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Academic Accountability between Charter and Public-School Principals in New Jersey

Nicole Goodman
Walden University

Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Nicole Goodman

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Review Committee
Dr. Mark Gordon, Committee Chairperson,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

Dr. Jacqueline Thomas, Committee Member,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

Dr. Michael Brewer, University Reviewer,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

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Abstract

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MSW, Yeshiva University, 2002

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore school principals' accountability with student academic performance. Charter and public-school principals are responsible for the learning process and academic development. Previously published literature did not reveal a clear understanding of the policies and practices that contributed in obtaining the desired student academic outcomes. Parsons's theory of action served as the foundation for analyzing principals' decisions to achieve accountability and comply with the policies established by the regulating authorities. A snowball sampling of school principals included a public charter school principal and 5 traditional public-school principals in the state of New Jersey. A multiple case study approach with semi structured interviews and open-ended questions was used to collect data, which was then transcribed, coded, and processed in Dedoose software program. Gaining insight may prove beneficial to the accountability of principals' duties disposed by school policies and practices. The study findings helped identify accountability standards common for both types of educational establishments. The study found that academic accountability goes beyond school principals and that school principals spend the least amount of time as instructional leaders. Finding contributes to positive social change by highlighting the need for regulatory agencies to identify and set clear guidelines of accountability, implement effective monitoring and measuring tools of accountability, and hold all stakeholders accountable for promoting student academic performance and achievement.

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Dedication

I dedicate this journey to my beloved mother and best friend Portia Goodman-Adams and to my son Sabir H. Culbertson.

To my mother who has instilled in me the value of education, self-love, and self-worth. I was blessed to have a mother who laid the foundation of strength, resiliency, and most importantly, spirituality. She was physically present at the start of my journey and in December 2012, gave me a journal with the inscription, "To my Doctor, my Nikki, my child, who I am so proud of, I hope to live long enough to see you reach your full potential, reach for the Stars my Star!" Mommy, I know you are spiritually present to see the fruits of your labor produced. Mommy, you have always been and continue to be my Star, Role Model, and Strength, Thank you! Until we meet again. Always on my mind, forever in my Heart!

To my son who is my inspiration, pride, and joy, who always remind me, giving up or into the pressures of life is not an option. Thank you Sabir for your constant support, words of encouragement, and most of all your patience during this journey. We sacrificed a lot but we did it! Thank you for being who you are, an intelligent, strong young man with a beautiful spirit and awesome personality, and always bringing laughter, especially when needed. Loving you more than life itself, and embracing your new name for me, Dr. Mama!

Thank you both for your unconditional love and helping me become the woman and mother that I strive to be!

Acknowledgement

Ephesians 3:20 "His power at work in us can do far more than we dare ask or imagine."

I would like to acknowledge first my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ for his grace, mercy and protection upon my life. I am forever grateful for the blessings and favor that he continues to bless me with, even when I feel undeserving. I am forever indebted and will always love, praise, and give you the glory and honor for never giving up on me, even when I was ready to give up on myself. For God be the Glory, without him there is no me!

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Although there are so many people that I need to acknowledge, I would be remiss if I did not begin with special thanks to my mother and son, for never doubting or giving up on me. I would like to send a special thank you to my Aunt Fran Haynes and Cousin

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Introduction to the Study

Several similarities and differences exist in academic accountability principles and protocols in charter schools and public-schools in the United States (Anyon, 2014). Academic accountability has been the most common aspect of accountability used for comparing the level of accountability principles in terms of reporting academic performance to the regulatory parties in the area of their operation. This is because all public-schools must provide annual reports on school performance compared to charter schools that are only required to do so every 3 years (Anyon, 2014). There is also a distinction in the number of observers in charter schools in comparison to public-schools, where the former has fewer (Baker & Weber, 2017).

There are other aspects of academic protocol that distinguish charter schools from public-schools in the United States, such as the size of the institution and the level of proficiency of learners in either case. The number of charter schools in the United States has increased based on their relevance in addressing academic needs of learners. The difference in academic accountability protocol has also been observed in the context of learning hours in a year, which is longer in traditional public-schools compared to charter schools. Even though a lower percentage of students are enrolled in charter schools, the actual number of charter schools and their relevance has improved (Baker & Weber, 2017).

The establishment of charter schools has resulted in increased competition for market relevance, which has also been a factor that has motivated the performance of

most public-schools. The change in accountability is a determining factor for the use of resources in schools for achieving academic objectives (Usman, 2016). Understanding the comparisons and contrast between academic accountability protocols in public-schools and charter schools is necessary to determine the way the school boards of the respective institutions can allocate resources for implementing the respective objectives and functions. Academic accountability in charter schools and public-schools can be understood in part by the enrollment process or the manner in which financial allocations are done in either case (Affolter & Donnor, 2016; Buras, 2014). It is also possible to understand the similarities and differences in academic accountability in the context of student performance evaluation and the level of qualification for teachers to teach particular subjects in the institutions.

This chapter provides a background on academic accountability in charter schools and public-schools in the United States. I also explain the problem of academic accountability protocols in the United States that has been a major area of interest in the management of charter schools and public-schools. This chapter also provides a theoretical framework that will be relevant in understanding the principles used in the management of public-schools and charter schools in the United States. I also discuss the importance of the study in enhancing accountability among principals in charter and public-schools.

Background

The term *charter schools* refers to public-schools that operate independently under a contract between the institutions and the regulating agency, (Camden Family School Guide (CFSG), 2015). Furthermore, enabling the operation of charter schools en-

sures operational objectives are achieved. Charter schools typically have a significant autonomy of operation and capacity to make decisions on matters of curriculum and budget (Arce-Trigatti, Harris, Jabbar, & Lincove, 2016). Since the passing of the Charter Schools Act in 1991, there has been an increase in the number of such institutions in the United States (Edwards, 2014). In most states, charter schools have sought to improve students' learning, provide learners with more choices and enhance accountability. They have also been aimed at enhancing public-school systems. Presently, 40 states have charter schools in the United States in addition to public-schools (Edwards, 2014). The funding of most charter schools comes from sponsorships from local boards and there is openness in providing a curriculum that puts more emphasis on sciences and math programs that address the needs of students who are at risk of not qualifying academically and graduating from the institutions (Edwards, 2014). States where charter schools have been implemented effectively include New Jersey, Minnesota, and the District of Columbia (Fabricant & Fine, 2015). According to a 2015 report from the National Alliance for Charter Schools; the total number of public charter schools in the United States was 5,600 while the total enrollment was 2 million students. The level of enrollment in charter schools in the United States has been competitive in the same manner as public-schools.

The increase in the number of charter schools in the United States has been spurred by the desire of parents to enhance their children's ability to learn under the current available resources to achieve their academic qualifications' objectives (National Alliance for Charter Schools, 2015). The inspiration behind creating charter schools was to enable educational attainment using resources that were less demanding compared to

those required in public-schools (Ferdig & Kennedy, 2014). According to Coulson (2017),

> Nationwide, poor and middle-class parents are almost equally likely to actively choose their children's schools as opposed to having them automatically assigned. The options open to low-income families are far more limited, and most schools chosen by them are within the public system. The motivations of low-income parents are even more clearly visible in the several dozen privately run voucher programs scattered across the U.S., with educational quality cited as their primary reason for choosing an independent school. (p. 261)

The creation and academic regulations for charter schools and the way they are accountable to the regulatory bodies is different from that of public-schools. Based on states' regulations, those responsible for running charter schools can include the boards of education of the respective schools or a board that has been appointed by the relevant regulatory body. The main areas where academic accountability principles apply in both public-schools and charter schools include qualifications of teachers, academic performance, the structures of remuneration for teachers, and the actual performance of an institution within a particular period of time, such as a year or 3 years (Ferdig & Kennedy, 2014). It is important for both charter schools and public-schools to understand the protocols to follow when reporting their schools' performances thus enabling a better understanding of their competence in the provision of educational objectives. I investigated the various aspects of overall academic accountability of principals in charter and public-

schools, with the focus on establishing areas of similarities and differences in the illustrated aspects.

Problem Statement

Accountability amongst school principals has become increasingly important in both public and charter schools and has had the most critical effect on these schools' policies and schooling practices and has picked up an extensive variety of support among policymakers with respect to the expanding worry about failing state-funded schools (Bovens, Goodin, & Schillemans, 2014). Unlike the traditional school principals, today's principals are tasked with the need to adhere to and provide an account of all the school policies and practices to the public (Argon, 2015). According to Moswela (2014), the relationship between the leader and those they lead in a social system like a school is vital. In such a setting the leader communicates the organizational needs, educates, and influences those he/she subordinates.

In this regard, the statutory responsibility of the leaders is the provision of efficient leadership meeting the schools and public's needs including satisfactory and/or improved performance (Moswela, 2014). This indicates a responsibility and obligation to the school leader to maintain accountability for the academic outcome of the students. Therefore, the school principal endures the responsibility and accountability frameworks that are statutory. Chen (2017) indicated that as per a recent report by the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO), the traditional public-schools were found to be academically outperforming charter schools in different American states and cities. While the requirement for accountability among school leaders in both public and charter are

well known to be in existence, minimal research has been done to establish whether charter schools and public-schools are held to similar academic guidelines for purposes of accountability and if there is any influence on student academic performance. To establish the possible differences, it was vital to employ a multiple case study approach with public-schools being one case and charter schools being the other. The case state was New Jersey as it is among the states where such guidelines are well established.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this multiple case study was to determine the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in both public and charter schools and how this affects academic performance. Given the fact that the study was a multiple case study approach, the purpose was to find out whether public and charter schools in the state of New Jersey are held to the same academic guidelines that ensure school leadership accountability. In case they are not, I also examined how the existing disparities in the guideline requirements affect the academic performance of students in the schools within the state.

The findings from this multiple case study of academic accountability among public and charter school principals in the state of New Jersey will shed light on the role of school principals in ensuring academic accountability and if culpability by these leaders promotes and/or deters school performance. The findings highlight any existing differences in the academic guidelines for the two types of schools and their promotion of liability and any existing differences within the guidelines that may promote/bar accountability and their impact on academic performance. In the data collection, I used was semi

structured interviews at a neutral location as per the interviewees' choice. This data was collected from principals, vice principals, directors, educational and operational leaders, and operation managers. The principals that took part in the study held their New Jersey administrators certification as part of the New Jersey department of education (NJDOE) criteria. An informal network of administrators was invited via electronic invitation.

Research Questions

RQ1: What is the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in both public and charter schools?

RQ2: How does accountability affect perception of performance in both public and charter schools?

Theoretical Framework

This research was framed using Parsons (1978) theory of action. The theory was relevant in illustrating organizational changes such as actions and managerial activities that enable the attainment of goals, objectives, and missions. Parsons stated that the strategy of performing activities in an organization can be understood by the methods used to perform particular actions that contribute to the attainment of change (Buras, 2011).

In the context of academic accountability of principals of charter schools and public-schools, Parson's theory focused on the actual actions that principals in each case need to perform in order to achieve the respective goals and compliance standards laid out by the regulatory bodies. For instance, principals are responsible for ensuring that teachers perform their duties in accordance with the goals, vision, and missions of their learning institutions. Thus, this theory provided insight regarding the actions that are rec-

ommended in order to promote the performance of duties and tasks in a responsible and accountable manner. The relevance of this theory in academic accountability among charter school and public-school principals in New Jersey is that it provides specific actions and strategies of complying with various aspects of accountability ranging from quality education services and reporting of students' performance based on the requirements of the regulatory agencies. Various implications of this theory exist regarding the management of charter schools and public-schools in the state of New Jersey, such as establishing the steps that principals need to take for the purpose of enhancing adherence to academic performances, observance of the curriculum, and student enrollment procedures relevant to their schools.

The comparison of charter school principal accountability and those of public-school principals provides insight regarding how they can be held accountable for academic performances of their institutions. I sought to investigate if principals of charter schools and public-schools design policies and procedures that comply with academic accountability during recruitment of teachers, assigning them various areas of teaching based on their qualifications, and managing facilities used for providing teaching tasks to learners so that the standards set by the regulating agencies can be met. In most cases, the principals perform the role of monitoring the performance of institutions by establishing whether the academic performance standards meet those set by the regulatory bodies (NJDOE, 2015). There is the need for school administrators, such as principals, to confirm the effective use of resources, such as finances, for the purpose of accomplishing

academic objectives of the institutions and ensuring they meet the standard academic performance set by the respective regulatory institutions

Nature of the Study

A multiple case study approach was used to explore and determine the impact of school principals' accountability on the academic performance in the state of New Jersey for both public and charter schools. In addition, I targeted any disparities in the academic guidelines for public and charter schools in the state and how these differences may influence accountability and consequently academic performance. I used a qualitative research design founded on social constructivist perspective. Hence, I did not take into consideration any numerical data. Interviews were used for data collection. The data was collected from a sample of five participants. An equal number of participants for selection were attempted from each school to eliminate any form of bias in the findings and promote the study's credibility. The convenient sampling approach was to be used for sample selection and this sample was selected from a population of principals who either are presently or previously headed charter and/or public-schools. This provided the most appropriate information. Data analysis and interpretation involved the presentation of the findings from the collected data in tables and figures and linking these findings to the reviewed literature in Chapter 2 of the study. Finally, the trustworthiness of the findings was ensured by the proper formulation of the semi structured interview questions and adhering to all ethical consideration required in a qualitative study and by certifying, only the most appropriate participants are interviewed.

Definitions

Authorizers: Organizations that determine whether an institution is complying with the requirements for operation of a charter school or a public-school in various states in the United States. Authorizers have more of an impact on charter schools, but they also affect the operation of public-schools, (CFSG, 2015).

Boards of directors: A group of people who manage or direct a company or organization, these are professionals involved in making policies that affect the operations of charter schools. They determine the way resources should be used in day-to-day activities, (CFSG, 2015).

Certification: This refers to the professional qualifications that teachers in public and charter schools must acquire in order to be authorized to teach particular subjects. Teachers in public-schools have different forms of certification from those charter schools, (CFSG, 2015).

Charter schools: These public-schools operate independently under the school boards and monitored by the respective state departments of education, (CFSG, 2015)

Grading criteria: This is the criteria followed during student assessment, such as the criteria used to provide grades in academic settings. In most public-schools, grading is done by providing students with grades ranging from A+ to F. However, the grading criteria may vary from one learning institution to another, (CFSG, 2015).

Operations: There are activities that take place daily in public-schools and charter schools in compliance with the requirements of the accrediting institutions. School principals and Boards of Directors have the responsibility to ensure they perform monitoring

tasks aimed at creating an environment that facilitates academic accountability, (CFSG, 2015).

Public-schools: They include schools that have been assigned to principals by the corresponding states so that they can comply with the school mandates. They may constitute primarily or secondary schools that operate under the operation of a local education agency (LEA), (CFSG, 2015).

Remuneration: These include the payments provided to teachers and instructors in public-schools and charter schools in terms of a specified condition, such as the level of experience and the technicality of subjects taught, level of degree, and experience of teachers, (CFSG, 2015).

School board of education: A group of individuals responsible for providing direction in which policies of a learning institution should take as well as cooperating with principals in order to achieve the aspects of academic accountability, (CFSG, 2015).

Training: There are the requirements that educators must undergo in order to attain the competence in teaching a particular subject. The role of training is to promote the acquisition of skills required to facilitate the provision of instruction. The role of teachers is to educate learners in a manner that complies with the requirements of the regulatory agencies, (CFSG, 2015).

Working conditions: These are environments in which learning takes place and have been created by schools for providing support for teaching activities. Principals and leaders have the duty to create a positive working environment for learners and teachers, (CFSG, 2015).

Assumptions

The assumptions of this study include that academic performance of both institutions is dependent on the accountability of the school principals. In addition, I assumed that the academic guidelines provided by the state have requirements for accountability that the principals should strictly adhere to and that these guidelines influence the accountability practices of the school principals. I also assumed that the school principals are only obligated to be accountable because of the academic guidelines and without which they do not practice accountability. Other assumptions are in relation to the participants where the assumption is that all the interviewees would answer the interview questions fully and honestly. In addition, I assumed that the participants of the study are knowledgeable of the accountability requirements and existing academic guidelines. Furthermore, I assumed that the interviewees are sincerely interested in being part of the study and do not have any other motives for being part of the research, such as expecting a monetary or nonmonetary reward from their respective institutions for taking part in the study. The other assumption was that the sample selection process was the most appropriate and would result in the selection of the most relevant participants of the study. Finally, I assumed that the number of participants selected are not a representative of the entire population of principals or educational institutions in the state of New Jersey.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this research includes an investigation of the required academic accountability among charter school principals in the context of enhancing the school's performance and complying with the competence requirements of the regulatory organiza-

tion. In addition, this research only covers a comparison of academic accountability of public-schools and charter schools in the state of New Jersey. The area of comparison in reporting academic performances of the charter schools and public-schools is covered in this research. One delimitation of this research is its role in explaining the comparing and contrasting between academic principles that need to be followed in the operations of charter schools and public-schools in New Jersey for creating awareness on the manner in which their competitiveness can be improved. This research also has delimitation in that it uses simple descriptions based on qualitative data for illustrating the roles of principals in enhancing academic accountability.

Limitations

This research had several limitations that affect its effectiveness in understanding the topic of research. For instance, it was focused on charter and public-schools in the United States and ignores schools in other countries; making the findings less relevant to countries other than the United States. This research was also conducted based on the assumption that New Jersey accountability rules for charter schools and public-schools is representative of schools in the United States, even though the policies may vary between states.

Significance of the Study

This research was of great significance in understanding various ways in which charter school principals and public-school principals need to be held accountable for the academic performances of their institutions. It provides distinctions and similarities in academic accountability among charter schools and public-school principals. This result

in a better understanding of the actions that principals in charter schools and public-schools need to implement in order to achieve the objective of academic accountability. This research is important in enabling principals of charter schools and public-schools to focus their attention on specific areas of academic accountability for the purpose of promoting schools' competitiveness and performances in compliance with the regulatory requirements. Well-framed autonomy and accountability allow for increasing the effectiveness of educational organizations. The mechanism of their impact is to establish coherence between school management, evaluation of their performance and student academic results, as well as the use of data on achievements in reporting to stakeholders. Advancement of the quality education was a critical success factor in improving student performance.

The significance of the research lies also in the scope of the autonomy that schools can obtain. To be more precise, the assumption is concerned with an opportunity of gaining more freedom in exchange for increasing responsibility and accountability while independence refers to the lack of barriers and self-management. School autonomy implies that teachers and school administration are likely to have increased influence on the decision making in all functional spheres of the educational institution. In this regard, employees directly involved in the educational process can better understand the sources of the problems that have arisen and the ways to solve them. The usefulness and practical importance of autonomy entails that freedom enables schools to implement the options that they could not exercise before or those in which they were limited. The improvement of the legislative basis in establishing the correspondence of normative acts to each other

and assessing their real contribution to the development of school autonomy may contribute to the expansion of the autonomy of educational organizations. Another important area of this work is training of personnel who are ready to act independently and have the necessary skills to be engaged in collegial management being able to take responsibility for the quality of education.

Summary

Few studies existed that currently investigated the topic of accountability among charter school and public-school principals in New Jersey. This research was relevant in providing insight on the roles of charter school principals and public-school principals in order to comply with academic accountability policies and mandates expected of them. In this chapter, I reviewed the topic of academic accountability among charter school principals and public-school principals by illustrating the historical background of the study of academic accountability and the differences between charter schools and public-school principals since the introduction of the former in enabling educational attainment among students in New Jersey. The definition of charter schools and its distinction from public-schools was also illustrated. The issue that this research addressed is the need to enhance competitiveness of charter schools and public-schools and methods in which they need to comply with regulations from authorizing institutions so that provision of academic services to students can be in aligned to the set standards.

The theoretical framework used to explain various aspects of accountability is the theory of action (Parsons, 1978) that explained the actions that principals of charter schools and public-schools need to apply in order to achieve the objective of academic

accountability. The nature of the study is a qualitative literature review of articles, journals, and books explaining the concepts of academic accountability among charter schools and public-school principals. It also includes a survey conducted among charter school principals and public-school principals in the United States regarding their knowledge of various forms of accountability. The key terms used in the study were also explained. The assumption made in the study is that there are disparities in accountability among principals in charter schools and public-schools in New Jersey. The scope of the study is a focus on charter schools in New Jersey with the assumption that the insight from the state will enable a better understanding of the nature of principals' academic accountability in other states. The study is significant because it may enhance the ability of policymakers and school administrators, such as principals, in understanding areas of academic accountability to which they need to focus so that the competitiveness of their schools is enhanced.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Research that focuses on management policies for public-schools and charter schools are considered important in understanding the roles of principles and variations that exist in laws that control the operations of public and charter schools. School principals are pivotal in ensuring public policy and school guidelines are followed in managing public and charter schools that is determined based on state and federal regulations. According to (Kober, 2015), few studies focus on the public policies that governs the application process as well as an in-depth view of charter schools and public-schools management. The distinction of management of public and charter schools has resulted into the need to understand the similarities and differences in accountability among public-school and charter school principals in various activities that take place in these institutions.

This chapter explains various areas of accountability in public-schools and charter schools in the United States by investigating and illuminating the similarities and differences between them. The literature review explains the principles of the theory of action and its relevance in implementation of school principals in charter and public-schools. It also illustrates the way administrators applies theory of action to manage schools. Having focused on the policies of the NJDOE that affect management of charter schools and public-schools, the issues of provision of grants to schools and decision making strategies for teachers as professional and academic qualifications are evaluated.

This is followed by an explanation of federal policies that are applied in teacher certification and teacher compensation in charter schools and public-schools. The next section explains professional development on anti-bullying that is provided to teachers. The state policies in the areas of recruitment, curriculum development, and professional development are touched along with the explanation of the role played by fiscal policies in public and charter schools. The comparison and contrast of the main principles of academic accountability in public-schools and charter schools is provided along with the similarities and differences in operations of charter and public-schools from a business perspective. Finally, the roles of the executive board of directors within charter schools and the board of education in public-schools are highlighted to explain the decisions and the points of responsibility.

Literature Search Strategy

The purpose of the literature review was to provide an assessment and synthesis of the theoretical framework of the study along with related literature on administrative academic accountability in public and charter schools and impact on student performance. The identified themes and trends, which underpinned the variables and key concepts of the study, helped me focus the literature review. In the review, the different points of views of the study were evaluated. Studies related to the research topic were synthesized in relation to the variables and key concepts to establish history, relation, contentious, and the need for further research.

Using libraries in my purlieu, the following databases were used: Education, Public Policy & Administration, and Business and Management. Subject specific databases

used to conduct research were Education Source, ERIC, Political Science Complete, Political Science Complete & Business Source Complete Combined Search, SAGE Journals, and SocINDEX with Full Text. In addition, multidisciplinary databases and multidatabase search tools used were Thoreau Multi-Database Search, ProQuest Central, Academic Search Complete, and Google Scholar. Some of the databases were used in combination of one another to produce a more in-depth and thorough search.

I reviewed dissertations and doctoral studies, government documents, peer reviewed journal articles, and reference materials. All searches were limited to peer reviewed materials without the limitation of full text. This allowed me to be exposed to greater material on the topic and not only the materials that provides immediate full-text access.

Examples of conceptual search terms used for the research topic were *academic performance, performance-based education, outcome-based education, education outcomes, educational accountability, and competency-based education, theory of action,* and *Parsons, Talcott*. These search terms were used as a single search item and combined using Boolean operators as (AND, OR, NOT). The thesaurus feature was used to identify related terms to avoid redundancy in the search findings. This process was concluded once I found enough literature to present how this study fills a gap and provides greater knowledge on the research topic.

Theory of Action

A subjective action must be distinguished from behavior as the former presupposes the presence of a meaning or an intention. The starting point for considering the action

within the framework of the theory is an individual or an actor. This kind of analysis focuses on typical actors in typical situations revealing the goals of the agent, his expectations, and values, the means of achieving goals, nature, which were called the action frame of reference (Alexander, 2014).

Theory of action was formulated by Parsons (1978) who attempted to create a comprehensive theory of a social action that would cover all social reality and all kinds of social activities of people (Alexander, 2014). Parsons explained the strategy that can be used to change the management system of an organization from the present management system to the desired management system. The theory identifies the way activities in an organization are dependent on particular actions so that overall improvement is achieved by applying different policies in different departments (Stichweh, 2000). According to a study by Brown (2012), the theory is based on identification of the association between activities in an organization and what is considered a good result. Wright (2017) has interpreted the theory of action through the vision of the effective monitoring of teaching activities in a serious manner; it is possible for teachers to teach with a high level of commitment and it is possible for students to achieve high academic performance.

The center of Parson's theory of action concept is a phenomenon of a human action by which a person understands an intrinsically motivated action is oriented toward an external goal, and is subject to regulatory social behavior. Each action has its own internal structure, consists of several elements, and represents a social integrity in relation to the external social environment at the same time. The action is not only immersed in the situation but also is directed to the future. It obeys not only the biophysical needs of the

human body but also the value orientations of man as a person. Human actions, as a rule, are not chaotic and confused but rather directed, organized, and framed by the impact of internal and external social factors.

A social system is formed from the innumerable human actions and interactions that correspond to certain social roles (Alexander, 2014). Parsons formulated a provision on the three-piece composition of the frame of society, which includes three aspects. The three aspects were explained by Alexander (2014) as follows, the first aspect consists of a personal system of actors with needs that are oriented toward values and goals. The second aspect is a cultural system with a value, normative and status-role content consisting of ideas, beliefs, and symbols. The third aspect refers to the natural context, which is the physical environment. Each social system is an internally structured system of actions carried out by one, several, or an arbitrarily large number of individuals.

In its development, the social system should strive to integrate its elements, strengthen the internal order, and maintain the balance to self-preservation. The role of binders is performed by such factors as money, power, mutual expectations, and obligations, as well as common goals (Alexander, 2014). To exist successfully, the system must perform several functions: the adaptation to the external environment, the achievement of the set goals, an internal coordination and integration, and the preservation of reference samples that allow following the chosen direction. Together, they allow the system to remain stable and balanced within its borders, as well as adapt to changing historical circumstances.

According to the theory of action, the main principles that can be important in application of a particular teaching program include the reasons for the development of a program by its protagonists and the manner in which the program operates in terms of its legal requirements, requirements within the institution, and theoretical guidelines for its application (Stavropoulou & Stroubouki, 2014). This enables understanding of the way various elements of a program function with respect to one another and the possibility of reaching the intended outcome (Stavropoulou & Stroubouki, 2014).

According to Wright (2017), when the theory of action is applied in understanding the functionality of charter schools, those who support the implementation of a charter school program state that there are particular goals that must be achieved by the policy program. For instance, it is believed that charter schools can be more efficient because they are selected in a competing bidding process and the organizations incur lower labor costs compared with public-schools (Wright, 2017). In addition, it is believed that charter schools can respond to accountability threats from the regulatory bodies (Wright, 2017). For instance, most charter schools face the threat of being closed if they do not achieve a level of performance in a given time period such as 5 years (Wright, 2017). Trying to criticize the theory of action, Scott (2000) tried to stress the point that if motivation is based on self-interest, there is nothing to say about the social contribution in general. Referring this statement to teaching, the application of the theory of action is based on the creation of charter schools, which will result into competition with public-schools, and in turn act as a motivation for public-schools to provide competent services that meet learning needs of students. This is because if they do not respond in this manner, they are like-

ly to lose students to charter schools that provide competent teaching and educational needs of learners.

Shye (2014) ensured that the theory of action is a system theory, which requires training and development for staff as the basis for the supervision and accountability. In terms of accessibility to coaching, Parson's theory of action indicates that if teachers are provided with the relevant coaching and professional development teachers will replicate what they were taught by teaching quality skills and students will demonstrate under-standing of the contents of the subjects by performing well in their studies. In addition, if administrators focus their efforts on monitoring and supporting the acquisition of teach-ing skills that improve students' performances, teachers will feel comfortable to be in-volved in an institution and cooperate with the school administration to provide compe-tent knowledge to learners. Reichenbach (2016) has tried to explain the theory and its reference to the teaching models through the structure and function as the basis for hu-man interaction and relations. Thus, in reference to principles of management of charter schools and public-schools, the main areas of concern should be taking actions to imple-ment various principles so that goals are reached to the benefit of the institutions.

The National Academy of Science (2018) noted that the theory of action has been used to design the standards-based reform model that is based on standards, evaluation, flexibility, and accountability. At the same time, Marion, Lyons, Pace, and Williams (2016) noted that the theory of action helps to connect innovative approaches used in the evaluation and accountability technique, which is in use in schools. Such innovative techniques should allow describing the relation of every factor of the innovation to other

factors of the complex-value measures. The contribution of the assessed results to the educational system, can explain the intended goal of evaluations, rationalize the innovative approach, as well as benefits to stakeholders, and should help create an effective improvement plan.

Implication of the Action Theory

The primary implication of action theory on teachers is that it states the actions teachers need to take to achieve the certifications required during teachers' recruitment in charter schools and public-schools. Consequently, teachers can implement these qualifications to improve learning outcomes of students in these schools. According to Serdyukov (2017), the need to achieve learning targets is a driving factor for teachers to focus their attention in the classroom and exhibit a high level of expertise. This involves making on the-spot decisions that ensure students' performances are improved. This is because the managements of both charter schools and public-schools require that students must attain a particular level of academic performance before he or she can be promoted to the next level (Serdyukov, 2017). It involves planning to implement instructions and the application of knowledge of typical student progress to improve students' understanding. Based on the targets to be achieved during the learning process, teachers are required to create partnerships with students so that they can make informed decisions that raise students' academic performances (Serdyukov, 2017).

The implication of theory of action on students is that if targets are set so that students aim at achieving them, they become dedicated to their work so that these targets are achieved. This is because students in public-schools and charter schools are required to

achieve a particular level of academic performance before they can proceed from one grade to another (Kahlenberg & Potter, 2014). For instance, when grades are set so that a student that does not attain that grade cannot be promoted to the next class, the student becomes motivated to work hard so that the target is raised. In the case of public-schools and charter schools, it is required that academic standards should be set so that students are motivated to take actions in order to improve academic achievements.

The implication of the theory of action on principals is that it determines actions that they need to take so that students and teachers are managed effectively. Peng et al. (2014) stated that it involves determining policies and structures of accountability, teacher recruitment, compensation, and management of facilities within an institution, which ensures activities of a learning institution, are enhanced. This is because principals are expected to determine what is not practicable so that learning and academic performances of students is improved, and teachers are encouraged to make reasonable decisions that ensure academic achievements of students is improved (Peng et al., 2014). Principals are also required to provide feedback that targets cooperation from the board, parents, and teachers so that the institution works as a unit. Following the guidance of learning goals, principals play an important role in creating coherence within classrooms and actions taken within schools. The decisions they make also affect the way resources are allocated to promote students' learning and enhance teacher's professional development.

Other stakeholders who are affected by the theory of action are school administrators. They are people who take part in formulation of policies regarding the use of school funds and recruitments of teachers in both charter schools and public-schools. By learn-

ing the principles of theory of action, school administrators can collect data regarding the nature of working environment in classrooms and schools. According to Loedb, Kasman, and Valant, (2014), this ensures that administrators can determine the elements that support strategies that raise student accomplishment of academic goals, communicate the association among the elements in a general and cohesive manner, and implement a strong performance data that ensure effective decision making. Under the guidance of achievement targets, administrators can implement strategies that ensure there is an increase in achievement of students in various areas of interest, such as academics, sports, and leadership. This can be achieved with the contribution of teachers, students, parents, and community members in general. They can develop human capital that implements the strategy so that improvement is achieved and coherences exist in the schools. Add summary and synthesis to fully conclude the section.

New Jersey Department of Education Policies (NJDOE)

The Center for American Progress and the Council of Chief State School Officers, CCSSO (2014) states that an example of a major function of NJDOE is the formulation of policies that shapes the education system to comply with the government's vision for education and strategic plans in each state. In the previous decades, the NJDOE has been instrumental in creating initiatives that have ensured reform is achieved in New Jersey schools, such as improved development, improvement of curriculum, and improvement of administration of states in testing grades 3 to 8 and has also shaped the strategies of funding charter schools and expansion of schools from early childhood education to secondary education, (NJDOE, 2015). Another function of NJDOE is the administration of a

number of programs and educational services that include licensing of teachers, policies

concerning deaf students, and promoting the achievement of GED diplomas (NJDOE,

2015). Furthermore, the NJDOE is involved in administering federal and state acquisition

of grant programs that facilitate the reception of funding for public-schools, charter

schools, organizations' within the community, educational technology, and education for

adults, among others. Basye, Grant, Johnston, and Stefanie (2015) stated that the NJDOE

is involved in creating awareness regarding grant opportunities that can be obtained from

other sources such as federal government and private organizations. Furthermore, the

NJDOE plays an important role in administering aid in compliance with laws regarding

state funding. At the beginning of each year, the finance section of the department issues

aid from the state to support educational initiatives in each local district. The aid is used

to fund activities of district schools as well as charter schools (NJDOE, 2015). Based on

the amount of funding in the budget, the state fund is not used as the main source of fund-

ing, but the deficit funds can be obtained from community support initiatives (NJDOE,

2015).

The NJDOE is the primary stakeholder who construct policies, provide oversight,

and serves many functions in local education agencies (LEA) for charter and public-

school districts. These oversights and resources spans from funding, building construc-

tion, standardize assessments, curriculum, and setting academic learning standards that

students should meet at the end of each school year. In addition, the NJDOE offer aide to

support supplemental educational initiatives through after-school programs, and is the

linkage for LEA's to apply and obtain additional resources via federal government and private institutions.

NJDOE is also involved in resolution of disagreements arising under various laws and policies that have impacts on school districts. NJDOE then takes action by contacting the school principal (Phelan et al., 2013). The success in implementation of NJDOE programs is dependent on the extent to which the theory of action is applied. This involves identifying a particular principle such as funding and teacher assessment and identifying the action that needs to be taken in order to achieve that objective. This shows that school administrators have the responsibility to ensure the requirements of NJDOE are implemented in the management of school activities.

New Jersey Department of Grants Management

The NJDOE is involved in planning, acquisition, awarding, and managing grant funds in a fair manner for the purpose of accomplishing academic excellence and ensuring teacher effectiveness and accountability in schools. According to Phillips (2016), the office serves the function of supporting an efficient and accountable grant management strategy in compliance with the goals and priorities of the department. The main activities of NJDOE include working in collaboration with program offices in developing a subgrant program that complies with the goals and priorities of the department, implementation of sub grant initiatives, such as grants management subprograms, managing grant systems, and withstanding tests of audit. There exist various forms of grant opportunities through the NJDOE such as New Jersey Afterschool/Summer Program-Cohort 2. Those who are eligible for this grant include statewide, public, and private institutions. Solak

and Ozaskin (2014) states that, this is a form of grant given to youth serving organizations to enable them to manage activities of youths after school. The programs funded are those that enhance the student's ability to attend college after school and ensure career objectives of the students are met. The funds also serve the purpose of implementing activities aimed at improving students' abilities in the areas of academic performance and the use of technology and math. The main target population of this fund is students between the ages of 15 to 18 years. In order to manage these funds accurately and effectively, school administrators need to use the theory of action. This involves identifying the action that needs to be taken so that the funds are utilized for the benefit of the institutions. For instance, it involves establishing and prioritizing the most important areas where funding is needed in order to achieve the overall goals and objectives of the institution.

Another grant provided by NJDOE is Migrant Education Program for Year 3 and 5. The main purpose of this fund is to ensure there is appropriate support to migrant children so that they can achieve their educational needs. NJDOE (2015) state that NJDOE has developed a 5 year program that ensures the children of migratory workers and fishers get the following benefits: recognition and recruitment in schools, allowing intrastate and interstate transfer of these students, enabling them to get supplemental instructions, and enabling the benefit from health and support services. Selected agencies are allowed to access discretionary grants so that they can address particular education initiatives. According to Vickers (2014), Federal regulations within states are incorporated into the guidelines that control educational programs at various levels of this grant. The NJDOE

creates the guidelines by publishing a Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO). This enables each applicant to have a detailed package focusing on provision of guidance towards the process. The grants are awarded after an application has been made for the award. A workshop is organized, where grant parameters and constraints are explained to the applicants. The implication for school administrators is that those who qualify for the grants must attend the workshops so that they can understand the areas where the funds should be allocated.

In addition, public and charter school principals have the duty to comply with NJDOE in management and use of grants in the areas that have been recommended by NJDOE. They also have the responsibility to cooperate with officials from NJDOE to manage the grants in a manner that is beneficial to the institutions and student academic performance (NJDOE, 2015).

Decision Making

During decision-making, the main difference between a charter school and a public-school is that teachers in charter schools have more control over the students compared with teachers in public-schools. Parents also have the ability to make decisions regarding learning activities of children in charter schools. According to Watts (2014), parents have the rights to transfer their children from one charter school to another charter school based on their preferences, as there are fewer restrictions when compared with public-schools. The innovations that take place in public-schools are not usually similar to those that take place in charter schools. Public-schools are also more involved in decisions regarding the establishment of charter schools. In order for a public-school to sub-

mit an application to the NJDOE requesting conversion to a charter school, 51% of teachers and parents must buy-in to the proposal (NJDOE, 2017). For instance, a public-school under pressure to deliver according to market demands can prevent the construction of charter schools in its surroundings. In order to attract students into their schools, charter schools tend to use attractive marketing strategies to promote a particular type of curriculum that makes it more competitive than a public-school. In some cases, these offerings may be traditional compared with those of public-schools. The implication for school administrators is that they are required to make decisions according to the restrictions on decision-making in charter schools and public-schools.

The distinction in decision-making roles between charter schools and public-schools can be observed during strong competition. Wright (2017) states that, when there is a high competition, charter schools encounter pressure from public-schools, and they are forced to introduce marketing strategies which enable them to reach particular segments of the population so that student enrollment is increased. A district regulatory body determines the response taken by district schools. School administrators are required to engage in healthy competitive activities that do not undermine their competitors in the areas in which they operate.

A number of public-schools allow parents to play an important role in the child's learning process and increase autonomy of the teacher, but the research has found that there have been mixed outcome in academic performance of children who undergo such programs. Lundström (2015) has reported about higher achievements since such changed motivated students for better performance. At the same time, (Núñez et al., 2017) report-

ed about low academic achievements of students in the conditions of teachers' autonomy and parental involvement. Baxter and Nelson (2012) state that, this has prevented most public-schools from achieving autonomy in terms of allowing teachers to make the most decisions affecting learning needs of students. Despite the inability of some charter schools to meet academic needs of learners, they have been able to create health and safety assurance for learners thus becoming attractive to most parents. The operation of charter schools is also flexible in that the teacher is allowed to report at flexible hours and there is little accountability regarding compliance to the curriculum. This is not contrary to a public-school, where teachers do not have the discretion to report to school at their preferred hours, nor do they have the choice to choose the curriculum to be followed by the learners. With respect to the theory of action, it is required that parent involvement should be focused on particular interventions that measure the improvement of student performance. The actions that need to be taken include allowing consultations with teachers and providing advice to students in areas, such as obedience to teachers and proper time management, while they are in school.

According to Davis (2013), this makes some parents opt to take their children to charter schools. Another reason why charter schools are less restrictive is that students who have lower levels of discipline are able to learn in charter schools until they complete their education compared with the case of learning in a public-school, where they face the threat of dismissal. School administrators have the responsibility to ensure that final decisions made in school pertaining to the learning needs of students are not influenced by the decision-making of parents, despite parental involvement.

Comparison of Teacher Evaluation Policies in Charter Schools and Public-schools

According to Anyon (2014), NJDOE principles of teacher evaluation and the evaluation, process in both charter schools and public-schools is composed of two major components: observations in classrooms in terms of the teacher's practices and student's growth in terms of academic achievements. The achievements of students are measured in terms of Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) that measures the gains that have been achieved within the 4 to 8 grades in Arts, Math and Science. The achievement is measured by determining the score on statewide assessments. The state standardized assessment is used to compare the variation of students' achievements from one year to another with students who have gone through the process in the previous years.

Stecher et al. (2016) state that all public-schools use the state standardized assessment structure, but charter schools are able to formulate their strategy of SGPs. SGP evaluation contributes to 10% of teacher's overall evaluation. SGP score for teachers can only be done if students have enrolled in the teacher's class for at least 70% of the year. Furthermore, teachers have to set Student Growth Objectives (SGOs) for all students during the beginning of the year, and the assessment involves determining whether those objectives have been achieved at the end of the year. According to Butler, Carr, Toma and Zimmer (2013), SGOs are goals that are set by the teacher, so that all students can achieve them at the end of the year. The goals should correspond to quality standards required in various tests that are done by the students. Public-schools are more advantageous to teachers in goal setting, because teachers are allowed to set their own SGOs, while charter schools are more restricted, and the principal or the executive board of di-

rectors may determine the teacher's SGO. The teachers set SGOs in public-schools so that they can use their skills and tactics to achieve these objectives. However, in charter schools, the principal may set these goals so that the teacher meets a particular performance required to maintain the competitiveness levels of charter school. Teachers that are involved in teaching non-tested subjects are required to set the goal of the ability to accomplish or exceed the SGO count of 20% of the total evaluation. Teachers who teach tested grades are required to set goals of the ability to exceed SGO count of 20% of the total evaluation.

According to Blitz, Firestone, Kirova, Nordin, and Shcherbakov, (2014) teacher practice is another area of educator evaluation based on New Jersey teacher evaluation policies. Teacher practice is determined in using a state-approved teacher practice instrument that enables collection of evidence through observation in classrooms. Non-tenured teachers will be observed for the first 2 years of employment in addition to another 2 short observations in years 3 and 4. Favero and Meier (2013) state that, during observations a number of observers are made in order to reach a reasonable conclusion. This is applicable to all public-schools but charter schools are not restricted to use this evaluation process. There is no restriction on the number of observers in charter school-teachers compared with public-school teachers. In the case of tenured teachers, the evaluation involves 3 years of short observation, but these observations are not required to be announced. Marder (2012) states that it is recommended that at least one of the observations should have a pre-occurrence. In this type of evaluation, it is recommended that a

number of observers should be involved. The following is a table that summarizes the

evaluation processes of teacher in public-schools.

Table 1

A Summary of Observation Requirements for Teacher Based on NJ Teacher Evaluation

Guidelines

Observations Requirements Overview			
Teacher Observations		Minimum Number of Observations	Requirement of Multiple Observers
Non-tenured	Years 1-2	3, 2 long and 1 short	Necessary
	Years 3-4	3, 1 long and 2 short	
Tenured		3, all short	Necessary

Additional Information:

o   Action Plans for corrections: When the first year has been completed, teachers who have been

    evaluated as having an Ineffective or Partially Effective ratings will be subjected to one more

    observation using multiple observers.

o   Short Observations: This observation will take a minimum of 20 minutes and will involve a

    post-reference observation.

o   Long Observations: This observation will take duration of 40 minutes and will include a post-

    reference observation.

o   Announced and Unannounced: Based on the minimum requirements, teachers will be

    expected to have at least a single unannounced and another announced observation including

    a pre-reference observation.

o   Teacher's presence in school for less than 40% of academic year: A minimum of two

    observations will be applied to observe them.

Fryer (2017) states that, in both public-schools and charter schools, those in-

volved in conducting evaluation tasks will be trained staff in the areas of observation.

They are provided with training in observation throughout the duration that they partici-

pate in observations. They are also required to take part in "refresher" training, and super-

intendents must ensure that they are trained before they can be assigned the task of evalu-

ation. The implication for school administrators is to ensure that teachers are in compli-

ance and attain the mandated qualifications before they are contracted to work in the in-

stitutions. It is the responsibility of public-school administrators to provide mentors too

teachers on strategies they can use to achieve student-learning goals, and assess the role played by teachers in achievement of SGO's. Furthermore, school principals must monitor teachers during the first years of teaching so that any areas where teachers are not effective can be identified, and recommendations for improvement can be made. Nevertheless, theory of action will be relevant in teacher evaluation, because it will determine the most important areas where evaluations need to be done and actions taken to improve the state of academic performance in an institution.

Scoring of Teacher Evaluation

According to Darling-Hammond (2015), in a study of evaluation criteria for teachers in public and charter schools found that scoring during teacher evaluation is a combination of results from practice ratings of teachers and the achievements of students. When the scoring strategies for teachers in public-schools are compared with those of charter schools, it is found that similar scoring systems are used in both cases. Johnson & Silvernail (2014) conducted a study on scoring criteria for public and charter schools and found that the achievements of students for all teachers in most public and charter schools are measured using SGOs. Other strategies of assessment used include median SGPs for teacher in the qualifying stage of grades 4 to 8 grade in Language Arts Literacy and Math. Ravitch (n.d.) states that scores that range from 1 to 4 are used for each teacher. An example of a scoring system for teacher evaluation is weighting of domains and components. In various elements of each instrument, a number of districts have determined components, standards, and areas where weighting should be applied. An example of a method that is used to weigh different components is illustrated below:

| Planning 20% | + | Environment 30% | + | Instruction 30% | = | Professionalism 20% | Summative Teacher Practice Rating 100% |
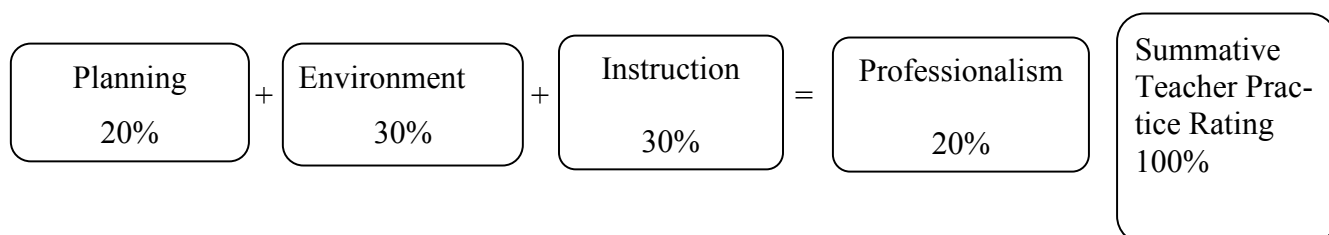
Figure 1.

An Example of a Scoring System Based on Different Teacher Evaluation Domains

For example, if a teacher has a weight of 3.25 in planning, 4.0 in Environment, 3.0 in instruction and 2.0 in professionalism, the score for the teacher will be (3.25 X 0.20) + (4.0 X 0.3) + (3.0 X 0.3) + (2.0 X 0.2) = 3.15.

According to Burstein and Shermis (2013), another scoring method during teacher evaluation in both public-schools and charter schools is SGO's scoring. Various approaches can be used during this method of scoring based on the approval of the district where a school is located as well as the strategy used by the teacher or the subjects being taught. In this type of scoring, a rating of 1-4 is used. School principals and administrators have the responsibility to ensure they monitor the activities of teachers in the areas of planning, management of learning environment such as student management, provision of instruction to students, and exercise professionalism in teaching. If teachers show incompetence in any of the areas, the administrators can take corrective action by providing them with opportunities such as training to enhance their competence. The strategy for improving performance based on teacher evaluation can best be determined by use of the theory of action. This is where areas of improvement are identified followed by specific actions that need to be taken in order to enhance teacher performance in specified areas.

Guarino, Reckase, Stacy, & Woolridge (2015) indicate that in a study of evaluation criteria for teacher in public and charter schools, found that both public-schools and charter schools use SGP measurement as a method of scoring teacher evaluation. This is where the improvement of a student is measured relative to that of other students who have similar histories of scores, and the performance of the student is used to rate the teacher's effectiveness. A growth percentile is created for each student resulting in a "rank" on the achievement of the student relative to other students. The rank ranges from 1 to 99. If a student has a lower percentile, this implies a lower academic achievement growth, while if a student has a higher percentile; it implies a higher academic growth.

Guarino and Zimmer (2013), state that, during the process of SPG in the year, performance is weighted at 50% as the standard weight of Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) for teachers of various test subjects. The impact of the SGP is determined using a TEM matrix and decision tables. Qualifying teachers of grades 4-8 in Arts and Math are assigned median SGP (mSGP) scores for all students who qualify in a particular subject based on the information provided by the district. For example, in a class where the student with the median score among the students is 51, the teacher is assigned a median SGP of 51. For mSGP to be used in teacher evaluation, the teacher must be assigned to a 4-8 grade Language Arts course or a 4-7 grade Math course for more than a year before the evaluation is done.

Implications of Teacher Evaluation

A study by Butler et al., 2013 on evaluation of teacher performance resulted in the observation that there is an association between the results of teacher evaluation and ten-

ure, recognition and professional development of a teacher in a particular area. The implication for administrators and principals is that their approval of teachers to teach in the schools should be based on the evaluation criteria such as the ability of teachers to plan their lessons effectively among other criterions. According to Mhlauli and MolokoMphale (2014), to maintain tenure, teachers are required to earn ratings of effective or highly effective. While effectiveness is used as a measure to protect the tenure of teachers, public-school teachers are less likely to be subjected to any action, such as, demotion, or transfer to another school if they do not meet the performance goals. While charter schoolteachers may be affected in various ways such as demotion and/or a salary reduction.

Achieve New Jersey is an important source of information for teacher's performance in both public-schools and charter schools. Favero and Meier (2013) state that; by understanding the data from various observations and achievements of students, it is possible to focus learning goals towards improving instruction. State approved teacher practice instruments implemented during observations act as a basis of discussion on teaching. When observations have been made, supervisors can provide more focused feedback that contributes towards identification of areas that need to be developed throughout the year. In order to provide the most relevant feedback, theory of action should be used by implementing actions that ensure SGO's are achieved in the institutions. Johnson (2017) states that SGO's act as structures that enable understanding of academic standards, assessment of the knowledge of students and their abilities, and focusing instruction to assist students to accomplish short and long-term goals. School administrators and princi-

pals can cooperate with supervisors to improve the abilities of educators in achieving SGOs. They can also use measures, such as the results of SGP's to measure teacher effectiveness during professional development within the institutions.

Similarities and Differences between State and Federal Policies

Staff Certification Requirements

There is a difference in licensure requirements between charter schools and public-schools. In traditional schools, it is required that teachers should be licensed so that they can teach programs that have been recognized by the states. When the levels of restrictions on teacher certifications are compared between charter schools and public-schools, it is found that public-schools have a high restriction on teacher certification compared with charter schools (Kahlenberg et al., 2014). Charter schools focus on hiring teachers who are more likely to leave the profession and switch to other schools, because they do not have the certification, they are younger, and are likely to work as part-time teachers. Despite these differences, both schools comply with the theory of action by ensuring action is taken to meet learning needs of students. School administrators and principals have the responsibility to ensure teachers have the recommended certifications before they are recruited to teach in the institutions.

According to (Hart & Sojourner, 2014), there is a difference in collective bargaining rights between charter schools and private school teachers. These rights determine whether the charter school is supported or not. Charter schools are in most cases not unionized, and there is no collective bargaining for teachers' salaries. On the other hand, teachers in public-schools are more likely to form unions that enable them to bargain for

salaries (Edwards, 2014). This is advantageous to the management of charter schools, because they are given the opportunity to make decisions such as the amount of compensation to be received by each teacher. Edwards (2014) further explains that this is also a point of vulnerability of charter schools, because they can create unfair employment without the ability of teachers to raise their voices. Irrespective of the existence of the rights to bargain among charter school and public-school teachers, principals, and school administrators such as boards of directors have the responsibility to ensure teachers are provided with compensation that meets their upkeep and well-being. They are also required to provide benefits to teachers based on technicality of the subjects they teach. When the theory of action is implemented, it can involve providing teachers with the right amount of compensation as a motivation for them to take action of teaching students to achieve the learning needs of students.

Teachers' Compensation in Charter and Public-Schools

There have been changes in the compensation policies of both charter and public-schools for high quality teachers where the traditional payment structures do not enable satisfaction of competent teachers in various areas of specialization. The fact that charter schools are free from rules and constraints during hiring, compensation and dismissal of teachers, they have a greater opportunity to develop flexible compensation structures for their teachers. On the other hand, when the basic pay of teachers in charter schools and public-schools are compared, Rodosky (2015) highlights that public-school teachers get higher basic pay compared with their charter school counterparts. In determining the pay for their teachers, charter schools do not use a salary schedule as a determinant for the

payments of teachers and there may be flexibility in the amount paid based on the level of workload and the complexity of the subjects to be taught. Edwards (2014) states that, in some charter schools, the teacher's pay are tied to performance based on the students' test scores, but this is not common in most public-schools. This is because most charter schools are required to comply with a particular level of performance, so that they can be allowed to operate. On the other hand, the payment for a teacher in a public-school is assured, even when the students do not perform to the expected standards provided the teacher has taught the particular subjects that are required to be taught.

A teacher should be provided with a base pay apart from bonuses, incentives and other benefits. Most public-schools have a clear salary schedule that is paid to the teachers based on the level of experience in teaching and the level of qualification in various fields. Only few charter schools use payment schedule. According to Roch & Sai (2017), the highest paid teacher in a charter school earns an average of $46,314 lower than that of a public-school teacher, which is approximately $48,718 per annum.

The salaries of teachers also vary based on the level of qualification. For instance, those with degrees but have no experience earn $20,000 per year while those with degrees but have no experience earn $34,000 per year. The data was collected from the interviews and surveys in different regions, including the Vaughn Street Charter School in Los Angeles, Catholic Diocese of Raleigh, NC, and Aspire Public-schools and High Tech High in California (Roch et al., 2017). The main reason why charter school may use salary schedule is to make the payment process convenient. The comparisons of payment schedules above show that school administrators must play a significant role in ensuring

teachers are paid when their salaries are due. School administrators and principals must also ensure teachers with high academic qualifications are provided with salaries that meet their qualifications.

Pay Based on Performance

A number of public-schools in the United States have tried to pay teachers based on their performance, so that teacher accountability can be increased and the quality of teaching can be improved. A number of schools, districts, and states are involved in attempts to create pay-performance programs. It is estimated that only 10% of public-schools in the United States have implemented payment structures based on performance since 1980. In most public-schools in the United States, payments for teachers are not based on performance, and they are assured of salaries irrespective of the level of performance of students. In most charter schools, pay-performance programs have been implemented, and, when students do not perform well, the teachers' salaries are reduced by a particular percentage. The main reason why charter schools use pay-performance systems is that it is used as an incentive to make the teacher deliver the teaching needs in an effective manner so that students can perform well. This ensures charter schools perform according to standards so that competition from public-schools can be countered.

Most public-schools may also use pay-performance program when there is the need to award a bonus to a teacher that has worked exemplarily well in ensuring high performance. In 2002, it was reported that almost than half (46%) of charter, schools in the United States used pay-performance program (Roch et al., 2017). Performance awards given to charter schoolteachers are a one-time bonus or a significant pay raise if teachers

meet a particular performance standard. Charter schools are able to provide performance-based pay to more than 10% of teachers in a school. In some charter schools, payment of bonuses is based on students' performance. The implication for school principals and administrators of public-school and charter schools is that teachers who have contributed to students' performance should be given a pay raise as well as other benefits such as bonuses. Some believe that this can act as a motivating factor for teachers to provide quality teaching in the future.

Roles of Authorizers in Charter Schools and Public-schools

Authorizers are associations that establish whether charter schools are complying with operational quality by conducting oversight on the activities of schools for public interest. The focus of authorizers is to act as legal entities that determine whether a new charter school should be established, sets the standards of practice, and oversees the performance of the school to determine whether the school should continue operating or not. The most common types of authorizers are school districts, educational institutions, universities, and mayors. When the impacts of authorizers are compared between charter schools and public-schools, it is found that they reduce the impact of autonomy in charter schools by 15% compared with 5% in public-schools. In some public-schools, authorizers have contributed to enhanced autonomy of charter schools beyond the limits of the state. According to Ozaskin and Solak (2014), authorizers have also contributed to increased autonomy of charter schools beyond the state's control in a number of ways. The main areas where authorizers have increased the autonomy of charter schools is in terms of governance and revision of teachers' contracts. For instance, authorizers have contributed

to the autonomy of charter schools in determining the number of people who can sit in the governance boards in the states of California by placing an individual on the governing board.

The charter type determines the level of autonomy, and a number of organizations have been empowered to operate as authorizers. These include boards of education in schools, mayoral offices, special purpose commissions, and state boards of education. Authorizers that have the least impact on schools have been state boards. This is because they make fewer decisions on activities of charter schools compared with other authorizers. The main limitations resulting from district authorizers are that district-authorized schools continue to operate as part of the district in a similar manner as public-schools (Antmann, 2016). When there is no success in the accomplishment of the goals of these charters, districts have the responsibility to make changes to their authorization restrictions. An example of a measure that can be taken by a district is to protect itself by limiting freedom in particular areas where charter schools have freedom so that possible legal problems are avoided. More advanced schools operate with more autonomy compared with normal schools. The level of autonomy of charter schools with high performance is also high compared with that of schools with lower performance.

Authorization is implemented in various areas of operation such as discipline of students, contracting with other organizations, and election of boards. In terms of these operations, most public-schools have a higher autonomy compared with charter schools. The most common authorizer for both charter schools and public-schools has been district authorizers (Antmann, 2016). When the impacts of authorizers on public-schools and

charter schools are compared, it is found that it is greater in charter schools, because they do not determine whether a public-school should operate or not. They also play a role in establishing areas where charter school activities, such as procurements and budgeting decisions, should be made. This is not the case in public-schools, where authorizers do not have an impact on budgeting and procurement of activities in the institution. Furthermore, authorizers play a role in scheduling school activities and revision of teachers' contracts in charter schools but not in public-schools. The area where authorizers play the least role is certification of teachers in both charter and public-schools.

State Policies Regarding Recruitment, Curriculum Development, and Professional Development

There is uniqueness in charter schools based on their ability to use a different curriculum, use the right technology, structure staff, and schedule their needs (Cummins, Ricciardelli, and Steedman, 2014). Teachers from public-schools are usually able to cope with the situations under their control, because they are trained in particular areas; hence, they have the competence to solve a number of teaching needs and curriculum requirements. Due to lack of restriction for certification of teachers in charter schools, some teachers are unable to perform their administrative and teaching duties with high efficiency. A policy has been proposed that aims at creating an on-site recruiting, training, and development of skills to equip charter schools with the ability to meet the unique needs of teachers (Klein & Rice, 2014). Consequently, teachers are able to develop their careers in teaching, leadership, and administrative functions. For instance, a teacher intern program has been proposed that will enable teachers to achieve their academic aspirations, as well

as earning salaries while undergoing training in design strategies and visions in accomplishment of educational needs. Success has been achieved since the beginning of this program.

In terms of collective bargaining, a number of charter schools enable teachers to form unions that enable them bargain for salaries, benefits, and working environment (Vickers, 2014). This is not based on the condition that they are held to the same agreement as in the case of other schools. An example of a non-district school operator in the United States is Green Dot that has enabled teachers to form unions. They have advocated for good working conditions and teachers have been satisfied with their jobs and the conditions under which they work. The main areas that the collective bargaining efforts focus on include salary, improved health care, adequate class size, and the periods of work. The main aspects of the contract include the ability of teachers to make decisions in the areas of budgeting, stipends, and payments for after school programs.

Another condition that exists in public-schools but not in charter schools is seniority. This is the rule and practice of last hire first fire. Teacher hire date is their seniority date. However, teachers in charter schools are not restricted to probation periods and they can work without supervision from the time they start working in the institution until the end of their contracts. Furthermore, teachers in charter schools must be accountable to their seniors such as supervisors or superintendents (Watts, 2014). States are also allowed to remove barriers such as collective bargaining being tied to the district. Consequently, charter schools are able to design the structure in which teachers need to be compensated, trained, and rewarded so that the vision of the school is achieved. Nevertheless, it is rec-

ommended that school administrators in both charter schools and public-schools must revise the contract of teachers so that they are provided with the benefits such as pay raise, promotions, and non-financial rewards based on their experience and accomplishments.

Parent Accountability in Public-schools and Charter Schools

Both public and charter schools do not have the obligation to meet an annual academic performance according to the expectations of parents. This is because some parents may have very high expectations of academic performances of their children, which may not be realistic in either charter schools or public-schools. Wallace (2014) states that parents in both public-schools and charter schools have a particular level of should involvement and accountability, such as making a choice regarding the school that a student attend, based on their satisfaction. For instance, there are few conditions for retention of a child in a charter school if the parent wishes to transfer the child to another school based on preference of the parent (Wallace, 2014).

Irrespective of the involvement of parents in ensuring accountability of public-schools and charter schools, administrators of these schools must ensure they meet academic performance of students according to the expectations of parents.

Operational Similarities and Differences

According to the Florida Department of Education (2014), the operations of charter schools and public-schools are similar in the manner in which they create facilities, such as repair of furniture and maintenance of buildings or prevention of floods from entering into buildings. Another operational activity that is common in both charter schools

and public-schools is facility auditing. This is where classrooms, offices, stores, and amenities within the schools are inspected to determine if they are in good operating conditions. Before the operation of building starts, the buildings must be commissioned to establish whether they are in good working conditions.

Vickers (2014) states that the operational activities in maintenance of classrooms include regular painting if the paint is worn out, replacement of roofs on buildings, if there are leakages, cleaning the bushes, and removing debris around classrooms. If they are not in good working conditions, actions are taken by school administrators to restore them to their working conditions. Custodians have been employed by most charter and public-schools to monitor most operational activities. Their roles include maintenance of inventory, records, and preparation of work reports. Furthermore, they play a role in reporting any equipment that are not in better working condition to school administrators so that actions can be taken to repair them.

Another operation, that is common in most charter schools and public-schools are projects that are aimed at improving the general infrastructures of a school. According to Cummins, Ricciardelli & Steedman (2014), the school administrations are responsible for coming up with budgets that ensure the projects are successful by accounting for labor costs and the extent of the maintenance task such as a repair or an overhaul. There are also a number of scheduling activities, which take place in both charter schools and public-schools. This involves making arrangements on the strategy to follow during a particular task or activity and procurement of resources that would enable accomplishment of those tasks. According to a study by Molnar (2013) on operational activities of schools, a

number of district and charter schools also require that annual reports should be provided from various departments. These include reports from academic departments, finance departments, and maintenance departments that provide information about areas of expenditures and whether goals of these departments have been achieved.

Another operational activity in which district schools and charter schools must be involved in is maintaining customer relations. This is where the school maintains better relations; with the local communities, parents, and suppliers of products and services that enable smooth running of the school. This is achieved by maintaining communication, work relations and soliciting feedbacks. In summation, it is the role of school superintendents and boards of directors to monitor the operations of schools to ensure they are compliant with the school traditions, missions, values, and visions.

Fiscal Responsibilities

In terms of financial accountability between public-schools and charter schools, it is found that state superintendents do monitoring of public-schools so that the federal aid can be used in an appropriate manner and act as a replacement or a surplus to the available funds. According to Cummins, Ricciardelli & Steedman (2014), school boards are responsible for conducting school audits in public-schools, and the school district clerk is responsible for filing financial statements each year and providing it to the state superintendent. The school district report of each school must incorporate the amount of money received and the manner in which it was spent. On the other hand, charter schools obtain their funds from the states where they operate and the amount of tax paid is determined by the level of school enrollment. Since the funds for school management are provided

by the local state, they are required to provide an account of the areas where they have spent the funds, and they are subject to regular audits. The implications of fiscal responsibilities for school principals and administrators is that they are required to ensure that their school comply with taxation requirements and ensure prudent expenditure of the institutions funds.

When the salaries of teachers in public-schools are compared with that of charter schools, it is found that teachers in public-schools receive higher compensation compared with those in charter schools. Weber et al. (2017) stated that the compensations for teachers in public-schools mainly come from the federal government, while that of charter schools may come from sponsoring organizations. However, charter schools may also get compensations from the federal government in addition to that provided by sponsors. The compensations of the board of charter schools are higher when compared with that of public-schools. This leads to the increased budgets of charter schools compared with that of public-schools. Nevertheless, the amount of compensation for teachers and school administrators must ensure that teachers are paid their salaries when it is due immediately.

Academic Expectations and Accountability

In terms of establishing teacher work rules, charter schools enabled teachers to determine their individual work rules more often than public-schools, where there are predetermined rules that determine how a teacher should conduct lessons (Berger, Education, Rugen, & Woodfin, 2014). Prior to 2012, when the case of dismissal of a teacher in a charter school is compared with that of a teacher in a public-school, it was found that teachers in charter schools are more likely to be dismissed compared with that in a pub-

lic-school. This is because during dismissal of a teacher in a public-school, there are a number of legal procedures that must be followed, making the process costly. Since the enactment of TEACHNJ, allowing districts to start the process in dismissing tenure teachers after two years of ineffective evaluations. Though there remains steps to follow the process is no longer as costly.

Similarities and Differences in Academic Accountability between Charter and Public-Schools

Similarities

Fry, Ketterridge, & Marshall (2014) state that academic accountability includes items such as curriculum used by a school, testing procedures and reporting regulations, certification of teachers and accreditation of schools. It also includes performance of a school with respect to regulatory standards.

According to Affolter et al., (2016), the main similarity between charter schools and public-schools is that students in both schools must take the same tests and achieve the targets set by the state. In addition, both schools similar standards of assessments are applicable in accordance with No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) policies. Fabricant et al. (2015) state that, this policy requires that states must determine challenging areas in academics and apply high quality, annual assessments that targets grades 3 to 8. There should be at least one assessment in high school in English language, arts, and math, so that the performance of the state can be determined. Both charter school and public-school students take the same assessment in a particular state. In addition, both charter schools and public-schools are required to create a nationwide system of accountability

that establishes the progress that a school has made to provide teaching to the students in reading and math. This implies that both charter schools and public-schools' administrators and board of directors must create programs that contribute to efficient accomplishment of academic goals by students, so that academic standards that need to be met are actually achieved.

Davis (2013) states that during statewide reporting or school performance, charter schools have a 5-year extension before providing the results to the district board. This is not the case for public-schools; reports of academic performance of schools are sent to the district boards on yearly basis.

Differences

According to Usman (2016), the main difference between academic accountability of charter schools and public-schools is that public-schools that do not perform according to the requirements set by authorizers can be closed down after a particular period of operation. A number of states have formulated policies for closure of charter schools that do not meet particular academic performance standards. Stavropoulou et al. (2014) states that, in Ohio, the laws have been made because authorizers have not been strict in providing charters to these schools or due to the failure of authorizers to close down schools that do not meet particular academic performance standards. Charter schools that do not comply with state requirements of accountability, health safety, and compliance with civil rights rules are assessed after every 3 to 4 years, and, when it has been determined that the school has performed well, the charter is renewed. Florida Department of Education (2014) states that this is not the case for a public-school where

there is no renewal of a charter, but the school can be held accountable for academic health and safety compliance. In addition, any person who holds a bachelor's degree, and has demonstrated proficiency in particular subjects that should be taught in the school can provide the teaching license of a charter school. The instructional license of a charter school can also be issued to any person who has a teaching license to teach a particular subject recognized by the state, provided the person has completed a major subject and passed content knowledge exam in the subject.

According to Fryer (2017), another difference is that some charter schools are required to meet a high academic achievement compared with most public-schools. The performance framework incorporates academic framework such as indicators of readiness for college, academic goals specific to a school's objectives, and organizational structure that complies with state and federal laws. Regardless of academic standards that need to be achieved by either charter schools or public-schools, principals and administrators have the responsibilities to ensure and create opportunities for achievement of these performances. School administrators should also create a culture of high achievement among learners. More specifically, principals are required to ensure schools meet the NJDOE recommendations for academic accountability, such as meeting the minimum school performance. For instance, Balfanz et al. (2012) states that in New Jersey, the Office of Charter Schools that has the authority to provide charters set the academic goal of charter schools to the level of "exceed standards" score for public-schools in the state. In order for a charter school to be considered to have met standards for charter schools, they must meet the minimum score for traditional schools in New Jersey.

Differences and Similarities of Operation of Charter and Public-Schools from

Business Perspective

In terms of management of schools from business perspectives, the management of charter schools does not have the right to own facilities acquired from another company from which the facilities are leased. However, both public-schools and charter schools have the responsibilities to maintain the facilities in their working conditions so that they are not destroyed. According to Antmann (2016), both charter schools and public-schools have the responsibility to ensure the revenues and expenditures of the school are documented, and profitability from school activities established. Both schools have the responsibility to conduct their activities with more focus on reducing costs of operation and maximizing revenues. Center for American Progress and the CCSSO (2014) states that charter schools are accountable for management of facilities such as computers, textbooks, and furniture, but public-schools cannot be held accountable in case of loss of such facilities. According to Usman (2016) in a study of the functions of school executive boards, the overall function of executive board and school board of education in both charter schools and public-schools is to provide direction of success for the schools in various areas, such as academic excellence, financial accountability, supervision of school activities, fundraising, and leadership. However, both charter school and public-school superintendents and board of directors have the responsibility to ensure that worn out facilities, such as buildings, are replaced so that activities of the institutions can continue.

Comparison of Functions of Executive Board and School Board of Education

According to Glass and Welner (2011) in a study of the functions of school executive boards, the overall function of executive board and school board of education in both charter schools and public-schools is to provide direction of success for the schools in various areas, such as academic excellence, financial accountability, supervision of school activities, fundraising, and leadership. Both boards of charter and public-schools are responsible for creation of an educational model that is approved by the district and implements most aspects of progressive heritage with the national expectations. Another member of the school board of education is the school superintendent, whose role is to oversee that the decisions of the board are implemented in the institution, as well as making recommendations on the needs of the school to the school board of education during meetings. Molnar (2013) states that school boards of education also create opportunities for students to develop skills in various disciplines and provide guidance on strategies in which, particular activities need to be performed according to the vision and mission of an institution. The executive board is also responsible for broadening, procurement, and refining key resources required enhancing academic enterprise. School boards assess the qualification of academic staff to determine whether they meet or exceed the qualifications of the positions to which they are assigned. Henceforth, determining the training required in achieving a particular objective in learning and management of a school, and developing suitable recruitment criteria for various positions in the institution. In order to achieve the above overall functions, the boards of directors and education play various specific roles, such as policy making in the areas of operations in a learning institution

that comply with the vision of the institution. In both charter schools and public-schools, the role of boards of directors is aimed at achieving academic performance of the institution.

Another member of the school board of education is the state superintendent. The main role of the state superintendent is to determine whether the activities of the school comply with the requirements of the state. State superintendent determine whether the school is able to meet learning needs according to the standards set by the state. Berger et al. (2014), state that they mobilize school community in creation of a vision and attainment of school objectives that match the interests of the local community. The school boards of directors also contribute to budgeting in both charter schools and public-schools. The school boards negotiate with labor unions and oversee procurement of food, technology, maintenance of facilities, and generation of revenues by conducting capital campaigns, bonds, and tax levies. Irrespective of the differences in roles of boards of directors, those in both charter schools and public-schools must ensure they come up with policies that are beneficial to the institutions they manage. These benefits include efficient policies that enhance academic performance and utilization of resources within the institutions.

Testing and Student's Academic Performance

In terms of grading, it has been found that the grading of charter schools ranges from A to F in a similar manner as that of public-schools. On the other hand, it has been observed that the average performance of public-schools is higher than that of charter schools, where the average score in most public-schools is B+, while that in charter

schools is C+ (Arce-Trigatti et al., 2016). In addition, teachers in public-schools have higher academic qualifications and are more likely to provide competent teachings compared with those in charter schools. In terms of reporting academic performance of schools to the respective education departments, public-schools are required to provide the reports annually, while charter schools are allowed to report after every 5 years.

There is also a variation in grading systems used by various states, such as autonomy in grading in charter schools compared with public-schools where standard-grading criteria is used. The grading system varies from one state to another with some states such as Arizona, California, and Texas having the highest number of autonomous schools in states where schools have a high level of autonomy, it has been established that a high percentage of these schools are charter schools (Arce-Trigatti et al., 2016). Most investors involved in setting up charter schools have been motivated by the idea that they will enjoy autonomy when they start operating. However, principals and administrators have the responsibility to ensure school testing procedures are in compliance with guidelines of various districts and that students are provided with examinations that have been approved by the districts that govern school activities in a particular state (Arce-Trigatti et al., 2016).

Summary

The literature review provides an adequate understanding of similarities and differences in principles of operation of public-schools and charter schools in various categories. The main categories that have been identified include teacher recruitment, training, and role of authorizers in accreditation of charter schools and public-schools. Simi-

larities have been found in teacher recruitment in both public-schools and charter schools is that teachers in either case must have the competence to teach particular subjects in both public-schools and charter schools.

This chapter has also shown that there are various levels of compensation for teachers in public-schools and charter schools, but this is dependent on factors such as level of experience, complexity of subjects, and level of academic qualification. It has also explained the role of board of directors in making policies that affect daily activities of a business. Teacher evaluation and scoring, the main policies that have been investigated are those of NDOE.

This chapter has shown that different policies apply when evaluating teachers in public-schools and charter schools. Similarities and differences in operational activities in charter schools and public-schools have also been investigated. Consequently, the literature review provides a guideline on the direction of the methodology of this research and the focus of the study. Thus, the methodology of this research was a qualitative study of academic accountability of policies in public-schools and charter schools and their impact on academic performance. Since the literature review has provided a number of factors, which affect school accountability, it is important to consider only those, which refer to the initial purpose of the study and the research questions mentioned in the beginning of the dissertation. The major focus should be directed at the factors, which are in the direct responsibility of principals. Therefore, the main areas of administrative and public policy that was investigated in this research included teacher recruitment, methods principals use to measure student performance, roles of executive boards and traditional boards of

education, operational and performance accountability of public-schools and charter

schools from a procedural perspective.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Introduction

This chapter provides the methods and procedures that were used during data collection, data analysis, and selecting the sample for the purpose of understanding the research topic and answering the research questions. It explains the research design that enabled the collection of relevant data for analysis and its interpretation in order to achieve the overall objective of the study. Furthermore, the various data analysis procedures that used are illustrated in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implications of the research outcomes. Throughout the study, considerations related to ethical practices while conducting research were abided, including the rules and procedures for data collection, analysis, and presentation of the research outcomes.

Restatement of the Research Questions

A qualitative case study design was used to understand the phenomena, context, and themes of academic accountability of public and charter school administrators and implications on student academic performance. The research questions sought to answer are as follows:

RQ1: What is the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in both public and charter schools?

RQ 2: How does accountability affect perception of performance in both public and charter schools?

Research Design

A qualitative research design was employed for guiding the study. Specifically, since the study was focused on conducting research in a particular locality (New Jersey), a multiple case study research design was used. This type of design is described as an analysis of the systems that are being studied with a comprehensive view by single or multiple methods (Austin & Sutton, 2015). It is an in-depth study of the occurrence of phenomenon within their natural setting and from the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomena (Yazan, 2015). Such a design allows the researcher to explore and understand complex phenomena and is qualified as a robust method for conducting research where a holistic and profound exploration is needed, (Bell & Bryman, 2015).

A researcher using the qualitative design focuses on a specific research problem rather than conducting a sweeping statistical survey or a comprehensive comparative inquiry (Bell & Bryman, 2015). When used, the researcher reduces the scope of the study into few areas that can be identified and are needed. It is useful for testing the applicability of specific theories and models in the real world. (Khankeh, Khorasani-Zavareh, Johansson, Ranjbar, & Zargham-Boroujeni, 2015). I researched academic accountability among public and charter school principals. The goal was to establish school principals' roles in ensuring academic accountability in public and charter schools and its impact on student academic performance with focus on the state of New Jersey.

Specifically, because my study involved charter and traditional public-schools in New Jersey, a multiple case study approach was used. While a case study approach places its focus on a single topic that is often selected due to its unique characteristics, the

multiple-case study approach allows the exploration of the phenomena being studied via a replication strategy (Bell & Bryman, 2015). The replication strategy can be compared to conducting several separate experiments on topics that are related. This approach is consistent with homogenous sampling methods that I employed in this research where the desired outcome was providing an in-depth description of a subgroup.

Sample Selection Procedure

For this research, the sample comprised a pool of principals, leaders, and administrators involved in accountability within New Jersey public and charter schools. These two types of educational institutions were selected based off past studies; there appeared to be disparity in the implementation and requirements for academic accountability between the two school institutions as noted in the differences in academic performance and reporting. The population of principals was selected as they are directly involved in implementing the accountability measures and requirements in their respective schools hence would provide the most appropriate feedback to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. Using the principals from the two educational institutions provided an opportunity for the process of literal and theoretical replication. Data was collected from principals, vice principals, directors, educational and operational leaders, and operation managers. The final sample size consisted of 6 participants who were knowledgeable of the accountability requirements. As stated by Latham (2014), to ensure saturation has been obtained, the writer must go beyond the point of saturation to ensure no new major concepts emerge in the next few interviews or observations. Consequently, 15 participants as a minimum for most qualitative interview studies work very well when

the participants are homogeneous. For a group, saturation often occurs between 12 and 15 participants, (Latham, p. 1).

A nonprobability convenient sampling approach was used to select the sample population. Convenience sampling is also referred to as haphazard or accidental sampling where members within the target population who meet the criteria for selection can take part of the study (Alkassim, Etikan, & Musa, 2016). The study participants are selected based on their convenience that is proximity, availability, accessibility, or other standards put in place by the researcher. This method is inexpensive, fast, and less stressful because population is readily accessible (Etikan et al., 2016). Access to the population was acquired through an informal network of administrators as well as a listing of all public and charter schools in New Jersey classified according to the geographical distance. School principals were contacted to verify contact information, confirm participant criterion, and availability data collection. The inclusion and exclusion criteria employed are discussed in the subsequent section.

Inclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria refers to a specific set of characteristics that are predefined and used for the identification of subjects that will be part of a study. Proper inclusion selection optimizes the internal and external believability and improves the feasibility, decreases costs, and minimizes the ethical issues of the study (Mark et al., 2015). A good inclusion criterion ensures homogeneity of the sample population selected, reduces confounding, and increases the probability of finding a true link between a phenomenon and the outcome (Mark et al., 2015). All the participants met leadership mandate required by

the NJDOE. Titles in school settings are dynamic and interchangeable, hence requirement the individuals should be serving within leadership positions versus holding a specific job title., Data was collected from principals, vice principals, directors, educational and operational leaders, and operation managers. The study also included only those participants with at least 5-10 years' experience, including administrators who have retired within the last 2 years. Furthermore, the titles previously identified must be working in either charter or public-schools in the state of New Jersey.

Exclusion

Exclusion criteria are the characteristics that disqualify the potential participants of a study from being included in the study or those that will have to be withdrawn from the study after inclusion (Mark et al., 2015). The criterion is guided by the objective of the study and has vital implications for a study's scientific rigor including the assurance of adherence to ethical principles. All leaders that did not meet the mandate set by the NJDOE requirements were excluded. Moreover, leaders that has less than the required years of experience were also excluded. Principals from private schools and other schools apart from charter and public-schools were excluded. Principals that are from schools outside the state of New Jersey were excluded. Finally, principals who were not available at the time of scheduling the interviews were excluded.

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Participants

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The target participants were comprised of principals from charter and public-schools employed in two New Jersey school districts. The procedure for participant selection began by making a complete list of all the charter schools and public-schools in the

state of New Jersey. From this list, six charter schools and six public-schools were selected Northern parts of New. I contacted principals to solicit participation; 6 principals were selected from those who were willing to participate.

Access to the population was attained via an informal network of administrators, and a public database of all public and charter schools in New Jersey. Contacts to the educational institutions were made to procure administrative titles, contact information, and verification of years of experience to ensure that the participant met the research study criteria. Principals had to meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria in order to participate in the study. To prevent saturation of data, an analysis was done concurrently with the collection of data in an iterative cycle.

Data Collection Procedures

There are numerous methods of data collection; however, for this study, I conducted face-to-face semi structured interviews for data collection, which was completed in 60 days. The data collection procedure involved the use of semi structured interviews with open-ended questions (Appendix B: Semi structured Interview Questions). Thus, participants were able to share their experiences, ideas, opinions, and perceptions. In addition, it offered me the opportunity to approach the mind-set and perspective of the participants. The format of open-ended questions focused on the participants' administrative experience in enacting policies and regulations. I took notes on each interview on an interview protocol sheet. Each interview was also audio recorded to certify accuracy. The audio recording of the face-to-face interviews were transcribed verbatim.

During the interview, the responses was recorded after seeking the permission from respondents. Each interview was recorded separately from the rest for distinguishing the qualities of responses. School principals chose their office as the interview settings so that there was confidentiality in the provision of the responses during the interview. The data records will be kept locked for 5 years in a fireproof locked safe.

The semi structured interview consisted of 10 questions to allow participants to provide an in-depth explanation of their responses. Using structured questions can have an impact on the quality of data collected, as participants may not have an opportunity to express themselves fully (Bell & Bryman, 2015). I also used document analysis as a data-gathering tool to examine documents such as policy and state school report cards for academic outcome measures.

The use of multiple types of schools within the state ensured that varying opinions were collected and issuing the questionnaires to the principals ensured that the most valuable data composed promoted integrity and trustworthiness of the study. The questionnaires were prepared in the simplest form of English so that all the vital information was captured.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis is defined as the process of bringing order to all the information that has been collected during the data collection process, and is the structuring and provision of meaning to the mass of data that has been collected (Nelli, 2015). The analysis in this study involved the coding of the responses provided in the questions followed by the identification of any common phrases, patterns, themes, and relationships including any

differences in the responses. According to Saldana (2015), coding of the responses is the

process of transferring raw research data into a form that can be used in calculations.

Coding is performed by classifying data into categories and assigning each category a

numerical value, many questions are pre-coded during the process of development of a

survey, and an encoding table is developed in cases where it is impossible to determine

the answers in advance (Saldana 2015). During the research, I planned to use such pre-

liminary codes as, academic accountability (AA), academic performance (AP), differ-

ences in performances (DP), differences in state regulatory mandates (DSRM), and the

role of principals (RP). The codes were recorded, analyzed, and tracked using Dedoose.

A semi structured interview is an in-depth interview during which the interviewer

seeks to discuss a specific list of topics or aspects with a respondent (Galletta, 2013).

This type of interview consists of thematic clusters and contains a list of mandatory as-

pects related to the information that should be obtained (Galletta, 2013). The interview

was directional, I had planned an interview procedure, which includes questions, topics,

and their sequence. To obtain the same type of information from each respondent re-

quired for further comparison and analysis, several strictly mandatory questions were

used for each participant. At the same time, some freedom of action was provided for the

participants, which allowed for additional questions that implied the use of an informal

interview in the research.

The questions have been prepared in advance in the proposed interview, which

means that their specific weight is much higher, as well as questions asked during the in-

terview that will correspond to an operative response to the respondent's statements. I

held to issues that were neutral in formulation and did not presuppose mental pressure on the respondent when drafting the questions. The interview was conducted in a soft way suggesting a polite and sympathetic listening to the respondent's answers. The clarification of the contradictions noted during the interview were handled in a delicate form. The semi structured interview included ten open-ended questions and a closing thought question that allowed participants to freely express and formulate their thoughts. The interview questions were designed with the aim to reveal the ability to comprehend and interpret the responses that were expressed.

The semi structured interview questions helped to discover the information about major roles of executive boards and traditional boards of education, as well as any disparities, in relation to policy and procedure, the efficiency of the administration and the possibility of the creation of an oversight committee with certain responsibilities and roles as the alternative solution. The interview questions also included the information about instruments and methods used to measure student performance and effectiveness, as well as understand to what extent these tools capture performance and accountability in schools, and outline possible recommendations for the improvement. At the same time, the questionnaire allowed gathering of information about teacher retention and its influence on accountability, as well as tools used to evaluate educators' skills and credentials. Besides, one of the questions allowed answering what accountability is for charter and public - school principals and how do the school principals ensure accountability in each of them? Including assessing the existing academic guidelines for accountability in charter and

public-schools in the state of New Jersey, and whether they are different from each other or not and in what way, and does the differences truly affects academic performance.

Dedoose is described as a cloud-based platform that allows collaboration for researchers in various industries and provides tools for communication, management of files, and assignment of tasks (Dennis, Li, Ross, & Zhao, 2016). It allowed the analysis of qualitative and mixed-method research using text, pictures, videos, and spreadsheets just to mention a few. Through the platform, a researcher may create and modify codes to tag various stages of the research methodology and organize the procedures they use to engage in research (Dennis et al., 2016). It contains descriptor fields that were used in the research to collect information that provides a narrative of the sources of data. The commonalities was then summarized into specific themes relevant to the research questions with generalizations made. Data interpretation was done through the presentation of the findings in tables and figures and these findings then related to theory as in the literature review section of this study.

Trustworthiness and Reliability

Marshall and Rossman (2014) note that qualitative research differs from quantitative as it begins with the intention to study a particular area, accumulates data, and leads to ideas and hypothesis based on these data by inductive conclusions. The strength of the qualitative research is the reliability, which means that a good qualitative study can really define the essence of what is happening but not reflect only what lies on the surface.

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of qualitative methods helps to increase the data research significantly when using a combination of methods that is called triangulation. The trustworthiness of qualitative research can also be improved by analyzing the same data by more than one independent researcher.

In qualitative study, the actual results of the study was separated from the interpretation of these results. The reader should easily separate the outcome researchers have discovered from its meaning. In qualitative research, such a separation is rarely possible as the results are an interpretation of the data by definition. Therefore, it is necessary to ask whether they are free from personal and cultural influences when assessing the trustworthiness of the qualitative study. This can be a difficult task as ordinary spoken language can contain opinions that the participants of the study may not share. The statement that the conclusions of qualitative research must be based on evidence, as any other outcome becomes a kind of cliché in this case, which means that they must flow from the findings.

Mays and Pope (2013) proposed three questions that helped to determine the trustworthiness of the conclusions of the qualitative research. The first question is how well the analysis explains the reasons for certain people's behavior. The second question is to what extent this explanation is clear to the thinking participant of the study. The third question is how well this relates to what is already known.

This study aimed at answering the research questions as provided in the introduction chapter. Therefore, to promote the study's trustworthiness the questions on the ques-

tionnaires was developed in the simplest and most understandable way possible. The increase in trustworthiness is necessary for a general justification of the paradigm, to show that it is based on a reliable basis and is trustworthy no less than the quantitative research. Additionally, the increase in authenticity helped to arouse more confidence among the public and research customers.

Since administrators from different schools was part of the study, a principal assisted in the creation of the questions developed to administer during interview to allow a similar meaning to all participants who completed them. To ensure the data and findings are not tainted, that principal did not participate in the study. The principals did have to be holders of an NJ Administrators certification as part of the NJDOE criteria. Moreover, the questions was based on already existing knowledge and past research conducted in the area as highlighted in Chapter 2. Further, the sample size selected was considered sufficient to provide reliable information for the study. The questionnaires and responses were also saved on Google Drive for future retrieval and reference.

To prove the trustworthiness of the research study, comparison of coding methods was used. This is an approach of triangulation to allow improving the authenticity of the research study. This approach helped to make sure that the analysis is not reduced to someone's ideas and was available for other researchers. Additionally, it was used for respondent verification approach, which implies that respondents are asked to comment on the analysis. This is a valuable way to attract participants to the study, which also makes it possible to make sure that the respondents have correctly understood the questions.

Reliability

According to Heale & Twycross (2015) reliability is the extent to which the measurement measures what it purports to be measuring. To ensure reliability, the questions were prepared to guarantee uniform understanding. Moreover, the language was kept simple to promote understanding by the participants and obtain clear responses. Member checking will be conducted, which is a process that provides research participants the opportunity to review and substantiate their interview responses for accuracy.

Ethical Considerations

While conducting the research, I complied with various ethical considerations, such as rules, policies, and principles governing research activities. After receiving the approval of various administrators, I ensured that participants participation in the research were selected on a voluntary basis, by distributing a research recruitment flyer and those who wish to not participate were free to decline (Appendix C: Participant Flyer Recruitment). Additional steps taken involved the provision of documents to be used during the research study to the participants prior to forwarding questionnaire.

The participants was provided with a study overview that contains a synopsis of the research study, its purpose, and procedure of the study (Appendix D: Synopsis of Study). The participants was given printed copies of terms and conditions of the interview informed consent. To ensure that there are no questions, concerns, or a lack of clarity, before each interview, review of all documentation was conducted with all participants being asked to sign the informed consent if they choose to participate in the study.

The research was conducted in compliance with the ethical procedure of enhancing confidentiality of the outcomes of the research by not disclosing the information to those who are not authorized to access the results of the research. In addition, ethical compliance of anonymity by not disclosing respondents' personal information when reporting research results, such as their names and location. Lastly, the research did comply with the ethics of providing accurate outcomes of the research without bias in order to meet particular personal objectives.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the research was done among principals in charter and public-schools in the state of New Jersey. Comparison was made between the two forms of institutions to evaluate the degree of accountability and the impact on academic performance of the schools.

The study undertakes a qualitative approach and since it was focused on a single locality, a case study approach will be undertaken. Further, since the study involved multiple variables, a multiple case study approach was utilized and convenient sampling was used for sample selection. The selected participants met the standards essential in the exclusion, inclusion criteria; data collected using semi structured interview questions and a small token of appreciation for their time and participation via a $15.00 gift card. Qualitative data analysis and interpretation methods was used to process the collected data. This was done while adhering to specific ethical standards.

Summary

The focus of this study was to establish the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in both public and charter schools and how this affects academic performance. Therefore, this research provides a deeper analysis to gain a richer understanding of the reasons for the disparities in academic performance. The research provided the background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, and research questions, which are the foundation and guidelines for this study. The research provided the nature of the study that introduces the methodology of conducting this study. The assumptions, scope, limitations, and delimitations also underlined and highlighted the boundaries in research and logic that was used while conducting the study including the significance, which underscore the study's importance.

The literature review highlighted the major findings in the field. The analysis of the literature review has also allowed developing factors that needed an intense exploration since only the provided analysis allows understanding of factors that require examination itself. The literature review focused on the following sections, implication of the action theory on various stakeholders in school management, and comparison of teacher evaluation policies in charter schools and public-schools. In addition, how do state and federal policies and the roles of authorizers in charter schools and public-schools, state policies regarding recruitment? Moreover, I was able to highlight curriculum development, professional development, and parent accountability in charter and public-schools after the study of academic sources related to the matter concerned.

Finally, I was able to outline comparisons of building operations, academic accountability, operation from a business perspective, functions of executive board and school board of education, testing, and student's academic performance. The literature review allowed identifying the main categories where there may be discrepancies within charter and public-school institutions. These categories included teacher recruitment, training, role of authorizers in accreditation, and levels of compensation. Moreover, it helped conclude that different policies applied for evaluation of teachers in charter and public-schools. Therefore, the significance of the literature review was to define further strategy for methodology development.

The methodology section of the dissertation explained the methods that was used in sample selection, data collection, and data analysis for understanding the research questions. The research design used was a qualitative research approach that involved the use of a semi structured interview in schools to determine the manner in which principals comply with accountability requirements of regulatory agencies in the State of New Jersey. The research design that was used is a multiple case study approach that allowed the collection of data from the two educational institutions that was involved in the study.

The convenience sampling approach was used for sample selection. The participants of the study was those who met the provided inclusion and exclusion criteria. Data collection procedure involved was the use of researcher issued questionnaire with principals in a charter school and public-schools in New Jersey. Ethical considerations that was observed included seeking permission from school administrators prior to the research, ensuring voluntary participation of the selected individuals and enhancing confidentiality

of the collected data until the findings are presented. The detailed methodology of the study was analyzed with the purpose to explain the framework of the study from an in-depth explanation of the actions, required to accomplish the research. The theoretical framework helped to select the focus of performing activities of the research.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the explicit roles and responsibilities of public and charter school administrators on student academic performance. The primary data of this qualitative study were collected from semi structured interviews with six elementary school principals. In this chapter, information regarding the setting, recruitment of research participants, specific methods used for data collection, and the emergent themes from coding of the data analysis will be discussed. In addition, the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are discussed in this chapter to present evidence of trustworthiness. Concluding with details of the results and a summary of the findings as it relates to the research questions.

RQ1: What is the role of school of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in both public and charter schools?

RQ2: How does accountability affect perception of performance in public and charter schools?

Setting

The setting of the study was in the Northern area of New Jersey. As of 2017, one district's demographics population totaled 51,097 with 8.67% White, 39.2% Black or African American, and 43.6% Hispanic or Latino. The demographics population consist of 71.2% U.S. citizens, with 48.7% of non-English language speakers. The second district's demographics population totaled 285,156 with 10.5% White, 36.2% Hispanic or Latino, and 49% Black or African American. The demographics population consist of 81.9%

U.S. citizens, with 0% reported as non-English language speakers with 32.7% speaking

Spanish.

Demographics

The study sample consisted of six school administrators who are all actively serv-

ing as a school administrator. A convenient sampling approach was used to recruit study

participants. Participants had to meet the following inclusion criteria. First, all the partic-

ipants must have a principle certification obtained by the NJDOE. Second, all participants

had to have a minimum of 5 years administrative experience or have retired in the past 2

years. Lastly, all participants must have had employment in either charter or public-

schools in the state of New Jersey as a school administrator. Table 2 and 3 display de-

mographics of administrators and school population.

Table 2

Demographic Information of School Administrator Participants of Charter *School and Public-schools*

Participants	Gender	Ethnicity	Degree	Title	Years in Education	Years As An Administrator
TP1	Male	Black	Masters	Principal	1998	2009
TVP2	Female	Black	Masters	Vice Principal	1993	2000
CP1	Female	Hispanic	Masters	Principal	1993	2009
TP3	Male	Black	Doctorate	Principal	1989	2000
TP4	Female	Black	Doctorate	Principal	1991	2000
TP5	Female	Black	Doctorate	Principal	1990	2004

Note: (TP) Traditional Principal (TVP) Traditional Vice-Principal (CP) Charter Principal

The demographic profiles in Table 2 illustrates that the participants were in compliance with the selection criteria. All school administrators held a principal certification through the NJDOE and served as a school administrator exceeding the minimum number of years required of 5 years. All public-school administrators shared that they took the alternate route program into the profession of education, meaning that they had a different career and profession before entering the field of education.

> The alternate route program is a non-traditional teacher preparation program designed for those individuals who have not completed a formal teacher preparation program at an accredited college or university, but wish to obtain the necessary training to become a New Jersey certified teacher, (p.1). (www.nj.gov)

It should be noted that completing the alternate route program requires a series of steps that must be taken in a sequential order.

Table 3

School Population Demographics

Participants	School Population	Grades	Average Class Size
TP1	504 Students	Pre K- 8	20
TVP2	504 Students	Pre K- 8	20
CP1	295 Students	Pre K- 4	20
TP3	600 Students	K-5	23
TP4	372 Students	Pre K- 5	20
TP5	375 Students	K- 5	20

Note. (TP) Traditional Principal (TVP) Traditional Vice-Principal (CP) Charter Principal

Data Collection

The data collection process began with potential participant recruitment. The participants were initially selected using a sampling convenience approach, after identifying the inclusion criteria and receiving approval from the Institution Review Board (IRB). The study was promoted via a participant recruitment flyer on social media and public postings (see Appendix B). In addition, emails were sent to potential participants by researching administrators in identified school districts. Once information was obtained, I sent an invite letter and an unofficial informed consent in an unmarked envelope stamped confidential using a post office box as a return address. The purpose of taking these steps were to ensure confidentiality and ensuring that administrators met the requirement of the inclusion criteria. Once I received an email expressing interest and confirming that the participant was comfortable and secure with email communication, participants received an email (see Appendix A: Email to Informal Network of Administrators), a flyer (see Appendix B: Participant Recruitment Flyer), and synopsis of study (see Appendix C: Synopsis of Study).

The process for the first two districts I attempted to interview began in October 2018 and ended in January 2019 before moving on to other identified districts. The first district was in Southern New Jersey and I attempted to contact 32 administrators via mail, several phone calls, and social media with no response. The second district I attempted to contact was located in central New Jersey. I contacted all charter and traditional public-schools listed in that district, totaling 31 educational institutions. I received correspond-

ence from one public-school administrators who expressed willingness to participate; however, there was no response when it was time to schedule the face-to-face interview.

In January 2019, I started the process of contacting administrators in the Northern New Jersey area. I was able to receive participation from three administrators in one school district. One of the administrators inquired if more participants were needed for the study as this administrator remembered the process when she was working on her dissertation. I shared that only if administrators were comfortable with passing the information to colleagues in the education profession, they were free to do so. This administrator shared the information securing the two public-school administrators outside of her school district. After obtaining interviews from three public-school administrators, I attempted additional contact to the charter schools within that same district. I received no responses from any charter school administrators. Out of the seven charter schools, no response from five and returned mailings from two, stating insufficient addresses.

In March 2019, I obtained interviews from two public-school administrators who were snowballed into the study. I was able to make a connection with one charter school administrator who was willing to participate in the study. Out of the eleven remaining charter schools, three declined and eight did not respond. I continuously and diligently reached out via mail, several phone calls, and email to the remaining educational entities to obtain the needed participants, with no success.

Snowball sampling is the process of identified participants referring additional participants for the study. According Dudovskiy, (2018)

This sampling method involves primary data sources nominating another potential primary data sources to be used in the research. In other words, snowball-sampling method is based on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects. Therefore, when applying this sampling method members of the sample group are recruited via chain referral. (p. 1)

Eligibility for all six participants was established through asking criteria related questions. At that time, I had the study participants sign the official informed consent with the university stamp. Interviews were face-to-face for a duration of 60 minutes with consent for recording. Semi structured interview questions were asked and copy provided to the participants (see Appendix E). If follow-up questions or clarity was needed after the interview, participants provided permission to obtain the information via email. Transcriptions were completed manually, producing 42 pages of transcripts, which were provided to participants for review prior to starting the process of coding and analyzing.

In addition, I stated that I would collect data from secondary sources such as NJDOE. Once the process of interviews was completed, I started the process of researching and obtaining school report cards from the NJDOE. However, except for one charter school, there were no charter schools listed on the NJDOE website. I extended my search and began looking for charter schools in districts that did not participate in the study, and again no data or school report card information was available.

It was determined that saturation was achieved with the six study participants when there was correlation in the responses to the questions and data collected. Participant testimonials were consistent and had similar meaning, which is evidenced in Table 4

with the number of times referential statements were made resulting in the primary source in theme development.

Data Analysis

The objective of data analysis was to cultivate themes from the emergent patterns produced from the data. First, I transcribed all interviews recorded in preparation to upload data into Dedoose, which is the qualitative data analysis software program used to code data collected. The coding began with reading and rereading the transcriptions multiple times. As I continuously read the transcriptions, I began highlighting similarities in the responses and key words, chunking the information. Afterwards, I began to identify key words to label the data, allowing identification of identifying emerging patterns. The codes and keywords were contrasted to evaluate patterns. As I moved through the process of pattern coding, themes that were evolving during transcription began to emerge. The codes were then clustered to formulate initial themes. Once the themes were developed, another process of review was conducted to establish that the themes emerged from the context of the experiences and perceptions of the participants, resulting a pattern of coded.

According to Saldana (2015), pattern coding is the process of searching for reoccurring themes in the data. These themes can represent relationships, communities, schools, and various environments. Stenner (2014, as cited in Saldana, 2015) hypothesized that, "at a basic level, pattern concerns the relation between unity and multiplicity. A pattern suggests a multiplicity of elements gathered into the unity of a particular ar-

rangement" (Stenner, 2014, p. 136). Qualitative researchers pursue patterns to identify trends reported by participants.

The patterns were identified without difficulty and the themes became more prevalent as I was transcribing the data obtained. I observed and noted the recurring patterns of participant responses bridging the relationship of the participants' professional experiences within the educational system.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

The additional steps that were taken to ensure the credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability heightened the trustworthiness of this study. Credibility pertains to the truthfulness of the study findings that is increased from data triangulation and member checking (Noble & Smith, 2015). Member checking was obtained by having study participants review their transcribed interview for accuracy and validity of transcription. Transferability was achieved through the quality and quantity of the data and providing a thick description of the setting and study sample and avoiding generalizations to allow findings of this study that may be transferable to future studies with similar aspects. Dependability references the reliability and stability of the research study findings, whereas confirmability pertains to those individuals who can corroborate the findings of the study (Noble & Smith, 2015). In addition, peer-review and debriefing with a doctorate level colleague was conducted regularly to allow discussion of any negative case analysis and certify that researcher bias was not present.

Results

Six emergent themes evolved from the results of this study as indicated in Table

5. This section will include a description of each theme, and excerpts from the data of the

transcribed interviews to support the findings in answering each research question.

Themes 1-3 are related to RQ1 and Themes 4-7 relate to RQ2 as noted in Table 5.

RQ1: What is the role of school principals in the promotion of academic account-

ability in both public and charter schools?

RQ2: How does accountability affect perception of performance in both public

and charter schools?

Table 4

Reasons for Retaining Research Questions

Research Questions	Disposition and Reasons
RQ1: What is the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in both public and charter schools?	Retained. Each participant responded to questions that formulate an analysis to answer potentially this question.
RQ2: How does accountability affect perception of performance in both public and charter schools?	Retained. Each participant responded to questions that formulate an analysis to answer potentially this question.

Table 5

Overview of the Themes & Number of References

Theme	Traditional Administrators (5)	Charter Administrator (1)
School Choice	31	30
Evaluation of Credentials	13	25
Teacher Retention	18	35
Instructional Accountability	10	10
Administrator Accountability	22	35
Guidelines of Accountability	10	15
Duty of Stakeholder	54	50
Parental Involvement	9	0

Theme 1: School Choice

The theme of school choice emerged to answer the first research question that inquired about the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in both educational institutions. This theme covers the topics of differences in performance and student performance measure. Majority of traditional public-school administrators interviewed believed that they are at a disadvantage in the promotion of student academic accountability, because charter schools have flexibility to be more selective with their student population deterring students who may not be performing academically or align to their school vision. The following excerpts are transcriptions from the administrator interviews.

Traditional Vice-Principal 2 (TVP2): We have to work with all students who enter our school; we do not have the privilege of choice.

Traditional Principal 1 (TP1): Two different populations of students, it is what it is but to compare the academic performance of a public and charter in the same grey

span, there is just no balance, there is no equity there; because we cannot not say no to anyone or kick a kid out, it is a public-school. Charter school is a public-school but they can say; you know you are not quite doing it for us you can leave now, right before state testing. I think with charter schools, and I have never been in a charter school but based on my experience it is a little lopsided. Because charter schools have the freedom to judge the students who do not meet their expectations. So if you are not performing at a certain level, have behaviour issues, parents not doing what we need parents to do, we just kick you out and then you end up at your local traditional public-school and we have to just deal with it. So, I think even to measure charters on the same plateau is unfair because they get to pick and choose who they keep.

Traditional Principal 3 (TP3): "So, charters effectively excommunicate a student who are not fitting into the culture they want, whereas public-schools do not have that same option, they have to deal with it. Charter schools are typically not held to the same standards with respect to servicing students with special needs, often time they end up sending them back to the public-school to deal with them. Charter schools have an advantage, kids come into a charter school they cannot legally put them out of school but if I am constantly suspending and failing a kid repeatedly, what is a parent going to do, exercise their other option and put them into a traditional public-school."

Another contributing factor that was identified in the difference of academic performance was the smaller class sizes and additional classroom support in a charter school.

Charter Principal 1 (CP1)

"Our class size is 20 students and each class has two adults. One is a certified master teacher and the second staff is an instructional assistant. In most of our classes the instructional assistant has the educational requirement to become certified, they just have to sit for the praxis exam, which they are encouraged to do because it is a nice salary increase. We also have substitute teachers in the building, totaling about 54 instructional adults and other adults in the building to step-in at any given time."

However, the charter principal was not in agreement with the belief of many traditional public-school administrators that if a charter school does not perform then they are not held accountable. Charter Principal 1 (CP1) expressed "our school meet the targets and I have shared this information with the staff because it is important that they know how the state sees us; because a charter school can close at any point. A district school is not likely too close because the school is owned by the city; they can move the administrator and teachers but will less likely close the school because of the impact to the community."

I would have to respectfully counter CP1 thoughts with data obtained from TP1 interview, which stated "a few years ago, they tried to close many schools, with this school being one and replace it with different charter schools. There are ways to see the achievement scores for charter schools but they are not openly shared. We had some tech savvy people who were able to ascertain the testing scores of the charter schools they wanted to replace us with, about five of them and we had outperformed all five schools in

every category. This is the only reason this public-school remains, we had to advocate and do our homework."

Another pattern that emerged under school choice was the academic promotion through the role of state testing. There was definitely a consensus with all administrators interviewed that an assessment tool is needed to measure students' academic performance and growth. Nevertheless, 3 of the 6 administrators believed that the assessment tool needs rebuilding and should not be a one-fit for all students, since we all know that not all students are the same.

CP1

"We use Every School Succeeds Act (ESSA), which measure the success of the school and one of the measures is the school report card, New Jersey School Performance Report that is an in-depth audit of the overall performance of the school from demographics, climate and culture, attendance, staffing. This year they did something unique, which is just a guide on how to share this overall report with your board, parents, faculty, and all the stakeholders. This report is either good or bad, our school meet the target but it is how you interpret the information and how you highlight the snapshot of how the state sees your school. How to make this report a topic of conversation, a snapshot and one pager of the information. We have PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessment, academic achievement, and student growth objectives. Because charter receives federal funding, you are accountable. Charter school report yearly just like a traditional public-school. The state wants charter schools

to identify themselves as "public charter schools." It is a rumored that charter schools

does not have to report their testing data for the first five years."

TP1

"Three obstacles that the state assessments represents is, (1) do you know the

standards. (2) Can you navigate a technological environment? (3) Can you do it under the

pressure of the clock? I think it is an effective measurement of all students; we have dif-

ferent student populations with different needs and levels. If I cannot type well but I have

the information here and the clock is ticking, you do not really know whether or not I ac-

tually know because I ran out of time or I cannot manipulate the technology to drag and

drop, highlight, etc. So are we really assessing how much of the standards the students

has measured or is more about how fast you can show what you know? Therefore, I do

not think it is effective in that regard."

TVP2

"Last year it was called the PARCC for grades 3-8 and now it is called NJSLA

(New Jersey Student Learning Assessments) for grades 3-8. I think it is a lengthy test and

I do not think it is fair for all students because it is an electronic test and they have to

have that electronic savviness to navigate. It is a time test to where the students might not

be able to get through the entire test within the allotted time. So what are they trying to

measure? How fast they can get through the test or whether or not they actually know the

information. I do not think it is effective.

TP3

"I have to actually agree, yes instruments are objective, effective, and fair such as the PARCC and state assessments because they are given to everybody. I have no issues with the instruments measuring student performance and effectiveness, at the end of the day how effective is our schools educating our students relative to these standards and expectations. I have no objection; I think they are effective and fair. The only unfair part to me is the idea that, my school particularly has many students who are English Language Learners (ELL). The state is expecting in after one year they have to take the test in their non-dominant language, English, which is not a measure necessarily of what this kid knows and understand but it is a more measure of their ability to perform academic tasks and demands in a language other than their own. Most of the writers of that curriculum, if you gave them that same assessment outside of their first language, they would fail the test as well. Yet, they hold schools accountable for that which they do not control so you drive this push to hurry up and learn academic English enough to pass a test versus letting kids learn and mature at a more developmentally appropriate pace. The one drawback is making kids who are not Native English speakers take a test that is not in their first language."

TP3 further elaborated by sharing, "I think we want to be careful not to lump all classified students together, some are appropriate for the assessment and some just are not. You have some of the more severely cognitively impaired; certainly, you cannot hold the same expectations as you would kids who are cognitively mild challenged or not severely just a little bit behind for whatever reason to interrupt their education. I am leery

of painting kids with all just one brush and I think that is what the State is doing, they do not have different expectations for resource student, students in inclusion settings, and then students in a self-contained setting is a whole different animal so let's have a different set of expectations. I do not think you have to do anyone to the exclusion of the others, certainly if a kid in the self-contained classroom think he/she is ready to take the State assessment, then give it to them, do not hold them back."

TP4

"I think that every student in time regardless of what state you are in there has to be some kind of state assessment. In our case is the PARCC, which is now renamed NJSLA. You definitely should measure overall performance, because not only is it measuring our students but it also measures by grade, school, and district. Then you want to see where you are at in comparison to other schools and districts in the state of NJ, and for some parents that determines where they live. Those state scores and assessments, whether your students are proficient and meeting AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) as they used to say. Every district has their own curriculum so I do not think there is going to be any perfect full proof measure, but at the end of the day, it supposed to measure what students has learned three quarters into the school year."

Theme 2: Evaluation of Credentials

This theme emerged with identifying the experience and readiness of educators when entering the classroom. The focus of preliminary evaluation of credentials needed as deemed by the NJDOE, did administrators believe that the current hiring process of educators sought to recruit the most skillfully competent teachers who were ready to in-

struct and teach lessons with rigor and proficiency too push academics and close the student academic performance achievement gap? The public-school administrators put great emphasis on the alternate route to teaching, believing that an eclectic background produces greater learning opportunities within the classroom.

As indicated on the NJDOE certification and induction webpage, certification requirements, teachers must have a certificate of eligibility, which is obtained by having a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree, passing the praxis exam, and holding a GPA of 2.75 or 3.5. The GPA will dictate the passing score on the praxis, the higher the GPA lowers the passing score needed on the praxis.

A school leader must hold a principal certificate of eligibility, which is obtained by having a Master's degree or higher. Have a minimum of 30 graduate study courses aligned with the National Policy Board of Educational Administration (NPBEA). Complete a 300-hour internship in educational leadership aligned to the professional standards of school leadership, and pass the Praxis II school leaders licensure assessment. The school principal must submit a record of professional studies completed by employer documenting five years of successful educational experience under a valid provisional or standard NJ certificate.

CP1

"In a district school it is such a strict guideline, you have to have your CE (Certificate of Eligibility), and you have to have your (CEAS) Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing, but the charter world they are more lenient because of the demand. They are more open to us saying you can have teachers teaching without a CE or CEAS,

in the charter world, which I can appreciate. However, the charter just offers them more amenities and in kind services. We give teachers like this year, sign-on bonus, abundance of classroom supplies; we do not want out of pocket cost. They can make copies as much as they want, black or white and color copies, as much as they do want, and a computer. We also provide all classroom supplies, teacher picks out the classroom decoration, bulletin board, etc., and we pay for it."

"We can have a principal sitting in this seat without a principal certification, I have it but it scared me that someone can sit in this seat without it and make strategic plans and educational decisions without having that knowledge."

TP1

"Traditionally you have to have the right certificate in order to teach in a specific area; however, sometimes like this coming school year there are people that we can put in certain places that we believe will be more effective in that position but does not have the right certificate. I will say this as well, in my experience alternate route teachers have performed superior to the traditional teacher and I am an alternate route as well. I think that maybe because we bring some additional experience of the world into the classroom. Alternate route teachers has been more colorful, flexible, and I guess because we come with different areas of the workforce into the classroom."

TVP2

"I think what they require now is fine. I like that we are able not to reoffer a position if we feel it is not working. Because you do great in the interview, and your mock teaching can be great as well. However, when you get in the nitty-gritty and practical de-

tails and there for two months and when things are happening in the classroom, dealing with behaviors, and things like that then you just fall to pieces. I entered education via alternate route and felt better prepared and equipped to handle unexpected situations."

TP3

"I am a big believer of pedagogy and that teachers should know instructional practice, and having said that I was an alternate route teacher; I didn't know nothing and look where I ended up. I have come full circle in that to some extent. A big believer that you have to have some instructional pedagogy. I have also seen where that is almost a liability because if I went to school as a student, to college to be a teacher, I got a job as a teacher and talking to these kids; all I know is how to teach and tell them how to be a teacher. When we are talking about careers and connecting to other worldly things, and when students start asking questions, why I have to know this and know that, as a second career you can better connect it to the real wide world more effectively than just a teacher who only knows how to teach. I find that there is a pro and a con to both sides of that coin, so I myself lean on pedagogy but also if you have the capacity to learn, you are smart, and have a work ethic, then I will find a way to work with you. It is just a matter of; can I afford the learning curve because if I am so close to being a school of status, can I afford to wait while you learn and acquire the skill set you need to help us move instruction?"

TP4

"Well usually, when I go to hire a teacher obviously you want to make sure that they have their COE (Certificate of Eligibility) in hand. I am not just thinking you should

have a degree in education; I did not have a degree in education and went through the alternate route. I do believe in the alternate route, teaching next door, and other programs they have nowadays, because I think you can be just as effective. I will add this; I believe that teachers should do a demo lesson prior to being hired, that I feel very strongly. I started doing that a couple of years ago because you have some people who has a talent for interviewing and do very well with the interview committee and has strong references, and then you see a lesson and be like, oh my gosh. Where I had like my top three candidates and the one who was maybe the weaker one really had some foundation when it came to teaching, so I always do demo lessons."

TP5

"I think our evaluation of credentials we already have in place is good. I think the basic criteria that we have for the state is fine but just making sure that the teachers receive that ongoing professional development throughout their first years."

Theme 3: Teacher Retention

This theme emerged with questions assessing the importance of teacher retention in promoting academic accountability, and what if any role does the school principal possess. Overall, there was a consensus of an extremely low turnover rate. There were varying perspectives and some administrators looked at retention from two different views. The first view was the longevity in the teaching profession and the second view was the grade level retention, transitioning between instructional grades and curriculum.

Longevity in teaching profession. *CP1*

"I have nine teachers about to be tenured, the state streamlined tenure five years. It is hard to keep teachers in an urban district charter school. Teachers leave her because of the exhaustion and I understand it, I get it. Working at a charter school wears them down and tell them to go somewhere else, another setting, just do not leave the profession. In the urban district, it is hard and both charter and public are tiring but charter school teachers work longer hours than district teachers."

TP1

"Teachers who have been home grown sort of speak, been in the school for several years, they already know what your expectations is, they know what to expect from you and you know what to expect from them. I do believe it improves accountability almost like if you moved a teacher with a group of students, you do not have to go over your expectations every year."

TP3

"There is not a lot of high turnover here. Typically, teachers that comes here, stay here. First, the job market does not let you pop in and pop-out. The only teachers who has the capacity to hop in and hop out are bilingual certified teachers so they can come and go and get another job. Lately I have been having difficulty hanging on to them because different neighbouring districts offering more entry level pay, as much as $10,000 for doing the same job and believe the pastures are greener and jump over there. Then some that stay and I think part of it is because of me. I have built enough rapport and a relationship because you understand that your work is your second home. This is where you are

spending your daylight hours. You got to make it warm, inviting, comfortable but we still got our job to do, do not get it twisted, but if it is a place you do not want to come to, then you do not want to get up and come to work."

TP4

"To my knowledge because this is my first year here at this school. I only have two first year teachers, non-tenured teachers who are in years two or three about to get tenured, which is about six teachers. So the bulk of the teachers here has been teaching for a while."

TP5

"I absolutely believe that teacher retention improves academics and if you are teaching that curriculum it is strengthened by longevity. Our retention rate in general is great. This year we have a few changes because we merged two schools but overall our retention rate is good. Normally when people come here, they stay here. We lose teachers because of retirement not because they do not want to teacher here anymore. We have had teachers' non-renewed based on performance."

Longevity in grade level. *CP1*

"Teaching is multi-dimension and multi-dynamic, you start off with a desired grade and subject and overtime it may change, find your grade level and/or subject, just do not leave the profession."

TP1

"I would agree to keep teachers in specific grade levels, especially if they are doing well I think in the best interest of the students we should keep them there."

TP3

"I have had my teachers come to me every day with the demand of staying in a grade level four years, and I think there is some merits to that but I will be mindful of my optic thinking. I believe has a philosophy that I am trying to build the best product over-time and not just for the short-term gains. If I take a teacher and have them teach a second grade class this for two years, and then third and fourth grade, now you know how to level-up and level-down with expectations of a grade below and a grade up, and I think that makes you a better teacher in the long run. What happens when the grade configuration has changed, then I have a teacher who has taught fourth grade for 20 years and all of a sudden, they have to teach third grade or fifth grade, so now the teacher is a little bit handicapped and limited? I think you want to maintain some flexibility and step back from an administrative standpoint. Again it is not to minimize the benefits of having enough continuity to master teacher pedagogy, let me use that term master loosely because at my school these experts; these masters (highly qualified), our kids are still failing at a prolific rate."

TP4

"Well, I think that there is some validity, if I have been teaching third grade my first year and then you move me two or three grade levels below; I think in order to be effective and learning the curriculum and instructing students, you need to be in that grade, easily 3-5 years at least. Now, if you are going to be moved because we know that does happen, one grade up or one grade down is still rather synonymous when it comes to curriculum.

TP5

"I think in order for a teacher to really feel comfortable in understanding the curriculum I would say by the third year you are really strong. The first year you are learning, the second year is an adjustment, and the third year they should have it. I think it is good to stay in that grade level if it is working. My third grade teacher right now is dynamic, she knows the expectations, what needs to be taught, can assess what changes she needs to make based on what she did not get a chance to cover based on past experiences or what she needs to spend a little more time covering. Being able to maneuverer through the curriculum and make sure it is all covered."

Themes 4-6 correlated to research question two, how does accountability affect perception of performance in both public and charter schools?

Theme 4: Instructional Accountability

This theme emerged from examining existing academic guidelines for accountability in both educational institutions and if administrators believed that, they differed. All participants believed that academic accountability through assessing and measuring teacher performance is needed. All administrators were in agreement that one cannot evolve personally or professionally without some form of self-assessment and reflection.

CP1

"We use a rubric that considers six factors and the components are lesson-planning, classroom management, delivery of instruction, data and assessment, professional development, and family-engagement. A spectrum of six and within those six there are ten sub areas. It is a scale, there is no perfect teacher but you fall within that scale. I

can tell you right now with all the lead teachers we have in the school, they scale from effective to highly effective."

TP1

"The one thing I do appreciate about the framework in our district is that it is a fair tool to evaluate effectively teacher performance and student achievement. It is very clear and it is based on what students are able to do. If you are a teacher and you understand your rubric, it should be almost impossible for you to fail as a teacher unless you are just not good at all. However, if you understand your rubric and what it is asking you to do; what students should be able to do, as an evaluator when I am reading it, it is very easy to put teachers in certain ratings. Either you have these things or you do not have them. I love what we have in our district; I like it. We used to use Charlotte Danielson, when I was a teacher; there is ways to get points on Charlotte Danielson evaluation without doing anything. On the particular tool we use, the teacher must do something and show something to get points."

TP3

"If you are looking at the SGP, yes it really does, it is a very fair assessment that takes into account the starting point of each student in their class and it compares the teachers' effectiveness with other kids who had similar starting points. The SGP yes is probably the best tool they developed with respect to measuring teacher effectiveness. Most of the other tools have significant flaws."

TP4

"I actually like our evaluation tool, we use the Charlotte Danielson and I think in comparison to other tools that we have used, I like the fact that it has a rubric. In that rubric, there is going to obviously be some degree of it being subjective but for the most part if the evidence does not fall within the evidence of that rubric indicator, from ineffective to highly effective, I think it takes a lot of self-reflection, with what does effective looks like, partially effective, highly effective and so on. I think t it is one of the better tools in measuring teacher performance; and it talks about engaging the learner, how student responds. It does captivate what the teachers' performance is as well as what the students produce. Therefore, yes I think it does accurately capture student and teacher performance to the best of its ability, provided it is used in the correct manner."

TP5

"Student's rubric captures what the student is supposed to learn and it is aligned with the curriculum and standards on what students are supposed to be able to do. We use Charlotte Danielson and I think that does a good job on what teachers should be able to do in terms of practice."

Theme 5: Administrator Accountability

Many of the administrators' highlighted self-accountability as the central concern as a professional in a leadership role. Being an effective role model and leading by example was the focal point of being an educational leader. The superintendent observations, walk-throughs, results of state assessments were expressed as secondary concerns that came after being an instructional leader.

CP1

"I am at the board of trustees' beck and call. They can call me at any given time, morning, noon, or night and I have to pick up the phone. If the president of the board has a question, she can ask me directly. I have to present a report every month the state of the school, from student registrations, what is happening with the school, the stakeholders – from new partners to old partners. How am I making sure we are seen in the city of the district, how are we seen in the state department, parent issues, nursing, health department, security, staffing, grievance, everything and it is presented every month and takes about an hour to present. I must set high expectations for myself and make sure that I am keeping myself accountable. As an administrator in the traditional public-school, I had an assistant superintendent that came and checked on me once a year. He came in and said how you are, I replied good, he responded okay and walked away."

TP1

"There is a couple of layers of this because we have a performance evaluation as well, and it is very specific. Some of it can be a little huh, do not want to say unrealistic but it does put a lot of the onus of students and parents on the administrators and we cannot control adults so I have issues with that portion of it. State performance achievement is critical as well, so the superintendent is going to look at that. But I believe that there are some self-check issues that has to happen as well, considering the demographics of where we are, and the type of students that we are servicing; these are our children and I mean that literally and figuratively, so for me it is a little more than what students do on a state test. For me personally, whether students do well on the state test or not, do they feel

comfortable, are they safe, do they behave in a way that we would expect a child to behave regardless of where they are in the world. So it is layers of it, what the superintendent expects of us, what the state expects from us, and then what we expect of ourselves; I think that is very important."

TVP2

"I am evaluated by the principal with an administrative rubric designed for our district, and it is the same tool as the principal. In areas and indicators, that the principal feel I need to strengthen it is rated accordingly and I will work on them. State expectations that is applicable for the principal also applies to me as the vice principal. I provide support to the principal in whatever areas needed.

TP3

"The central administrators evaluate public-school administrators one time per year. They have minimal data points they can look at, test performance, which usually does not come back until after the evaluation is done. They can walk through but on a given moment it is only snapshot data and through conversation. I believe there is a little less accountability but more public scrutiny of my performance because you know you get parents come in and if they walk away dissatisfied they spread the word. Interestingly enough I have done surveys a few years ago, about our schools performance, and again we are not shinning stars by any stretch of academic performance and passing the state test, but parents by large were very satisfied with academic performance and I was not satisfied at all. I am not a person that needs a lot of accountability because I am going to do what I do. I am not bragging but I believe in coming to work. To me a big part of ac-

countability is showing up. I left my first job, a teacher in an urban public-school district, 10 years in, I left there with 80 sick days, and the district took half my sick days. I try to give children their maximization experiences.

TP4

"I cannot speak for charter but I will presume it is the same. The superintendent or assistant superintendent conduct site visits and evaluates twice a year with the principal performance rubric and principals complete a current self-assessment and growth objectives. As an administrator, you are an instructional leader you lead by example basically, and schools sometimes are little islands by themselves and at the end of the day, everything you do your staff looks at and it sets the tone and example for the building. Accountability, you have to establish a climate that is conducive for the students and a school that the students want to be in, and teachers where want to teach. You have to dot your I's and cross your T's at all times because the superintendent and assistant superintendent is not going to be there nine out of ten times, so your accountability is with everyone that you are working for. You just have to really lead by example, if I am late everyday then how am I having attendance and tardy conferences with my staff about their attendance. My superintendent may not know but my staff knows. So that accountability is always there, not just in school but outside of school."

TP5

"There is really no accountability for school administrators. When I come in my building, no one checks to see if I am doing what I am supposed to do, which is probably not good. If I know to do, what I am supposed to do then I will do it but then when you

have new principals and new leaders that do not necessarily know what they supposed to be doing and then teachers influence them. If we had someone regulating principals coming in and evaluating us on a regular basis and not just for formality but in a consistent way, coming to the school, walking through the school, looking at data, parental engagement, having that conversation I think you will have better outcomes from principals. We are supposed to be evaluated but more of compliance than outcome and if it was more outcome driven it would be better for the kids."

Theme 6: Guidelines of Academic Accountability

This theme was derived by discussing the liability of academic guidelines of accountability that the NJDOE placed on charter and public-schools.

CP1

"Guidelines are the same for both charter and traditional public-school. We have PARCC assessment, academic achievement, and student growth objectives. We are more accountability than anybody would imagine. When I worked at a district school, I just worked. When I am here, I have to do my job and document it well because someone is going to ask. It is definitely more accountability as a charter administrator than a traditional public administrator. So here, I have state exams, periodic reviews – random visits where someone from the NJ Charter School Association come and do checks. Then I provide annual reports – a 36-page report, answering questions and providing data, gap analysis, and a performance framework – another report to complete. I must also assist with closure process – that is if the school closes, money must be put aside in the budget to make sure we can pay staff, etc. The traditional public is state exams and periodic re-

views, and this is true because I worked for them. As for their periodic reviews, I happen

to have a seat in a district school where they would say, she is okay. I was checked on

once through a phone call."

TP1

"I do not believe they differ at all and I believe that we are held to the same stand-

ards. We used to call it AYP it is SGP now and what it pretty much says is that every

year it is an expectation that a specific percentage of our students will show growth.

There are two areas that the district is typically looking at; (1) student performance –

what percentage of students in each grade level and content area are proficient? For ex-

ample, at this school we may have 50% of student performance achieved in literacy in

grade six. However, we may have 85% of those students that grown from fifth grade to

sixth grade. Therefore, for me the growth piece is huge because there may be certain

schools with students coming to them already entering proficient so there is no growth at

all. So let us say I have Achievement Academy, all the students inherited are already pro-

ficient and performing in the 90th percentile; well at the end of the year, how much did

those students grow? Whereas, another school has 50% and people say, oh gosh that is

horrible but at the end of the year look how much the students are growing while they are

here? I think it is unfair as I stated last time with charter schools, if I pick all the students

here at my school just imagine how my achievement would look but I do not get to do

that. So I think it is even better when you have public-schools like us and we have to

work with whatever we can. We cannot say no to anyone with the expectation that you

will make those students better, and I believe that is better when you can show growth

with student academic performance. Achievement is awesome but for us at the end of the day, we must be growing students. That growth piece for me is very big."

TVP2

"Without growth that means you are not doing anything. That means students are stagnate and they are not achieving so we always want to see growth. We have to work with all students who enter our school; we do not have the privilege of choice."

TP3

"I do not know if they differ from a charter school but they are public-schools so I expect to the same extent we are; that they are held under the NJSLA that is kind of applicable to everyone. I assume that they are using those and cannot imagine why you would not because they are already done for you. I do know that charter schools are typically not held to the same standards with respect to servicing students with special needs, often time they end up sending them back to the public-school to deal with them. So there are some guidelines that do make a difference between public-school and charter school."

TP4

"SIP (School Improvement Plan), every school has one now in this district. Fortunately, we are not a state school that is in need of improvement. Therefore, we do not have that state SIP, which is a catch twenty-two because when you are one, you get a lot of extra Title I money but you also have to report to the state. There is a lot of data reporting, student and staff attendance monitored, in-house assessments findings are reported every quarter. It is a lot and you have all SIP indicators that you have to show that you are accomplishing by certain timelines. Every school has a SIP, it is just that when you

are not a state SIP, it is less strict but I still have to set my goals and objectives as a school. Schools that are deemed SIP by the states is based on school testing and that determines whether you are a school in need of improvement. When the school is deemed in need of improvement, a state coach is assigned to the school, a data coach, math coach, English language arts coach, and you have to update your SIP weekly. There is a climate and culture piece and a fourth factor selected by the school. As long as a school is showing progress and growth on the state assessments, they are not earmarked for a school in need of improvement by the state."

TP5

"There is no specific academic guidelines other than schools are supposed to grow each year and it is based on the PARCC assessments. Each year 3-8 grade takes the PARCC and they are given a number of a growth level, and they would say based on your scores that you received in 3rd grade you should receive this score in 4th grade. Based on the score you received in 4th grade you should get this score in 5th grade. So if kids are not growing at the level that has been outlined by the state that is when they start identifying schools in need of improvement, which is where we are because your kids did not grow where we said they should grow. Not so much that your students are passing, because right now we have more students proficient in the district but some of our kids did not grow at the level of expectation. So now, here is the state saying why your kids did not grow and here comes the accountability? The new thing is that you can be a school in need of improvement but not be considered a Title I school. The school that merged in this year was a Title I school, but we are not, interesting."

Theme 7: Duty of Stakeholders

These themes emerged through discussions relating to the responsibilities of traditional and executive board of education; and if members should be elected or appointed. The public-school administrators were not knowledgeable about the operation of charter school executive boards. Consideration of an oversight committee and exploring what would that committee's role be.

CP1

"That is a great question. Both boards should operate pretty much the same. Therefore, the board of trustees govern our school with eight members and they have local control. With executive boards, the school principal of the charter school is much more involved. For example, the hiring process for the upcoming school year starts March so I must review all the school policies and protocols on hiring to match what is going to happen starting next week. If there is any revisions, I have to make sure it is reviewed by legal and gets to the board meeting with edits for approval, if the board approves the edits. The executive board can manipulate the money easier than a traditional board. For example, if there is a child who needs a one-on-one then we can manipulate the money to pay for a one-on-one aide. If a teacher need supplies, we can manipulate the money to purchase the supplies. As for elected or appointed, that is a good question; I have a bipartisan conversation in my head. There is always power in election. I always advocated for people to vote, make a decision, power in people coming together and accountability. I am always fearful of people making the wrong decision because they do not have the background of knowledge. People not really understanding of what a charter

school is and if you speak louder you message is true versus if you do not speak at all, than you are not speaking truth. I would like to appoint and just because they do not speak, I know that person has a lot of wisdom. Therefore, I am really split on this question. This city is racially divided, that it is scary at times because due to peoples understanding and their theories you may need to appoint people because of the neo fight. There is, Trust for Education, a non-for profit organization for oversight for both charter and public-schools to have voices at both ends. We were approved to 2023, charter schools are approved 4-5 years, and in the 4th year, they will receive approval for the 5th year based on an audit."

TP1

"I do not anything about Executive Boards of charter schools. Traditional school boards of education role is too simply to approve or deny proposals coming from the superintendents of school and requests by specific schools in the district. The superintendent answers to the school board and the administrators answer to the superintendent. I love the question, and I want to say elected. In my experience often times those who is elected still do not have enough information on the process of teaching, educating, and learning. Even if people vote for them, it is like voting for the lesser of two evils. In event of appointment, it seems like people are appointed for political reasons, so that a specific agenda can be moved so I put the right people in place so I can do what I need to do. I believe many decisions are made outside of the expertise of the people who are on the ground. So oversight committee can be of people who have experience with teaching and learning, just rather be the checks and balances for the school board, I think that would be

powerful. It seems always to be contingence between the school board and superinten-

dent."

TVP2

"I do not anything about Executive Boards of charter schools. However, the tradi-

tional boards of education approve or deny proposals made by the superintendent. The

superintendent answers to the school board and the administrators' answers to the super-

intendent. I would say elected; however, those who are elected could be because of their

popularity in the community and not necessarily how much they know in the educational

field. I would say no for an oversight committee. I would think if the superintendent is is

for or against a particular curriculum, then he/she should be able to convince or bring re-

search and data to the board for a decision of whether it is effective or not.

TP3

"I cannot speak to executive boards but I can speak to traditional boards of educa-

tion to some extent. They are expected to develop and drive policies in support of district

goals. They should be under the leadership of a superintendent and they should interact

without prejudice or politics. Elected boards are it does not have to reflect qualifications,

skills, backgrounds, or value add of the individual member that is elected. Appointed

boards have potential to be more effective because there can be a different vetting process

for identifying more candidates that are qualified but that can also be a political pitfall.

Short answer is yes, a strong yes for an oversight committee. There is no town that is ab-

solved from politics…that just the nature of the world. Politics runs our government so

let us not act that it is necessarily a bad thing but it still relies upon the personal integri-

ties of each individual member of that board to make the best decisions but often alliances forms, coalition's forms, voting blocs forms, opinion forms that are not necessarily vetted appropriately. When it comes to curriculum and you have a board who that is necessarily their field of discipline or expertise but their making ultimate and final decisions on curriculum items, curriculum materials, and instructional approaches oppose to having an expertise in that area identifying and implementing curriculum."

TP4

"I am not familiar with the role of an executive board. I just know of a traditional board of education obviously follows Roberts Rules of Order and that the community votes on the board of education. A board of education is not a paid position; they do not get a salary. The board of education obviously makes many decisions when it comes to everything in the school district. They work very closely with the superintendent and assistant superintendent. The superintendent reports to the board of education and I report to the superintendent versus me reporting to the board of education. I think that when you are elected it allows the community to get involved, because at the end of the day we pay property taxes, which goes towards the school budget. I do not know if they are going to be more effective; as for as their productivity and commitment, but I do think that when you are elected by the community it takes out that political, favoritism, nepotism. A lot politics comes into play as oppose to why you are doing it. So if you are elected, it minimizes the politics, it does not take it out the ballpark, just minimizes it because it still happens to a degree. No, to an oversight committee, I think it would further complicate things to be honest. So to have an oversight committee, it would just be a whole group of

governing bodies who are just going to add and complicate sometimes the politics that is already involved in a board of education."

TP5

"I do not know anything about executive boards. Traditional board of education their major role is to hire a superintendent and oversee policies in the district. They manage and oversee the budget and meet with the superintendent to make sure that the district is operating smoothly. Responsible for approving major spending in district, as well as all hiring. The superintendent oversees the district operations, the board oversees the superintendent to make sure all the policies, and procedures that have been outlined for the district are being followed."

"However, I live in a district to where they are appointed and here the district where I work they are elected. I think that you just need good people, knowledgeable people on the board. The good thing for an appointed board where I live is that there is an application process. So people who have an interest in the board, they apply based on their experiences, like for example we have a person with a special education background, a person with a finance background, general education background, legal background; it is a well-rounded group of people with a knowledge base. If you have an elected board, the community elects them. However, sometimes you are not electing people with the knowledge base and may be just popularity. I like the idea of appointed board if you are going to have people from a variety areas such as parent, community member, because having oversight of a district is a big job. You do not need just any Joe Schmo who does not have any educational base or knowledge on laws, governance, and those

things making these decisions. There should be a criteria for being on the board and leave about two-three spots for the Joe Schmos to bring a different perspective. Yes, there should be some type of an oversight committee to regulate the board. There should be structure. We have too many people now in positions of power making decisions without the knowledge base. I believe that the oversights are making sure that the people appointed to the boards are carrying out their roles, as they should be, and there is no ethic violation. Just to make sure that the board is operating, if there is an issue have a meeting and avoid the chaos. Right now, there is chaos in our district, and that committee would be able to step in and say, what is going on?"

Closing Thought: Parental Involvement

All participants were asked if they could highlight one fundamental difference between a charter and public-schools that drives student academic success, what would it be? Overwhelmingly, all the public-school principals placed emphasis on what they deemed the most critical component needed parental involvement because without it the student is fragmented. Public-school administrators believe that charter schools has an advantage with securing parental support, because they are able to place expectations and set guidelines that parents must adhere to in order for their child to remain in that charter school setting. Here are a few excerpts from some of the public-school administrators regarding parental involvement. Whereas the charter school principal believed, it was the resources and level of administrator accountability.

CP1

"We have a social-emotional curriculum. We have been able to outsource our counselling, we have 50+ students receiving professional counselling throughout the day here at the school by partnering with neighbouring local organization. The level of accountability is higher, with all the reporting that must be conducted annually to justify keeping our school open."

TP1

"The demand on parents to participate in their child's experience. You can force parents and parents comes with the expectation that I will make sure that my child is in uniform, I will come to all of the meetings, you have to do it if you are going to a charter school; they must do it. Here in traditional public-schools, we cook, dance, sing, give out raffles, Rita's Water Ice, Dunkin Donuts; we have a meeting now, Monday mornings, coffee and donuts and these are the things we do to entice parents to come in. We have to perform to get parents to come in and our numbers are still terrible and we are very personable in this school, they can pop-up, come talk to us, touch us and only three parents attended our budget meeting out of 504 kids. So speaking of a "whip", that is why I think that in school districts they must be some workshopping for parents, why do someone need to force you to do what you need to do as a parent? We are dealing with in our communities that mind-set. What do you mean you are not going to wear your uniform? My mom said I do not have to wear my uniform, what do you mean? Who allows children to make those kind of decisions? But see in the charter school I want my baby to go there, and if they do not wear the uniform, they can kick my child out so I will do it be-

cause there is a consequence. That is the wrong reason to do the right thing. Charter schools can place requirements and hold parents accountable for their involvement that we cannot do in the traditional public-schools."

TVP2

"Parental involvement in their child's education is crucial and it is needed. We had a budget meeting two weeks ago, and only three parents attended. The principal sent letter, flyers, and automated calls went out to parents consistently until the night before the meeting saying, come out see hear how the money is being spent and only three parents attended. Last year, I was talking to a parent about something and she has a child here and a child at the charter. She informed me that she could not make my meeting because she has to attend a meeting at the charter. I asked her what makes her want to go to the meeting at the charter oppose to the traditional public, and parent replied that they make us and she has to go, she does not have a choice. So that "whip" of them saying you have to do this and that, parents make sure they do it. They wear the uniform every day, certain kinds of shoes but here in traditional public we get, "oh we have to wash it.""

TP3

"I highlighted how charter schools can put kids out. In our area, charter schools are able to have longer school days and many are non-unionized so they are running to 5:30-6:00 p.m. Parents who are working parents that need aftercare, it works for them. It does not matter if the school is better or not, it just fits my work schedule. Typically, parents who choose to go the charter school route are looking for a better and many times a safer educational environment. Parent feel that when they child wakes up and get dress

for school in their blazer uniforms, their child knows school is important oppose to students not in uniform, different optic eye."

TP4

"I think the only difference and what parents sometimes see, they think it is a magic bullet, especially if it is a charter school that is new and has not been established for a long time. Just because the level of accountability is higher and more support does not mean you will always show big gains in academic improvement."

TP5

"The difference is the parents choose to send their children to charter schools. With the guidelines of the charter schools, and how they have it built into their charter parents are required to adhere and we do not have that ability in the traditional public-school. If it says in their charter that kids will wear uniform, stay to 4:00 p.m., receive mandatory extra tutoring; a parent cannot say or refuse otherwise they can be put out. Because in the charter it says you agree to do X, Y, Z and that is the only way you can be kicked out. You cannot be kicked out if you are a behavior problem or failing, even though they try to because I had many parents that come here and I send them back saying nope they cannot kick you out. The parents are surprised and I tell them they are not a private school so go right back. However, if they do not have a bilingual program or a special education program they do not have to take those kids, which now you do not have those barriers and challenges that is in some of the public-schools because you do not necessarily have that."

"Another difference a lot of the parents who choose charter schools are parents who has the wherewithal to understand the policies and practices, the more educated parents and the most talented students are sent to charter schools taking away the top layer of kids. I think that is the main difference in terms of success rates of charter schools. My kids love it here; but will start to leave around 5th grade because charter schools will you are not going to have a spot. Parents do not want to send their children to the middle school, and those are my best students leaving. Therefore, it looks like they are out performing us but you took our best students and now I am stuck with lower performing or average students, especially in the middle school. I have a few students also going to private school when they leave here not to go to the middle school."

Summary

This chapter presented the results of the interviews and addressed the purpose of the study. The purpose of this qualitative multiple-case study was to explore administrative perceptions on academic accountability. All school principals that participated in the study appeared to be open, honest, and forthcoming as evidenced of their verbal responses with no non-verbal gestures or demeanors that created a cause for concern. When asked to elaborate, provide further explanation, or an example, it was completed with ease. There was no hesitancy in answering the questions, and all administrators interviewed expressed satisfaction with the research questions.

Seven emergent themes evolved from the data of this study to answer the research questions. The themes included (a) school-choice, (b) evaluation of credentials, (c) teacher retention, (d) instructional accountability, (e) administrator accountability, (f) guide-

lines of academic accountability, (g) duty of stakeholders, and the closing thought produced a theme of parental involvement. These themes were derivative from thematic analysis of the interviews and the data collected from the 6 school principals who participated in the study.

To answer the first research question, assessing the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability. The participants commonly believed that there are multiple factors that contributes to their role in promoting academic accountability. However, the most important role was the self-awareness and self-accountability in being an instructional leader and must; lead by example in order to promote accountability within their school. It was a general belief that school choice affected the elevation of academic accountability, believing that charter schools recruit the students who are academically performing and unable to service the population of special education and English learners. There was an overall agreement that the role of teacher credentials and retention was an important part in promoting academics in the classroom, and placed emphasis that educators who enter the profession via alternate route has increased experience to relate the real-world to classroom instruction.

To answer the second research question, how does accountability affect perception of performance? Majority of administrators believed that the accountability of how students perform on state testing dictates the perception of their performance as an administrator and instructional leader. The many other components that contributes to the success of a student are not taken into consideration, or the success of a school. For example, an administrator having a total population of 500+ students and not able to receive

a vice-principal. The role of the stakeholders, which were described as the boards,

NJDOE, and parental involvement were described as key factors where accountability is

needed, and when they do not function, the perception of academic accountability remain

solely on the school principal

      A further discussion of the research study results will be provided in the next

chapter, which will also include the theoretical framework, relations to literature, and

limitations of the study, recommendations, and implications for social change.

Chapter 5: Discussions, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to gather data to increase understanding of academic accountability among charter and public-school principals. This study offers an in-depth view of the lived and daily experiences and understanding of 6 school principals. Emerging from a theoretical framework based on Parsons' (1978) theory of action, two research questions were used to lead the study: (a) what is the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in both public and charter schools? And (b) how does accountability affect perception of performance in public and charter schools? A qualitative multiple case-study analysis was conducted using semi structured interview questions.

A summary of the study and discussion of the findings will be discussed in this final chapter. The summary includes a statement of the problem, a review of the methodology, and a summation of the results. The discussion is grounded on the responses to the two research questions that studied the academic accountability among charter and public-school principals in alignment with the literature and theoretical framework.

Overview

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in both public and charter schools and how this affects academic performance and if both educational institutions in the state of New Jersey were held to, the same academic guidelines that ensure school leadership accountability. In the event of any disparities within the guideline requirement, does it affect the academic per-

formance of students in the schools within the state of New Jersey? Qualitative measures were used in this study to address the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the role of school principals in the promotion of academic account-ability in both public and charter schools?

RQ2: How does accountability affect perception of performance in both public and charter schools?

Parsons' (1978) theory of action was the theoretical framework for this study. The theoretical approach provided a guide for school principals to illustrate organizational change in the framework of academic accountability, and the actions that principals must execute in order to achieve the respective goals as mandated by the regulatory bodies, whether it be the NJDOE, an executive board, or traditional board of education.

The literature review identified numerous elements that affect school accountabil-ity; however, only those aligned with the initial purpose of this study were explored. Those main factors included teacher recruitment and retention, methods principals use to measure student performance, roles of executive and traditional boards of education, and operational and performance accountability of charter schools and public-schools from a procedural perspective.

For the study, I used a qualitative research approach and a multiple-case study de-sign, which was deemed the most effective approach given the purpose of the study and the essential data needed to conduct this research. The multiple-case study approach al-lows the exploration of the phenomena being studied via a replication strategy (Bell & Bryman, 2015). This methodology was used because it provided various sources of data

to construct a comprehensive representation of public and charter school principals' perception on their role in academic accountability. There were two data sets used for the study, interviews and relevant documents that will be discussed in this chapter.

Interpretation of Findings

The results of the study were analyzed and organized by research questions in correlation to the themes and major focal points of this study. Highlights of relevant information obtained in the literature review and excerpts of participant interviews will be discussed in this section. Multiple themes and focal points will overlap.

Research Question 1

What is the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in a public-school and charter schools? Three major themes materialized from the study of this central research question: (a) school-choice, (b) evaluation of credentials, and (c) teacher retention.

Theme 1 – school choice.   This theme was not one of the focal points of the study. However, it derived from the data collected and respectfully to the participants, along with trustworthiness and reliability of my study, it could not be disregarded. In the state of New Jersey, school choice became law in 2010, offering families several school choice opportunities that included traditional public-schools, public charter schools, public magnet schools, private schools, and homeschooling options, (NJDOE, 2017).

All study participants strongly believed in the right for parents to have choices in educating their children. However, the public-school principals emphasized that the process of school choice should be consistent across all educational institutions. No school

should establish rules and guidelines that will exclude certain students, and all schools should have to service a percentage of English language learners and special education students, especially when they are receiving public funds.

Traditional Principal 3 expressed that

Charters effectively excommunicate a student who are not fitting into the culture they want, whereas public-schools do not have that same option, they have to deal with it. Charter schools are typically not held to the same standards with respect to servicing students with special needs, often time they end up sending them back to the public-school to deal with them.

Traditional Principal 2 supported this statement by sharing,

We have to work with all students who enter our school, we do not have the privilege of choice. Charter schools can place requirements and hold parents accountable for their involvement that we cannot do in the traditional public-schools. So, I think even to measure charters on the same plateau is unfair because they get to pick and choose who they keep.

Traditional Principal 5 echoed this statement, stating, "The most talented students are sent to charter schools, taking away the top layer of kids. I think that is the main difference in terms of success rates of charter schools." This theme revealed the overarching core belief that no student should be excluded, which will further be discussed later in this chapter.

Theme 2 – Evaluation of credentials.   This theme is in direct correlation with the focal point teacher recruitment. There were clear disparities as it related to teacher and

principal credentials. All five public-school principals shared knowledge of charter schoolteachers not having to have a standard certificate or certificate of eligibility. Charter Principal 1 shared that

> In a district school it is such a strict guideline, you have to have your CE, and you have to have your CEAS, but the charter world they are more lenient because of the demand. They are more open to us saying you can have a teacher teaching without a CE or CEAS.

Charter Principal 1's statement echoes the work of Kahlenberg et al. (2014), who noted that public-schools tend to have stronger restrictions for teacher certification than other types of schools, like charter schools.

> With the differences in credentials, it is important to evaluate whether there is a difference and if student performance is affected. According to Traditional Principal 3, Again, it is not to minimize the benefits of having enough continuity to master teacher pedagogy, let me use that term master loosely because at my school these experts; these masters (highly qualified), our kids are still failing at a prolific rate.

In addition, all five public-school administrators took the alternate route into the profession of education, which was discussed in Chapter 4, and strongly believed that teachers who enter education as a second career have more to contribute in the classroom by means of bringing real-world experience into the classroom. Traditional Principal 1 stated

> I am not sure if traditional education courses in college are really preparing students who become teacher on what is going to happen in the classroom. However,

in my experience, teachers who are traditionally trained struggles to deliver instruction and manage classrooms. Alternate route teachers have been more colorful, flexible, and I guess because we come from and bring different areas of the workforce into the classroom.

One administrator pointed out one difference:

I will add this; I believe that teachers should do a demo lesson prior to being hired, that I feel very strongly. I started doing that a couple of years ago because you have some people who has a talent for interviewing and do very well with the interview committee and has strong references, and then you see a lesson and be like, oh my gosh. Where I had like my top three candidates and the one who was maybe the weaker one really had some foundation when it came to teaching, so I always do demo lessons. (Traditional Principal 4)

As indicated in the literature review, Rodosky (2015) highlighted that public-school teachers get higher basic pay when compared with their charter school counterparts. Charter Principal 1 shared that the pay scale for their charter school is comparable to the public-school district and then there are many amenities. The charter school had matched the public-school salary guide, and this is without CE's and CEA's. Amenities that Charter Principal 1 mentioned included sign-on bonuses for teachers and classroom supplies furnished by the school.

However, the public-school administrator all perceived that a charter school principal must hold a principal certification by the NJDOE, as indicated by Traditional Vice-Principal 2 "I cannot speak for charter, but I will presume it is the same." While inter-

viewing the charter school principal, it was revealed that a school leader or school princi-

pal in the charter school sector does not have to hold a principal or administrator certifi-

cation. Charter Principal 1 stated, "We can have a principal sitting in this seat without a

principal certification, I have it, but it scares me that someone can sit in this seat without

it and make strategic plans without having that knowledge." This theme interlinks with

procedural perspective, which will be correlated to another focal area of the study later in

this chapter. Add summary and synthesis to fully conclude the paragraph.

Theme 3 – Teacher retention.   This theme is aligned with teacher retention.

Overall, there was a consensus with all school principals interviewed that retention in

their school(s) was good. Only those teachers with specialty certification, such as bilin-

gual teachers, tended to have a higher turnover rate because the neighboring district pays

$10,000 more annually. A point that was touched on was tenure of teachers.

> On a bigger scale, I think it is the ability of charter schools to be not beholding to
>
> a teacher as long. It is a public-school, so I guess tenure rights still apply but they
>
> have more flexibility of staffing. They have the opportunity to look for and ac-
>
> quire new talent, whereas if I am promoted from a vice-principal position to a
>
> principal position, I am inheriting my staff oppose to self-selecting my staff, and
>
> those are some of the things that can impact academic success. (Traditional Prin-
>
> cipal 3)
>
> This resulted in a follow-up question being asked to further explore the mindset. I
>
> asked Traditional Principal 3 about the role of unions. Traditional Principal 3 re-
>
> sponded, Unions has pros and cons, I believe in unions and that they have to be

some protections for people. However, they can get in the way when it comes to making hard decisions, as budgets impact our ability to fund everybody. It was incumbent upon the district to have a better vetting process because if you have teachers in the district for 20 years who are no good, then that was somebody's fault. We have to do a better job of vetting who gets tenured and who makes what amount of money. I have seen in other districts where criteria are set so if a teacher wants to make a certain amount of money than they have to meet those criteria's or you will be stuck, unless you do x, y, and z. When you keep the quality up, but public-schools have been a victim of traditional Arcadian classroom thinking, so we victimize ourselves.

In 2002, it was reported that almost than half (46%) of charter, schools in the United States used pay-performance program (Roch et al., 2017). Meaning that a teacher's base pay or bonus incentive is aligned with student academic performance for that school year.

An aspect of the response that stood out was that the school principal did not only focus on the teacher, but also placed ownership on the school principals who are responsible for evaluating teachers, as well as the superintendent and school boards to do a better job of vetting and making decisions on tenure. Moreover, research has also shown that prior to new legislation that was enacted in 2012, "school districts could dismiss tenured teachers for "inefficiency," but the process for doing so took years and could often cost districts hundreds of thousands of dollars, leading many school districts to avoid the process all together," (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2015, p. 47). The enactment of the law in 2012,

Teacher Effectiveness and Accountability for the Children of New Jersey Act

(TEACHNJ), will be discussed more in Themes 5 and 6.

Research Question 2

How does accountability affect perception of performance in both public and

charter schools? Themes developed from this research questions includes (a) instructional

accountability, (b) administrator accountability and guidelines of academic accountabil-

ity, (c) duty of stakeholders, and a closing thought produced a theme of parental in-

volvement.

Theme 4 – Instructional accountability. Teachers' role in instructional ac-

countability is pivotal because they are the individuals who delivers classroom instruc-

tion. However, measurement of student performance is the central point of **t**his theme.

With that in mind, this theme reflects both topics and highlight how one affects the other.

During my interviews, all administrators expressed a satisfaction and contentment with

the current teacher evaluative tool being implemented in their district. There was a con-

sensus of approval from public and charter principals. Only one school district tool will

be identified by name since there are many school districts across the state that is current-

ly using this teacher evaluative tool.

> Traditional Principal 1 stated that the tool used was developed specifically for
>
> their district, in our district it is a fair tool to evaluate effectively teacher perfor-
>
> mance and student achievement. If you are a teacher and you understand your ru-
>
> bric, it should be almost impossible for you to fail as a teacher unless you are just
>
> not good at all.

Traditional Vice-Principal 2 supported this statement by sharing, "I like the tool our district uses, which is the framework for effective teaching." Traditional Principal 4 shared,

> I actually like our evaluation tool, we use the Charlotte Danielson and I think in comparison to other tools that we have used, I like the fact that it has a rubric. It does captivate what the teachers' performance is as well as what the students produce. So yes, I think it does to the best of its ability provided it is used in the correct manner.

Traditional Principal 5 was in support of TP4 analysis sharing, "we use Charlotte Danielson and I think that does a good job on what teachers should be able to do in terms of practice." Charter Principal 1 stated that the

> Evaluation tool consist[s] of a spectrum of six and within those six there are 10 subareas. It is a scale, there is no perfect teacher, but you fall within that scale. I can tell you right now with all the lead teachers we have in the school, they scale from effective to highly effective.

As noted by all the school principals interviewed, the teacher evaluation tool is effective and does a good job, however; I must echo TP3 that students are still not academically performing to the standards expected. Research has shared that, teacher practice is determined in using a state-approved teacher practice instrument that facilitates collection of evidence through classroom observations, (Blitz, Firestone, Kirova, Nordin, & Shcherbakov, 2014). Marder (2012) made a recommendation; at least one observation should have a pre-occurrence, which would include a number of observers.

One could ask if the evaluation tools are effective and reveals the information that is needed to make an informed decision of whether a teacher is performing effectively, and if so, then why are students not performing on state assessments and showing minimal growth. When exploring points of view on measurement of student performance, it was evident, that all school principals were in favor of an assessment tool yet public-school principals strongly expressed that there are some tweaking that must be considered for state testing to level out the playing field for all educational institutions.

For clarification purposes, students are measured by the school district and by a state standardized assessment. All administrators gave full approval of district assessments. The school assessment entails the public-school teacher setting SGO that is achievable by the end of that school year. Research found that teachers set the goals that students must achieve by end of school year, and goals should be aligned with the standards. Public-school teachers has an advantage by setting their own student growth objectives, whereas teachers in charter schools are more restricted because school principals or executive board of directors may determine their SGO's, (Butler, et. al., 2013).

The state assessment provides a SGP based on how students perform on state standardized assessments, which is NJSLA formerly referred to as PARCC. There were mixed reviews regarding state testing. I will share a few excerpts from the study participants in this section, as this topic will also be discussed in theme 7.

Traditional Principal 3 expressed, "if you are looking at the SGP, yes it really does, it is a very fair assessment that takes into account the starting point of each student in their class and it compares the teachers' effectiveness with other kids who had similar

starting points. The SGP yes is probably the best tool they developed with respect to measuring teacher effectiveness. Most of the other tools have significant flaws."

Traditional Principal 1,

"Achievement is awesome but for us at the end of the day, we must be growing students. That growth piece for me is very big." Charter Principal 1, "the report is neither good or bad it is how you interpret the information and how you highlight the snapshot of how the state sees your school, our school meet the targets." Traditional Principal 5, "I do not think the PARCC assessments is indicative of the success of our students because I personally see that we have kids that are very talented, on or above grade level and sometimes they do not pass the PARCC. One of the things I tell my teachers is that, kids need exposure to how the test is given in terms to the quality of the question. For example, if you teach them how to do fractions but never teach them how to apply those to real world situations, does not mean they are not on grade level it just that they have never been given those types of questions. We have many kids with testing anxiety, and parents get them tutoring but day of the test it is overwhelming and kids are crying, so how do they function. Then you have my special needs students who are very low, sometimes they get a score comparable to our average students but they are read too."

Student academic performance is a direct correlation to teacher effectiveness, and if teachers are performing and receiving effective evaluations of their instructional practice through classroom observations conducted by school principals, students should be

passing assessments or only showing annual growth, and annual growth does not auto-matically equate to grade level performance.

Themes 5 and 6 – Administrator accountability and guidelines of academic accountability. I have decided to discuss Theme 5 and 6 jointly, as both themes are in direct correlation to a key point of this research study, operational and performance accountability of public and charter schools. This may provide some prospective to the question asked at the end of Theme 4, what if any role does school administers contribute to this widespread of low performing school districts?

School administrators' accountability differs from district to district. In the two public-school districts where participants were interviewed, shared that their particular district created school principal rubrics with similar ratings to those of teachers. In addi-tion, one of the public-school districts implemented Principle Growth Objectives (PGO) along with a reality self-assessment at the start of each school year. Their superintendent or assistant superintendent, twice a year evaluate all public-school principals. Prior to the creation of the principal rubric, principal evaluations consisted of a walk through and re-sults of the state standardized test scores. School principals had mixed views as it pertains to accountability, appearing that the same protocol and level of accountability is not dis-seminated across the board of all administrators.

Traditional Principal 1,

"There is a couple of layers of this because we have a performance evaluation as

well, created by the same people who created the teacher evaluations, and it is

very specific. It can be a little huh, do not want to say unrealistic but it does put a

lot of the onus of students and parents on the administrators and we cannot control adults so I have issues with that portion of it. So the superintendent looks at the performance of the rubric evaluation and student achievement." Traditional Principal 3, "public-school administrators are evaluated one time per year by the central administrators they have minimal data points they can look at, test performance, which usually does not come back until after the evaluation is done. They can walk through but on a given moment it is only a snapshot data and through conversation."

Additional excerpts included, Traditional Principal 5 "there is really no accountability for school administrators. When I come in my building, no one checks to see if I am doing what I am supposed to do, which is probably not good. If I know to do, what I am supposed to do then I will do it but then when you have new principals and new leaders that do not necessarily know what they supposed to be doing and teachers influence them. Therefore, I inherited a school; teachers have been allowed to do things the way they do things and so now, I have to tell them, that is not what we supposed to do because as a district we do this."

The Charter Principal accountability differs from public-school principals' accountability. Charter Principal 1,

"I am at the board of trustees' disposal. They can call me at any given time, morning, noon, or night and I have to pick up the phone. If the president of the board has a question, she can ask me directly. I have to present every month the state of the school from student registrations, what is happening with the school, the

stakeholders; from new partners to old partners. How am I making sure we are seen in the city of the district, how are we seen in the state department, parent issues, nursing, health department, security, staffing, grievance, everything and it is presented every month and take about an hour to present." Charter Principal 1 then shared how she was evaluated when she was an administrator in a public-school. Charter Principal "as an administrator in the traditional public-school, I had an assistant superintendent that came and checked on me once a year. He came in and said how you are, I replied good, he responded okay and walked away."

Nevertheless, they all firmly agreed that self-accountability is more prevalent than any other accountability. Traditional Principal 1 expressed,

"I believe that there are some self-check issues that has to happen as well, considering the demographics of where we are, and type of students we are servicing; these are our children and I mean that literally and figuratively. Therefore, for me it is a little more than what students do on a state test. The fact that we can sit here, have this meeting in a school that is located in the heart of the southward, and not once have or heard a disruption. For me personally, whether students do well on the state test or not, do they feel comfortable, are they safe, do they behave in a way that we would expect a child to behave regardless of where they are in the world. So it is layers of it, what the superintendent expects of us, what the state expects from us, and then what we expect of ourselves; I think that is very important."

Traditional Principal 3 shared similar sentiments by stating,

"I am not a person that needs a lot of accountability because I am going to do what I do. I am not bragging but I believe in coming to work. To me a big part of accountability is showing up. I left my first job, a teacher in an urban public-school district, 10 years in, I left there with 80 sick days, and the district took half my sick days. I believe in coming to work and I like to win. I am competitive, I do not need anybody to tell me how we doing, I remember seeing the test scores and my school was in the bottom. I was hurt and said I will never let that happen again, we never made it to the top but we no longer been at the bottom, we are maybe third or fourth, which is still not my goal."

Traditional Principal 4 "I cannot speak for charter but I will presume it is the same. As an administrator, you are an instructional leader, nevertheless, as an instructional leader, you lead by example basically, and schools sometimes are little islands by themselves and at the end of the day, everything you do your staff looks at and it sets the tone and example for the building. Accountability, you have to establish a climate that is conducive for the students and a school that the students want to be in, and teachers want to teach in."

It was established in Theme 2: Teacher Retention, that school principals of both institutions are responsible for teacher evaluations. Since the change to the tenure law in 2012, with TEACHNJ Act, school administrators now have the ability to hold tenure teachers accountable to perform and deliver quality instruction in the classroom. "In a major change to educational policy, tenured teachers may lose their jobs after two con-

secutive years of ineffective evaluations. Teachers have 105 days after a school district

files tenure revocation papers with the state to appeal the decision. Under the new law,

arbitration will take place outside of the courts and costs will be capped at $7,500. In ad-

dition, the legal costs will be paid by the state. This reduction in administrative and fi-

nancial burdens is thought to be an incentive for school districts to pursue the dismissal

on ineffective teachers," (Callahan and Sadeghi, 2015, p. 47).

I compiled all the responsibilities that were identified through the interviews and

applicable with public and charter school principals who participated in this research

study. School principals of both educational institutions are responsible for the day-to-

day operations, maintenance, cleanliness, and upkeep of school facilities. School princi-

pals' monitors teacher attendance and ensuring that teachers comply with district man-

dates and academic initiatives. In addition, review teacher lesson plans to make sure that

they are aligned with the NJLSA. School principals deal with student discipline and pa-

rental concerns. In addition, they have to review and approve requested class and school

trips and initiatives, and are responsible for establishing an environment that is conducive

to learning and safe for all. In addition, school principals review HIB concerns (Harass-

ment, Intimidation and Bulling) and make the decision if it warrants an investigation by

the HIB school coordinator, and other monthly reports to complete. School principals are

instructional leaders and must support the push for effective and rigor instruction inside

the classroom. Moreover, to the stated responsibilities, dealing with Department of Child

Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) is the Charter Principal responsibility whereas in

the public-school districts, the teachers union handles all allegations of child abuse and neglect.

The literature produced minimal information as it pertains to administrator guidelines of academic accountability, deeming this study essential because a gap was established in the literature review. Responses from interviews appears to be in support of the literature review findings; leaving one speculating exactly what is a definitive role of a school principal? "Regardless of academic standards that need to be achieved by either charter schools or public-schools, principals and administrators have the responsibilities to ensure they create opportunities for achievement of these performances. They should also create a culture of high achievement among learners. More specifically, they are required to ensure schools meet the NJDOE recommendations for academic accountability, such as meeting the minimum school performance," (Fryer, 2017).

Traditional Principal 1 supported the literature by elaborating on the key areas that the school district and superintendent considers when assessing school principals performance, "there are two areas that the district is typically looking at; (1) student performance – what percentage of students in each grade level and content area are proficient?"

The support of Traditional Principal 5 echoed the following viewpoint. "Administrator practice can get a score but the SGP can impact your performance. I do not think the guidelines has to do anything with the performance, the performance is what it is. The state evaluates student performance only based on the state test. If we had someone regulating principals coming in and evaluating us on

a regular basis and not just for formality but in a consistent way, coming to the

school, walking through the school, looking at data, parental engagement, having

that conversation I think you will have better outcomes from principals. We are

supposed to be evaluated but more of compliance than outcome and if it was more

outcome driven it would be better for the kids. If no one is monitoring that all

schools should be doing readers workshop, guided reading, and should have the

same suspension and homework policy."

Theme 7 – Duty of stakeholders.   This theme will cover two key points of the

study, role of executive and traditional boards of education and procedural perspectives

as distinguished in Table 6. Fist lets define stakeholders from a business perception. Ac-

cording to the Business Dictionary (2019) "a person, group or organization that has inter-

est or concern in an organization. Stakeholders can affect or be affected by the organiza-

tion's actions, objectives and policies. Some examples of key stakeholders are creditors,

directors, employees, government (and its agencies), owners (shareholders), suppliers,

unions, and the community from which the business draws its resources. Not all stake-

holders are equal," (p. 1).

Therefore, a stakeholder can be a multitude of individuals but for this theme and

key points of the research study, I am going to focus on the stakeholders whose roles are

paramount as their function or dysfunction has the greatest impact on children, educa-

tional instruction, academic accountability, and overall performance. Those stakeholders

are the State Department of Education/State Superintendent, Executive and Traditional

Boards of Education, District Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Parents. Parental involvement will be discussed in the closing thought theme.

Table 6. *Distinctions of Executive Boards and Traditional Boards of Education*

Executive & Traditional Similarities	Executive	Traditional
1. Academic Excellence Elected 2. Approval of Hiring 3. Financial Accountability/Budget 4. Supervision of School Activities 5. Fundraising 6. Leadership 7. Creation of Educational Model that Is State Approved (Curriculum) 8. Determine Training & Professional Development 9. Implements aspects of Progressive Heritage with National Expectations 10. Oversee School Superintendent	1. Selected Position 2. Develop Policies 3. Procurement (food, technology, maintenance of facilities) 4. Broadening, procurement, & refining key resources required enhancing academic enterprise.	1. Majority 2. Negotiate with Unions 3. School Base Procurement 4. Open to public

As indicated by Glass and Welner (2011) overall function of Executive and School Board of Education in both charter schools and public-schools is to provide direction of success for the schools in various areas. Molnar (2013) added that they also create opportunities for students to develop skills in various disciplines and provide guidance on strategies in which, particular activities need to be performed according to the vision and mission of an institution.

In addition, both boards are charged with the responsibility of overseeing the school superintendent in a traditional and the school principal in a charter. Both individuals are charged with ensuring that execution of decisions made by the board are adhered

to within the educational institution, and making recommendations as to the needs of the school to the executive and board of education during monthly meetings.

After reading the roles and responsibilities, the first thing that comes to thought is how are they measured for accuracy and who is responsible for performing such measurement? According to the literature, both boards are under the State Superintendent whose main role is to determine whether the activities of the school comply with the requirements of the state. The State Superintendent determine whether the school is able to meet learning needs according to the standards set by the NJDOE.

Therefore, the State Superintendent/NJDOE oversees the boards of education, who oversees the school district superintendent whom all is charged with implementing efficient policies that enhance academic performance and utilization of resources within the institutions towards direction of success. Exactly what does this all mean; it reads as a generalization and not clearly stated measurable goals. When inquired about the roles and responsibilities of both boards of educations, here are the responses from the school principals. All public-school principals clearly stated they were not knowledgeable on the operation or function of executive boards:

CP1 "That is a great question. Both should operate pretty much the same. Therefore, the board of trustees govern our school with eight members and they have local control. Executive boards and school principal of the charter school is much more involved. The executive board can manipulate the money easier than a traditional board. For example, if there is a child who needs a one-on-one then we can manipulate the money to pay

for a one-on-one aide. If a teacher need supplies, we can manipulate the money to purchase the supplies."

TP1 "I am not familiar at all with Executive Boards of charter schools. Traditional boards of education role is too simply approve or deny proposals coming from the superintendents of school and requests by specific schools in the district. The superintendent answers to the school board and the administrators answer to the superintendent."

TVP2 "I do not know anything about Executive Boards of charter schools. However, the traditional boards of education approve or deny proposals made by the Superintendent. The superintendent answers to the school board and the administrators' answers to the superintendent."

TP3 "I cannot speak to executive boards but I can speak to traditional boards of education to some extent. They are expected to develop and drive policies in support of district goals. They should interact without prejudice or politics."

TP4 "Considering that, this is a public-school district I am not familiar with the role of an executive board. I just know of a traditional board of education obviously follows Roberts Rules of Order and I know that the board of education is voted on by the community, they run for their office, have a slate, and terms that they have to work for. The board of education obviously makes many decisions when it comes to everything in the school district. They work very closely with the superintendent and assistant superintendent. The superintendent reports to the board of education and I report to the superintendent versus me reporting to the board of education."

TP5 "I do not know anything about executive boards. Traditional board of education major role is to hire a superintendent and oversee policies in the district. They manage and oversee the budget and meet with the superintendent to make sure that the district is operating smoothly. Responsible for approving major spending in district, as well as all hiring. The superintendent oversees the district operations, the board oversees the superintendent to make sure all the policies, and procedures that have been outlined for the district are being followed."

It is evident by the responses; no detailed descriptive information as it pertains to the traditional boards of education was provided. There was a little more insight provided by the charter school principal for the role of an executive board. It is also evident that the functions of similarities outweighs the differences. Moreover, the similarities are the core fundamentals that will dictate student achievement and success of an educational setting. The core fundamentals dictates the process in forming beneficial policies and enhances academic performance. Yet, these primary stakeholders are the ones who directs and controls the success of every component and individual within an educational institution but the roles and responsibilities when read by the public appears vague with no clear implication on how and what must be conducted in order to guide an educational institution towards direction of success.

When I inquired with the school principals about whether a board of education should be elected or appointed and should the boards have an oversight committee, there were interesting mixed reviews. Some principals believed that an appointed board would be effective based on how it was conducted, sharing that normally appointed boards are

political base and the mayor assigns all their inside people. However, if the appointed process is facilitated as a candidate applying for a position, it may work. The applicant will complete an application and go through an interview process. Candidates should have experience in an area that will contribute to education, promote classroom instruction, and student academic performance. Overall, all the responses were intriguing.

Traditional Principal 1 shared,

"I love the question, and I want to say elected. In my experience often times those who is elected still do not have enough information on the process of teaching, educating, and learning. Even if people vote for them, it is like voting for the lesser of two evils. In event of appointment, it seems like people are appointed for political reasons, so that a specific agenda can be moved so I put the right people in place so I can do what I need to do. Therefore, I would have to go the way that an elected official for the board of education will be better but at times, I have seen that they still do not have enough information on what teaching and learning requires." TVP2 specified, "I would say elected; however, those who are elected could be because of their popularity in the community and not necessarily how much they know in the educational field."

CP1 articulated, "That is a good question; I have a bipartisan conversation in my head. There is always power in election. I always advocated for people to vote, make a decision, power in people coming together and accountability. I am always fearful of people making the wrong decision because they do not have the background of knowledge. People not really understanding of what a charter school is and if you speak

louder you message is true versus if you do not speak at all, than you are not speaking truth. I would like to appoint and just because they do not speak, I know that person has a lot of wisdom. Therefore, I am really split on this question."

TP3, response was thought-provoking, "the easy answer is it depends; the drawbacks are easier to point out if it is simply a popularity vote, which many elected boards are it does not have to reflect qualifications, skills, backgrounds, or value add of the individual member that is elected. Appointed boards have potential to be more effective because there can be a different vetting process for identifying more candidates that are qualified but that can also be a political pitfall."

Traditional Principal 4 response was appealing,

"I think that when you are elected you have to run for your position and allows the community to get involved, because at the end of the day we pay property taxes, which goes towards the school budget. I do not know if they are going to be more effective as for as their productivity and commitment. I do think that when the community elects you it takes out the political, favoritism, nepotism, whatever you want to call it, which rather happens a lot when the politics comes into play as oppose to why you are doing it. So if you are elected, it is fair and square through polling, votes, and so on and it minimizes the politics, it does not take it out the ball park, just minimizes it because it still happens to a degree because now the mayor is not selecting the people that they want or voicing who is their favorite."

Traditional Principal 5 response was lengthy but provided great insight and information on elected and appointed boards of education. It further offered an inside view of how an appointed board operates.

"I live in a district to where they are appointed and here the district where I work they are elected. I think that you just need good people, knowledgeable people on the board. The good thing for an appointed board where I live is that there is an application process. So people who have an interest in the board, they apply and based on their experiences, like for example we have a person with a special education background on the board, a person with a finance background, general education background, legal background; it is well rounded group of people with a knowledge base. It can also be bad if it is appointed because then it is too much power with one person because then that means that the Mayor has too much control if they are appointing things, which means you get less of what the people may want because the control is with one person. If you have an elected board, the community elects them. However, sometimes you are not elected people with the knowledge base and may be just popularity. I like the idea of appointed board if you are going to have people from a variety areas such as parent, community member, because having oversight of a district is a big job. You do not need just Joe Schmo who does not have any educational base or knowledge on laws, governance, and those things making these decisions. Therefore, if you have someone in accounting, finance, because the large part of the board is approving the budget, you have to know have someone that know what that looks like and be able to

go through it. Therefore, a finance person on the board would be able to vet that out and make sense of the information for the remainder of the board. To have an individual run for the board for influence and power without knowledge than you are not making an informed decision. I like the idea of appointed if it is a process like my town I live in where people applies and placed based on expertise to contribute to the needs. Some people want to be on the board to have influence and some people want to be on the board to make a difference, there is a lot of money in the board. There should be a criteria for being on the board and leave about two-three spots for the Joe Schmos."

School principals had mixed viewpoints of an oversight committee. Some principals believe it may generate further dysfunction and increase complication of the presently unspecified clear roles. One school principal believed that if there was an oversight committee, it should be comprised of individuals to oversee and ensure that the school board of education were upholding their responsibilities without politics and personality clashes influencing their decision-making.

TVP2 stated, "I do not agree with an oversight committee, I would say no for an oversight committee." Whereas, TP1 was in favor of an oversight committee and expressed the following,

"I think the oversight committee should consist of people who have spent time and have experience in the classroom with students. Oversight committee job should be to question, why would the district want to make a move like this and how would it benefit students? Oversight committee can be of people who have

experience with teaching and learning, just kind of be the checks and balances for the school board; I think that would be powerful." TP4 felt that "it would further complicate things to be honest. A board of education is not a paid position; they do not get a salary. They work free and work many hours after their full-time jobs on behalf of a school district. So to have an oversight committee, it would just be a whole group of governing bodies who are just going to add and complicate sometimes the politics that is already involved in a board of education." TP3 expressed that "hiring and everything can become political. I have seen where the most qualified candidate or the better prepared candidate does not get the opportunity to help a district move forward." However, the CP1 stated that there was an oversight committee "a non-for profit organization appointed by the Governor to ensure that there is equity, voice, and the process is transparent and clear for both charter and public-schools to have voices at both ends, and the selection process."

I sent an email to all traditional school principals inquiring if anyone was familiar with the non-profit organization appointed by the New Jersey Governor, and all responded that they have never heard of the non-for-profit organization. This prompted me to investigate this organization further to gain an understanding of its function in overseeing and governing charter and public-schools. Research revealed that the Governor did not appoint the organization, which is an independent non-profit dedicated to coordinating and focusing ideas, people, and resources on the efficient and effective delivery of a quality public education to all children and accountability for student success across multiple

stakeholders. To protect the confidentiality of the school district, I cannot identify the organization by name.

TP5 contributed an interesting viewpoint,

"I believe that the oversight committee are making sure that the type of people appointed to the boards are carrying out their roles as they should be, and there is no ethic violations. The board should maintain their oversight but boards are always controversial and with drama, so there is that other layer. There is another layer right now if boards are not functioning, ethics violation, and appeal to the Commissioner of Education but if there was another layer maybe at the County level where they are overseen then they can regulate them. Just to make sure that the board is operating, if there is an issue, hold a meeting and avoid the chaos. Right now, there is chaos in our district, and that committee would be able to step in and say, what is going on?"

There was an abundance of information shared as it relates to the stakeholders' roles and responsibilities in promoting student academic performance, and the benefits of having an oversight committee on the local level. I will discuss and reflect on this information further in the conclusion part of this chapter.

Closing Thought Theme – Parental Involvement.   All participants were asked a closing thought question, which was if you could highlight one fundamental difference between charter and public-schools that drives student academic success, what would it be? Once the responses were inputted into the database for coding, the overarching theme that generated was parental involvement. All the public-school principals adamantly identified parental involvement and the charter principal stated accountability and resources. Not to minimize the school principals viewpoints, full interview statements are being shared.

Traditional Principal 1 voiced that,

> "The demand on parents to participate in their child's experience. You can force parents and parents comes with the expectation that I will make sure that my child is in uniform, I will come to all of the meetings, you have to do it if you are going to a charter school; they must do it. Here in traditional public-schools, we cook, dance, sing, give out raffles, Rita's Water Ice, Dunkin Donuts; we have a meeting now, Monday mornings, coffee and donuts and these are the things we do to entice parents to come in. We have to perform to get parents to come in and our numbers are still terrible and we are very personable in this school, they can pop-up, come talk to us, touch us, and only three parents attended our budget meeting out of 504 kids. So speaking of a "whip", that is why I think that in school districts they must be some workshopping for parents, why do someone need to force you to do what you need to do as a parent? See in the charter

school I want my baby to go there, and if they do not wear the uniform,

they can kick my child out so I will do it because there is a consequence.

That is the wrong reason to do the right thing; some work has to be done.

So when we can see student growth, walk the hallways, you seen the cam-

eras during the interview-nothing; so for me in my heart that is awesome."

Traditional Vice-Principal 2 echoed parallel views,

"We had a budget meeting two weeks ago, and only three parents attend-

ed. The principal sent letter, flyers, and automated calls went out to par-

ents consistently until the night before the meeting saying, come out see

hear how the money is being spent and only three parents attended. Last

year, I was talking to a parent about something and she has a child here

and a child at the charter. She informed me that she could not make my

meeting because she has to attend a meeting at the charter. I asked her

what makes her want to go to the meeting at the charter oppose to the tra-

ditional public, and parent replied that they make us and she has to go, she

does not have a choice. So that "whip" of them saying you have to do this

and that, parents make sure they do it. They wear the uniform every day,

certain kind of shoes but here in traditional public we get, "oh we have to

wash it."

However Charter Principal 1 voiced,

"Accountability – we are more accountability than anybody would imag-

ine. When I worked at a district school, I just worked. When I am here, I

have to do my job and document it well because someone is going to ask. It is definitely more accountability as a charter administrator than a traditional public administrator. We have a social-emotional curriculum. We have been able to outsource our counseling; we have 50+ students receiving professional counseling throughout the day here at the school by collaborating with a neighboring local organization. For the first time in five years, we have zero homicidal and suicidal ideations. We have partnerships with a university that wants to team with teachers to provide additional support with their seniors for student teaching. Another university just contacted me to provide a sealant program, where there student dentists would provide the services for children teeth free. We have a partnership with an art organization providing services. We need to keep the community small and strong to create taxpayers and not tax takers."

Traditional Principal 3, closing thoughts aligned with their fellow traditional school principals.

"I am not going to answer that directly and I know I am being a little effusive but I am going to speak to some points. I highlighted how charter schools can put kids out. In our area, charter schools are able to have longer school days and many are non-unionized so they are running to 5:30-6:00 p.m. Parents who are working parents that need aftercare, it works for them. It does not matter if the school is better or not, it just fits my work schedule. That time can be used for tutoring, and if student is low-

performing or special needs, they can be selective with student enrolment. Typically, parents who choose to go the charter school route are looking for a better and many times a safer educational environment. Many times the optics alone, they have better school uniform with blazers, nice building and, parents believe they are better oppose to students walking to traditional public-school in jeans and a t-shirt. Parent feel that when they child wakes up and get dress for school in their blazer uniforms, their child knows school is important oppose to students not in uniform, different optic eye. There are some small things that can affect student academic success."

Traditional Principal 4, believed that there were no fundamental difference by sharing,

"Based on what I know, I am going to say no for a fundamental difference, because a charter school is a public-school because the money from our school budget goes to the charter schools. I think the only difference and what parents sometimes see, they think it is a magic bullet, especially if it is a charter school that is new and has not been established for a long time. We have had charter schools closed down, sometimes their limited in resources or they may not have highly qualified staff. I think that it is not always full proof and at the end of the day they still have to follow a curriculum, have teachers with certificates, management of student behaviors, rules and so forth. It would be interesting to see what the data would say

about charter and public-schools academically. I personally do not believe
in pushing charter over public-schools, so is that I work at a public-school.
I think you have to follow the same whether you are a charter or public."

Traditional Principal 5 was in agreement with the majority of the traditional
school principals by expressing,

"The difference is the parents choose to send their children to charter
schools. With the guidelines of the charter schools, and how they have it
built into their charter parents are required to adhere and we do not have
that ability in the traditional public-school. If it says in their charter that
kids will wear uniform, stay to 4:00 p.m., receive mandatory extra tutor-
ing; a parent cannot say or refuse otherwise they can be put out. Because
in the charter it says you agree to do X, Y, Z and that is the only way you
can be kicked out. You cannot be kicked out if you are a behavior problem
or failing, even though they try to because I had many parents that comes
here and I send them back saying nope they cannot kick you out. The par-
ents are surprised and I tell them they are not a private school so go right
back."

Parental involvement in a child's education is paramount and can contribute to
increasing the child's achievement and moving towards closing the overall student aca-
demic gap. In addition, parents are stakeholders and their involvement can become the
impetus for quality education.

"Much research exists about the importance of parent involvement in education. The research overwhelmingly indicates that parent involvement not only positively affects student achievement, it contributes to higher quality education and better performance of schools overall. Yet both schools and parents struggle with how to make that involvement happen. The U.S. Department of Education reports that the rate of parent involvement drops to 55 percent by the time children reach age 14, and it continues to drop as children progress through high school," (Hinkle 2017).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that grounded this study was Theory of Action by Talcott Parsons (1978) an American theorist. It channeled the understanding of the various factors that contributes to school principals being effective and efficient in their roles as school leaders.

The application of theory of action to pulverize the study empirically demonstrated the core role of school principals in promoting academic performance. The key insight to theory of action is the actions that are recommended in order to promote the performance of duties and tasks in a responsible and accountable manner. The relevance of this theory in academic accountability among charter and public-school principals in New Jersey is that it provides specific actions and strategies of complying with various aspects of accountability ranging from quality education services and reporting of students' performance based on the requirements of the regulatory agencies.

Although theory of action is not new to the profession of education, no research was established that utilized this theory to study the roles of school principals in academic accountability. The chief theoretical propositions to theory of action on principals is that it determines actions that they need to take so that students and teachers are managed effectively. In addition, Peng et al. (2014) noted that it involves determining policies and structures of accountability, teacher recruitment, compensation, and management of facilities within an institution, which ensures activities of a learning institution, are enhanced.

The theory of action is implemented in evaluations of credentials as it can involve providing teachers with a comparable compensation as a motivator to teach students to achieve the learning needs of students. However, research revealed that students are not performing academically and showing minimal growth from year to year, yet the starting salary for a novice teacher appears respectable. Previous research revealed that most public-schools have a clear salary schedule that is paid to the teachers based on the level of experience in teaching and the level of qualification in various fields. Only few charter schools use payment schedule, the charter school that participated in this study utilizes the same salary scale that the public-school district uses. As noted in the literature review, the highest paid teacher in a charter school earns an average of $ 46,314 lower than that of a public-school teacher, which is approximately $ 48,718 per annum.

Understanding that student academic performance is not improving at the rate expected, theory of action with teacher retention is performance base pay. Teachers who has contributed to student performance and producing results should be compensated; believing that this can become a motivating factor for teachers to provide quality instruc-

tion. Theory of action with instructional accountability is significant with teacher evaluations, as it will govern the focus areas where actions are needed to improve the academic performance. In order for this to be accomplished, the evaluative tool must be effective with identifying the instructional and teacher practice and providing effective feedback to correct and strengthen the areas needing the most improvement.

It was stated previously that school principals according to the theory of action is responsible for determining policy, structures of accountability, teacher recruitment, compensation, management of facilities, and ensuring that activities of learning are enriched. School principals are expected to determine what is not practicable so that learning and academic performances improves. For instance, principals are responsible for ensuring that teachers perform their duties in accordance with the goals, vision, and missions of their learning institutions. Thus, theory of action provides insight regarding the actions that are recommended in order to promote the performance of duties and tasks in a responsible and accountable manner. The relevance of this theory in academic accountability among charter school and public-school principals in New Jersey is that it provides specific actions and strategies of complying with various aspects of accountability ranging from quality education services and reporting of students' performance based on the requirements of the regulatory agencies. Furthermore, according to the theory of action school principals are charged to provide feedback that targets cooperation from the key stakeholders to function as a whole body. Based on the theory of action, administrator accountability and guidelines for accountability weighs heavily on school principals,

who should receive the support of the stakeholders so that the body can function as one unit.

In accordance with the theory of action, school principals' purpose contradicts the verbal reports received by all the school principals in this study. No information was shared or identified by any of the study participants as having a role or responsibility in the integral areas as it pertains to managing the school system and incorporating structure in the institutional organization. There was a considerable amount of vagueness in providing a clear understanding and defined role of a school principal as it pertains to academic accountability. It appears that school principals are accountable for the results of student academic performance but not accountable for the implementation of resources, programs, professional development, and hands on modeling that may be needed to contribute to student academic performance.

Theory of action provided the lens through which this study analyzed the administrative roles and responsibilities of school principals with a view to establish whether they aligned to academic accountability. The concerns discussed in chapter 4 and 5 are linked to the research questions of this study, which the participants answered candidly and vehemently. As a result, the theory of action that grounded this study has contributed to the understanding of policy and administration by providing the essence of school principals within an educational institution.

Limitations of Study

This study offered valuable in-depth data delineating the current and lived experiences of school principals within the selected state of New Jersey. The study does have

some limitations. This study was limited to two districts in the state of New Jersey, with a small number of participants. I was only able to obtain half of the population size predicted, and out of the six participants, there was only one charter school principal. Finally, this study relied solely on the self-reporting of roles, responsibilities, and practices by the school principals themselves, oral responses can often be partial and were treated as such. Therefore, social desirability was a limitation of the study due to the absence of perspectives from other stakeholders on the academic accountability charged against school principals. Since obtaining sound generalizability requires data from a large population size in order to make predictions and create themes based on recurring and similar experiences, a limitation to generalizability existed due to having a small population size of one charter school principal in the study. Therefore, I cannot conclude that the findings of this study is applicable to the broader population of charter schools.

Recommendations

Historically in education, the premise of failing schools that are not meeting the proficiency and academic growth standards in academics has been the center of educators and policymakers for transforming schools and restructuring goals. The state standardize assessments weighed heavily on the perceptions of school principals and student achievement. Results of state testing supports and justifies decisions made by stakeholders who are the policymakers of educational reform. This research study has recognized that school principals wear many hats with the least amount of time being instructional leaders to guide and mold teachers. So I asked, does test results offer an accurate and im-

partial perception of school principals' performance? Recommendations made are based solely on the data that was collected and coded.

I recommend that no student should be excluded from any public-school educational institution receiving public dollars and credentials for administrators and teachers should be standard for all educational institutions who receive public funding. In addition, public-school administrators should be provided a vice-principal for supplementary support regardless of the total student population. Only one of the four public-schools that participated in this study had a vice principal, and the total student population for the other schools were 372, 375, and 600 students.

In addition, I recommend that policymakers and school districts place a greater emphasis on teacher evaluative tools. Even though all school principals were in favor of their teacher evaluative tool being used, one must question its effectiveness, as schools continues to struggle academically. Moreover, a study was conducted in 2015 focusing on teacher perceptions on teacher evaluations in New Jersey. Findings of the study revealed that, "almost half the teachers indicated that formal evaluations did not lead to improvements in their classroom. Teacher observations are conducted more frequently, but the observation value has not improved. The frequent observations are more rigid, following a script," (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2015, p. 56).

It is also recommended that more emphasis be placed on classroom and districtwide assessments when measuring student growth and evaluating student overall academic performance instead of being solely based on end of the year state standardize tests. Students are administered daily classroom assessments, and quarterly district as-

sessments that stakeholders should take into consideration when measuring teachers and school principals' performance.

Areas for Future Research

As the student performance academic gap increases the regulatory agents continues to place more demands on academic accountability amongst school principals to improve student performance. Stakeholders continue to develop and restructure policies to transform schools in need of improvement based on student standardize test scores. It is suggested that future studies be piloted to examine the articulated roles of school principals in relation to the literature and identified inconsistencies to have better understanding academic accountability.

1. Replication of this study with a larger sample population of charter and public-school principals that include more districts.

2. This study was piloted in low socioeconomic urban school districts. It would be interesting to conduct the same study with school principals in high socioeconomic and rural school districts.

3. A mixed-methods study inclusive of the stakeholders identified in this study to obtain a better understanding and gather additional data of their role and responsibility in student academic performance.

4. Research should be conducted on school boards of education to investigate if the function and practices promote or hinder educational improvement and student academic growth. In addition, to gain an understanding of their oversight and accountability measures of their role and responsibilities to promote education.

School principals' role in student achievement and academic accountability remains the ultimate challenge in school reform as the school systems continues to provide the groundwork for continual educational research and support the need of unending policy assessment.

Implications for Social Change

The findings of this study has the potential to create positive social change by gaining a better understanding and an in-depth view of academic accountability amongst school principals allows improved educational policies to be enacted. School districts and policymakers should not place the burden of academic accountability exclusively on school principals. This research study is capable of raising awareness on the many factors that contribute to student academic performance and all who should be held accountable for student academics. Finding contributes to positive social change by highlighting the need for regulatory agencies to identify and set clear guidelines of accountability, implement effective monitoring and measuring tools of accountability, and hold all stakeholders accountable for promoting student academic performance and achievement.

The themes that emerged from this study highlighted the additional efforts that need to be made by all stakeholders involved in the educational academic accountability. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to the boards of education, state and local governments, district superintendents, school principals, and parents. This list should be the start of meaningful collaborations in an effort to combat this phenomenon of failing school districts and poor student academic performance.

Based on the perspective of the participants in this study; I conclude that more needs to be done to develop clearly stated roles that provide school principals the resources needed to promote improved student academic performance. An eclectic, well rounded, and diverse board of education that can guide the school district towards academic success. Furthermore, all educational institutions that receive public funding should be required to adhere to state regulations. Stakeholders should increase parental accountability and consider mandating parental involvement by providing parent workshops, and informing parents' that their involvement benefits their child, the school, and themselves. To pilot this idea, perhaps the state can start with parents who receives state funding for their child. After all, in order to have impartial opportunities to be competitive both educational institutions should be provided with equal resources and regulated to the same policies and procedures by the regulating bodies.

State testing should not be one fit for all and should align to the individual needs of the student. TP3 expressed the following sentiment,

"The only unfair part to me is the idea that, my school particularly has a lot of students who are English Language Learners (ELL). After one year the state expectation is that students can take the test in their non-dominant language, English, which is not necessarily a measure of what students knows and understand. There is a push to rush and learn academic English enough to pass a test versus letting kids learn and mature at a more developmentally appropriate pace. Schools are accountable for students' ability to perform academic tasks and demands in a language other than their own. The one drawback is making children who are not

Native English speakers take a test that is not in their first language and then hold the schools accountable."

I asked a follow-up question to TP3, is this comparable to students that are classified?

"I think we want to be careful not to lump all classified students together, some are appropriate for the assessment and some just are not. You have some of the more severely cognitively impaired; certainly, you cannot hold the same expectations as you would kids who are mildly cognitively challenged or not severely just a little bit behind for whatever reason to interrupt their education. I am cautious of placing restrictions and providing a one-fit all to students with diverse needs. The state assessment does just that by not having a different set of expectations for students receiving resource and pull-out services, in class support services, and those students needing services in a self-contained program because all their educational needs are different. Certainly if a student in the self-contained program think they are ready to take the state assessment, then give it to them, do not hold them back."

Lastly, state testing results should be openly reported to the public especially if the educational institution receives public funding. TP1 stated,

"There should not be differences in the guidelines but achieving those academic performances there are differences. Even though charter schools are considered public-schools when the traditional public-schools receives their testing data from the state, it does not include the charter schools data and achievement scores.

Right before state testing comes, we get a whole influx of students from the char-

ter schools; because now they know they do not want those scores to be on their

jackets so they send them to the public-schools. I do not think it is fair. There is

not cut-off date for state testing results but there is a cut-off date of October 15. It

is strategic; everyone knows once October 15 hits, and whoever you have you

have."

In attempts to collect some data on the charter schools since there was only one

participant, I attempted to retrieve the school report card data from the state website.

There were 17 charter schools between the two school districts, and only one charter

school report card was conveyed on the state website.

All these suggestions could be implemented with a theory of action approach that

could assist with a smooth transition and implementation of the necessary strategies to

address this phenomenon. It explains the strategy that can be used to change the man-

agement system of an organization from the present management system to the desired

management system. Theory of action identifies the manner in which activities in an or-

ganization are dependent on particular actions so that overall improvement is achieved by

applying different policies in different departments, (Stichweh, 2000). In addition, Wright

(2017) has interpreted the theory of action through the vision of the effective monitoring

of teaching activities in a serious manner, it is possible for teachers to teach with a high

level of commitment, and it is possible for students to achieve high academic perfor-

mance.

Conclusion

This research study was designed to examine academic accountability among charter and public-school principals. As student, performance continues to decline and increase accountability is placed on school principals. I conducted this study with the intent of gaining an understanding of academic accountability among charter and public-school principals. Seven themes emerged from the data: (a) school-choice, (b) evaluation of credentials, (c) teacher retention, (e) instructional accountability, (f) administrator accountability & guidelines of academic accountability, (g) duty of stakeholders, and the closing thought produced a theme of parental involvement.

When assessing research question one, the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in both educational institutions, the research found that there is no clear defined role. With the many responsibilities and different hats worn, it appeared that the least amount of a school principal's time during the day was being an instructional leader to support effective classroom instruction and teacher guidance.

When assessing research question two, how does accountability affect perception of performance in both public and charter schools, school principals are considered the head of their facility. School principals set the tone and atmosphere of the culture. If a school does not fare well on state standardize tests, the perception is school principals are not effective in their leadership role. I must support, that this perception is unfair and is definitely inaccurate as research exposed several factors that contributes to student academic performance and other stakeholders who also have onus of academic accountability.

One theme that was not developed from the data but is an essential aspect of teacher effectiveness is professional development. Theory of action states that, if teachers are provided with the relevant coaching and professional development, resulting in teachers replicating what they were taught by teaching quality skills, and students will demonstrate understanding of the contents of the subjects by performing well in their studies. According to research, "teachers want more professional development training and has raised concerns regarding lack of resources, whereas a key component of ACHIEVE NJ; was to align professional development opportunities with observed areas of needs. We also need to remember that effective professional development opportunities are contingent upon sufficient financial resources and there is a genuine concern that the funding available to develop high quality teachers is insufficient," (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2015, p.56-57).

School principals provided thought provoking responses, which created additional questions, what is causing such a widespread of low performing school districts and why are they predominately in urban communities? All stakeholders in education must accept that school reform requires a rededication of their commitment to reorganize and facilitate school reform with a well-organized strategic collaborative plan that will stimulate student academic performance and achievement because what is being done has not produced or proven successful. I posits that with school reform, those individuals in the trenches and providing direct services must be involved in decision-making process to begin a thorough assessment of a policy analysis.

Through partnership of stakeholders, a strategic plan can be developed to ratify a different action plan that incorporates input from all stakeholders. By considering the results of this case study in conjunction with the data provided in this study, many challenges continue to be present and highly needed in educational reform. Theory of Action is a systems theory, which requires training and development for staff as the basis for the supervision and accountability.

The study found that academic accountability goes beyond school principals and that school principals spend the least amount of time as instructional leaders. School principals are in need of vital support and resources to serve as instructional leaders and wear the many hats that is required to be effective to students, parents, and teachers. When assessing next steps, I propose that stakeholders and others invested in improving public education and student academic performance to ask themselves two basic but complex questions: Whatever happened to the days when the system was designed for teachers to teach children to learn? How did public education become a corporate entity based on teaching to a state standardize test?

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Appendix A: Email to Informal Network of School Administrators

███████████, Operational Manager (██████ Charter School)

To: ███████████, Principal (██████ Public School)

To: ███████████, Principal (█████ Public School)

To: █████████, Executive Director (█████ Charter School Foundation)

Re: Soliciting Participants for Research Study

Good morning ██████████

I hope all is well and thank you for taking the time to communicate with me about my research study. Your professional insight into the benefits of my study to the educational profession was encouraging and reassuring that this research is essential.

Per our conversation, please find attached a description of the research study, Accountability among Charter and Public-School Principals, along with additional relevant information. I am truly grateful for your support in assisting me to solicit participants for my research study.

If you are in need of any further information or have questions pertaining to the materials provided, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Once more, please know that I am truly appreciative for your support!

Nicole Goodman, MSW
Certified School Social Worker
Walden University Doctoral Candidate

Appendix B: Participant Recruitment Flyer

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Charter and Public-School Administrators

Purpose: Obtain clarity and understanding of academic accountability protocols amongst public and charter schools, and if there are any impact on student academic performance.

Eligibility: Participants must meet the following qualifications: Participants must meet the administrator/school leadership requirements as mandated by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE).

Currently serving in a school leadership role as an administrator, principal, vice principal, lead educator, executive director, or operational manager. Must be employed in the field of education for a minimum of 5 years or retired within the last 3 years.

Participants must have performed in the role of a school leader for at least three years at the time of study.

Benefits: Refocusing on implementing accountability policies allowing school administrators to place emphasis on student success and developing societal contributors in various careers and professions.

Compensation: $15.00 Gift Card

Contact: Nicole Goodman,
Walden University Doctoral Candidate

ADMINISTRATORS MUST AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING TERMS:

Complete an in person 45-60 minute interview

Agree to Audiotape

Agree to a one time follow-up interview if needed

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW:

Convenient for participant

GAURANTEES:

100% Anonymity

STRICTLY Voluntarily

Participant identity is STRICTLY Confidential

All Participants are protected!

Appendix C: Synopsis of Study

Description of the Study

Accountability has become increasingly important in both public and charter schools and has had the most critical effect on these schools' policies and schooling practices and has picked up an extensive variety of support among policymakers with respect to the expanding worry about failing state-funded schools. Today's principals are tasked with the need to adhere to and provide an account of all the school policies and practices to the public.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this multiple case study will be to establish the role of school principals in the promotion of academic accountability in both public and charter schools and how this affects academic performance. The findings from this multiple case study of academic accountability among public and charter school principals in the state of New Jersey will shed light on the role of school principals in ensuring academic accountability and the role of leaders in promoting and/or deterring school performance. The findings will also highlight any existing differences in the academic guidelines for the two types of schools and their promotion of accountability and any existing differences within the guidelines that may promote/bar accountability and their impact on academic performance.

Procedures

The study will employ a qualitative research approach using a case study research design. The study involves charter and public-schools in New Jersey, a multiple case

study approach will be used. The sample will comprise of a pool of principals that will comprise of leaders and administrators involved in accountability in public and charter schools in New Jersey, six from each school. I conducted a face-to-face semi structured interview with 10 open-ended questions so that the principals can provide a further and in-depth explanation to their responses. The data will be analysed through coding of the responses, identification of any common phrases, patterns, themes, and relationships including any differences in the responses. The data will also be recorded, analysed and tracked using Dedoose.

Appendix D: Definition of Terms Handout

Authorizers: These organizations determine whether an institution is complying with the requirements for operation of a charter school or a public-school in various states in the United States. Authorizers have more of an impact on charter schools, but they also affect the operation of public-schools.

Boards of Directors: A group of people who manage or direct a company or organization. These professionals involved in making policies that affect the operations of charter schools. They determine the manner in which resources should be used in day-to-day activities.

Certification: This refers to the professional qualifications that teachers in public and charter schools have to acquire in order to be authorized to teach particular subjects. Teachers in public-schools have different forms of certification from those charter schools.

Charter Schools: These public-schools operate independently under the school boards and monitored by the respective state departments of education

Grading Criteria: This is the criteria followed during student assessment, such as the criteria used to provide grades in academic settings. In most public-schools, grading is done by providing students with grades ranging from A+ to F. However, the grading criteria may vary from one learning institution to another.

Operations: Activities that take place on a daily basis in public-schools and charter schools in compliance with the requirements of the accrediting institutions. School

principals and Boards of Directors have the responsibility to ensure they perform monitoring tasks aimed at creating an environment that facilitates academic accountability.

Public-schools: They include schools that have been assigned to principals by the corresponding states so that they can comply with the school mandates. They may constitute primarily of secondary schools that operate under the operation of a local education agency (LEA).

Remuneration: These include the payments provided to teachers and instructors in public-schools and charter schools in terms of a specified condition, such as the level of experience and the technicality of subjects taught, level of degree, and experience of teachers.

School Board of Education: A group of individuals responsible for providing direction in which policies of a learning institution should take as well as cooperating with principals in order to achieve the aspects of academic accountability.

Training: The requirements that educators have to undergo in order to attain the competence in teaching a particular subject. The role of training is to promote the acquisition of skills required to facilitate the provision of instruction. The role of teachers is to educate learners in a manner that complies with the requirements of the regulatory agencies.

Working Conditions: Learning takes place and have been created by schools for providing support for teaching activities in these environments. Principals and leaders have the duty to create a positive working environment for learners and teachers.

Appendix E: Semi structured Interview Questions

1. What are the major roles of executive boards and traditional board of education, as well as their similarities and differences in relation to procedure and policy?

2. Do you feel that board of education members are more effective if they are appointed or elected, or there should be an oversight committee for either structure of a board of education, if so why?

3. What role and authority should the oversight committee have as it relates to appointments, budgeting, hiring, disciplinary issues, negotiation of contracts, and selection of curriculums?

4. Are instruments and methods used to measure student performance considered effective? If so, what evidence is used to determine the effectiveness?

5. Does the rubric or evaluative tool accurately capture performance and accountability? If so how and if not what would you recommend for improvement of accountability being captured and identified?

6. Do you believe teacher retention improves accountability regarding instructional practice, if so how? What are the teacher retention rates for your school?

7. Are there any preliminary evaluation of credentials and teacher skills that you believe should be mandatory when hiring teachers for either a charter or public-school?

8. What is accountability for public and charter school principals and how do the school principals ensure accountability in each of them?

9. What are the existing academic guidelines for accountability in public and charter schools in the state of New Jersey? Do they differ from each other? If yes, in what way?

10. Do these differences in the guidelines affect the academic performance and affect the accountability of school principals in public and charter schools in the state?

Closing Thought:
If you could highlight one fundamental difference between charter and public-schools

that drives academic success, what would it be?

Possible Coding Terminology:
1. AA - Academic Accountability
2. AP - Academic Performance
3. DP - Differences in Performances
4. DSRM - Differences in State Regulatory Mandates
5. RP - Role of Principals