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## Relationship between Principal Change and Influence Styles: Is There an Impact on Teacher Retention?

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Relationship between Principal Change and Influence Styles: Is there an impact on  
Teacher Retention?

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. To my parents, Lewis and Gail Johnson, thank you for instilling in me the desire to follow my dreams. I am truly lucky to have such wonderful parents that modeled for me what hard work and ambition can accomplish in life.

To my friends and family, especially Lynn and Mark Szlachetka, who were always cheering me on when I needed it most - "You only get to climb The Great Wall once, don't stop now!"

To my husband, Connor Howder, without your encouragement and love none of this would have been possible. I truly appreciate the sacrifices you made so that I could accomplish my dream - Thank you for supporting me on my path to educational "enlightenment". I love you.

Last but not least, this research and degree is dedicated to my daughter, Adeline. Mommy did this for you in hopes that when you grow up, you understand that you can do anything you set your heart to.

"All our dreams can come true - if we have the courage to pursue them" -Walt Disney.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a relationship between principal leadership styles, specifically change and influence styles, and teacher retention in the Low-Country region of South Carolina. Utilizing the Change Style Indicator and Influence Style Indicator, the researcher surveyed 25 principals from Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester 2 School Districts. The results were analyzed and compared to teacher retention rates from South Carolina State School Report Cards. Three relationships were analyzed: 1) correlation between change styles and influence styles, 2) correlation between change styles and teacher retention and 3) correlation between influence styles and teacher retention. There was a significant relationship between the change style Conserver and selected influence styles. There was also a significant relationship between change style Pragmatist and selected influence styles. There was no relationship between change styles and teacher retention but there was a significant relationship between selected influence styles and teacher retention.

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## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

#### **Relationship between Principal Change and Influence Styles: Is there an impact on Teacher Retention?**

Since the administrative role affects so many facets of a school, it is important to reflect and determine if specific qualities of administrators impact school improvement. The idea that the principal is pivotal of the school is supported by many researchers. In South Carolina, with declining perceptions of public schools, there are still many that are achieving excellent ratings on their state report cards in part due to leadership. "For the 2009–2010 academic year, South Carolina was ranked 45th out of 50 states" (USDE as cited in Rauh, 2011, p. 1587). The single most important indicator of student academic performance is the quality of instruction. High teacher retention rates have been consistently found in schools with more administrative support (Brown & Wynn, 2009).

Public Education Network (2003) highlighted the importance of the school principal for beginning teachers:

Teachers listed several attributes and behaviors of principals and other school administrators that made a difference to their introduction to teaching. The first was accessibility. Teachers gave high marks to principals who made it easy for them to ask questions and discuss problems, and those that provided them with assistance, guidance, and solutions. (p. 22)

In 2007, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future reported that almost one-third of all new teachers leave within the first three years and nearly fifty-percent leave within the first five years. The departure of younger teachers frustrated by low salaries and the stress of working in low performing schools is fueling concerns regarding teacher turnover. The purpose of this study is to determine if there are specific leadership styles that affects teacher retention. This study identifies specific leadership change style preferences and leadership influence style preferences of administrators that could affect teacher retention within their schools.

Since the 1980's, research has supported the need to retain qualified teachers in the educational field. Veenman stated, "the more problems that a beginning teacher encountered, the more likely he or she was to leave teaching" (as cited in Varah, Theune, & Parker, 1986, p. 30). In South Carolina, 2003-2009, the teacher turnover rates have been somewhat stagnant; ranging between 8.9% to 11.3% (CERRA, 2009). D'Aniello (2008) stated that "shortages of teachers—particularly in certain subjects and geographic regions—are becoming increasingly problematic," (p. 2). As stated by Alliance for Excellent Education (2007), "every school day, nearly a thousand teachers leave the field of teaching. Another thousand teachers change schools, many in pursuit of better working conditions," (p. 1). Public Education Network (2003) found that teachers wanted administrators who provided support within the school environment. In many cases, instead of providing support, administrators provided more chaos to the working environment (Public Education Network, 2003).

Some more recent data stated that teachers continuously leave the profession because, they are not adequately prepared to enter a classroom, there is a lack of

administrative support, and for personal reasons that include low salaries, poor work conditions, lack of respect, and limited advancement opportunities. Teachers commented that the school climate is not conducive when administrators: (1) do not conduct enough classroom observations with meaningful feedback, (2) provide opportunities for the staff to plan together, and (3) lack managerial skills which negatively impacts schedules, processes and procedures (Public Education Network, 2003).

Other authors like Luft and Patterson (2002) also cite working conditions or job dissatisfaction as reasons teachers leave the profession. Johnson (2004) stated that, "30% of the teachers who leave do so within the first 3 years and 50% do so by the 5-year mark" (as cited in Latham & Vogt, 2007, p.154). Specifically, "on average, southern states lose nearly half of their new teachers within five years" (SREB, 2001).

Due to increased accountability and educational reform, schools need qualified teachers to continue to drive students to meet state standards. Curran and Goldrick (2002) stated that, "states, school districts, and schools can ill-afford to lose good teachers at a time when pressure to improve student achievement is increasing" (p.1). "Although the public expects beginning teachers' performance to resemble that of experienced teachers, novices without adequate support need 3 to 7 years of teaching to reach their maximum impact on student learning"(Stanulis & Floden, 2009, p. 112). Harold Holloman (1998) stated that teachers become so overwhelmed with the difference between college preparations of teaching to first year practical teaching that first year teachers are more susceptible to burnout.

Susan D'Aniello (2008) commented in her study of first year teachers that

Graduates requested more coursework in classroom management skills, more preparation related to communication skills for effective interactions with parents and other adults, and more emphasis on skills needed to meet the diverse needs of students from various cultures and disability areas (p. 310).

Susan D'Aniello (2008) stated that during a national tracking of 1992-1993 teacher college graduates, "25 percent of new teachers quit within their first five years to pursue other careers. Another 24 percent said they were leaving because they were not interested in teaching or were dissatisfied with teaching" (p. 1).

With first year teachers not adequately prepared to enter the classroom, it is up to the building level administrators and the districts to provide other sources of training to ensure that they stay in the teaching profession. Brown and Wynn's research (2009), cited "the principals that were also committed and passionate about their jobs and were able to diagnose and resolve organizational problems" created a more positive working environment for teachers (p. 44). This research also stated that teachers were more likely to stay within a school characterized by "integrated professional cultures" that were "organized to engage teachers of all experience levels in collegial and collaborative efforts" (Brown & Wynn, 2009, p.44).

### **Problem Statement**

This study examined two focal points in administration, change style and influence style. With so much pressure placed on administrators to adjust and modify schools for continuous improvement, it is important to research specific administrative styles that may positively impact teacher retention. “Principals whose schools do a good job of retaining teachers share common traits and strategies” (The Principal Effect, 2004). The challenge is to determine if principal styles impact teacher retention.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the preferred change style of principals in the Low-country region of South Carolina?
2. What is the preferred influence style of principals in the Low-country region of South Carolina?
3. Is there a correlation between a principal's change style and influence style?
4. Is there a correlation between the principal's change style category (Conserver, Pragmatist, Originator) and teacher retention?
5. Is there a correlation between the principal's influence style category (Rationalizing, Asserting, Negotiating, Inspiring, Bridging) and teacher retention?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant because it will provide data to analyze principal styles and teacher retention in the Low-country region of South Carolina. The study will involve K-12 principals in the Low-country of South Carolina. The three districts include Berkeley County School District, Charleston County School District, and Dorchester School District 2. The two surveys, Change Style and Influence Style, will allow the

participants to answer openly about their influence style and change style preferences. Like other professionals, principals must complete specific graduate coursework and pass an exam to receive certification. Though each principal and aspiring principal must complete these tasks, there has not been any research that states that leaders in education have similar leadership qualities.

Utilizing these surveys as tools, principals gain insight regarding their own leadership styles and ultimately their ability to improve their school. This researcher's contribution could assist with screening for school leaders as well as assist in building an administrative program that adds to specific leadership skills. This study is intended to assist districts and schools in determining specific skills needed for administrators in relation to teacher retention. The findings will also help develop novice administrator programs as well as provide insight for professional development for veteran administrators of specific skills that positively affect teacher retention.

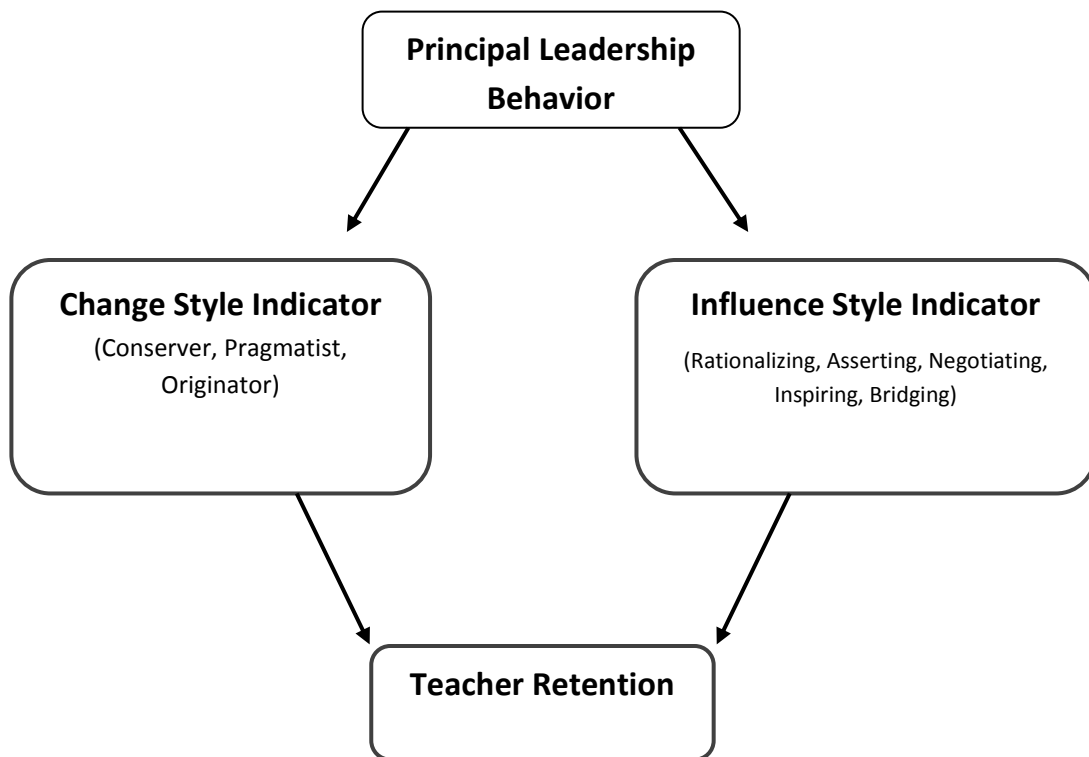
### **Methodology and Design**

The sample group consists of approximately 77 principals in the Low-country region of South Carolina. The three districts included in this study are Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties. In using these three districts, only three of the four school districts participated in this study, Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester 2. Principals were chosen based on a minimum of 3 years experience within each school. Each principal was administered two surveys, Influence Style Indicator and Change Style Indicator designed by Discovery Learning, Inc. To protect the privacy of individual participants, a numeric coding will be used to differentiate by schools within districts.



The responses from both surveys were paired with the principal's average teacher retention rate to determine if there is correlation between principal Change Style, principal Influence Style and teacher retention rate. Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) will be used for data analysis.

### Conceptual Framework



## **Organization of the Study**

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 presents an introduction and overview of the importance of administrative leadership styles and how they can effect teacher retention. It addresses the problem statement, research questions, significance of the study, methodology and design, and conceptual framework.

Chapter 2 presented a review of historical and theoretical bases of literature that is related to this study. Chapter 2 is divided into three sections: (a) Theoretical framework, (b) Leadership Styles and (c) Components of teacher retention. Chapter 3 explains the research and methodology of this study. The study involves approximately 77 principals' in three Low-Country School Districts who responded to the two surveys. Statistical data for teacher retention rates will be gathered and compared to individual principal change and influence style. Chapter 4 discusses the demographics of the sample population and results of the study and Chapter 5 presents the conclusions and recommendations for further studies.

## **Chapter II**

### **Review of Related Literature**

To review educational leadership theory today, it is helpful to review the progress of organizational leadership starting with Fredrick Taylor. Taylor's views of leadership focused on overseeing simplistic tasks completed in a factory. He believed that there was a 'best way' to get the most out of each factory position; the most output for the least amount of input. Though public schools are not run like a factory, it is about providing an appropriate education to our students with limited resources. One resource that impacts students is teachers. With this resource, school leaders need to learn how to equip teachers to do more with less; the question is why would teachers stay in the profession.

This researcher's belief is that the leadership styles of the principals influence teachers to stay in the profession. The literature below incorporates historical and current leadership styles and influences on education. It is divided into three parts, theoretical framework, leadership styles and components of teacher retention.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Trait Theory**

There is no simple way to define a good leader. Theorists have discussed leadership in different capacities for centuries but still have not come up with an

definitive definition of an effective leader. The basic understanding of any effective leader is "an interpersonal influence" (Massank as cited in John and Moser, 1989), and "to have followers act for certain goals" (John & Moser, 1989, p. 115). Historically in education, trait theory was used to distinguish specific leadership qualities of leaders from non-leaders.

Aronson (2001) stated that the essential attributes to the trait theory were physical characteristics, abilities such as level of intelligence and skills, and personality factors (Bass, 1990; Bryman, 1992). This theory "supported the ideas that certain identifiable qualities separated leaders from non-leaders and that these inherent traits were transferrable from situation to situation" (Bass & Stogdill, 1991, p. 287). Empirical research on trait theory found that there were specific traits of successful and unsuccessful leaders but success was determinate of the situation. The shift from specific traits to leadership style or behavior occurred after the 1940s when sole characteristics could not be proven to be antecedents of good leadership (Aronson, 2001).

Stogdill's concluded that "personality is a factor in leadership differentiation" (as cited in John & Moser, 1989, p. 112) but did not believe these results were a return to the trait theory approach to leadership. McDonald stated, "the way a leader interacts with others instead of personality traits is more determinate of how successful he or she is at achieving goals" (as cited in John & Moser, 1989, p. 116).

From 1946 to around 1956, Ohio State leadership studies focused on studying the Consideration and Initiating Structure as the basic dimensions of leadership behavior (John & Moser, 1989). More current research still supports specific leadership qualities for effective leaders but it does not revert back to the basic assumptions of trait theory.

Adair stated that, "reoccurring qualities in leaders are aptitude, character, and integrity" (as cited in John & Moser, 1989, p.120).

The difference between this broad statement and those supporting the trait theory is that it does not define the situations or level at which good leaders possess these characteristics. Current perspective on trait theory does not ensure leadership success but that some traits do distinguish effective leaders (Van Eeden, Cillier, & Deventer, 2008; Bateman & Snell, 1999).

### **Situational Leadership/Contingency Theory**

Fiedler's contingency theory focused more on the leader's situational behavior. Aronson (2001) commented that "these contingency approaches identified situational conditions under which a leader's task and/or interpersonal-oriented role would be effective or ineffective" (p. 245). Derived from Ohio State's Consideration and Initiating Structure, Hershey and Blanchard then adapted this theory and developed the Life Cycle theory, later referred to as Situational Leadership theory. "This theory attempts to provide understanding of the relationship between an effective style of leadership and the level of maturity of group followers," (John & Moser, 1989, p. 119).

Situational leadership theory states that the leader's leadership style varied depending on the situation, group being influenced and the task that needed to be completed. There were four leadership styles that differed depending on which level of maturity his/her followers were functioning on. The model combined tasks and people into a chart which listed four possible leadership styles: telling, selling, participating, and delegating. Maduakolam and Bailey (1999) stated that the "principles of situational

leadership model imply that little task and relationship behavior from the leader is needed when the group reaches a high maturity level," (p. 23).

### **Bolman and Deal's Reframing Theory**

"Reframing theory provides school leaders with a systematic, expanded viewpoint for understanding organizational life," (Israel & Kasper, 2005, p. 16). Using Bolman and Deal's four frames, structure, human resources, political, and symbolic, it "provides the theoretical pedagogy to create consensus on purpose and practice during the change process," (Israel & Kasper, 2005, p.16). As administrators review past practices and continue to make changes to improve schools and increase student achievement, it is important to realize that, "change intrudes upon deeply rooted symbolic forms, traditional ways, and ritual behavior," (Israel & Kasper, 2005, p. 17).

For change to be purposeful and productive, administrators must reflect on practices and be "cognizant of the barriers to change," (Israel & Kasper, 2005, p. 17). Bridges stated that "demonstrating respect for the traditions, practices, and policies of the past provide the leader with the opportunity to hear what is believed, what is wanted, and what is known" (as cited in Israel & Kasper, 2005, p. 22). Leading and motivating faculty and staff to change comes easy for some administrators. Their educational philosophy encompasses shared decision making and is focused on student learning. Lezotte and McKee stated "to produce the desired results of improved student learning, an effective leader must be able to create and manage a process for change that inspires commitment and action from others" (as cited in Pepper, 2010, p. 44). Bolman and Deal stated that "by reframing the context and leadership style, the leader lessens the

complexity, surprise, deception, and ambiguity of the group's work," (as cited in Israel & Kasper, 2005, p. 19).

### **Hertzberg's Theory**

Hertzberg's motivation -hygiene theory can be used to describe why teachers are satisfied or unsatisfied with their work. Motivators refer to intrinsic aspects including achievement & recognition while hygiene factors refer to extrinsic rewards like working conditions and salary. Bogler (2001) found that teachers were very satisfied with their jobs when they had the opportunity to "participate in determining school practices" (p. 676). Her study focused on 745 teachers in reference to teacher retention and teacher satisfaction through a Likert scale.

Bogler (2001) stated that "it is hypothesized that the greater the involvement of teacher in decision-making processes, the higher their level of job satisfaction" (p. 665). Bogler focused on how the principal's leadership styles and decision-making strategy affected teachers' job satisfaction. "To improve the general feeling of all teachers, school principals need to be more aware of how strongly their roles and behavior affect teachers' perceptions and job satisfaction" (Bogler, 2001, p. 679).

### **Leadership Styles**

School administrators do more than manage people and processes. Their roles are not clearly defined, yet they are accountable for ensuring that students are learning and making progress through the educational system. Maduakolam and Bailey (1999) stated, "although schools are too complex for effectiveness to be attributed to any single dimension of organizational effectiveness, there is no doubt that leadership owns a significant share of responsibility for effectiveness in schools," (p.22). Leadership styles

can vary from laissez-faire behavior, transactional to transformational (Van Eeden, Cilliers, & Deventer, 2008; Bass & Avolio, 1994). Leaders must also be ethical and equitable towards students and staff members to build trust and continued improvement.

Cotton (2003) stated that principal leadership styles indirectly impact student achievement but do impact student outcomes through their interactions with teachers. Research has found that teacher effectiveness has a direct effect on student achievement (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2008). The relationship between the administrator, specifically the principal, and the teachers is a key component to the success of any school. Deal and Peterson stated that "principal's leadership affects every element of the school culture" (as cited in Hines, 2007, p.104). The principal sets the tone for instruction, change, and the goals of each school organization and culture. Current Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, addressed the importance of Educational Leadership at the 2010 American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Conference. Duncan (2010) stated,

Today, the job of a principal is to be an instructional leader, not just a supervisor. Top-flight school leaders are more like CEOs than building managers. They can oversee multimillion dollar budgets and hundreds of employees. They work with community organizations and the media, and are expected to serve as change agents. Arthur Levine, the former president of Columbia's Teachers College, wrote in his comprehensive study of leadership preparation programs in 2005 that principals are being "educated for jobs that do not exist any longer". (para. 10)



Leadership impacts the community of the school and the relationships that are formed among faculty and staff, students, parents, and stakeholders. "The principal's influence with teachers, students and staff members is a fundamental element in providing the school climate and quality instruction needed to reach the goals set by No Child Left Behind," (Pepper, 2010, p. 45). Aronson (2001) stated, "leaders must establish the spirit, set the ambience and determine the boundaries of acceptable behavior" (p. 245). In reference to the relationship of administrators and teachers, Arne Duncan (2010) commented,

It is the principal who is responsible for building a school culture focused on learning and high expectations. It is the principal who must hire good instructors, provide quality professional development, evaluate teachers, and serve as the school's instructional leader. Great principals nurture, retain, and empower great teachers—bad principals run them off. (para. 50)

In the 2009 Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) report, SREB developed thirteen Critical Success Factors (CSF) for effective principals. SREB (2009) found that there was a disconnect between principal preparedness programs and actual principal roles and responsibilities. Through this research, it was found that fewer than one half of pre-service principals are required to lead activities that support change and fewer than one-fourth require them to implement good instructional practices that influence implementation of the curriculum (SREB, 2009).

Schmidt-Davis, Bottoms, and O'Neil (2009) stated that

Current methods of preparing principals are not working. Nearly 1.3 million high school students drop out every year.... If principals are to turn schools around so

more struggling students are taught to grade-level standards and higher, they need to understand how to engage faculty in creating and maintaining a culture of high expectations and support for all students. They will need to inspire faculty to develop engaging instruction and curricula that link students' learning to their interests, aspirations and talents. (p.3)

Hines (2007) stated, "by [principals] identifying their leadership style, pre-service principals will be better prepared to determine how to be effective leaders for schools," (p.104).

### **Transactional/Transformational**

Bass (1998), as cited in Aronson (2001), portrayed the transactional culture as being more conducive to personal interest than to that of the organization. As the role of the principal changes to be more of a leader instead of a manager, the scope of the position has changed to be more than just pushing papers and demanding district approved initiatives throughout the school; it is more about ensuring strong educational structures that support teachers so that students can succeed.

Aronson (2001) stated that Rost's 1991 opinion of a transactional leader was "management is a relationship between the manager and the subordinate founded upon an authority power base and is transactional in nature," (p.247). More than before, leadership employs persuasion to influence others and is generally non-coercive. Leadership is a relationship between leaders and followers who collaborate to bring about meaningful change often based on mutual objectives.

Leithwood stated that "transactional and transformational leadership represent opposite ends of the leadership continuum," (as cited in Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000, p.

113). Bass (1985) developed the two-factored theory but also believed that these two types of leadership styles could complement each other (as cited in Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000). Transactional leadership is defined as a mutual exchange between the leader and the follower. Effective transactional leadership is contingent on the leader's ability to meet and respond to the reactions and changing expectations of their followers (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987; Kellerman, 1984). Transactional leadership is actually divided into two levels; high quality and low quality exchange relationships (Graen, Liden, & Hoel as cited in Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). High quality exchanges focus on inter-personal bonds between the leader and the follower where as low quality exchanges are more about specific exchanges of rights or goods.

MacGregor Burns also believed in different levels of transactional relationships; these were categorized on a scale from obvious to less obvious. Kuhnert and Lewis (1987) believed that with the use of constructive personality theories, there emerged distinct personality characteristics of transactional leaders. "While the behaviors of leaders may change under different circumstances, the underlying personality structure that produced the behaviors are quite stable" (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987, p. 650).

Transformational leadership differs from transactional leadership because these leaders make decisions based on personal value systems that include integrity and justice (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987; Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). These values are referred to as 'end values'; values that cannot be exchanged or negotiated (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987).

Transformational leaders gain influence by demonstrating "characteristics such as self confidence, dominance, and a strong conviction in the moral righteousness of one's beliefs" (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987, p. 650). When followers adopt these beliefs, this is

when transformational leadership takes form. This commitment from the followers to their leader's values causes leadership influence to filter through the organization (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987; Bass, Waldman, and Avolio, 1986). Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) described transformational leadership by six dimensions:

1. Building school vision and goals
2. Providing intellectual stimulation
3. Offering individualized support
4. Symbolizing professional practices and values
5. Demonstrating high performance expectations
6. Developing structures to foster participation in school decisions

Even with these six dimensions, Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) believed that there should be transactional practices interwoven in a transformational leader. There are four practices that are stated to be fundamental to the success and stability of any organization: (1) Staffing, (2) Instructional support, (3) Monitoring school activities, and (4) Community focus, (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000).

Bernard Bass developed a Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and determined that there were three sub factors of transformational leadership: charisma, personal consideration, and intellectual stimulation and two sub factors of transactional leadership: contingent reward and management by exception (Bogler, 2001). The three sub factors that transformational leaders focus on are influencing followers to believe in the leader's mission and vision, providing followers with personal attention, and encouraging followers to be creative and cultivate solutions to problems. The two sub factors of a transactional leader, contingent reward and management by exception,

pertain to a reward being given to followers who complete a task and responding only when something goes wrong (Bogler, 2001).

### **Collective/Collaborative Leadership**

Collective leadership, or collaborative leadership constructs are very similar to transformational leadership. "Collective leadership in the form of distributed influence and control has the greatest influence through teacher motivation and the elements of the work setting" (Wahlstrom, 2008, p. 594). Wahlstrom (2008) reviewed several articles regarding leadership and achievement and found that there are four major themes that assist in defining leadership: (1) Context, (2) Relationships, (3) Belief systems, and (4) Indirect effects on student achievement.

When Wahlstrom (2008) stated that context is key, she was discussing the context of decision making as a way to view and manage leadership within either the state or local municipalities. Her supporting evidence was based on local concerns being answered by local leaders rather than being a concern of the state. Wahlstrom (2008) discussed context as being the environment of the school. One key component of strong school leadership is implementing consistent and active professional learning communities. "Teachers who work in schools with strong professional communities often perceive themselves as collectively sharing the leadership responsibilities" (Wahlstrom, 2008, p. 594). She focused on the use of Professional Learning Communities when she discussed the importance of indirect leadership and context. It was noted that when leadership and decision-making is shared, the paradigm shift toward focusing on teaching to the students' needs is more apt to occur.

The second theme in Wahlstrom's work is on relationships. Wahlstrom (2008) determined that the relationships between leaders and those being led are more spherical rather than linear. Wahlstrom (2008) emphasized the importance of leadership on equalizing power within the school. "As the distribution of power increases, lines of responsibility become more lateral and more nuanced" (Wahlstrom, 2008, p. 595). Wahlstrom (2008) in citing Leithwood and Mascall stated, "it is not the lines of authority that predict how school leadership is effectively enacted as much as it may be a result of the leader's understanding of equalizing power in all relationships," (p. 594).

The third theme focused on the leader's belief system as a key component to student achievement. Wahlstrom (2008) stated that trust and efficacy influence a person's ideas of their workplace and does have a impact on the relationship with the leaders at one's school. For example, the belief and support of the administrators in the development of Professional Learning Communities, "may be a potential key to improved student achievement," (Wahlstrom, 2008, p. 595). The final theme stated that leaders have an indirect effect on student achievement. It is important for administrators to realize that their personal beliefs regarding education can influence teaching and learning within their school building.

As noted earlier, principals do not directly impact student achievement but play an important supportive role for teachers. "The principal's actions clearly have sometimes powerful and sometimes more diffuse effects on how teachers teach and what teachers know about effective instructional strategies" (Wahlstrom, 2008, p. 596).

## **Instructional Leadership**

Themes regarding instructional leadership developed in the 1980s and focused on the principal as the educational expert; which would standardize effective teaching. "The principal's role was to maintain high expectations for teachers and students, supervise classroom instruction, coordinate the school's curriculum, and monitor student progress" (Marks & Printy, 2003; Barth, 1986). The limitations of this type of leadership were due to the lack of instructional knowledge and teaching strategies of the principal. It was the role of the administrator to ensure that teachers were receiving support to grow professionally in the areas of instruction and delivery.

Pajak stated that the role of instructional leaders was to "help teachers discover and construct professional knowledge and skills" (as cited in Blase & Blase, 1999, p.351). Even though the ideas of an instructional leader focused on assisting and enhancing the teacher's skills, Gordon stated, "in the present, control supervision still dominates professional practice" (as cited in Blase & Blase, 1999, p.351).

Glanz (1995) & Blumberg (1980) agree that today's classroom supervision is a "bureaucratic legacy of fault finding" (Blase & Blase, 1999, p.351). Sergiovanni believed that classroom discussion between principals and teachers were "well-established scripts without much consequence" (as cited in Blase & Blase, 1999, p. 351). As the principal grew within their role, they became more disconnected from instruction. Over time, the administrator visited the classroom less frequently and when the administrator did intervene, it was seen as an intrusion on the teacher's professional judgment (Fink & Resnick, 2001). Fink and Resnick (2001) also believed that

"evaluation and support were two distinct functions" which discouraged administrators from taking a lead role in shaping a focused culture of instruction.

The purpose of the instructional leader was to improve "teacher's critique of practice, consideration of alternatives, teamwork with colleagues, and implementation of innovations" (Blase & Blase, 1999, p. 352). To be able to facilitate these strategies, the principal had to know the teacher's strengths and weaknesses. As the role of an instructional leader grew within schools, teachers began to desire specific qualities in their instructional leaders. As teacher and administrator began focusing on collaborative development, administrators began to rely more on the teacher's expertise in the areas of instruction and professional development so that they could focus more on managerial tasks.

For a principal to change instructional practices at school, Fink and Resnick (2001) stated

The administrators must know the individual teachers well enough to suggest particular ways of improving particular aspects of their teaching performance, creating a culture in which deep knowledge of instruction and learning serves as the foundation for an interdependent professional community. (p. 12)

The idea of collaboration between teachers and administrators revolved around both engaging and developing better school practices together rather than delegating school initiatives. To be an effective instructional leader, it was important to keep up with current teaching practices as well as to expect teachers to keep up with current teaching strategies. Similarly, to teachers, administrators needed to learn continuously to lead their schools (Fink & Resnick, 2001).



Some research has indicated that successful schools were focused around shared decision-making and a collective practice of teaching for teachers (Blase & Blase, 1999). The five primary tasks of instructional leadership were defined as direct assistance to teachers, group development, staff development, curriculum development and action research (Glickman as cited in Blase & Blase, 1999). Similarly, to the idea of an independent professional community, Reitzug and Cross discussed the importance of "critical collaboration" (as cited in Blase & Blase, 1999). This is an inquiry-oriented practice that encouraged teachers to discuss the complexities of teaching with the instructional leader as a facilitator (Blase & Blase, 1999).

Even though the instructional leader was more of a facilitator, principals were responsible for selecting and cultivating a teaching staff that was able to effectively teach the district's mission (Fink & Resnick, 2001). Fink and Resnick (2001) did believe in an instructional leader for the schools but did not feel that the principal possessed all of the necessary skills to be an instructional leader. They did believe that instructional leadership was learned and acquired and that principals could possess the skills to be the instructional leader but it would take learning instructional strategies to meet the demands of curriculum and instruction in the classrooms.

## **Components of Teacher Retention**

Leithwood and Jantzi (1990) stated that successful principals have used a "wide-range of mechanisms to motivate and activate their staff to bring about changes in their school culture" (as cited in Bogler, 2001, p.663). Teachers derive part of their satisfaction from interpersonal relationships (Bogler, 2001). These relationships are with students, parents and colleagues. Hall et al. (1992) as cited in Bogler (2001) stated that teachers who are planning to leave the profession leave because of dissatisfaction of the job and negative attitudes towards school administrators. Dinham and Scott (1998) as cited in Bogler (2001) found that teachers are more satisfied with intrinsic rewards; which mean that teachers value their role in the educational occupation more than any form of extrinsic rewards.

Though there are many reasons why teachers choose to stay or leave the profession, Boyd, Grossman, Ing, Lankford, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2011) found that "the school administration plays a particularly important role in teachers' career decisions" (p.304). Boyd et al. (2011) stated that "turnover is higher among young and old teachers compared to middle-aged ones" and "among less experienced teachers compared to more experienced ones" (p.305). Boyd et al. (2011) also found that "teachers with stronger qualifications...are more likely to leave teaching" (p.305). Boyd et al. (2011) also stated that teachers who continue to have students make gains on tests are less likely to leave the profession. Schools with higher rates of low-income, non-White, and low-achieving students are also more likely to have higher teacher turnover rates (Boyd et al., 2011).

Though there seemed to be specific characteristics of teachers that will leave the education profession, there were also school contextual factors that influence teacher

attrition. Some contextual factors that were discussed in Boyd et al.'s (2011) research included administrative support, staff relations, student behavior, facilities, and safety. Boyd et. al. (2011) defined administrative support as, "when principals and other school leaders make teachers' work easier and help them improve their teaching" (p.307). Waters, Marzano, and McNulty found that the effects of school leadership on student achievement is more indirect, (as cited in Boyd et al.(2011).

It was cited that school leadership affects students through, "building a sense of community, establishing school routines, providing teachers with necessary resources, and advocating for the school to stakeholders" (Boyd et al., 2011, p. 307). Boyd et al. (2011) also stated that school leadership can influence more of the working environment which in turn can affect teacher retention. Haberman and Rickards found that "student discipline was the greatest perceived problem before [teachers] started teaching as well as when they left teaching" (as cited in Boyd et al., 2011, p. 308). Ingersoll also found that there was "a significant relationship between working conditions and teacher morale and retention decisions" (as cited in Boyd et al.,2011, p. 309). It was concluded through Boyd et al. (2011) that "the administration factor is the only one that significantly predicts teacher retention decisions" (p.323).

### **Induction Program**

D'Aniello (2008) stated, "in 1996, National Commission on Teaching and America's Future recommended that the first years of teaching be structured like a medical school residency" (p. 3). This type of process would include close contact with veteran teachers in reference to classroom management, instructional practices and other pertinent teaching responsibilities. In South Carolina, an induction program is mandated

by the South Carolina State Department but the actual program components are determined by the district. D'Aniello (2008) stated, "teacher induction happens haphazardly, so the experiences of new teachers vary by placement and school environment" (p.3).

It has been stated by Levin, Hammer, & Coffey (2009) that many novice teachers walk into a classroom and are not equipped to focus on student progression of the knowledge because the teachers are so concerned with procedures and routines. Novice teachers focus on *triadic dialogue* and do not concern themselves with the depth of knowledge.

Levin et. al. (2009) defined the use of *triadic dialogue* as "a conversational routine of teacher questions, short student answers, and teacher evaluations" (p.143).

In South Carolina, it is required that every first year teacher be provided an induction program. Section 59-26-30 of the South Carolina code of laws states that the State Department of Education (SDE) is to "promulgate regulations to be used by local school districts for providing formalized induction programs for teachers employed under induction contracts"(Teacher Induction, 2009). Recent data of local colleges found that from 2003 to 2009, the number of Education graduates has decreased for the College of Charleston, Charleston Southern University and The Citadel Military College (NCES, n.d).

Susan D'Aniello (2008) stated that, "teacher induction is the process of socialization to the teaching profession, adjustment to the procedures and more of a school site and school system, and development of effective instructional and classroom management skills" (p.2). College classrooms prepare teachers for how to get students to

participate in classroom discussions but the novice teacher does not necessarily recognize the difference between quantity and quality of student learning. Levin, Hammer, & Coffey (2009) supported that novice teachers develop in stages that allow specific and demanding needs to be met first, teacher behavior, classroom management and meeting state mandated curriculum. Early in their career, teachers are not able to focus on "the substance of students' ideas and reasoning" (Levin et al., 2009, p. 149).

Wang, Odell, & Schwille (2008) commented that induction programs should be more than just assisting first year teachers in knowing procedures and becoming comfortable in his/her new environment but should focus on teaching and instruction and meeting the specific needs of the students. Wang et al. (2008) stated a successful induction program includes, (1) teacher mentoring program, (2) providing opportunities for collaboration between veteran teachers about teaching strategies, and (3) professional development opportunities to focus on student achievement and student learning (p. 133). With administrative support during the first years of teaching, it is more likely that teachers will stay in the profession rather than leave within the first few years. In a study conducted by Stanford University in reference to professional development, it was found that, "frameworks that support high levels of [teacher] professional development had students that scored above national averages on the NAEP," (Jaquith, Mindich, Chung Wei, & Darling-Hammond, 2011, p. 33). To keep quality educators, Jaquith et al. (2011) stated professional development must "deepen teacher's content knowledge and pedagogical skills more broadly" (p. 37).

## **School Mentor**

The mentoring program currently implemented in South Carolina is vague when discussing student achievement, teacher collaboration and incorporating building level administrators. Though mentoring is a well-known strategy and has assisted many teachers, definitions of this program can vary. South Carolina has designated mentoring responsibilities to district administrators and building level administrators. With this version, the building level administrator is responsible with ensuring that induction teachers are provided "limited number of extracurricular duties, number of students, and number of course assignments..." (DEQL, 2006) but it does not state how the administrator will be used to assist with instructional needs and strategies.

Johnson stated that "the quality of interactions between beginning teachers and their colleagues can play a critical role in the success of novice teachers" (as cited in Stanulis & Floden, 2009, p.114). Though mentors are normally chosen within a school based on certification level and mentor training, administrators make the decisions on who the novice teacher will be matched up with for his/her first year.

Mentors should assist novice teachers in "enhancing student achievement through the development of a balanced instructional practice" (Stanulis & Floden, 2009, p. 114). Mentors need to help with more than just instructional suggestions; they need to assist, "novices [to] understand the importance of learning from practice while providing tools useful for studying teaching, including observation, feedback, and analysis of student work" (Allen, 1998; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; as cited in Stanulis & Floden, 2009, p. 114).

## **Role of the Administrator**

"The accountability provisions of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) highlight the shift in thinking about the roles and responsibilities of school leaders" (Provost, Boscardin, and Wells, 2010, p. 533). The role of the principal has changed from the traditional manager and disciplinarian to one that is providing instructional leadership (Provost et al., 2010). As principals change towards becoming instructional leaders within schools, the managerial component is still pertinent to their role. "By controlling public spaces, by stressing discipline, and by handling disciplinary problems in their offices, principals buffer the instructional core from disruptions" (Valentine & Prater, 2011, p.6).

Teachers are looking for a principal who "focus[es] on establishing school wide goals, provide resources for learning, supervises and evaluates teachers and creates a collegial relationship with and among teachers" (Valentine & Prater, 2011, p. 7). Valentine and Prater (2011) stated that, "effective instructional principals increased teacher morale and performance, thereby increasing student achievement" (p.7). To assist teachers in becoming more effective in the classroom, principals are "expected to be knowledgeable about curriculum and instruction and able to intervene directly with teachers in making instructional decisions" (Valentine and Prater, 2011, p.7). Leithwood defined instructional leadership in terms of "a series of behaviors designed to affect classroom instruction directly through supervision, coaching, and other such means of influencing teachers' thinking and practice" (as cited in Valentine & Prater, 2011, p.7).

Walker and Slear (2011) stated, "principals must address issues related to teacher effectiveness and they must work with teachers to support them in developing the skills

to help students achieve" (p.48). As teachers advance in their procedural methods and become more united in their pedagogy, teachers are more apt to focus on how students are learning and if he/she was able to meet and challenge students in the classroom.

Levin, Hammer, and Coffey (2009) reported that because pressure is placed upon teachers to focus on classroom management strategies instead of curricular strategies, novice teachers receive more support from administration when they have more control of their classroom rather than being able to differentiate between the different stages of student progression in a specific content area.



## **Chapter III**

### **Methodology**

This study examines five questions regarding the effects of leadership styles on teacher retention. It will be based on administrator responses to two leadership surveys, Change Style Indicator (CSI) and Influence Style Indicator (ISI). The study will also examine the correlation of principal's change style and influence style preferences to his/her school's teacher retention rates measured by the South Carolina State Report Card.

### **Research Design**

This research design will use the Pearson's  $r$  analyses to determine if there is a correlation between principal change style, principal influence style and the mean teacher retention rates for the past three years. The CSI focuses on identifying strengths and limitations of change style preferences. There are three change styles on the continuum: conserver, originator, and pragmatist. The second survey, ISI, helps leaders understand how their influencing style is perceived by others and what other leader influence styles look like. There are five influence style preferences based on forty-situational questions: rationalizing, asserting, negotiating, inspiring, and bridging. The analysis of each survey and teacher retention rates will provide information needed to assist school districts in determining what styles work best for an administrator's specific skills.

## **Research Questions**

This study will utilize two surveys and teacher retention data from the South Carolina State Report Card to address the following research questions:

1. What is the preferred change style of principals in the Low-country region of South Carolina?
2. What is the preferred influence style of principals in the Low-country region of South Carolina?
3. Is there a correlation between a principal's change style and influence style?
4. Is there a correlation between the principal's change style category (Conservator, Pragmatist, Originator) and teacher retention?
5. Is there a correlation between the principal's Influence Style category (Rationalizing, Asserting, Negotiating, Inspiring, Bridging) and teacher retention?

### Variables Grid

Question	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Statistical Description
Is there a preferred Change Style of principals in the Low-country?	Principal	Change style results	Descriptive
Is there a preferred Influence Style of principals in the Low-country?	Principal	Influence style results	Descriptive
Is there a correlation between a principal's Change Style and Influence Style?	Principal's change style results	Principal's influence style results	Pearson's <i>r</i>
Is there a correlation between the principal's Change Style and teacher retention?	Principal's change style results	Teacher retention	Pearson's <i>r</i>
Is there a correlation between the principal's Influence Style and teacher retention?	Principal's influence style results	Teacher retention	Pearson's <i>r</i>

### Sample

The surveys will be administered to approximately 77 principals in the Low-country region of South Carolina. This geographical area will include three school districts, Berkeley County School District, Charleston County School District and Dorchester School District 2. Berkeley County is one of the largest counties in South Carolina. It covers approximately 1,229 square miles (Berkeley County School District (BCSD), 2012). Of the population, 69% are white, 27% are African American, and 4% Hispanic (BCSD, 2012). The county is split 66% urban and 34% rural (Berkeley County,

South Carolina). Berkeley County School District has approximately 30,000 students, 1,900 teachers and forty schools (BCSD, 2012).

Charleston County covers approximately 1,000 square miles of coastal lands (Demographics of Charleston County School District, 2012). The county is a mix of rural, suburban and urban communities that have approximately 45,000 students, 5,500 employees district-wide, and 80 schools (Demographics of Charleston County School District, 2012).

Dorchester County covers approximately 577 square miles (Dorchester County, South Carolina, 2012). Of the population, 71.05% are white, 25.08% are African American, 1.79% Hispanic, and 2.52% are other ethnicities (Dorchester County, South Carolina, 2012). Dorchester County is divided into two school districts, Dorchester 2 and Dorchester 4. Dorchester School District 2 has approximately 23,000 students, 3,000 employees and 33 schools (District Facts, 2012). Collectively, these three counties mirror the different regions of South Carolina.

The sample is based on criteria sampling. Principals will be chosen if they have been in their current position for three or more years to ensure some continuity in leadership. Each district's policies and procedures were different in gaining permission to survey principals.

In Berkeley County, the researcher emailed the district's Chief Academic Officer requesting access to send the surveys to principals (Appendix A). After discussing the research over the phone, Berkeley County School District's Chief Academic Officer provided written approval via email (Appendix B). The initial correspondence about the

research had to be sent to the Superintendent for him to disseminate it to the principals (Appendix C).

Charleston County School District had a research and review committee that had to approve the research before providing permission for their principals to participate in the research. Three written proposals were sent to Charleston County School District for each committee member to review (Appendix D). An approval letter was sent from Charleston County with stipulations prior to starting my research (Appendix E). After the initial approval, the researcher was able to correspond with the district's Executive Director of Achievement and Accountability as well as the Administrative Assistant for the Achievement and Accountability Office to ensure all questions and concerns were answered. The district provided the researcher with a list of principals that have been at their current school for at least three years.

An email was sent to the Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Dorchester School District 2 (Appendix F). After the district's research committee reviewed the proposal, I received confirmation to conduct the research from the Assistant Superintendent. (Appendix G).

All three district contacts as well as each principal received a copy of the confidentiality as well as a brief description of the surveys (Appendix H).

### **Definition of Terms**

*Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)* - This term is defined by NCLB as the minimum level of improvement that schools and school districts can achieve each year.

*Change Style Indicator (CSI)* - The Change Style Indicator is a change management survey designed to measure preferred styles in approaching and dealing with change. The

Change Style Indicator identifies strengths and pitfalls of change style characteristics.

Knowing one's change style preferences can allow individuals to work together as a team, revising work processes and delivering more satisfactory results. There are three change styles on the continuum, conserver, originator, and pragmatist.

*Influence Style Indicator (ISI)*- identifies a dominant influencing style and provides insight into other styles that may be better used in a given situation. This survey helps individuals understand how their influence style is perceived by others and also understand what other styles look like as well. There are five style preferences based on situational questions. These preferences are rationalizing, asserting, negotiating, inspiring, and bridging.

*No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* - Is a standards-based reform that supports state assessments, hiring qualified teachers and incorporating accountability in local educational agencies.

*Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS)* - is an annual test that all students in grades three through eight must take. This test is aligned to South Carolina Curriculum Standards, which defines what students should learn each year.

*Principal/administrator* - These names are used interchangeably throughout this paper to describe the leaders within a school.

*Teacher retention rates*-teacher retention is defined by the percentage of teachers returning to that specific school on the South Carolina state report card.

## **Instrumentation**

### **Change Style Indicator**

The Change Style Indicator (CSI) focuses on identifying strengths and limitations of change style preferences. Knowing one's change style preferences can allow individuals to work better as a team, revising work processes and delivering more satisfactory results. There are three change styles on the continuum, conserver, pragmatist, and originator. The change style indicator is designed to measure preferred styles in approaching and dealing with change. This survey identifies strengths and areas of growth of change style characteristics. Knowing your change style preferences can allow individuals to work together as a team, revising work processes and delivering more satisfactory results.

This survey utilizes twenty-two paired statements to establish a ranking of how the respondent prefers to address and work with change. The survey addresses both initiated and imposed change and places the respondent on a continuum between Conserver and Originator with Pragmatist in the center of the continuum. The three styles display distinct differences and preferences when approaching change. Conservers tend to prefer gradual change as Originators prefer quick and expansive change while Pragmatists tend to take the middle of the road approach. The individualized report provides each participant with a synopsis of their strengths and their potential challenges based on their change style. This survey works in collaboration with the Influence Style Indicator by looking at factors that can impact an organization's readiness to deal with and sustain change in challenging times.

## **Influence Style Indicator**

The second survey, ISI, helps individuals understand how their influencing style is perceived by others and assists in understanding what other styles look like. The ISI is an individual survey which identifies a dominant influencing style and assists in the development of skills to increase leadership effectiveness. There are five style preferences based on forty situational questions. These preferences are rationalizing, asserting, negotiating, inspiring, and bridging.

Influence is defined as having an impact on ideas, opinions and actions of others. Each style provides an in-depth description of the value of the style, best scenarios to use this style, the product of when it is used effectively, and what could happen if the influence style is used ineffectively. When you influence effectively you increase trust, support and ownership. When you influence ineffectively you increase mistrust, intimidation and resentment. A key behavior of effective leaders is the capacity to influence those around them towards acceptance of beneficial outcomes. Whether you are leading, following, and/or collaborating, chances are you need to influence others to be successful. Each influence style report provides in-depth information about your dominant influence style, your influence orientation, and what area of influence that is underutilized.

The final portion of the report provides information on how to develop an influence style. It provides specific practices to implement that can assist school leaders in engaging all influence styles.



## **South Carolina State Report Card**

Teacher retention percentages will be collected from the 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 South Carolina State Report Card for each principal's school that participates in this study. Information provided from these surveys as well as teacher retention percentages from the state report card will be disaggregated using descriptive statistics and correlation statistical data to determine if there is a statistical significance between principal leadership styles and teacher retention.

### **Validity and Reliability**

#### **Change Style Indicator**

The interest of change styles started in 1987 as part of the Kellogg National Leadership Program (Musselwhite, 2000). "This three-year fellowship provided the opportunity to identify, interview, shadow and in general better understand individuals who were responsible for creating significant change and innovation in their organizations and/or communities" (Musselwhite, 2000, p. 10). The subjects that were involved in the development included a broad range of organizations that included for-profit, academic, non-profit, and community based (Musselwhite, 2000). Discovery Learning developed a survey that measures individual preferences to change; from incremental to radical. The development of this survey came from two different organizational consulting experiences. The first was from a leadership development training within ten electrical utility companies in the United States from 1990 to 1993. The second organizational consulting experience was from 1993-1996 with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The CSI has been used successfully since 1996 in a variety of programs and settings (Musselwhite, 2000).

This survey utilizes the Delphi method. For each item, the participant is to distribute three points among two questions. For the internal reliability, the 30-item instrument was administered to 190 subjects. Eight of the original thirty items were dropped from the Change Style Indicator because they did not correlate well with the total. The remaining items had item-to-total correlation coefficients ranging between .43 and .64. Cronbach's Alpha for the 22-items was .9. Concurrent validity was also tested with the subjects. From three unnamed descriptions, each participant chose one that they felt described their change preference. Each was a concise description of each change style, conserver, pragmatist, and originator

### **Influence Style Indicator**

The original Influence Style Indicator uses a theoretical framework (Musselwhite & Plouffe, 2011). The survey consists of forty-six items rated on a five-point likert scale, 1= rarely to 5=very often. There is a range of seven-nine items that correlate for each conceptual area, Rationalizing, Asserting, Negotiating, Bridging, Inspiring, and Defusing. The initial analysis was conducted with a sample of 294 surveys. Musselwhite and Plouffe (2011) "first examined the distributions of individual 46 items and identified 14 items with very little variability, i.e., greater than 80% of respondents rated the item *often* or *very often*," (p. 3).

"Cronbach's alpha was then calculated for the overall scale and for each conceptual area (subscale). Alphas were above the generally accepted standard of .85 for the overall scale and for half of the subscales. Bridging ( $\alpha=.82$ ), Negotiating ( $\alpha=.78$ ), and Defusing ( $\alpha=.67$ ) fell below .85," (Musselwhite and Plouffe, 2011, p.3). A factor analysis was also conducted using a varimax rotation. "With this factor analysis, the four

subscales, Rationalizing, Asserting, Bridging and Inspiring held up very well. The subscale of Negotiating held together fairly well but two items within this subscale did not load on any factor. The Defusing subscale was not supported by the factor analysis (Musselwhite and Plouffe, 2011, p. 3).

"From this 5-subscale, 30-item version, 4 items were randomly selected from each of the 5 subscales, leaving a total of 20 items which were used for a forced-choice version of the instrument. Cronbach's alphas on this 20-item version ranged from .76 to .83," (Musselwhite and Plouffe, 2011, p. 3).

### **Data Collection/Analysis**

The surveys were administered on-line. Each participant received an initial email instructing them on how to access the website using a group ID, depending on the school district, and a unique pin. Each pin is specifically associated with each participant that submits their survey results. The email contained instructions, contact information of the researcher, a confidentiality statement about privacy and the descriptions of each survey. Survey windows were open for a two-week period for each district. After the initial email, a reminder email was sent to respondents that have not accessed the surveys on-line. Once the two-week data collection period was over, the individual reports were sent to each participant. A spreadsheet from Excel was used to disaggregate districts, participants, teacher retention rate for each principal's school, and survey results. The results included in the spreadsheet are the principal's change style preference, dominant influence style, and underutilized influence style. To protect the privacy of individual participants, a numeric coding was used to differentiate by schools within districts without violating confidentiality.

Pearson's  $r$  was used to determine if there is a correlation between principals and their change and influence style. A school by school analysis of data was conducted with the independent variables being each principal's change and influence style when the dependent variable being the mean percentage of teacher retention for the past three years.

To determine teacher retention rates, each principal's South Carolina State Report Card from 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 was used. A two-step equation was used to find the mean percentage of teachers returning over a three year period. To find the actual number of teachers retained for each school year, the total number of teachers was multiplied by the percentage of teachers returning from previous years. After determining total number of teachers returning, it was divided by the total number of teachers in that specific school for the past three years.

Pearson's  $r$  was used to establish if (1) there is a correlation between specific change styles and influence styles and teacher retention mean percentages for the past three years and (2) if there is a correlation between each principal's change and influence style. Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used to analyze the data. Pearson's  $r$  was chosen to determine if there is a significant relationship between each principal's change and influence style compared to their teacher retention rates.

The data analysis will include the following steps:

1. The mean teacher retention rate will be calculated from the 2010, 2011, and 2012 South Carolina State Report Card.
2. The principal's change style and influence style will be collected from CSI and ISI surveys.

3. Each district's principal's change style (conserver, originator, or pragmatist) will be compared to their influence style (rationalizing, asserting, negotiating, inspiring, or bridging).
4. Pearson's  $r$  correlations will be calculated to determine if there is a significant relationship between each principal's change style and influence style, principal's change style and mean teacher retention percentage, and principal's influence style and mean teacher retention percentage.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **Presentation and Analysis of Data**

This chapter presents the data collected regarding principal change and influence styles and the relationships of teacher retention rates. At the time of this study, seventy-seven principals across Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester 2 school districts met the criterion of having three or more years experience within the same school. Dorchester 2 school district provided the researcher with names of eleven principals that have been at their current school for three or more years but there was not sufficient teacher retention data listed on the South Carolina State Report card to use all of these schools. From the original eleven names, three were dismissed due to insufficient data. Of the remaining seventy-four principals, twenty-five principals (34%) completed the Change Style Indicator (CSI) and Influence Style Indicator (ISI) surveys. Specific to each district, Berkeley County had sixteen (62%) completion, Charleston County had five (13%) completion and Dorchester District 2 had four (50%) completion. Specific survey completion demographics of the principals include Berkeley County, 44% males; 56% females, Charleston County, 20% males; 80% females, and Dorchester District 2, 25% males; 75% females.

### **Demographics of Sample**

The purpose of this study was to determine if principal change and influence styles affect teacher retention rates. It is important to note that this study is examining

only one relationship of leadership styles and teacher retention and does not rule out other possibilities of why teachers leave or stay.

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the preferred change style of principals in the Low-country region of South Carolina?
2. What is the preferred influence style of principals in the Low-country region of South Carolina?
3. Is there a correlation between a principal's change style (Conserver, Pragmatist, Originator) and influence style (Rationalizing, Asserting, Negotiating, Inspiring, Bridging)?
4. Is there a correlation between the principal's change style category (Conserver, Pragmatist, Originator) and teacher retention?
5. Is there a correlation between the principal's influence style category (Rationalizing, Asserting, Negotiating, Inspiring, Bridging) and teacher retention?

Even though school demographics were not included in this research, using the South Carolina Department of Education School Report Cards, it is being included to provide a more thorough understanding of principal leadership styles and teacher retention rates. The types of schools of the principals that completed the survey, were 1-primary, 14-elementary, 1-intermediate (grades 3-5), 6-middle, and 3 high schools. Based on the South Carolina Department of Education School Report Cards, of the principals that completed these surveys, the 2012 South Carolina Report Card Absolute Ratings ranges were 1-not applicable, 1-below average, 4-average, 4-good, and 15-excellent.

### Research Question One

What is the preferred change style of principals in the Low-country region of South Carolina?

This question was addressed using descriptive statistics of median, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum for each school district in the Low-country region. Principals' responses were analyzed as a collective sample by district (Table 4.1).

District names were abbreviated in all tables.

Table 4.1

*Preferred Change Style by District*

School District	Median	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
BCSD	-15	13.64	-50	8
CCSD	-22	32.79	-56	26
DD2	8	4	8	16

N=25

Table 4.1 indicates that preferred change style of the sample in three Low-Country districts of South Carolina. To distinguish between the scale scores of a Conserver and an Originator, the Conserver numbers ranged from a -66 to a -14 while the Originator numbers were ranged from a positive 14 to 66. A Pragmatist would range between a -13 to 13. The median number for the three districts ranged from -22 to 8. Principals within BCSD results showed to be more conservative in reference to their change style with a median of -15, minimum of -50 and a maximum of 8. Out of the principals that participated in this study from BCSD, only one was rated as a Pragmatist with originator tendencies while all others were ranged between Conserver to Pragmatists. CCSD principals were about as conservative with a median of -22 but a minimum of -56 and maximum of 26. With the CCSD principal results, only one



response was within the Originator range while all other responses were within the Conserver to Pragmatist categories. DD2 principal change style results were more Pragmatist with a median of 8, minimum of 8 and a maximum of 16. All DD2 responses were either Pragmatists or Originator with no results within the Conserver range. Table 4.2 indicates the preferred change style by district.

Table 4.2

*Preferred Change Style of Principals by District*

Change Style	BCSD		CCSD		DD2		Total	
	Number/Percent		Number/Percent		Number/Percent		Number/Percent	
Conserver	10	62.5%	4	80.0%	0	0.0%	14	56.0%
Pragmatist	6	37.5%	0	0.0%	3	75.0%	9	36.0%
Originator	0	0.0%	1	20.0%	1	25.0%	2	8.0%

N=25

The results indicate that the preferred change style for the Low-country region is Conserver with 56% preference. To disaggregate the data by district, BCSD's preferred change style would be Conserver with a 62.5% preference, CCSD's preferred change style Conserver would be 80%, and DD2 would be Pragmatist with 75% preference.

### **Research Question Two**

What is the preferred influence style of principals in the Low-country region of South Carolina?

The second research question was addressed by categorizing the influence style of each principal within the school districts of the Low-country region. On the Influence Style Indicator, each principal is given a rating on each influence style between 0-16.

The sub ratings for each influence style range from 0-3 (underutilized), 4-8 (slight), 9-12 (moderate), and 13-16 (dominant).

Table 4.3 provides descriptive statistics of the collective group's influence style ratings for all categories that include mean, standard deviation, and 50% quartile.

Table 4.3

*Preferred Influence Style of Principals*

Influence Style	Mean	Standard Deviation	50th Percentile
Rationalizing	10.32	2.63	10
Asserting	6.08	4.28	4
Negotiating	4.72	3.18	5
Inspiring	8.48	3.54	9
Bridging	10.4	4.11	11

When using the mean of each influence style, Bridging would still be considered the preferred influence style. This data indicates that even though Bridging was the preferred influence style, Rationalizing ratings among principals were very close to being equally preferred. This data also indicates that Asserting, Negotiating and Inspiring were perceived by the participants as a slight preferred influence style compared to a moderate preference of Rationalizing and Bridging.

It is important to note that a few principals had multiple influence style categories with similar ratings but the category with the highest rating was designated as the preferred style. The preferred influence style was selected based on the category with the highest rating. Principal responses were analyzed as a collective sample by district (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4

*Preferred Influence Style of Principals by District*

Influence Style	BCSD		CCSD		DD2		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Rationalizing	5	31.3%	2	40.0%	0	0.0%	7	28.0%
Asserting	1	6.3%	0	0.0%	1	25.0%	2	8.0%
Negotiating	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Inspiring	3	18.7%	1	20.0%	1	25.0%	5	20.0%
Bridging	7	43.7%	2	40.0%	2	50.0%	11	44.0%

Within BCSD, 43.7% had a preferred influence style of Bridging while 31.3% had a preferred style of Rationalizing. Only 18.7% had a preferred influence style of Inspiring and 6.3% had preferred influence style of Asserting. CCSD had a 40% preferred influence style of Rationalizing and Bridging. Only 20% had a preferred influence style of Inspiring. DD2 had a 50% preferred influence style of Bridging and 25% of Asserting and Inspiring. When reviewing the principals preferred influence style collectively, 44% had a preference of Bridging, 28% Rationalizing, 20% Inspiring and 8% preferred Asserting. Negotiating was the only non-preferred influence style.

### Research Question Three

Is there a correlation between a principal's change style and influence style?

To determine if there was a correlation between the principal's change style and influence style, the researcher utilized the principal's rating in each influence category (Rationalizing, Asserting, Negotiating, Inspiring and Bridging) and compared the ratings to each principal's change style preference (Conserver, Pragmatist, and Originator). The tables below show the correlation between the principal's influence style ratings and

change style. All correlations are at the .05 level and were calculated using the SAS program.

Table 4.5

*Pearson Correlations for Principal Influence Style and Change Style: Conserver*

Influence Style	Pearson Correlation
Rationalizing	.2886
Asserting	.9143*
Negotiating	.3730
Inspiring	.0994
Bridging	.9780*

N=14

\*=significant

Table 4.5 above indicates that there is not a statistically significant relationship between the principal's change style Conserver and influence style ratings in Rationalizing, Negotiating and Inspiring. The influence styles Asserting and Bridging had a statistically significant relationship to the change style Conserver with Bridging having the highest correlation with .9780.

Table 4.6 indicates the correlation coefficients of principal influence styles and the change style Pragmatist.

Table 4.6

*Pearson Correlations for Principal Influence Style and Change Style: Pragmatist*

Influence Style	Pearson Correlation
Rationalizing	.3727
Asserting	.9602*
Negotiating	.3720
Inspiring	.9824*
Bridging	.8264*

N=9

\*=significant

There were no statistically significant relationships between the preferred change style Pragmatist and influence style ratings in Rationalizing or Negotiating. There were three statistically significant correlations between the change style Pragmatist and influence style ratings of Asserting, Inspiring and Bridging with Inspiring being the highest at .9824. Since the sample size was too small with the change style Originator, a correlation was not calculated.

#### **Research Question Four**

Is there a correlation between the principal's change style category (Conserver, Pragmatist, Originator) and teacher retention?

The fourth question was addressed by comparing the principal's change style and teacher retention rates for each school. Table 4.7 indicates the principals in the Conserver category and the corresponding teacher retention rate.

Table 4.7

*Correlation between Principal Change Style Conserver and Teacher Retention Rates*

Conserver Scale Score	Teacher Retention Rates
-22	83.6%
-50	86.3%
-28	80.1%
-16	89.9%
-22	89.1%
-14	83.8%
-16	87.0%
-18	84.0%
-14	88.4%
-40	84.4%
-56	71.3%
-14	88.4%
-50	93.6%
-22	72.2%

N=14

Pearson's  $r=.4569$ 

Table 4.7 above indicates that there is no statistically significant relationship between the change style Conserver and teacher retention rates. Teacher retention rates were calculated by averaging the previous three year's retention rates for each school. The range of retention rates for the principal's whom had a preferred change style of Conserver ranged from 71.3% to 93.6%.

The data below in Table 4.8 indicates that there was also no statistically significant relationship between the change style Pragmatist and teacher retention rates.

Table 4.8

*Correlation between Principal Change Style Pragmatist and Teacher Retention Rates*

Pragmatist Scale Score	Teacher Retention Rates
-10	83.8%
-8	80.0%
-12	81.7%
-8	87.3%
-6	85.8%
8	76.2%
8	86.1%
8	81.2%
8	84.4%

N=9

Pearson's  $r=.5879$ 

The range of retention rates for the principal's whom had a preferred change style of Pragmatist ranged from 76.2% to 87.3%. The sample size was too small to calculate if there was a correlation between the change style Originator and teacher retention rates. Table 4.9 below indicates the number of principals in each change style category and Pearson's correlation coefficient.

Table 4.9

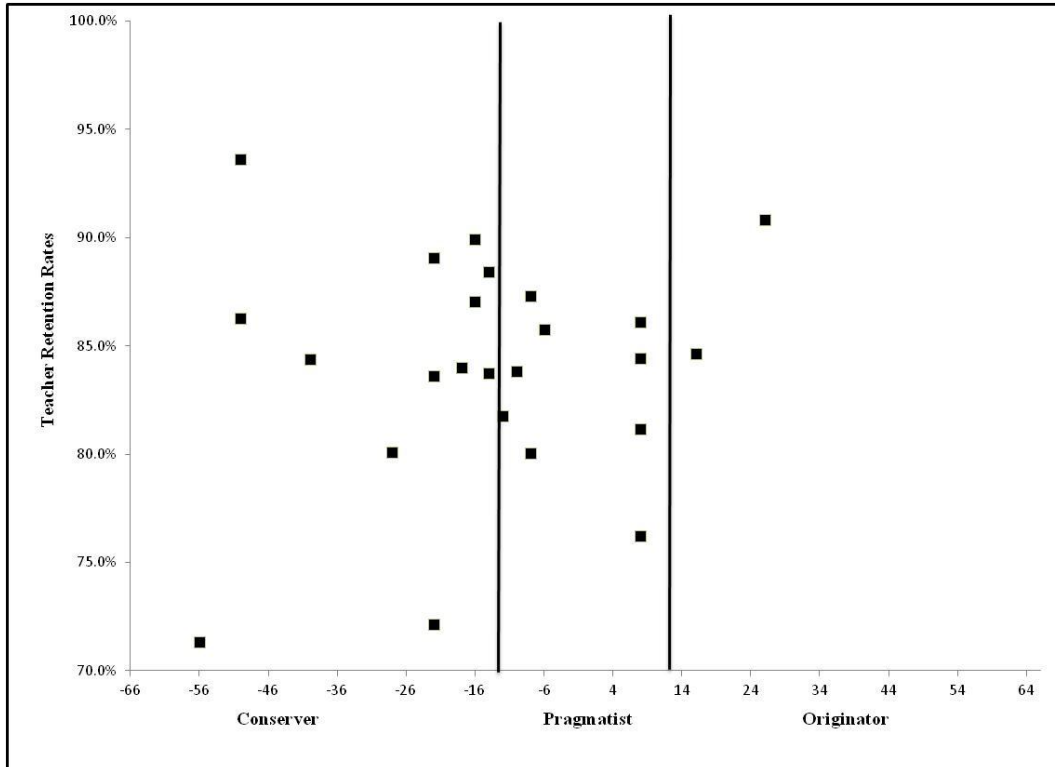
*Correlation between Principal Change Style and Teacher Retention Rates*

Principal Change Style	Number of Principals	Pearson Correlation
Conservator	14	.4569
Pragmatist	9	.5879
Originator	2	Insufficient Data

N=25

Figure 4.1 below shows the relationship between principal's change style and the average teacher retention rates from 2009-2012.

Figure 4.1



### Research Question Five

Is there a correlation between the principal's influence style category (Rationalizing, Asserting, Negotiating, Inspiring, Bridging) and teacher retention?

Question five was addressed by comparing principal influence style ratings to teacher retention rates. Since each principal has a rating for each influence style, Table 4.10 indicates the correlation between each influence style and teacher retention rates.



Table 4.10

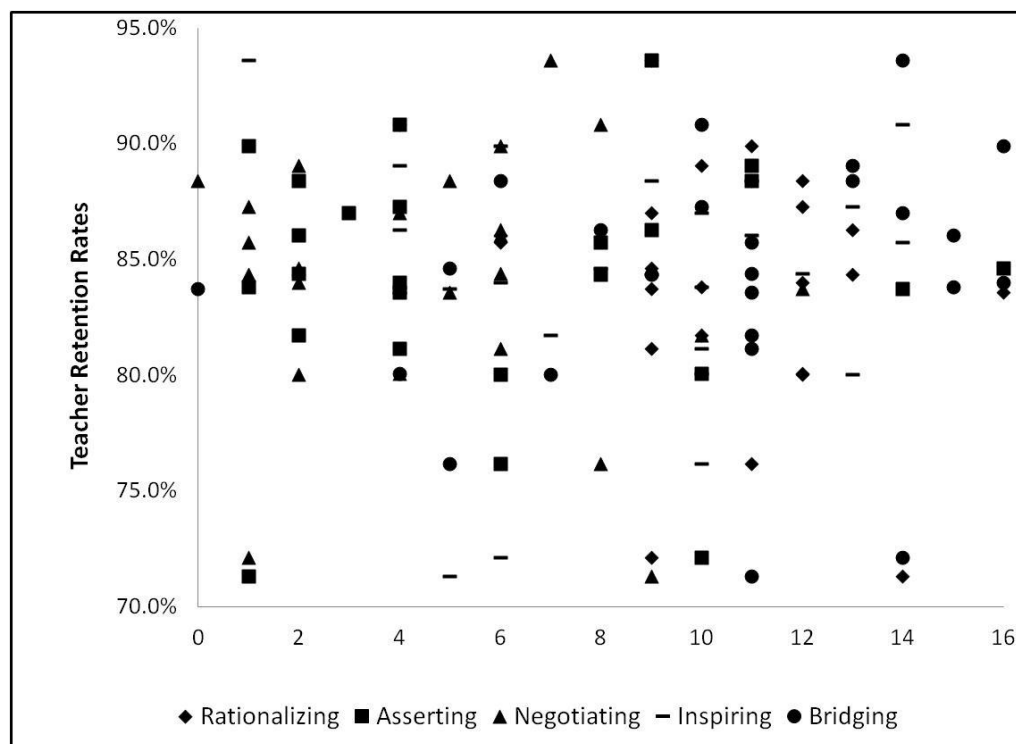
*Pearson Correlations for Principal Influence Style and Teacher Retention Rates*

Influence Style	N	Pearson Correlation
Rationalizing	25	.1489
Asserting	25	.8436*
Negotiating	25	.6451*
Inspiring	25	.9473*
Bridging	25	.3149

\*=significant

Table 4.10 indicates that there is little to no relationship between Rationalizing and Bridging influence style ratings and teacher retention rates of this sample population. However, there is a statistically significant correlation between the principal's influence style ratings in Asserting, Negotiating and Inspiring and teacher retention rates with Inspiring being the highest correlation at .9473. Figure 4.2 below presents each principal's influence style rating (Rationalizing, Asserting, Negotiating, Inspiring and Bridging) and the teacher retention rates for each school.

Figure 4.2



### Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to determine if principal change and influence styles affect teacher retention rates. Descriptive statistics and Pearson's  $r$  correlation was used to answer the research questions.

1. Based on a sample size of 25 principals in the Low-country region of South Carolina, the preferred change style is Conserver.
2. Based on the same sample population, the preferred influence style is Bridging.
3. There were two statistically significant relationships between the change style Conserver and influence style rating of Asserting and Bridging with Bridging being the highest correlation at .9780.

4. There were three statistically significant relationships between the change style Pragmatist and influence style ratings of Asserting, Inspiring and Bridging with Inspiring being the highest correlation at .9824.
5. There is no correlation between either change style Conserver or Pragmatist and teacher retention rates and insufficient data to conclude a comparison between the change style Originator and teacher retention rates.
6. Of the five influence styles, Asserting, Negotiating and Inspiring ratings had a significant correlation to teacher retention rates.
7. It is worth noting that the influence style rating of Asserting had a statistically significantly correlation to both change styles and teacher retention rates.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **Summary of Significant Findings**

This study analyzed principal change and influence styles compared to teacher retention. The findings are stated below:

1. The preferred change style in the Low-country region of South Carolina is Conserver. This type of style preference is defined as someone who prefers, "change that is implemented gradually and incrementally," (Discovery Learning, Inc., Conserver). The Conserver change style is further described as "good at managing details and generally approaches a new situation in a deliberate and disciplined manner. This type enjoys predictable situations and appreciate established traditions and practices," (Discovery Learning, Inc., Conserver). The preferred change style of these principals could be correlated to the location of the sample population as well as the political preferences within the state of South Carolina. "Some 35% of Americans consider themselves 'conservative' compared to 22% who describe themselves as 'liberal'," (Pew Research Center (2004) as cited in Fram and Miller-Cribbs, 2008, p. 885). South Carolina has voted conservative in every presidential election since 1980 (South Carolina, n.d.).
2. The preferred influence style is Bridging. This style describes someone who, "builds relationships and connect with others through listening, understanding and

3. building coalitions," (Discovery Learning, Inc., Bridging). The influence style Bridging description also includes, "someone that listens to what others have to say and works to establish a climate of trust," (Discovery Learning, Inc., Bridging). Fullan stated, "all major research on innovation and school effectiveness shows that the principal strongly influences the likelihood of change," (as cited in Leech and Fulton, 2008, p.634). Based upon a small number of responses by gender, Discovery Learning, Inc. (2011) found that, "women demonstrate a stronger preference for Negotiating, Bridging and Inspiring than do men," (p. 3). It is no surprise that with 64% of the respondents being women that the preferred influence style is Bridging. This choice is also supported by the demands of schools to move towards a shared-decision approach.
4. There were two statistically significant relationships between the change style Conserver and Asserting and Bridging influence styles. Possible explanation for these correlations could be based on how long each principal has been in their current role. It would be assumed that veteran principals would make incremental change while asserting their own values because they have had previous experiences in different educational initiatives. Similarly, novice principals might also implement incremental change but look to incorporate newer educational theories that build on shared-decision making processes. "Successful leaders must utilize charismatic leadership strategies and communication to sell the vision to the entire organization," (Leech and Fulton, 2008, p. 633). Another possibility for these correlations could be that principals must demonstrate a stronger preference depending on teacher's years of experience in the building. It has been stated by

Levin, Hammer, & Coffey (2009) that many novice teachers walk into a classroom and are not equipped to focus on student progression of the knowledge because the teachers are so concerned with procedures and routines.

5. There were three statistically significant relationships between the change style Pragmatist and influence styles Asserting, Inspiring and Bridging. Pragmatists approach is described as, "middle of the road," (Musselwhite, 1998, p. 6). "They understand both sides of an argument and may have difficulty deciding and committing to a specific course or action," (Musselwhite, 1998, p. 6). This correlation focuses on the ratings of the three influence styles; not necessarily the highest. One possible reason for this relationship could be the ability of the administrator to be flexible in their influence styles or their recognition of more than one influence style. In this sample population, 37.6% of all influence style ratings were ranged between 9-12. This indicates that many of the principals have a moderate strength in two or more influence categories.

Leech and Fulton (2008) stated, "to create lasting change, there must be a change in governance through a redistribution of power and control," (p. 634). Anderson stated "a key purpose of leadership is 'set[ting] directions and influence[ing] others to move in those directions,'" (as cited in Helterbran, 2010, p. 364).

Principals must be able to vary their leadership influence style to meet the needs of their teachers to ensure change is implemented.

6. Of the five influence styles, Asserting, Negotiating and Inspiring had a significant correlation to teacher retention rates. Boyd et al. (2011) stated that "the administration factor is the only one that significantly predicts teacher retention

decisions" (p.323). When comparing the influence styles and teacher retention, the influence style ratings are not necessarily the preferred style. All three styles were viewed by the collective population as a slight preference. This indicates that even though the preferred influence style may be different, the correlation between the slight preference of Asserting, Negotiating and Inspiring still affect teacher retention rates. One potential reason for these correlations could be the teacher's years of experience. It would be assumed that new teachers would prefer a more Asserting influence style while veteran teachers prefer a more Negotiating and Inspiring leader. Lezotte and McKee stated "to produce the desired results of improved student learning, an effective leader must be able to create and manage a process for change that inspires commitment and action from others" (as cited in Pepper, 2010, p. 44). Another possibility for these correlations could also be that 64% of the sample population was female and that women "demonstrate a stronger preference for Negotiating, Bridging, and Inspiring," (Discovery Learning, Inc., 2011, p. 3).

### **Discussion of Results**

The purpose of this study was to determine if principal change and influence styles affect teacher retention rates. Data was collected from two surveys and school report card data. The sample population included principals with three or more years experience from three Low-country region districts in South Carolina. Twenty-five principals (34%) completed the surveys.

## Change Style Indicator

Discovery Learning Inc. indicated that when given the Change Style Indicator, 25% of the general population would be considered Conservers, 25% Originators and the other 50% Pragmatist. With this distribution, the comparison between these norms and this study's population results are quite different (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1

### *Change Style Norms and Sample Population Comparison*

	Conservor	Pragmatist	Originator
Discovery Learning, Inc Norms	25%	50%	25%
Sample Population	56%	36%	8%

The majority of participants were considered Conservers (56%) with the minority being Originators (8%). "The change style model helps to reframe this conflict from 'right-wrong' orientation to the more useful framework which embraces differences in perspective," (Musselwhite, 2000, p.25). It is important to note that situations may dictate change style preferences. Depending on what each participant was dealing with at the time of this study may have impacted their change style preference. "People placed in charge of organizational improvements and change efforts advocate for the improvement strategies and process with which they are most comfortable and which match their own mental models," (Musselwhite, 2000, p.25).

Even though there were significant findings within this study in reference to change styles and influence styles, there were no significant findings when compared to teacher retention. With only two principals having a preferred style of Originator, there was not sufficient data to conclude if there was a correlation between influence styles and



teacher retention. Other points to consider when reviewing change style and teacher retention are the school report card ratings and teacher retention rates. Boyd et al. (2011) found that teachers who continue to have students make gains on tests are less likely to leave the profession. Dinham and Scott (1998) as cited in Bogler (2001) also stated that teachers are more satisfied with intrinsic rewards; which mean that teachers value their role in the educational occupation more than any form of extrinsic rewards. Out of the twenty-five principals that participated in this study, only one school was rated on the South Carolina State Report Card as being a Below Average school. The teacher retention rates ranged 71.3% to 93.6% which signifies that over 71% of all teachers returned to their previous school.

### **Influence Style Indicator**

When discussing influence styles, Discovery Learning Inc. found that "strong preferences and insignificant preferences are not uncommon, approximately 15% for each influence style, but that most respondents score in a mid-range suggesting recognition of and familiarity with more than one influence style," (Discovery Learning, Inc., 2011). The norm distributions for the ratings of the influence style indicator survey are 15% for scores ranging from 1-4, 40% for 5-8, 30% for 9-12 and 15% for 13-16 (Discovery Learning, Inc, 2011). Table 5.2 presents the norm distributions and the sample population's ratings for the influence style.

Table 5.2

#### *Influence Style Norm Distributions Compared to Sample Population Distributions*

Influence Style Score Ranges	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16
Influence style distributed norms	15%	40%	30%	15%
Sample population ratings	24.8%	22.4%	37.6%	14.4%

The sample population ratings were comparable to Discovery Learning, Inc. influence style distributed norms. This data indicates that the principals in this study had proportional preferences of more than one influence style. Wren (1979) as cited in John and Moser (1989) stated, "...a number of leader behavior styles may be effective, depending on the elements or the situation," (p.119). Depending on the situation, influence styles may vary according to the leader. Hersey and Blanchard stated that, "the more managers adapt their style of leader behavior to meet the particular situation...the more effective they will tend to be in reaching personal and organizational goals," (as cited in John and Moser, 1989, p. 118).

When comparing influence styles to change styles, two influence styles (Asserting and Bridging) were statistically significant to the change style Conserver and three influence styles (Asserting, Inspiring and Bridging) were statistically significant to the change style, Pragmatist. Conservers "lead through reliable, stable and consistent behavior" while Pragmatists lead by "facilitating problem-solving among people" (Musselwhite, 1998, p 16-17). "Collective leadership in the form of distributed influence and control has the greatest influence through teacher motivation and the elements of the work setting," (Wahlstrom, 2008, p. 594).

Spillane et al. stated

[leadership] theory is not so much a guide or template for the moves leaders should make, but rather a tool for helping leaders to think about and reflect on their practice. Leaders in different settings will use this tool in different ways and for different purposes. (as cited in Gordon and Patterson, 2006, p. 208)

### **Limitations**

The researcher surveyed all principals within three school districts in the Low-country region of South Carolina who had been in their building for three or more years. The findings were based on two surveys and each school's report card teacher retention rates and were limited by the following:

1. The principal participation in this study was voluntary and could skew the results. Only 34% of the principals asked to participate completed the surveys.
2. The participants were limited to the completion of both surveys and teacher retention data for the past three years. There were a few schools that did not have teacher retention rates on the school report card and were not included in this study.
3. The selection of the principals was limited to a specific region in South Carolina. The region was chosen based on the location of the researcher.
4. The selection of the principals was limited to years of experience at current school. This criterion was used to ensure continuity in leadership.
5. This study is examining only one possible relationship between leadership styles and teacher retention.

This study does not rule out other possibilities as to why teachers leave or stay in the profession.

## **Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to assess principal leadership styles, specifically change and influence, and the effects on teacher retention within the Low-country region of South Carolina. Five research questions guided the study; two specific to the sample population and three regarding the correlation between principal change and influence styles and teacher retention. The findings of this study support that there is a correlation between the principal's change style Conserver with the influence style ratings Asserting and Bridging. The findings also corroborate a correlation between the change style Pragmatist and influence style ratings of Asserting, Inspiring and Bridging. This study also supports that there is a correlation between principal's influence styles Asserting, Negotiating and Inspiring and teacher retention. As a principal, it is important to know what your leadership styles are to better address change within each school.

Based on this research, principal influence styles are related to teacher retention within the Low-country region of South Carolina. With these findings, there are implications for education that could be helpful for districts as well as pre-service and current administrators.

## **Implications for Researchers and Practitioners**

Even though there is no correlation between the principal's change style and teacher retention, this study could serve as a starting point for districts to modify professional development for administrators to focus more on the key elements of the influence styles Asserting, Negotiating and Inspiring which does correlate with teacher retention rates in the Low-country of South Carolina. Utilizing these surveys as tools,

principals gain insight regarding their own leadership styles and ultimately their ability to improve their school. It is evident that the principal plays a critical role within a school and does impact teacher retention but there is limited research that examines the relationship between principal leadership styles and teacher retention. This study is intended to assist districts and schools in determining specific skills needed for administrators in relation to teacher retention. Even though this study concluded that principal influence styles do impact teacher retention, the results only provide one small piece of information in determining the impact principals have on teacher retention.

Below is a list of recommendations for further studies based on these findings:

1. Replication of this study is recommended with a larger sample population. Have a minimum sample population of 100 principals to determine if there is a correlation between the change style Originator and retention rates or influence styles.
2. Conduct a follow-up study within these three districts utilizing principals that have been in their current role for five or more years to determine if longevity affects individual principal results.
3. Further research is needed to analyze other variables that may impact teacher retention. Variables such as teacher perspective regarding leadership and socio-economic status may provide a more complete picture of why teachers stay or leave the teaching profession.
4. Further research is needed to analyze principal change and influence styles.

While this study focused on teacher retention, it did not disaggregate principal gender, principal total years as an administrator, or school levels (elementary,

middle, high). It would also be worthwhile to determine if graduate programs affects principal change and influence styles.

5. Further research is needed to analyze different regions of South Carolina. The location variable may impact individual principal results as well as provide a wider range of teacher retention rates.
6. Further research is needed to analyze principal change and influence styles compared to superintendent change and influence styles. The principal's change and influence styles may be impacted by the leadership at the district level.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Berkeley County Request for Research Email**

Dr. Turner,

I spoke to Mr. Thompson and he stated that you would be the contact for approving my dissertation research within the district.

I am currently working on my dissertation which focuses on the effects of leadership styles on teacher retention with Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester school districts. My research consists of two surveys created by the Discovery Learning Inc. that focuses on influence styles and change styles. I am attaching the handout that I would like to administer to all administrators within our district that has been at their current school for the past three years. It is my hypothesis that there will be commonalities of influence styles and change styles of principals that have high teacher retention rates. This information would be beneficial to our district to assist with creating professional developments for current and aspiring administrators.

If you would like I would be happy to sit down with you in person if you need more information than what I have provided. It is my hope that I would be able to present my research at the May Principal's meeting to increase my chances of return rate by the principals. Both surveys are only accessible by The Discovery Learning Inc. website and I would be happy to send the link if you would like to review and take the surveys.

Thank you,  
Leslie Howder

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Berkeley County School District Approval Email**

Dear Leslie,

Thank you for responding to my requests for more information about your request to conduct research in BCSD. I am approving your request to survey our principals with two short on-line instruments. As we discussed, I believe you should take time to construct a sheet of instructions for accessing the on-line instruments that is foolproof. Additionally, I am recommending that you compose a cover letter (e-mail) addressed to the principals that summarizes briefly the objective of your research. If you will send this information to Superintendent Thompson, I believe he will forward it to the principals with his own note encouraging the principals to respond quickly to this request from one of our administrators.

If you find significant correlations between leadership traits and teacher retention rates, I know that the superintendent and his cabinet would be interested in receiving a copy of your findings 'down the road.'

Dr. Michael M. Turner  
Interim Chief Academic Officer  
Berkeley County School District

## **APPENDIX C**

Correspondence sent out to Berkeley County School District Principals

Good Morning,

I am a doctoral candidate at The University of South Carolina currently working on my dissertation which focuses on the effects of leadership styles on teacher retention. My research consists of two surveys created by the Discovery Learning Inc. that looks at individual influence styles and change styles. Since I am focusing on leadership styles and teacher retention, I will only be requesting your participation if you have been a principal for three or more years.

An automated email will be sent to your district email from Discovery Learning that provides you with instructions on how to access the surveys.

Similarly to the Myers Briggs Type Indicator, these two surveys will provide you with insight about your influence style and change style. You will receive your personal PDF report via email once the survey window is closed in two weeks.

Attached is the confidentiality sheet as well as a brief description of each survey. If you have any questions or concerns, you are more than welcome to email me.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Charleston County School District Proposal**

Achievement and Accountability Department  
75 Calhoun Street  
Charleston, South Carolina 29401

#### **Charleston County School District Request for Research**

##### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to provide pertinent information on specific leadership styles and determine if these characteristics affect teacher retention in South Carolina. The focus of this research will provide information on if there are common leadership styles of principals that positively affect teacher retention in public schools.

##### **Participants and Procedures**

Two surveys created by Discovery Learning, Inc. will be administered to principals in Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties whom have been in their current school for three or more years. Since the surveys are on-line, the researcher is requesting email addresses of principals that meet this criterion from each school district. Each principal will receive an initial email that includes step-by-step directions on how to access the surveys. Each districts survey window will only be open for two weeks. After the two-week period, each principal that completed the surveys will receive a copy via email of their personal results. Since the surveys are on-line, there are no written copies but enclosed are the researchers' personal report.

##### **District Benefits**

These assessments can provide your district with information about current principal influence styles (leadership styles) and change styles. With this information, a more defined professional development program could be built to align leaders' strengths to each district's mission. This information could also be used as a reflection piece for each administrator when reviewing decisions made in previous school years.

##### **Confidentiality and Privacy**

This research is being conducted as a dissertation study by a Ph.D. candidate at The University of South Carolina. These surveys are designed to collect information on specific Influence Style and Change Style. Both surveys were designed to collect



quantitative data on personal Influence strengths, underutilized Influence styles and Change Style preference.

Principal responses will only be used in a collective format to assist in providing information on Influence and Change styles and if there are any correlations to teacher retention rates. Individual pieces of information will not be used with specific names or schools. Please note that personal information that is provided will only be utilized as contact information from the researcher. Since the surveys only discuss strengths and underutilized skills, there is no possible physical, psychological, legal or other risks for the participants to participate in this study.

### **Data Development**

Each principal's influence style and change style will be entered into SAS, *Statistical Analysis System*, with the teacher retention rates of their school for the past three years. A Pearson-R will be conducted through SAS to determine if there is a correlation between specific influence styles and change styles. Once SAS has completed the Pearson-R on each principal, the collective data for each district will be reviewed for the researcher's dissertation.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant because it would be the first of its kind in the Low-country region of South Carolina. This study will involve K-12 principals in the Low-country of South Carolina. The three districts include Berkeley County School District, Charleston County School District, and Dorchester County School District 2. The two assessments provided by Discovery Learning will allow the participants to respond about their leadership influence style and their change style preference. Like any profession, principals must complete specific graduate coursework and pass an exam to receive certification. Both of these assessments will provide pertinent information about how to lead a school. With administrators utilizing these assessments as tools, it can assist them in gaining insight on their own leadership styles and ultimately impact their ability to improve their school. This researcher's contribution could assist with basic screening for school leaders as well as assist in building an administrative program that works on specific leadership skills. The significance of this study is intended to assist districts and schools in determining specific administrator skills that could positively affect teacher retention. The findings of this study will also help develop novice administrator programs as well as provide insight for professional development for veteran administrators of specific skills that positively affect teacher retention.

### **Enclosures**

- Informational sheet that each principal would be sent that includes confidentiality and privacy, contact information and a general overview of each survey.
- Copies of the researcher's personal Influence Style and Change Style report-which will be similar to what each principal will receive that completes each survey.
- Approval Exempt Letter from the University of South Carolina

## APPENDIX E

### Charleston County Approval Letter



June 13, 2012

Leslie Howder  
College of Education  
USC  
Wardlaw  
Columbia, SC 29208

Dear Mrs. Howder,

#### Administration

Dr. Nancy J. McGinley  
Superintendent of Schools

Melissa F. Matarazzo  
Executive Director  
Achievement and Accountability

This is to inform you that your request to conduct your research "Leadership Styles and Teacher Retention" has been reviewed and approved with particular concerns that you must address before beginning. These are:

- How will the district receive feedback on principals' style preference, influence orientation, underutilized style, and change style?

Please provide me with an answer to this concern via email. Once I provide you with final approval, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Except in the case of emancipated minors, researchers must obtain signatures of parents or legally authorized representatives on a consent form prior to a student's participation in the research study. All consent forms must contain the following sentences:
  - "I do not wish (my child) to participate." (This must be an option on the form.)
  - The school district is neither sponsoring nor conducting this research.
  - There is no penalty for not participating.
  - Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
- Assent of children who are of sufficient age and maturity should be obtained prior to their participation in research. In all cases, students should be told that they have the right to decline participation.
- Parents or guardians of students participating in your research must be notified of their right to inspect all instructional materials, surveys, and non-secured assessment tools used in conjunction with your research. This notification should include details of how parents can access these materials.
- Student social security numbers should never be used.
- Data directly identifying participants (students, teachers, administrators), such as name, address, telephone number, etc., may not be distributed in any form to outside persons or agencies.
- All personally identifiable information, such as name, social security number, student ID number, address, telephone number, email address must be suppressed in surveys and reports. Reports and publications intended for audiences outside of the district should not identify names of individual schools or the district.

75 Calhoun Street • Charleston, SC 29403 • Tel. (803) 937-6300 • Fax. (803) 937-6323 • [www.ccsd.k12.sc.us](http://www.ccsd.k12.sc.us)

- Any further analyses and use of the collected data beyond the scope of the approved research project, and any extensions and variations of the research project, must be requested through CCSD's Department of Achievement and Accountability.
- Researchers should forward a copy of the results of the research to CCSD's Department of Achievement and Accountability.

Please note that this district-level approval obligates no school or employee to participate. Final approval, consent to participate, and cooperation must come from the school principal or administrator of the unit involved. Please show this letter to the school principal or administrator.

Respectfully,

#### Administration

Dr. Nancy J. McGinley  
Superintendent of Schools

Melissa F. Matarazzo  
Executive Director  
Achievement and Accountability

Cc: Dr. Nancy McGinley

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**APPENDIX F**  
Dorchester School District 2 Initial Request

Mrs. Huffman,

I am currently working on my dissertation which focuses on the effects of leadership styles on teacher retention with Berkeley, Charleston and hopefully Dorchester school district. My research consists of two surveys created by the Discovery Learning Inc. that focuses on influence styles and change styles.

I would like to gain permission from your district to be able to distribute these two surveys electronically to principals that have 3 or more years experience within the same school. I am attaching my proposal, samples of the individual reports that will be given to each principal, and my dissertation approval letter from USC.

If needed, I would be happy to meet in person to discuss my research or I can call you at your earliest convenience.

Thank you,

Leslie Howder  
Doctoral Candidate, University of South Carolina

**APPENDIX G**  
Dorchester School District 2 Approval

Good morning, Leslie.

Here is a list of our administrators and their respective email addresses who have been principals in their current location for the past three years. I have notified them that you wish to contact them via email asking that they complete a leadership survey. Let me know if you have any questions.

Linda Huffman  
Assistant Superintendent of Administration and Personnel  
Dorchester School District Two

## **APPENDIX H**

### **Confidentiality/Privacy Statement**

#### **Confidentiality and Privacy**

This research is being conducted as a dissertation study by a Ph.D. candidate at The University of South Carolina. These surveys are designed to collect information on your specific Influence Style and Change Style. Both surveys were designed to collect quantitative data on personal Influence strengths, underutilized Influence styles and Change Style preference. The information provided could better assist school districts in designing professional development for aspiring administrators as well as current administrators.

Your responses will have no affect on your contractual decision to your school and your school district. Your information will only be used in a collective format to assist in providing information on Influence and Change styles and if there are any correlations to teacher retention rates. Individual pieces of information will not be used with specific names or schools. Please note that personal information that is provided will only be utilized as contact information from the researcher.

#### **Influence Style Indicator Overview (Approximately 10 minutes)**

The Influence Style Indicator is an individual assessment which identifies a dominant influencing style and assists in the development of skills to increase leadership effectiveness.

Influence inherently means that you are able to impact ideas, opinions and actions of others. When you influence effectively you increase trust, support and ownership. When you influence ineffectively you increase mistrust, intimidation and resentment. A key behavior of effective leaders is the capacity to influence those around them towards acceptance of beneficial outcomes.

Whether you are leading, following, and/or collaborating, chances are you need to influence others to be successful. Discovery Learning has definitely identified five styles of influence, Rationalizing, Asserting, Negotiating, Inspiring, and Bridging. Each individualized influence style report provides in-depth information about your dominant influence style, your influence orientation, and what area of influence that is underutilized.

#### **Influence Styles**

Within your report, each influence style provides an in-depth description of the value of the style, best scenarios to use this style, the product of when it is used effectively, and what could happen if the influence style is used ineffectively.

#### **Influence Orientation**

Your influence orientation is defined by your combined scores of your influence styles. There are two determined influence orientations defined by Advocating or Uniting.

Within your report, it provides techniques that are used and how your orientation supports your influence style.

### **Underutilized Style**

The final portion of your report provides information on how to develop your influence styles that are not as dominant. In this section, it provides specific practices to implement that can assist any leader in engaging all influence styles.

## **Change Style Indicator Overview (Approximately 10 minutes)**

The change style indicator is designed to measure preferred styles in approaching and dealing with change. This assessment identifies strengths and areas of growth of change style characteristics. Knowing your change style preferences can allow individuals to work together as a team, revising work processes and delivering more satisfactory results.

This assessment uses 22 situational pairs of statements to establish a ranking of how the respondent prefers to address and work with change. The assessment addresses both initiated and imposed change and places the respondent on a 133-point continuum between Conserver and Originator with Pragmatist in the center of the continuum.

This individualized report provides each participant with a synopsis of their strengths and their potential challenges based on their change style.

This assessment works in collaboration with the influence style indicator by looking at factors that can impact an organization's readiness to deal with and sustain change in challenging times.

**APPENDIX I**  
Principal Change Style, Influence Style Ratings and Retention Rates

<b>Principals</b>	<b>CSI</b>	<b>Rationalizing</b>	<b>Asserting</b>	<b>Negotiating</b>	<b>Inspiring</b>	<b>Bridging</b>	<b>3 year Average Percent</b>
P1	-10	10	1	4	10	15	83.8%
P2	-22	16	4	5	4	11	83.6%
P3	-50	13	9	6	4	8	86.3%
P4	-8	12	6	2	13	7	80.0%
P5	-12	10	2	10	7	11	81.7%
P6	-8	12	4	1	13	10	87.3%
P7	-6	6	8	1	14	11	85.8%
P8	-28	12	10	4	10	4	80.1%
P9	-16	11	1	6	6	16	89.9%
P10	-22	10	11	2	4	13	89.1%
P11	-14	9	14	12	5	0	83.8%
P12	8	11	6	8	10	5	76.2%
P13	-16	9	3	4	10	14	87.0%
P14	-18	12	4	2	6	16	84.0%
P15	-14	11	2	5	9	13	88.4%
P16	-40	13	8	1	9	9	84.4%
P17	26	4	4	8	14	10	90.8%
P18	-56	14	1	9	5	11	71.3%
P19	-14	12	11	0	11	6	88.4%
P20	-50	9	9	7	1	14	93.6%
P21	-22	9	10	1	6	14	72.2%
P22	8	6	2	6	11	15	86.1%
P23	8	9	4	6	10	11	81.2%
P24	16	9	16	2	8	5	84.6%
P25	8	9	2	6	12	11	84.4%