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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO  
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY  
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN MARCOS

Supports for Ethnically Diverse Teacher Leaders

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

in

Educational Leadership

by

Olga E. West

Committee in Charge:

San Diego State University

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University of California, San Diego

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2008

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The Dissertation of Olga E. West is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm:

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Chair

University of California, San Diego  
San Diego State University  
California State University, San Marcos

2008

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my family. I want to recognize my husband for his patience. I want to encourage my children, Holly and Cooper West, to take opportunities to learn and grow. I give special thanks to my parents, George and Olga Erickson, for instilling in me the desire for learning. All of my family members have supported my never-ending appetite for learning and my desire to make a difference. Thank you for your understanding and acceptance of my goals for higher education as well as my personal and professional growth.

I also dedicate this work to the students and staff that I have watched blossom. I encourage them to continue to grow and challenge the world both professionally and personally. I give a special wish of success to Holly West, Cooper West, Astrid Rea, Pilar Bada, Danielle Salazar, Cheyene Silva, Leticia Hernandez, Dianna Bugel, and Rene Gil. I encourage you to reach for the stars. The world is yours for the taking!

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

API – Academic Performance Index

BCLAD- Bilingual Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development Certificate

BTSA – Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment

CLAD – Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development Certificate

CST – California State Test

GATE – Gifted and Talented Education

GLAD – Guided Language Acquisition Design

ILT – Instructional Leadership Team

NBCT – National Board Certified Teacher

NCLB – No Child Left Behind

NFRLP – National Free and Reduced Lunch Program

OARS – Online Assessment and Reporting System

PAR – Peer Assistance and Review

PTA – Parent Teacher Association

SST – Student Study Team

TLSS – Teacher Leadership School Survey

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## PUBLICATIONS

“Supports for Ethnically Diverse Teacher Leaders”

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Professors Brock Allen and Donn Ritchie
- Educational Leadership  
Professors Ian Pumpian, Nancy Frey & Randall Souviney  
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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Supports for Ethnically Diverse Teacher Leaders

by

Olga E. West

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

University of California, San Diego, 2008  
San Diego State University, 2008  
California State University, San Marcos: 2008

Professor Ian Pumpian, Chair

The purpose of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is to ensure that all students meet academic standards. However, in the last few years, many schools that serve diverse student populations have encountered difficulties in meeting NCLB objectives. It is argued that principals and district administrators cannot be the only leaders making the instructional decisions for continuous improvement in student achievement. The effective schools research indicates that sharing instructional leadership has a positive impact on school achievement. Prior research shows that teachers make valuable and essential assets to this effort as their role changes from classroom teacher to teacher leader. These studies have identified the skills and

characteristics of successful teachers, teacher leaders, the barriers in becoming teacher leaders, and how the administrator can support the development of teacher leaders.

The current study specifically examined the supports provided to teacher leaders and how principals supported ethnically diverse teacher leaders. The instrument utilized was the Teacher Leadership School Survey developed by Katzenmeyer & Moller (2001). This instrument identified seven areas that support teacher leaders. These supports for teacher leaders included developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication, and positive environment. The participants for this study were 67 teacher leaders from a large elementary school district in Southern California. The study utilized mixed methods including the collection of archival data, a survey, focus groups, and interviews. The researcher conducted three focus groups with ethnically diverse teacher leaders and three interviews with principals that identified these teacher leaders. The study examined effective elements of support for teacher leaders reported in the literature and contrasted their impact on the development of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. The data was analyzed through descriptive statistics, independent-samples t-tests, Mann-Whitney U Tests, and coding of focus groups, and interviews. Significant differences were found between how White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders perceived supports with regard to recognition, autonomy, and support for professional development. In addition, new themes also emerged regarding effective supports, continuing barriers, and key characteristics of teacher leaders.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, the educational demands on teachers and administrators have increased due to the standards movement (U.S. Department of Education, 1994), No Child Left Behind Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2001), state accountability policies, and the need for students to meet the academic demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace (U.S. Department of Education, 1983; U.S. Department of Education, 1994). There is pressure from the politicians, leaders in both minority and business communities, and parents to highly educate all students. A school's failure to meet the academic demands on the prescribed time line brings required sanctions and actions. The state and federal governments publicly label the school as failing. They mandate that the school and/or district offer transportation out of the local school. They also require that the school and/or district offer tutoring to students. Further sanctions from the state and federal government include extending the school day, requiring professional development for staff, assigning an outside expert for the "failing" school, replacing some or all of the school staff including the principal, converting to a charter school, and/or being taken over by the state. The eyes are on students and schools to meet the multiple proficiency marks or publicly receive a failing grade. Evaluating the success of schools has been mixed and controversial as there are differing opinions on what measures to use for the diverse student populations and what constitutes proficiency from state to state. No matter, the pressure is on for all students to meet the designated targets. How they get there is left up to the schools and/or districts.

The state and federal demands for high student achievement and the sanctions for not meeting the targets has changed how we structure the day-to-day operations of schools. Improving student achievement is a complex mission. Because it is complex, principals and district administrators cannot be the only leaders making the decisions for continuous improvement in student achievement. Principals need substantial participation by other educators (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). Teachers are valuable and essential assets in this effort, and their role is evolving from classroom teacher to teacher leader.

### *Statement of the Problem*

Decision-making increasingly occurs at the school site with teacher leadership and input in mind. This change in teachers' role must be addressed methodically. The need to identify the characteristics of teacher leaders and the supports needed to have them effectively work with students, as well as their adult peers, is vital to the school. The effective use of teacher leaders with support from administrators can create and foster professional learning communities and facilitate a shift in school culture. Many studies suggest that these changes in roles and relationships result in high student achievement and effective schools (Barth, 2001b; Chlares A. Dana Center, 1999; DuFour, 2004; Krisko, 2001; Lambert, 2003).

Many schools serve large numbers of diverse students. The tasks are too many to accomplish alone as a site administrator. Shared leadership is a theoretical construct that involves "principals, teachers, support staff, and students ... coming together in leadership teams ... to jointly make decisions required to manage the school and improve the learning environment" (Chrispeels, 2004, p. 5). Encouraging

and cultivating teachers as leaders provides a support structure for students, staff, parents, teacher colleagues, and administrators. It is important to cultivate all teacher leaders but also those who are as diverse as the students are. This shared leadership brings a level of enjoyment to the work that is absent when you work in isolation. However, engaging the teachers as leaders is no easy task. Teachers often resist the role as teacher leader. They do not consider it as a part of their job to be teacher leaders. They are modest in wanting to share their craft with others or be in the spotlight. There are barriers and lack of supports that prevent the development of teacher leaders. They also fear making the step from teaching students to teaching teachers and their peers.

#### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to survey current teacher leaders to identify the supports and barriers to their ability to assume leadership roles. The supports and barriers will be examined to make suggestions on how to support and encourage ethnically diverse teacher leaders. The researcher will make suggestions on how administrators and educators can encourage talented and successful diverse teachers to recognize their skill and have them step up to a role as teacher leader and share with others. The involvement of diverse teacher leaders in the school reform process is important for our expanding diverse student population.

#### *Research Questions*

The main research question for this study is: What supports do diverse teacher leaders need to facilitate their participation in school leadership? The following questions will be used to guide the research. They are:



1. What supports do teacher leaders receive as teacher leaders?
2. What barriers do teacher leaders face as teacher leaders?
3. Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity?
4. Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity and school demographics?
5. How do principals and teacher leaders characterize teacher leaders?
6. Do principals differentiate supports based on the ethnic diversity of teacher leaders?

### *Significance of the Study*

This research study will provide educational leaders and policy makers the supports that teacher leaders identified as valuable. In particular, the supports for ethnically diverse teacher leaders will be analyzed. There is much literature around the supports and barriers for teacher leaders. However, little effort is made to examine if ethnicity or school demographics are factors in the types of supports that teacher leaders need to take on teacher leader roles within the school. Through the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods, this study will contribute to the paucity of research on diversity and teacher leaders.

### *Definition of Terms*

- Teacher Leadership - Teacher leadership is when teachers help “sustain changes that enhance student learning, improve instruction, maximize participation in decision making, and align resources to the school’s vision and purpose” (Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003, p. 25).

- **Teacher Leader** – A teacher leader is defined as a teacher who formally or informally provides leadership for instruction within and beyond the classroom, serves students and/or staff, is in charge of school operational duties, and/or serves in a decision-making role within the school or district. (Frost & Durrant, 2003; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).
- **Critical Race Theory** – CRT is a framework useful to assist in the examination of the manner in which race and racism affect the practices and policies in education and society.
- **Diversity**- A representative mix of racial and ethnic groups that make up the total population (Winston, 2001).
- **Ethnic Minority** – A group of people who differ racially from a larger group. The ethnic minorities identified for this research study include Hispanic, Asian, Filipino, African-American, Pacific Islander, Other, and responses to more than one category.
- **Ethnic Identity** – How individuals define themselves as a member of a specific group.
- **Ethnically Diverse** – A group of people who responded to the demographic survey with a response other than White, not Hispanic.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last decade, the educational demands on teachers and administrators have increased due to the standards movement (U.S. Department of Education, 1994), No Child Left Behind Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2001), state accountability policies, and the need for students to meet the academic demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace (U.S. Department of Education, 1983; U.S. Department of Education, 1994). There is pressure from the politicians, leaders in both minority and business communities, and parents to highly educate all students. A school's failure to meet the academic demands on the prescribed time line brings required sanctions and actions. Under NCLB, the state and federal governments publicly label schools as failing. They mandate that schools and/or districts offer transportation out of the local schools. They also require that the schools and/or districts offer tutoring to students. Further sanctions from the state and federal government include extending the school day, requiring professional development for staff, assigning an outside expert for the "failing" school, replacing some or all of the school staff including the principal, converting to a charter school, and/or being taken over by the state (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). The eyes are on students and schools to meet the multiple proficiency marks or publicly receive a failing grade. Evaluating the success of schools has been mixed and controversial as there are differing opinions on what measures to use for the diverse student populations and what constitutes proficiency from state to state. No matter, the pressure is on for all students to meet the designated targets. How they get there is left up to the schools and/or districts.

### *Critical Race Theory*

A Critical Race Theory (CRT) framework is useful to assist in the examination of the manner in which race and racism affect the practices and policies in education and society. CRT in education explores the ways in which historical structures, policies, practices, and laws that espouse equity perpetuate racial/ethnic inequality (Solorzano, Villalpando, & Oseguera, 2005). “The CRT challenges dominant liberal ideas of color blindness and meritocracy and shows how these ideas operate to disadvantage people of color while further advantaging Whites” (Delgado & Stefanicic, 2001, p. 274). CRT provides a way of identifying the contradictory practices in our educational system that may be barriers to teacher leaders of diverse ethnicity. There may be many factors that contribute to the low numbers of diverse teacher leaders. However, this study will examine if there are supports and practices that are within the structures, policies, and practices that encourage or discourage the ethnic representation among teacher leaders.

### *Role of Diversity*

One notion of why schools are not meeting academic targets is the classroom dynamics between teachers and students. Dee’s (2004) research results “indicate that the racial, ethnic, and gender dynamics between students and teachers have consistently large effects on teacher perceptions of student performance” (p. 11). He reports that students assigned to a teacher of another race or another gender is identified as more disruptive, inattentive, and less likely to complete their homework.

Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds are perceived more negatively by 35 to 57 percent when evaluated by another race teacher.

Researchers have argued that there is a relationship between ethnic match of teachers with students and their achievement. Dee (2005) would suggest that a mismatch of minority students with majority teachers has grave implications for the achievement gaps and current underrepresented groups of students.

These results indicate the need for recruiting teachers of minority backgrounds (Dee, 2005). He contends that schools are not meeting academic targets because of the classroom dynamics between teachers and students. Dee's (2004) research results "indicate that the racial, ethnic, and gender dynamics between students and teachers have consistently large effects on teacher perceptions of student performance" (p. 11). It could also be argued that there is a need to encourage and support diverse teachers as leaders at the school level as well as beyond.

The number of ethnic candidates needed to authentically lead and accurately reflect the composition of the new ethnic majority, are not readily available in the profession. Leaders need to encourage and envision leading in a heterogeneous sociocultural landscape as truly representative of a wealth of resources to be 'shepherded' creatively for the sake of a productive society. Hence, the need to support diverse teacher leaders (Wilmore & McNeil Jr., 1999).

Outside of the educational arena, Winston, (2001) has documented that the companies that are the most diverse have been identified for outperforming the competition and as being more successful companies overall. One successful method for accomplishing this is through diverse company leadership. The diversity leadership suggests that the company has developed a diverse pool of talent that

worked their way up through the ranks. The companies open themselves up to a variety of different views and ideas by employing diverse leaders. These differing perspectives often tap into the underrepresented populations of U.S. society (p. 518). Can these same principles be enacted in the public school systems? Magdealeno (2006) sees a clear need to increase the number of Latina and Latino school leaders as the demographics of Hispanics in California as well as the United States continue to grow. The Hispanic students enrolled in 2002 in California schools were 44% while the Hispanic staff statewide was 13.9% (CDE, 2006). This trend toward a majority minority will continue. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey, there are approximately 25% or 72 million minorities in the total U.S. population. Marx (2002) indicates that soon after the year 2050, minorities will dominate the United States. Children from various racial groups will enter the school system. There must be intensified efforts to recruit and retain minority teachers and administrators to serve as role models for these students and positively impact student achievement.

### *Shared Leadership*

One method for encouraging teachers to participate as leaders is under the auspice of shared leadership. Chrispeels (2004) defines "shared leadership as principals, teachers, support staff... who come together in leadership teams, governing bodies, or committees to jointly make decisions required to manage the school and improve the learning environment" (p. 5). Through shared leadership, schools implemented site based management, school site councils, and leadership teams. Teachers were an integral part of these groups. Teacher leadership emerged

with shared leadership. These two concepts along with the less structured form of collaborative or distributed leadership facilitates involving more people in leadership roles and responsibilities. Principals are key to supporting others and “vital to the process of facilitating the delegation, sharing, and distribution of leadership, especially the instructional leadership, throughout the school and cultivating teachers as leaders” (Chrispeels, 2004, p. 13). Other researchers concur with these statements (Darling-Hammond, 1995; Lieberman, 1995; Little, 1993) and others go on to state that the student achievement improves when teachers participate in the decision-making that impacts teaching and learning (Smylie, Lazarus, Brwonlee-Conyers, 1994; Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2003).

### *Teacher Leadership*

While teacher leadership has been widely studied, there is not one clear definition (Harris, 2003; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Throughout the literature, a teacher leader is defined in numerous ways. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) state, “Teachers who are leaders lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others toward improved educational practice” (p. 5). Lambert (1998) defines teacher leadership as “the reciprocal learning process that enable participants to construct and negotiate meanings leading to a shared purpose of schooling” (p. 9). She separates out the act of leadership from a specific person or a role. She recognizes that all who participate in learning that leads to change is participating in leadership.

In a similar fashion, Day and Harris (2003) identify four dimensions to teacher leadership that encompass the multiple aspects of the change process. They identify teacher leaders as participating in the implementation of school wide initiatives, engaging others in the school focus, supporting and acquiring resources for others, and finally building relationships with others to achieve a common goal. Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach (2003) indicate that leadership is “more of a broad characteristic of schools ...that helps sustain changes that enhance student learning, improve instruction, maximize participation in decision making, and align resources to the school’s vision and purpose” (p. 25). Harris (2003) indicates, “teacher leadership refers to the exercise of leadership by teachers regardless of position or designation” (p. 316).

Despite the varying definitions and descriptors of teacher leadership, there is a commonality within the definitions in the literature. The authors recognize that teacher leadership involves taking on responsibilities outside the classroom and engaging others toward common learning and student achievement.

#### *Roles of Teacher Leaders*

While there are varying definitions for teacher leadership, Lambert (1998; 2003), Barth (2001a; 2001b), and Urbanski and Nickolaou (1997) are strong proponents for developing teacher leadership. Lanting and Jolly (2001) state that increased teacher leadership can positively influence the individual teacher’s classroom as well as the school wide environment. How then do teachers lead? The literature examines teacher leaders and describes the variety of roles of a teacher leader. There are designated leaders by position or title. These roles are more easily



defined and clear in responsibilities. These include roles such as department chair, mentor teacher, lead teacher, curriculum chair, resource teacher, peer coach, and union representative.

The formal leaders are generally those with defined school roles and titles. However, there are often formal teacher leader roles that are not clearly understood. These formal leaders may have new roles or roles that often are focused more away from the classroom. They take on the managerial and operational roles in the school (Ash & Persall, 2000; Gehrke, 1991). The other staff members may or may not understand clearly, what their duties are or roles entail. As a result, these teacher leaders are not supported by their peers and may not be as effective in their role (Feiler, Heritage, & Gallimore, 2000; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Ovando, 1994; Smylie & Denny, 1990; Zinn, 1997).

Then there are the informal leaders without formal roles and again without clear responsibilities. Zepeda, Mayers, and Benson (2003) indicate that teachers are informal leaders when they participate in school and district committees, engage in staff development, attend graduate school, or participate in school and/or community activities. Informal leaders have classroom-related duties such as planning, organizing the learning environment, motivating other staff, and supervising activities. The informal leaders serve a variety of roles and receive recognition and respect from their colleagues (Gabriel, 2005). Others seek the informal leaders out to ask for resources, ideas, or advise. The informal teacher leaders do not have an official title but are significant leaders at the school site and often determine the climate and approval of many school wide efforts.

### *Influence of Teacher Leaders*

The researchers find that both the informal and formal teacher leaders are taking the lead in working with others to create change in the teaching and learning process. They do this in a variety of ways. Glickman (2002) defines teacher leaders in two ways. He identifies the traditional teacher leader as someone who completes tasks, jobs, and administrative directives that maintain the wellness of the school. In addition, he recognizes transformational teacher leaders who can make a significant difference to the climate and culture of a school. These transformational teacher leaders serve as mentors and peer coaches that observe lessons so that instruction can be refined and best practices implemented for the higher achievement of all students. Lambert (2003) and Urbanski and Nickolaou (1997) identify teacher leaders who take action by having conversations relating to coaching, mentoring, and networking and they establish a cycle of inquiry. “These teachers assumed leadership roles to improve their profession and improve teaching and student learning. They developed roles to serve as mentors to new teachers, coaches to each other, peer evaluators, members of team-teaching groups, and inventors who assist colleagues lacking competency” (Urbanski & Nickolaou, 1997, p. 247). The more recent teacher leader is one who encourages other staff to create change through collaboration, gathering and using evidence, and experimenting with practice (Frost & Durrant, 2003).

Katzenmeyer & Moller (2001) indicate that teacher leadership roles can vary and are different from one school to the next. Teachers identified as many as 182 leadership roles in the school when given a survey. Forty-one percent of teachers were part of a leadership team and 37.5% were department chairs (Hewitt-Gervais,

1996). Katzenmeyer & Moller indicate that the teacher leadership roles fall into three separate functions. First is a teacher leader that serves students and/or staff. A second function is a teacher leader that is in charge of school operational duties. The third is a teacher leader that serves in a decision-making role within the school or district.

Teacher leaders are individuals who, regardless of their position, help schools identify issues that interfere with student learning, create a more participatory environment, and help bring resources forward for meaningful change and reform.

Regardless if the role is formal or informal, teacher leaders still carry power and/or influence (Gabriel, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Krisko, 2001; Lambert, 2003). The school and/or administrators may or may not clearly identify the informal teachers as teacher leaders, but they influence the culture of the school like those in more formal leadership roles. Their influence of informal teacher leaders can be either positive or negative. Portin et al. (2003) label these informal teacher leaders as defacto leaders. They indicate that they exist in every school. The definition of defacto teacher leaders is very similar to the four dimensions of teacher leadership mentioned by Harris (2003). In addition to the positive affects of defacto leaders, they can also sabotage change efforts of other teachers, teacher leaders, and those in formal leadership roles. Similarly, other researchers recognize the negative impact of some teacher leaders (Barth, 2001b; Chrisman, 2005; Gabriel, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 2003; Smylie & Denny, 1990).

Day and Harris (2003) and Muijs and Harris (2002) identify the interconnectedness of the influence and roles of teacher leaders. The first role and set of activities is translating the improvement practices into the classroom. They lead

through the development and modeling of effective forms of teaching. They lead other teachers through coaching, mentoring, and in working in groups. Their next role is one of mediating and brokering services. The teachers identify resources, expertise, and information from within the school as well as from outside the school. They also lead by completing tasks related to improved learning and teaching. Another role and activity identified by Day, Harris, as well as Muijs and Harris, is creating close working relationships with other staff, and engaging all teachers in change and the development of the school change process. These activities create a pathway for mutual learning.

All these researchers may describe the actions of teacher leaders a bit differently. However, they find that teacher leaders are an integral piece in the school's efforts at learning and growing (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Karhanek, 2004; Hart, 1994; Lambert, 1998, 2003; Reeves, 2002). The literature provides several definitions of teacher leaders. It has defined teacher leaders in the informal and formal roles and actions that teacher leaders take. It also recognizes the influence that teachers in leadership roles have. For the purpose of this research, a teacher leader is therefore defined as the informal and formal teacher leader, who leads within and beyond the classroom, serves students and/or staff, is in charge of school operational duties, and/or serves in a decision-making role within the school or district. (Frost & Durrant, 2003; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).

#### *Characteristics of Teacher Leaders*

The literature further describes the personal characteristics of teacher leaders. Many of the studies indicated that there were definitive qualities or preconditions of

teachers in leadership roles (Biddle, 1997; Childs-Bowen, Moller, & Scrivner, 2000; Gabriel, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Krisko, 2001; Lambert, 2003; Lonquist & King, 1993; Neapolitan, 1997; Ruppert, 2003; Smylie, 1997; Snell & Swanson, 2000; Stronge, 2002; Zinn, 1997). These qualities or preconditions of teachers described their actions, personalities, as well as their beliefs. Several researchers find that teacher leaders are identified as competent teachers first (Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; Krisko, 2001; Lonquist & King, 1993; Ruppert, 2003; Snell & Swanson, 2000; Stronge, 2002). They describe competent teachers as efficacious and with expertise in the field. In Ruppert's (2003) interviews with principals and middle school teacher leaders, he found that teacher leaders were not only described as creative, productive and organized, he indicated that all of the teacher leaders have one common characteristic: their students scored well on end-of-year tests. These teacher leaders were skilled in the craft of teaching and had success with students. The expertise and characteristics of the three types of leaders were displayed differently. The productive teacher built upon their units of study. They had a wealth of resources, presented lessons that met the diverse needs of students, and were often used as models for other teachers. The creative teacher was passionate and inspired both students and teachers. They were interested in new ideas and raised the bar in the school. The organized teachers were dependable and conscientious. They had good relationships with administrators and their colleagues and they got things done.

Childs-Bowen, et al. (2000) also indicates that the first and most important characteristic of a teacher leader is that they were competent in their work and a leader in the classroom with students. This leads to establishing a reputation and

credibility with peers. They found that other teachers would listen and respond to the teacher leader if the person has earned a positive reputation for success with students.

In addition to being effective, Snell and Swanson (2000) and Lambert (2003) both identify teacher leaders as reflective. Snell and Swanson further identify teacher leaders as having a sense of empowerment, having expertise in the content, being reflective of their teaching practice, being collaborative, and being flexible in working with others. After following the teachers' career paths, their study finds that "as they developed a high level of skill in each of these areas... they emerged as leaders" (p. 19). Lambert further describes teacher leaders as inquisitive, focused on improving their craft, action oriented, accountable for student learning, and possessing a stronger sense of self.

Krisko (2001) and Ruppert (2003) describe a common characteristic in teacher leaders. They find that teacher leaders are willing to take risks. Ruppert describes teacher leaders as always trying new things and stretching themselves and their student by taking risks. In Krisko's study on the attributes of teachers, she also identified the additional characteristics of teacher leaders as creative, efficacious, flexible, life long learners, able to find humor in situations, had a good intrapersonal sense, and strong interpersonal skills. Intrapersonal is defined by the teacher leader who is confident, has a strong sense of self, is able to interpret the actions of others, and is able to make sense of situations. This is supported by Zepeda, Mayers, and Benson (2003). They indicate that teacher leaders often have "an innate understanding of ... the underlying skills and tools necessary for leadership" (p. 8). In addition, interpersonal is defined as the ability to communicate and relate well with

others. In Krisko's study, she surveyed the participants at three stages in their development: pre-college, teaching, and teacher leader levels. All individuals showed strength in the areas surveyed from the beginning. However, they all developed positively in the categories as they became teacher leaders. The results show that there was a 20% positive change in being creative, 26% growth in being efficacious, 26% growth in taking risks, and 27% growth in lifelong learning and in being flexible. Krisko writes that as individuals gain knowledge and experience, they gain strength in leadership attributes. Krisko proposes that leadership matures through experience, opportunity, and challenge.

Zepeda, Mayers, and Benson (2003) recognize the importance of teacher leaders. They also identify characteristics that are similar to those of other researchers (Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; Krisko, 2001; Lambert, 1998; Lonquist & King, 1993; Ruppert, 2003; Snell & Swanson, 2000; Stronge, 2002). They recognize that teacher leaders possess expertise and they recognize the "big picture" and shared vision of the school. They also understand the communication networks, the culture of the school, and understand that being a teacher leader means assuming an element of risk. They describe teacher leaders as risk-takers.

In Zinn's (1997) study of nine teacher leaders, all talked of having strong, dependable support networks, supportive principals and other administrators, and opportunities for leadership and training. The participants mentioned that a strong network of colleagues served as a key support. The last two characteristics converge with Zinn and Childs-Bowen's et al., (2000) findings. They indicated that teacher leaders had effective people and interpersonal skills and self-confidence. They had a

need for involvement, professional growth, renewal, and collegiality. Snell and Swanson (2000) also found that teacher leaders were collaborative in nature. The teachers place a high value on consensus and compromise. These teachers put themselves in a position to be accessible to students and their peers. They recognize that collective energy and work can lead to a higher level of solutions.

Krisko (2001) identified several characteristics of teacher leaders that are unique to her study. These include finding humor and being creative. She found that the teacher leaders with humor place value on having a sense of humor and has a need to laugh and laugh at oneself. She writes that individuals who find humor are also creative and use a high level thinking skill. Like Zinn (1997), she wrote that teacher leaders place value on intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. She also indicated that the creative teacher leader is one who innovates and generates ideas and solutions. They solve problems, shape programs, raise issues, and create change. Even though the labels were unique, some of their characteristics were captured in the other studies.

Smylie (1997) conducted research with 13 teacher leaders and 56 randomly selected peers of the teacher leaders. He indicates that teacher leaders such as mentor and lead teachers are generally ones that have more experience in teaching, more academic training, and more years in the district than non-teacher leaders. They have a desire to make a difference in their school and district. Childs-Bowen et al. (2000) also recognize that teachers will assume a leadership role if they have a strong passion for the school accomplishing a goal. Another characteristic identified by Childs-Bowen et al. is the approachability factor. Their colleagues will listen and



respond to teachers and teacher leaders who are adept at interpersonal skills. Teacher leaders also try to maintain positive working relationships with other staff members, increase the effectiveness of all teachers, and model desired behaviors. These behaviors include confidence, openness, and risk taking behaviors. Teacher leaders also try to provide the appropriate resources to staff and students and increase the staff knowledge to accomplish their tasks (Smylie & Brownlee-Conyers, 1992).

Some researchers describe teacher leaders as life long learners (Cain, 2001; Krisko, 2001). The teacher leaders not only are learners themselves but facilitate the learning of their colleagues. They exhibit a sense of collegiality, do the right thing, and separate their ego from their work (Cain, 2001). Krisko (2001) defined a life long learner as one whom:

engages higher level thinking skills, gathering data, applying past knowledge, thinking with clarity and precision, creating and innovating, and finding unique relationships. As a lifelong learner, a teacher is resourceful and uses the resourcefulness of others to remain open to learning (p. 12).

In the three case studies of lead teachers in Hampton Roads, Neapolitan (1997) did not call teacher leaders life long learners, but he describes teacher leaders as believing the change process improves one's knowledge and teaching practice, understanding the connection between curriculum and assessment for increasing student achievement, and participating in action research. Snell and Swanson (2000) describe teacher leaders as being reflective of their practice. Being reflective and being a life long learner indicates a willingness to change and grow in their practices.

In addition to the characteristics of teacher leaders, there are qualifications and accomplishments that might identify teachers as teacher leaders. These experiences may provide them some of the characteristics described in the literature to be a teacher leader such as content expertise, experience, and the self-confidence. These accomplishments might include a Master's Degree in a content area, a Specialist Credential, Specialized Training by a recognized individual or institution, and National Board Certification. These titles can provide some authority and clout as a leader. However, these titles and certificates alone do not make a leader. Wade and Ferriter (2007) recognize that "Those interested in helping board-certified teachers grow into leaders must understand that leading adults requires skills that are not the focal point of the certification process" (p. 66). In addition, Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, and Cobb (1995) contend that teachers who attend Professional Development Schools will "challenge traditional ideas about who are leaders and who are leaders within schools and in school-university partnerships" (p.90). Harris (2003) recognizes that teachers need rich and diverse opportunities for professional development that will establish professional learning communities within and between schools. However, the mere participation in these opportunities is not enough to create leaders. "Evidence suggests that it is a possibility if the school puts in place the appropriate support mechanisms and creates the internal conditions for forms of teacher leadership to flourish" (Harris, 2003, p. 319).

There are many characteristics, experiences, and accomplishments of teacher leaders found in the literature. The descriptors vary widely as evidenced by the extensive list generated from the literature. There is one overarching characteristic of

a teacher leader. They are effective teachers. Beyond that, those that have been mentioned in this literature review include the following:

- Accountable
- Action Oriented
- Approachable
- Collaborative
- Competent
- Content Experts
- Creative
- Empowerment
- Experienced
- Facilitative
- Find Humor
- Flexible
- Inquisitive
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal
- Knowledgeable
- Learner
- Listener
- Make a Difference
- Openness
- Organized
- Passionate
- Positive
- Productive
- Reflective
- Risk Taker
- Self Confidence
- Willingness to Change & Grow

### *Barriers to Becoming a Teacher Leader*

The research on teacher leaders describes the barriers and difficulties that teachers experience as they have tried to assume these roles. The barriers are many. Several researchers classified them as internal and external barriers (Lonnquist & King, 1993; Zinn, 1997). Other researchers did not specifically label them as such, but the barriers organized themselves around the individual teacher or the organization (Bauer, Haydel, & Cody, 2003; Buckner & McDowelle, 2000; Feiler et al., 2000; Hart, 1995; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).

The researchers have indicated that there are internal barriers that include personal, intellectual, and psychosocial factors such as unease with a leadership role, family commitments, cultural expectations, and health problems (Chrisman, 2005; Lonnquist & King, 1993; Zinn, 1997). Zinn noted that in three cases, teacher leaders encountered cultural and religious barriers. They belonged to groups that did not value or encourage leadership roles. Her participants included a Quaker woman, an Asian woman, and a Hispanic woman. The women were not encouraged to exhibit

the characteristics of leaders or spend too much time away from their families. The barriers of family, culture, and health most often are outside the control of the school and administrators. The degree to which barriers affect teacher leaders varies throughout the career of a teacher. Zinn (1997) noted that several participants had experienced health problems that were a definite impediment to leadership.

Many teachers desire to have harmony within the school and with their peers and therefore are uneasy in a leadership role. They perceive resentment and experience conflict when they are successful and visible in a leadership role. Some teachers describe teacher leaders as the eyes and ears of the principal. These feelings and perceptions create a barrier and jeopardize the harmony that many teachers desire. This may dissuade them from participating in a leadership role (Chrisman, 2005; Gabriel, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 2003; Ovando, 1996). The external factors often include lack of time, the ill-defined roles for teacher leaders, the lack of support, and training as a teacher leader. Leadership roles demanded extra time (Barth, 2001a; Bauer et al., 2003; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 2003; Zinn, 1997). Barth writes, "There is not enough time to do it all, let alone do it all well" (p. 91). Katzenmeyer and Moller identify the barrier of time as the public's expectation of how teachers use their time and how teachers manage their time. The public often believes that students need to be under the direct supervision of the teacher at all times while in school. If teachers are released from classroom instruction, the parents and community may put pressure on the school and teachers and question the practice. Teachers also need to be able to manage their time and decide what is important and what tasks and skills should be occupying their time.

Moreover, the structure of the traditional classroom setting leaves little time for adult interaction and collaboration. Often the time is not allowed within the structure of the school day or school year to have adult conversations around instruction and learning. Generally, the time is only found by accident. Principals need to allow enough time for teacher leaders to do their work. “The success of teacher leaders have been in large part, related to the amount of time they spend in classrooms either observing or working with other teachers and their students” (Feiler et al., 2000, p. 4).

Feiler et al. (2000), Lonquist and King (1993), and Zinn (1997) noted that ill-defined roles were a barrier to developing teacher leadership. Often the other teachers did not fully understand all the roles and responsibilities of the new teacher leader. The principals and teacher leaders did not communicate the roles or the leadership activities with the staff.

Buckner and McDowelle (2000) described the lack of clarity with the role of teacher leader as one that is fraught with uneasiness with the power that separates them from their peers. Teacher leaders participate in decision-making that impacts fellow teachers and their instruction. Teachers hesitate when it comes to intruding on another teacher’s classroom practices. They often will not ask their colleagues to comply with a school wide decision. Hart (1994) interviewed teachers and reported that the line between administrator and teacher was blurred by the new roles of teachers. Conflict emerged when others questioned the actions of these teacher leaders and their authority in their areas of work. These feelings towards teacher leaders threaten the collegiality and professional equality of teachers and ultimately are barriers to becoming a teacher leader or maintaining a role as a teacher leader.

Bauer et al. (2003) describes the leadership role as demanding and ambiguous in nature. If this is the case, then both time and a clearer definition of the work of teacher leaders should be articulated to all.

Furthermore, Feiler et al. (2000) write that teachers need more knowledge on how to be teacher leaders and have more understanding of pedagogy. They suggest that teacher leaders need to be experts in their teaching, as well as in interpersonal, and organizational skills. Other researchers also contend that teacher leaders often lack the specialized professional development and training in leadership (Buckner & McDowelle, 2000; Chrisman, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Robertson & Briggs, 1995).

The barriers are many and may vary depending upon the individual teacher and school site. Paying attention to the most common barriers can assist administrators and teachers to recognize and overcome them. The identified barriers included the lack of time, lack of clear roles, lack of support by administrators and by other teachers for their leadership. Other barriers for teachers included family conflicts and personal commitments.

#### *Supports for Teacher Leaders*

As some the researchers described the barriers, they also recommended how others could assist teachers in overcoming them. The literature indicates that there is much support that administrators and schools can give to teacher leaders. The research by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) on supports and barriers for teacher leaders is well cited by the researchers in the field.

Katzenmeyer & Moller (2001), in their experience with over 5000 teacher leaders, have learned that schools vary in the manner in which they support teacher leaders. They developed and used the Teacher Leadership School Survey to measure teachers' perceptions of how schools model effective practices in supporting teacher leaders (p. 136). They found that the schools that support teacher leaders and where teacher leadership is thriving have certain "dimensions" in common. They are developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication, and positive environment.

More specifically, developmental focus means that teachers receive guidance, coaching, and assistance. Teachers are assisted in learning new knowledge and skills. Typical activities include professional development, study groups, and professional reading. Recognition means that the ideas and opinions of the teachers are valued and respected. They receive recognition by administrators and their peers for leadership roles and the contributions they make to the school and/or district. There are formal recognition opportunities where teachers celebrate the successes of their colleagues. Autonomy means that teachers are encouraged to take initiative and be innovative for their students. Teachers are supported to make changes to the curriculum and try new instructional techniques that will meet the needs of the students. It also means that teachers are actively engaged in creating the vision for the school. Collegiality signifies that teachers collaborate on instructional and student issues. Teachers have the opportunity to share ideas, materials, and strategies. Teachers spend time examining others' teaching, discussing the needs of students, and working to solve the issues at hand. The dimension of participation is that teachers give input on

important decisions and they are actively involved in the process. They are a part of the hiring process, the organization of the school, the schedules, and use of time.

“Teachers have the authority to make specific decisions, and they feel that they have the freedom to make choices” (p. 138). Open communication is the open, honest, and timely communication of what is happening in the school. Teachers discuss ways to serve the students, families, and share opinions and feelings as freely as the administrators. When a mistake is made, people are not blamed. The focus is on learning and how to do things better in the future. The last dimension identified by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) is positive environment. This means that teachers are viewed as professionals and treated as professionals. There is a partnership with the administration, and all stakeholders are functioning together as a team. Despite the richness of the data by these researchers, specific data is not detailed in their work that would allow other researchers to replicate or examine the work.

Bauer, Haydel, & Cody (2003) reported on the effects of a teacher leader curriculum on teacher leadership. There were 19 teachers who participated in a school leadership program that included field based problem solving, school improvement, and reform activities. The objective of the program was to prepare the teachers to play significant leadership roles in school improvement. Three factors were cited by the teachers as reasons for staying in the program: incentives, principal support, and peer support. The fact that principals sought them out and encouraged their participation was important motivation to enter and complete the leadership program. The data from the questionnaire indicated that the mean score for principal support was 3.9 on a five-point scale. The teachers also indicated positive support by their



peers in collegiality (4.4), collaboration (4.4), and quality of thought (4.5). The teacher leaders ranked these areas most favorably.

The supports identified by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) as well as those of other researchers, cluster together around major themes. The most common supports recommended for teacher leaders include increased time, professional development, encouragement, rewards, and recognition. This list is not as extensive as the dimensions of support provided by Katzenmeyer and Moller, but sufficiently covers the supports they describe.

*Time.* Administrators can support teacher leaders by providing time to plan, time to discuss curriculum with others, to complete tasks, to prepare, to organize visits, and to collaborate with other colleagues (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, & Cobb, 1995; Harris, 2003; Ovando, 1994). The teacher leaders often take on more responsibility than their non-leader peers. Time becomes scarce for both the formal and informal teacher leaders. Administrators can allocate release time to work as teacher leaders. They can provide professional development during the work hours, at a convenient time for teachers, and on a regular basis. A principal can also utilize more staff in leadership roles and restructure time so as not to overburden just a few teachers (Burmeister & Hensley, 2004; Gabriel, 2005; Hancock & Lamendola, 2005). Administrators can allocate time to engage in leader behaviors. They can allow time to engage in activities that are in alignment with the focus or student achievement (Reeves, 2002). Time is a valuable resource. Administrators can find ways to provide needed time to adequately support teacher leaders to engage in leadership tasks.

*Professional development.* Professional development in many areas can also support teachers in leadership roles. Administrators and school districts need to offer continuous professional development in focusing on action research, collaboration, and their new roles (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Teachers can learn to work successfully in collaborative settings, using action research, and lesson studies. All these experiences build the confidence that teachers need to be effective leaders (Harris, 2002). The administrators can encourage and help teachers develop the skills through formal professional development experiences and informal experiences (Reeves, 2002). Another form of professional development for teacher leaders is in conflict management skills. This type of professional development assists teacher leaders in their roles to resolve tensions that might stem from the informal and formal leadership positions (Hart, 1995; Lashway, 1998b; Smylie & Brownlee-Conyers, 1992). One way to assist in conflict management skills is to provide teachers with opportunities for professional development in leadership. The leadership training motivates teachers, increases teachers' self esteem, confidence, and knowledge to be leaders at their school sites and with their peers.

It is imperative that administrators offer a variety of professional development that will support teacher leaders. Teacher leaders learn through professional development focused in the areas of leadership, instruction, collaboration, and in conflict management. With guided support, principals provide the experiences and feedback in order for the teacher to learn and grow in their new role (Buckner & McDowelle, 2000).

*Encouragement.* In addition to providing time and staff development opportunities, administrators can support teachers by boosting their self-confidence (Day & Harris, 2003; Gehrke, 1991). Teacher leaders need encouragement, trust, and an administrator who will listen to support them in their leadership roles (Bauer et al., 2003; Heller & Firestone, 1995). The research further shows that successful teacher leaders had principals that provided encouragement, voiced understanding with regard to the additional workload, and worked with teachers to complete tasks. The administrator can tune into the needs of the teachers and teacher leaders. This ability to listen can provide valued support for teacher leaders (Lashway, 1998a, 1998b; Ruppert, 2003). It also assists in developing trust, which is an essential step to productive teacher leadership and in effectively working with administrators, teachers, and peers (Ruppert, 2003; Smylie & Brownlee-Conyers, 1992). Burmeister and Hensley (2004) further indicate that administrators can provide support for teachers by providing guidance, friendship, and reassurance.

Teachers are supported emotionally by administrators by increasing their self confidence, encouraging them in their work, listening to them, providing guidance and reassurance, and developing their trust and the trust of others. All these supports increase the capacity for teacher leaders to take on the new roles.

*Rewards and recognition.* Lastly, administrators can provide incentives and rewards for teacher leaders (Little, 1995). Administrators need to recognize teachers for the small successes and that they can do a good job (Burmeister & Hensley, 2004). Administrators and districts can also provide incentives to engage in leadership work and participate in training. These incentives might include providing

graduate work on or near their school site, offering tuition assistance, and encouraging words from the principal to engage in higher level learning (Bauer et al., 2003; Zmuda, Kuklis, & Kline, 2004). Many times, rewards and recognition are not monetary, and not the sole purpose for taking on the role of a teacher leader. The teachers perceived the mere invitation to participate in leadership roles as recognition (Heller & Firestone, 1995).

Researchers suggest that the changes in roles and relationships of teachers result in high student achievement and schools that are more effective (R. DuFour, 2004; Krisko, 2001; Lambert, 1998; Lanting & Jolly, 2001; Lashway, 1998b; Reeves, 2002; Ruppert, 2003; Smylie, 1995). Increased teacher leadership can also positively influence their own classroom, as well as the environment for students school wide (Lanting & Jolly, 2001). The support of administrators and districts is vital in these efforts. Krisko (2001) indicated that successful school improvement could only be accomplished through the development of teacher leaders. DuFour (2004), Lambert (2003), and Robertson and Briggs (1995) suggest that supporting and empowering teachers to become leaders is successful with the development of working teams and collaborative groups.

Muijs and Harris (2002) cite a need for research and the collection of empirical evidence on teacher leadership. They list the areas of need as: identifying how teacher leadership can be developed and facilitated, providing case study exemplars, and identifying the conditions in which teacher leaders can flourish and grow.

Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) conducted a study on principal and teacher leadership. They surveyed 2424 elementary and secondary teachers. The purpose of their study of teacher leadership was to measure the extent of influence in the school by teachers as individuals and in groups. They found that both principal and teacher leadership had significant influence on the school but not on the classroom conditions. Teacher leadership did not have a significant effect on student engagement and a smaller effect on school conditions than did principal leadership. They noted that other studies reported that teacher leadership is not by itself a silver bullet but should be a part of a multi dimensional approach to systematic reform and change (Leithwood & Louis, 1999; Fullen, 1993). Leithwood and Jantzi go further and state the idea of placing leadership on the label of teacher may not be adding value to the role but rather detracting from its status. They recommend further quantitative research on teacher leadership.

#### *Summary of Research*

Becoming a teacher leader requires effort on the part of the teacher in overcoming the barriers and seeking out and receiving the supports from those around them. The literature on teacher leadership indicates that site administrators play a key role in this process. Principals can identify, develop, and support teacher leaders in their schools. Particular attention needs to be paid to support diverse teacher leaders. Principals can support them by defining the roles of both the formal and informal leaders. They need to be comfortable with teachers in leadership roles, recognize that teacher leaders are assets that can benefit the whole school, and create conditions to foster teacher leadership.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The present study adds to the body of research on the supports for teacher leaders, which ones are most effective and for whom, and who is most likely to receive them. More specifically, the purpose of this study is to explore how ethnically diverse teacher leaders perceive the supports for their leadership.

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) identify the categories of supports for teacher leaders. They developed a survey instrument that lists seven specific dimensions or types of supports. Overall, the most common supports identified in the literature for teacher leaders include increased time, professional development, encouragement, rewards, and recognition. The research questions for this study are:

1. What supports do teacher leaders receive as teacher leaders?
2. What barriers do teacher leaders face as teacher leaders?
3. Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity?
4. Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity and school demographics?
5. How do principals and teacher leaders characterize teacher leaders?
6. Do principals differentiate supports based on the ethnic diversity of teacher leaders?

*Site and Context*

This study is an exploratory study conducted in a Southern California elementary school district. There are 44 schools that serve kindergarten through sixth grade students.

The district has approximately 27,200 students enrolled. There are 32.5% of students identified as low socioeconomic status, 32.6% are English Learners, and 85.4% are minorities. The minority student population includes 64.0% Hispanic, 9.5% Filipino, 4.8% African American, 2.8% Asian, .8% Pacific Islander, .4% American Indian, and 3.2% with multiple responses or no response.

The school district employs approximately 1403 certificated teachers. The ethnicity of the teachers includes 63.5% White, 28% Hispanic, 5.7% Filipino, 1.3% Asian, 1.2% African American, .1% American Indian, and .2% with multiple responses or no response. Table 1 shows the ethnicity of students, teachers, and administrators in the district.

Table 1: Ethnicity of Students, Teachers, and Administrators

District Ethnicity	Students	Teachers	Administrators
White	15%	64%	53%
Hispanic	64%	28%	35%
Filipino	10%	6%	4%
Asian	3%	1%	1%
Black	5%	1%	7%
American Indian	0%	0%	0%
Pacific Islander	1%	0%	0%
Other	3%	0%	3%
Multiple or No response			

### *Participants*

*Teachers.* The participants in the study were teachers whom were identified as teacher leaders by their principals. The principals had the opportunity to identify three to six teacher leaders from their site to participate in the study. The participants in the study were selected from 41 of the District's K-6 elementary schools. The teacher leaders are classroom teachers but also include resource teachers, literacy media specialists, reading coaches, or teachers on special assignment. The gender, ethnicity, age, as well as student and school demographics they serve were collected as a part of the survey.

*Principals.* All principals were invited to participate in the identification of teacher leaders at their school site. Each principal was asked to identify three to six teacher leaders at their school site. After collecting survey data and conducting the



focus groups, the researcher interviewed three principals. The principal participants were selected if a teacher leader from their school site participated in one of the focus groups.

### *Instrument*

The survey instrument utilized was the Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001). This instrument identifies seven areas that support teacher leaders called dimensions. For each of the seven dimensions, there are seven items that the researchers have identified that describe these areas of supports. These dimensions or supports for teacher leaders include developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication, and a positive environment. Katzenmeyer and Moller indicated through their extensive research with over 5,000 teachers that these dimensions are characteristic of schools where teacher leadership is successful and thriving. The descriptors for the dimensions of teacher leadership are:

Developmental Focus: Teachers are assisted in gaining new knowledge and skills and are encouraged to help others learn. Teachers are provided with needed assistance, guidance, and coaching.

Recognition: Teachers are recognized for roles they take and the contributions they make. A spirit of mutual respect and caring exists among teachers. There are processes for the recognition of effective work.

Autonomy: Teachers are encouraged to be proactive in making improvements and innovations. Barriers are removed and resources are found to support teachers' efforts.

Collegiality: Teachers collaborate on instructional and student-related matters. Examples of collegial behavior include teachers discussing strategies, sharing materials, or observing in one another's classroom.

Participation: Teachers are actively involved in making decisions and having input on important matters. Department chairpersons, team leaders, and other key leaders are selected with the participation of teachers.

Open Communication: Teachers send and receive information relevant to the effective functioning of the school in open, honest ways. Teachers feel informed about what is happening in the school. Teachers easily share opinions and feelings. Teachers are not blamed when things go wrong.

Positive Environment: There is a general satisfaction with the work environment. Teachers feel respected by one another, by parents, students, and administrators. Teachers perceive the school as having effective administrative leadership. Appointed or informal teams work together effectively in the interests of students.

The survey instrument asks the participants to respond to the statements in terms of how frequently each statement is descriptive of their school. The choices include never, rarely, sometimes, often, and always.

This study utilized this instrument with teacher leaders. The researcher examined the survey data along with collected demographic data from the teacher leaders. She examined the responses to each question as well as examined the responses by each of the seven dimensions of teacher leadership. The researcher received permission to put the survey online and send it via email to the teacher leaders. The researcher used Survey Monkey<sup>®</sup> to collect the survey data.

#### *Validity and Reliability*

The content validity of the survey instrument has been established by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001). A panel of experts was used to develop items that would measure teacher leadership. Over 300 teachers from several schools completed the survey. The panel of experts completed a factor analysis to cluster

items. Items that did not load any factor and were unrelated were dropped from the survey. Additional items were added to round out the survey to 49 items in its current form. There are seven items for each dimension.

The panel of experts determined the reliability of the survey by using Cronbach's Alpha (internal consistency) reliability as the criterion. A sample of 312 teachers from 12 schools completed the final version of the TLSS. The Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used to compute the reliability estimates. Table 2 represents the Alpha Reliability estimates. The results indicate that the TLSS have above average reliability.

Table 2: Internal Consistency (Cronbach Alpha) Reliabilities of Dimensions of Teacher Leadership.

Dimensions of Teacher Leadership	Alpha Reliability	Items
Developmental Focus.	.87	1 - 7
Recognition	.88	8 - 14
Autonomy	.87	15 - 21
Collegiality	.83	22 - 28
Participation	.87	29 - 35
Open Communication	.93	36 - 42
Positive Environment	.87	43 - 49

The researcher followed the protocol described in the data collection section. The data from the TLSS survey and the demographic survey was downloaded and imported into a SPSS® data file for analysis.

#### *Data Collection*

To gain a thorough understanding of the participants' responses, the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The data collection techniques prevalent in the research on teacher leaders include the use of interviews,

focus groups, surveys or questionnaires, and collection of archival data. The use of different data sources and data collection methods will reduce the risk of biases associated with a singular specific method (Maxwell, 1996). The rationale for using these techniques is cited by major contributors of research methodology.

The researcher used a survey to gather extensive data and demographic information. Surveys are especially useful when targeting well-defined populations and special interest groups. The surveys are free of researcher bias and pose no threat to the respondents. The main disadvantage is the low return rate and the bias of the early returns (Katz, 1993).

Kleiber (2004) indicates that the major strength of a focus group is its ability to elicit opinions, attitudes, and beliefs held by the participants. “The data generated are very rich as ideas build and the participants explain why they feel the way they do. The researcher has an opportunity to listen in on the participant’s conversation and gather data that would not be available through individual interviews or surveys” (p. 97). The major drawback to focus groups is that the researcher has less control than an individual interview (Katz, 1993). The focus group dynamics may also inhibit the collection of data should there not be a common bond with the participants.

The researcher used the interview guide method to conduct semi-structured interviews (Patton, 1990; Merriam 1998) with the site principals. She followed a list of questions that were explored in the course of the interview. This method allowed the researcher to build a conversation around a particular theme, to word questions spontaneously, and allowed individual perspectives and experiences to emerge.

The following studies on teacher leaders utilize both quantitative and qualitative methods. Bauer, Haydel, and Cody (2003) utilized an interview with the project director, anonymous questionnaires, and focus group interviews. Zinn (1997) conducted a multi stage case study design and utilized interviews and focus groups. Ovando (1994) utilized open-ended surveys with 25 teacher leaders, and Smylie and Denny (1990) used interviews with 13 teacher leaders and surveys from the peers of 56 randomly selected teacher leaders. The use of surveys, interviews, and focus groups is well grounded in the research on teacher leaders. The researcher will utilize these methods for this study.

*Phase I: Identification of teacher leaders.* The researcher provided a definition of formal and informal teacher leaders as determined by the literature review to the 41 site principals along with the principal consent letter. (See appendix A) They were asked to identify three to six teacher leaders at their site with the definition in mind. This initial identification was done in a principal's meeting. After the initial request, the researcher emailed the two documents to those site administrators who were absent or did not respond. Then, as a final attempt to garner teacher leaders from each school site, the researcher sent the principal consents and definition of teacher leader by school mail to the site administrators who had not responded. In the end, 37 of the 41 site administrators provided names of teacher leaders.

*Phase II: Archival data and survey data.* The researcher collected data using archival records (Yin, 2003). This included demographic information about the students, teachers, administrators, schools, and district. The researcher also collected

demographic data from the identified teacher leaders at the time the survey was completed.

The researcher followed a four-phase administration process as indicated by Slant and Dillman (as cited in Creswell, 1994). The identified steps and follow up facilitated the survey process and an appropriate response rate. The researcher made initial contact with the identified teacher leaders by email indicating they were identified as a teacher leader at their site and that an electronic survey would soon be sent. The consent letters were attached to the email. The second contact was sent with the link to the electronic survey and the teacher consent to participate. The third contact was sent out a week after the initial survey request to the non-respondents. The fourth contact and final request to take the electronic survey was sent to all non-respondents with a date that the survey would go offline. In total, the collection of the electronic survey data covered a period of 4 weeks.

*Phase III: Focus groups and interviews.* The researcher conducted one-hour focus groups with teacher leaders. After reviewing the survey information (Krueger, 1991), the researcher identified 4-6 Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders to participate in the focus group. The participants were selected by a random draw of the 31 ethnically diverse teacher leaders who responded to the online survey. Each teacher leader was assigned a number as they were drawn from the pool. An invitation was sent to the first eight teachers selected. If a teacher leader could not participate in the focus group, the next teacher leader was invited to participate.

The purpose of the focus group was to gain a deep understanding of the supports that aided specific teacher leaders in developing as teacher leaders. This

focus group assisted in understanding the responses on the survey as well as assist in the interpretation of what the respondents were thinking when they marked the survey (Kleiber, 2004). This was an opportunity for cross checking participants' responses to ensure triangulation of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The researcher also conducted interviews with principals after examining the survey data, demographic information, and conducting the focus groups. The researcher interviewed three principals. These principals were selected because the ethnically diverse teacher leader from their school site participated in the focus group. The purpose of this interview was to examine how teachers were identified as leaders beyond the definition given, and how the principal supported teacher leaders in their role. The researcher was able to triangulate the data from the survey, focus group, and interview.

In the interviews and focus group, the researcher verified information collected through archival records and the surveys. The interviews and focus groups were tape recorded and transcribed. The researcher took notes to capture any reactions, body language, or other information that may not be captured by taping alone (Merriam, 1998). The focus group and interviews were held at a neutral site. They were approximately one hour in length.

### *Data Analysis*

The researcher used constant comparison of data during the collection and data analysis phases (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This allowed for early data analysis and allowed the principal interviews and the focus group to be shaped by the rich survey data rather than a predetermined process (Charmaz, 2002).

She used the strategy to constantly compare data from the surveys to guide questions in the focus groups and interviews. This technique assisted in triangulation of data. This process allowed data to be collected in a focused and insightful manner.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) identify strategies that facilitate data collection and analysis. These include planning data collection sessions according to what the researcher has already collected, writing observer comments and memos about what the researcher is learning, and trying out ideas and themes on participants to advance the analysis. Kleiber (2004) recommends constant comparison after each interview and/or focus group and before the next. This allows for tailoring of questions that target the research questions.

*Phase I – Identification of teacher leaders.* The site administrators from 41 of the 44 schools were asked to identify three to six teacher leaders from their site. Three school administrators were not asked to participate due to the relationship of the researcher to the teacher leaders in two schools. One school was not included in this research study because it was brand new with a new school staff and administrator.

The initial identification of the teacher leaders provided data. The researcher utilized archival records to further examine the identified teacher leader group. She identified the ethnicity and gender of all identified teacher leaders.

*Phase II - Survey and demographic data.* The data from the Teacher Leadership Survey and the demographic survey was entered into a SPSS® data file. The researcher utilized SPSS® to conduct descriptive analysis, sub group analysis and first level of statistical analysis (t-tests). The t-test was used to determine if the



mean scores between the ethnic minority and white teacher leaders are significantly different. In addition, when the sample size was very small or did not meet the specifications of the parametric tests. The researcher utilized the Mann-Whitney U Test. This was a non-parametric test for comparing groups with a very small sample size. The researcher ran descriptive statistics of the survey data as a whole as well as by ethnicity of teacher leaders and for school demographics.

The data was analyzed for significance, to disaggregate responses, calculate means of the whole group, of the ethnic groups, frequencies, and determine standard deviations. The themes from the literature were explored through the teacher focus group and the principal interviews. The researcher looked for the themes that emerged and matched those found in the literature for supports, barriers, and characteristics of teacher leaders. The anticipated themes were time, professional development, encouragement, rewards, and recognition. The researcher examined the data in order to determine if there was a difference between the supports teacher leaders received and their ethnic diversity. She also examined data to determine if school demographics and ethnic diversity were factors in the supports of teacher leaders.

Frequency distributions as well as descriptive statistics were calculated for each item based on ethnicity, percentage of free and reduced lunch, and percentage of minority students. The frequencies were also used to examine the profile of the teacher leaders. The researcher examined the level of education, the types of credentials, the roles, marital status, and number of children of the teacher leaders.

The researcher compared the demographic data of the identified teacher leaders and determined whether it is a representative sample of the district's overall teaching staff and if it contained the underrepresented ethnic minorities.

*Phase III – Focus groups & interviews.* The second phase of data analysis was qualitative. Recorded interviews and the focus groups were transcribed to gain understanding of the themes related to the supports needed by teacher leaders. The initial coding was based on the supports as identified in the literature (Merriam, 1998). The researcher pattern coded the data from the focus group and interviews by theme (Miles & Huberman, 1994). They indicate that codes assist the researcher to organize and then retrieve the chunks of information so that she can quickly find, pull out, and cluster the segments relating to a particular research question. The clustering assists the researcher to draw conclusions (p. 57). The researcher used this coding system to organize the data for analysis. The coding and themes were utilized to triangulate the data with principal interviews.

The researcher integrated the quantitative and qualitative data into a descriptive narrative. She used the quantitative data as a method of triangulating the qualitative data collected. The researcher established a clear chain of evidence and provided a clear documentation of the procedures. She reported the data in a manner so that future researchers can replicate the study and reach the same findings and conclusions (Yin, 2003). Table 3 lists the research questions and the corresponding participants, data collections procedures, and types of analysis that was conducted.

Table 3: Research Question Matrix: Listing of participant, how data was collected and the type of analysis by question.

Question	Participant	Data	Analysis
1. What supports do teacher leaders receive?	Teacher Leaders	Survey	Mean
	Principals	Focus Group	Frequency
		Interview	t-test
			Mann-Whitney U Test
2. What barriers do teacher leaders face?	Teacher Leaders	Survey	Mean
	Principals	Focus Group	Frequency
		Interview	t-test
			Mann-Whitney U Test
3. Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity?	Teacher Leaders	Survey	Mean
	Principal	Focus Group	Frequency
		Interview	t-test
			Mann-Whitney U Test
			Narrative Analysis
4. Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity and school demographics?	Teacher Leaders	Survey	Mean
	Principals	Focus Group	Frequency
		Interview	t-test
			Mann-Whitney U Test
5. How do principals and teacher leaders characterize teacher leaders?	Teacher Leaders	Focus Group	Themes
	Principal	Interview	Triangulation of Data
			Narrative Analysis
6. Do principals differentiate supports based on the ethnic diversity of teacher leaders?	Teacher Leaders	Survey	Means
	Principal	Focus Group	Themes
		Interview	Triangulation of Data
			Narrative Analysis

### Limitations of the Study

The proposed study has a number of limitations that must be considered. This study is limited in scope due to a small sample specific to one southern California district. The research was conducted in one school district and can be influenced by the district's and schools' particular interests and/or programs. There were 41 possible school sites with up to 246 participants. The principals identified three to six teacher leaders based on a predefined definition of teacher leader. This initial identification of the teacher leaders was a bias based on the principals' perceptions. The selection of three to six teacher leaders may also prevent the study of additional teacher leaders that are not identified at each school site. In addition, the researcher studied teacher leaders in an elementary setting. That and the single district may restrict the ability to generalize the results to middle and high school settings and to other geographic locations.

The researcher is a principal of the same district where the research was conducted. She has collegial relationships with principals and some teacher leaders who were surveyed. The researcher's administrative role and familiarity may have impacted the validity of participant responses and/or how forthcoming the respondents were. The influence of this familiarity on the study will not be addressed and the attempts to limit this familiarity could cause other program limitations. The researcher's school site was not be utilized for this research study. This may lead to exclusion of valuable data. The researcher's familiarity with the district may have lead to bias in how the researcher interpreted the data. The survey data collected is obtained through self-report.

To minimize some of the limitations due to sample size, self-report, the single location, and the elementary setting, the researcher used the focus group and interviews to provide data triangulation. “With data triangulation, the potential problems with construct validity also can be addressed because the multiple sources of evidence essentially provide multiple measure of the same phenomena” (Yin, 1998, p. 99). Per Yin’s recommendations, the researcher will minimize the errors and biases in the study by providing complete documentation of the procedures so that future researchers may conduct the same study and arrive at the same findings and conclusions.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section presents the quantitative data collected from archival records and an online survey that included the demographic data and the Teacher Leadership School Survey (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001). The second section presents the qualitative data collected through the focus groups and interviews. The transcribed documents were analyzed using coding, themes from the literature, and commonalities of all the data. This chapter presents quantitative and qualitative results separately. In Chapter 5, quantitative and qualitative findings are discussed in a more integrated fashion in order to consider the overall implications of the present research and areas for future study.

The current study was designed to address the following research questions:

1. What supports do teacher leaders receive as teacher leaders?
2. What barriers do teacher leaders face as teacher leaders?
3. Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity?
4. Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity and school demographics?
5. How do principals and teacher leaders characterize teacher leaders?
6. Do principals differentiate supports based on the ethnic diversity of teacher leaders?

*Phase I - The identification of teacher leaders.*

The initial participants for the online survey were identified as teacher leaders by the school principals. The researcher provided all principals with background information about the study in a principal's meeting. She then provided a principal consent form and definition of a teacher leader to guide them in their identification (see Appendixes A and B). The principals were asked to identify three to six teacher leaders at their school site that fit the definition provided. The researcher followed up by email or school mail with principals who were absent during the meeting or who did not return their list of teacher leaders during the meeting. The intent was to elicit names of teacher leaders from as many schools as possible.

The research study excluded 3 of the 44 schools in the district. One school was excluded, as it was brand new with a new administrator and new staff. Two schools were excluded where the researcher was formally the site administrator and currently is the site administrator. The principals from 37 of the 41 possible schools identified 168 educators as teacher leaders for the study.

### Quantitative Research Findings

*Phase II - Demographic and Survey data*

Quantitative data was collected through the use of an online survey instrument. This included demographic information about the respondent, their school, as well as the Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) developed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001). The demographic data is presented first.

*Survey population.* The participants in the study were teachers from a K-6 elementary school district in Southern California. The teachers were identified as teacher leaders by their principals. Of the 168 teacher leaders identified, 67 responded to the survey. This is a response rate of 40%. There was representation from 34 of the eligible 41 district's K-6 elementary schools. The respondents represent 51% Title 1 schools and 49% non-Title 1 schools.

*Ethnicity.* The ethnicity of all the teacher leaders was collected through archival records in addition to those who responded to the survey. Table 4 represents the ethnicity of all the district teachers, the identified teacher leaders for the study, and the teacher leaders that responded to the survey. The ethnicity of the teacher leaders who responded to the survey was representative of the identified teacher leaders and the district teacher population.

Table 4: Ethnicity Matrix: Representation of teachers in each group.

	District Teachers	Identified Teacher Leaders	Survey Responses
Ethnicity	N=1403	N=168	N=67
White	63.5%	61%	53.8%
Hispanic	28%	25%	29.9%
Asian	7.0%	3.6%	10.5%
Black	1.2%	1.8%	3.0%
American Indian	.1%	0%	0%
Other	.2%	5.5%	3.0%
Unknown	0%	3.0%	0%



*Gender.* From those identified as teacher leaders, 17 were male and 151 female. Only 4 of the 17 males identified as teacher leaders responded to the survey. Only two males completed the entire survey and they represent 3% of the 67 survey responses. The other two males answered survey items 1-34. The number of male participants is not representative of the district teacher population. Males make up 15.5% of the teaching population and females make up the other 84.5%. Table 5 lists the gender of teacher leaders in the district, identified as teacher leaders by principals for this study, and those that responded to the survey.

Table 5: Teachers by gender.

Gender of Teachers	District N=1403	Identified Teacher Leaders N= 168	Teacher Leaders Survey Respondents N= 67
Male			
#	217	17	4
%	15.5%	10.1%	6.0%
Female			
#	1186	151	63
%	84.5%	89.9%	94.0%

*Roles of teacher leaders.* The teachers leaders who responded to the survey reported that they took on the roles of Instructional Leadership Team, Grade Level Representative, BTSA Support Provider, School Site Council Member, Reading Coach, Resource Teacher, Committee Chairperson, Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Advisory, and Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The informal teacher leader was marked by 19 of the 67 survey respondents. The informal teacher is one

who has a classroom assignment, and takes on leadership roles. In addition to the roles listed in Table 6 from the survey, 17 teacher leaders marked the other category and listed additional roles. They listed roles such as:

- Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) trainer
- Technology Leader
- Successmaker Support Provider
- Master Teacher
- Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Consulting Teacher
- Ability Awareness Coordinator
- Extended Day Coordinator
- Student Study Team (SST) Chairperson
- California Standards Test (CST) Co-Coordinator

Classroom teachers make up 57 of the 67 who responded to the survey. Table 6 lists the roles as reported by the teacher leaders from the online survey.

Table 6: Roles of Teacher Leaders

\*Multiple responses allowed

Roles of Teacher Leaders Job Titles	Survey Respondents N= 67
Classroom Teacher	57
Reading Coach	9
Resource Teacher	1
<b>Additional Assignments &amp; Roles</b>	
Instructional Leadership Team	49
Grade Level Representative	36
Committee Member	36
School Site Council	36
Informal Teacher Leader	19
PTA	11
Resource Teacher	10
Reading Coach	9
BTSA	9
GATE	5
Other roles	17

*Credentials and certificates.* The research was conducted in an elementary school district in southern California. As such, the most common credential is a multiple subject teaching credential. Of the 60 respondents for this survey item, 19 indicated that they hold multiple credentials and certificates. Table 7 provides an overview of the credentials and certificates held by the survey respondents. In addition, the descriptors for the BCLAD, CLAD, and NBCT certificates are provided.

- BCLAD (Bilingual Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development Certificate) The BCLAD certificate authorizes teaching in dual immersion or primary language classrooms.
- CLAD (Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development Certificate). The CLAD certificate authorizes instruction to English Learners in a self-contained classroom.
- NBCT (National Board Certified Teacher) This certificate is a national recognition that is earned through evidence of accomplished teaching practices, completion of portfolio entries, and assessments of content knowledge based on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBCT, 2008).

Table 7: Credentials and Certificates of Teacher Leaders.

\*Multiple responses allowed

Type of Credential of Certificate	Survey Respondents N= 60
Multiple Subject	58
Special Education	7
Administrative	7
CLAD	4
BCLAD	3
Reading	3
NBCT	2
Single Subject	1

*Highest level of education.* In addition to the information about the roles of teacher leaders, the highest level of education was also collected. Figure 1 shows the

level of education of the survey respondents. Of the 60 teacher leaders who responded to the survey, 20% reported having a Bachelor's degree and 80% had a Master's Degree.

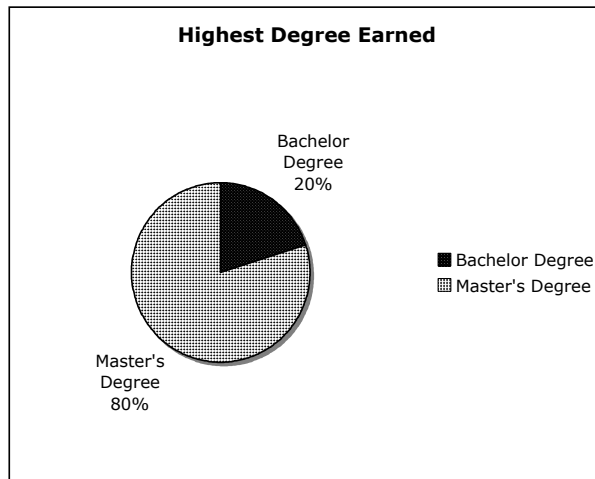


Figure 1: Level of Education: Highest Degree Earned

*Personal characteristics.* Personal data were collected from the teacher leaders through the survey. The information included age range, gender, marital status, number of dependents, and ethnicity. There were 60 responses to this section of the survey. There was 10% of the teacher leaders in the 20-29 age range, 48% in the age range of 30-39, 22% in the 40-49 age range, 17% in the 50-59 age range, and 3% over 60. Figure 2 shows the breakdown of teacher leaders by age.

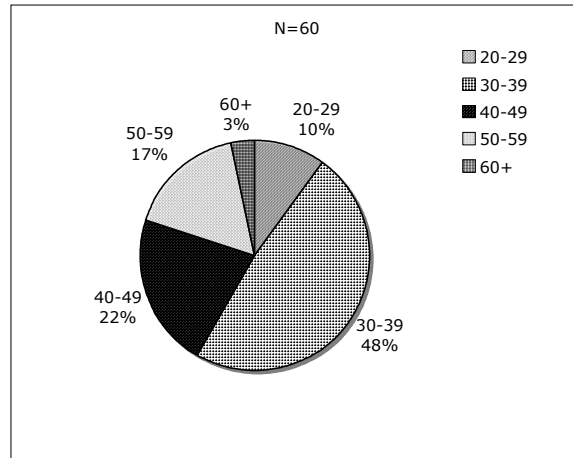


Figure 2: Age Range of Teacher Leaders

The teacher leaders reported their marital status as 81% married and 19% single. There were a total of 58 responses to this portion of the survey. The teacher leaders reported that 51.7% had dependents living with them. Table 8 shows the 60 responses for this survey item.

Table 8: Dependents living with teacher leaders.

# of Dependents	Response	Percentage
0	22	36.7%
1	10	16.7%
2	14	23.3%
3	7	11.7%
No Response	7	11.7%

*Survey data.* The next section presents the survey data. The data from the survey is reported by research question. There are 49 survey items and seven dimensions in the Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS). The seven dimensions are developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open

communication, and positive environment. A copy of the electronic survey is available for reference in Appendix D.

The first level of analysis used descriptive statistics. The means and frequencies were examined for each survey question and each dimension of teacher leadership. The survey responses ranged from (1) never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often, and (5) always. The overall mean for the dimension of teacher leadership is reported first and then the mean of each survey item in the particular scale is reported. Each dimension has seven corresponding survey items. The dimensions and survey items are ranked from highest to lowest. The items with the same mean were given the same ranking.

Questions 1 and 2 were partially answered by looking at the mean scores for each question and dimension of teacher leadership. A high mean score indicated a level of support that is perceived by the teacher leaders at their site. A low mean score indicated that the question or dimension of teacher leadership is not representative of their school site and could be considered a barrier. In this section, the means are examined. In Chapter 5, this data is integrated with the qualitative data for a more comprehensive answer to these two questions

*Research Question 1. What supports do teachers receive as teacher leaders?*

*Research Question 2. What barriers do teachers face as teacher leaders?*

*Dimensions of teacher leadership.* The 49 survey items were categorized into the seven dimensions of teacher leadership developed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001). The seven dimensions have means between 3.69 and 4.10. Developmental focus was the dimension with the highest mean of 4.10. Positive communication was

the dimension with the lowest mean of 3.69. In addition, an independent-samples t-test was run for each dimension comparing the responses for the categorized groups of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. There was no significant difference for the dimensions of teacher leadership between the two groups. However, when examining the means of the two groups, White teacher leaders had higher means than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders on four of the dimensions of teacher leadership. Table 9 depicts the means of each scale for White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. Further discussion of the similarity and differences between the White and Ethnically Diverse means of teacher leaders is presented in Chapter 5.

Table 9: Dimensions of Teacher Leadership: Mean scores of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.

Dimensions of Teacher Leadership	Combined Mean	White	Ethnically Diverse
Developmental Focus	4.10	4.15	4.03
Recognition	4.00	4.09	3.90
Autonomy	3.89	3.95	3.82
Collegiality	3.73	3.75	3.71
Participation	3.93	3.94	3.92
Open Communication	3.70	3.65	3.74
Positive Environment	4.04	4.02	4.06

*Survey items.* This next section describes the results of the 49 individual survey items. Twenty-two of the items had a mean score of 4.00 and above. The highest mean was 4.61 for the statement “The administrators at my school have confidence in me.” The lowest mean was 3.00 for the statement “Teachers in my school observe one another’s work with students.” The overall mean for each



dimension of teacher leadership and each question is provided in Tables 10a through 10g.

*Developmental focus, survey items 1-7.* In Table 10a, the data for developmental focus and the corresponding items are presented. The overall mean for this dimension is 4.10. It was the highest ranked dimension, and contained three survey items ranked in the top ten. Five of the seven items were marked as often and always with means between 4.04 and 4.54. Two items had lower means and were marked as sometimes. Those items reported means of 3.84 and 3.71.

Table 10a: Developmental Focus – Survey Items 1-7: Teachers are assisted in gaining new knowledge and skills and are encouraged to help others learn. Teachers are provided with needed assistance, guidance, and coaching.

	Mean	N	Rank
Developmental Focus – Items 1-7	4.10	67	1
1. At my school, administrators and teachers try hard to help new teachers be successful.	4.33	67	6
2. At my school, teachers are provided with assistance, guidance or coaching if needed.	4.18	67	7
3. Administrators at my school actively support the professional development of faculty and staff.	4.54	67	2
4. We gain new knowledge and skills through staff development and professional reading.	4.03	67	14
5. We share new ideas and strategies we have gained with each other.	3.84	67	20
6. Teachers at my school are supportive of each other personally and professionally.	4.04	67	13
7. Teachers at my school are engaged in gaining new knowledge and skills.	3.71	66	23

*Recognition, survey items 8-14.* In Table 10b, the data for recognition and the corresponding items are presented. The overall mean for this dimension of teacher leadership was 4.00 and ranked third. Five of the seven items were marked as often and always with means between 4.04 and 4.61. Survey item 8 ranked the highest item in the survey. Two items had lower means and were marked as sometimes. Those items reported means of 3.66 and 3.69.

Table 10b: Recognition – Survey Items 8-14: Teachers are recognized for roles they take and the contributions they make. A spirit of mutual respect and caring exists among teachers. There are processes for the recognition of effective work.

	Mean	N	Rank
Recognition - Items 8-14	4.00	67	3
8. The administrators at my school have confidence in me.	4.61	67	1
9. My professional skills and competence are recognized by the administrators at my school.	4.44	66	5
10. Other teachers recognize my professional skills and competence.	4.11	66	11
11. It is apparent that many of the teachers at my school can take leadership roles.	3.69	67	24
12. The ideas and opinions of teachers are valued and respected at my school.	4.04	67	13
13. At my school, we celebrate each other's successes.	3.66	67	26
14. Many of the faculty and staff at my school are recognized for their work.	3.63	67	28

*Autonomy, survey items 15-21.* In Table 10c, the data for autonomy and the corresponding items are presented. The overall mean for this dimension of teacher leadership was 3.89. Three of the seven items were marked as often and always with means between 4.17 and 4.18 and ranked in the top ten for the survey. Four items had lower means and were marked as sometimes. Those items reported means between 3.31 and 3.94.

Table 10c: Autonomy – Survey Items 15-21: Teachers are encouraged to be proactive in making improvements and innovations. Barriers are removed and resources are found to support teachers’ efforts.

	Mean	N	Rank
Autonomy - Items 15-21	3.89	67	5
15. In my role as a teacher, I am free to make judgments about what is best for my students.	4.18	67	7
16. At my school, I have the freedom to make choices about the use of time and resources.	3.72	67	22
17. I know that we will bend the rules if it is necessary to help children learn.	3.31	58	32
18. Teachers are encouraged to take the initiative to make improvements for students.	4.17	64	8
19. I have input to developing a vision for my school and its future.	4.17	63	8
20. At my school, teachers can be innovative if they choose to be.	3.91	64	17
21. Administrators and other teachers support me in making changes in my instructional strategies.	3.94	63	16

*Collegiality, survey items 22-28.* In Table 10d, the data for collegiality and the corresponding items are presented. The overall mean for this dimension of teacher leadership for collegiality was 3.73. Two of the seven items were marked as often and always with means between 4.03 and 4.13. Five items had lower means and were marked as sometimes.

Table 10d: Collegiality – Survey Items 22-28: Teachers collaborate on instructional and student-related matters. Examples of collegial behavior include teachers discussing strategies, sharing materials, or observing in one another’s classrooms.

	Mean	N	Rank
Collegiality - Items 22-28	3.73	63	6
22. Teachers at my school discuss strategies and share materials.	3.97	63	15
23. Teachers at my school influence one another's work with students.	3.68	63	25
24. Teachers in my school observe one another's work with students.	3.00	63	33
25. I talk with other teachers in my school about my teaching and the curriculum.	4.13	63	10
26. Teachers and administrators work together to solve students' academic and behavior problems.	4.03	63	14
27. Other teachers at my school have helped me find creative ways to deal with challenges I have faced in my classes.	3.51	63	30
28. Conversations among professionals at my school are focused on students.	3.75	63	21

*Participation, survey items 29-35.* In Table 10e, the data for participation and the corresponding items are presented. The overall mean for this dimension of teacher leadership was 3.93. Two of the seven items were marked as often and always with means between 4.03 and 4.47. Survey item 33 ranked fourth overall. Five items had lower means and were marked as sometimes. Those items reported means between 3.69 and 3.97.

Table 10e: Participation – Survey Items 29-35: Teachers are actively involved in making decisions and having input on important matters. Department chairpersons, team leaders, and other key leaders are selected with the participation of teachers.

	Mean	N	Rank
Participation - Items 29-35	3.93	64	4
29. Teachers have input to decisions about school change.	3.84	64	20
30. Teachers have a say in what and how things are done.	3.71	63	23
31. Teachers and administrators share decisions about how time is used and how the school is organized.	3.69	64	24
32. Teachers and administrators at my school understand and use the consensus process.	3.84	63	20
33. Teachers participate in screening and selecting new faculty and/or staff at my school.	4.47	64	4
34. My opinions and ideas are sought by administrators at my school.	4.03	64	14
35. We try to reach consensus before making important decisions.	3.97	60	15

*Open communication, survey items 36-42.* In Table 10f, the data for open communication and the corresponding items are presented. The overall mean for this dimension of teacher leadership was 3.70 and was the lowest ranked dimension. One of the seven items was marked as often and always with a mean of 4.16 and was ranked ninth in the survey. Six items had lower means and were marked as sometimes. Those items reported mean between 3.50 and 3.90.

Table 10f: Open Communication – Survey Items 36-42: Teachers send and receive information relevant to the effective functioning of the school in open, honest ways. Teachers feel informed about what is happening in the school. Teachers easily share opinions and feelings. Teachers are not blamed when things go wrong.

	Mean	N	Rank
Open Communication - Items 36-42	3.70	60	7
36. Because teachers and administrators share ideas about our work, I stay aware of what is happening.	4.16	57	9
37. At my school, everybody talks freely and openly about feelings and opinions they have.	3.51	59	30
38. Faculty and staff at my school share their feelings and concerns in productive ways.	3.52	60	29
39. Teachers at my school discuss and help one another solve problems.	3.64	59	27
40. Faculty and staff talk about ways to better serve our students and their families.	3.90	60	18
41. When things go wrong at our school, we try not to blame, but talk about ways to do better the next time.	3.63	59	28
42. Faculty meeting time is used for discussions and problem solving.	3.50	60	31

*Positive environment, survey items 43-49.* In Table 10g, the data for positive environment and the corresponding items are presented. The overall mean for this dimension of teacher leadership was 4.04 and was ranked second. Four of the seven items were marked as often and always with means between 4.03 and 4.48 with item 43 ranked third overall. Three items had lower means and were marked as sometimes. Those items reported means between 3.68 and 3.97.

Table 10g: Positive Environment – Survey Items 43-49: There is a general satisfaction with the work environment. Teachers feel respected by one another, by parents, students, and administrators. Teachers perceive the school as having effective administrative leadership. Appointed or informal teams work together effectively in the interests of students.

	Mean	N	Rank
Positive Environment - Items 43-49	4.04	60	2
43. Teachers are treated as professionals at my school.	4.48	60	3
44. Teachers at my school look forward to coming to work every day.	3.68	59	25
45. There is a general satisfaction with the work environment among teachers at my school.	3.85	60	19
46. Teachers and administrators at my school work in partnership.	3.97	59	15
47. Teachers at my school are respected by parents, students, and administrators.	4.17	60	8
48. The principal, faculty, and staff at my school, work as a team.	4.10	59	12
49. We feel positive about the ways we are responding to our students' needs.	4.03	60	14

A further discussion of these means and an analysis of the data for all the research questions are presented in Chapter 5.

*Research Question 3. Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity?*

This next section presents the data for research question 3. Figure 3 depicts how the data was analyzed for this research question.

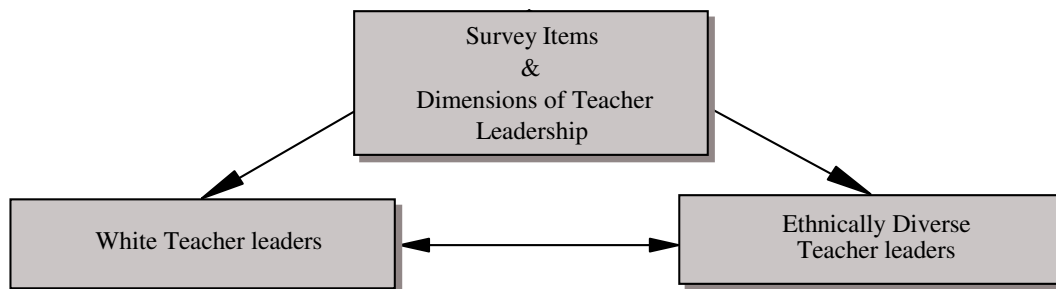


Figure 3: Research Question 3: Comparing White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leader.

*White teacher leaders compared to Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.* The ethnicity of the teachers was categorized into two groups, White (not Hispanic) and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. The Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders included all teachers who marked an ethnic group other than White. There were 36 teacher leaders in the White group and 31 teacher leaders in the Ethnically Diverse group. Independent-samples t-tests and descriptive statistics were run for the seven dimensions of teacher leadership and the 49 items of the survey comparing the responses for the White teacher leaders and the Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. In addition, Mann-Whitney U Tests were run where the sample size was small.

*Dimensions of teacher leadership.* The dimensions of teacher leadership are the identifiable characteristics that support teacher leadership (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001). The seven dimensions are developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication, and a positive



environment. Each has seven items on the survey. According to descriptive statistics, the means of the items showed that White teacher leaders had higher means than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders on 5 of the 7 dimensions. In Table 11, the mean scores are reported for White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders for the seven dimensions of teacher leadership.

Table 11: Dimensions of Teacher Leadership, Mean Scores comparing White and Ethnically Diverse Teacher Leaders.

Dimensions of Teacher Leadership	White	Ethnically Diverse
Developmental Focus	4.15	4.03
Recognition	4.09	3.90
Autonomy	3.95	3.82
Collegiality	3.75	3.71
Participation	3.94	3.92
Open Communication	3.65	3.74
Positive Environment	4.02	4.06

*Survey items.* According to the independent samples t-tests, White teacher leaders perceive at a statistically significant level more support by their administrators for the professional development of faculty and staff at their school than the Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders (see Table 12). This is item three in the survey, and is one of the seven items included in the dimension of teacher leadership named developmental focus. There was a significant difference in scores between Whites ( $M = 4.69$ ,  $SD = .577$ ) and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders [ $M = 4.35$ ,  $SD = .755$ ;  $t(65) = 2.085$ ,  $p = .04$ ]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate ( $\eta^2 = .06$ ) by the guidelines proposed by Cohen (1998).

Effect size describes the magnitude of the differences between the groups being compared. Eta squared is one way to calculate the magnitude. The number can range from 0 to 1 and represents the portion of the variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variable (Pallant, 2005).

Table 12: Independent-samples t-test: Survey item 3

Item #	t	df	Sig.	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% C.I. of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
3. Administrators at my school actively support the professional development of faculty and staff.	2.085	65	.041	.340	1.63	.014	.665

There were no other significant differences according to the independent-samples t-test. According to descriptive statistics, the means of the items showed that White teacher leaders had higher means than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders on 31 of the 49 survey items. Table 13a through 13g show the mean scores for White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders for the 49 survey items.

Table 13a presents the means scores for survey items 1-7. White teacher leaders had higher means on five of the seven survey items. These items refer to the dimension of teacher leadership titled developmental focus.

Table 13a: Survey Items 1-7 - Developmental Focus: Mean scores of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.

Survey Item	White	Ethnically Diverse
1	4.45	4.23
2	4.14	4.23
3	4.69	4.35
4	4.14	3.90
5	3.89	3.77
6	4.03	4.06
7	3.77	3.65

Table 13b presents the means scores for survey items 8-14. White teacher leaders had higher means on all seven of the survey items. These items refer to the dimension of teacher leadership titled recognition.

Table 13b: Survey items 8-14 – Recognition: Mean scores of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.

Survey Item	White	Ethnically Diverse
8	4.69	4.52
9	4.49	4.39
10	4.20	4.00
11	3.78	3.58
12	4.11	3.97
13	3.72	3.58
14	3.69	3.55

Table 13c presents the means scores for survey items 15-21. White teacher leaders had higher means on five of the seven survey items. These items refer to the dimension of teacher leadership titled autonomy.

Table 13c: Survey Items 15-21 – Autonomy: Mean scores of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.

Survey Item	White	Ethnically Diverse
15	4.31	4.03
16	3.89	3.52
17	3.37	3.25
18	4.18	4.17
19	4.21	4.13
20	3.91	3.90
21	4.06	3.80

Table 13d presents the means scores for survey items 22-28. White teacher leaders had higher means on five of the seven survey items. These items refer to the dimension titled collegiality.

Table 13d: Survey items 22-28 – Collegiality: Mean scores of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.

Survey Item	White	Ethnically Diverse
22	4.06	3.87
23	3.74	3.62
24	2.91	3.10
25	4.15	4.10
26	4.06	4.00
27	3.65	3.34
28	3.68	3.83

Table 13e presents the means scores for survey items 29-35. Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders had higher means on four of the seven survey items. These items refer to the dimension titled participation.

Table 13e: Survey Items 29-35 – Participation: Mean scores of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.

Survey Item	White	Ethnically Diverse
29	3.76	3.93
30	3.70	3.73
31	3.65	3.73
32	3.85	3.83
33	4.62	4.30
34	4.09	3.97
35	3.94	4.00

Table 13f presents the means scores for survey items 36-42. Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders had higher means on five of the seven survey items. These items refer to the dimension titled open communication.

Table 13f: Survey items 36-42 - Open Communication: Mean scores of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.

Survey Item	White	Ethnically Diverse
36	4.20	4.11
37	3.44	3.59
38	3.41	3.64
39	3.63	3.67
40	3.91	3.89
41	3.59	3.67
42	3.44	3.57

Table 13g presents the means scores for survey items 43-49. Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders had higher means on five of the seven survey items. These items refer to the dimension titled positive environment.

Table 13g: Survey items 43-49 - Positive Environment: Mean scores of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.

Survey Item	White	Ethnically Diverse
43	4.47	4.50
44	3.68	3.68
45	3.91	3.79
46	3.90	4.04
47	4.06	4.29
48	4.09	4.11
49	4.00	4.07

*Research Question 4. Do the supports provided to teacher leader differ based on the ethnic identity and school demographics?*

For this question, the data is organized and analyzed three ways. First, it compares all teacher leaders with one school demographic to all teacher leaders with a differing school demographic (see Figure 4). For example, all teacher leaders in schools with 0-50% National Free and Reduced Lunch Program (NFRLP) are compared to all teacher leaders with 51-100% NFRLP. Then, it compares White teacher leaders to Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with similar school demographics (see Figure 5). For example, White teacher leaders are compared to Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with 0-50% NFRLP. Finally, it compares ethnically similar teacher leaders in schools with differing school demographics (see Figure 6). For example, it compares White teacher leaders in

schools with 0-50% NFRLP to White teacher leaders in schools with 51-100% NFRLP.

*Comparing Teacher Leaders in Schools with Differing Demographics.*

This first section presents the data comparing all teacher leaders with one school demographic to all teacher leaders with a differing school demographic.

Figure 4 depicts how the data was analyzed.

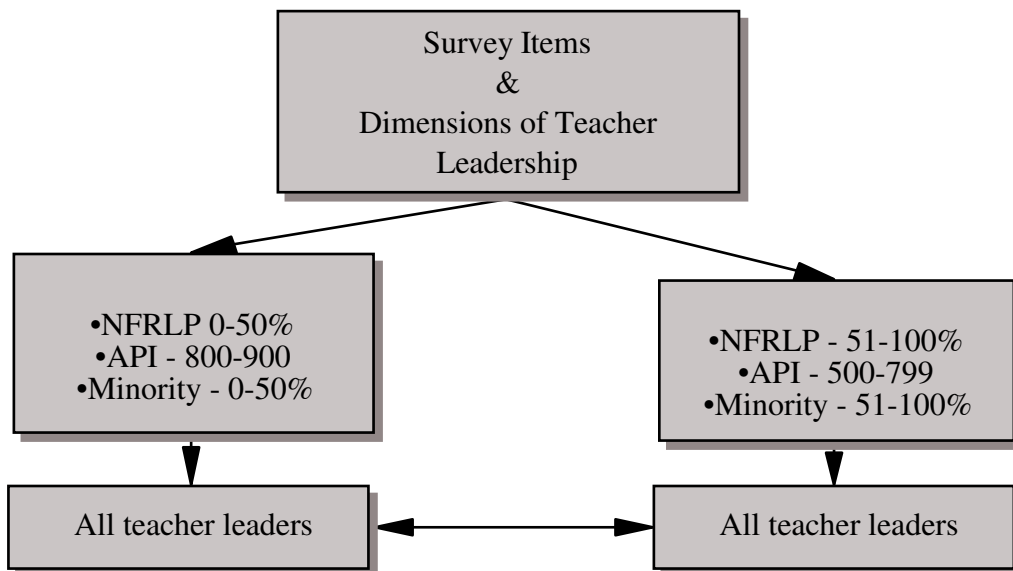


Figure 4: School Demographics Aggregate Responses: Comparing teacher leaders in schools with differing demographics.

Teacher leaders were compared to each other by three school demographics. The school demographics utilized included National Free and Reduced Lunch Program (NFRLP), their Academic Performance Index (API), and the percentage of minority students in the school. Each demographic was categorized to create two groups. The teacher leaders in group 1 were compared with the teacher leaders in group 2.

- NFRLP was categorized into 0-50% and 51-100%.
- The API scores were categorized into 500-799 and 800-900.
- The percentage of minority students was categorized into 0-50% and 51-100%.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the scores for the seven dimensions of teacher leadership and the 49 survey items for teacher leaders in differing school demographics. The researcher also examined the means for each dimension and each survey item.

*Dimensions of teacher leadership.* The independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the scores for teacher leaders in differing school demographics on the seven dimensions of teacher leadership. Table 14 shows that teacher leaders perceived more recognition at a statistically significant level ( $p = .040$ ) at schools with 0-50% of students participating in NFRLP than teacher leaders who are at schools with 51-100% of students participating in the NFRLP. Recognition consists of survey items 8 through 15. The magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate ( $\eta^2 = .06$ ).



Table 14: Independent-sample t-test: Recognition-Comparing teacher leaders in schools with differing percentages of students in NFRLP.

Dimension of Teacher Leadership	t	df	Sig.	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% C.I. of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Recognition	2.097	65	.040	.276	.077	.013	.540

Likewise, teacher leaders in schools with 0=50% minority students receive significantly more recognition when compared to teacher leaders in school with 51-100% minority students ( $p = .047$ ) according to the Mann-Whitney U test (See Table 15).

Table 15: Mann-Whitney U tests: Recognition: Comparing teacher leaders in school with 0-50% FRNLP to teacher leaders in schools with 51-100% NFRLP

	Teacher Leaders NFRLP	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Sig.
	51-100%	46	25.37	1167.0	

*Survey items.*

*National Free and Reduced Lunch Program.* When comparing the responses of teacher leaders in schools with 0-50% and 51-100% of students participating in the NFRLP, there were four survey items with statistically significant differences (Items 13, 15, 16, and 44). Table 16 shows the results from the independent-sample t-test for the four survey items. Teacher leaders in 0-50% NFRLP schools perceived at a statistically significant level ( $p = .032$ ) a higher degree of celebration for each

others' successes than teacher leaders in 51-100% NFRLP schools. The magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared = .02). They also perceived at a statistically significant level ( $p = .007$ ) more freedom to make judgments about what is best for students. The magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate (eta squared = .11). They perceived at a statistically significant level ( $p = .008$ ) freedom to make choices about the use of time and resources. The magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate (eta squared = .11). They also indicated that they looked forward to coming to work everyday at a statistically significant level ( $p = .049$ ) as compared to teacher leaders in 51-100% NFRLP schools. The magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate (eta squared = .07).

Table 16: Independent-samples t-test: Comparing teacher leaders in 0-50% NFRLP schools and teacher leaders in 51-100% NFRLP schools.

Survey Item	t	df	Sig.	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% C.I. of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
13. At my school, we celebrate each other's successes.	2.191	65	.032	.458	.209	.041	.876
15. In my role as a teacher, I am free to make judgments about what is best for my students.	2.762	65	.007	.592	.214	.164	1.02
16. At my school, I have the freedom to make choices about the use of time and resources.	2.740	65	.008	.576	.210	.156	.995
44. Teachers at my school look forward to coming to work every day.	2.011	57	.049	.387	.192	-.025	.853

*API scores.* Teacher leaders in schools with API scores of 800-900 indicate that they look forward to coming to work every day at a nearly significant level ( $p = .057$ ) as compared to teacher leaders in schools with API scores of 500-799. Table 17 shows the data for this survey item. The magnitude of the differences in the means was very small ( $\eta^2 = .08$ ).

Table 17: Independent-sample t-test: Survey item 44 - Comparing teacher leaders in schools with differing API scores.

Survey Item	t	df	Sig.	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% C.I. of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
44. Teachers at my school look forward to coming to work every day.	-1.947	55	.057	-3.95	.203	-.801	.012

*Percentage of minority students.* There were only seven teacher leaders in the 0-50% minority schools and 46 teacher leaders who responded in the 51-100% minority schools. As such, the independent-samples t-test was not a viable test due to the small and unbalanced sample size. Instead, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was used. There were no significant differences in scores of schools with low and high minority schools when the Mann-Whitney U test was conducted. However in 37 of the 49 survey items, the mean score for teacher leaders was higher in the 0-50% minority schools than in the 51-100% minority schools.

#### *Comparing Teacher Leaders in Schools in Demographically Similar Schools*

This section compares White teacher leaders to Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. The researcher split the data by school demographic and analyzed it by the categorized ethnicity of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. Figure 5

indicates how the data was split and compared. An independent-samples t-test was run for the seven dimensions of teacher leadership and the 49 items of the survey comparing the responses for the White teacher leaders and the Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders and school demographics. Where the sample size was very small and unbalanced, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was utilized. In addition to the tests run on the individual items, the categorized dimensions of teacher leadership were used and an independent-samples t-test and Mann-Whitney test were run for each demographic. These tests allowed the researcher to compare the responses of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with similar demographics.

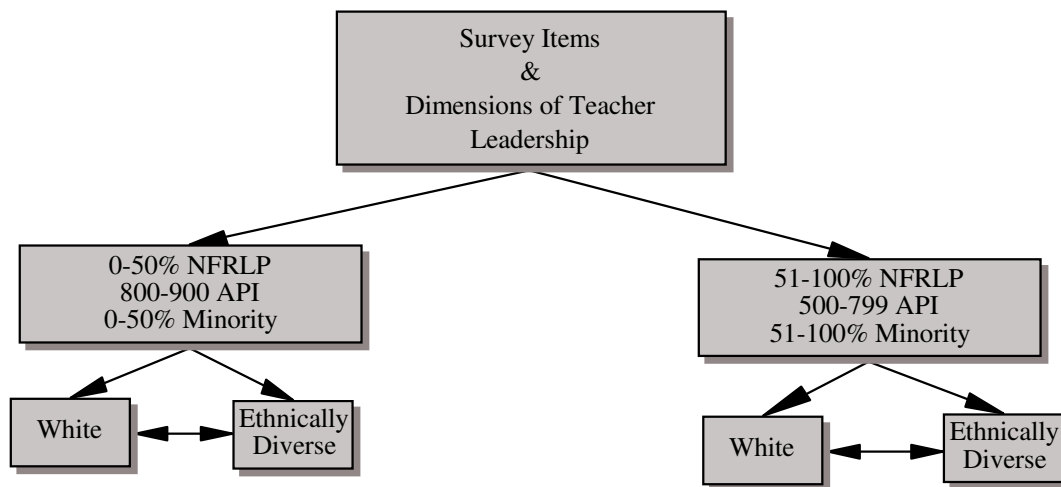


Figure 5: Like School Demographics: Comparing White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leader in like schools.

*Dimensions of teacher leadership.*

Table 18 shows the significant results when comparing White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders with similar school demographics. There was significance in the 0-50% NFRLP schools, the 800-900 API schools, and the 0-50% minority schools.

Table 18: Mann-Whitney U tests: Dimensions - Comparing White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with similar demographics.

	Ethnicity of Teacher Leaders	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Sig.
0-50% NFRLP Autonomy	White	21	20.98	440.50	.009
	Ethnically Diverse	13	11.88	154.50	
800-900 API Scores Autonomy	White	14	14.46	202.50	.029
	Ethnically Diverse	9	8.17	73.50	
0-50% Minority Students Positive Environment	White	4	2.63	10.50	.050
	Ethnically Diverse	3	5.83	17.50	

*0-50% NFRLP.* White teacher leaders were compared to Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in 0-50% NFRLP schools. White teacher leaders (n=21) in schools with 0-50% of the students participating in NFRLP perceive more autonomy at a statistically significant level ( $p=.009$ ) than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in similar schools according to the Mann-Whitney U test (See Table 18). There was no significant difference between the White teacher leaders and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with 51-100% of the students participating in NFRLP or in schools with 500-799 API scores.

*800-900 API scores.* White teacher leaders were compared to Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with APIs between 800-900. There were only 23 responses. Due to the low sample size, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was conducted. White teacher leaders in schools with an API between 800 and 900 perceive more autonomy at a statistically significant level ( $p=.029$ ) than Ethnically

Diverse teacher leaders in similar schools according to the Mann-Whitney U test (See Table 18).

*0-50% Minority student population.* White teacher leaders were compared to Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with 0-50% minority student populations. There were only seven responses from teacher leaders in schools where 0-50% of the students are minority. Due to the low sample size, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was conducted (see Table 18). Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with 0-50% minority students perceive a more positive environment at a statistically significantly level ( $p = .050$ ) than White teacher leaders in schools with the same percentage of minority students according to the Mann-Whitney U test.

*51-100% Minority student population.* There was also significance in schools with 51-100% minority student populations. White teacher leaders in schools with 51-100% minority students perceive a higher level of recognition at a statistically significant level ( $p = .022$ ) than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in similar schools according to an independent-samples t-test (see Table 19). The magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate ( $\eta^2 = .011$ ). Items 8-15 represent the dimension of teacher leadership titled recognition.

Table 19: Independent-sample t-test: Recognition - Comparing White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with 51-100% minority students.

Dimension of Teacher Leadership	t	df	Sig.	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% C.I. of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Recognition	2.368	44	.022	.389	.164	.058	.720

### *Comparing Ethnically Similar Teacher Leaders with Unlike School Demographics*

This last section of research question 4 presents the data comparing ethnically similar teacher leaders in schools with differing demographics. Figure 6 depicts how the data were analyzed.

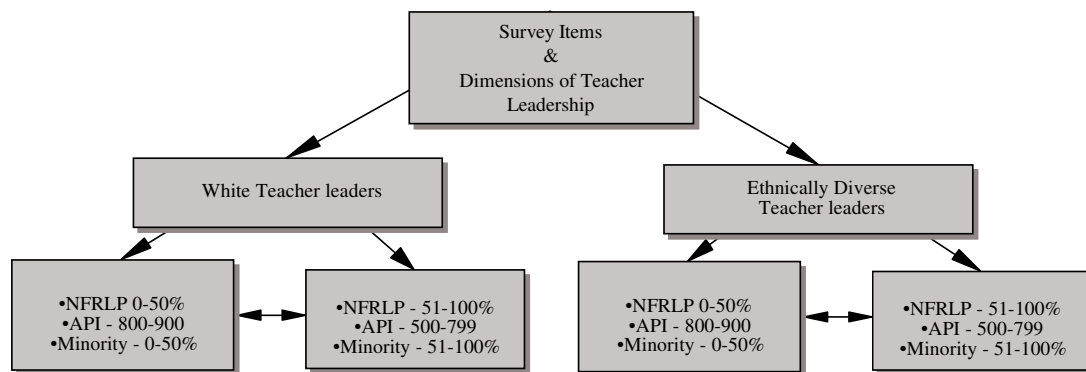


Figure 6: Unlike School Demographics: Comparing Ethnically similar teacher leaders with unlike school demographics

The data file was separated into two groups, White (not Hispanic) and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. Independent-samples t-tests were run for the demographics of NFRLP, API, and minority student population. Independent-samples t-tests were run for the seven dimensions of teacher leadership and the 49 items of the survey comparing the responses of White teacher leaders with 0-50% NFRLP to White teacher leaders of 51-100% NFRLP schools. Similarly, White

teacher leaders in schools of 800-900 API were compared to White teacher leaders in schools of 500-799 API. Finally, White teacher leaders in schools with 0-50% minority were compared to White teacher leaders in schools with 51-100% minority student populations. The same comparisons were made for Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders across the types of school demographics. Where the sample size was very small, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was utilized. The researcher also compared the means of the White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in each school demographic. In addition to analyzing the survey items, the dimensions of teacher leadership were also analyzed using the same process as the survey items. An independent-samples t-test was conducted on the dimensions of teacher leadership. The Mann-Whitney U test was run for each demographic when the sample size was not sufficient.

*Dimensions of teacher leadership.* As shown in Table 20, there was a significant difference for autonomy and near significance level for recognition ( $p = .059$ ).

Table 20: Mann-Whitney U tests: Dimensions of Teacher Leadership - Comparing ethnically similar teacher leaders in schools with differing demographics.

Dimension of Teacher Leadership	Ethnicity of Teacher Leaders	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Sig.
White Autonomy	NFRLP				
	0-50%	21	22.50	472.50	.007
	51-100%	15	12.90	193.50	
Ethnically Diverse Recognition	Minority Students				
	0-50%	3	21.67	65.00	.059
	51-100%	22	11.82	260.00	



*0-50% NFRLP vs. 51-100% NFRLP.* White teacher leaders in schools with 0-50% NFRLP were compared to White teacher leaders in schools with 51-100% NFRLP. White teacher leaders in schools with 0-50% of the students participating in NFRLP perceived more autonomy at a statistically significant level ( $p = .007$ ) than White teacher leaders in schools with 51-100% of the students participating in NFRLP according to the Mann-Whitney U test (See Table 20).

*0-799 API scores vs. 800-900 API scores.* There was no significant difference between the White teacher leaders in schools with 0-799 API scores as compared to White teacher leaders in schools with 800-900 API scores on the 49 survey items or the seven dimensions of teacher leadership. Likewise, there were no significant differences between the Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with 0-799 API scores as compared to Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with 800-900 API scores. The mean scores were very similar and no trend or pattern emerged.

*0-50% minority students vs. 51-100% minority students.* Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with 0-50% minority students perceive a higher level of recognition at a statistically significant level ( $p = .028$ ) than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with 51-100% minority students according to the Mann-Whitney U test (See Table 20). While not at a significant level, Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with 0-50% minority students perceive a more positive environment near a significance level ( $p = .059$ ) than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in schools with 51-100% minority students according to the Mann-Whitney U test. There was no significant difference for the 49 survey items. A further

discussion of the means and an analysis of the data from all the research questions are presented in Chapter 5.

*Research Question 6. Do principals differentiate supports based on the ethnicity of teacher leaders?*

This question is not directly answered through the survey results. However, the survey items and dimensions of teacher leadership can be examined by ethnicity to shed light on the different supports offered to teacher leaders. As reported for research questions one and two, there were significant differences between the supports teacher leaders perceived based on their ethnicity. These are reported in Tables 9 through 11. The means for White teacher leaders on 31 of the 49 survey items and 5 of the 7 dimensions of teacher leadership were higher for White teacher leaders than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. A more thorough discussion of this question will be addressed under the qualitative findings and discussion in Chapter 5.

### Qualitative Research Findings

This section presents a description of the participants of the focus groups and interviews and how they were selected. Then the data is presented by research question, themes from the literature, and those that emerged during the focus groups and interviews.

#### *Teacher Leader Focus Groups*

The teacher leaders selected for the focus group had responded to the online survey, they were ethnically diverse, and they were randomly chosen. Their names were written on slips of paper and drawn from a hat. They were given a number in

the order they were drawn. The first eight were invited to participate in the teacher leader focus group. Invitations were sent by email along with the teacher consent form and directions to the neutral site. A follow up email was sent one week later. If there was no response or the teachers were unable or unwilling to participate, the next teacher leader on the list was invited to participate. Teacher leaders who had not responded to the first request or who had responded late were invited to the next focus group. The first focus group only contained two participants. Invitations and reminders were sent out again to the teacher leaders who had not responded or could not make the initial focus group date. Attention was paid to their randomly drawn numbers. The second focus group included two more participants. The process was repeated and the final focus group included four participants. Pseudonyms were used throughout the study to quote the teacher leaders in the focus group and the principal interviewees. The code behind the pseudonym is T for teacher and P for principal. The numbers indicate the order of their participation.

*Focus Group A.* The first focus group consisted of two teacher leaders. Both were serving their schools outside the classroom. One was a Reading First Coach, Sarah (T1), funded by state and federal grants. The other was a Literacy Coach, Elena (T2), funded by school monies. One had previously served on the leadership team and one was currently serving on the leadership team.

*Focus Group B.* The second focus group consisted of two teacher leaders. One teacher leader was a Reading First Coach, Isabel (T3), funded by state and federal grants and on the leadership team. The other was a kindergarten teacher,

Lupe (T4), who had taken on leadership roles at her school site but was not on the leadership team.

*Focus Group C.* The third focus group consisted of four teacher leaders who were classroom teachers, Anna (T5), Diana (T6), Alex (T7), and Miguel (T8), and they all served on the leadership team. They were all from a charter school associated with the district.

#### *Principal Interviews*

Principals were invited to participate in a one-hour interview if one of their teacher leaders participated in the focus group. Pseudonyms were used throughout the study to quote the principals. These principal interviews provided the researcher with an opportunity to triangulate the data from the survey, focus group, and interview.

*Principal A.* This principal, Mr. Garcia (P1), was Hispanic and in his fourth year as principal of a Title 1 school. He identified three teacher leaders from his school site, all Hispanic females.

*Principal B.* This principal, Mrs. Ochoa (P2), was Hispanic and in her ninth year as principal of a Title 1 school. She identified two teacher leaders from her school site, both Hispanic females.

*Principal C.* This principal, Mr. Lee (P3), was White and in his eighth year as director of a Title 1 charter school. He identified six teacher leaders, two Hispanic females, one white female, one female listed as other, and two Hispanic males.

The focus group sessions and interviews were transcribed, reviewed, and coded for supports, barriers, and characteristics. The researcher started with the major

themes from the literature and added themes that emerged from the focus groups and interviews. The findings were tallied for the frequency of each theme, but did not measure the strength of the responses.

*Research Question 1. What supports do teacher leaders receive as teacher leaders?*

The major supports identified in the literature review included time, professional development, encouragement, rewards and recognition. Those that surfaced in the focus groups and interviews were peers, family, trust, and well-defined roles. Despite not being major themes for supports, they did surface in the literature. Peer support is cited by Bauer, Haydel, and Cody (2003) as a reason teachers persevered in a school leadership program. Ruppert (2003), Smylie and Brownlee-Conyers (1992) identified trust as an essential step to productive teacher leadership. While family was often cited as a barrier to teacher leaders (Chrisman, 2005; Lonquist & King, 1993; and Zinn, 1997), it surfaced as a support in the focus groups.

*Time.* Time as a support was only mentioned a total of five times. Two principals each mentioned it two times and one focus group mentioned it one time.

Mr. Garcia (P1) said:

Collaboration does help with that because of the collaboration time. One of the things we did this year was we added whole grade level collaboration blocks to our calendar. Every two weeks, grade levels get about four hours to meet as a grade level. I also provide. ... my literacy coach time ... to be able to purchase books, plan and attend workshops and those sorts of things.

Mr. Lee (P3) indicated that time is protected and provided for teachers and teacher leaders. He said:

We have five interns who are credentialed teachers who can take a class at any time and fill in. The other thing ... is that we have intentionally kept them out of the extra duties in the morning, at lunch, or in the afternoon. They have never had supervision responsibilities. This is everybody. We keep their mornings and afternoons totally open except for Fridays.

Sarah (T1) indicated that ILT (Instructional Leadership Team) meetings were often held after hours. “We would talk to our principal. After one year, she made an arrangement to do it within contract hours. She got subs so we could do it within contract hours.”

*Professional development.* Professional development was a support that was mentioned 48 times total: 27 times in the focus groups and 21 times in the principal interviews. The types of professional development offered and mentioned by teacher leaders and principals included school and district initiatives including:

- BTSA (Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment) workshops
- Aspiring Administrator Program (workshops for teachers who want to pursue an administrative position)
- Ball Foundation (A private organization that focuses on partnerships with mid-sized urban school districts and supports the development of high-performing schools in which all children learn at high levels regardless of race, national origin, socioeconomic status, native language and culture)
- Focus on Results (A consulting group that worked with schools and to make measurable, lasting improvements in student performance, school leadership, decision-making, and professional development)
- Targeted Leadership (A consulting firm that assists school systems with

the development of leadership capacity for improving student academic achievement, through direct training and personalized executive coaching)

- Reading First Trainings (5 day trainings on the research and implementation of the district adopted language arts curriculum)
- Collaborations (Release time from the contract time to work with the grade level team, vertical teams, or the Instructional Leadership Team.
- Professional books

Outside professional development and individual efforts at professional development was also mentioned as a support for teacher leaders by the teacher leaders and principals. These included participating in a master's and doctoral programs, National Board Certification, coaching training, administrative credentialing programs, and workshops of individual interest such as gender-like classes, technology, or family math and literacy nights. Alex (T7) recalled support offered and recommended by the principal. He said, "There was one workshop recommended for me. It was held here in the District and I really enjoyed it. It talked a lot about listening and coaching." Isabel (T3) reported, "As a Reading First Coach, I have attended trainings on how to guide conversations, facilitate collaboration meetings, and coaching."

*Encouragement.* Encouragement was a support that was mentioned 40 times total: 23 times in the focus groups and 17 times in the principal interviews. The types of encouragement offered and mentioned by teacher leaders included receiving information from the principal, being asked to present to the staff, being asked to be

a part of the ILT, being encouraged to pursue advanced degrees, higher level jobs, participate in school and district initiatives. Sarah (T1) cited a specific example of encouragement by her principal. She said:

I talked to my principal for a letter of recommendation. She said definitely and you are on the right track.... I finished my masters and then a year later, I said to my principal, I am ready to move on, to go to the next level. I changed jobs. My principal really supported me a lot. She took me and told me I know that you can do it. She told me I am ready for the next challenge. Since I felt so supported by my principal. I knew that I could do it.

Diana (T6) indicated that she has consulted the principal on her goals for higher education. She said:

I have talked with [my principal] quite a bit about a doctorate degree, an administrative credential, which route to go, or the National Board whatever. There are so many things. But for now, I am okay being lead teacher. I am also a support provider. If I go in that direction, these are things that could help me in improving that relationship too.

Isabel (T3) conveyed how she felt when her principal and other district administrators encouraged her.

I think in having people walk through my classroom. Having them send people to my classroom to see what I did, then to talk to me on the side, then hearing, that motivation when you tell the kids. "Tú puedes, you are going to go to college." It goes throughout your lifetime. They would walk through and they would say, "You are going to make a good administrator." It pumped me up ... I know what I did and I was fine with it. I feel so honored.... It is a driving force that somebody else thinks that of me.

The principal interviews also revealed how teacher leaders are encouraged. Even though they may receive praise for a job well done, for efforts in the classroom,



or as a leader, they often discount those words of encouragement. Mr. Garcia (P1) said:

I don't think they have the full confidence in that they consider themselves a leader. I think there is always an insecurity of if they are really as good as I have told them or as somebody has told them.

Mrs. Ochoa (P2) explained how she encourages her teacher leader in furthering her education, in taking on new roles, and also in learning how to work with the staff.

Encouraging, ... the reading coach she was very much encouraged to apply and go for the training. I encouraged her. She had finished her masters and now she could take something different. She's not necessarily looking for everyone to follow her that's not how she works.

Mr. Lee (P3) provided encouragement to his staff individually, as a group in the leadership meetings, and as a whole staff. Individually, he visited with his teachers in goal setting meetings, there was a journaling system where teachers could ask questions of the administrators and they responded back to them. There seemed to be individual conversations about professional development opportunities and higher education choices like doctoral programs, administrative preparation, and National Board certification. He articulated his support this way. "We cheerlead and do what we think we need to do with that young staff. They haven't experienced a lot.... Somebody has to provide that encouragement, the faith that we're on the right path."

*Recognition and rewards.* This support was mentioned a total of 15 times, eight times by the teacher leaders and seven times by the principals. It was not mentioned at all by one focus group or one principal. The types of recognition mentioned included verbal praise individually or in front of others, written recognition through personal notes or in a staff bulletin, or recommendations for other teachers to visit you or your classroom. Mrs. Ochoa (P2) said, “What I’ve found is that I have to do the personal things that are not seen. . . . If I do anything for the ILT, it has to be very subtle. So as to not make them stand out.” There was very little mention of rewards by principals or teacher leaders. In one instance, that is the philosophy of the principal. Mr. Lee (P3) summed it up. “A lot of what we promote its intrinsic reward. . . . There are no rewards. The reward is in the work. It is really by design.”

*Peers.* The teacher leaders and principals recognized the peers as a support for teacher leadership. Two principals mentioned it two times each. Two focus groups really emphasized the support of their peers with 19 references to peer support. One focus group only mentioned peer support one time. This contrasts with the literature as peers are often seen as a barrier to teacher leadership (Buckner & McDowelle, 2000; Chrisman, 2005; Johnson & Donaldson, 2007; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Robertson & Briggs, 1995).

Alex (T7) described peer support at his school as a willingness to assist others and share.

We all have a respect for each other. . . . I think there is a climate. . . . I can say, “I hear you’re pretty good at something. Can you share with me, coach me, teach me how to do that.” I have no problem with that.

I would like people to come and ask me items. I would do my best to help them out. ... So I try to extend my hand and help them out.

Anna (T5) described her school as one that has a climate of support and collaboration. "As far as the leadership role with Mr. Lee (P3) and the leadership role of committees, and just the way this school connects and works together. It is very connected here. ... It is a good thing here."

Lupe's (T4) experience is with a staff that helped each other out to lighten the load. "I have been lucky that all the teachers want to help and we get together. We help each other so it is not overwhelming."

Isabel's (T3) school is like family and friends. She said:

At my school, when anyone is acknowledged or applauded, I would have to say that there is a tight knit group of teachers. ... They are family like. ... They say, "Yes, I just have to add that this person does this and this and this." It goes on and on and on.

Mr. Garcia (P1) described the teachers' actions towards the ILT and teacher leaders in his school. He said, "They get positive reactions from other teachers and good feedback from the teachers. This staff tends to be very supportive."

Mr. Lee (P3) reported that his staff is supportive not only of those who have earned the National Board Certification but also as they seek out ways to grow and learn. He stated:

There is a healthy respect for the four National Board Certified Teachers and in the process that they had to go through [As a leadership team]. When teachers come to them, they want to support them. ... They want to support the initiative of their colleagues.

*Trust.* Trust was mentioned in all interviews and focus groups. The principals mentioned it seven times and the teacher leaders mentioned it seven times. This was not a major theme that emerged from the literature. However, the relationship between teacher leaders and administrators was very critical to several of the teacher leaders in this study. Several of the teachers not only acknowledged their administrator's encouragement, they reported that their administrators had great faith and trust in them and that the teacher leaders trusted them. It was a mutual sense of trust. In several cases, there was deep emotion connected to this topic. Elena (T2) articulated the trust of her principal. She said:

He knows I work hard. He tells me that I am the expert. He has faith in me. I share more with him than I thought I would because I trust him. He's him. I have a trust in him. If I didn't...if there was a little bit that I did not trust, I probably wouldn't be working with him. I have to trust the person I work with.

Sarah (T1) described her principal, "She knows my strengths and weaknesses. She sees qualities that our school needs and how that can help our students. Having that trust with your principal and that support makes it."

Isabel (T3) indicated that her administrator trusts her and includes her in conversations to plan and strategize ways to meet the needs of the school and staff. She said, "There is a mutual trust. Without that, I would not be in that role and that scenario would not happen. ... He truly sees me as one [a leader]. ...I feel honored on how much he does [trust me]." Mr. Garcia (P1) indicated that trust is earned and comes with time. He said,

Because there is a level of confidence, urgency, [and] trust, they have gotten to know me personally and I am not here to ding them. ...They

trust me enough to know that whatever comments or things that I am going to say are based on my observations, not personal. I am not trying to fire anybody [or] get rid of anybody. I am just trying to figure out how to make things improve.

Mrs. Ochoa (P2) indicated that trust was built over time. “The constant collaboration and sharing and making sure that we set up things for success. It was the trust in me but also with each other.”

*Family.* Family was not a theme identified in the literature as a support. Conversely, it was cited as a barrier to teacher leaders (Chrisman, 2005; Lonquist & King, 1993; Zinn, 1997). However, in all three focus groups, family support was recognized and essential for these teachers in their lives. It was mentioned three times in each focus group. Elena (T2) described her situation.

My husband is totally supportive. They [my family] really helped me get through it. Even at school. ... I had 2 kids in college at the same time. We were all in college. It was part of our family culture. One more celebration.

Sarah (T1) expressed the support she received from both her family and her husband’s family.

They helped and lived in the area. I get so emotional [tears up]. My mother and mother-in-law were all helping. They did everything they could. They supported me so much. I was the first one to get a Master’s in both of our families. I was the first one to get a B.A. In my husband’s and mine [family]. They felt really proud.

After listening to Sarah (T1), Elena (T2) made an observation about the support of family. “It makes you wonder if that is why we did do college and get a

Master because we had the support within the families.” Lupe (T4) described the story of how her family supported her.

We are always helping each other. When my husband has extra work, like the sand castle project, that is a big job. ... So we help each other. I have always included my children. It is like give and take. I will do it. For my daughter, she is very creative. She likes to create, suggest workshops, and prizes. She gives her input. She loves that. My son loves to help, do posters, and flyers. ... As a teacher, I could integrate the family. I have been able to involve the family. ... We try to help each other, to make it easy for each other.

Diana’s (T6) family support is from her husband who has a similar upbringing to hers. They are both mixed ethnically and both had a very strong mother figure that worked outside the home. She said, “There was never any doubt that I would be working. I met somebody that did not expect that from me [traditional roles]. Otherwise, we wouldn’t be married.”

Anna (T5) shared her story as one that has made the transition from a traditional family structure to one that is more current with the times. She felt support and sometimes pressure to succeed at the highest levels.

I was raised in a very traditional home where the mom stayed home and the father worked. I have three other sisters. My father was almost a college graduate. My mother never finished second grade. Being one of five, I was the first to graduate college, which was very important to my dad. I have had all the support from them, even from my mom who did not complete grammar school. Even today, my dad envisions me completing my doctorate. I have to make him understand that is not what I want to do with my life. A Master’s degree is good. When I came home and discussed it with my father, he was elated [about the lead teacher role]. My mother knows that the traditional way is not a thing anymore. It is not a thing for us. It may have been 20-30 years ago. My sisters have also taken a step forward. We have professionals in our family. So it does not hinder [you] if you are a girl or a boy.

*Well-defined roles.* While teachers made no mention of well-defined roles as a support, all three principals mentioned that as a support. They specifically mentioned it four times. Feiler et al. (2000), Lonquist and King (1993), Zinn (1997), Hart (1994) and Buckner and McDowelle (2000) recognize this more often as a barrier. Two administrators did indicate that the teacher leader roles were clarified and defined for the staff. The administrators knew what was expected of the teacher leaders.

Mr. Garcia (P1) described establishing the literacy coach in his school. This was a new position at the school two years ago. The school used their own funds to pay for the literacy coach and had the approval of the School Site Council and teachers.

We have talked about it in the grade level collaborations. Her initial role was to lead the grade level meetings and be an initial resource in talking about best practices. We have also talked about it in whole staff meetings. Talking about how she would play the part of facilitator and resource. We have started to talk in meetings about her role as changing as staff development and coach. People should take advantage of it and ask her to come into their classrooms. ... I told the staff that her role would be a coaching and staff developer role, not a support teacher in instruction.

Mrs. Ochoa (P2) indicated that defining the role of teacher leaders, specifically the Reading Coach, was necessary with the upper grade. The lower grade teachers had attended trainings where the coach's role was defined and clarified. While Mr. Lee (P3) described the roles, duties, and functions of the teacher leaders, the communication of those for the teacher leaders and the school community may or may not be evident to others.

This section reported the findings from the principal interviews and teacher leaders focus groups on the supports for teacher leaders. A further discussion of the support teacher leaders receive is presented in Chapter 5.

*Research Question 2. What barriers do teacher leaders face as teacher leaders?*

The barriers identified by the literature include lack of time, lack of clear roles, personal commitments, and lack of support by administrators, peers, and family. From the focus groups and interviews, a theme that emerged was external pressures from the district or state and lack of professional development specifically targeted to leading peers and the change process.

*Lack of time.* This was identified as a barrier by both groups. The teacher leaders mentioned it seven times and the principals mentioned it seven times. They listed time beyond contract hours as a barrier. Time was mentioned by Mr. Garcia (P1) four times as essential for leadership. He said that, “The biggest barrier is time and energy.” Several teacher leaders indicated that the time impacted their ability to establish the close connection with their peers [Alex (T7)]. In addition, Anna (T5) and Miguel (T8) both stated that regular meetings impacted their time with their children at home. They often would get home at 5:30 p.m. or so and only have an hour or two with their children before bedtime. This has been a detractor to being on the leadership team. Sarah (T1) indicated that time is an issue and a barrier of hers. In order to be prepared for substitute teachers, trainings, and meetings, she said, “Yes, we work two to three hours extra. We plan lessons and stay after school.”



*Ill-defined roles.* This was identified as a barrier by both groups but with the teachers giving it more emphasis. The teacher leaders mentioned it 14 times and the principals mentioned it only four times.

Sarah (T1) and Elena (T2) expressed how their role impacts their relationship with their peers. There were teachers with similar credentials and training. They may or may not have had the same amount of experience. They worked closely with the principal and did many things that principals did. Sarah (T1) reported, “Now, they see me as an administrator but I am not an administrator. The teachers that were my friends see me differently.” Elena (T2) has similar experiences. She said:

Maybe the hardest thing about this is being in a gray area. You are a teacher.... Sometimes you are just walking this fine line between a peer and someone who is close to the principal. Even though I don't tell him everything and he doesn't tell me everything. That is an understanding with us. If I see something in the classroom, I deal with it with the teacher. But, that is the toughest. Trying to define your own role of being in between.

Alex (T7) and Anna (T5) specifically asked the principals to define their role. They both received an answer that they felt was ambiguous and open. They both felt uneasy that they were to develop the role as they chose. Miguel (T8) stated, “There is no description. It's just, you are the lead teacher.” Isabel (T3) often is called away from her role as reading coach to complete other duties. While the duties were not in her job description, there were important to the smooth running of the school. She described her situation.

No, it [the role of reading coach] has been defined on paper and in theory. But there are numerous things on my plate perhaps that have nothing to do with what I am supposed to be doing. I have to do them because at the end of the day, I have a boss. He says, “We need to do

this and this and this.” ... At the end of the day, the principal calls the shots. I can’t say, “I can’t do that.” There is recess duty, subbing, the site plan, the list can go on and on and on. It limits what I can do in my role as a reading coach. That in itself stifles or confuses the teachers as well because I say that I will be available at recess and lunches. But then the principal says, “I need you to do this.” Then, I have to do that. Sadly, enough it contradicts my role. I am truly there for the teachers. I have to go back and say, “Sorry I have to cancel because I have to do this.” It sabotages the intention. I also understand that everything else is just as important and needs to be done too. I am stuck between a rock and a hard place. ... It is really a juggling act and it is not defined to me or the staff.

Despite conversations at the beginning for this new teacher leader role, Mr. Garcia (P1) felt that the literacy coach’s role needs to be clarified for staff. The ideas teachers have to support the school, students, and staff may differ. He stated:

I think we haven’t solidified her role for everybody. Some people might think her role is only running staff meetings, grade level meetings, and she could do some coaching. So that is something that can be tweaked and fine-tuned a little bit. But my definition to her and her feedback to me is we want to have her in the classroom coaching. Initially when she was first hired, there was a lot of conversation about whether she would take small groups. Occasionally, maybe to model a practice was okay. But I told the staff that her role would be a coaching and staff developer role, not a support teacher in instruction.

Mr. Lee (P3) indicated that there might have been a job description in prior years for the lead teacher, but that the role has changed significantly this last year.

*Lack of encouragement or support.*

The lack of encouragement and support was mentioned 31 times by the teacher leaders and 18 times by the principals. Peers were the focal point of the comments. These comments reflect the finding of many researchers. Teachers in a leadership role often experience resentment, conflict, and negative comments and

attitudes from other teachers (Chrisman, 2005; Gabriel, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 2003; & Ovando, 1996). Three teacher leaders expressed concern about the union pressures. They indicated that the union leader on campus often put pressure on them to resist meetings or trainings after hours and to resist participating in new initiatives. Specifically, Isabel (T3) said, “When we say we are a writing focus school and these are the next steps. She’ll [union representative] quickly interject, “That can’t happen after school hours.” There is a lot of personal agendas, or personal reasons that people do things.”

Sarah (T1) recalled her experiences:

Our union reps are very strict about working extra hours past contract hours. They don’t want us to be paid less. It’s a strong philosophy in our school. We have to try to do everything within our hours. That is the barrier that I struggle with. After our staff meeting with our union representative, all the teachers said, “No, we are not doing this. Especially those teachers that do not have tenure, they shouldn’t be a part of this.”

In addition to the union pressures, their colleagues also questioned their involvement as a younger teacher with fewer years of teaching and maybe less coursework or training. Elena (T2) experienced this. She said, “It was a weird position because one person taught 25 years and another taught 5-6 years. It was a little uncomfortable [being a coach].” Diana (T6) indicated that her colleagues kind of joked and wondered why she was chosen. Isabel (T3) and Lupe (T4) both indicated that a barrier is [the] veteran teacher. Lupe (T4) said, “They don’t have to renew their credentials. They are stuck in their old ways. They question everything.

“You don’t have the experience, how can you suggest that.” They have 30 years of exp. They throw it in your face.”

The negative comments not only impact the teacher leaders but the staff. Elena (T2) indicated, “Upper grades were very dominant to the point of bullying where no one would say anything. That was a hard one because they are scary.” When she reflects on her work and instructional practices, she questions herself because of these pressures. “It makes sense, it’s research-based and good teaching for the children, but you get the pressure that you are doing it for the principal.”

Isabel (T3) recalled a recent event at her school.

Teachers were discussing a schedule and needed to let the principal know of their decision. One teacher mentioned that they were not talking freely because I was in the room. There still are certain individuals that taint the certain dynamic. The other said, “Yep, that is why I am not saying anything.” [I said] I was only there for my two cents if you asked. I stood up and left.

*External pressures.* The presence of external pressures was a theme that was mentioned 29 times in the teacher focus groups. It was mentioned three times by one principal. The external pressures mentioned included a focus on test scores, mandated programs and assessments, district and school protocols. Many teachers and teacher leaders were very focused on their jobs and using their time to meet the never-ending demands. Sarah (T1) indicated that when she would have meetings there was little time to support each other due to the training demands and the full agendas. Isabel (T3) stated that the required reports, site plans, and managerial items often interfere with the instructional efforts and her defined role as a Reading First Coach. Lupe (T4) noticed that the teachers are very overwhelmed trying to get out of

improvement status. They are very busy with their classrooms. She as well as Elena (T2) both reported how stressed their principals are to meet the demands of achievement. Their time is precious and they are dealing with pressing items in addition to instruction. Elena (T2) shared her feelings about the possible future of her school. She said:

The district is frustrating sometimes. They say that we are supposed to do research based [instruction]. ...But when it comes down to it, if the kids in our schools don't do well, then what are they going to do, give us the basal and give them worksheets? It is frustrating. Frustrating for me. Learning what I know about leading, they say they are supporting us but yet, what happens if our school doesn't make it? I know we are next in line for Reading First. I probably won't stay for that as it is too far away from my beliefs about reading and instruction. There is really nothing for teacher leaders. There is an occasional [literacy training]. If they really think of us as teacher leaders, why do they separate us from our principals? I don't understand that. If we are supposed to be helping lead the literacy, yet they get [one training] because they are the leaders and we get the [doesn't finish her thoughts]... We should get just as much. There is a perception. I do wonder.

Likewise, Sarah (T1) reported her frustrations at just the lack of communication and training. She had come in after the beginning of the Reading First program for the school. She had not received the initial training that was given to the other coaches.

When I came in, there was no money left for training. I asked for training and support. I did have the support coach that if I had questions she would help me and guide me through. Everything that I didn't know, I am finding out. I felt that I was thrown into this position without knowing exactly what I was getting into, the philosophy, and the purpose of it ...When I asked for support, I thought I needed training but there was no money available. Nobody showed me the essentials at the beginning. I still feel behind and that I cannot catch up with them. [the other coaches] Sometimes, I wait until the end [of the meeting] to ask questions so I don't waste their

time. I have to wait and schedule an appt and ask my questions. Very simple, but information I should have known to be effective – very simple information.

Mr. Garcia (P1) noted that teachers are very busy both in the classroom and outside of work. He indicated that it takes extreme amounts of time beyond the classroom to be a strong leader. He questioned if the teachers really have the time and effort to balance a teaching role, a leadership role, and a family role.

*Lack of professional development.* This was mentioned 12 times by both principals and teacher leaders. The teacher leaders indicated that they often were unable to order substitutes in order to be released for professional development. They also reported that there was little professional development in the area of leadership.

Elena (T2) expressed her opinion. She said:

There is really nothing for teacher leaders. There is an occasional ...[literacy training]. If they really think of us as teacher leaders, why do they separate us from our principals? I don't understand that. If we are supposed to be helping lead the literacy, yet they get the whatever training because they are the leaders and we get the ... We should get just as much.

Elena (T2) shared her frustrations about the lack of professional development. She reported:

When I came in, there was no money left for training. I asked for training and support. ...Everything that I didn't know, I am finding out. I felt that I was thrown into this position without knowing exactly what I was getting into, the philosophy, and the purpose of it. ... I thought I needed training but there was no money available.

Alex (T7) had attended one coaching workshop but did not receive ongoing training in that area. He said:

There was one workshop recommended for me. It was held here in the District and I really enjoyed it. It talks a lot about listening and coaching. They haven't encouraged me to continue to go to any other workshops like that. I have not received [further] coaching in that area.

This section reported the findings from the principal interviews and teacher leaders focus groups. A further discussion of the barrier teacher leaders face is presented in Chapter 5.

*Research Question 3. Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity?*

There was no indication that administrators offered differentiated support for teacher leaders based on their ethnicity. Neither the teacher leaders nor the principals offered examples of incidents when this was evident. However, two principals offered different supports to teachers based on their needs. Mr. Garcia (P1) offered training and professional books to the literacy coach who was new to her position. Mr. Lee (P3) offered training based on the request of the individual teacher leaders.

*Research Question 4. Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity and school demographics?*

There was no indication that administrators offered differentiated support for teacher leaders based on their ethnic identity and school demographics. However, there were two teacher leaders that held Reading First Coaching positions [Sarah (T1) and Isabel (T3)] that are specifically targeted to schools with low API scores. In addition, the two coaches and one classroom teacher mentioned that the Reading First training offered to them was beneficial [Sarah (T1), Isabel (T3), and Lupe

(T4)]. These may be considered supports provided to teachers and teacher leaders based on the school demographics.

*Research Question 5. How do principals and teacher leaders characterize teacher leaders?*

There are many characteristics of teacher leaders identified in the literature. The overarching characteristic identified in the literature is that teacher leaders are themselves effective teachers (Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; Krisko, 2001; Lonquist & King, 1993; Ruppert, 2003; Snell & Swanson, 2000; & Stronge, 2002). In addition, teacher leaders have been described as reflective (Lambert, 2003; Snell & Swanson, 2000), collaborative (Snell & Swanson, 2000), creative, life-long learners (Cain, 2001; Krisko, 2001; Ruppert, 2003), having effective people skills (; Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; Krisko, 2001; Ruppert, 2003; Zinn, 1997), experienced (Smylie, 1997), and being experts in the content areas (Smylie, 1997). The characteristics that surfaced in the focus groups and interviews were action oriented, dedicated, and outspoken.

The data from the teacher leaders focus groups and the principal interviews are reported by characteristic. Each of the characteristics that follow was mentioned by both groups in every focus group and every principal interview. The findings tallied the frequency of each theme but did not measure its strength.

*Effective teachers.* Effective was a characteristic mentioned 10 times. The teacher leaders mentioned it five times and the principals mentioned it five times. Sarah (T1) said, “One [of the teacher leaders] is really dynamic and a good instructor.” Isabel (T3) reported, “Thinking of teacher leaders, I think of the ILT and



another [teacher that] is a very strong teacher.” Mr. Lee (P3) recalled how his school looks for teacher leaders. He said, “We are looking at folks who have had good results. A lot of it is what they actually do in the classroom and how that materializes.” Mr. Garcia (P1) concurred. He stated, “The ILT are the strongest teachers academically.”

*Reflective.* Reflective was a characteristic that was referred to 20 times: 13 times by the teacher leaders and seven times by the principals. Mrs. Ochoa (P2) indicated that her ILT and teacher leaders take time to plan and reflect back on what worked and did not work. She said, “We want to make note of it so that we can repeat what went well. We want to talk about things that we can improve upon or on things than didn't go the way we thought it would.” Mrs. Ochoa (P2) indicated how she reflects and involves her teacher leaders in the process.

My supporting the reading coach is the debriefing we do for each of the groups as we meet with them. This is the agenda. What do you think? How do you think it's going to go? Who are you worried about? This happened. So we plan.

Elena (T2) indicated that she was always examining her practices even early in her career. She reported, “As a newer teacher, you think, [Does] it makes sense? Is it research-based and good teaching for the children?” Sarah (T1) indicated how others reflect on their practices and how she assisted in the process. “They come to me and ask what I observed, how can I make it better.” Isabel (T3) worked with another teacher and they reflected on an instructional practice. “A few weeks ago I did a demo. My purpose was to [do] modeling and think alouds. Afterwards, she said, “I didn't see it.” I said, “This is a perfect example. I am not perfect.” Even then,

I asked a question to my self and a student answered, and I got carried away. I am the reading coach and it can happen to me. In these instances, these teacher leaders questioned their practices and work with students and teachers.

*Collaborative.* Collaborative was a characteristic mentioned 17 times total: 10 by the teacher leaders and seven by the principals. Mr. Garcia (P1) indicated that teacher leaders are a positive force during collaborations. He reported, “Certain teachers have really good suggestions for practices that they are all working on. ... In that way, they have the opportunity to share their leadership style and practices.” Anna (T5) said, “We talk quite a bit after school [with my grade level partners]. ... I listen a lot.” Mrs. Ochoa (P2) reported, “The constant collaboration and sharing makes sure that we set up things for success.” Mr. Garcia (P1) gives his teacher leaders an opportunity to work with other teachers. He said, “We share that ... this teacher has really done well in this area. We are going to have her share out. She has had the opportunity to do that and people have replicated that as well.”

Mrs. Ochoa (P2) indicated that the collaborative efforts came slowly. She said:

Finally, the ILT started to gel and wanted to work together and wanted to change the toxic atmosphere. They stuck together. They didn't let someone who wasn't on the ILT say, “What are you doing now? If you do that then we all have to do that.” It was the trust with me but also with each other.

*Life long learners.* Life long learner was a characteristic that described teacher leaders 29 times total. The teacher leaders mentioned it 17 times and the principals mentioned it 12 times. It was evident in the focus groups and interviews

that the teacher leaders were engaged in learning. This was reflected in the advanced degrees, the participation in workshops, and how they approached their work. Three teacher leaders had started and finished their master's degree in the last few years. Three were interested in pursuing doctoral degrees and one is currently in a doctoral and administrative program at Point Loma Nazarene, a local University. Four were engaged in professional development through the district or independently. Three were participating in the Aspiring Administrators Program, one in a coaching seminar at Ohio State University, two attended a coaching seminar offered through BTSA, and two were in a study of teachers whose classrooms achieved 75% proficient and advanced on the state testing. Two of the teacher leaders indicated that their future goal was to teach at the University level. Four teacher leaders indicated that they might pursue an administrative position. Two definitely said that an administrative role was not for them. The comments made by teacher leaders referred to this characteristic as well. Elena (T2) said, "I was always interested in learning anything I could." Sarah (T1) indicated that in her work she is continuously learning. She stated, "The more I do this work, I am ... forcing myself to learn these things and other areas I thought I was weak on. The strategies are the same. You just apply it in that grade." Alex (T7) reported, "I have been reading on my own about leadership. Since I am taking that role seriously. I want to develop as a leader."

*Effective people skills.* Having effective people skills was a characteristic commented on 26 times total. The teacher leaders mentioned it 17 times and the principals mentioned it nine times. Teacher leaders and principals described teacher leaders with this characteristic as able to develop relationships with others, as being

positive, and as being a listener. Anna (T5) already mentioned that she listens a lot to her grade level partners. Sarah (T1) described one teacher leader as dynamic.

Similarly, Mr. Lee (P3) indicated that one teacher leader naturally attracts others to him as a result of his worldview, his passion, and his personality. Mr. Garcia (P1) reported, “They get positive reactions from other teachers and good feedback from the teachers.” Mrs. Ochoa (P2) indicated:

Some are naturals. The naturals are comfortable with being involved. ... They are going to listen to people. They are going to mediate. They are going to translate what people are saying and bring people around. They keep people focused. ... They are listening. They are bringing people around, not by telling, [but] by listening and helping people see connections, making connections.

*Expert in the content area.* Being an expert in a content area was a characteristic mentioned 12 times total: nine times by the teacher leaders and three times by the principals. Anna (T5) stated, “There are a lot of people who have certain expertise ...this person can teach phonics. ... We definitely have an idea of who is strong in what. I think they’re looked up to because they do have that knowledge.” Alex (T7) shared his experience in seeking out those with content expertise. He shared, “I can say I hear you're pretty good at something. Can you share with me, coach me, and teach me how to do that?” Diana (T6), Alex (T7), and Anna (T5) indicated that their principal directed them to the content experts. Diana (T6) said, “He would direct us to people or say go check out this person. ... I have had people say, ... “he told me to come talk to you about [this].” Mr. Garcia (P1) said, “I have a few teachers who are really strong in a few areas.” Mrs. Ochoa (P2) reported that the teachers recognized the success teacher leaders had with the students. “They all

started talking about what [they] are doing .... Because they are doing something right.” Mr. Garcia (P1) described how the literacy coach is building her expertise. He said:

She has her masters in the area of reading. She is going through a set of classes being given Gay Su Pinnell in Ohio. That is giving her some clout because they are familiar with her work. That will give her a level of expertise that teachers will want to take advantage of. He also reported how teacher leaders are recognized as experts based on the

data from the local curriculum and assessments. He said:

We have a few teachers in our OARS theme tests that consistently get good results. That is probably the biggest piece of clout that they can carry with them. People say, “She keeps getting good results in vocabulary and spelling, let’s talk to her.”

*Action oriented.* Being action oriented was a characteristic mentioned 21 times total: 15 times by the teacher leaders and 16 times by the principals. This characteristic was reported as the teacher leader that took the initiative, took charge, brought ideas to their grade level or staff, and was willing to share. Isabel (T3) reported that the ILT influences the school. She said:

Those teachers on ILT are true leaders as well because they fulfill, they help mold the direction that our school is going and make certain that they are the models for each grade level. We have teachers, ...[the] math coach, myself, the reading coach. We take on leadership responsibilities, facilitating and collaboration meetings.

Mr. Garcia (P1) said, “They initiate a practice and ask questions.” Mrs. Ochoa (P2) indicated that teacher leaders just do it. Mr. Lee (P3) said, “You start to see people who are exerting their role. ... some leadership can start to percolate out.”

*Dedicated.* Dedicated was a characteristic mentioned 20 times total: 12 times by the teacher leaders and eight times by the principals. This was characterized as teacher leaders who had a willingness to serve, wanted to be in a lead role, were committed to their students and school, and spent the extra time and effort to carry out their lead role. Mr. Garcia (P1) repeatedly expressed, “Being a leader takes a lot of time and effort. ...To take on a strong leadership role, it takes an incredible amount of commitment beyond the classroom.” Sarah (T1) said, “[Teacher leaders are those] who were willing to work and to move forward and were open to change.” Isabel (T3) reported that ILT members were chosen for two reasons. She listed, “Their willingness and their strong instructional leadership.” She also indicated that teacher leaders have a “withitness [and] ... inner drive.”

*Outspoken.* Being outspoken was a characteristic mentioned 13 times total: seven times by the teacher leaders and six times by the principals. Teacher leaders and principals named this characteristic in different ways. They identified teacher leaders as willing to voice their opinions, speak up in staff meetings, lead others in a discussion, and share out their practices and ideas learned in trainings. There were times that teacher leaders needed to persuade their peers. Sarah (T1) said:

So, we convinced, [them] ... and they left us alone. Then, we moved forward with it [Ball Foundation and ILT]. We said, “Do we want the principal to make decisions by herself or do we want input from teachers?” Pretty much that was our strongest point. It made us move forward.

Anna (T5) shared her experience as a teacher leader. She said, “I think there are voices in the room that speak for those who are not there. They are representative of their grade level. Not necessarily outspoken, but not afraid to speak.”

Mrs. Ochoa (P2) reported, “They can help spread the word and get decisions ready before we sit down to do the dialogue.” She also shared how one teacher leader made a difference. “She wasn't afraid to stand up right away. That has made other people look at what she's doing.”

*Experienced.* This characteristic was mentioned in all three teacher leader focus groups and in two principal interviews. Being an experienced teacher was a characteristic mentioned seven times total; five times by the teacher leaders and two times by the principals. When asked what are the characteristics of teacher leaders, Isabel (T3) responded, “Years of experience,” and Lupe (T4) said, “Seniority.” Anna (T5) thought that her years of experience were the reason she was selected as the lead teacher in her grade level. Mr. Lee (P3) indicated that others looked to one teacher as a leader due to “his experience and his worldview.”

Sarah (T1) shared her conversation with an experienced teacher in a lead role when the school was deciding whether to participate in the Ball Foundation and have an ILT. She said:

I clearly remember, an experienced teacher, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. We both talked about the positive that would come out of this. We would be empowered to give decisions and how to do and plan our professional development and how to really help the principal make decisions at staff meetings and everything else that was planned out for the year.

There were other characteristics that were mentioned by one or two participants of the focus group and/or principal interviews. For example, Mr. Lee (P3) reported that teacher leaders were accountable for their work. He also described teacher leaders as creative, inquisitive, passionate, and wanting to make a difference at the school, with the students, and for the community. These characteristics were found in the literature. Cain (2001), Krisko (2001), and Ruppert (2003) all identified teacher leaders as creative. In Smylie's (1997) research, he identified that one characteristic of teacher leaders was the desire to make a difference. In addition, Childs-Bowen et al. (2000) recognized teacher leaders as those who had a strong passion for the school and accomplishment of their goals.

Mrs. Ochoa (P2) indicated that teacher leaders were open to ideas. This idea was reported by Childs-Bowen et al. (2000) as well as connected to the comments of Mr. Lee (P3). He reported that teacher leaders were organized, positive with their peers, and they modeled good practices.

From the focus groups, Sarah (T1) reported that a characteristic of teacher leaders are they are empowered and inquisitive. Isabel (T3) and Lupe (T4) both felt that teacher leaders were motivating. They were passionate and positive. They also indicated that they should be good role models in their practices. Being a role model was reported as a role of a teacher leader rather than a characteristic of teacher leaders in the research of Day and Harris (2003) and Muijs and Harris (2002). Alex (T7) indicated that teacher leaders needed to be flexible. That was similar to the findings of Snell and Swanson (2000). In addition, he noted that teacher leaders have



a strong sense of self as identified by other researchers (Childs-Bowen; Krisko 2001; Lambert, 2003; Zinn, 1997).

There were some themes found in the literature but not mentioned by the teacher leaders or the principals. These were the characteristics of finding humor (Krisko, 2001), risk taker (Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; Krisko; Ruppert, 2003), and productive (Ruppert). A further discussion of the characteristics and the findings for this research question is presented in Chapter 5.

*Research Question 6. Do principals differentiate supports based on the ethnic diversity of teacher leaders?*

There was no indication that administrators offered differentiated support for Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders based on the focus groups or interviews. However, there was some differentiation of support based on the individual needs of teachers and teacher leaders.

A principal indicated that he provided support based on the individual interests and goals of the teachers. In his response to the questions on differentiation of support, he responded:

It's like the two (teacher leaders) that went to Ernie Mendez or who are going up to the District Aspiring Administrator Workshops. Those are both great teachers who are in the leadership development program. The teachers ... self select what they wanted to do and we provided the resources. We financed all our National Board Certified Teachers. Everyone for the three years that it took them to go through. We had 14 going at one point. That was their choice. We try to open their eyes up to things. We have one that is really strong in technology. She is a lead teacher. We keep trying to find opportunities for her. We are looking for opportunities outside for her if she's ready to do things for her. To that extent, it is differentiated. It is like, what do you want to do? Where do you want growth?

### *Summary*

This research study focused on the supports valued by and provided to teacher leaders and whether those differed for Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. The samples were drawn from teachers and administrators from one urban K-6 school district in southern California. This was a mixed methods study. Principals initially identified teacher leaders from their school sites. From this group of teacher leaders, an online survey collected demographic information in addition to responses from the Teacher Leadership School Survey (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001). There were 67 responses total. To answer the research questions quantitatively, the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent-sample t-tests, and Mann-Whitney U Tests.

### *Summary of Quantitative Findings.*

The significant findings for the quantitative research are presented in three sections: the overall survey, the seven dimensions of teacher leadership, and the 49 individual survey items. Independent-samples t-tests and the Mann-Whitney U Tests were conducted to compare the scores for the seven dimensions of teacher leadership for teacher leaders in differing school demographics, in similar school demographics, and by ethnic diversity. The school demographics utilized included National Free and Reduced Lunch Program (NFRLP), their Academic Performance Index (API), and the percentage of minority students in the school. Each demographic was categorized to create two groups. In addition the ethnicity of teacher leaders was categorized into two groups (White and Ethnically Diverse). The teacher leaders in one group were compared with the teacher leaders in the other group.

Table 21 provides a summary of the significant findings for the quantitative research. Column one (Teacher leaders) provides the descriptors for the types of schools. The differences are summarized for teacher leaders based on all schools. Then three different school demographic categories are described (National Free and Reduced Lunch Program, Academic Performance Index scores, and percentage of minority students in attendance). Column two (All) summarizes findings for all teacher leaders surveyed in each type of school. In addition, Column three (White) summarizes significant disaggregated findings for the White teacher participant group. Column four (Ethnically Diverse) summarizes significant disaggregated findings for the Ethnically Diverse teacher participant group.

Table 21: Summary of Significant Quantitative Findings.

Teacher Leaders	All	White	Ethnically Diverse
All Schools	Developmental Focus had the highest mean at 4.10.	Developmental Focus had the highest mean at 4.15.	Positive Environment had the highest mean at 4.06.
	Open Communication had the lowest mean at 3.70.	Open Communication had the lowest mean at 3.65.	Collegiality had the lowest mean at 3.71.
		Higher means on 4 of 7 Dimensions of Teacher Leadership.	
		Higher means on 31 of 49 Survey Items.	
	<u>Highest Mean 4.61</u> Survey Item 8: The administrators at my school have confidence in me.	<u>Highest Mean 4.69</u> Survey Item 8 & Survey Item 3: Administrators at my school actively support the professional development of faculty and staff.	<u>Highest Mean 4.52</u> Survey Item 8
	<u>Lowest Mean 3.00</u> Survey Item 24: Teachers in my school observe one another's work with students.	<u>Lowest Mean 2.91</u> Survey Item 24	<u>Lowest Mean 3.10</u> Survey Item 24

Table 21 continued

Teacher Leaders	All	White	Ethnically Diverse
NFRLP			
0-50%	<p>Higher levels of recognition. (p = .040)</p> <p>Higher degree of celebration for each others' successes. (p = .032)</p> <p>More freedom to make judgments about what is best for students. (p = .007)</p> <p>More freedom to make choices about the use of time and resources. (p = .008)</p> <p>Look forward to coming to work everyday. (p = .049)</p>	<p>Higher levels of autonomy. (p = .009) White - E.D. Same demographics</p> <p>Higher levels of autonomy. (p = .007) White - White Differing demographics</p>	<p>Higher levels of recognition. (p = .028) E.D. - E.D. Differing demographics</p> <p>More positive environment. (p = .059) E.D. - E.D. Differing demographics</p>
51-100%	No Significant Findings	Higher levels of recognition. (p = .022) White - E.D.	No Significant Findings

Table 21 continued

API				
	800-900	Look forward to coming to work everyday. (p = .057)	Higher levels of autonomy. (p = .029) White – E.D. Same demographics	No Significant Findings
	500-799	No Significant Findings		
Minority		All	White	Ethnically Diverse
	0-50%	Higher levels of recognition. (p = .047)	Higher levels of recognition. (p = .022) White – E.D. Same demographics	Perceive a more positive environment. (p = .050) E.D. – White Same demographics  Perceive a more positive environment. (p = .059) E.D. – E.D. Differing demographics  Higher levels of recognition. (p = .028) E.D. – E.D. Differing demographics
	51-100%	No Significant Findings		

Table 22 provides a summary of the findings of teacher leaders of the same ethnic diversity in different school populations. This table shows that all significant differences were found in the more affluent schools for both White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.

Table 22: Summary of Significant Findings by Similar Ethnic Identity and Differing School Demographics.

		Comparing White teacher leaders in more affluent schools to White teacher leaders in less affluent schools		Comparing Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in more affluent schools to Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in less affluent schools	
		White in 0-50% NFRLP	White in 51-100% NFRLP	Ethnically Diverse in 0-50% NFRLP	Ethnically Diverse in 51-100% NFRLP
School Demographic	Recognition			X	
	Autonomy	X			
	Positive Environment			X	

Table 23 provides a summary of the findings of teacher leaders of the different ethnic diversity in similar school populations. This table shows that all but one significant difference was found in the more affluent schools. One significant finding indicated more recognition for White teacher leaders in the less affluent schools.

Table 23: Summary of Significant Findings by Different Ethnic Identity and Similar School Demographics.

		Comparing White teacher leaders to Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in more affluent schools		Comparing White teacher leaders to Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in less affluent schools	
		White in 0-50% NFRLP	Ethnically Diverse in 0-50% NFRLP	White in 51-100% NFRLP	Ethnically Diverse in 51-100% NFRLP
NFRLP	Recognition			X	
	Autonomy	X			
	Positive Environment		X		
API		800-900	800-900	500-700	500-700
	Autonomy	X			
Minority Students		0-50%	0-50%	51-100%	51-100%
	Recognition	X			

### *Summary of Qualitative Findings*

After completing the quantitative portion of the research, data was then collected for the qualitative portion of the study. The participants for the focus



groups were chosen from the 31 Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders of the 67 survey respondents. A random drawing was held that determined the Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders that were invited to participate in the three focus groups. The first and second focus groups consisted of two Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. The third focus group consisted of four Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. The interviews were transcribed and coded. The principals whose teacher leaders participated in the focus group were invited for an interview. Three individual principal interviews were conducted. These interviews were transcribed and coded. The coding system utilized themes from the literature and as well as new themes that emerged from the focus groups and interviews. The results were reported by frequency. There were themes that were mentioned in all focus groups and principal interviews. Then there were themes that were only mentioned by a few or not mentioned at all. In Table 24, the significant findings for the qualitative research are presented by themes that matched the literature and those that emerged from this research study.

Table 24: Summary of Significant Qualitative Findings.

Data from the Teacher Leader Focus Groups and Principal Interviews		
Supports	Themes Aligned with Literature	Emerging Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• time</li> <li>• professional development</li> <li>• encouragement</li> <li>• rewards and recognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• peers</li> <li>• family</li> <li>• trust</li> <li>• well-defined roles</li> </ul>
Barriers	Themes Aligned with Literature	Emerging Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of time</li> <li>• lack of clear roles</li> <li>• personal commitments</li> <li>• lack of support by administrators, peers, and family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• external pressures from the district or state</li> <li>• lack of professional development in leadership</li> </ul>
Characteristics	Themes Aligned with Literature	Emerging Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective</li> <li>• reflective</li> <li>• collaborative</li> <li>• creative</li> <li>• life long learners,</li> <li>• experienced</li> <li>• an expert in a content area</li> <li>• having good people skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• action oriented</li> <li>• dedicated</li> <li>• outspoken</li> </ul>
Differentiated Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No evidence that administrators offered differentiated support for Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.</li> </ul>	

In Chapter 5, the study's quantitative and qualitative findings are discussed. Each of the research questions is discussed in addition to the themes that emerged from the research, the limitations of the study, and recommendations for practice, and further research.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### *Introduction*

This study sought to examine leadership supports provided and their perceived value among ethnically diverse teachers. The variables included White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders, the API of the schools, NFRLP levels of the schools, and the percentage of minority students in the schools. With increased Ethnically Diverse student populations, one would expect to see a concurrent rise in the Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. One way to ensure the participation of Ethnically Diverse teachers is to determine whether the ethnicity of teacher leaders and the types of schools in which they work influence the types of supports they need. Results from this study should help facilitate school districts and policy makers to provide the needed support to promote Ethnically Diverse teachers to learn and grow as leaders. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders regarding the supports they receive, the barriers they face, and how they themselves characterize teacher leaders.

As a part of this study, data was collected from teacher leaders of various ethnicities. This study examined the supports for all participating teacher leaders and compared the data of White teacher leaders to that of Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. In addition, the barriers to teacher leadership and the characteristics of teacher leaders were examined.

This chapter discusses the findings of the study. The discussion integrates the findings of the survey, the focus groups, and the interviews. It focuses on the

supports, barriers, and characteristics of teacher leaders in general. More specifically, it examines the supports for Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders and the impact of the types of schools where teacher leaders are employed. This chapter also presents the limitations of the study, recommendations for practice, and further research.

### Discussion of Findings

*Research Question 1 – What supports do teacher leaders receive as teacher leaders?*

*Research Question 2 – What barriers do teacher leaders face as teacher leaders?*

These two research questions will be discussed together as the findings lend themselves to a common discussion. The literature identified supports and barriers for teacher leaders. The research study revealed new themes. Some were identified as barriers and some also emerged as supports.

*Professional development.* While professional development was identified as both a support and barrier in this study, the type of professional development offered was an issue. It was evident by the survey items that teacher leaders perceived a high degree of support for professional development and a high degree of administrator support. While there was general support from peers, there were teachers actively opposed to leadership efforts and professional development outside the contract hours. However, the general feelings from the teacher leaders in the focus groups were that generally their peers supported them and their professional development efforts.

All teacher leaders and principals articulated the many types of professional development that was available. In addition to the individual pursuits of advanced degrees and certificates, there was considerable school and district wide professional

development. However, the focus group sessions reported a need for professional development on how to work with their peers, facilitate change, and deal with conflict. Johnson and Donaldson (2007) reported, “Teacher leaders need professional development that prepares them to respond to colleagues’ resistance respectfully while helping these teachers improve their practice” (p. 13). Individually, two teacher leaders reported attending one training session on coaching. In addition, the literacy coach and the Reading First coaches attended trainings specific for their roles.

Despite these professional development opportunities, the teacher leaders felt it was not comprehensive enough to support them in their roles as teacher leaders. This lack of specific leadership training is addressed in the literature. Researchers indicate that there is a need to further examine the trainings for topics and how they do or do not prepare these teachers for dealing with their peers, the change process, and conflict management (Buckner & McDowelle, 2000; Chrisman, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Robertson & Briggs, 1995). While some of the qualities and characteristics of teacher leaders are natural, there are some skills that would be worth honing and perfecting. Would these professional development efforts have a positive impact on teacher leaders, the school culture, and student achievement? It would be valuable to examine the effectiveness of leadership training efforts. As such, further research in this area is warranted for all teacher leaders as well as Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.

*Encouragement.* Encouragement was a support that was clearly evident in qualitative portions of this study. The teacher leaders and principals indicated actions and words of encouragement 40 times during the focus groups and interviews. In the

quantitative portion, encouragement was not a dimension in itself. Despite the frequency and emphasis of this support occurring in the focus groups, there was only one survey item that included the word encouraged. It stated, “Teachers are encouraged to take the initiative to make improvements for students.” This survey item was included in the dimension of autonomy. This seemed to imply a trust by the administrator in the expertise, skill, and knowledge of the teacher leaders. Likewise, in the focus groups and interviews, encouragement emerged as trust. It also emerged as encouragement for professional development, positive words, and invitations to participate. Encouragement bridged several themes including supporting teacher leaders in professional development, providing rewards and recognition, and developing trust. However, researchers in the field recognize encouragement as key to teachers taking on leadership roles (Danielson, 2007; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lattimer, 2007; Wade & Ferriter, 2007). Is this theme separate or is it an overarching theme in all of the themes? Literature on leadership and organizational change outside the field of education is specifically addressing the importance of trust (Covey, 2006; George, 2007; Hoerr, 2005; Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, & Switzler, 2002). Is trust a teacher leader support that needs to be more specifically addressed when promoting and supporting teacher leaders? The data would suggest that encouragement and trust are key to teacher leaders and can be interwoven through all the supports.

*Rewards and recognition.* There were also conflicting results for recognition and rewards. While there was confidence in teacher leaders’ professional skills and competence by the administrators and other teachers, there was little recognition of

their contributions to the students, staff, and school. “Teacher leaders thrive when they feel respected for their knowledge and experience” (Little, 1988). While this expresses the need for teachers and teacher leaders to receive recognition, most of the rewards and recognitions come intrinsically and informally. Students and parents will say, “Thank you” or even give a small gift. However, there are times when teachers themselves resisted recognition. From the focus groups and interviews, it was reported that some schools did not participate in the District Teacher of the Year. It was a negative thing. Some teachers felt that the process was not clear or it did not go to those who truly deserved it. It has been a sore point for many teachers. Also, there were often no rewards or recognition in place except the private verbal praise or the occasional praise during staff meetings or a compliment in the staff bulletin. Even when asked about how the school viewed teachers with NBCT, there was a response that the certificate was not an indicator of a teacher leader or contributing to the role of teacher leader. Principals and teacher leaders recognized that the NBCT certification was a rigorous process but one that did not necessarily lead to being a teacher leader. Wade and Ferriter (2007) reported:

Although teachers who achieve National Board certification are often expected to become teacher leaders - and the process itself requires candidates to show evidence of learning centered leadership beyond the classroom – teachers seldom pursue this voluntary certification process with the express goal of leading their colleagues.

Leading adults was not the main focus of the NBCT certification and the lack of training in adult learning can be a barrier to developing teacher leaders. Wade and Ferriter’s (2007) recommendations coincide with those of Germany (2004). They felt that mentors encouraged them and assisted them in developing their leadership skills.

They built their professional confidence through feedback and invitations to lead.

Perkins-Gough (2007) examined the performance for pay controversy. While there are many doubts about such plans, there are recommendations to compensate teachers that would mesh with providing rewards and recognition for teacher leaders. They include:

- Provide pay for additional degrees and professional development.
- Reward teachers who develop and share effective practices with small teams.
- Reward leadership when teachers take on additional responsibilities.

Despite the teacher leaders from the focus groups reporting that they wanted more recognition and rewards, there were times when identifying individuals as leaders and having them be visible in their role created angst towards that person. It is often called the tall poppy syndrome (Feather, 1989). The teacher leaders that experience success and stand above the rest are cut down by their peers. One can also describe this as the crabs in the bucket pulling their peers back in or the Japanese proverb, the nail that stands out gets hammered down. Mrs. Ochoa (P2) used the crab analogy when talking about her school's culture and how she moved her staff toward more productive forms of peer support. The literature concurs with the conflict that rises out of teachers in a leadership role (Chrisman, 2005; Gabriel, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 2003; Ovando, 1996; Perkins-Gough, 2007). How then can teachers become leaders, be recognized and rewarded for the hard work, and also maintain the respect and camaraderie of their peers? Do the traditional avenues of rewards and recognition contribute to these negative feelings? Should the



rewards and recognition originate from their colleagues rather than the administrators? Are there promising practices in the professional learning communities and more recent reform efforts that have successfully rewarded and recognized teacher leaders? More research is warranted to determine what and how encouragement and rewards of teacher leaders can be provided as support for the teacher leaders and be positively accepted the school's culture.

*Peers.* Confounding data in the current study identified peers as both a support and barrier to the leadership roles. While means of the survey items for collegiality (i.e. peer support) were reported as sometimes to frequent ( $M=3.73$ ), the focus group data indicated both strong collegiality and support from individual teachers as well as strong opposition specifically from veteran teachers and union leadership. In several instances, the union leadership was identified as a barrier to participating in the ILT (Instructional Leadership Team) and taking on greater responsibilities that entailed working outside the contract time. Hart (1994) as well as Buckner and McDowelle (2000) reported that conflict was created when teachers participated in decision-making roles that blurred the lines between teacher and administrator. Their actions threatened the collegiality and ultimately the relationships with their peers. While veteran teachers were often seen as barriers to teacher leadership (Johnson & Donaldson, 2007), there seemed to be more connection with their inability to change and grow rather than years of experience. Twenty percent of teacher leaders who responded to the survey were over 50 years old and 42% were over 40 years old. Veteran teachers often had the years of experience and possibly the expertise in a content area, and both are characteristics of teacher leaders. Why then are they seen

as a barrier? Veteran teachers often asked questions such as, “And how old are you?” (Johnson & Donaldson, 2007, p. 11). Even those teachers who entered their career late were criticized for their lack of teaching experience. They would often make comparisons based on years of experience. They would say, “Why didn’t I get that job? I have been doing this for 18 years” (p. 11). Elena (T2), a teacher leader from the focus group, expressed her dilemma as a relatively new teacher and as a teacher leader. She said:

It was a weird position [to be in] because one person taught 25 years and another taught 5-6 years. It was a little uncomfortable but at the same time, I came in as an older teacher at the age 44. I ran a business... So, I just got involved.

Is it possible that the teachers who are not supported to take on leadership roles do not possess the personal characteristics that facilitate them as leaders? Maybe they were not provided the opportunities or support to develop as teacher leaders. Another possibility is that their peers are not selecting the teacher leaders. Lattimer (2007) suggests that when administrators and those outside the classroom setting identify the teacher leaders in isolation, their colleagues see them as favorites or undeserving of the role. In essence, it undermines the professional learning community and the leadership that rises from such a structure. There might be many reasons that peers negatively impact teacher leaders. It is a dynamic that involves union leadership, years of experience, content expertise, the established trust, interpersonal skills, and the clarity of the roles and responsibilities. Experience and seniority are not the main determinants for being identified as a teacher leader. When other factors are used, a range of challenges may occur, affective responses may emerge, and explanations may be sought. These circumstances may provide

significant issues and barriers for teacher leaders and their administrator. These findings have immediate implications for school and district leaders. In addition, further study on the interpersonal supports and barriers for teacher leaders that occur among peers is warranted.

*Family support.* All of the female teacher leaders in the focus groups reported that their families were a tremendous support for their achievement of advanced degrees and serving in leadership roles in addition to their teaching responsibilities. However, from the literature, Chrisman (2005), Lonquist and King (1993), and Zinn (1997) all indicated that the cultural demands and the expectations to conform to the traditional roles of women often served as a barrier to taking on leadership roles. This raised several questions about how pervasive this is and if the family and cultural support has changed over the last few years. Were the teacher leaders participating in the focus groups representative of all teacher leaders? Are there Ethnically Diverse teachers not in leadership roles because of family and cultural barriers? Further study could be focused on collecting data from Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders who are teacher leaders and as well as Ethnically Diverse teachers who are not teacher leaders. Similar to the question that was raised about veteran teachers, is it more about the personal characteristics of the teacher that contributes to family and culture being a barrier? Are they not outspoken enough to overcome the demands of the family or culture? Further study might focus on the personal characteristics of Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders and the impact of family and culture. It was interesting to note that when this question was asked of the males who were Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders, there was no response. It appeared that it was not something that

impacted them as males or was even considered a barrier. In either case, the present study would suggest that family must be viewed as both a support and potential barrier for teacher leaders, and additional research is needed to understand the variables and factors associated with this phenomenon.

*Trust.* Trust between principal and teacher leaders was a support that surfaced in the focus groups and interviews. The teacher leaders indicated that the trust was essential for their role and in their relationship with the administrator. Ruppert (2003) and Smylie and Brownlee-Conyers (1992) reported that developing trust is an essential step to productive teacher leadership and in working with administrators, teachers, and peers. These feelings of trust were echoed in the survey item where teachers reported a mean of 4.61 that their administrator had confidence in them. However, while there was confidence and trust reported by the teacher leaders, the dimensions of autonomy and participation have means below 4.00. This raises several questions. How does the trust of the administrators translate into action in the classroom and decision making powers? If teacher leaders feel they do not have the autonomy to make decisions in their work or for their students, do they really have the trust and confidence of the administrator? Why do the teacher leaders then report a lower mean for participation in school decisions? Are these connected to the trust of the administrator or is this rather a reflection of district or state mandates? Ingersoll (2007) indicated that teachers often have little input in decisions at the school level with regard to curriculum, scheduling, discipline, student placement, evaluation, or training. He stated, "Those entrusted with the training of the next generation are not entrusted with much control over many of the key decisions concerned with this

critical work” (p. 23). He further stated, “Too much organizational control may deny teachers the very power and flexibility they need to do the job effectively, undermine their motivation, and squander a valuable human resource – the high degree of commitment of those who enter the teaching occupation” (p. 25). The present study does more to outline the questions with regard to trust and autonomy than it does to help answer them. Researchers interested in supporting teacher leadership, are encouraged to delve further into trust as a specific support and barrier as a major theme.

*Roles: well-defined or ill-defined.* This theme was both a support and barrier for teacher leaders. While there were well known roles such as the Reading First Coach with explicit roles and duties, there was still confusion among the teacher leaders as to their role. In several instances, the role was clear to the principal and teacher leader, but not to their colleagues. In addition, the role and duties changed and grew as the teacher leader gained expertise in the role and gained the trust and confidence of the administrator and teachers. This then caused the teacher leaders to become unclear about their role over time. The teacher leaders were often seen as a source of extra help. In addition to their intended roles of classroom visits and coaching, they were often utilized for supervision, subbing, and overseeing school mandated events such as testing and compliance activities. The roles appeared to transition to administrative apprentices or assistants rather than the role initially identified (Johnson & Donaldson, 2007). It seems that the success of the teacher leader may actually confound their role. How do teacher leaders and specifically coaches maintain their flexibility without being seen as difficult or resistant? If the

coach tells the principal or the teachers that they will not do something because it is not in their job description, will that negatively impact the culture and their relationship with the administrator? If we really valued the coach and roles of teacher leaders, wouldn't we allocate sufficient funds and resources so that we don't infringe on their duties? There seems to be a flaw in the educational system that allows this condition to flourish. What funding and/or creative use of human and fiscal resources would be needed to ensure that the integrity of the coaches and teacher leaders are intact, effective, and making a positive impact on student achievement? Can these roles be maintained and well defined in the current system of educational funding? Are charter schools more apt to be successful at this than traditional schools? A further study on maintaining the integrity of the roles of coaches and teacher leaders in multiple settings would be meaningful. The literature identified classroom teachers who assume leadership roles without a formal title, such as grade chair, as informal leaders (Harris, 2002; Katzenmeyer, & Moller, 2001; Lambert, 1998; Lambert, 2003; Zepeda, Mayers & Benson, 2003). As more classroom teachers assume leadership responsibilities in the school, the issue of ill-defined roles is bound to increase. Therefore, supports for teacher leaders in both identified formal roles as well as informal roles needs to be further studied.

*Research Question 3 – Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity?*

When examining the means of survey items and dimensions of teacher leadership, White teacher leaders had higher means than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. This was evident in 31 of the 49 survey items and in four of the seven

dimensions of teacher leadership. Ethnically diverse teacher leaders reported higher means for open communication and positive environment while White teacher leaders felt greater support in the dimensions of developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, and participation. One would think that with the higher means in these areas, the White teacher leaders would also perceive a more positive environment. One explanation could be that as the White teacher leaders may have more experiences and professional development opportunities, they may or may not be in alignment with the efforts of the school or current research. The White teacher leaders may feel discontent and question why their school does not participate in or provide the instruction that was presented in the professional development or training.

One survey item was significant with regard to support for professional development where White teacher leaders had higher means than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. Despite the findings of the survey data, the Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders from the focus groups felt very strongly about the support they received from their principals. Of the eight Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders, five related strong support from their principals. They were appreciative of their administrator support. Perhaps the fact that these teachers are in a leadership role at their current school site is reflective of support from their current principals. This data might be tainted as these principals identified and as such recognized these teachers as leaders and per se implied or demonstrated a level of support for their role from the point of identification. If the study would have relied on self-report of teacher leaders, there may not have been as strong as evidence of administrator support in the focus groups. A study using different methodology might provide differing results.

Another survey item was approaching significance. White teacher leaders indicated a higher mean than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders for the selection and screening of new faculty and staff. This is interesting as this district has an expectation of multiple stakeholders participating in the selection process when hiring new employees. This item ranked fourth highest for all survey items, yet, there is a difference in how this is reported by White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. This is surprising. Does this indicate that White teacher leaders are asked more often than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders to participate in the screening of new employees? It would warrant further examination of whether the interview panels were diverse not only in the types of stakeholders but also in the ethnic diversity of the stakeholders.

*Research Question 4 – Do the supports provided to teacher leaders differ based on their ethnic identity and school demographics?*

*Dimensions of teacher leadership.* In this discussion, reference is made to the affluence of the schools based on the percentage of students who qualify for NFRLP. The affluence level and the high and low minority schools are categorized into 0-50% and 51-100% ranges. The schools are determined to be high or low performing based on the APIs of 800-900 and 500-799.

There were two areas of significance when comparing teacher leaders in schools with differing student demographics. In both instances, teacher leaders in the more affluent and lower minority schools reported more recognition than teacher leaders in the less affluent and higher minority schools. These results were not surprising as more affluent schools, higher performing schools, and lower minority



schools are generally perceived more positively by the public. Furthermore, Ingersoll (2007) reports, “A “good” school is characterized by well-behaved students, a collegial and committed staff, and a general sense of cooperation, communication, and community. Likewise, a “bad” school is characterized by conflict, distrust, and turmoil among students, teachers, and administrators” (p. 24). While that might not describe all less affluent, lower performing, and high minority schools, there are some factors that ring true. Hence, one can speculate why teacher leaders report higher means for recognition. Many of the students at more affluent schools and lower minority schools come with the social capital needed for success and as such the teacher leaders are recognized for the students’ achievement of academic goals. Often, the recognition of teachers and teacher leaders is reserved for staff or schools that meet academic goals (Perkins-Gough, 2007). One wonders, do teacher leaders at these schools have more experience and more expertise, and therefore are recognized for these attributes? Ingersoll (2007) recognized the lack of recognition for teachers in times of high accountability especially in schools with reform models. He noted:

Accountability reforms are sometimes unfair. Policymakers and reformers often question the caliber and quality of teachers, telling us time and again that teachers lack sufficient engagement, commitment, and accountability. The data suggest just the opposite – that teachers have an unusual degree of public service orientation and commitment and a relatively high “giving-to-getting” ratio, compared with those in other careers. The critics fail to appreciate the extent to which the teaching workforce is a source of human, social, and even financial capital in schools (p. 25).

Other questions that arise include: Do the teacher leaders in the more affluent schools and lower minority schools have more opportunities to participate in committees and workshops? Are these opportunities a form of recognition? Are there

more opportunities for celebrating successes at higher performing and more affluent schools? While not surprising considering the public's viewpoint on what constitutes good and bad schools (Ingersoll, 2007), it is somewhat distressing to see the trend of supports that favor teacher leaders in the higher performing, more affluent, and lower minority schools. We need more highly qualified and experienced teachers in the most needy schools (Thompson and O'Quinn, 2001). If we don't recognize the efforts of the teachers who work there, will that happen? What will change this data trend? What actions or recommendations can we make to equalize the supports? These questions are worth researching further to investigate recognition and the impact on teacher leadership, student achievement, and attracting highly qualified teachers for all children.

In addition to the findings comparing schools with differing demographics, there were significant differences when comparing White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in similar school demographics. White teacher leaders felt more autonomy in more affluent schools and in higher performing schools than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. This information raises questions to the increased freedom and confidence reported by White teacher leaders. Do they report more autonomy because they are experienced and possess more expertise, or because there is a match between the ethnicity of teacher leaders, students, and /or administrators? Do the Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders report less autonomy because they have less confidence in their abilities or is this a reflection of historic perceptions about minorities and their ability to perform at the same level as Whites even in high performing school? There are many unanswered questions to why there is a

significant difference in autonomy for teacher leaders of differing ethnicities in the same types of schools?

One confounding piece of data is the significant results for recognition of White teacher leaders in higher minority schools. It is often reported that teachers assigned to schools with a greater proportion of minority students or higher levels of poverty are less experienced (Simmons & Ebbs, 2001/2001; Thompson & O'Quinn, 2001). This information was not readily available and was not requested in the survey. Do the White teacher leaders stand out in these schools in comparison to the Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders? Are they recognized because they are experts, dedicated, and passionate about making a difference? Are the White teacher leaders more apt to feel recognition in the same situation than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders due to their social conditioning and the policies and practices implicated by Critical Race Theory? Can we be sure that we are providing an equitable environment for all teacher leaders or are there still clear political and social advantages for White teacher leaders in minority schools? (Morfin, Perez, Parker, Lynn, & Arrona, 2006). Why then do White teacher leaders perceive higher recognition in these schools? Are the White teacher leaders that work in these schools more experienced or have greater content expertise? Do they receive recognition because they are from the dominant culture, and are viewed as helping the needy? Do they have an administrator that is similar in ethnicity or training? When examining the ethnicity of administrators of the survey respondents, there was no clear pattern of White administrators being matched with White teacher leaders, Ethnically Diverse administrators matched with Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders, or visa versa. Through an analysis of teacher

leaders' credentials and certificates, there were no clear indicators that White teacher leaders possessed a higher level of training or expertise. These are unanswered questions and further research is warranted.

Despite the perception of less recognition, Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders perceived a more positive environment than White teacher leaders in lower minority schools. Does this indicate that Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders rely more on the intrinsic reward and don't look outside to others for rewards and recognition? While there was significance using the Mann-Whitney U test, there was a very small population and should be studied further with larger sample sizes.

Additional significant findings favor supports for teacher leaders in lower minority schools and more affluent schools. Again White teacher leaders perceived more autonomy than White teacher leaders in less affluent schools. Likewise, Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders perceived more recognition and a more positive environment than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in higher minority schools. Regardless of their ethnicity, teacher leaders perceive supports in more affluent and lower minority schools. What conditions are prevalent in these schools that support teacher leaders? Are the students the defining condition that supports teacher leaders? Can these same conditions be present in the higher minority and less affluent schools? Do the current educational reforms in high minority and low performing schools run counter to the supports for teacher leaders? Does the high stakes environment that surrounds a low performing school act as a barrier to the support teacher leaders need? If so, the role and performance of teacher leaders in low performing schools warrants significant study if these leaders are to be best positioned to help their

schools succeed. The Charles A. Dana Center study (1999) asserts that high poverty schools should not be held to a specific reform model but be encouraged to implement the reform principles and be allowed flexibility along with the accountability provisions. The schools should be offered support, adequate resources, and decision-making in the critical areas of instructional need. They should channel resources in ways that provide additional leadership to schools such as the development of instructional facilitators or specialist positions. Ingersoll (2007) concurs that strict reform efforts hinder the expertise and flexibility of teachers to effectively do their job. Examining whether the perception of autonomy is connected to reform efforts and control in schools is worth further study.

*Forty-nine survey items.* In addition to the significance found in the dimensions of teacher leaders, the significant findings of the survey items contribute to the examination of supports, barriers, and the differences based on ethnicity and school demographics. The survey results reflected support for professional development, and this was articulated in the focus groups.

Many of the findings are consistent with the idea that supports for teacher leaders are more prevalent in higher performing, lower minority, and more affluent schools. Even in schools that were lower performing, higher minority, and less affluent, the supports were more evident for White teacher leaders than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders.

There were significant differences when comparing teacher leaders in schools with differing NFRLP and API scores. Schools with 0-50% NFRLP and 800-900 API are considered more affluent and higher performing. In both these scenarios, teacher

leaders look forward to coming to school more so than teacher leaders from less affluent and lower performing schools. The other three survey items of significance for the 0-50% NFRLP may provide us insight to why they look forward to coming to school. These teacher leaders from more affluent schools reported their ability to make judgments about what is best for their students, they had freedom to use time and resources as they saw fit, and they felt that their successes were celebrated by others. These findings seemed to indicate that teacher leaders are supported differently in schools with differing demographics. They are given more latitude with their students and their everyday decisions. Their successes are recognized and celebrated by others. These results are not based on ethnic diversity, but on the schools' demographics.

There are schools that qualified for the Reading First program and as a result participated in the district professional development initiatives such as the Ball Foundation, Focus on Results, and literacy trainings. The participation in the reform efforts such as Reading First could be one explanation for the lower mean on the survey items related to dimension of autonomy. These programs are instituted in the higher minority schools, less affluent schools, and the lower achieving schools. Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in these types of schools indicated they had less autonomy. As teacher leadership is examined, how critical is autonomy and does it match with student achievement? Can there be autonomy in schools with such reform efforts? The Charles A. Dana Center (1999), would suggest following the principles of reform recommended by the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program legislation rather than a particular reform model. What should be examined

is the extent to which the Reading First program follows the principles of reform. Are there opportunities to be autonomous and allow for teacher leaders while following these recommendations? What is the impact on teacher leadership and student achievement? Answering these questions and correlating the findings to the recommendation from the Charles A. Dana Center would be an interesting endeavor.

*Research Question 5 – How do principals and teacher leaders characterize teacher leaders?*

Relative to rewards and recognition, principals indicated that many teachers had advanced training such as a Master's degree, reading credentials, and NBCT. However, these were not recognized as a characteristic of teacher leaders. Having the National Board certification did not indicate the teacher as a leader (Wade & Ferriter, 2007). The difference may not lie in the completion of the degree or certificate but the idea of how the knowledge is put to use, their personal characteristics, and the encouragement they receive. This was reflected in the focus groups and interviews. A very evident characteristic of teacher leaders is that they continue to learn and grow. This was evidenced by the 80% of the teacher leaders who had completed a Master's degree, and their participation in ongoing professional development. Along with their ongoing learning, the teacher leaders were recognized more for their achievement with children, their ability to motivate others, and lead the school efforts. Danielson (2007) writes "Effective teacher leaders exhibit important skills, values, and dispositions" (p. 16). They are open-minded, respectful, optimistic, enthusiastic, confident, and flexible. Danielson and Fullan (2007) further describe teacher leaders as able to collaborate and motivate others to improve their craft. The interpersonal

skills and ability to work with others was a key factor in the success of teacher leaders. Not all teachers have the tact, patience, or craft with words that assist in dealing with people and situations. You can train for some of these qualities, but many are inherent. As a result, teachers are encouraged and steered into leadership roles when they exhibit these qualities regardless of their experience. There seems to be a fine line between a difficult teacher and a teacher leader. The perception may be in the eye of the beholder: the administrator, peers, or even district leaders. What supports the teacher leader to moderate their actions and words at an appropriate level? Are there factors, individuals, or administrators that push teachers over the edge and they become those vilified veteran teachers? These ideas have immediate implications for school leaders and how they view questions, comments, and concerns that are raised during meetings and casual conversations. In addition, case study research of teachers is needed to fully understand these dynamics. How outspoken can teacher leaders be without becoming a liability rather than an asset? Harrison and Killion (2007) would suggest that there are many roles of teacher leaders that suit their many characteristics. “The variety of roles ensures that teacher can find ways to lead that fit their talents and interests” (p.77).

*Research Question 6 – Do principals differentiate supports based on the ethnic diversity of teacher leaders?*

It would be reasonable to hypothesize from the literature that Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders may need differentiated supports based on the demands of culture, family, and the lack of representation in leadership roles (Delgado & Stefanicic, 2001; Germany, 2005; Magdaleno, 2006; Tillman & Cochran, 2000;



Winston, 2001). The data from this research indicated otherwise. There was no indication from the principal interviews or focus groups that principals differentiated the support based on ethnicity. However, there were differences in the responses on the survey between White teacher leaders and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. This indicates the need to differentiate support, but the questions remain: how, and in what areas? This study focused on identified teacher leaders. These identified Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders could have already overcome the barriers reported in the literature. The nature of this study and its samples may have been insufficient to effectively address this question. It did not include Ethnically Diverse teachers not currently in leadership roles. As such, this is an area that should receive more focused attention in future research.

#### *Limitations of the Study*

This study was limited to one ethnically diverse elementary school district in Southern California. The response rate, while large enough to run independent-samples t-tests, was small and at times required non-parametric tests. In addition, the demographic portion of the survey was too broad with groupings between 0-50% and 51-100%. That left schools at the 35-50% range for NFRLP and minority student populations grouped with non Title 1 schools. Also, the personal data should have collected the number of years of teaching experience and if the teacher leaders were currently a classroom teacher. Finally, the researcher was an administrator in the district where the research study was conducted.

*Recommendations for Practice and Policy*

The research from the field tends to suggest that minority students identify with minority teachers and it has a positive impact on student achievement (Beckford & Colley, 1993; Dee, 2004; Dee, 2005; Thompson & O'Quinn, 2001). As more minority teachers are entering the field of education and working in lower performing and less affluent schools, we need to pay particular attention to the supports they need to learn and grow as educators and participate in leadership roles in the schools. This study indicates that there are fewer supports for Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in these schools. It also suggests that the supports favor the White teacher leaders in recognition and autonomy. Schools, districts, and the educational agencies need to reflect on the current state of affairs and provide the structures that would equitably support teacher leaders regardless of ethnicity or school demographic.

It seems clear that the roles of teacher leaders need to be constantly defined and redefined. In addition to the roles and positions of teacher leaders, there should be well-defined qualifications, responsibilities, and a clear selection process. "Principals can build support for a teacher leader's role by explaining its purpose, establishing qualifications and responsibilities, encouraging applicants for the position, and running a fair selection process" (Johnson and Donaldson, 2007, p. 13). Without the transparency in selecting teacher leaders, the roles will never be taken seriously. This may not alleviate the perceptions by other teachers that the teacher leaders are a quasi administrator or that they are over stepping their bounds. As schools look to implement shared leadership and teacher leadership, careful planning and communication is needed to ensure that the roles of the teacher leaders are defined for

all members of the school community. Administrators will cement and clarify these roles not only through words but also their actions. Argyris and Schön (1974) contend that there is effective policy implementation and reforms when there is congruence between theory-in-use and the espoused theory. There seems to be the need to align the defined roles, or the espoused theory, to the actual roles of the teacher leaders, or the theory-in-use. When an administrator is asked how he or she would behave under certain circumstances, the answer he or she usually would give would be the espoused theory of action for that situation. That is the theory of action the administrator communicates to others. However, the theory that actually governs his or her actions is this theory-in-use. It is important for school and district administrators to align the espoused theories and theories-in-use with regard to teacher leaders and their defined roles.

There is also a need to examine the leadership path for both female and male teacher leaders. Females were the majority of the identified teacher leaders in this study at 90%, yet the percentage of men in administrative roles was much higher than what was represented by the identified teacher leaders. In the district, there were 43.2% male administrators and 56.8% female administrators. Tillman and Cochran (2000) reported that, "Although over 50% of the U.S. population is female and three-quarters of all teaching positions are held by women, women represent only about 12% of school superintendents." The distribution of administrative positions between men and women and between minority group members and Whites is imbalanced. This raises questions concerning the interplay of ethnicity and gender and how we provide support for both. Are teacher leader roles a step toward an administrative

position for ethnically diverse teacher leaders and for women? Do the avenues toward leadership differ based on gender and ethnicity? In this study, we learned more about female teacher leaders who are Ethnically Diverse and White. Many questions remain concerning the supports for teacher leaders and how they may differ based on gender.

In addition to examining the support in schools, there is a need to provide support and training at the district and university level for teacher leaders. Can we create an awareness of the characteristics of teacher leaders and develop those in both formal and informal settings? Can we provide professional development for teacher leaders in leadership skills, conflict management, and interpersonal skills? Should the training and preparation for teachers include these classes and be a part of continuing education for all teachers? This change in practice and policy may be needed as many if not all teachers at some time in their career are expected to take on leadership roles within the school.

Lastly, schools, districts, and educational agencies need to create a culture of rewards and recognition with clear guidelines. There is a need to support a system that places value and prestige on the accomplishments of teachers. In addition, teachers need to see and believe that the rewards and recognition are an acknowledgment of the ability and potential rather than due to personal or political connections. One such way is to develop a strong professional teacher community where teacher leaders rise naturally as their colleagues recognize their peers' accomplishments and seek opportunities to build upon others' successes (Lattimer, 2007).

### *Recommendations for Further Research*

Recommendations for further research on supports for teacher leaders exist throughout this discussion. There are, however, some further recommendations worth noting. It would be important to replicate this study with a larger sample size, across geographic locations, and in a variety of educational settings. In addition, further research in the following areas would be warranted:

- Ascertain the supports and barriers of teacher leaders holding classroom assignments.
- How are teacher leaders selected and supported and whether there are characteristics of principals that result in bias in the teacher leader selections?
- The impact of specific leadership development programs and how they support teachers in becoming teacher leaders.
- An in-depth case study of White teacher leaders in less affluent and higher minority schools, their characteristics, and their specific supports and barriers.

### *Summary*

School accountability has created a new sense of urgency to renew and reform our schools. These reforms have facilitated reorganizations of schools and leadership roles. The role of the teacher leader has emerged as a recognized means of promoting and managing school success. This study was based on previous studies that purport that teacher leaders need effective supports in order to assume these leadership

opportunities and demands. This study has added to the existing literature by providing evidence that supports and barriers may be different based on the teacher's ethnicity and the demographics of the schools in which they work.

Many minority students are not achieving at the same rate as their White counterparts. The lack of role models and ethnically diverse teachers is one factor in the achievement gap. As the population of minorities grows, so should the ethnic diversity of teachers and teacher leaders. Since we know that the percentage of ethnically diverse teachers has not kept pace with student demographics, we need to assume that there may also be an under representation in the number of ethnically diverse teacher leaders. We must also assume, that the identification, promotion and support for ethnically diverse teachers may be different than their White counterparts. There is a paucity of research on this specific issue and the present study has presented findings and raised new questions that warrant further investigation.

This mixed methods study examined the supports, barriers, and characteristics of teacher leaders in an ethnically diverse school district in Southern California. Data was collected through archival records, an online survey, focus groups, and interviews. The participants included 67 teacher leaders, 31 who were Ethnically Diverse, and three principals. The analysis of the demographics and survey responses of White and Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders were compared. White teacher leaders perceived significantly greater recognition, autonomy, and access to professional development in low-minority and low-poverty schools than did Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders. White teacher leaders even received more recognition than Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders in high-poverty schools. Despite

these findings, Ethnically Diverse teacher leaders reported at significant levels a more positive working environment than White teacher leaders in low-minority schools. The qualitative findings concurred with the supports, barriers, and characteristics found in the literature. However, new themes did emerge. They included family and peers as a critical support for taking on leadership roles. In addition, the level of trust between the principal and teacher leader was an essential support for teacher leaders. A new barrier that emerged was external pressure from the district and state. The characteristics that surfaced were that teacher leaders were action oriented, dedicated, and outspoken.

While this study confirmed themes from the literature, it raised questions regarding the supports for teacher leaders based on ethnic diversity. Specifically, why would White teacher leaders in less affluent schools and high minority schools perceive more supports than their Ethnically Diverse counterparts? There is a need to continue to research supports and barriers faced by teacher leaders. This study justifies the need to research teacher leaders who are ethnically diverse as a specific subset within the teacher leader literature. The need for further research on the topic of supporting and encouraging ethnically diverse teacher leaders is warranted by this study.

## Appendix A - Identification of Teacher Leaders

### Identification of Teacher Leaders

Please read the two definitions below. Write the names of three to six teacher leaders who fit the definition from your school site.

Return this form to Olga West.

(Address and emails omitted for publication)

Teacher Leadership - Teacher leadership is when teachers help “sustain changes that enhance student learning, improve instruction, maximize participation in decision making, and align resources to the school’s vision and purpose” (Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003, p. 25).

Teacher Leader – A teacher leader is defined as the informal and formal teacher leader, who leads within and beyond the classroom, serves students and/or staff, is in charge of school operational duties, and/or serves in a decision-making role within the school or district. (Frost & Durrant, 2003; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).

Teacher Leaders from \_\_\_\_\_ School

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_



Appendix B - Principal Informed Consent  
UCSD/SDSU/CSUSM Joint Doctoral Program  
Principal Informed Consent

Olga E. West, a graduate student researcher at University of California, San Diego, California State University San Marcos, and San Diego State University is conducting a study on supports for diverse teacher leaders. The title of the project is *Exploring Supports for Diverse Teacher Leaders*.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to examine current teacher leaders to identify the supports and barriers to their success. The supports and barriers will be examined to make suggestions on how to support and encourage ethnically diverse teacher leaders. The involvement of diverse teachers in leading schools in the reform process is important to the academic success of all students especially minority students.

**Participation:** As a site administrator, you are invited to participate in this study to identify three to six teacher leaders from your site. You may be invited to participate in an individual interview about teacher leaders.

**Benefits:** The benefit to the participants may be that it stimulates your thinking and others' thinking about teacher leadership in the field of education. With quantitative and qualitative research methods, this study will contribute to the scarce data on diversity and teacher leaders. Your participation in the study is voluntary. If you choose to participate in the principal interviews, you will receive a \$10 gift card.

**Risks:** There are minimal risks attached to this study. If invited to an interview, the interview transcripts will be kept confidential and available only to the researcher for analysis purposes. You will be given a copy of the transcript of the interview to review and, if you wish, to revise it. You may choose not to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence to you. Informed consent will be obtained from all individuals.

**Data Collection:** Your participation is to identify three to six teacher leaders from your site. After reviewing the survey information, I will invite several principals to participate in an interview. The interview will take about an hour. I will tape record the interview and take notes. Upon request, I can share the transcript with you and you may add or delete any of your comments. The interview will be scheduled at your convenience at a neutral site. It will not interfere with your administrative responsibilities.

**Confidentiality:** Your identity and your school will remain confidential. All information collected in this study is confidential. Participation in this study is voluntary. There will be no reports made, filed or distributed which list or describe who elected to, or not to, participate in any aspect of this study. Responses will be kept confidential using pseudonyms and coding for you, your school, and anyone mentioned by you.

You need to be aware that, as the main researcher, I am a site principal in the district. However, I am collecting information for the sole purpose of completing this study. I will not use, share, or disseminate any information that could be attributed to a specific participant. I will not use any information disclosed through this study to take any administrative action or to share the information with another administrator. You should

consider the implications of a district administrator conducting research and publishing the findings of the research. The district will not be named in the published document. District officials approved this research proposal, and will receive a copy of my dissertation. Data and findings in the final dissertation document will not include specific school sites or names of individuals. The results will be reported in aggregate by ethnicity, gender, and any other significant groupings.

I am conducting this study independent of the district. The tape recordings and documents will be secured during the study. The tapes and transcripts will not be shared with any district personnel at any time. Interview tapes will be locked in a safe place. Only the researcher, her committee, and/or graduate assistant will listen and transcribe the information you give us. Transcripts will be provided to participants upon request. All information will be coded and entered into a data file. All identifying information will be stored in a locked file cabinet (and password-protected computer) in a locked office and destroyed after completing the research. You should know that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) from University of California, San Diego, Cal State San Marcos, and San Diego State University may inspect study records as part of its auditing program, but these reviews only focus on the researchers and the study, not on your responses or involvement. The IRB is a committee that reviews research studies to make sure that they are safe and that the rights of the participants are protected.

**Freedom to Withdraw and Ask Questions:** Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty. Your choice to participate will not be reported to your supervisor or any district personnel. You may choose not to participate and/or withdraw from the survey or focus group at any time. You have a right to skip a question or refuse to answer any question. Should you withdraw from a focus group, your information will not be transcribed or otherwise used. If you do not wish to participate, just let me know at any time before or during the study.

My contact information is: Olga West, (address and emails omitted for publication). My advisors' contact information is: SDSU Professor Dr. Ian Pumpian, UCSD Professor Dr. Randall Souviney or CSUSM professor, Dr. Jennifer Jeffries. (Phone numbers and emails omitted for publication) If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or to report research-related problems, you may also contact the UCSD Human Research Protections Program at (858) 455-5050, the CSUSM Institutional Review Board at (760) 750-4029, or the SDSU Institutional Review Board at (619) 594-6622.

**Statement of Participation and Risks:** As the main researcher, I am a site administrator in my district. Although I will take steps to ensure confidentiality, there is a remote possibility that your participation and/or comments may become known by others. This study may be terminated at any time due to unforeseen circumstances. I will notify you should that happen. Upon completion of my research, I will provide you with a link to the published dissertation and any relevant new findings.

**I agree to participate in the proposed research being conducted by Olga West, graduate students in the Joint Doctoral Program at UCSD, SDSU, and CSUSM.**

I agree participate in this research study.

I agree to be audio taped.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix C – Teacher Leader Informed Consent

### UCSD/SDSU/CSUSM Joint Doctoral Program Teacher Informed Consent

Olga E. West, a graduate student researcher at University of California, San Diego, California State University San Marcos, and San Diego State University is conducting a study on supports for diverse teacher leaders. The title of the project is *Exploring Supports for Diverse Teacher Leaders*.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to examine current teacher leaders to identify the supports and barriers to their success. The supports and barriers will be examined to make suggestions on how to support and encourage ethnically diverse teacher leaders. The involvement of diverse teachers in leading schools in the reform process is important to the academic success of all students especially minority students.

**Participation:** You are invited to participate in this study because you have been identified as a teacher leader by your site administrator. Your participation in the study includes the completion of an online survey. You may also be invited to participate in a focus group with several other teacher leaders. The focus group will be tape recorded and transcribed. A transcript of the focus group meeting will be made available to you. If you wish to revise your comments, you may do so. The focus group will be held at the convenience of the participants at a neutral site. It will be approximately one hour in length.

**Benefits:** The benefit to the participants may be that it stimulates your thinking and others' thinking about teacher leadership in the field of education. With quantitative and qualitative research methods, this study will contribute to the scarce data on diversity and teacher leaders. Your participation in the study is voluntary.

**Data Collection:** Your participation will include the completion of the Teacher Leadership School Survey. The survey is a 49-question instrument. I will also collect demographic information about you as a teacher leader and your school to determine if they are common characteristic that support teacher leaders. After reviewing the survey information, I will invite 4-6 diverse teacher leaders to participate in a focus group interview. Participants in the focus group will receive a \$10 gift card. The interview will take about an hour. I will tape record the interview and take notes. Upon request, I can share the transcript with you and you may add or delete any of your comments. The focus group will be scheduled at your convenience at a neutral site. It will not interfere with your teaching responsibilities.

**Confidentiality:** Your identity and your school will remain confidential. All information collected in this study is confidential. Participation in this study is voluntary. There will be no reports made, filed or distributed which list or describe who elected to, or not to, participate in any aspect of this study. Responses will be kept confidential using pseudonyms and coding for you, your school, and anyone mentioned by you.

You need to be aware that, as the main researcher, I am a site principal in the district. However, I am collecting information for the sole purpose of completing this study. I will not use, share, or disseminate any information that could be attributed to a specific participant. I will not use any information disclosed through this study to take any administrative action or to share the information with another administrator. You should consider the implications of

a district administrator conducting research and publishing the findings of the research. The district will not be named in the published document. District officials approved this research proposal, and will receive a copy of my dissertation. Data and findings in the final dissertation document will not include specific school sites or names of individuals. The results will be reported in aggregate by ethnicity, gender, and any other significant groupings.

I am conducting this study independent of the district. The tape recordings and documents will be secured during the study. The tapes and transcripts will not be shared with any district personnel at any time. Interview tapes will be locked in a safe place. Only the researcher, her committee, and/or graduate assistant will listen and transcribe the information you give us. Transcripts will be provided to participants upon request. All information will be coded and entered into a data file. All identifying information will be stored in a locked file cabinet (and password-protected computer) in a locked office and destroyed after completing the research. You should know that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) from University of California, San Diego, Cal State San Marcos, and San Diego State University may inspect study records as part of its auditing program, but these reviews only focus on the researchers and the study, not on your responses or involvement. The IRB is a committee that reviews research studies to make sure that they are safe and that the rights of the participants are protected.

**Freedom to Withdraw and Ask Questions:** Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty. Your choice to participate will not be reported to your supervisor or any district personnel. You may choose not to participate and/or withdraw from the survey or focus group at any time. You have a right to skip a question or refuse to answer any question. Should you withdraw from a focus group, your information will not be transcribed or otherwise used. If you do not wish to participate, just let me know at any time before or during the study.

My contact information is: Olga West, (address and emails omitted for publication). My advisors' contact information is: SDSU Professor Dr. Ian Pumpian, UCSD Professor Dr. Randall Souviney or CSUSM professor, Dr. Jennifer Jeffries. (Phone numbers and emails omitted for publication) If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or to report research-related problems, you may also contact the UCSD Human Research Protections Program at (858) 455-5050, the CSUSM Institutional Review Board at (760) 750-4029, or the SDSU Institutional Review Board at (619) 594-6622.

**Statement of Participation and Risks:** As the main researcher, I am a site administrator in my district. Although I will take steps to ensure confidentiality, there is a remote possibility that your participation and/or comments may become known by others. This study may be terminated at any time due to unforeseen circumstances. I will notify you should that happen. Upon completion of my research, I will provide you with a link to the published dissertation and any relevant new findings.

I agree to participate in the proposed research being conducted by Olga West, graduate students in the Joint Doctoral Program at UCSD, SDSU, and CSUSM.

I agree to complete the online survey  I agree to participate in the focus group & be audio taped

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix D - Teacher Leadership School Survey

For information and permission to use, please contact:

Dr. Marilyn Katzenmeyer

Professional Development Center, Inc.

P.O. Box 46609

Tampa, FL 33647

(800) 332-2268

[mkatzen383@aol.com](mailto:mkatzen383@aol.com)

The purpose of this study is to examine current teacher leaders to identify the supports and barriers to their success. The supports and barriers will be examined to make suggestions on how to support and encourage ethnically diverse teacher leaders. The involvement of diverse teachers in leading schools in the reform process is important to the academic success of all students especially minority students.

Your participation will include the completion of the Teacher Leadership School Survey. The survey is a 49-item instrument. I will also collect demographic information about you as a teacher leader and your school to determine if they are common characteristics that support teacher leaders.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty. Your choice to participate will not be reported to your supervisor or any district personnel. You may choose not to participate and/or withdraw from the survey at any time. You have a right to skip a question or refuse to answer any question.

Completion of the survey is recognized as consent to participate. The consent documents were sent in the first email. Those are for your review and reference. Upon completion of my research, I will provide you with a link to the published dissertation and any relevant findings.

**Teacher Leadership School Survey © Marilyn & Bill Katzenmeyer**

Please respond to the following statements in terms of how frequently each statement is descriptive of your school.

(Each item had an answer choice of never, rarely, sometimes, often, or always)

1. At my school, administrators and teachers try hard to help new teachers be successful.
2. At my school, teachers are provided with assistance, guidance or coaching if needed.
3. Administrators at my school actively support the professional development of faculty and staff.
4. We gain new knowledge and skills through staff development and professional reading.
5. We share new ideas and strategies we have gained with each other.
6. Teachers at my school are supportive of each other personally and professionally.
7. Teachers at my school are engaged in gaining new knowledge and skills.
8. The administrators at my school have confidence in me.
9. My professional skills and competence are recognized by the administrators at my school.
10. Other teachers recognize my professional skills and competence.
11. It is apparent that many of the teachers at my school can take leadership roles.
12. The ideas and opinions of teachers are valued and respected at my school.
13. At my school, we celebrate each other's successes.
14. Many of the faculty and staff at my school are recognized for their work.
15. In my role as a teacher, I am free to make judgments about what is best for my students.
16. At my school, I have the freedom to make choices about the use of time and resources.
17. I know that we will bend the rules if it is necessary to help children learn.
18. Teachers are encouraged to take the initiative to make improvements for students.
19. I have input to developing a vision for my school and its future.
20. At my school, teachers can be innovative if they choose to be.
21. Administrators and other teachers support me in making changes in my instructional strategies.
22. Teachers at my school discuss strategies and share materials.
23. Teachers at my school influence one another's work with students.
24. Teachers in my school observe one another's work with students.
25. I talk with other teachers in my school about my teaching and the curriculum.
26. Teachers and administrators work together to solve students' academic and behavior problems.
27. Other teachers at my school have helped me find creative ways to deal with challenges I have faced in my classes.
28. Conversations among professionals at my school are focused on students.
29. Teachers have input to decisions about school change.
30. Teachers have a say in what and how things are done.
31. Teachers and administrators share decisions about how time is used and how the

school is organized.

32. Teachers and administrators at my school understand and use the consensus process.
33. Teachers participate in screening and selecting new faculty and/or staff at my school.
34. My opinions and ideas are sought by administrators at my school.
35. We try to reach consensus before making important decisions.
36. Because teachers and administrators share ideas about our work, I stay aware of what is happening.
37. At my school, everybody talks freely and openly about feelings and opinions they have.
38. Faculty and staff at my school share their feelings and concerns in productive ways.
39. Teachers at my school discuss and help one another solve problems.
40. Faculty and staff talk about ways to better serve our students and their families.
41. When things go wrong at our school, we try not to blame, but talk about ways to do better the next time.
42. Faculty meeting time is used for discussions and problem solving.
43. Teachers are treated as professionals at my school.
44. Teachers at my school look forward to coming to work every day.
45. There is a general satisfaction with the work environment among teachers at my school.
46. Teachers and administrators at my school work in partnership.
47. Teachers at my school are respected by parents, students, and administrators.
48. The principal, faculty, and staff at my school, work as a team.
49. We feel positive about the ways we are responding to our students' needs.

Teacher Leader Demographics - Please provide me with some background information about you to help me analyze data in regards to teacher leader characteristics.

50. What is your age?

- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60+

51. Your gender?

- Male
- Female

52. Educational Level

- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctoral Degree

53. What type of credential(s) do you currently hold?

- Multiple Subject
- Single Subject
- Reading Specialist
- Administrative
- Pupil Personnel
- Special Education
- Other (please specify)

54. Marital Status

- Single
- Married

55. Number of Dependents living with you currently.

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5+

56. Ethnicity

- White (not Hispanic)
- Hispanic
- African-American
- Asian
- Filipino
- Pacific Islander
- American Indian
- Other (please specify)

57. Please mark the teacher leader role(s) you have held during either of the last two school years. (Mark all that apply)

- (ILT) Instructional Leadership Team
- Grade Level Representative
- BTSA Support Provider
- School Site Council Member
- Reading Coach
- Resource Teacher
- Committee Member
- Resource Teacher
- Informal leader
- National Board Certified Teacher
- GATE Advisory
- PTA Officer
- STRETCH Coordinator
- Others (please specify)



School Demographics - Please tell me a little bit about your current school site.

58. What is your school's enrollment?

- Less than 400
- 401-500
- 501-600
- 601-700
- 701-800
- 801-1000
- 1000+

59. What percent of your students qualify for free and/or reduced lunch?

- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 76-100%
- Do Not Know

60. What percent of your students are minorities?

- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 76-100%
- Do Not Know

61. What percent of your student are English Learners?

- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 76-100%
- Do Not Know

62. What is your school's API (Academic Performance Index)?

- 500-599
- 600-699
- 700-799
- 800-900
- 900+

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