CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In the conclusion section the researcher answers the research questions and puts forward suggestions and recommendations for future studies. In this segment each research question is highlighted and interpreted for further explanation.

Conclusion of the Research Questions

In this section the research questions will be discussed individually and the findings will be summarized and presented as conclusions.

1. The preferred leadership style among secondary school principals in Belize was transformational leadership style

The preference of leadership style among secondary school principals in Belize was Transformational leadership style which indicated that those principals practiced or displayed patterns indicative of idealized influence or charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. According to Bass (1994), transformational leaders motivate others to do more than they thought possible. These leaders set more challenging expectations and typically achieve higher performance. Bass (1994) adds that transformational leadership is an expansion of transactional leadership which explains the extra effort and duties exhibited by the leaders in secondary education systems in Belize. As a result the principals in the Belizean school context are displaying qualities that fit their present school cultures, which explain the type of leaders that are needed to develop or enhance the school systems.
2. *The demographic factors had no influence on the preferred leadership style among secondary school principals in Belize*

The statistical results should that the demographic data had no statistically significant relationship to the leadership style that the principals practice in the secondary school systems in Belize. However the in-depth study showed that there were other factors that were more relevant to determine the leadership quality or preference among the leaders.

3. *The secondary school principals in Belize showed greater similarities than differences among their leadership practices.*

It was interesting to note that the principals had more similarities than differences in their practices of transformational leadership style, which was preferred by the majority of the secondary school principals. Some small differences were seen in their practice styles, philosophies, influential factors and opinions on gender implications.

4. *The practices employed in schools by secondary school principals in Belize were gathered from a cross section of the styles; transformational, transactional and laissez-faire.*

The practices employed in schools by secondary school principals were generally a cross section of all the styles covered in the study. In their practice of transformational leadership style, leaders exhibited qualities within the four broad areas of individualized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. In individualized influence, leaders showed qualities of: setting an example, showing the ability of risk management and taking risk, showing personal sacrifice for the purpose of community, talking about important values, considering the moral and ethical consequences of decisions, and illustrating a sense of power and confidence. In inspirational motivation roles, leaders exhibited qualities of: providing clear vision,
talking positively about the future, talking enthusiastically about what needs to be done, illustrating valuable meanings for goals, expressing confidence that goals will be achieved, and building human resources. In the area of intellectual stimulation, the behaviors the leaders practiced were: seeking different perspectives when solving problems, having others look at problems from many different angles, and supporting intellectual development. Finally, in individual consideration, behaviors leaders practiced were that they spend time teaching and coaching, treat others as individuals rather than members of a group, and develop others’ strengths.

In their practice of Transactional Leadership style, the leaders exhibited qualities of concentrating full attention on dealing with mistakes and failures, failing to interfere until problems become serious, and suggesting rewards and punishments. Finally, in their practice of laissez-faire leadership style, avoiding getting involved was the only practice and was only shown by one leader from the group.

5. What are the general leadership philosophies amongst secondary school principals in Belize?

The general philosophies of the leaders were characterized into several categories. The principals believed that leadership practices that leaders need to exhibit in their roles are attributed to several areas relating to job, interpersonal interaction, character, education, and life.

Relating to Job explained that leaders should execute their job well and know that no job is beneath you, be prepared, create a culture for success, balance roles of service and leading, contribute positively, be agents of change, balance autocratic and democratic governance and be accountable in the system.

Relating to interpersonal interaction highlights that leaders should seek help; see the glass as half empty; dissolve conflicts quickly; have an open door policy; develop leaders and be cautious of negative influence, facilitate interaction, and provide personal needs because they are team builders.

Relating to character explained that the personality qualities of leaders are that they are willing to take risks, accept mistakes, take blame, stand firm on principles, be
dynamic, be visionaries, be dedicated, be intrinsically motivated, be responsible, be strong, compassionate and understanding, and be humble and meek hearted persons.

*Relating to Education* this section discussed that leaders should express their leaders should see educations are an equalizer. Also that leadership should be current with information. And, finally that leaders remember that the, organization is bigger than anyone person and power and authority are in the hands of the leaders.

*Relating to Life* included that the component of life is change, as referred in table 4.27, not about speaking but believing, “water against fire” philosophy, and that leaders are immaterial, it is the bigger goal that is material.

These pointers summarize the views of the leaders in the study, how they see life and how they think a leader should best serve and execute their roles as dynamic and proactive professionals.

6. *Gender has no significant impact on leadership style and practices among secondary school principals in Belize*

According to the leaders under investigation, their general consensuses were that gender has no major impact. However, some leaders called on individuals to be strong and more effective in their duties as secondary school principals. The principals interviewed believe that all persons, whether male or female, are equally capable to execute their roles within the system.

7. *What are the influential factors that affect the practices among secondary education principals in Belize?*

The influential factors that have affected the roles and practices of secondary school principals were family background and formal education system. Self discipline, experience and mentorship were secondary factors identified amongst the principals. Here one can conclude that other factors different from the demographic factors employed in the study could have been the decisive influential factors that have affected the principals’ leadership style. The other influence factors gathered from the in-depth
study are the factors that the researcher wishes to recommend for further research in the field of education. If policy makers, professionals and researchers are able to better understand the system and those employed in the system, they would be better equipped to mold candidates for the role of principals in the secondary school system of Belize.

Suggestions and Recommendations

The findings from this study imply that policy makers, researchers and secondary school principals need to take a closer look at the present leaders employed in the school system, so as to have a meaningful benchmark for the advancement of principals’ leadership in secondary education in Belize. The proceeding section highlights recommendations for three groups who hold the primary responsibility to govern the future of secondary schools with effectiveness, efficiency, and reliability.

Recommendations for policy makers in the education system in Belize

These recommendations are focuses on ideas for policy makers in the Educational system to use to uplift the current structures. The research hopes these would be beneficial to overall development and improvement with the system as a whole.

1. Create workshops and design courses based on transformational leadership styles

The Policy makers such as the Ministry of Education, Board of Governors, the Universities in Belize, etc., can use the results that transformational leadership style is the preferred leadership style that was practiced among secondary school principals in order to create workshops and design courses that would develop other leaders or aspiring leaders in similar pathways to the present leaders within the system. These leaders within the system can be exemplary role models to provide stories of the present status and practices of leadership in Belize. As a consequence, professionals will be molded with the knowledge and skills for meaningful leadership, so as to have a direction before entering into the system or whilst in the system.
2. Upgrading the educational system through meaningful advocacy of professionals

The findings also indicated that family background, formal education and peers were the most important deciders for the leaders within the present system. Therefore, the policy makers must make every effort to continue to maintain and upgrade the system, for it to continue delivering strong educational background to professionals in this field. Secondly, the system must continue to promote family values, since good family background has molded leaders. Families within the society should support their children because it is only through proper nurturing that great leaders can be molded.

3. Use transformational leadership style to modify evaluation criterion for principals

The policy makers can also use the information that transformational leadership style is the preferred practice to modify the criteria used to evaluate principals. The indicators in Bass (1988) are great ideas for meaningful evaluation. The factors are: idealized influence or charismatic leadership, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. These could be included in the forms presently used to evaluate principals, since these are areas which the principals reported were effective to govern schools.

4. Use the practice style of transformational leadership style to hire new leaders

Lastly, the Ministry of Education and the Board of Governor can also utilize the information that transformational leadership style was the dominantly practiced leadership style to select candidates for the principal position, i.e., when hiring new personnel to manage the schools. The recruiting committee can use the information provided by Bass (1988) to question the candidate’s responses to the various situations or philosophies of how they can effectively manage and operate a school environment. The Ministry of Education can benefit tremendously from these results in order to develop and improve the present state of the institutional structure in modern Belize. The researcher is convinced that if the Boards of management and the ministry would collaborate to fund more research in these areas, then the information could definitely be used to contribute to the overall development of the educational system in Belize.
Recommendations for researchers

These recommendations are intended for future research in leadership in the field of education. The research hopes these ideas would be beneficial to overall development and improvement of leaders with the school system in Belize.

1. Explore more in-depth how subordinates view the principals as leaders

In the area of research, researchers could explore more in-depth how the subordinates actually view the principals as leaders. The same Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (5X Forms) can be modified and administered to subordinates to test the extra effort, satisfaction and efficiency of the leaders within the system. This information would compliment the current research and truly give greater importance to the educational leadership in Belize.

2. Create a questionnaire to test the significant influential factors generated from this study against leadership style

The second recommendation would be for researchers to create a questionnaire to test the factors resulting from the qualitative findings in this paper -- such as family influence, previous job, mentors and other influential factors -- against leadership style. None of the results obtained from the demographic factors tested in the present study were statistically significantly related to the transformational leadership style preference among principals. However, the results from the qualitative findings in this study can be used to test the influential factors that were deemed significant against the dominantly preferred leadership style practice, which was identified in this study as transformational leadership style.

3. Determine the impact that transformational leadership has on employees and schools’ performance results

Additional research is also needed to determine the impact that transformational leadership has on employees’ and schools’ performance. Future research could also investigate whether the transformational leadership style contributes significantly to the
overall CXC performance, which is a measuring indicator used by the Ministry of Education and the Community to identify the outstanding schools in the country. In addition, further research could be conducted to measure reliability and validity of performance indicators against leadership style.

4. Test the leadership style of the entire population of principals in Belize

Another area for future researchers could be to target all other school principals in the country of Belize to test whether or not transformational leadership style is indicative of the population. The investigation could test each group of school principal, i.e., pre-school, primary, and tertiary, to study each group’s propensity towards the MLQ Forms 5X factors. This test may yield data to determine if these groups are homogenous or diverse. The information would be useful for the policy makers to promote strong leadership programs. The additional research in these areas would contribute significantly to the limited academic research currently available to scholars, professionals and the Ministry of Education in Belize.

5. Further knowledge of Bass’s (1985) model

The researcher is convinced that the leadership styles and practices of principals are important to the overall operation and management of the school system functioning in a globally competitive and rapidly changing environment. Therefore, further knowledge of Bass’s (1985) transformational leadership model in secondary school environments is needed to understand further the development and effectiveness of leadership, related competencies, capabilities and performance of the leaders and organization. (Bass, 1988)

Recommendations for administrative leaders (principals)

These recommendations are for principals in Belize secondary schools and the researcher hopes these ideas would be employed for the betterment of education in Belize.
1. Strengthen leadership skills

To all the principals in the secondary school system the researcher would first like to congratulate them on the wonderful job they are doing and recognize that the leaders in the system are all extremely dynamic and energetic in their individual school cultures. Acting as administrator of a secondary school demands the best leadership skills that a principal can muster. While transactional or laissez-faire might be needed in emergency situations, transformational leadership is deemed to be the most effective in the existing culture in secondary schools in Belize, which expects multifaceted leaders. Transformational leadership calls principals to be charismatic leaders who are able to dynamically move followers, as well as inspirational motivators who are intellectually stimulating and able to recognize individuals for who they are and mold them into meaningful leaders. The faculty should assist in developing policies, but the execution of the policy is the overall responsibility of the principals.

2. Socialization process in meaningful leadership

Leadership may also be conceptualized as a social process since many influential factors from family, peers and mentors were significant in the establishment of the existing leaders in our school system. Leadership is a social process which involves working with groups of people that leader is called to manage and develop to their maximum potential. No one type of personality or trait was significant but rather a mixture of the leadership qualities; the situation and the ability of the person to lead in that situation seems to be what is most important. Therefore, the administrator who leads with vision, humility, and concern is vitally needed in our secondary schools today. Because schools are service agencies which deal with humans, it is extremely important for the principal to be able to establish a humane environment in the schools which permits each individual to have a sense of self worth. One common practice that was constantly repeated was the need for teamwork and open communication, so that all the members could play an active role in the upkeep of the structure. This factor is very important and should be recognized for effective management and improvement of the school system.
3. Use the study as a benchmark for improvement of leadership style

Next the researcher would like to suggest to employed and aspiring principals within the secondary school system to use the data presented in this research in order to explore the type of leader that they are and how they can measure up to the standards. The information can be used as a benchmark for leaders to modify and adopt in order to suit their individual needs and school environments. Principals need to be skilled leaders to assist in the development and implementation of bargained agreements for teachers, parents and students if they are to retain flexibility to initiate needed actions and to insure that teachers’ and student’s performance exceeds minimal requirements. Our school systems in Belize continue to yearn for effective, caring, devoted, dedicated, trustworthy, and efficient leadership.

4. Gender result supports that males and females are equally capable to lead schools

Next the researchers would like to briefly discuss the effect of gender on management. After carefully analyzing the data, gender was determined as having no significant impact on leaders. This finding encourages all persons who are physically and mentally ready to become sound leaders to venture into the arena because the system needs good leaders to shape future leaders. Males and females alike are capable of running schools in our Belizean context

As was reiterated by the principals in the interview, principals need to be strong and not be prone to negative influences that could prevent meaningful governance. In conclusion, the researcher hopes that the information gathered from this study will be used for the betterment of leaders’ roles and practices within the secondary school system’s in Belize.