

**A STUDY OF THE ROLE OF THE ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL IN CHEATHAM COUNTY**

ELIZABETH ANN FERRELL

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SCHOOL PRINCIPAL IN
CHEATHAM COUNTY

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Elizabeth Ann Ferrell

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ABSTRACT

The problem of this field study was to obtain, organize and present data from elementary teachers and principals in Cheatham County in order to determine what the role of the elementary principal is perceived to be by this group as compared to how it is actually being carried out in Cheatham County.

The purpose of the study was to answer the question "What is the role of the elementary principal: instructional leadership or management?"

The method used to obtain this data was by the use of a questionnaire which contained an explanation of the purposes and questions to be answered, a set of directions, seven items of personal data, and a list of thirty tasks of the elementary principal. Half of these were management tasks and half instructional leadership tasks which were listed randomly. Participants were asked to rank each item on the following rating scale: (1) highest priority, (2) very important, (3) some importance, and (4) not important. Each item was to be ranked according to its importance ideally and according to the actual priority given it in the schools. The responses were tabulated and compared to determine what the ideal role of the elementary principal was perceived to be by this group and how it compared to the actual role of the elementary principal in

Cheatham County.

In addition to the questionnaire, principals were given a self-study form along with a letter of explanation. The self-study involved keeping a log of tasks performed each day for a period of five days in order to determine how principals spend their time, and whether more time was spent on instructional leadership or management tasks. After the results of the self-study were tabulated, these were compared to the actual role of the elementary principal in Cheatham County according to the perceptions of the research group.

Items of personal data were tabulated and comparisons were made between the perceived ideal and real role of the principal in instructional leadership and in management among the following groups:

1. Principals and teachers;
2. Level of experience (0-5 years, 6-12 years, 13 or more years);
3. Grade level assignments (K-2, 3-4, 5-6);
4. Level of degrees held; and
5. Size of school.

There were slight differences in the perceptions of the role among principals and teachers, levels of experience, grade level assignments, and size of school. There was no noticeable difference in the way the role was perceived by those holding the master of arts or higher degree and those with only a bachelor of science or

bachelor of arts degree.

The major conclusion drawn from the study was that there was no difference in the priority placed on management or instructional leadership. It was somewhat surprising that these areas of responsibility were considered to be of equal importance. However, there was a slight difference between the perceived ideal role and the perceived actual role of the elementary principal in Cheatham County. This perception was in agreement with results of the self-study conducted by the principals. This study showed more time being spent on management than on instructional leadership as the perceived actual role had indicated.

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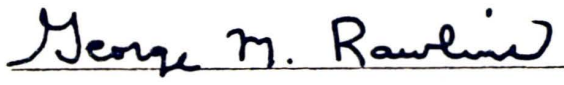
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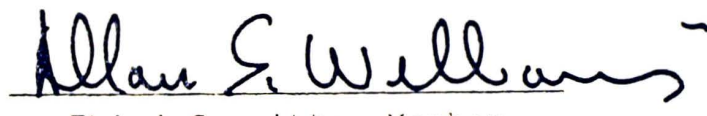
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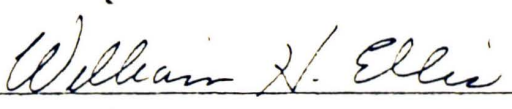

Major Professor

We have read this field study
and recommend its acceptance:


Second Committee Member


Third Committee Member

Accepted for the Graduate and
Research Council:


Dean of the Graduate School

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The role of the elementary principal is not clearly defined. Therefore, a clear description of priorities concerning the role or tasks is left largely to chance. Even though it is generally assumed the principal is to be involved with the instructional program, with pupil personnel, staff personnel, school-community relations, building maintenance, student discipline, school finance, transportation, and anything else which affects the school program, there are no guidelines to determine how much time is to be spent in each area of responsibility.

With the present criticism of public education and the tendency to put most of the blame on principals, it seems worthwhile to examine the role of the elementary principal according to the literature, and compare the findings with the way the role is perceived by elementary teachers and principals. The perceived role may be further compared to the way it is actually being carried out in Cheatham County.

Statement of the Problem

The problem undertaken in this field study was to obtain, organize, and present data gathered from the

elementary principals and teachers in Cheatham County so as to determine what the role of the elementary principal was perceived to be by this group. Perceptions of the ideal role were then compared to the way the role is actually being carried out according to the views of the same group.

The question which was to be answered through this field study was, "Which tasks should take first priority in the role of the elementary principal: instructional leadership or management tasks?" After the collection of data, an attempt was made to define the actual role of the elementary principal in Cheatham County.

Limitations

This study was limited in that it included only elementary teachers and principals. It did not include secondary teachers and principals, other administrators, or supervisors.

The study was further limited geographically, since it only included elementary teachers and principals in Cheatham County. It did not include educators from any of the surrounding counties.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to prioritize the numerous tasks and responsibilities of the elementary school principal so as to determine what the role is perceived to be as compared to how it is actually being carried out in Cheatham County.

It is further hoped that the results of the study will serve to point out a clear definition of the role of the elementary principal and will be used in planning and evaluating principal effectiveness.

Methods and Procedures

This study dealt with perceptions of elementary principals and teachers in Cheatham County for the purpose of defining the role of the elementary principal, and comparing the ideal role and the actual role as it is being carried out in Cheatham County.

With the help of the computer department in the Austin Peay State University library, a computer search was made for the purpose of locating current literature on the role of the elementary principal.

After studying the literature, it was discovered that one of the main problems with the job of the elementary principal is role ambiguity. The role has been primarily considered one of instructional leadership, but the many demands attached to the job today are administrative or management tasks which, in many cases, leave little time for instructional leadership.

A questionnaire was devised listing thirty tasks of the elementary principal, and all principals and teachers in Cheatham County were asked to rate the tasks in a priority order according to the following scale:

(1) highest priority, (2) very important, (3) some

importance, and (4) not important. Then, using the same scale, they were asked to rate each task according to the priority they felt it received in their schools.

The questionnaire, along with a consent form and explanation of the purposes of the study, and seven items of personal data was sent to the elementary teachers in the six elementary schools in Cheatham County. One teacher in each school had been contacted in advance and asked to collect the completed questionnaires, detach the consent forms to insure anonymity, and return them to the researcher.

In addition to the questionnaire, principals were sent a form for a self-study. It was accompanied by a letter of explanation. A log was to be kept of tasks performed each day and the time recorded which was spent on each task. This was to be kept for a period of five days in order to determine whether the role of the elementary principal in Cheatham County is involved more with management or with instructional leadership, and how this compares with the perceptions of the research group.

Principals mailed the questionnaires and self-study forms to the researcher in a stamped, self-addressed envelope which had been sent with the questionnaire.

After data had been collected, services of the computer department at Cheatham County High School were secured to assist in tabulating the results of the study.

Organization

The first chapter presents an introduction to the study, a statement of the problem, the limitations of the study, and methods and procedures by which the study was conducted.

The second chapter gives a review of current literature on the role of the principal, how the role evolved, how it has changed, and how it is expected to change in the future.

Chapter 3 describes the instrument used in the study, the research group, and the expected outcome of the study.

Chapter 4 presents by the means of tables and comparisons, the findings related to the study.

Chapter 5 gives a summary of the results of the study, the conclusions and recommendations for further use of the study.

CHAPTER 2

A Review of Related Literature

Since the role of the elementary principal is not clearly defined, a study of the literature could prove to be beneficial in an effort to determine just what the role should be. Many elementary principals enter the field without a job description, and without actually knowing why they were selected for the job (Manasse, 1982).

Ambiguity concerning the role has existed for many years. It has been assumed by the public that the chief responsibility of the elementary principal is that of instructional leadership. On the other hand, it is evident that management tasks take a large portion of the principal's time. It is the intent of this research to determine how the role is viewed in the literature and whether the role should be instructional leadership, management, or a combination of both.

History of the Principalship

In an effort to define the job of the principal, consideration may be given to what principals in the past have done, and how job expectations have changed with time.

In this country the principalship evolved with the growth of cities and the establishment of graded schools. The first school to have a full-time supervising principal

may have been the Quincy School in Boston in 1847. At that time duties of the principal were largely clerical in nature, including such things as keeping attendance records, reporting enrollment and attendance to the central office, and accounting for all school funds and supplies (Faber, 1970).

As schools became larger, the managerial aspects of the job began to assume importance. The principal had to classify pupils by grade, assign pupils and teachers to rooms, and coordinate the efforts of several teachers. It was toward the end of the nineteenth century that the principal began to assume responsibility for supervision and improvement of instruction (Faber, 1970).

After the formation of the Department of Elementary School Principals of the National Education Association, several images of the principal began to emerge. These included the kindly, sympathetic principal who took an interest in each child, the "headmaster" who knows more about any subject matter than anyone else, and the "administrative mechanic" who worked long hours on paper work and had no time to get to know pupils or to work with teachers in a meaningful way. Then in the 1960's, the principal as a "change agent" became a new concept with emphasis on innovation.

The principal as a leader is not a new idea. No one will argue that the principal should not lead. The only difficulty arises when one tries to attach a precise

meaning to this value-laden word (Faber, 1970:211).

Role of the Principal

"Principals are the key to success": this is a recurring theme which keeps appearing in research on curriculum change, desegregation, program implementation, and especially effective schools. All of the factors consistently identified as characteristics of an effective school are either directly or indirectly related to the effectiveness of the principal. Yet, few studies provide information as to what principals do or what differentiates effective principals from their less successful colleagues (Manasse, 1982).

Role Ambiguity

Despite hundreds of articles, studies, and textbooks on educational administration, until recently almost no research has even described what principals actually do during a typical work day. Local school districts have not been articulate in defining what they expect principals to do, or in specifying criteria for selecting and evaluating principals. Principals, themselves, often do not know why they were selected for the position, and thus feel no clear mandate for any particular style of leadership (Manasse, 1982).

The principal's role has been described as residual, consisting of what no one else is assigned to do. DeBevoise (1984) stated that the leadership role of the principal has

never been positively defined. Rather, it has evolved over the years as an accumulation of tasks that teachers were either unable or unwilling to perform. If the concept of instructional leadership is to be taken seriously, the residual role must be defined. To accomplish this, research needs to move beyond an examination of how a principal behaves, to an understanding of what the principal can do to facilitate the job of teaching and encourage student learning. In addition, it is important to know what functions are essential in diverse contexts (DeBevoise, 1984).

Ambiguity over the principal's role is the main reason for the recurring debate over whether principals are (or should be) managers or instructional leaders, a debate sparked by the evolution of the principal's role from head teacher to manager of a complex organization. It is no wonder, then, that principals consider ambiguity about role expectations to be the major source of frustration concerning their jobs (Manasse, 1982).

Management Roles

Selection and placement of personnel is an important responsibility of the principal. Selection of staff members is perhaps the most important step to be taken in actual implementation of the curriculum (Peterson, 1966).

After teachers have been selected, divisions of responsibility must be determined. All teachers should

have some responsibility in the continuous study and improvement of the curriculum and educational programs of the school. Certain personnel should have more responsibility than others. However, it is up to the principal to discharge this responsibility (Grieder, 1969). This delegation of responsibilities not only frees the principal to give attention to other tasks but also gives staff members more authority and helps them feel more fulfilled (Gmelch, 1980).

While teachers are certainly the pivotal figures in the educational process, their efforts are sometimes limited, subverted, or nullified by poor administrators. When the school leader (the principal) is frightened, uncertain, domineering, incompetent, or irresponsible, the teachers and the school reflect these traits. Not only is the actual function of a leader important, but also the group members' perception of what he/she is doing is of equal importance.

As cited by Shultz (1977), Hollander concentrated largely on goal accomplishments in his 1961 studies. The two most important characteristics of the leader are (1) competence in the group's central job as "task competence" and (2) active membership in the group as perceived by other members.

A study which has contributed to the understanding of the principalship is the 1978 Rand Change Agent Study (Pinero, 1982). In their research on factors affecting

innovative process and its outcomes, the authors emphasized the role played by the principal. The importance of the principal to both short and long-run outcomes of innovative projects can hardly be overstated. Three specific ways were identified in which principals supported new projects: (1) provided active support, (2) gave moral support to the staff, and (3) created a stimulating organizational climate.

Further confirmation of the principal's influence in management areas as found in the results of Johnson's study, as cited by Pinero (1982), is the impact of teacher unions in the day-to-day operations of schools. These studies showed that labor relations practices varied greatly from one school to the next in the same district. These variations seemed to hinge on differences in expectations of principals and building representatives. Principals who were effective in managing labor relations were neither autocratic nor had they abdicated their responsibilities to teachers. Teachers wanted principals to honor their contracts, but they also allowed for flexibility, amendment, and mistakes when the principal's motives were believed to be in the best interest of the school (Pinero, 1982).

Supervisory Roles

Among the many changes in the concept of school leadership is the specific change in the concept of the principal's role in the area of supervision of teachers.

The prevailing opinion among administrators seems to be that principals ought to spend much of their time in instructional supervision. As a matter of fact, it was reported in a study by Trask (1964) that three-fourths of the principals studied perceived their superintendents as believing that supervision was the most important duty of principals, and they should spend at least sixty percent of their time supervising teachers. Trask went on to say that principals cannot do this, but they feel guilty because they recognize the wide gap between "what is" and "what ought to be."

The process of evaluation is a part of the task of supervision. Program evaluation as well as evaluation of teacher performance takes high priority in the responsibilities of the principal. Evaluations should be focused on outcomes. When a program or plan fails, it should be determined why it failed. When a plan is successful, the good administrator does not conclude that its effectiveness has been proven, but rather studies the essential conditions for the success and uses this for further improvement (Cronback, 1982).

Changes in the Role of the Principal

Federal education programs of the sixties spawned its own bureaucracy; the principal's autonomy and possibilities for leadership were greatly reduced, while the time required for coordinating programs and responding to

their requirements grew. Principals trained for the traditional setting, where little outside interference was expected, were caught unprepared for the increased demands and complexities of the role. As a result, they found it easier to concentrate on their abundant management responsibilities, where they felt more comfortable, than on their instructional roles.

In the eighties, as federal cutbacks reduce resources, and block grants bring control closer to the local level, the principal's role is likely to be affected (Pinero, 1982).

Effectiveness Studies

In an attempt to elaborate on how principals contribute to effectiveness, Duckworth and Carmine, as cited by DeBevoise (1984), wrote on the importance of providing consistent standards and expectations for teachers. Despite the need and desire for autonomy, teachers need the backbone of organizational policy to sustain their efforts with new strategies. Staff meetings, staff development activities, and observation of and consultation with individual teachers provide opportunities for the principal to encourage and recognize good work, and strive to remedy slack teaching (DeBevoise, 1984).

In an attempt to answer the question as to what makes some principals effective, some behavior patterns of effective principals may be examined. Effective principals

have a vision of the kind of school they want; they set goals, they do not stop with limited resources, and they plan continuously for improvement. They spend much time observing classes, and discussing instructional problems in a manner regarded by teachers as helpful. The difference between effective principals and others seems to lie in their knowledge of quality instruction, and this drives their judgment on how to spend their time (Cawelti, 1984).

The quest for a clearer understanding of what makes certain principals more effective than others has spanned several decades. Many able researchers have already traced the evolution of this inquiry. Cawelti (1984) cited the research of Greenfield, Rutherford, Hord, and Huling on the subject of principal effectiveness. These reviews add to the literature on the principal's role as instructional leader, and evaluates what is known, what is not known, and what should be known about the role. Cawelti further referred to studies conducted by Bassett, Dwyer, and others which have developed a framework for examining instructional management in schools that consider context as well as personal characteristics as functions.

Effective principals will begin to communicate their ideas in a way people can understand. A good leader does not have to be articulate but must possess a knack for communicating with others and must be committed and persistent (Bennis, 1983). According to Kanter (1979), effective leaders should also be able to insulate themselves

to a degree, from the routine operations of the organization in order to develop and exercise power.

Taking over what subordinates should do can cause the leader to get so much dumped on his desk that it hinders his effectiveness. At the same time, this style of leadership can isolate the leader to the extent that lack of information becomes a problem (Kanter, 1979). The principal, then, must be careful to balance the delegation of responsibility with his/her actual involvement in routine tasks.

Miskel (1977) noted that principal effectiveness is a multidimensional concept that includes three components: (1) innovative effort, (2) perceptual evaluation by subordinates, and (3) perceptual evaluation by superordinates. This definition is complicated by the potential influence of situational factors, since a principal's performance apparently is contingent on various characteristics of the school's environment. In other words, effectiveness is not an absolute concept; it varies with differing requirements as school conditions change. Two situational variables which greatly influence performance are the interpersonal climate in the school building and the technology level of the school district.

These factors make it impossible for the principal to be able to spend more time on tasks which he/she feels should take first priority. The effective principal must determine his/her own priorities and strive to balance

these with other variables in order to meet the goals of the school.

A good leader will guide and develop individuals to organize goals which they share. As a result, vital resources are tapped, morale enhanced, human energies are combined to create harmony and enthusiasm, and inertia is translated into initiative. These are all evidences of good leadership (Teard, 1935).

School Climate

Even though effective principal leadership may be difficult to define, an effective principal usually is not difficult to spot because the gauge of principal effectiveness is the school itself. An effective school is seen as an optimum learning environment, one that nurtures the cognitive, affective, social, and aesthetic development of its students. The goal of the principal should be to develop such an environment. The role of the principal encompasses all the functions essential to achieving this goal (Nash, 1977).

The principal is believed to set the tone of the school. Critics who believe teachers are too satisfied with the status quo, and do not want to improve teaching procedures, believe they can be changed by the right school climate created by the principal. This atmosphere can only be created when the principal involves teachers in decision making, goal setting, and evaluating. Initiating and

nurturing such processes will do more to improve the quality of education than any of the attacks made on schools. Of course, the principal must constantly reinforce the importance of moving on from less threatening matters of students' playground behavior, lack of materials, tardiness and the like, to placing the real business of education at the top of their agendas. One must not underestimate the power of the principal to turn teachers' attention to students' learning processes (Goodlad, 1983).

In order to meet the diverse needs of students in a changing society, psychological needs of the staff must first be met. It is of utmost importance for the principal to work toward establishing an atmosphere of trust among staff members where weaknesses can be admitted without fear of recrimination.

Encouragement and support should be given to staff members. This attitude and atmosphere can be honestly related to students who rarely achieve success. Thus, the "domino theory" is applied. The principal's attitudes and approaches determine, to a great extent, the teachers' attitudes which largely determine attitudes of students (Abler, 1981).

According to Evelyn Carswell (1973), "The principal is in the position to make a difference." She suggested that one should take a look at the school's organizational pattern and answer these questions:

1. Is it organized for administrative convenience?

2. Does the action epitomize the philosophy that the primary responsibility of the school is to educate a unique collection of individuals successfully?

The principal, then, may create a climate of success or failure. Without a positive creative atmosphere, the school resembles a jail, a place where growth is sacrificed for conformity.

If a positive climate is to exist, good human relations must prevail. The principal serves as the key person and must have the desire to see the group live and work in harmony. Wiles (1967) concluded the principal must be guided in his actions by his faith in staff members and by a concern for the feelings and desires of others.

Public Relations

Much has been said about the principal's responsibility in establishing good school community relations. Experts in the field state again and again that the key public relations person is the principal. But little if anything is ever done to provide the principal with funds to attend public relations organizations. In addition, few principals are trained in public relations, since few school systems provide the means for inservice training in this area. Yet, one cannot minimize the importance of good public relations (Goldstein, 1977).

Robert Olds, vice president of the School Management Institute in Santa Barbara, California stated that the

principal who puts public relations at the bottom of his priority list is shortsighted and should expect his school's eventual breakdown (Cronback, 1982).

During the 1960's and 1970's a version of the neighborhood school once again became prominent. It was recognized that the community school's curriculum develops from the life of the community and is directed toward improving community life (Cook and Doll, 1973).

The principal should be aware of this and work with the community forces in order to determine or change the curriculum. But the question is: How much time should be devoted to this area of responsibility?

As community involvement in the school has increased, one of the most active groups which has emerged is the parent advisory council. Today, in public schools, approximately a million parents and local citizens serve on some sixty-thousand advisory councils. Many factors help determine the effectiveness of a council, but the most critical one, according to research, is the attitude of the principal (Foster, 1984).

Some principals may lack the background or leisurely contemplation to see the school as a social institution capable of solidifying a community. Instead, their minds are on having enough social studies books, handing out recognition to honor students, and keeping graffiti off restroom walls. They are leery of educational theorists who demand that schools foster social change while teaching

academic skills.

Up until now, parent and citizen participation in school governance has brought about little change at the local level. However, if those who influence and shape public policy continue to want some mechanism for citizen participation, it must be realized that the mechanism is already in place. The success or failure lies with the attitude of the principal (Foster, 1984).

In a Chicago study of what principals do and why they do it (Manasse, 1982), it was discovered that principals often see themselves as having little authority or discretion of their own, and caught in the middle between district regulations and constraints and the needs of students and staff. However, studies have found that the authority of the principal's office depends heavily on the decision-making opportunities that do exist.

According to the study's basic findings, much of the procedural policy of the school system was loose and flexible. Principals used their discretion to adapt organizational policies to the needs and interests of the local community, balancing the need to observe bureaucratic chains of command against the need to dilute the dehumanizing effects of impersonal decision-making.

Practices of short-circuiting the bureaucracy included finding loopholes in rules to solve staffing problems, inventing policy statements on an ad hoc basis to solve site-level problems, and using an "old crony" network to

identify good teachers or track down hard-to-find supplies. These extra bureaucratic maneuvers helped to keep the educational program of the school operating and to use this organizational apparatus to adequately serve the ultimate client: the student. This points out how principals are free largely to shape their own jobs to their own image. The Chicago study team found that as much as eighty percent of a principal's work day was spent on institutional management; in contrast, instructional concerns occupied only about one-fifth of the managerial day. This information leads back to the recurring debate over whether principals are primarily managers or instructional leaders. How can good principals reconcile the many functions so they can be effective at both (Manasse, 1982)?

The school principal performs a key role in bringing human and material resources from the larger environment to bear upon improvement of the ultimate client system to be served: the local school. As an educational linkage agent, the principal is positioned at the critical confluence of the interorganizational and extraorganizational forces which either foster or impede educational change and improvement. Although much has been written about the managerial aspects of the administrator's role, less has been said about the role of the administrator in fostering educational improvement. Still less is known about the unique linking functions of the school administrator (Nash and Culbertson, 1977).

The educational linkage process makes available the conceptual, technical, human, and material resources required for improving performance. These resources may come from inside as well as outside the school organization. The school administrator serves as a linking agent in providing leadership to the process of implementing educational improvement in the local school (Nash and Culbertson, 1977).

Concepts of Leadership

Leadership represents a critical element in the curriculum development process. Without strong leadership in instructional improvement, values and goals are not clarified, plans are not drawn, and activities are not implemented. Leadership is the intangible driving force in planned educational change. Despite its importance, leadership remains one of the least understood concepts in educational program development.

The question of what makes a good leader has interested social scientists for many years. During this century, there have been numerous attempts to analyze and define leadership. Such studies have evolved through three stages of inquiry: (1) a study of leadership traits, (2) a situational or environmental analysis, and (3) a study of exchange or transaction. In early studies, there was an attempt to identify characteristics or traits which were unique to leaders. Although many traits were studied and research still continues today on leadership traits, there

is little evidence that traits or abilities assure success. In a 1948 study by Stogdill, an important turning point in research on leadership focused on the situation. Stogdill conceptualized leadership as a relationship that exists between a person and a group in a social situation rather than a singular quality of an individual as a leader (Wiles and Bondi, 1979).

As much of the research shows, it is difficult to arrive at a specific prescription for effective principal-ing. However, the evidence indicates that effective principals tend to be actively involved in their schools' instructional program in several ways. Specifically, they:

1. Become knowledgeable about instruction, especially in relation to basic skills;
2. Set clear goals for the school's instructional program and announce these goals to students, faculty, and community;
3. Set high expectations for the behavior and achievement of students;
4. Emphasize the importance of basic skills;
5. Set expectations for collegiality and continuous improvement and model desired behavior;
6. Participate with teachers in inservice activities;
7. Use sanctions advisedly to further school goals;
8. Buffer the faculty from undue pressures;
9. Insist on giving priority to instructional concerns by, for example, concentrating time and effort on

instructional matters and delegating as many non-instructional tasks as possible; and

10. Make instruction and its improvement the central concern of the school.

Principals need to return to the task of instructional leadership that gave birth to the profession, but that has been obscured by increases in size and complexity (Pinero, 1982).

Leadership Goals

The complexities will not go away, and administrative tasks will continue to occupy some of the principal's time, but effective school administration requires that those tasks be performed in support of rather than impediments to instructional services. Responsibilities for scheduling, record-keeping, testing, and teacher inservice--to name a few--all need to be fulfilled. However, they are likely to be done differently if the principal begins by asking how this activity can further the school's instructional goals.

This call for an emphasis on instruction has always been a part of the rhetoric surrounding the principal's role, but it has seldom been supported in practice. Research evidence now lends legitimacy to the importance of instructional leadership in promoting school effectiveness and forcing a new look at the way in which administrators are prepared to assume that responsibility (Pinero, 1982).

The forces for change in educational leadership in the past two decades have roots in diverse and multiple social and environmental conditions. Educational leadership theory and systematic applied research, together with new methods and technologies of inquiry, communications, and instruction have influenced a new perspective of educational leadership (Granger, 1971).

To some extent, the distinction between management and instructional leadership may be artificial. Effective principals, by identifying the strengths and potentials in their staffs, may provide opportunities and developmental experiences for staff members while, at the same time, move the operation of the school forward and free themselves to concentrate on high priority activities. Effective principals influence the overall instructional program and the specific learning objectives of students and staff by keeping their vision always before them and integrating as many of their activities as possible with their goals.

This broader conception of instructional leadership is especially important with advancing instructional technology and curricular changes. Principals cannot acquire the technical expertise in all subject areas to personally provide instructional support. But, if the principal knows the issues, identifies the appropriate expertise and resources, provides necessary incentives, and orchestrates the processes for bringing resources to the

staff and putting them to use, then effective leadership does not always require the principal to intervene directly and personally in instructional matters. Educational research suggests that a vision of the change process may be necessary for principals to act on a daily basis and assess the effectiveness of various actions.

As the changing role of the elementary principal has been examined, it may be worthwhile to look at the possibility of a changing role for the future.

Educational Leader of the Future

The educational leader of the future will be an integrated generalist as well as a competent specialist. He/she will possess rich experiences and sound theoretical knowledge in addition to a healthy self-confidence and independence and a sincere human interest and concern. Participatory professional leadership will focus on the individual uniqueness of client problems and needs. He/she will work to achieve an optimum balance of service, mutual benefit, and management efficiency. Human interpersonal relationships in future schools will emphasize equality and interdependence rather than dependence and structural hierarchy. They will be productively open, not bureaucratically closed.

Ultimately, informed educational leaders will realize that human beings and societies can and must improve, not only their amoral systems of natural science, deductive

thought, and standardizing technology, but also their inductive social and aesthetic systems of belief, ideology, and ethical human responsibility and concern (Granger, 1971).

Summary

As evidenced by a study of the history of the role of the elementary principal, the role has changed drastically as educational changes have taken place. The role which was once one of record-keeping and making pupil and staff assignments has expanded to include numerous supervisory and management responsibilities.

The main problem which elementary principals face is that of role ambiguity. In most cases, the principal is given no clear job description and does not know what is expected of him/her. They do, however, realize that the success of the instructional program, along with administrative responsibilities, and public relations becomes their responsibility. The problem lies in finding a way to balance time and effort to link these responsibilities in order to serve the needs of the school.

Numerous studies have been conducted to determine what makes some schools more effective than others. Conclusions are that effective schools are those in which a favorable climate exists. Most studies are in agreement that the principal is the key to a good school climate, and the qualities of the principal seem to make the difference.

Since no one factor can determine the success of a school, the principal must be aware of his/her role as a linking agent to bring human and material resources together to serve the needs of the school.

It becomes evident that the principal of today must be an effective manager as well as an instructional leader. It is up to the unique qualities and expertise of the individual principal to decide how to manage time and resources to insure the effective operation of the school.

As the role of the elementary principal changes in the future, the role will take on a new perspective as suggested by the literature. The administrator of the future will be looked to not only for educational leadership in the traditional sense, but also for leadership in redefining and restructuring the roles and responsibilities within his/her own school (Bean and Clemes, 1978).

CHAPTER 3

Design and Procedure

The review of the literature revealed the importance of finding a clear definition and description of the role of the school principal, especially the elementary principal. Since there seems to be no clear mandate for any particular job description, principals have been left to decide their own styles of leadership and to set their own priorities as far as essential tasks are concerned, sometimes without much feeling of satisfaction.

Based on these findings, it was decided that a study could be conducted to determine how elementary principals and teachers in Cheatham County perceive the role of the elementary principal and how this perception compares to the way the role is actually being carried out.

An instrument in the form of a questionnaire was sent to the six elementary principals and the elementary teachers. In addition, the principals received a self-study instrument. The questionnaire was accompanied by a consent form to be signed by each person participating. The questionnaire, itself, consisted of a letter of explanation, seven items of personal data, and a list of thirty roles or tasks of the elementary principal. Fifteen of these were management tasks and fifteen were instructional leadership

tasks, which were listed randomly. Teachers and principals were asked to rank each task according to the priority they felt it should be given on a scale of 1 - 4, with 1 as highest priority. Using the same scale, each individual then ranked the same tasks according to the priority that is being placed on them in their individual schools.

In addition to the questionnaire, principals were asked to make a self-study of tasks they perform. A log was to be kept for a period of five days. The completed study was to be turned in with the questionnaire for the purpose of helping to determine what the role of the elementary principal actually is in Cheatham County.

Results of a study conducted by Southern States Cooperative Program in Educational Administration (SSCPEA) (Faber, 1970:212) were used as a model for listing specific tasks which the principal does. Tasks listed fall into the following areas:

1. Instructional curriculum development;
2. Pupil personnel;
3. Community-school leadership;
4. Staff personnel;
5. School plant;
6. Organization and structure;
7. School finance and business management; and
8. Transportation.

The thirty tasks from the eight areas were not listed in order, but half of them fell into the category of

instructional leadership and half in the area of management. Participants in the study ranked the items on a rating scale beginning with one as "highest priority" and ranging through four as "not important." Then they ranked the tasks according to the priority they receive in their schools (see Appendix B).

CHAPTER 4

Presentation of Data

A total of sixty-six questionnaires was received. The six elementary principals responded and a total of sixty teachers from the group of one hundred responded. This resulted in sixty-two percent of the group participating in the research.

When the data were collected, the thirty roles or tasks were separated into fifteen instructional leadership tasks and fifteen management tasks. Differences between ideal and real perceptions of individual tasks were studied. In the area of instructional leadership, there was a noticeable difference between ideal and real perceptions in the following three items:

1. Item 7, gives assistance to new teachers, was given a difference of 0.7 between what is perceived to be ideal and what is real.

2. Item 8, evaluates teacher performance, was given a difference of 0.9.

3. Item 15, supervises instructional program, was given a difference of 0.7 between ideal and real. Management tasks showed less difference between ideal and real perceptions of the group. Only one item, provides counseling for students, was given a difference of 0.7 between ideal and

real.

Results of the study showed no difference in the ideal priority of instructional leadership or management tasks as perceived by the group. The average mean for both groups was 1.9. however, perceptions of the actual priority as compared to ideal showed a difference of 0.4 in instructional leadership and a difference of 0.2 in management tasks. See Tables 1 and 2 for presentation of this data.

Table 1

Mean Ideal and Real Perceptions of Instructional
Leadership by Total Group

Instructional Leadership	Ideal	Real	Diff
1. Formulates curriculum objectives	1.7	2.3	0.6
2. Determines curriculum content and organization	1.8	2.2	0.4
3. Relates desired curriculum to time, facilities, personnel	1.8	2.1	0.3
4. Develops procedures for assessing and evaluating pupil progress	2.4	2.7	0.3
5. Provides inservice for personnel	1.9	2.0	0.1
6. Teaches a class when needed	2.2	2.6	0.4
7. Gives assistance to new teachers	1.4	2.1	0.7
8. Evaluates teacher performance	1.6	2.5	0.9
9. Develops methods for evaluating new methods and materials	2.2	2.6	0.4
10. Provides for professional growth of personnel	2.0	2.5	0.5
11. Determines educational service rendered by school and how affected by community forces	2.1	2.4	0.3
12. Develops staff organization in implementing educational objectives	1.8	2.1	0.1
13. Organizes lay groups for participation in educational objectives	2.3	2.7	0.4
14. Provides materials, resources, and equipment for instructional programs	1.5	1.6	0.1
15. Supervises instructional programs	1.5	2.2	0.7
Average Mean	1.9	2.3	0.4

Number Responding: 66

Table 2
Mean Ideal and Real Perceptions of Management
by Total Group

Management	Ideal	Real	Diff.
1. Institutes measures for orientation of kindergarten pupils	1.9	2.2	0.3
2. Provides health services for pupils	2.4	2.7	0.3
3. Establishes methods for dealing with pupil absences	2.1	2.5	0.4
4. Sets guidelines for student discipline	1.5	2.0	0.5
5. Selects and assigns staff personnel	1.4	1.6	0.2
6. Develops system for staff personnel records	2.3	2.7	0.4
7. Develops and implements plans for improvement of community life	2.6	2.7	0.1
8. Promotes school-community relations	1.6	1.9	0.3
9. Develops program for operation and maintenance of physical plant	1.6	1.9	0.3
10. Provides for safety of pupils and personnel	2.1	2.4	0.3
11. Prepares school budget	1.6	2.1	0.5
12. Accounts for all school monies	1.7	1.8	0.1
13. Accounts for all school property	1.7	1.9	0.2
14. Manages school records to insure accuracy and safety	1.9	2.6	0.7
15. Provides counseling for students	1.9	2.6	0.7
Average Mean	1.9	2.1	0.2

Number Responding: 66

Results of the self-study conducted by the elementary principals in Cheatham County showed an average of 65.8% of a typical work week to be spent on management tasks. In contrast, only 34.2% of the time was being spent on instructional leadership tasks. Table 3 presents the results of this study.

Table 3

Principals' Self-Study: Time Devoted to Instructional Leadership and Management by School Size

Grade Level And Number of Schools Involved in Principals' Self-Study	Number of Teachers Per School		Hours and Percent of Time Spent by Principals During 40-Hour Week in Each Role			
			Instructional Leadership		Management	
	11-20	Over 20	Hours	Percent	Hours	Percent
K-4	X		18	45.0	22	55.0
K-4	X		10	25.0	30	75.0
K-6		X	10	25.0	30	75.0
K-6	X		10	25.0	30	75.0
K-6	X		15	62.5	25	37.5
K-6		X	19	47.5	21	52.5
Average				34.2		65.8

Results of the principals' self-study seem to conflict with the perceptions of the group and the extent to which they feel the tasks are prioritized in their individual

schools. However, the discrepancy may be explained in that the study reveals time actually spent on tasks in these areas and the research questionnaire presents data concerned with perceptions of the group.

After tabulation of the mean ideal and real perceptions of the group as a whole, the mean ideal and real perceptions of principals and teachers were tabulated separately and results compared to those of the group. Results show that principals rated instructional leadership tasks with a mean of 1.6 ideal and 2.0 real with a difference of 0.4. Management tasks were perceived as actual and ideal priorities being about the same. They saw little difference in the way both management and instructional leadership were being treated and the way they felt they should be treated, ideally.

Certain individual tasks, however, showed a greater difference between what is ideal and real. For instance, in the area of instructional leadership, Item 1, formulates curriculum objectives, showed a difference of 1.2 between ideal and real perceptions by principals. Also, Item 2, determines curriculum content and organization, showed a difference of 0.9 between ideal and real. Item 4, develops procedures for assessing and evaluating pupil progress, showed a difference of 0.7, according to views of principals.

It was interesting that teachers' views were not in agreement with the differences between ideal and real in

these particular tasks. The conclusion was that principals feel they are not giving these tasks the priority they should receive. This is in agreement with the literature which states "principals feel guilty because they recognize the wide gap between what is and what ought to be" (Trask, 1964).

Teachers viewed two tasks in the area of management with a wider difference between ideal and real than did principals. Item 4, sets guidelines for student discipline, showed a difference of 0.6 between ideal and real. Also, Item 14, manages school records to insure accuracy and safety, showed a difference of 0.9. These two items showed teachers' perceptions to indicate that principals are not giving these tasks the priority they should receive, ideally. See Tables 4 and 5 for this data.

Responses made by experience levels were compared. Average mean perceptions of instructional leadership and management showed very little difference. However, some individual items showed a noticeable difference among educators of different experience levels as far as what "should be" and "what is." For instance, Item 3 listed in instructional leadership, relates desired curriculum to time, facilities, and personnel, showed a difference of 0.9 between real and ideal according to perceptions of educators with 6-12 years experience.

The group with 13 or more years experience showed a wider gap between ideal and real than did the other groups

Table 4

Mean Ideal and Real Perceptions of Instructional
Leadership by Principals and Teachers

Instructional Leadership	Principals ^a		Teachers ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
1. Formulates curriculum objectives	1.3	2.5	1.8	2.2
2. Determines curriculum content and organization	1.3	2.2	1.8	2.3
3. Relates desired curriculum to time, facilities, and personnel	1.7	1.5	1.8	2.2
4. Develops procedures for assessing and evaluating pupil progress	1.5	2.2	1.9	2.1
5. Provides inservice for personnel	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.9
6. Teaches a class when needed	1.7	1.8	2.0	2.1
7. Gives assistance to new teachers	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.6
8. Evaluates teacher performance	1.3	1.8	1.4	2.1
9. Develops methods for evaluating new methods and materials	1.2	1.3	1.6	1.9
10. Provides for professional growth of personnel	1.8	2.3	2.2	2.6
11. Determines educational service rendered by school and how conducted by community forces	1.8	1.8	2.1	2.4
12. Develops staff organization in implementation of school objectives	2.2	2.7	2.0	2.4
13. Organizes lay groups for participation in educational objectives	1.7	1.7	1.8	2.2

Table 4 (continued)

Instructional Leadership	Principals ^a		Teachers ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
14. Provides materials, resources, and equipment for instructional program	2.0	2.3	2.3	2.7
15. Supervises instructional program	1.3	1.7	1.5	2.1
Average Mean	1.6	2.0	1.9	2.3

^aNumber of Principals Responding: 6

^bNumber of Teachers Responding: 60

Table 5

Mean Ideal and Real Perceptions of Management
by Principals and Teachers

Management	Principals ^a		Teachers ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
1. Institutes measures for orientation of kindergarten pupils	2.0	2.2	1.9	2.4
2. Provides health services for students	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.8
3. Establishes methods for dealing with pupil absences	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.6
4. Sets guidelines for student discipline	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.1
5. Selects and assigns staff personnel	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.6
6. Develops system for staff personnel records	1.8	2.0	2.3	2.4
7. Develops and implements plans for improvement of community life	2.7	3.2	2.6	2.7
8. Promotes school-community relations	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.9
9. Develops programs for operation and maintenance of physical plant	2.0	1.8	2.1	2.4
10. Provides for safety of pupils and personnel	1.7	1.7	1.6	2.0
11. Prepares school budget	1.7	2.0	1.6	1.8
12. Accounts for all school monies	1.5	1.2	1.7	2.0
13. Accounts for all school property	1.8	1.5	1.7	1.9
14. Manages school records to insure accuracy and safety	1.7	1.6	1.7	2.6

Table 5 (continued)

Management	Principals ^a		Teachers ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
15. Provides counseling for students	2.2	1.7	1.9	2.3
Average Mean	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.2

^aNumber of Principals Responding: 6

^bNumber of Teachers Responding: 60

in Item 7, gives assistance to new teachers. They viewed this item as 2.0 ideal and 2.9 real with a difference of 0.9 in contrast to a difference of 0.5 for the group with 0-5 years experience and 0.6 for the group with 6-12 years experience.

The only outstanding difference in opinions among experience level groups was found in Item 2. This task was rated 2.5 ideal and 3.0 real by the group with 6-12 years experience, a wider difference than perceived by other groups. However, it did not seem to be rated as a high priority item by any of the groups. See Tables 6 and 7 for this data.

Results of the study were compared by grade-level assignments. They were divided into three groups of educators: K-2, Grades 3-4, and Grades 5-6. These groups did not view either role with noticeable difference.

Table 6
Mean Ideal and Real Perceptions of Instructional
Leadership by Experience Levels

Instructional Leadership	0-5 yrs. ^a		6-12 yrs. ^b		13 + yrs. ^c	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
1. Formulates curriculum objectives	1.9	2.2	1.7	2.3	1.6	2.2
2. Determines curriculum content and organization	2.1	2.3	1.8	2.3	1.6	2.2
3. Relates desired curriculum to time, facilities, and personnel	1.7	1.6	1.9	2.8	1.5	1.6
4. Develops procedures for assessing and evaluating pupil progress	1.9	1.0	2.0	2.4	1.4	1.8
5. Provides inservice for personnel	1.8	1.8	2.0	1.6	1.3	1.6
6. Teaches a class when needed	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	1.7	1.8
7. Gives assistance to new teachers	1.9	2.4	2.2	2.8	2.0	2.9
8. Evaluates teacher performance	1.2	1.8	1.5	2.3	1.2	2.0
9. Develops methods for evaluating new methods and materials	1.4	1.8	1.8	2.1	1.3	1.8

Table 6 (continued)

Instructional Leadership	0-5 yrs. ^a		6-12 yrs. ^b		13 + yrs. ^c	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
10. Provides for professional growth of personnel	1.5	2.0	2.2	2.9	1.9	2.2
11. Determines educational service rendered by school and how conducted by community forces	1.6	1.9	2.1	2.1	1.9	2.1
12. Develops staff organization implementing educational objectives	2.1	2.1	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.5
13. Organizes lay groups for participation in educational objectives	1.7	1.9	1.8	2.3	1.7	1.8
14. Provides materials, resources, and equipment for instructional program	2.1	2.1	2.4	2.8	2.3	2.6
15. Supervises instructional program	1.5	1.8	1.5	2.2	1.1	1.8
Average Mean	1.7	1.8	1.6	2.2	1.5	1.9

^aNumber Responding: 10

^bNumber Responding: 33

^cNumber Responding: 23

Table 7
Mean Ideal and Real Perceptions of Management
by Experience Levels

Management	0-5 yrs. ^a		6-12 yrs. ^b		13 + yrs. ^c	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
1. Institutes measures for orientation of kindergarten pupils	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.8	1.7	2.1
2. Provides health services for students	2.2	2.4	2.5	3.0	2.1	2.4
3. Establishes methods for dealing with pupil absences	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.8	1.8	2.2
4. Sets guide-lines for student discipline	1.4	1.7	1.5	2.2	1.3	1.8
5. Selects and assigns staff personnel	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.8	1.3	1.7
6. Develops system for staff personnel records	1.8	2.1	2.3	2.6	2.2	2.6
7. Develops and implements plans for improvement of community life	2.7	2.7	2.1	2.7	2.7	2.6
8. Promotes school-community relations	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.7	1.4	1.7

Table 7 (continued)

Management	0-5 yrs. ^a		6-12 yrs. ^b		13 + yrs. ^c	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
9. Develops programs for operation and maintenance of physical plant	1.6	2.3	2.1	2.6	1.3	2.0
10. Provides for safety of pupils and personnel	1.2	1.5	1.7	2.2	1.6	1.8
11. Prepares school budget	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.0	1.4	1.5
12. Accounts for all school monies	2.0	2.1	1.9	2.3	1.3	1.3
13. Accounts for all school property	2.2	2.0	1.9	2.3	1.3	1.4
14. Manages school records to insure accuracy and safety	2.1	2.4	1.6	2.2	1.3	1.4
15. Provides counseling for students	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.3	2.1	2.4
Average Mean	1.7	2.0	2.0	2.5	1.7	1.9

^aNumber Responding: 10^bNumber Responding: 33^cNumber Responding: 23

Neither should take priority over the other, according to the views of the group. See Tables 8 and 9 for this data.

Participants in particular groups, however, did view some individual items with a wider range of difference between ideal and real than did others. For instance, in the area of instructional leadership, Item 1, formulates curriculum objectives, was viewed as 2.0 ideal and 1.2 real, indicating that this task is receiving higher priority than it should ideally, according to the views of those in grades 3-4. Likewise, Item 5, providing inservice for personnel, was given 2.1 ideal and 1.6 real by the 5-6 group. Item 7, gives assistance to new teachers, was viewed by the 3-4 group and the 5-6 group as having a difference of 0.7 between ideal and real. The two groups were in agreement that the task is not being treated with enough importance. Item 8, evaluates teacher performance, was viewed by all groups as not receiving the priority it should, ideally. Item 15, supervises the instructional program, was viewed by the 3-4 group and the 5-6 group as not being treated as it should, ideally. However, the K-2 group was not in agreement.

The only item in management which showed a wide gap between what is and what should be was Item 3, dealing with pupil absences. All groups felt this should be given higher priority. See Table 9 for results.

Table 8

Mean Ideal and Real Perceptions of Instructional
Leadership by Grade Level

Instructional Leadership	K-2 ^a		3-4 ^b		5-6 ^c	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
1. Formulates curriculum objectives	2.0	2.3	2.0	1.2	1.7	1.9
2. Determines curriculum content, organization	1.8	2.2	2.0	2.4	2.3	2.6
3. Relates desired curriculum to time, facilities, personnel	1.7	2.0	2.1	2.4	1.7	2.3
4. Develops procedures for assessing, evaluating pupil progress	1.4	1.9	2.0	2.5	1.9	2.2
5. Provides inservice for personnel	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.1	1.6
6. Teaches a class when needed	1.9	2.0	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1
7. Gives assistance to new teachers	2.2	2.6	2.1	2.8	2.2	2.9
8. Evaluates teacher performance	1.3	2.1	1.5	2.3	1.3	1.9

Table 8 (continued)

Instructional Leadership	K-2 ^a		3-4 ^b		5-6 ^c	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
9. Develops methods for evaluating new methods, materials	1.7	2.0	1.6	2.2	1.6	2.4
10. Provides for professional growth of personnel	2.2	2.7	2.4	2.9	2.2	2.5
11. Determines educational services of school; how affected by community forces	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.6	1.9	2.5
12. Develops staff organization in implementing educational objectives	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.5	2.1	2.7
13. Organizes lay groups for participation in educational objectives	1.7	2.2	2.1	2.4	1.6	2.0
14. Provides materials, resources, and equipment for instructional programs	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.9	2.5	2.9

Table 8 (continued)

Instructional Leadership	K-2 ^a		3-4 ^b		5-6 ^c	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
15. Supervises instruc- tional program	2.3	2.1	1.7	2.4	1.2	1.8
Average Mean	1.9	2.2	2.0	2.4	1.9	2.3

^aNumber Responding: 23

^bNumber Responding: 16

^cNumber Responding: 18

Table 9

Mean Ideal and Real Perceptions of Management
by Grade Level

Management	K-2 ^a		3-4 ^b		5-6 ^c	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
1. Institutes measures for orientation of kindergarten pupils	1.8	2.3	1.9	2.4	2.2	2.5
2. Provides health services for students	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.9
3. Establishes methods for dealing with pupil absences	2.0	2.7	2.3	3.3	2.2	2.7
4. Sets up guidelines for discipline	2.4	2.1	1.7	2.1	1.2	2.3
5. Selects and assigns staff personnel	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.7
6. Develops system for staff personnel records	2.1	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.8	2.9
7. Develops and implements plans for improving community life	2.5	2.4	3.0	2.8	2.6	2.8

Table 9 (continued)

Management	K-2 ^a		3-4 ^b		5-6 ^c	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
8. Promotes school-community relations	1.5	1.8	1.8	2.0	1.6	1.9
9. Develops program of operation, maintenance of physical plant	1.9	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.5
10. Provides for safety of pupils and personnel	1.5	2.0	1.9	2.1	1.4	1.8
11. Prepares school budget	1.5	2.1	1.8	2.1	1.4	1.8
12. Accounts for all school monies	1.4	1.8	2.2	2.3	1.7	1.8
13. Accounts for all school property	1.5	1.8	2.1	2.3	2.1	1.8
14. Manages school records to insure accuracy, safety	1.4	1.9	1.9	2.1	1.9	1.8

Table 13 (continued)

Management	11-20 ^a		over 20 ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
14. Manages school records to insure accuracy and safety	1.7	2.0	1.8	2.4
15. Provides counseling for students	1.9	2.3	1.8	2.6
Average Mean	1.6	2.0	1.8	2.2

^aSchool Size by Number of Teachers. Respondents: 40

^bSchool Size by Number of Teachers. Respondents: 26

There is no wide difference of opinion as to which is more important in the role of the principal, instructional leadership or management. See Tables 12 and 13 for data.

Table 10

Mean Ideal and Real Perceptions of Instructional
Leadership by Degrees Held

Instructional Leadership	B.S. Ed. ^a		M.A. or M.S. ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
1. Formulates curriculum objectives	1.8	2.3	1.6	2.3
2. Determines curriculum content, organization	1.7	2.1	1.8	2.4
3. Relates desired curriculum to time, facilities, and personnel	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.9
4. Develops procedures for assessing and evaluating pupil progress	1.8	2.1	1.7	2.2
5. Provides inservice for personnel	1.5	1.7	1.6	1.5
6. Teaches a class when needed	1.9	2.1	1.9	2.0
7. Gives assistance to new teachers	2.1	2.6	2.3	2.6
8. Evaluates teacher performance	1.3	2.2	1.4	2.1
9. Develops methods for evaluating new methods and materials	1.5	2.0	1.5	1.9
10. Provides for professional growth of personnel	2.2	2.6	2.2	2.7
11. Determines educational service rendered by school and how affected by community forces	2.0	2.3	2.0	2.2
12. Develops staff organization in implementing educational objectives	2.2	2.4	2.1	2.3
13. Organizes lay groups for participation in educational objectives	1.9	2.2	1.6	1.9

Table 10 (continued)

Instructional Leadership	B.S. Ed. ^a		M.A. or M.S. ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
14. Provides materials, resources, and equipment for instructional programs	2.4	2.7	2.1	2.6
15. Supervises instructional programs	1.5	2.0	1.8	2.0
Average Mean	1.8	2.2	1.8	2.2

^aNumber Responding: 40

^bNumber Responding: 26

Table 11
Mean Ideal and Real Perceptions of
Management by Degrees Held

Management	B.S. Ed. ^a		M.A. or M.S. ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
1. Institutes measures for orientation of kindergarten pupils	2.0	2.3	2.0	2.4
2. Provides health services for students	2.5	2.8	2.4	2.6
3. Establishes methods for dealing with pupil absences	2.1	2.7	2.2	2.4
4. Sets guidelines for discipline	1.3	2.0	1.7	2.1
5. Selects and assigns staff personnel	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.5
6. Develops system for staff personnel records	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.5
7. Develops and implements plans for improving community life	2.8	2.8	2.5	2.8
8. Promotes school-community relations	1.3	1.9	1.7	1.7
9. Develops program of operation and maintenance of physical plant	2.1	2.3	2.0	2.4
10. Provides for safety of pupils and personnel	1.6	2.1	1.7	2.0
11. Prepares school budget	1.6	1.8	1.8	1.8
12. Accounts for all school monies	1.6	1.9	1.8	1.8
13. Accounts for all school property	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.9
14. Manages school records to insure accuracy and safety	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.9

Table 11 (continued)

Management	B.S. Ed. ^a		M.A. or M.S. ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
15. Provides counseling for students	1.9	2.4	1.8	1.9
Average Mean	1.9	2.2	1.9	2.1

^aNumber Responding: 40

^bNumber Responding: 26

with a B.S. degree. Item 10, provides for professional growth of personnel, was also rated a low priority item, but participants with a master's degree viewed it as having a wider gap between ideal and real than did those with a B.S. degree as in Item 7. Item 14, provides materials, resources, and equipment for the instructional program, was ranked as low priority, both ideally and real. It is assumed that the group felt this should be the responsibility of someone other than the principal, rather than to perceive it as unimportant.

In the area of management, two items were rated as low priority items. Item 2, provides health services for students, was given 2.5 ideal and 2.8 real by those with only a B.S. degree. Participants with a master's degree rated it 2.4 ideal and 2.6 real. Item 7, develops and implements plans for improving community life, was perceived as a low priority item, both ideally and real. The groups were almost

in complete agreement on the unimportance of this item in the role of the principal. See Table 11 for this data.

Finally a comparison was made of group perceptions according to school size. The groups studied were those in schools of 11-20 teachers and those in schools of over 20 teachers.

The conclusion was that there was not much difference in perceptions of the importance of instructional leadership or management according to school size.

Some items in the area of instructional leadership did show a wider range of difference between ideal and real according to the views of those in schools with over 20 teachers. These were Item 1, formulates curriculum objectives, Item 2, determines curriculum content and organization, Item 8, evaluates teacher performance, and Item 10, provides for professional growth of personnel. These ranged from a difference of 0.7 to 0.9. This difference was reflected in the average mean of perceptions of those in schools with over 20 teachers. The average ideal mean for this group was 1.9 and 2.5 real with a difference of 0.6. See Table 12 for this data.

It was surprising that these same tasks had shown wide differences between ideal and real in some of the other groups.

It may be concluded that individual tasks may be viewed as more important than others by some groups, and some groups differed in their perceptions of priority given these tasks.

Table 12

Mean Ideal and Real Perception of Instructional
Leadership by Size of School

Instructional Leadership	11-20 ^a		Over 20 ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
1. Formulates curriculum objectives	1.6	2.3	1.7	2.5
2. Determines curriculum content and organization	1.7	2.1	1.9	2.7
3. Relates desired curriculum to time, facilities, and personnel	1.7	2.0	2.0	2.4
4. Develops procedures for assessing and evaluating pupil progress	1.7	2.0	1.9	2.4
5. Provides inservice for personnel	1.6	1.9	1.4	1.3
6. Teachers a class when needed	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.3
7. Gives assistance to new teachers	1.5	1.8	2.7	3.3
8. Evaluates teacher performance	1.3	2.4	1.6	3.3
9. Develops methods for evaluating new methods and materials	1.2	1.8	1.6	2.2
10. Provides for professional growth of personnel	2.1	2.5	1.9	2.8
11. Determines educational service rendered by school and how affected by community	2.0	2.4	1.9	2.5

Table 12 (continued)

Instructional Leadership	11-20 ^a		Over 20 ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
12. Develops staff organization in implementing educational objectives	2.0	2.2	2.3	2.7
13. Organizes lay groups for participation in educational objectives	1.7	1.9	2.0	2.3
14. Provides materials, resources, and equipment for instructional program	2.1	2.5	2.3	2.7
15. Supervises instructional programs	1.3	2.0	1.7	2.4
Average Mean	1.7	2.1	1.9	2.5

^aSchool Size by Number of Teachers. Respondents: 40

^bSchool Size by Number of Teachers. Respondents: 26

Table 13

Mean Ideal and Real Perceptions of Management
by Size of School

Management	11-20 ^a		Over 20 ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
1. Institutes measures for orientation of kindergarten pupils	2.0	2.3	1.9	2.5
2. Provides health services for students	2.5	2.8	2.3	2.4
3. Establishes methods for dealing with pupil absences	2.0	2.5	2.0	2.7
4. Sets guidelines for discipline	1.5	2.0	1.3	1.8
5. Selects and assigns staff personnel	1.5	1.6	1.8	1.8
6. Develops system for staff personnel records	2.5	1.9	2.7	3.4
7. Develops and implements plans for improving community life	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.9
8. Promotes school-community relations	2.1	2.2	1.8	2.5
9. Develops program for operation and maintenance of physical plant	1.7	1.9	1.7	2.0
10. Provides for safety of pupils and personnel	1.6	2.0	1.5	2.0
11. Prepares school budget	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.8
12. Accounts for all school monies	1.5	1.5	1.7	2.0
13. Accounts for all school property	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.9

Table 13 (continued)

Management	11-20 ^a		over 20 ^b	
	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real
14. Manages school records to insure accuracy and safety	1.7	2.0	1.8	2.4
15. Provides counseling for students	1.9	2.3	1.8	2.6
Average Mean	1.6	2.0	1.8	2.2

^aSchool Size by Number of Teachers. Respondents: 40

^bSchool Size by Number of Teachers. Respondents: 26

There is no wide difference of opinion as to which is more important in the role of the principal, instructional leadership or management. See Tables 12 and 13 for data.

CHAPTER 5

Summary and Recommendations

Results of the study show there is no great difference in the way principals and teachers in Cheatham County perceive the role of the elementary principal as far as priority of tasks related to instructional leadership or management is concerned. This study leads to the conclusion that neither is deemed more important; in fact, both areas of responsibility are essential in the effective operation of the elementary school.

It is further concluded that there is no clear-cut division between instructional leadership and management tasks. Some tasks definitely fall into the area of management, but also directly affect the instructional program. For instance, supervision of the instructional program may be thought of as management, but certainly it is a responsibility of the instructional leader. Evaluation of teacher performance may be considered management or leadership, since the main responsibility of the teacher is that of the instructional program.

This study may have been beneficial in that it gave elementary principals an opportunity to evaluate their roles as they participated in the self-study for a period of five days. After studying how time was being used each

day, the group may have become aware of the importance of managing their time wisely. They may have seen the importance of delegating responsibilities where feasible in order to provide the best possible instructional leadership.

The main problem in making use of knowledge gained from the study lies in the fact that personnel is limited in the elementary schools. Principals may, of necessity, spend more time on tasks which they do not give first priority just because there is no one else to do the job. Certainly, if guidance counselors were in the elementary schools, and maintenance staff and clerical personnel were adequate, more time could be spent in the area of instructional leadership.

In the future, as a review of the literature suggests, principals may become program coordinators, providing both instructional leadership and management for a more diversified staff.

This can only be accomplished through some reforms in educational planning, especially in the area of personnel. However, this seems to be the trend at the present time. Certainly, if adequate staffing is provided and principals accept the position with a clear job description communicated to them, they will be in a better position to make the best possible use of their time, and to put as their first priority the task of serving the needs of students.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. Research Consent Form

Austin Peay State University

Dear Colleague:

I request your assistance in conducting a study to meet certain degree requirements at Austin Peay State University. Participation is voluntary and any information you supply will be held strictly confidential. No names will be used in the written report and the report will be available for your review.

No risks are involved but potential benefits may be derived through better instructional or management techniques. Local school officials are aware of this effort and have given me permission to conduct the research.

Title of Research: "The Role of the Elementary School Principal in Cheatham County"

Student Conducting Research: Elizabeth Ann Ferrell

Subjects Involved: The six elementary principals and teachers in Cheatham County

University Supervisor: Dr. Donald Lambert

Consent

I agree to participate in the research project explained above.

Signature _____
(Subject or Legally Authorized Representative)

Date _____

APPENDIX B. Questionnaire

The Role of the Elementary School Principal in Cheatham County

This study is being conducted for the purpose of determining the role of the elementary principal in Cheatham County. The question to be answered through the study is, "Which should take first priority in the role of the elementary principal: management or instructional leadership?"

In order to determine this, the six elementary principals in Cheatham County and the teachers in these schools are asked to rank the tasks listed on the following questionnaire according to the priority you feel should be given each. Then rank the same list of tasks according to the priority you feel is being given them in your school.

When responses are tabulated, a conclusion can be made as to whether the perceived role of the elementary principal in Cheatham County and the actual are the same, and which takes first priority: management tasks or instructional leadership.

General Data

Directions: Please check the appropriate blank in each group.

1. Degree(s)
 - a. B.S./Education _____
 - b. M.A. or M.S. _____
2. Present Position
 - a. Elementary teacher _____
 - b. Elementary principal _____
3. Grade level assignment at present
 - a. K-2 _____
 - b. Gr. 3-4 _____
 - c. Gr. 5-6 _____
4. Experience in Education
 - a. 0-5 years _____
 - b. 6-12 years _____
 - c. 13 yrs. or over _____
5. Sex
 - a. Male _____
 - b. Female _____

APPENDIX B. Questionnaire (continued)

6. Type of school
 a. K-4 _____
 b. K-6 _____
 c. Other _____
7. Size of Faculty
 a. 10 teachers or less _____
 b. 11-20 teachers _____
 c. Over 20 teachers _____

Principals' Roles and Tasks

Directions: Please circle your response to each item according to the following rating scale:

1. Highest Priority
 2. Very Important
 3. Some Importance
 4. Not Important

	Priority this task should receive ideally				Priority actually given this task			
8. Provides for the formulation of curriculum objectives	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
9. Provides for the determination of curriculum content and organization	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
10. Institutes measures for the orientation of kindergarten and new pupils	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
11. Relates desired curriculum to available time, physical facilities and personnel	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
12. Provides health services for students	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX B. Questionnaire (continued)

13.	Arrangement of systematic procedures for continual assessment and interpretation of pupil growth	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
14.	Provides materials, resources, and equipment for the instructional program	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
15.	Provides for inservice education of instructional personnel	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
16.	Teaches a class when there is a need	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
17.	Gives assistance to new teachers or others to improve the instructional program	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
18.	Evaluates teacher performance	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
19.	Devises a method for the evaluation of new methods and materials	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
20.	Establishes a means of dealing with excessive pupil absences	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
21.	Sets up specific guidelines for student discipline	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
22.	Selection and assignment of staff personnel	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
23.	Development of a system of staff personnel records	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
24.	Provides opportunities for professional growth of personnel	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX B. Questionnaire (continued)

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| 25. | Determines the educational services the school renders and how such services are conditioned by community forces | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 26. | Helps develop and implement plans for improvement of community life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 27. | Promotes a good school-community relationship | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 28. | Development of an efficient program of operation and maintenance of physical plant | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 29. | Provides for safety of pupils and personnel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 30. | Development of a staff organization as a means of implementing the educational objectives of the school program | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 31. | Organization of lay and professional groups for participation in educational objectives of the school program | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 32. | Prepares the school budget | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 33. | Accounts for all school monies | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 34. | Accounts for all school property | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 35. | Manages school records in order to assure that they are filled in accurately and kept safely | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

APPENDIX B. Questionnaire (continued)

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| 36. | Provides counseling
services for students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 37. | Supervises the instru-
tional program | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

APPENDIX C. Letter to Principal

February 28, 1984

Dear Fellow Principal:

I am conducting a field study entitled "The Role of the Elementary Principal in Cheatham County" as partial requirements for the Education Specialist Degree.

The purpose of the study is to determine whether the role of the elementary principal is involved more with management or with instructional leadership.

I would appreciate your help by asking you to respond to the enclosed questionnaire.

I am also enclosing a form for a self-study of the tasks performed by the principal each day. I would like for you to fill this in for a period of five days and return it with the questionnaire. This will help me to make my conclusion as to what the actual role of the elementary principal in Cheatham County involves.

Thank you for your help with this project.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Ferrell

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