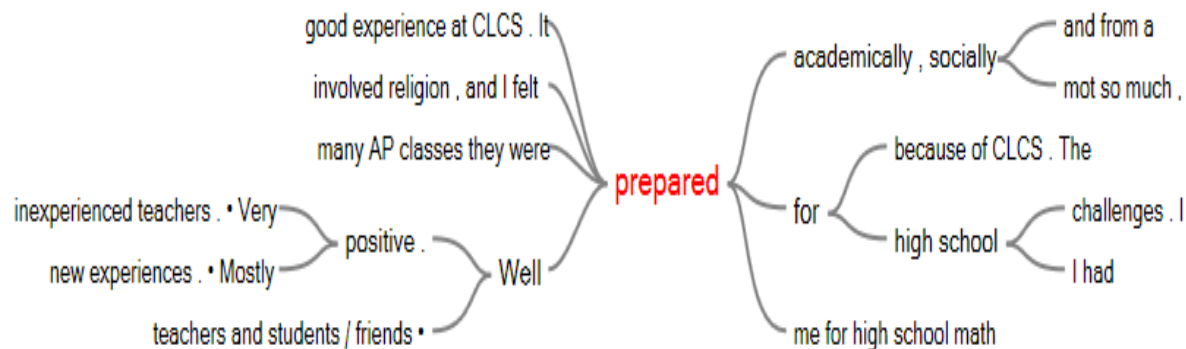
Figure 4. Word tree for the keyword *Prepared* in Q1.

Q2.   What do you think are the strengths of your Christian school?

Table 11

Keyword Frequencies in Q2

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Academic	17
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Caring	14
Board Members / Executives	Strong	12
Industry Experts / scholars	Experience	11
	Community	8

Table 12

Context of Keywords in Q2.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Academic	S4	I believe the strengths of my current school are mainly focused on academics.
Caring	P10	Our school is to a Christ-centered, caring community that celebrates, nurtures, teaches and equips for a Christian life
Strong	P11	Strong academics, sound religion
Experience	P13	Our experience at our children's Christian school is mixed
Community	S1	It was also a positive and morally upright community that kept me on the right

The responses seem to indicate that participants appreciate their positive experience in strong academics and caring community environment in Christian schools.
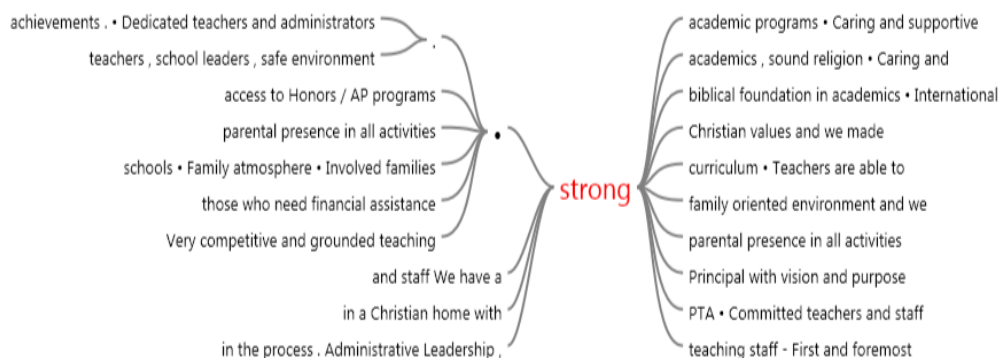
*Figure 5.*Word tree for the keyword Strong in Q2.

Q3.   What do you think are the weaknesses of your Christian school?

Table 13

Keyword Frequencies in Q3

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Communication	37
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Process	23
Board Members / Executives	Advanced	20
Industry Experts / scholars	Resources	15
	Competitive	13
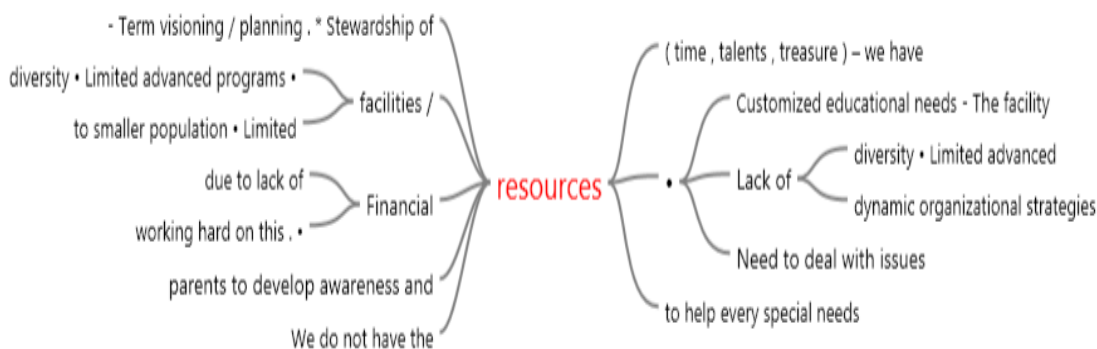
*Figure 6.*Word tree for the keyword Resources in Q3.

Table 14

Context of Keywords in Q3.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Communication	E25	lack of communication
Process	T20	We also need to dramatically improve our brand (website primarily) and organizational processes
Advanced	P13	The curriculum didn't foster academic growth and limited students from taking advanced courses
Resources	P12	Concerned about long term viability due to lack of financial resources
Competitive	E26	Lack of adequate and competitive programs

The responses indicate that the weaknesses in Christian schools may be related to the lack of effective communication and advanced processes and resources, and shortages in competitive academic and extracurricular programs.

Q4.   What thoughts do you have on ways to improve the performance at your Christian school? (Strategies, Processes and Activities you envision to improve effectiveness).

Table 15

Keyword Frequencies in Q4

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Improve	32
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Quality	21
Board Members / Executives	Continuous	16
Industry Experts / scholars	Structure	15
	Diversity	11

Figure 7. Word tree for the keyword Improve in Q4.

Table 16

Context of Keywords in Q4.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Improve	T22	Continuously monitor and improve academic offerings
Quality	T21	Maintain stellar academic quality
Continuous	E28	Engage in continuous improvement
Structure	X30	looking at infrastructure – are finances going where they are needed – to the student
Diversity	S1	The Christian schools I attended often lacked diversity, lacked an open approach to secular issues

Responses indicate that participants think continuous change and improvement in processes, strategies, structure, academics and community engagement would result in higher quality educational standards.

Q5.   What do you see are the primary challenges that Christian schools are facing?

Table 17

Keyword Frequencies in Q5

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Support	27
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Community	24
Board Members / Executives	Quality	18
Industry Experts / scholars	Resources	8
	Financial	6

Figure 8. Word tree for the keyword Financial in Q5.

Table 18

Context of Keywords in Q5.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Support	T21	Demonstrate caring and supportive environment
Community	T17	Students are taught, inspired, and prepared to be critical thinkers and authentic Christians
Quality	T23	High quality curriculum adopted through a data driven team approach where teachers are included in the process.
Resources	E28	Develop sufficient resources – athletics, academics, facilities…
Financial	P12	Concerned about long term viability due to lack of financial resources

Participant responses indicate that primary challenges of Christian schools include financial and related resources, community engagement and support, and quality of academic programs.

Q6.   How would you describe a successful or effective Christian school?

Table 19

Keyword Frequencies in Q6

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Service	31
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Advanced	31
Board Members / Executives	Resource	22
Industry Experts / scholars	Administration	19
	Diverse	16
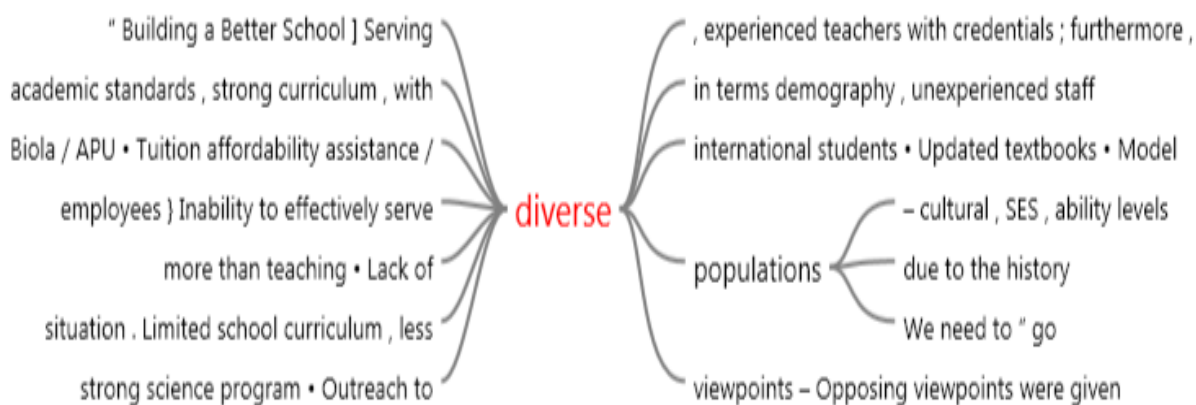
Figure 9. Word tree for the keyword Diverse in Q6.

Table 20

Context of Keywords in Q6.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Service	P13	Giving back through service projects and volunteer events.
Advanced	S3	Offer more advanced academic programs, more resources
Resource	T24	Lack of resources (financial and human capital.
Administration	E25	Caring and engaged administration, supportive parent community
Diverse	P13	The school culture wasn't diverse and there was an obvious conservative bias

Responses indicate that an effective Christian school should have strong administrative and organizational capabilities, diverse community services, effective communication strategies, well defined, goals and objectives, and effective resource development strategies.

Q7.   How would you describe your strategies for Outreach (recruiting) students?

Table 21

Keyword Frequencies in Q7

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Communities	46
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Events	23
Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Board Members / Executives	Personal	19
Industry Experts / scholars	Activities	18
	Marketing	6

Table 22

Context of Keywords in Q7.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Community	T24	We could do a better job of connecting with the local community.
Events	T22	Hold community events on campus, Invite community to school events, Attend community events and interact with local leaders
Personal	T21	Personal outreach, word or moth, spread the good news
Activities	X29	Excellent frequent communication with parents (usually via email). Extracurricular activities.
Marketing	E28	Need to have more aggressive strategies and marketing efforts

Participants responded that best strategies for recruiting students include community outreach, scheduling events and activities, and personal or word of mouth marketing.

Q8.   How would you describe effective strategies for student retention?

Table 23

Keyword Frequencies in Q8

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Activities	42
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Support	19
Board Members / Executives	Caring	19
Industry Experts / scholars	Engagement	10
	Excellence	5

Table 24

Context of Keywords in Q8.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Activities	E27	We offer all kinds of activities where we teach and model appropriate behavior.
Support	P13	making sure the students had the academic strengths to support that Christian leadership
Caring	P11	Caring and supportive environment
Engagement	E25	Total school engagement (Teachers, Parents, Students, Administration);
Excellence	T23	Purposefully pursue excellence and a high level of communication with the parents.

Participants responded that effective student retention strategies include providing caring and supportive environment by engaging students and families through strategic activities to promote academic excellence.

Q9.   How would you describe effective strategies for financial affordability?

Table 25

Keyword Frequencies in Q9

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Create	15
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Quality	15
Board Members / Executives	Strategies	10
Industry Experts / scholars	Offer	9
	Scholarship	4

Table 26

Context of Keywords in Q9.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Create	T24	Create a more transparent assistance and evaluation system to encourage continued growth
Quality	E27	Use a global assessment development and data analysis process in our courses to continually improve quality.
Strategies	E26	We need new strategies and aggressive marketing
Offer	S3	Offer more advanced academic programs, more resources
Scholarship	T22	Raise funds to offer scholarships for those who can't afford

Responses indicate that effective strategies for affordability in Christian schools involves creating or developing successful and high quality strategies to offer scholarships.

Q10. How would you describe the academic standards and quality in your Christian school? (Compared to other private and public schools…)

Table 27

Keyword Frequencies in Q10

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Superior	48
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Standard	33
Board Members / Executives	Advanced	22
Industry Experts / scholars	High	21
	Good	19

Table 28

Context of Keywords in Q10.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Superior	T22	Superior academics
Standard	P13	Christian schools need to should have strict standards of behavior, high academic standards, strong curriculum, with diverse, experienced teachers
Advanced	P13	The curriculum didn't foster academic growth and limited students from taking advanced courses
High	E28	Cultivate solid and high performing academic culture
Good	A8	I thought my schools did a good job in pushing us to do our best academically.

Participant responses indicate that the academic standards and quality in Christian schools is superior to that of public school and their math and science performance is very good and highly advanced.

Q11.   What do you think are the external factors that impact effectiveness of Christian schools?

Table 29

Keyword Frequencies in Q11

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Leaders	7
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Community	6
Board Members / Executives	Culture	6
Industry Experts / scholars	Church	3
	Media	3

Table 30

Context of Keywords in Q11.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Leaders	P11	Board/leader should be transparent and proactive
Community	T17	Community Strategies: improving; social media; outreach to neighborhood and feeder schools
Culture	E28	Cultivate solid and high performing academic culture
Church	P10	Our Church and School work together to reach the community and make them feel welcome.
Media	X29	Effective use of the internet and social media is mandatory for attracting students

Participants responded that leadership in the community, culture, church and the media

has significant impact for the effectiveness of Christian schools and their mission.

Q12.   How would you describe the impact of homeschooling in your Christian school?

Table 31

Keyword Frequencies in Q12

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Competitive	6
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Sheltered	5
Board Members / Executives	Reasonable	3
Industry Experts / scholars	Program	3
	Opportunity	2

Table 32

Context of Keywords in Q12.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Competitive	E26	Very competitive and grounded teaching
Sheltered	T24	More sheltered environment
Reasonable	E25	It is a reasonable alternative for those families who want to possibly combat some of the external factors

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Program	E27	Robust online program and some homeschoolers take advantage of that opportunity
Opportunity	T19	This allows for a tremendous mission opportunity, on the other the culture of the school can be impacted negatively

Participant responses indicate that although homeschooling is perceived as a competitor to Christian schools, homeschools can also be partners and feeders to Christian schools. One challenge that was expressed by the participants is that homeschools provide a sheltered educational environment and that occasionally homeschooled students have difficulty fitting into the school culture and community environment. However, they do offer great opportunity for Christian schools to provide reasonable and cost oriented outreach to combat the challenges and stigma of antisocial and individualistic attitudes connected with homeschooling.

Q13.   How would you describe the impact of charter schools on your Christian school?

Table 33

Keyword Frequencies in Q13

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Quality	8
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Education	6
Board Members / Executives	Learning	5
Industry Experts / scholars	Alternative	5
	Vision	3

Table 34

Context of Keywords in Q13.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Quality	T24	There is a viable alternative for quality education.
Education	T22	Private education at no cost
Learning	T23	Having educational options helps find the best learning environment for students.
Alternative	E25	I think it is a reasonable alternative
Vision	T20	establish a vision for the future…a strategic plan that inspires people

Respondents seem to indicate that Charter schools operate with a vision to provide higher quality educational and learning experience that is an alternative to public schools and private schools. This can have significant negative impact on Christian schools.

Q14. How would you describe the impact of affordability on your school?

Table 35

Keyword Frequencies in Q14

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Provide	5
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Families	4
Board Members / Executives	Scholarship	3
Industry Experts / scholars	Raise	2
	Bring	2

Table 36

Context of Keywords in Q14.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Provide	E27	Provide in need based financial aid
Families	T16	communicate and put the students and their families as a high priority
Scholarship	T22	offer substantial scholarships
Raise	T22	Raise funds to offer scholarships for those who can't afford
Bring	T23	families who can't bring their kids here because they can't afford it

Participants indicate that affordability in Christian schools should include strategies to raise funds and provide scholarships to worthy families and bring even those who otherwise cannot afford it.

Q15.   What internal capabilities do you think are essential for sustainable performance improvement in your Christian school?

Table 37

Keyword Frequencies in Q15

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Operation	39
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Process	27
Board Members / Executives	Improvement	25
Industry Experts / scholars	Quality	24
	Sustainability	18

Table 38

Context of Keywords in Q15.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Operation	T22	Develop resources to sustain effective operations
Process	T20	We also need to dramatically improve our brand (website primarily) and organizational processes.
Improvement	X31	There needs to be a culture in the school that embraces the relentless pursuit of improvement.
Quality	E27	Assessment development and data analysis process in our courses to continually improve quality.
Sustainability	E26	Strategically positioned in order to attract financial sustainability

Participant responses indicate that internal capabilities necessary to maintain sustainable performance improvement include effective operations management, continuous change, process improvement, sustainable and quality programs and activities.

Q16.   How would you describe effective leadership in your school?

Table 39

Keyword Frequencies in Q16

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Positive	16
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Knowledge	16
Board Members / Executives	Thought	11
Industry Experts / scholars	Quality	10
	Service	6

Table 40

Context of Keywords in Q16.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Positive	E26	provides a well-rounded education that fosters a positive environment of learning and academic excellence
Knowledge	P13	Effective leadership in Christian schools is critical and important with real-world knowledge and experience.
Thought	X29	A school obviously needs a well-thought out curriculum knowing that the teacher is the "living curriculum.
Quality	T23	High quality curriculum adopted through a data driven team approach where teachers are included in the process.
Service	X31	Students should ideally have the opportunity to be involved in serving others through service to society

Responses indicate that effective leadership characteristics include having positive

attitudes, knowledge and thoughtfulness, and an attitude of excellence in quality of service

offered at Christian schools.

Q17.   How would you describe effective operations management in your Christian school?

Table 41

Keyword Frequencies in Q17

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Organize	26
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Communication	18
Board Members / Executives	Administration	14
Industry Experts / scholars	Management	14
	Function	5

Table 42

Context of Keywords in Q17.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Organize	E28	Improve organizational, strategic and resource development initiatives
Communication	23	Purposefully pursue excellence and a high level of communication
Administration	X31	Administration and teachers must continually seek excellence
Management	T19	Operations management is always great, especially from the executive offices
Function	E27	functions of the ministry collaborate on strategy and execution

Participant's responses indicate that effective operations management includes outstanding organizational, management and administrative capabilities coordinated by strong communication to perform all the necessary functions.

Q18.   How would you describe your school culture? (Friendly? Competitive? Reserved, Adaptive?)

Table 43

Keyword Frequencies in Q18

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Community	70
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Friendly	37
Board Members / Executives	Adaptive	30
Industry Experts / scholars	Accommodation	23
	Reserved	23

Table 44

Context of Keywords in Q18.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Community	E28	Small and intimate community
Friendly	E26	The school culture is very friendly, however it is not very diverse
Adaptive	E28	Reserved and less adaptive to change
Accommodation	T20	We are a family friendly, low expectations accommodating kind of culture.
Reserved	E28	Reserved and less adaptive to change

Participant responses indicate that the culture in their Christian schools seems to be friendly, accommodating, but also reserved; however, they also describe that change and adaptation is essential for maintaining continuous improvement and growth.

Q19.   What role does school culture play on the effectiveness of your Christian school?

Table 45

Keyword Frequencies in Q19

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Change	119
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Process	50
Board Members / Executives	Development	50
Industry Experts / scholars	Community	49
	Critical	27

Table 46

Context of Keywords in Q19.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Community	E28	Small and intimate community
Friendly	E26	The school culture is very friendly, however it is not very diverse
Adaptive	E28	Reserved and less adaptive to change
Accommodation	T20	We are a family friendly, low expectations accommodating kind of culture.
Reserved	E28	Reserved and less adaptive to change

Participants' responses indicate that schools culture is critically important for the process development and continuous change for the good of the community.

Q20.   How would you describe the students' spiritual development at your Christian school?

(How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's spiritual development?)

Table 47

Keyword Frequencies in Q20

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Important	9
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Focus	6
Board Members / Executives	Understanding	6
Industry Experts / scholars	Faith	3
	Foundation	2

Table 48

Context of Keywords in Q20.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Important	P10	To start them on the right path early with Christian values and morals is so important.
Focus	P13	The Christian school did focus on moral and character developments

(Table Continues)

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Understanding	X29	a knowledge of the Holy One, who have an understanding of the Gospel, who can defend the faith
Faith	P12	The school provides Strong foundation for students' faith and spiritual life.
Foundation	E28	Building biblical foundation in our students and provide excellent academic programs

Participant responses indicate that spiritual development is critically for Christian schools to focus as it provides the foundation for strong faith and understanding in students' lives.

Q21.   How would you describe the students' moral development at your Christian school? (How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's moral and character development?)

Table 49

Keyword Frequencies in Q21

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Important	100
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Activities	95
Board Members / Executives	Message	52
Industry Experts / scholars	Interact	31
	Expected	11

Table 50

Context of Keywords in Q21.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Important	P10	I think it's very important and necessary to instill in our children strong morals and Christian values
Activities	A9	Personal growth in God and coordinating the schedule with Confirmation, church and youth activities.
		(Table Continues)

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Message	P14	I think the teachers, the church staff and the principal all give a united message about good morals.
Interact	T20	Students I interact with they have a strong sense of duty toward their grades and mostly strong work ethic.
Expected	X31	An effective school culture as one where high expectations for performance abound

Participants' responses indicate that students' moral development is expected in the Christian school environment that is based in the Christian message and is important that be integrated into all the activities of the school.

Q22.   How would you describe the students' social development at your Christian school? (How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's social and emotional development?)

Table 51

Keyword Frequencies in Question 22

Participant roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, alumni, parents	Activities	31
Teachers, principals/administrators	Culture	22
Board members/executives	Christian	18
Industry experts/scholars	Emotional	10
	Understanding	10

Table 52

Context of Keywords in Q22.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Activities	E27	We offer all kinds of activities where we teach and model appropriate behavior.
Culture	E28	Cultivate solid and high performing academic culture
Christian	P13	Place a greater emphasis on academics and make the tuition affordable while maintaining the Christian based learning.
Emotional	X30	Environments need to be created where children can socially and emotionally develop.
Understanding	T24	understanding of stewardship and leadership to spend wisely

Participants' responses seem to indicate that students' social development in Christian schools is critical in developing the emotional, cultural and the understanding of faith aspects in all school activities.

Q23.   How would you describe the effectiveness of the Mission statement of your Christian school?

Table 53

Keyword Frequencies in Q23

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Change	149
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Community	70
Board Members / Executives	Development	67
Industry Experts / scholars	Growth	41
	Relationship	25

Table 54

Context of Keywords in Q23.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Change	T20	Need to change mission statement, establish a vision for the future…a strategic plan that inspires people.
Community	S1	A positive and morally upright community that kept me on the right path until I was able to make morally conscious decisions of my own.
Development	P11	Should have effective marketing, management and resource development strategies
Growth	18	The school, programs, and personnel need to be self-aware, self- and co-regulating, growth-oriented, and aware of directions and advances in the fields
Relationship	T22	strong relationships and connections with surrounding communities

The participants' responses seem to indicate that the Mission Statement of a Christian school should focus on continuous development, change, growth and effective community relationships.

Q24.　How would you assess the current strategies and operating frameworks for your school and what would you change or improve?

Table 55

Keyword Frequencies in Q24

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Change	16
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Measure	7
Board Members / Executives	Reason	7
Industry Experts / scholars	Process	6
	Commitment	3

Table 56

Context of Keywords in Q24.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Change	T18	Raising the bar academically for admissions will drastically change who we are and who we become
Measure	24	I would look for more ways to measure the effectiveness of what we do
Reason	E25	It is one of the reasons to make sure that we have a more transparent approach
Process	T23	High quality curriculum adopted through a data driven team approach where teachers are included in the process.
Commitment	T21	Focus mission and vision of the school, long term commitment and vision

Respondents seem to indicate that the strategies and operating frameworks in Christian schools should focus on continuously measuring and assessing the school performance and make commitment to improve processes.

Q25.   How would you evaluate your strategies for engaging and connecting with local communities and how would you improve it?

Table 57

Keyword Frequencies in Q25

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Organic	38
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Improve	23
Board Members / Executives	Events	30
Industry Experts / scholars	Engage	19
	Measure	14

Table 58

Context of Keywords in Q25.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Organic	X29	Most schools have a defacto mission statement that is organic… recommend schools have a motto that encapsulates the Mission.
Improve	P11	Improve organizational capabilities
Events	E25	Could benefit from a dose of norm building and inclusionary events.
Engage	E25	Encourages open dialogue and engagement
Measure	T24	would look for more ways to measure the effectiveness of what we do and look for the reasons

Responses indicate that Christian schools need to develop organic processes to engage

with local communities using events and continuously measure the outcomes to improve

relationships.

Q27.   How would you describe the benefits of attending a Christian school?

Table 59

Keyword Frequencies in Q27

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Knowledge	55
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Activities	22
Board Members / Executives	Develop	17
Industry Experts / scholars	Prepared	11
	Faith	7

Table 60

Context of Keywords in Q27.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Knowledge	S1	I think attending Christian school has also helped me be a morally upright individual and motivated me to be an educated and positive impact on my world
Activities	A9	Personal growth in God and coordinating the schedule with Confirmation, church and youth activities.
Develop	E28	Develop high level of academic, social and spiritual capabilities
Prepared	P12	Well prepared academically, socially and from a religious perspective
Faith	S1	The academics in the classes were always geared to support the faith.

Participants' responses focused on development of faith-based learning and knowledge that strongly prepares students for the next stage of their life.

Q28.   What do you think are the disadvantages or challenges of attending a Christian school?

Table 61

Keyword Frequencies in Q28

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Setting	19
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Limited	16
Board Members / Executives	Small	12
Industry Experts / scholars	Diversity	10
	Belief	9

Table 62

Context of Keywords in Q28.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Setting	P10	Another disadvantage in the small school setting is social issues that sometimes arise due to "small pool" of friends.
Limited	P13	The Christian school was less diverse and was limited in academics. The curriculum didn't foster academic growth and limited students from taking advanced courses
Small	P14	I think the small classes can be a weakness, if the class is too small. It limits the pool of friends
Diversity	A6	No diversity, kids of same background, Socially underdeveloped
Belief	A9	The disadvantage is that you are surrounded by the same people, with the same belief, everyday

Participants' responses indicate that disadvantages of attending Christian schools include limited setting for academic achievements, the smaller size, lack of diversity and very narrow-minded and closed beliefs and worldviews that persist in Christian schools.

Q29.   What other concerns or recommendations do you have that may impact the performance of your school?

Table 63

Keyword Frequencies in Q29

Participant Roles	Top 5 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Change	38
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Activities	14
Board Members / Executives	Struggle	13
Industry Experts / scholars	Operation	10
	Improve	10

Table 64

Context of Keywords in Q29.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Change	T20	Need to change mission statement, establish a vision for the future…a strategic plan that inspires people
Activities	E27	We offer all kinds of activities where we teach and model appropriate behavior
Struggle	P10	While the small school is an advantage it can also be a disadvantage to some kids that might already struggle socially
Operation	T23	Develop resources to sustain effective operations
Improve	E28	Improve organizational, strategic and resource development initiatives

Participants' responses indicate that Christian schools should engage in continuous improvement and organizational change to avoid their struggles and improve their operations and routine activities.

Q30.   What thoughts and recommendations do you have to improve Christian school performance?   (You may discuss from strategic, administrative, management, community outreach, and sustainability perspectives?)

Table 65

Keyword Frequencies in Q30

Participant Roles	Top 10 keywords	Frequency
Students, Alumni, Parents	Change	79
Teachers, Principals / Administrators	Sustainability	21
Board Members / Executives	Performance	21
Industry Experts / scholars	Quality	19
	Strategic	12

Table 66

Context of Keywords in Q30.

Keyword	Participant Code	Context
Change	T18	Raising the bar academically for admissions will drastically change who we are and who we become
Sustainability	E26	Christian schools have to be strategic… in order to attract financial sustainability
Performance	P11	Continuously negotiate with teachers, parents to improve performance
Quality	E27	Attracted to us because of our high quality in academics, athletics and the arts … and our strong values.
Strategic	E28	Improve organizational, strategic and resource development initiatives

Participants' responses indicate recommendation for continuous change and performance improvement through aggressive community engagement using events, effective strategies, management and administration, and forming a coalition to maintain sustainable quality programs and academic excellence.

Summary of the top 50 critical keywords are given below. The theoretical model developed was based on the constructs of the keywords and contexts as described in the tables above, as well as the key variables identified from the literature review as presented in the next section.

Table 67

Summary of the top 50 Keywords and frequencies.

Keyword	Frequency
Change	401
Community	273
Activities	222
Development	151
Quality	115
Process	106

Keyword	Frequency
Improvement	90
Advanced	73
Knowledge	71
Communication	55
Events	53
Message	52
Operation	49
Superior	48
Support	46
Resources	45
Growth	41
Academic	40
Sustainability	39
Organic	38
Diversity	37
Friendly	37
Service	37
Administration	33
Caring	33
Standard	33
Improve	32
Interact	31
Adaptive	30
Engagement	29
Culture	28
Critical	27
Organize	26
Positive	25
Relationship	25
Prepared	24
Reserved	23
Strategies	22
Measure	21
Performance	21
Competitive	19
Continuous	16
Limited	16
Understanding	16
Create	15
Structure	15

Keyword	Frequency
Management	14
Struggle	13
Strong	12
Experience	11

Data Presentation

The following section is an analytical summary and data aggregation of the above listed tables and other models that pertained to the participants' responses in reference to various perspectives, themes and perception about Christian schools.

Data Analysis and Results Aggregation of Literature Review

The data analysis of the literature review focused on aggregating the key variables, phrases and themes presented in the models of organizational change and performance improvement models that serve as popular models in the corporate world, but also have been adopted by many non-profit organizations. In the following table I provide the description of the model, author and keywords that constitute the models discussed in Chapter 2.

Table 68

Key Variables of Popular Organizational Change Models

Model	Organization	Author	Key variable
STAR	USC Marshall Galbraith Consultants	Jay Galbraith	Strategy Structure Processes Rewards People

(Table Continues)

Model	Organization	Author	Key variable
8-Step	Harvard Business School Kotter International	John Kotter	*Establish a Sense of Urgency* *Create* the Guiding Coalition *Develop* a Vision and Strategy *Communicate* the Change Vision *Empower* Broad Based Action *Generate* Short-Term Wins *Never Let Up* *Anchor* New Approaches in the Culture
ADKAR	Prosci	Jeff Hiatt	Awareness Desire Knowledge Ability Reinforcement

Summary of Aggregate Data Analysis

Based on the literature review and participant interview, the following table contains the

aggregate themes and keywords that constitute organizational performance improvement in

Christian schools.

Table 69

Aggregation of Key Variables

Keyword	Related Words			
Ability	Capabilities	Capacity		
Awareness	Knowledge	Understanding		
Change	Improvement	Innovation	Transformation	
Communicate	Connect	Negotiate		
Community	People	Culture	Diversity	
Create	Generate	Develop	Establish	Cultivate
Desire	Urgency	Motivation	Reward	
Resource	Reinforcement	Reward	Anchor	Empower
Management	Organization	Strategy	Structure	Operation
Never Let Up	Support	Sustainable		
Performance	Achievement	Excellence		
Process	Standard	System		
Quality	Superior	Sustainable	Character	Unique

To answer the research questions posed in Chapter 1, the literature review and participant interview responses were analyzed using the NVivo software and data analysis applications such as Microsoft Excel to sort and prioritize the themes and frequencies of the data and information gathered. The three research questions were:

1. What are the key attributes of an effective Christian school?

2. What external and internal factors leading to performance decline and failure in Christian schools?

3. What type of organizational change model can guide Christian schools for effectiveness and continuous improvement?

The first question pertained to identifying key attributes of an effective Christian school? The primary goal of the research study was to find out what type of organizational effectiveness theoretical model can enable Christian schools to maintain effectiveness and sustainable performance improvement. The research question focused on identifying key attributes of an effective Christian school, external and internal factors leading to performance decline and failure in Christian schools, and developing an organizational change model can guide Christian schools for effectiveness and continuous improvement. The following section describes summary of the key attributes of effectiveness in Christian schools. It seems to me that you need to restate the first RQ and then give the data. Then the 2nd RQ and the data etc. Below you go to the 2nd research question, but I don't see data related to the first one.

Key attributes of a Christian school are the characteristics that enable it maintain competitive and strategic advantages, performance excellence, customer satisfaction including

students and their parents or guardians; and stakeholder loyalty and commitment including

teachers, alumni, supporters and advocates. The participant interview responses and analysis of

the literature review indicate that attributes of effectiveness are linked to visionary leadership

and efficient operations management. The analysis of the keywords as partially depicted using

the word tree diagrams (Figure 4-9), and the literature review of the popular organizational

change and performance improvement models indicate the following as some of the attributes of

effective Christian school:

Academic Excellence. Preparing students successfully for their next level of academic

tenure such as from elementary to middle school, and from high school to college. Similarly,

preparing students with strong morals, spiritual values and social awareness were important

characteristics of effectiveness in Christian schools. Resource Development: Academic

excellence and effective management would not be feasible if the school is struggling

financially. Therefore, designing strong resource development strategies such as fundraising and

utilizing creative means of income streams is essential. This can be achieved through aggressive

engagement and fostering healthy community relationships.

Continuous Improvement: One of the key attributes of organizational effectiveness is

awareness and implementation of continuous improvement strategies including educational

programs and teaching and learning methodology enhancements.

Diversity Awareness: Diversity in worldview, social, and ethnic composition in an educational institution adds strength towards adaptation of broader outlook for personal, psychological and professional growth within the school community.

Integration of Faith in Academics: Among the core mission of Christian schools is cultivating and sustaining faith and spiritual values within the students so they can develop adequate level of ethical and social values to live their lives in this world, as well as gain clear understanding and appropriate level of preparation for the world to come.

Analysis of the responses given by the research participants to the 2nd research question "What external and internal factors lead to performance decline and failure in Christian schools?" shows that the factors leading to decline and failures in Christian schools are associated with attributes that focus on weaknesses, challenges and threats that impact Christian schools. Using NVivo, a Node emerged that focused on a category identifying the weaknesses, threats, unfavorable issues and undesirable features in Christian schools. To maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the participants, the following coding mechanism is used to mask the identity of the respondents.

Table 70.

Research Participant Coding Categories.

Participant Category	Identification #	Code
Student	1	S1
Student	2	S2
Student	3	S3
Student	4	S4

(Table Continues)

Alumni	1	A1
Alumni	2	A2
Alumni	3	A3
Alumni	4	A4
Alumni	5	A5
Parents	1	P1
Parents	2	P2
Parents	3	P3
Parents	4	P4
Parents	5	P5
Parents	6	P6
Parents	7	P7
Parents	8	P8
Teachers	1	T1
Teachers	2	T2
Teachers	3	T3
Teachers	4	T4
Principals / Administrators	1	R1
Principals / Administrators	2	R2
Principals / Administrators	3	R3
Principals / Administrators	4	R4
Board Members / Executives	1	B1
Board Members / Executives	2	B2
Board Members / Executives	3	B3
Board Members / Executives	4	B4
Industry Experts / Scholars	1	I1
Industry Experts / Scholars	2	I2
Industry Experts / Scholars	3	I3

In consideration of the second research question, interview question number 3 (Q3) asked participants to describe the weaknesses of Christian schools:

Participant responses and the Node clusters relating to the question above are given below. The responses and/or quotes are directly takes from the Q3 Node in Nvivo. The Node for this cluster contains weaknesses, unfavorable attributes and threats that participants expressed toward their Christian schools.

Question: "What do you think are the weaknesses of your Christian school?"

Table 71.

Student Responses to Q3.

Respondent	Response
S1.	The Christian schools I attended often lacked diversity, weren't academically enriching, and lacked an open approach to secular issues. I also recall many of my teachers being biased and often "forced" their opinions on politics and religion on their students.
S2	Lack of improved academics, higher level courses Teacher Respect for students Too much babying Teacher yelling at students
S3	I believe the weaknesses of my school focus on the methods of teaching. The subject being taught can lean towards a very opinionative standpoint (Christian, conservative, etc.) from the teacher. During my attendance at Christ Lutheran, I remember skipping a few sections from our science textbook concerning evolution, global warming, and so on.
S4	Facility limitations, advanced academic programs, resource limitations

The student responses to the interview question relating to the weaknesses of Christian schools focus on critical issues such as lack of diversity, shortage of advanced academic programs, narrow worldview and resource limitations.

Table 72.

Alumni Responses to Q3.

Respondent	Response
A1	… Sometimes things were run so nonchalant, and it didn't feel like a real school.
A4	Narrow worldview – Christian worldview only Too much protection from the real world, focus on Christian perspectives Lack of diversity, ethnically, socio-economically Staying behind curriculum with non-credentialed teachers Classroom management, policing more than teaching Lack of diverse viewpoints – Opposing viewpoints were given negative No openness in worldviews Isolation from realities Warning about college challenges because of faith
	(Table Continues)

Respondent	Response
A5	Lack of social life preparedness
	Small class size, limited number of friends
A2	The class size was too small. It meant not many options for friends.
	Occasionally it was too intimate i.e. too many people/staff knew my personal
	business.
A3	My school lacked a variety of honors and AP courses in high school.

The alumni responses to the interview question relating to the weaknesses of Christian schools focus on lack of diversity, narrow or Christian only worldview, lack of social skills development and shortage of advanced courses and academic programs.

Table 73.

Parent/Guardian Responses to Q3.

Respondent	Response
P4	Children can be overprotected. Lack of social interactions due to smaller population. Limited facilities / resources
	Lack of dynamic organizational strategies and marketing
P6	Often too disorganized and unpredictable. Events change from year to year. Not enough understanding of our family faith – denominational differences.
P3	Does not run like a business, need to spend money on important projects and yet be frugal. Board/leadership should be transparent and proactive.
	Week on funding/resource development
P1	In our experience at my children's school, one weakness that I find is the social issues that come up in a small school environment. While the small school is an advantage it can also be a disadvantage to some kids that might already struggle socially. My daughter was in a class with only 10 kids most of them boys and only a few girls so with that came very little choice in friendships but at the same time teaches that you have to adapt to each situation.
P7	Limited school curriculum, less diverse in terms demography, unexperienced staff with less teaching credentials, no benchmarking with state administrate exam. Students have no opportunities to take advances classes they are limited to the grade class only.

The alumni responses to the interview question relating to the weaknesses of Christian schools focus on size of Christian schools being too small, Lack of effective leadership, lack of financial resources and constraints of school curriculum and benchmarking strategies to compare the effectiveness of Christian schools compared to public and other private schools.

Table 74.

Teacher Responses to Q3.

Respondent	Response
T2	Too quick to imitate, not innovate / faculty disassociated from each other / administrative issues with clear and cogent communication – Teachers and programs can easily feel isolated.
T4	In order to stay competitive and growing as a school we have started to value peripheral things over our main objective. We often seem to make decisions that are reactive to the decisions around us rather than stay grounded in what we are good at. For example: we do things that are aimed to impress future students and keep current families happy, rather than fill real needs and demanding accountability from all of our students. In addition, I am not sure what it means if there are more administrative positions than faculty, this seems backwards to me.

Teacher responses to the interview question relating to the weaknesses of Christian schools focus on lack of innovation, too much imitation of other schools, lack of faculty engagement on administrative affairs and being visionary about the school affairs.

Table 75.

Principal / Administrator Responses to Q3.

Respondent	Response
R3	Long-Term visioning/planning. Stewardship of resources (time, talents, treasure) – we have not always done this well but are working hard on this.
R2	Financial resources, Limited advanced programs Lack of diversity,
R1	Facilities / resources Customized educational needs
R4	The facility is old so AC, heating units, and field sprinklers present challenges Limited amount of finances to pursue the latest technology and RTI tools

Principal / administrator responses to the interview question relating to the weaknesses of Christian schools focus on the lack of effective vision and strategies, lack of financial resources,

and the challenges of facilities and costs associated with allocation and maintenance of school

buildings.

Table 76.

Board Member Responses to Q3.

Respondent	Response
B2	In group vs. out group dynamics amongst "old guard and new guard parents"; lack of communication between church and school; school board approach; non-mandatory parent service hours
B1	Lack of adequate competitive experience. The school is sometime insular. Not supported in thinking outside of the box. Latency in advancing in the InfoTech era. The school does not have a standard employee handbook. Very conservative Christian principles are the backbone of the school foundation however they hinder the progress of the school. There is no budget for marketing, the school could benefit with a strong marketing program. There is no real incentive program for teachers.
B4	Lack of school vision and leadership, lack of solid fundraising, low standard admissions policies, seen as lacking in academics, low salary scale, too dependent on volunteers, arbitrary financial aid methods

Board Member responses to the interview question relating to the weaknesses of

Christian schools focus on the leadership challenges including the lack of competitive strategies,

shortage of resources for marketing and promotional initiatives and the development and

sustainability of new ideas and perspectives.

The third research question pertained to what type of organizational change model can

guide Christian schools for effectiveness and continuous improvement?" The question certainly

be answered by analyzing the weaknesses of Christian schools so that these shortcomings can be

avoided, while capitalizing on the strengths that help the schools to thrive. The strengths of

Christian schools are summarized below as derived from the Nodes relating to strengths,

favorable attributes and opportunities of Christian Schools based on interview question number 2 (Q2).

Strengths of Christian Schools. The following section provides summary of the strengths, favorable attributes and opportunities of Christian Schools as aggregated from the responses of the interviewees:

Safe and Caring Environment: Parents choose to enroll their kids in Christian schools primarily because they reflect their social, moral and spiritual values and provide safe and caring learning environment.

Outstanding Academics: Many parents and alumni that participated in the study indicated that they were highly satisfied by the academic standards and rigor at their respective schools. This claim was also triangulated by the CAPE Outlook report (2015).

Integration of Faith and Academics: One of the key favorable characteristics of Christian schools as expressed by students, alumni and parents is the integration of faith with the academics. Although secular education may portray faith-based academics as anti-scientific and anti-progressive social standards, the fact is that the students, alumni and parents of Christian school appreciate the fact that sciences and social studies at Christian schools are taught from a biblical perspective; which does not actually contradict scientific and social advances.

An effective model for organizational change and continuous performance improvement for Christian schools should therefore focus on capitalizing the strengths of Christian schools as outlined above from the literature reviews and research participant responses. Implementing such

strategies can actually enable Christian schools to avoid the weaknesses, unfavorable attributes and threats that are essential for leading and sustaining a vibrant academic institution.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

A study is considered to be valid if it measures what it is intended to measure and more importantly, "if there are no logical errors in drawing conclusions from the data" (Carson 2013, p. 1). Similarly, reliability is "the correlation of an item, scale or instrument with a hypothetical one that truly measures what is supposed to" (p. 34). Validity is defined by "the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure" (Golafshani, 2003, p. 599). The validity of the research and interview questions was analyzed by two teachers who are knowledgeable of the issues, challenges, strengths and opportunities of Christian schools. The credibility strategies involved triangulation of the research and interview questions were presented to different categories of research participants including students, alumni, parents, teachers, administrators, board members and industry experts and scholars. Similarly, the transferability of the research and interview questions were verified by the same teachers who understood the importance of transferability from a theoretical and application perspectives. The application of transferability was tested when the research and interview questions were presented to different categories of research participants including students, alumni, parents, teachers, administrators, board members and industry experts and scholars.

Golafshani, (2003) argued that reliability in a research study addresses "the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study … and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology" (p. 598). The dependability of the research study focused on selecting research participants based on

recommendation of school principals. Participants selected from all schools were identified as individuals who have knowledge and lived experience of the issues and challenges facing Christian schools, which are the essence of the study. All participants identified to participate have had personal experience, connections and vested interest with Christian schools. The Confirmability of the research study focused on asking the same research interview questions to all participants with consistency. The results of the responses to the interview questions confirm that common trend exists that validate for the need to address the issues and challenges existing in Christian schools.

Summary

The results of the research data collection and analysis indicates that an effective model for organizational change and performance improvement should focus on purposefully and strategically integrating the strengths and favorable attributes of Christian schools, while avoiding and intentionally tackling the weaknesses, undesirable characteristics and threats that are faced by Christian schools. Based on the data analytics and literature reviews conducted in the previous chapter, an ideal model of organizational change and performance improvement for Christian schools should provide a framework that integrates at least the following five elements:

A.   Designing and developing attribute of effective Christian school including improved organizational capabilities, superior academic programs, streamlined business processes, aggressive resource development strategies, continuous improvement and change, cultivating strong community relationships, intentionally integrating faith with academics, fostering diversity and cultural awareness, and developing strategic

leadership and management capabilities are some of the critical success factors that are

essential for Christian school.

B.   Avoiding and tackling forces that weaken Christian schools including lack of

visionary leadership, resource development strategies, shortage of advanced programs

and excellence in academics, lack of diversity, overprotection, narrow worldview,

population size limitations, lack of transparency, and shortage of effective marketing and

promotional strategies are issues that Christian schools need to be vigilant to prevent

crippling failure and suboptimal performance.

C.   Intentionally cultivate and integrate Christian values, faith and biblical principles

into academics, continue on fostering safe and caring environment, focus in developing

socially and morally upright citizens, maintain smaller class size to give personalized

attention to students, strive to provide outstanding academically rigorous curriculum,

provide creative, arts, musing and athletic programs, create an environment for teachers

to provide caring and responsive services, focus on the higher mission providing Christ-

centered education, and connect with parents and community to gain their continued

support and advocacy.

D.   Fostering a culture of continuously improving systems and processes that enable

schools to master and standardize their capabilities in designing and delivering academic

excellence, effective resource development strategies, positively connecting with

stakeholders, and efficiently utilizing technologies and applications that facilitate

productivity and achievements in their strategic and operational initiatives. Optimizing

existing systems and processes and people capabilities mount the organization for

success.

E.   Developing superior capabilities in networking, negotiation and engaging

stakeholders in the strategic and operational initiatives, and reaching out to local

community and fostering healthy relationships with businesses, government and civic

agencies provides positive image and free promotional opportunities for Christian

schools. Creating such healthy relationships not only promotes the schools without

incurring marketing cost, but also provides opportunities for resource development and

partnerships for the schools.

The newly developed model of organizational change and performance improvement was

designed to integrate the elements discussed above as critical components including superior

programs, effective organizational leadership and management capabilities, smart resource

development strategies, healthy connections, relationships and networking strategies, and

efficient systems and processes. Achieving such initiatives enables the schools to avoid

performance decline and failure, but also positions the schools to achieve their vision, mission

and goals.

In the following Chapter, I will provide summary, conclusion and recommendations for

the development of a named model based on the findings and analysis of the data, information,

themes and trends of the research participants and related literature reviews.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the internal and external factors contributing to decline and failure in Christian schools and develop an organizational change and performance improvement model by analyzing existing models of effectiveness that are suitable for Christian schools. The alarming trend of failure in Christian schools as described in Chapter 1 of this study poses significant threat for the survival and sustainable performance of faith based academics that many families and communities prefer for their children's education. As a parent whose children attend Christian school, and as a professor at a Christian university, I personally felt the need to develop a model of organizational effectiveness and performance transformation that uniquely addresses the needs and concerns of Christian schools.

The research was conducted in Southern California and I involved five Christian schools ranging from elementary to high schools. A total of 30 individuals including students, alumni, parents, teachers, principals, board members, and industry experts and scholars took part in the study based on purposeful sampling as outlined by Palinkas (2013) and Creswell (2013). The research question focused on identifying key attributes of effectiveness and describing critical factors that lead to the stagnation, decline and failure of Christian schools. Participants responded to a total of 30 interview questions that were designed to capture the attributes from an operational, management and strategic perspectives.

Participant responses suggested various perspectives for the weaknesses of Christian schools are the primary reason for the decline in enrollment and failures in many schools. Consequently, respondents provided numerous strengths and desirable qualities of Christian schools that need to be integrated as part of the schools' strategic and operational initiatives to

promote the values and unique features that are necessary to attract new students, families and supporters for the cause of faith-based education. The key findings that participants expressed during interviews are summarized in the following sections.

Interpretation of Findings

The literature reviews and participant interviews can be categorized in alignment with analysis of organizational strengths and weaknesses as described below. The literature review in Chapter 2 contained critical factors that contribute to the decline and failure of Christian schools. These factors included affordability of Christian schools, competition from charter schools and homeschooling. It also revealed the importance of effective leadership, efficient business processes and systems, and transforming school culture to build and sustain organizational performance excellence, develop necessary resources, and promote the differentiating characteristics and unique values they offer to the society.

Weaknesses of Christian Schools:

Lack of effective vision and leadership. Effective and visionary leadership is the mark of an effective organization. Many Christian schools struggle to survive due to leadership crisis and lack of management and administrative capabilities. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) argued that effective school leadership is directly related to improved academic achievement of students (p. 10), superior educational program quality, continuously learning and improving culture, and strong moral and cooperative work environment between teachers, staff and the primary customers including students and their parents or guardians. The lack of such leadership

attributes creates a void to attain and sustain efficiency and effectiveness in the teaching and learning process.

Lack of adequate financial, facilities, and human resources. As in every organization, sustainable financial resources are key to develop effective programs and run successful operations. However, the shortage of sufficient financial resources creates challenging administrative and operational environment for Christian schools. Tuition fee is the primary source of income for Christian schools; however, tuition alone cannot sustain the operational and administrative expenditures of the schools. Alternative funding sources such as fundraising, creative partnerships, and the principles of negotiation and investing to raise the necessary financial resources are critical requirements for resource development in Christian schools. Burris and Mckinley (1990) argued that "you cannot raise money without spending money" (p. 26) and so reasonable spending is necessary to raise funds for the operational and infrastructural requirements.

Lack of effective marketing and outreach strategies. The failure of developing effective marketing and promotional strategies hinders Christian schools from reaching out to their potential customers and attracting students, parents, friends, supporters and donors that would help advocate and promote faith-based education. It is critically important that school leaders research and analyze effective ways to promote their schools by highlighting the philosophy, values and qualities of Christian schools. Marketing and promoting faith-based education and the values that Christian schools provide is best achieved by discerning and clearly identifying the gaps and unmet needs of the community, and positioning Christian schools to fill the void in delivering what's missing from the public educational system, as well as other forms of private educational institutions.

Lack of advanced academic excellence and advanced programs. Many students and families enjoy the faith-based academics, spiritual, moral, social and personal values available in Christian schools. However, the lack of advanced, competitive and challenging academic programs turns away many students and families from staying in Christian schools. Although many of the research participants indicated satisfaction with the spiritual, social and personal development at their Christian schools, a number of participants also expressed that shortage of advanced academic programs and competitive educational environment supported by higher level courses such as honors and AP (advanced placement) courses are critically important for students to advance their scholastic experience, and for the schools to demonstrate their distinction in educational leadership.

Lack of diversity. Many research participants expressed that there is significant shortage of diversity in reference to racial, social and worldview in Christian schools. One student participant (S1) expressed "the Christian schools I attended often lacked diversity, lacked an open approach to secular issues". Another alumni commented "no diversity, kids of same background, socially underdeveloped". Yet another parent (P3) resented the lack of diversity in racial, cultural and worldview that portrays Christian schools as a place for people who look, think and behave similarly. Although it is understandable that people who spend significant amount of time together can develop a shared sense of identity and culture, in most cases Christian schools attract students and families from the same demographics. In validating the lack of diversity, many of the principals and board members who participated in the research study agreed that lack of diversity is a major concern that they intend to address and find a solution to make their schools culturally and racially inclusive. Addressing the lack of diversity in Christian schools does not mean selling out on the guiding biblical principles and core values

that the schools are founded upon. It is understandable that people with different theological

beliefs and social values that are contrary to the fundamental principles of the schools may not

feel welcomed. As long as such fundamental constraints and requirements are clearly described

and communicated, Christian schools should open door policy and welcome everyone. However,

as expressed by the research participants, the importance of intellectual, socio-economic,

scientific, racial and ethnic diversity in the schools would be extremely valuable for the students,

teachers and the entire school communities.

Research participant responses in reference to weaknesses of Christian schools were

primarily focused on three categories: strategic, management and operations. The strategic

aspects of weaknesses in Christian schools pertain to the lack of leadership, resource

development, academic quality and lack of diversity in the learning and teaching environment.

The management related weaknesses can be described as shortage of effective marketing and

outreach strategies, lack of transparency and accountability and maintaining the right size of

student population where social life and friendships of students could flourish, while avoiding

overcrowding and dilution of academic quality standards.
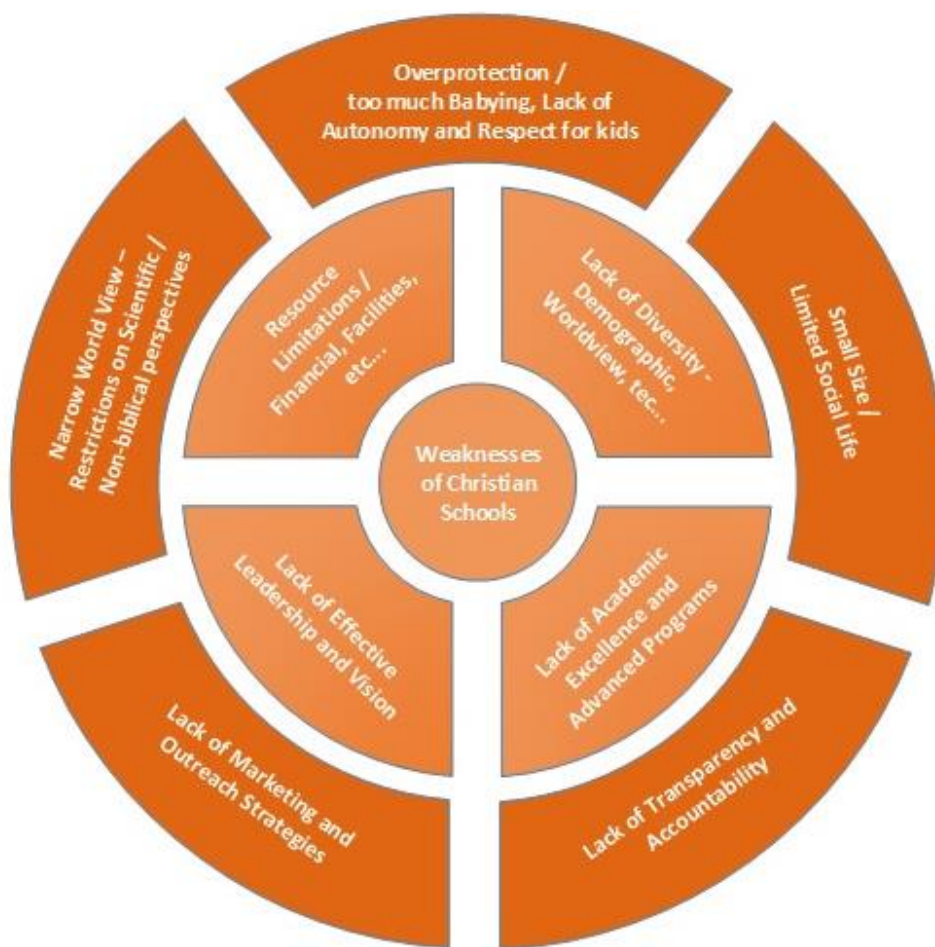
Figures 10. Weaknesses and undesirable characteristics in Christian schools.

Strengths of Christian Schools

The research participants also pointed out the strengths and desirable qualities of

Christian schools that should be used to promote the values, social change contributions and

strategic advantages of the schools.

Some of the strengths of Christian schools described by the participants include:

Safe and caring environment, personal attention to students. Christian schools offer

scripture base personal, social, and spiritual values of the families they serve. The smaller class

size and attention given to individual student in enables Christian schools to set faith-based

personal standards and behavioral expectations that aligns with the parents who choose to enroll

their kids in the private Christian schools.

Developing socially responsible and morally upright citizens. One of the main goals

of Christian schools is to cultivate spiritual and moral values based on the scriptural mandate of

bringing up children in God's Word that serves as a solid foundation for their faith, personal and

social standards.

Outstanding academics, challenging programs. Christian schools offer rigorous and

challenging academic programs that outperform public schools preparing the students for their

next level of academic tenure. Students and alumni of Christian schools, and the parents who

participated in the research study expressed that the academic programs in Christian schools

were challenging, and yet appropriate for their educational requirements.

Dedicated, responsive and caring teachers. What sets Christian school teachers apart

from their public school counterparts is that Christian school teachers consider their teaching role

as a calling; rather than just a job. Consequently, they show genuine caring attitude towards their

students not only as fellow human beings, but also as children of God. This unifying message

and demonstration of a shared vision enables Christian school teachers to continuously lookout

and provide support for their students.

Strong integration of faith and biblical principles with academics. Christian schools

teach all academic programs and courses from a biblical perspective, validating the fact that true

sciences, social studies, math, and all other academic disciplines align with scriptures, which is

considered to be the foundation of all human knowledge and intelligence. In addition, they also

teach more complex paradigms, constructs and experiences that may not totally align with scientific world, but only make sense through faith and spiritual understanding.

Cultivating Christian values based personal, social and moral standards. Christian school students are taught biblical principles of developing personal, social and moral values based on the fear of God, and respect and care for fellow humans. Developing morally upright and responsible citizens is one of the mission and goals of Christian schools.

Christ centered mission and vision. Christian schools have dual educational mission. Not only do they train to develop knowledge and skills for this world, but also for the world to come. This spiritual context of education is probably the biggest differentiator between public and private faith based schools. Highly advanced academics may be taught at prestigious educational institutions; but faith and godliness that prepares students for the world to come is formally taught in the classroom at Christian schools only.

Perspectives from Literature Review

The STAR model. Kates and Galbraith (2007) STAR model described the importance of developing effective business strategy, successful structural and relational decision making principles, streamlined business processes, and practical mechanism for hiring and rewarding employees and partners that are core components of the organization.

The 8-Step model. Kotter (1996) 8-Step model emphasized on the importance of establishing a sense of urgency, forming a guiding coalition, developing and communicating vision and strategy, empowering and celebrating milestones and achievements, and persistence

and recognition of anchoring necessary change and cultural transformation for the good of the organization.

The ADKAR model. Hiatt (2006) argued on the values of organizational change initiatives through the realization and awareness of the need for change, developing the desire to implement change, acquiring the knowledge and ability to change, and the importance of the events and actions taken to reinforce the change adopted by the organization   Similarly, the research interview findings indicate that Christian schools need to develop their organizational capabilities to build a solid infrastructure for sustainable financial resources to attract highly qualified teachers and administrators to lead the schools for success. In addition, Christian schools should make concerted effort to raise financial resources to offer financial assistance or scholarships to attract good students who otherwise may not be able to afford private education.

Another critical element of organizational effectiveness pertained to business strategies. Christian schools need to create effective marketing and promotional strategies by effectively packaging the unique values they provide to the community including faith-based spiritual, moral, social and personal values that have been eroded from the public school system. If Christian schools are unable to describe and promote their unique value proposition, they will face hardship attracting students, supporters and advocates.

The Systems Thinking Approach. The systems thinking theory provides framework for managing complexities and chaos; and design a successful business architecture that affords sustainability and competitive advantage while avoiding fatal mistakes in Christian schools. The systems thinking approach enables schools avoid circumstances and forces that erode competitive advantage and address the lack of dynamic responsiveness to change and

performance improvement initiatives including imitation, inertia and suboptimization in Christian schools. In addition, based on Gharajedaghi (2011), this approach provides effective platform to identify and analyze relevant stakeholders and partition them into categories such as superordinates, subordinates, customers and complementors to devise effective communications, strategies, and Tactics to engage them in the processes. Another key element of systems thinking involves, as argued by Nickerson (2014), that leaders should not stimulate negative emotions that make people "DEAF – Disrespect, Envy, Anger and Fear – to efforts to produce change" (p. 17). Rather, to secure the support of stakeholders and engage them in the change initiative, integrating Nickerson (2014) ABBA approach referring to "Agree-in, Bee-in, Buy-in, and Allow-in" (45) enables schools to successfully design and implement needed organizational change and performance improvement initiatives. This approach is critically essential to connect with the stakeholders and foster healthy working relationships for Christian schools to achieve their vision, mission and goals.

Summary of Research Participant Expressions

The following sections provide summary of the participant expressions in reference to the strengths, weaknesses, and theoretical constructs that have relevance to the literature review.

Table 77.

Summary of Strengths and Weakness based on Responses and Literature Review.

Participant Code	Response
T18	Raising the bar academically for admissions will drastically change who we are and who we become
E26	Christian schools have to be strategic… in order to attract and maintain financial sustainability
P11	Continuously negotiate with teachers, parents to improve performance
E27	Attracted to us because of our high quality in academics, athletics and the arts… and our strong values.
E28	Improve organizational, strategic and resource development initiatives
T20	Need to change mission statement, establish a vision for the future…a strategic plan that inspires people
E27	We offer all kinds of activities where we teach and model appropriate behavior
P10	While the small school is an advantage it can also be a disadvantage to some kids that might already struggle socially
T23	Develop resources to sustain effective operations
E28	Improve organizational, strategic and resource development initiatives
P11	Improve organizational capabilities
E25	Encourages open dialogue and engagement
P11	Should have effective marketing, management and resource development strategies
T22	Strong relationships and connections with surrounding communities
P13	Place a greater emphasis on academics and make the tuition affordable while maintaining the Christian based learning.
E28	Cultivate solid and high performing academic culture
P12	The school provides Strong foundation for students' faith and spiritual life.
E26	The school culture is very friendly, however it is not very diverse
T21	Safe environment. Sound academics. Community service programs.

The research participant responses are closely aligned with the literature review findings.

The following diagram provides a summary of the findings in reference to attributes of an

effective Christian school:
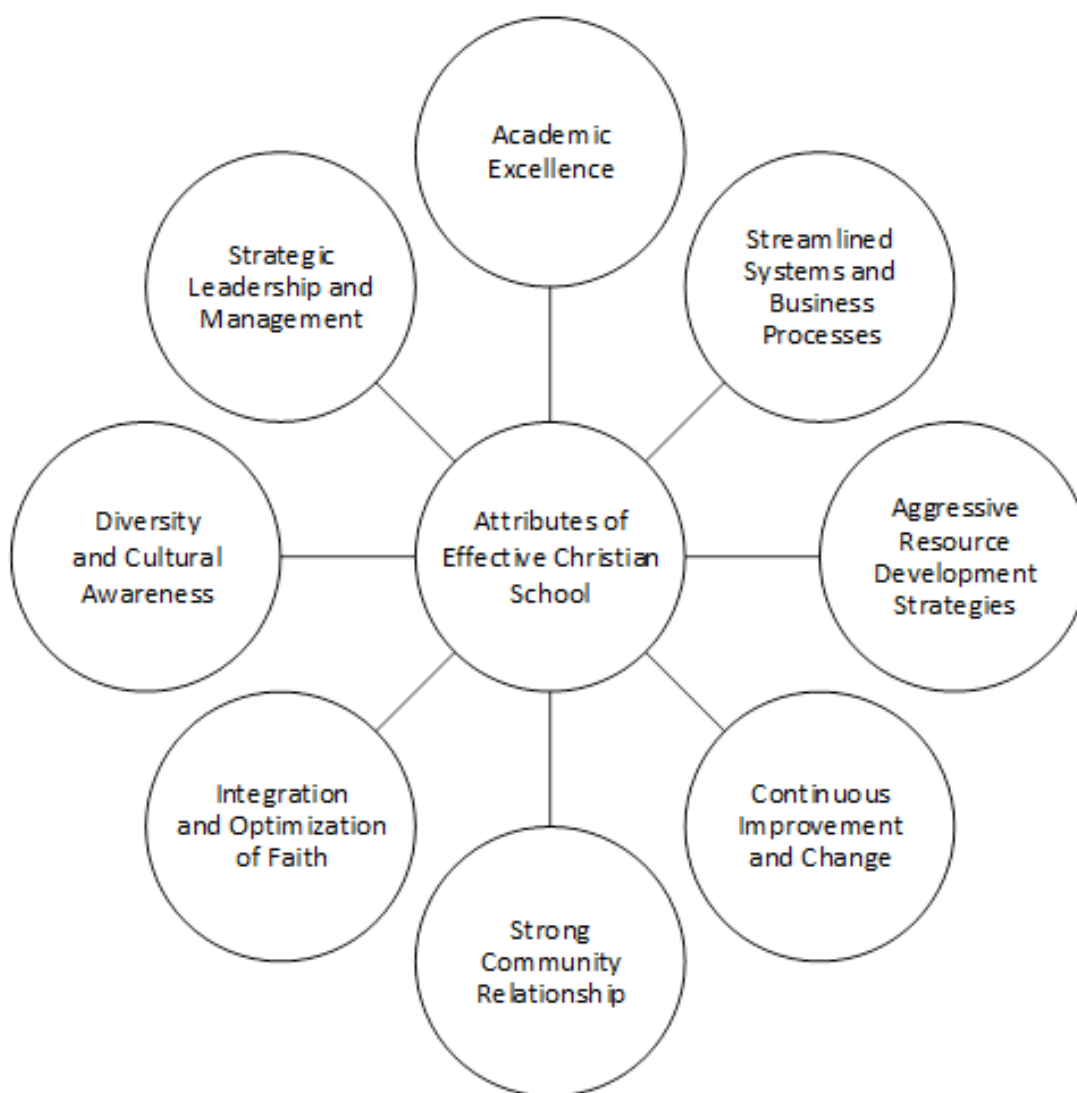
Figure 11. Attributes of effective Christian school.

In addition describing the attributes of an effective Christian school, I also revealed the importance of defining and analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of Christian schools so that an appropriate model can be designed to implement organizational change and performance improvement initiatives.

Based on the analysis of the strengths and desirable characteristics of Christian schools, and considering the weaknesses and pitfalls that should be avoided in the Christian

school environment, as well as integrating theoretical and applied constructs involving Galbraith

(2007) STAR model, Kotter (1996) 8-Step model, Hiatt (2006) ADKAR model, and the Systems

Thinking approach, I recommended a new framework that that is uniquely designed, and

appropriately suitable for organizational effectiveness and performance improvement in

Christian schools.

The new model focused on strategic, management and operational frameworks

that enable Christian schools to *connect* with the stakeholders of Christian education, *develop*

organizational capabilities, *negotiate* with constituents, *cultivate* desired spiritual, social and

moral values; *optimize* product qualities and operational strengths, aggressively build *resources,*

and *develop* efficient systems and processes to sustain continuous improvement and performance

transformation initiatives.

The keywords in the above summary statement include:

1. *Connect*

2. *Organize*

3. *Negotiate*

4. *Cultivate*

5. *Optimize*

6. *Resource*

7. *Develop*

Using the initials of the keywords above, the researcher recommended a

conceptual framework referred as The CONCORD model for organizational change and

performance improvement in Christian schools. The components of the model are intentionally

presented as verbs and action oriented expressions because the model is intended to serve as a

functional guideline to help and direct Christian schools to act and perform so they can achieve

organizational change and performance improvement. The elements of the framework are further

explained below.
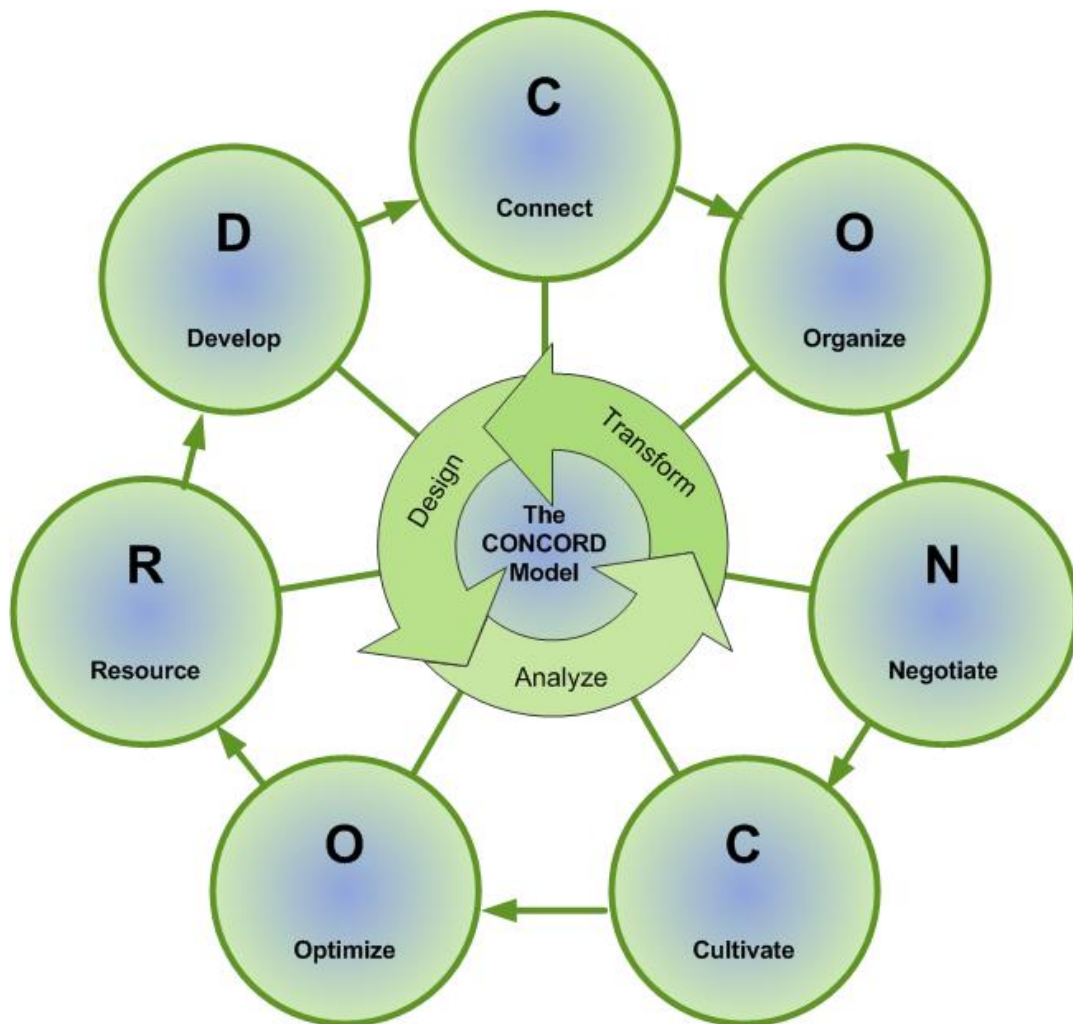
Figure 12. Framework of the CONCORD Model

The CONCORD Model

C = Connect:

The importance of establishing and developing strategies to build strong connections, relationships and network of stakeholders, customers, supporters, advocates and opinion leaders is a critical component of effective leadership and management capabilities. As presented in Chapter 2, Kotter (2012) argued that organizational change and business transformation initiatives are normally associated with strong leadership, and some influential forces within the firm who advocate for the value of the change efforts. Similarly, many of the research participants expressed the importance of forming strong connections and alliances to create network of students, alumni, parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders, experts and scholars to build a solid academic excellence, operational effectiveness, and extracurricular activities to develop and sustain quality products and services within Christian schools.

Based on Cameron and Green (2012) argument, connecting with stakeholders and communities in a politically savvy, ethical and accountable standards in a way that optimizes strategies to achieve short term needs and long term values is a critical success factor for Christian schools. This initiative is achieve by connective leaders who are constantly on a quest for new meaning and vision to changing the world for the better using methodology Dolan and Naidu (2013) referred as "business storytelling" (p. 1) that is a proven way used to "persuade, motivate and inspire in ways that cold facts, bullet points and directives can't" (p. 1). It is an effective means to share one's stories, values and experience while linking it to an organizational or business message that influences or inspires the intended audience. Business storytelling is an

effective strategy for Christian schools to employ for the purpose of reaching out their

communities.

Another great way of building strong and functional connection is the ability to inspire

stakeholders using positive reinforcements and constructive engagements. Zurchin (2012)

contended on the positive effects of involving and inspiring stakeholders using the story of the

killer whale Shamu at Sea World in San Diego, California arguing "if the simple tools of

building trust, praising and redirecting could get five-ton whales to jump thirty feet in the air, we

know they would work with people as well" (p. xii). One of the key attributes of effective

leadership is the ability to foster networks that "have unique capabilities for achieving social

impact that distinguishes them from other forms of social organizing" (Plastrik, 2014 p. 13).

O = Organize:

Improving organizational capabilities including leadership, management and operational

strategies is one of the critical elements of success in any institution. As argued in chapter 2,

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) contended that organizational leadership is the basis for

operational excellence and strategic effectiveness in Christian schools. They further described

that effective school leadership should integrate transactional and transformational forms of

leadership where the transformational leader "raises the followers' sense of purpose and levels of

motivation"; and the transactional leader, on the other hand, "sets goals, clarifies desired

outcomes, exchanges rewards and recognition for accomplishments, suggests or consults,

provides feedback and gives employees praise when it is deserved" (Marzano, Waters, and

McNulty, 2005 p. 14). Furthermore, Galbraith (2014, 2007) argued for the importance of

developing organizational capabilities and structures to design, develop, manage and control

effective systems and business processes. Similarly, research participants pointed out the importance of modeling, analyzing and developing effective organizational processes and systems while warning the concerns related to the lack of dynamic organizational strategies for branding, marketing, recruiting, admissions, academic quality and related initiatives.

Organizational improvement and transformation within school environment can also be achieved using coaching techniques. Aguilar (2013) in her work titled *The Art of Coaching: Effective Strategies for School Transformation,* argued that "coaching is an effective component of professional development… coaching can build will, skills, knowledge and capacity because it can go where no other professional development has gone before: into the intellect, behaviors, practices, beliefs, values and feelings of an educator" (p. 8). Effective school leadership and management therefore should integrate principles of coaching to build capabilities and strong performance enhancement strategies that facilitate transfer of knowledge, skills and values within the academic institutional environment.

N = Negotiate:

Negotiation is the art of communication, "it is a form of give-and-take discussion or conference in an attempt to reach an agreement" (Lee, 2015, p. 1). In involves understanding and mutual respect with the goal of settling transaction that benefits all parties involved. The ultimate goal of negotiation is to achieve desired objective not by taking advantage of the other party; rather, in seeking an end result that satisfies all who are engaged in the transaction. It is true that hiring the best teachers, administrators and coaches is not always cheap; and Christian schools are, in most cases, can't afford to on board the best of talents. To solve this problem, school

leaders need to master the art of negotiation so they can attract the best talent not for the compensation, but for the values they offer to their constituents.

Christian schools are mostly known for asking, getting and being recipient of donations, fundraisers and resources. The concept of reciprocity and giving out, and giving back, is not the most prominent culture in Christian schools. However, the art and science of negotiation where receiving and giving, taking and offering, catching and throwing are equally important needs to be part of the strategic and management equation. Many of the research participants expressed that Christian schools need to attract good teachers and administrators. However, it is clear that outstanding teachers and administrators don't come cheap. Therefore, the skills and capabilities of negotiation and value proposition is a critical component of a successful Christian school.

C = Cultivate:

Cultivating is the process of planting, growing, improving and transforming an object from its current state into a different state. Although education is all about cultivating knowledge and learning, the concept of cultivating moral, social, spiritual values and personal standards, and instilling social responsibility, caring, respecting and honoring others more than one's self are some of the unique attributes of Christian schools. In addition, implanting the philosophies and attitudes of academic excellence, cultural and racial diversity is considered as a recipe for success. Therefore, cultivating such principles of service, dedication, sacrifice is contrary to the popular culture and social standards that promotes self-centeredness and narcissism, but it is the mission and goals of Christian schools. Therefore, cultivating these values within the environment of Christian schools, and striving to reach out to the population at large has significant impact for social change.

Another type of cultivation that is critical component of Christian schools involves building trust, confidence and respect towards school leadership. Of course, it is a widely known fact that trust is earned. Moran (2014) commented that in previous era, "school leaders were highly respected and largely unquestioned members of the community" (p. 8). It is important that schools "must garner trust and legitimacy at a time where these commodities are in short supply in society at large. Trustworthy school leaders must learn to create conditions in which trust can flourish within their school as well as between their school and their community" (p. 12). School leaders should aspire to "cultivate a culture of high trust between students and teachers through their attitudes, example and politics" (p. 13) have greater chance of achieving success for their schools. Without trust school leaders are likely to "flounder in their attempts to provide constructive educational environment and meet the challenging goals" (p. 14) that is set before them to achieve academic excellence and performance improvement.

O = Optimize:

Optimizing business processes and continuously improving systems enables effective decision making, and streamlined processes are fundamental principles for maximizing throughput. In addition, enhancing customer experience and continuously learning about, and understanding the stakeholders, optimizes customer satisfaction and ensures organizational success. The basic attitude of striving to build strong and sustainable client relationships is always valuable, and yields better results. Warner (2014) argued that business optimization means "viewing business as a whole and making an assessment of how it can be run in a way that maximizes value in a sustainable manner" (p. 1). In reference to systems and processes optimized processes provide "consistent and high quality products and services delivered to the

customer through well-designed processes which employ efficient and effective systems at every level of the firm" (p. 1).

Many Christian schools have a vision, goals, systems and resources, that are well designed and efficient enough to serve a greater purpose, and to larger number of peoples and communities. However, the lack of effective strategic and operational capabilities stifles the optimum functionality and effectiveness that are critically important to achieve performance transformation. It is therefore vital for Christian schools to focus on optimizing business processes, enhancing systems, and maximizing resource utilization so they can be well positioned for operational excellence and effective decision making. Research participants also argued on the importance of realizing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities threats to ensure their survival and success so that Christian schools can avoid pitfalls, mitigate risks and optimize the opportunities they have to achieve their mission.

R = Resource:

As in any organization, developing sustainable resources including finances, human resources, facilities, equipment and support systems are the building blocks of an effective Christian school. Resourcing is the means by which organizations acquire, develop and utilize the resources they need to accomplish their goals and achieve their mission. School leaders are tasked with connecting alumni, friends and their communities to their school and eventually motivating them to actively participate in various forms of philanthropic activities such as direct financial giving, advocacy and leveraging expertise from leadership to operational activities. In the Christian school environment it is critically important to build capabilities and resources in financial, human and systems enhancement strategies. This requires strong leadership and

resource development capacities including fund-raising, relationship building, and positive

engagement within the community. It is true that in most private schools tuition income alone

cannot sustain the financial needs of the institution; and therefore, effective fundraising strategies

and capabilities are essential.

Drezner and Huehls (2015) argued that understanding the questions of "why donors give

freely and how to encourage them to make annual and major financial contributions are the basis

of building good fundraising strategy" (p. 1). Effective fundraising strategies for academic

institutions requires deep understanding of the theories of motivation for giving. Most

philanthropic gifts and the behaviors to giving are linked to "altruism and self-interested motives,

or impure altruism" (p. 2). Impure altruism includes giving out of motivation to receive

recognition, gain networking opportunities, tax deductions, or in some cases can simply be

egoism. Another motivation for philanthropic giving or volunteerism is "mutual benefit" where

the donor receives some sort of intrinsic or extrinsic gain from their actions in the form of

personal growth or satisfaction that Drezner and Huehls (2015) referred as "warm glow" (p. 2).

Either way, the gifts are given from a public good will, or private good will perspectives, and

understanding the motivations to capitalize on the form of giving would be essential.

Relationships marketing and social exchange theory are key to fundraising and resource

development initiatives at Christian schools. Relationship marketing focusses on "establishing,

developing and maintaining successful relational exchanges" (p. 4) to cultivate long term

relationship with the institution with primary objective of building loyalty and engagement for

sustainable giving. This strategy can be affective form of resource development by branding the

institution and the relationship based in "integrity, nurturance, sophistication and ruggedness" (p.

29). The integrity aspect focusses on branding the relationship as reputable, committed to the

public good, purposeful and long term; while the nurturance, sophistication and ruggedness aspects position the relationship as caring, compassionate, pleasant and strong for both the donor and the recipient institution. Utilizing such models provides strong potential for successful resource development strategies for Christian schools.

D = Develop:

Development is the incremental process of growth, change and process improvement to transform and organization from its current state to higher level, desired state. It is a process by which continuous improvement and advancement is realized. In as much as people and living organisms grow, change and improve constantly, organizations like Christian schools also need to adopt effective process of change and advancement as part of their framework. Several of the research participants emphasized the importance of organizational change, capacity development, improving on diversity and outreach strategies and devising aggressive resource development.

Industry experts and scholars including Gmelch Buller (2015), Kotter (2012) and Hiatt (2006) argued for the critical need and sense of urgency for developing vision, strategy and leadership capabilities to achieve organizational transformation through structured systems and process design, analysis and reengineering to implement much needed change and continuous improvement. Gmelch Buller (2015) advocated for school leaders to develop their organizational capabilities using the corporate strategy known as the "7-S model" to have functional understanding of the seven elements including "strategy, structure, systems, staff, skills, style, and shared values" (p. 9). Similar to Galbraith (2014), Gmelch Buller (2015) contended that leaders of academic institutions need to have solid understanding of their organizational strategy,

vision, mission, values, culture and the political dynamics in their campus environment. Developing the structure focusses on improving the operating procedures and working principles of the organization. Improving the systems in educational institutions involves support groups, peer reviews, utilizing modern technologies and decision support mechanisms. Developing staff and skills is concerned with improving the level of competence, integrity, creativity, analytical, intellectual and relational capabilities needed to conduct their business effectively interacting with the systems, strategies and resources within and around their environment. Improving and style and shared values of the 7-S model focusses on transforming the culture, values and interactions for the common good.

The following diagram provides visual description and summary of components of The CONCORD Model.
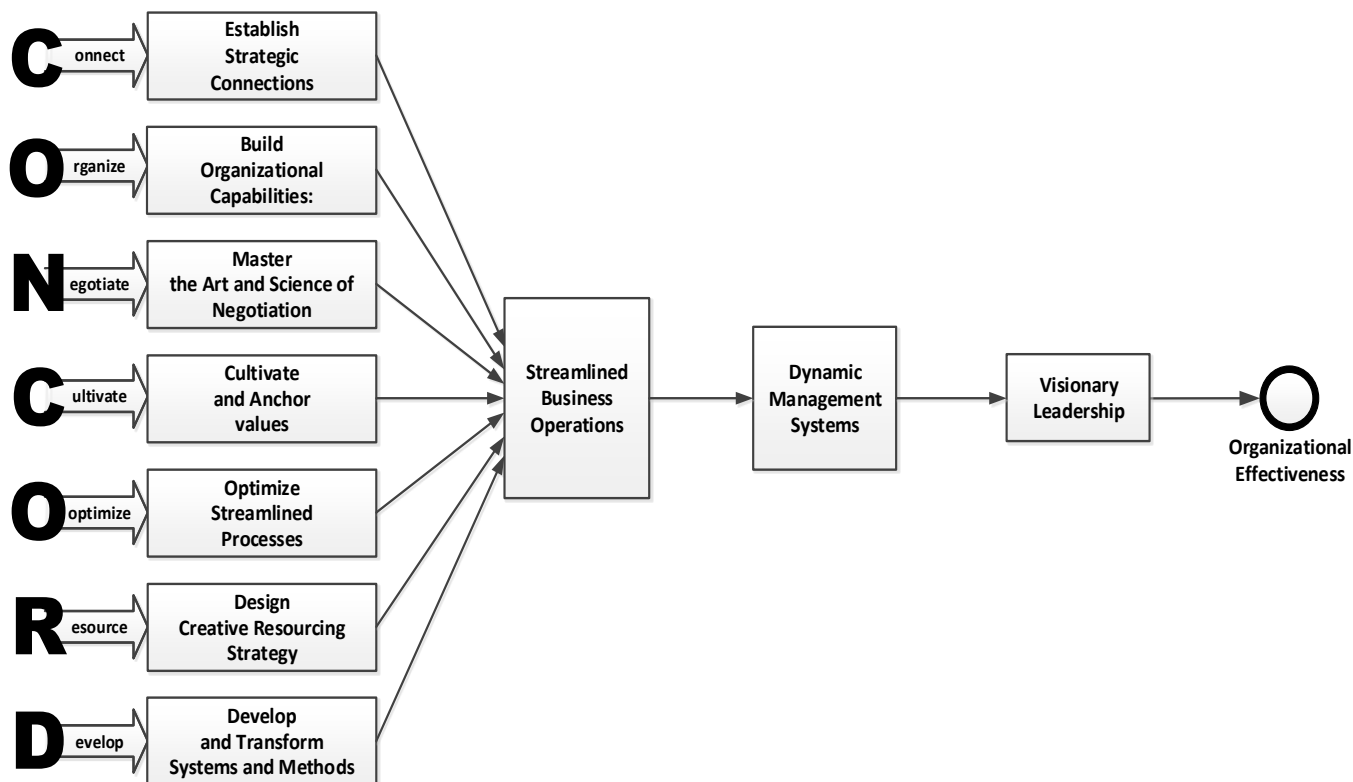
Figure 13. The CONCORD Model

The key proposition of The CONCORD Model is that organizational effectiveness is achieved through the integration of critical components and guidelines for establishing strategic connections, building organizational capabilities, mastering the art and science of negotiation, cultivating and anchoring values, optimizing streamlined process, designing solid resource development strategies, and continuously developing and transforming systems and methodologies have the potential to establish competent organization characterized by streamlined operations, dynamic management principles, and visionary leadership. A high-level, top-down approach of the model may be expressed as: visionary leadership has the potential to orchestrate dynamic management principles that produce streamlined operations to develop

strategic connections and networks, improve organizational capabilities, master negotiation skills, cultivate and anchor values, optimize functional processes, design appropriate resource development strategies, and continuously develop and transform systems and methodologies.

Limitations of the Study

The study involved a total of 5 schools and 32 participants including students, alumni, parents, teachers, administrators, board members, scholars and industry experts in the area of Christian education. Generalizing the findings based on the limited data and participant pool may not sufficiently represent the larger population. In addition, the scope of the schools and participants was focused to schools affiliated with evangelical Christian denomination, excluding Catholic and other denominational affiliated schools.

I did not attempt to analyze the historical impact of racial desegregation and its social implications following the civil rights movement of 1960s and early 1970s when the Christian school movement was booming, and Christian schools were thriving. Swatos and Kivisto, (1998) attributed this boom primarily to avoid the federally mandated racial integration as private faith-based education were exempt from the federal requirement. Therefore, although the conceptual framework of the model developed based on the literature review and the findings of the research may be applicable in many organizations, its primary focus and application is limited to the population and operational environment of schools affiliated with evangelical Christian based organizations.

Recommendations

The CONCORD Model was developed in response to the need for transforming Christian schools by addressing their weaknesses, and expanding the strengths and qualities that the schools enjoy to support their initiatives for organizational efficiencies and effectiveness. Addressing the weaknesses would entail tackling the lack of effective vision and leadership, improving financial, infrastructural and human resources, conducting aggressive marketing and promotional strategies, expanding academic excellence and advancing curriculum and program offerings, and intentionally cultivating cultural and worldview diversity and inclusion efforts. Countering the weaknesses expressed by the stakeholders and resolving to improve performance by avoiding the undesirable and unproductive practices would position Christian schools for success.

One of the primary weaknesses of Christian schools expressed by the research participants was the need to develop effective vision and leadership. Improving leadership in Christian school environment involves both transactional and transformational leadership capabilities. Transformational leadership, according to Lynch (2012) focusses on the achievement of organizational objectives through comprehensive approaches. This includes generating and promoting an unwavering acceptance of the schools' goals, objectives and mission through the stakeholder groups, and encouraging everyone to look beyond their self-interest and focus on common good. Transformational leadership possess characteristics such as charismatic influence, motivation, intellectual stimulation, personalized considerations. Similarly, effective leadership includes qualities such as "servant leadership" (p. 5) focusing on the personal characteristics of the leader including integrity, trust, respect, delegation, and vision.

Transactional leadership is also another traditional form of leadership that focusses on giving and receiving – thus, transaction, where the leader and followers are engaged in some type of negotiation and that the leader sets expectations from the followers, and in turn, the followers expect reward for their engagement. Lynch (2012) argued that transactional leadership is complementary to transformational leadership, although "is not as long lasting as transformational leadership" (p. 6). Another form of leadership that complements transformational leadership is emotional leadership, where the leader exerts emotional influence.

Core principles of effective leadership include integration of "technical leadership" that involves sound management of school resources; "human leadership", through the expansion of networks; "educational leadership", through development of academic expertise; "symbolic leadership" through demonstration of role-modeling; and "cultural leadership" (p. 14) in promoting the values, beliefs, and organizational identity of the school. Effective leadership also focuses on developing professionalism in the teaching staff by giving autonomy and platform to improve their expertise and capabilities, as well as encouraging them to face and solve their own challenges in their respective disciplines. In addition, entrepreneurial, strategic and sustainable leadership provide essential components by enabling leaders to learn from business leaders in developing successful planning, culture change and methodologies for continuous improvement.

Resource development is a critical component of organizational effectiveness in Christian schools. Designing creative financial resource development and networking strategies play important role in positioning the schools for success. This would include successful fundraisers, sustainable income generating mechanisms and ability to partner with businesses and community organizations. Similarly, adequate and modern facilities would be considered a critical success factor for Christian schools. Both financial resource development and improving facilities will

require a strong networking, marketing and promotional capabilities. However, it is also necessary to understand that academic excellence, organizational capabilities, and focus on diversity positions Christian schools at a higher level of prominence and recognition. Therefore, developing an integrated, universal strategy for transforming Christian schools requires effective leadership and capacity development to avert the weaknesses and shortcomings of the schools, and promoting the unique values that are only available in Christian schools.

Many of the research participant parents indicated the reason for sending their children to Christian school as their preference to have faith-based education and the development of spiritual, moral and biblically based social values, Christian schools still lack diversity and inclusion in terms of social racial and cultural backgrounds. Many research participants expressed the lack of diversity as a sign of weakness and threat for the growth and performance improvement of Christian schools. Further research and analysis is therefore needed to understand the implications of the historical events of desegregation and its impact on the preferences of many parents wanting to send their children schools that lack racial and cultural diversity.

Further in depth case study type of research is also necessary to define the relationships and correlations between the decline and failures of each Christian school. A separate study focusing on the upsurge of charter schools and homeschooling is also necessary to analyze its impact on the decline and failure of Christian schools. The literature review and many research participants argued that charter schools and homeschooling as in direct completion to Christian schools. However, data driven research and analysis is needed to draw conclusion and its impact on Christian schools. Another recommendation is to conduct a broader study that covers larger demographics, and broader geographic locations. It is fair to say that this study was narrow in

scope due to the limited number of participants, both in terms of number of persons and number of institutions who took part in the study.

Implications of the Study

The primary mission and goals of Christian schools is to educate and develop students that are all rounded and responsible citizens who have solid foundation in terms of spiritual, social, and moral values. The social and moral values and standards promoted by Christian schools are those that provide strong foundation and virtues including respect to others, caring attitude, and shared sense of responsibility to achieve community development and positive social change. The primary objective of The CONCORD model is to assist Christian schools develop a framework for strategic and operational efficiency; achieve academic excellence, operational excellence, and organizational effectiveness.

The model focusses on developing strategic connections that provide foundation for fostering effective relationships within the constituents of Christian schools; improving organizational and operational capabilities, attaining transactional and negotiation skills, cultivating solid foundation and platform for personal, social, moral and spiritual values; optimizing processes, systems and institutional capacity; developing sufficient human and financial resources; and developing a framework for organizational change continuous improvement.

The CONCORD model is designed as a theoretical framework for organizational change and performance improvement for Christian schools that need to achieve transformation using a model that is relevant to their mission, vision, environmental challenges and structural needs. Its application requires committed leadership, effective management and efficient systems and

processes to sustain the performance transformation from a current state to the desired future state. In addition, commitment and involvement of the stakeholders for the organizational change and performance transformation initiatives requires readiness to adapt culture change, new relationship development strategies, negotiation skills, cultivating new values, continuously improving and optimizing use of resources and developing functional resource development strategies for the common good.

Conclusion

The literature review and research participant responses confirmed that demand for faith-based education is very high. The research findings indicate that, if given the choice, many parents rather send their children to study in Christian schools. The problem, however, is that although Christian schools are very good in developing the faith and Biblically founded social and moral values, many families expressed concerns that they lack the core principles and requirements of effective education and academic excellence involving math, sciences, technology and engineering that lays the foundation for successful academic tenure from elementary through high school, and to college and beyond that are essential for preparing students for career and life.

Christian schools are working hard to promote their value proposition to serve their constituents and reach out to a wider population that can benefit from the unique value they provide in academic excellence and faith-based social and moral values development among students. Their efforts have been hindered by the lack of resources, capabilities and an effective model of organizational change and performance improvement. The CONCORD model provides a framework for effectiveness in operational, management and leadership perspectives focusing

on processes, systems, resources and capabilities. It is my vision and belief that the model serves as an instrument to introduce and sustain social change.

Researcher's Reflections and Closing Statement

This doctoral program along with the research project, and the quest for organizational effectiveness focusing on faith-based educational institutions was long, challenging and extremely demanding, to say the least. The researcher's passion for academics and vision for organizational change and performance transformation triggered the study. However, competing demands for family, career and community service obligations made the scholastic endeavor extremely challenging and long. Despite the challenges, the mission and objectives of the study has greater reach and implications for social change and community development in laying strong foundation to build the mind and character of students, who are deemed future leaders. The stronger the foundation we lay to build the capabilities, character, and a sense of social responsibility, the more effective the outcome is.

As a researcher I believe that The CONCORD model sets a benchmark, and reference framework to build further models focusing on the core components that are identified as critical success factors for Christian schools. These critical variables include standards such as academic excellence, outreach and sustainability, resource development, and constructs of diversity and inclusion in terms of worldview, race and social differences that are based on biblical merits. The researcher strongly recommends further research and exploration to develop functional models that specifically address the needs and challenges of Christian schools focusing on the variables and components discussed above.

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Appendix A

Interview Outline

No.	Level	Research Question	Student (2)	Alumni (6)	Parents (3)	Teachers (2)	Principal / Administrator (3)	Executive / Board Member (2)	Industry Expert (2)
						Research Participants. (No. of Participants)			
1	Operational	How would you describe your experiences at your school?	X	X	X				
2	Operational	What do you think are the strengths of your school?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Operational	What do you think are the weaknesses of your school?							
4	Management	What thoughts do you have on ways to improve the performance of your school?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	Management Strategic	What do you see are the primary challenges that Christian schools are facing?					X	X	X
6	Strategic Management	How would you describe a successful or effective Christian school?		X	X	X	X	X	X
7	Strategic Management	How would you describe your strategies for Outreach (recruiting) students?				X	X	X	X
8	Management Strategic	How would you describe effective strategies for student retention			X	X	X	X	X
9	Management Strategic	How would you describe effective strategies for financial stability?				X	X	X	X
10	Operational Management Strategic	How would you describe the academic quality in your school	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
11	Management Strategic	What do you think are the external factors that impact effectiveness of Christian schools?				X	X	X	X
12	Management Strategic	How would you describe the impact of homeschooling in your school?				X	X	X	X
13	Management Strategic	How would you describe the impact of charter schools on your school?				X	X	X	X
14	Management Operational Strategic	How would you describe the impact of affordability on your school?				X	X	X	X

No.	Level	Research Question	Student (4)	Alumni (5)	Parents (8)	Teacher (4)	Principal / Administrator (4)	Executive / Board Member (4)	Industry Expert (3)
							Research Participants (No. of Participants)		
15	Strategic Management	What internal capabilities do you think are essential for sustainable performance improvement in your school?				X	X	X	X
16	Strategic Management	How would you describe the role of effective leadership in your school?			X	X	X	X	X
17	Strategic Management	How would you describe the role of effective operations management in your school?			X	X	X	X	X
18	Strategic Management	How would you describe your school culture?			X	X	X	X	X
19	Strategic Management	What role does school culture play on the effectiveness of your school?			X	X	X	X	X
20	Strategic Management Operational	How would you describe the student's spiritual development at your school?		X	X	X	X	X	X
21	Strategic Management Operational	How would you describe the student's moral development at your school?		X	X	X	X	X	X
22	Strategic Management Operational	How would you describe the student's social development at your school?		X	X	X	X	X	X
23	Strategic Management	How would you describe the effectiveness of the Mission of your school?				X	X	X	X
24	Strategic Management	Describe how you see the current strategies and operating frameworks for Christian schools and what would you suggest?		X	X	X	X	X	X
25	Strategic Management	How would you evaluate the usefulness of the current strategies for connecting with local communities and what changes might you suggest?		X	X	X	X	X	X
27	Operational	How would you describe the benefits of attending Christian school?	X	X	X				
28	Operational	What do you think are the disadvantages or challenges of attending Christian school?	X	X	X			X	X
29	Strategic Management Operational	What other concerns do you have that may impact the performance of your school?			X	X	X	X	X

No.	Level	Research Question	Student (4)	Alumni (5)	Parents (8)	Teacher (4)	Principal / Administrator (4)	Executive / Board Member (4)	Industry Expert (3)
							Research Participants (No. of Participants)		
30	Strategic Management Operational	What other recommendation do you have to improve school performance?			X	X	X	X	X

Appendix B: Student Interview Questions Form

Student Research Interview Outline
Researcher: Abraham K. Adhanom
Participant Category: Student
Participant Name: _____
Participant Association: _____
Date: _____

No.		Research Question
1	Question	How would you describe your experiences at your Christian school? Discuss in terms of personal satisfaction in academic and personal experiences…
	Answer	
2	Question	What do you think are the strengths of your school?
	Answer	
3	Question	What do you think are the weaknesses of your school?
	Answer	
4	Question	What thoughts do you have to make your school perform better?
	Answer	
10	Question	How would you describe the academic quality in your school? (Compared to other private and public schools…)
	Answer	
27	Question	How would you describe the benefits of attending Christian school?
	Answer	
28	Question	What do you think are the disadvantages or challenges of attending Christian school?
	Answer	

Appendix C: Alumni Interview Questions Form

Alumni Research Interview Outline
Researcher: Abraham K. Adhanom
Participant Category: Alumni
Participant Name: _____
Participant Association: _____
Date: _____

No.		Research Question
1	Question	How would you describe your experiences at your Christian school? Discuss in terms of personal satisfaction and preparedness after your Christian school experience…
	Answer	
2	Question	What do you think are the strengths of your school? (Discuss based on your experience)
	Answer	
3	Question	What do you think are the weaknesses of your school? (Discuss based on your experience)
	Answer	
4	Question	What thoughts do you have on ways to improve the performance of your school? (Discuss in terms of academic, intellectual and social worldview preparedness)
	Answer	
10	Question	How would you describe the academic quality in your school? (Compared to other private and public schools…)
	Answer	
27	Question	How would you describe the benefits of attending Christian school?
	Answer	
28	Question	What do you think are the disadvantages or challenges of attending Christian school?
	Answer	

Appendix D: Parents Interview Questions Form

Research Interview Outline
Researcher: Abraham K. Adhanom
Participant Category: Parent
Participant Name: _____
Participant Association: _____
Date: _____

No.		Research Question
1	Question	How would you describe your experiences at your child's Christian school? Discuss in terms of student achievements, personal satisfaction and preparedness after Christian school experience…
	Answer	
2	Question	What do you think are the strengths of your Christian school? (Discuss based on your child's achievements and experiences)
	Answer	
3	Question	What do you think are the weaknesses of your Christian school? (Discuss base on your child's achievements and experience)
	Answer	
6	Question	How would you describe a successful or effective Christian school?
	Answer	
10	Question	How would you describe the academic quality in your Christian school? (Compared to other private and public schools…)
	Answer	
16	Question	How would you describe the role of effective leadership in your Christian school? (In terms of resource development, community outreach, academic success…)
	Answer	
18	Question	How would you describe your school culture? (Friendly? Adaptive? Diverse? Conservative? Competitive? Reserved?...)
	Answer	
20	Question	How would you describe the students' faith or spiritual development at your Christian school? (How important is it for Christian schools to emphasize on students' faith and spiritual development?)
	Answer	
21	Question	How would you describe the students' social and moral development at your Christian school? (How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's social, moral and character development?)
	Answer	
23	Question	How would you describe the effectiveness of the Mission of your Christian school?
	Answer	
27	Question	How would you describe the benefits of attending a Christian school?
	Answer	

28	Question	What do you think are the disadvantages or challenges of attending a Christian school?
	Answer	
30	Question	What thoughts and recommendations do you have to improve Christian school performance? (You may discuss from Strategic, Administrative, Management, Community Outreach, and sustainability perspectives?)
	Answer	

Appendix E: Teachers Interview Questions Form

Research Interview Outline
Researcher: Abraham K. Adhanom
Participant Category: Teacher
Participant Name: _____
Participant Association (School): _____
Date: _____

No.		Research Question
2		What do you think are the strengths of your school?
	Response	
3		What do you think are the weaknesses of your school?
	Response	
4		What thoughts do you have on ways to improve the performance of your school?
	Response	
6		How would you describe a successful or effective Christian school?
	Response	
11		What do you think are the external factors that impact effectiveness of Christian schools?
	Response	
15		What internal capabilities do you think are essential for sustainable performance improvement in your school?
	Response	
16		How would you describe the role of effective leadership in your school?
	Response	
17		How would you describe the role of effective operations management in your school?
	Response	
18		How would you describe your school culture? (Friendly? Adaptive, Competitive? Reserved?...)
	Response	
19		What role does school culture play on the effectiveness of your school?
	Response	
20		How would you describe the students' spiritual development at your school?
	Response	
21		How would you describe the students' moral development at your school? (How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's moral and character development?)
	Response	
23		How would you describe the effectiveness of the Mission of your school?
	Response	
25		How would you evaluate the current strategies for connecting with local communities and what changes would you suggest?

	Response	
29		What other concerns do you have that may impact the performance of your school?
	Response	
30		What other recommendation do you have to improve school performance?
	Response	

Appendix F: Principal / Administrator Interview Questions Form

Research Interview Outline
Researcher: Abraham K. Adhanom
Participant Category: Principal / Administrator
Participant Name: _____Rebecca Neal _____
Participant Association: ___Heights Christian Junior High _____
Date: ____11/17/2014_____

No.		Research Question
2	Question	What do you think are the strengths of your school?
	Answer	
3	Question	What do you think are the weaknesses of your school?
	Answer	
4	Question	What thoughts do you have on ways to improve the performance at your school? (Processes and activities you envision to implement to improve effectiveness)
	Answer	
5	Question	What do you see are the primary challenges that Christian schools are facing?
	Answer	
6	Question	How would you describe a successful or effective Christian school?
	Answer	
7	Question	How would you describe your strategies for Outreach (recruiting) students?
	Answer	
8	Question	How would you describe effective strategies for sustainability (student retention)?
	Answer	
9	Question	How would you describe effective strategies for financial affordability?
	Answer	
10	Question	How would you describe the academic standards and quality in your school? (Compared to other private and public schools...) What would you do to improve?
	Answer	
11	Question	What do you think are the external factors that impact effectiveness of Christian schools?
	Answer	
12	Question	How would you describe the impact of homeschooling in your school?
	Answer	
13	Question	How would you describe the impact of charter schools on your school?
	Answer	
14	Question	How would you describe the impact of affordability on your school?
	Answer	
15	Question	What internal capabilities do you think are essential for sustainable performance improvement in your school?
	Answer	
16	Question	How would you describe effective leadership in your school?
	Answer	
17	Question	How would you describe effective operations management in your school?
	Answer	
18	Question	How would you describe your school culture? (Friendly? Competitive? Conservative?, Adaptive?...
	Answer	
19	Question	What role does school culture play on the effectiveness of your school?
	Answer	
20	Question	How would you describe the students' spiritual development at your school? (How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's spiritual development?)
	Answer	
21	Question	How would you describe the students' moral development at your school?

		(How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's moral and character development?)
	Answer	
22	Question	How would you describe the students' social development at your school?
		(How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's social and emotional development?)
	Answer	
23	Question	How would you describe the effectiveness of the Mission of your school?
	Answer	
24	Question	Describe how you assess the current strategies and operating frameworks for your school and what would you change or improve?
	Answer	
25	Question	How would you evaluate your strategies for engaging and connecting with local communities and how would you improve it?
	Answer	

Appendix G: Board Member / Leadership Interview Questions Form

Research Interview Outline
Researcher: Abraham K. Adhanom
Participant Category: Leadership / Executive
Participant Name: _____
Participant Association: _____
Date: _____

No.		Research / Interview Question
2	Question	What do you think are the strengths of your Christian school?
	Answer	
3	Question	What do you think are the weaknesses of your Christian school?
	Answer	
4	Question	What thoughts do you have on ways to improve the performance at your Christian school? (Strategies, Processes and Activities you envision to improve effectiveness)
	Answer	
5	Question	What do you see are the primary challenges that Christian schools are facing?
	Answer	
6	Question	How would you describe a successful or effective Christian school?
	Answer	
7	Question	How would you describe your strategies for Outreach (recruiting) students?
	Answer	
8	Question	How would you describe effective strategies for student retention?
	Answer	
9	Question	How would you describe effective strategies for financial affordability?
	Answer	
10	Question	How would you describe the academic standards and quality in your Christian school? (Compared to other private and public schools…)
	Answer	
11	Question	What do you think are the external factors that impact effectiveness of Christian schools?
	Answer	
12	Question	How would you describe the impact of homeschooling in your Christian school?
	Answer	
13	Question	How would you describe the impact of charter schools on your Christian school?
	Answer	
15	Question	What internal capabilities do you think are essential for sustainable performance improvement in your Christian school?
	Answer	
16	Question	How would you describe of effective leadership in your Christian school?
	Answer	
17	Question	How would you describe effective operations management in your Christian school?

	Answer	
18	Question	How would you describe your school culture? (Friendly? Competitive? Reserved, Adaptive?...)
	Answer	
19	Question	What role does school culture play on the effectiveness of your Christian school?
	Answer	
20	Question	How would you describe the students' spiritual development at your Christian school? (How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's spiritual development?)
	Answer	
21	Question	How would you describe the students' moral development at your Christian school? (How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's moral and character development?)
	Answer	
22	Question	How would you describe the students' social development at your Christian school? (How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's social and emotional development?)
	Answer	
23	Question	How would you describe the effectiveness of the Mission statement of your Christian school?
	Answer	
24	Question	How would you assess the current strategies and operating frameworks for your school and what would you change or improve?
	Answer	
25	Question	How would you evaluate your strategies for engaging and connecting with local communities and how would you improve it?
	Answer	
29	Question	What other concerns or recommendations do you have that may impact the performance of your school?
	Answer	

Appendix H: Industry Expert / Scholars Interview Questions Form

Research Interview Outline
Researcher: Abraham K. Adhanom
Participant Category: Industry Expert
Participant Name: _____
Participant Association: _____
Date: _____

No.		Research Question
5	Question	What do you see are the primary challenges that Christian schools are facing?
	Answer	
6	Question	How would you describe a successful or effective Christian school?
	Answer	
7	Question	How would you describe effective strategies for Outreach (recruiting) students?
	Answer	
8	Question	How would you describe effective strategies for student retention?
	Answer	
9	Question	How would you describe effective strategies for financial affordability?
	Answer	
10	Question	How would you describe effective educational standards and academic quality in your school? (Compared to other private and public schools...)
	Answer	
11	Question	What do you think are the external factors that impact effectiveness of Christian schools?
	Answer	
15	Question	What internal capabilities do you think are essential for sustainable performance improvement in Christian schools?
	Answer	
16	Question	How would you describe of an effective leadership in Christian schools?
	Answer	
18	Question	How would you describe the culture of an effective school culture? (Friendly? Competitive? Reserved, Adaptive?...)
	Answer	
20	Question	How would you describe the importance of students' spiritual development at Christian schools? (How critical is it for Christian schools to focus on student's spiritual development?)
	Answer	
21	Question	How would you describe the importance of students' moral development at your school? (How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's moral and character development?)
	Answer	
22	Question	How would you describe the students' personal and social development In Christian school?? (How important is it for Christian schools to focus on student's social and emotional development?)
	Answer	
23	Question	How would you describe the effectiveness of the Mission statement of a Christian school?

	Answer	
25	Question	How would you describe strategies for engaging and connecting with local communities and how would you improve it?
	Answer	
29	Question	What other concerns or recommendations do you have that may impact the performance of Christian schools?
	Answer	

Appendix I: Research Participant Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study of developing organizational change and performance improvement model for Christian schools. The researcher is inviting Christian school students, alumni, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, sponsors and experts to participate in the study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Abraham Adhanom, who is a doctoral student at Walden University. The research period and your participation will be limited to one interview within six months period of time from the date of your consent to participate in the study.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to gather information relevant to analyzing existing organizational change and performance improvement models and develop a suitable model for Christian schools.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- ___✓___ Participate in one (1) hour interview and discussion to share your experiences and perspectives of effectiveness in Christian schools
- ____Participate in one (1) hour phone interview and discussion to share your experiences and perspectives of effectiveness in Christian schools
- ____Participate in an online video conference interview and discussion to share your experiences and perspectives of effectiveness in Christian schools
- ___✓___ Respond via email to research questions listed on a Word document

Here are some sample questions:

1. What do you think are the strengths of your school?
2. What do you think are the weaknesses of your school?
3. What do you see are the primary challenges that Christian schools are facing?
4. How would you describe a successful or effective Christian school?
5. How would you describe effective strategies for Outreach (recruiting) students?
6. What do you think are the external factors that impact effectiveness of Christian schools?
7. What internal capabilities do you think are essential for sustainable performance improvement in your school?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

The study may not benefit you directly. However, because you value Christian education, the result of the study is expected to provide a model of effectiveness and performance effectiveness for Christian schools which I believe is valuable to you.

Potential risk of participating in the study may include psychological or emotional discomfort in case you need to express any unfavorable or undesirable process, event or activity that you would like to share during the interview. Should you face any psychological or emotional discomfort during or after the interview, there will be a process for free or low cost referral using your school resources or other ways to address the issue in partnership with your school principal.

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Appendix J: Parent Consent Form

PARENT CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH

Your child is invited to take part in a research study of developing a model for Christian school performance improvement. The researcher is inviting all students who demonstrated academic excellence and leadership at a Christian school to be in the study to be in the study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to allow your child to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Abraham Adhanom , who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to develop a model of organizational effectiveness and performance improvement at Christian schools.

Procedures:
If you agree to allow your child to be in this study, your child will be asked to:
- Discuss his/her ideas and perspectives about what makes a Christian school effective and successful.

Here are some sample questions:
1. How would you describe your experiences at your school?
2. What thoughts do you have on ways to improve the performance of your school?
3. What do you see are the primary challenges that Christian schools are facing?
4. How would you describe the academic quality in your school?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you want your child to be in the study. Of course, your child's decision is also an important factor. After obtaining parent consent, the researcher will explain the study and let each child decide if they wish to volunteer. No one at your school will treat you or your child differently if you or your child decides to not be in the study. If you decide to consent now, you or your child can still change your mind later. Any children who feel stressed during the study may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
Being in this project might make your child tired or stressed, just like being in class for a full hour. But we are hoping this project might help others by making Christian schools effective and successful. No physical risks are anticipated for participating in this study. Being in this study would not pose risk to your child's safety or wellbeing.

Potential risk of participating in the study may include psychological or emotional discomfort in case you need to express any unfavorable or undesirable process, event or activity that you would like to share during the interview. Should you face any psychological or emotional discomfort during or after the interview, there will be a process for free or low cost referral using your school resources or other ways to address the issue in partnership with your school principal.

Payment:
No payment or any form compensation will be provided to participating in this study.

Privacy:

Any information your child provides will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your child's information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your child's name or anything else that could identify your child in any reports of the study. The only time the researcher would need to share your child's name or information would be if the researcher learns about possible harm to your child or someone else. The researcher will use audio recorder to record the interview conversations. Data will be kept secure by physical and digital security measures. Data will be kept for a period of 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via email at abraham.adhanom@waldenu.edu or by phone 562-577-5341. If you want to talk privately about your child's rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University staff member who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **10-06-14-0114162** and it expires on **October 5, 2015**.

The researcher will provide an extra copy of this form for you to keep.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my child's involvement this optional research project. By _____
I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Parent: _____

Printed Name of Child: _____

Date of consent: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

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Appendix K: Student Assent Form

ASSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH

Hello, my name is Abraham Adhanom and I am doing a research project to learn about Christian school performance improvement. I am inviting you to join my project. I am inviting all students who demonstrated academic excellence and leadership at a Christain school to be in the study. I am going to read this form with you. I want you to learn about the project before you decide if you want to be in it.

WHO I AM:
I am a student at Walden University. I am working on my doctoral degree

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
If you agree to be in this project, you will be asked to:
- Discuss your ideas and perspectives about what makes a Christian school effective and successful.

Here are some sample questions:
1. How would you describe your experiences at your school?
2. What thoughts do you have on ways to improve the performance of your school?
3. What do you see are the primary challenges that Christian schools are facing?
4. How would you describe the academic quality in your school?

IT'S YOUR CHOICE:
You don't have to be in this project if you don't want to. If you decide now that you want to join the project, you can still change your mind later. If you want to stop, you can.

Being in this project might make you tired or stressed, just like being in class for a full hour. But we are hoping this project might help others by making Christian schools effective and successful.

No payment or any form compensation will be provided to participating in this study.

PRIVACY:
Everything you tell me during this project will be kept private. That means that no one else will know your name or what answers you gave. I will record the interview conversations using an audio recorder. The only time I have to tell someone is if I learn about something that could hurt you or someone else.

ASKING QUESTIONS:
You can ask me any questions you want now. If you think of a question later, you or your parents can reach me atby phone at 562-577-5341 or email at abraham.adhanom@waldenu.edu. If you or your parents would like to ask my university a question, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. Her phone number is 612-312-1210.

I will give you a copy of this form.

Please sign your name below if you want to join this project.

Name of Child   _____

Child Signature   _____

Date   _____

Researcher Signature   _Abraham A. Adhanom_