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Principals' Performance Assessment

Empirical Evidence from an Israeli Case Study

Haim Gaziel

ABSTRACT

Despite the current interest in many countries in assessing the principal's performance, stemming from the greater attention to educational reform and accountability, the empirical study of principal's appraisal has been slow to develop. This article was designed to fill partially this gap. Data was collected by semi-structured interviews of eight primary school supervisors and 24 primary school principals from four of the six educational districts in Israel. The subjects were asked to respond to the following questions related to the purposes of the principals' appraisal, political factors exerted on principals' appraisal, assessment usefulness and its impact upon principals' effectiveness. Results reveal that both groups had different perceptions regarding the principal appraisal purposes, processes, usefulness and effectiveness, which corroborate studies conducted in other countries. While most of the supervisors believed that the assessment process was helpful, 75 percent of the principals reported that the assessment was a waste of time. Regarding the improvement of the process, while the supervisors put emphasis on summative assessment and the need for more resources for supervision, school principals emphasized formative assessment, portfolios, being involved in the process and peer assessment.

KEYWORDS *education assessment usefulness, education personnel assessment, Israel educational system, principals' appraisal approaches, school inspection*

Introduction

Performance assessment as an administrative function has become an important domain in education, especially in the last decades. Since the quality of learning and teaching in educational organizations is the main factor in the provision of the workforce to the economy, there is considerable pressure to identify the effective means to assess the performance of those responsible, i.e. teachers and principals (Middlewood, 2002). The perception that the public schools are failing (Green, 2001; Senge et al., 2000) has stimulated political debate over school reform in many nations (Goertz et al., 1995), with growing attention to educational reform and accountability (Fuhrman and Elmore,

2004). Improving the performance of educational personnel has been one of the significant issues in this era of educational reform. Moreover, educational reforms such as self managing schools, shared decision making and the charter school movement in USA, have provided a powerful impetus for careful analysis of the roles, knowledge, duties and leadership effectiveness of principals (Webb and Norton, 1999). According to Glasman and Heck (1992), one by-product of these changes has been the intensification of demands to improve principal assessment methods and instruments for increased school effectiveness. 'Clients are demanding better schools, and school officials are seeking better appraisal systems to assist them in motivating personnel to consistently higher levels of performance' (Castetter, 1996: 277).

For three decades, educators have been looking for ways of identifying and creating effective schools (Edmonds, 1981; Danielson, 2002). One of the important findings is that strong principal leadership was central to high-producing schools (Mortimore, 1993). For that reason, the principalship has become the focus of considerable discussion in the context of initiatives designed to increase school effectiveness. A growing body of literature has supported the view that principals have the potential to be key actors in improving the quality of schools (Bolman and Deal, 2003; Fullan, 2001; Murphy, 2002). Therefore, creating an evaluation system which encourages excellence in the principalship is important, to the principals themselves, and for all who may be significantly affected by how well a principal performs.

Despite interest in assessing the principal's role performance, the empirical study of principal assessment has been slow to develop, has not experienced a high degree of systematization, and has not been guided by firmly established theoretical foundations (Heck and Marcoulides, 1996). These authors (1996: 234) state 'In too many instances, principals have reported that their evaluations are superficial and based on informal feedback to the superintendent'.

Ironically, while principal's responsibilities often include teacher assessment, practices of principal assessment have not kept pace in focus, sophistication, or reliability with changes in schools or with developments in teacher assessment (Hart, 1992; Kowalski, 1999).

Ginsberg and Thompson (1992) have raised the lack of empirically supported information about actual procedures used to assess school principals, and about the nature, role or quality of those procedures. Given the little known, nothing close to consensus exists concerning criteria of principal evaluation. The present study was designed to fill part of the void.

Principal Performance Assessment: A Review of the Literature

Little systematic research or analysis on principal assessment has been done. When principals were assessed in the past, it was usually on the basis of criteria like administrative skills, political savvy, moral fortitude and personal

charisma, rather the performance of their schools, or the satisfaction of their subordinates.

Examination of relevant literature indicates that the major approaches to principal assessment are based on the following aspects: (1) results (outcome-based); (2) standards-based; (3) personal qualities; (4) role-based; (5) key behaviors of successful principals (6) principal efficiency; and (7) subordinates' satisfaction.

The first assessment approach is the outcome-based assessment procedure, which focuses primarily on the accomplishment of objectives mutually agreed upon at the start of the school year. From the organization literature it is known that an organization is effective if it achieves its purposes (Handy, 1993). If a competent manager is one who presides over an effective organization, it may be reasonable to contend that a principal is meritorious to the extent that school goals are achieved. Despite the straightforward nature of objectives accomplishment as a criterion of principal evaluation, some argue (Hart, 1992) that the complexity makes principal evaluation on the basis of outcomes unrealistic, because of the following reasons: First, are all objectives to be weighted equally? Presumably, a principal is expected to pursue more than one objective during a given year. What if some objectives are achieved and others are only partially achieved? Are we prepared to accept nothing less than complete accomplishment of all objectives? Furthermore, the difficulty lies in determining at what point the price to accomplish school objectives is no longer in the best interest of those being served.

Another critical point of the outcome-based evaluation approach was presented by Heck and Marcoulides (1996). According to their argument student achievement was been favored by evaluators (as an outcome-based assessment criteria), because it seemed much less subjective than criteria that entails perceptions, high inference questions or global assessment. Despite the possible benefits of relying on student achievement data as a basis for assessing principals, compelling reasons exist for caution. Principals are too distant from the classroom to be held accountable for student outcomes, therefore, any effectiveness based scheme of principal evaluation is ill-conceived. Individual principals should not be held accountable for the achievement of many of these outcomes because they do not have control over all the variables upon which these outcomes depend. Principals appear to exert more direct influence over school processes such as the school mission and the work lives of teachers and, hence more indirect influence over actual academic outcomes (Snyder and Ebmeier, 1992).

A major limitation on the authority of principals is rooted in the traditional loosely coupled nature of schools (Weick, 1982). Therefore, the real issue is whether it is possible to find a criterion of principal assessment superior to any student outcome based notion of effectiveness.

The literature provides some alternatives to student outcomes as a basis for principal assessment.

The second approach to principal assessment is the standards-based approach. According to this approach which is recommended by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (Stufflebeam[p1], 1988), evaluation is determined by the discrepancy between actual and expected performance as defined by certain standards. The main problem with this approach is that it could lead to a form of a new Taylorism, with principals being held accountable for responding to certain standards, which may not fit a great majority of principals because they do not take into account the local context and individual school priorities (Stufflebeam, 1995).

The third assessment approach is centered on personal qualities of the principal that are considered to be most likely to lead to improvement in overall effectiveness of the school. Louden and Wildy (1996), after analyzing the statements about the key competencies, knowledge and skills that principals should possess, as well as the indicators used to show that they are possessed, were critical of this approach because of the following reasons: the long list of competencies and skills ignore their interrelationships. It also separates the performance from the context within which it occurs. Furthermore, the wording of items on the lists implies a degree of precision difficult to realize in a real professional context. Therefore, they suggest an estimation of the extent to which a principal has attained a certain level and not the making of judgments about the presence or the absence of a particular competency.

The fourth assessment approach is centered around the principal's role (role-based approach). According to Marcoulides and Heck (1996), any attempt to develop an evaluation procedure on principal performance must into account the theoretical aspects of the role and provide valid and reliable data. The main question remains as to which roles.

Much of the research on the principal's role over the past 20 years revolved around the image of strong instructional leaders. Studies frequently determined, however, that the realities of the work did not coincide with this image of the principal's role (Glasman and Heck, 1992; Oplatka, 2004). More recent studies view the principal's role centering more upon the development of human resources within the school and community, as opposed to the traditional view of 'managing' the school and its instructional program (Heck and Glasman, 1993[p2]). New expectations for the principal's role suggest their activities will include making shared decision making work in school, training the school staff, selling the results of decisions to the staff, and learning to be accountable to others while losing managerial control. So principal assessment must consider the contributions of multiple individual and organizational processes (Goldring and Rallis, 1993). Because of the complexity of interrelationships among context, school processes, the principal's role, and learning outcomes, it is likely that the assessment of one principal may be quite different from another. Moreover, Delanshere and Petrosky (1994) suggest that because of the complexity involved in assessing one's performance in a role (e.g. cognitive processes), the assessment process must reflect several critical

perspectives on the role and serve as a framework for interpreting the performance. Assessment, therefore, must be flexible enough to allow variation in how the role is perceived, be multi-dimensional to adequately cover central aspects and include multiple data sources. Additional methods mentioned in the literature for assessing principals include: stressing key behaviors of successful school principals, principal efficiency and subordinate satisfaction. What is important to note is that role-based assessment should center upon those areas that have construct validity within the principal's role and for which the principal has responsibility and control.

The fifth approach is centered on stressing key behaviors of successful principals. This form of principal assessment means that principals might be assessed on whether or not they spend a specified portion of their time in managing the curriculum, assessing and supervising teachers and promoting a positive school climate, because principals in schools with high student achievement have often been found to do these things (Gaziel, 1995). Such a scheme has the virtue of only holding principals responsible for what they themselves can control and it has the intuitive appeal as a criteria of principal assessment. The main problem with the key behavior evaluation is that it could lead to a form of neo-Taylorism, with principals being held accountable for how they spend their time and nothing else (Gronn, 1982). This trend might result in trivialization of the role of the school principal.

The sixth approach is the principal's efficiency. Efficiency refers to reducing costs while maintaining effectiveness (Levin, 1983).

As educational resources stabilize or decline, efficiency could become a major criterion by which the performance of principals is assessed. That could be done by making the best use of available personnel, equipment, facilities and other resources, and by setting up routines to reduce paperwork and ensure that teachers have adequate supplies when they are needed. However when trying to employ this criterion in principal assessment it would encounter several problems as Mintzberg (1983) has argued that in any organization whose goals are vague and long-range (such as educational goals), there is a strong possibility that efficiency will be reduced to economy and that this reduction often cases the mission of the organization to suffer. Therefore, to use the lever of evaluation to encourage principals to stress efficiency may harm the mission of schools. Furthermore, most principals have so little fiscal discretion that they can have only minimal effect on the efficiency of their schools.

The last approach is the subordinates' satisfaction. As principals work directly with teachers, specialists and administrative assistants, it may be more reasonable to look to employee satisfaction as a basis for principal evaluation. This variable could be measured either by objective criteria such as rate of absenteeism or staff turnover and/or by high-inference judgments related to self-esteem, morale and satisfaction. Although it is reasonable to hypothesize that satisfied teachers produce greater student achievement, few of the many studies done in the area provide confirmation (Wright and Cropanzano, 2000).

A second issue that militates against the use of subordinates' satisfaction in assessing principals is that sometimes the desires and actions of employees may be detrimental to the goals of schools.

To summarize we may say, that principals' evaluation procedures are of three different categories: *principal's inputs* (personal skills); *principal processes* (behavior, practices and role perceptions); *principal's results* (school performance, subordinates' and superior satisfactions).

Method

The study was qualitative in its nature, and based upon semi-structured interviews. The interviews were done with two primary school supervisors and six primary school principals chosen randomly from four of the six educational districts in Israel ($N = 8 + 24 = 32$). The interviews were conducted either at the supervisor/principal's office or at the university. Each interview took from 60–90 minutes. The interviews were done during the school years 2004 and 2005 by the main investigator and by research assistants who were trained for that purpose.

Semi-structure interviews were chosen because they throw a more focused light on some of the aspects of school principals' appraisal, which some of the more general, larger scale surveys barely illuminated. For validity and reliability measures two persons conducted each interview, each of them had to take notes separately (Sabar Ben-Yehoshua[p3], 1990). The answers to the questions gathered by the two assistants (in each district) were content analyzed and compared. In case of differences in the interpretations to the data gathered, the main investigator asked for clarification by phone calls to the interviewees. The interview protocols for the school supervisors as well as for the principals consisted of questions to elicit purpose, processes, usefulness and effects upon principal's effectiveness.

Results

Purposes for Assessing Principals

Participants were asked to tell about the most important purposes for assessing principals in terms of both (1) their own value structure and (2) their opinion of the value of the Ministry of Education. A content analysis of the interviews reveal the following categories: as regarding their own values, to promote the professional development of principals is the most important purpose. This factor was mentioned by both groups: supervisors and principals. While three of the supervisors (37 percent) mentioned that factor, 18 (75 percent) of the principals believe that this has to be the most important factor in assessing principals. The improving student performance factor was mentioned by two of the supervisors (25 percent) while only two (8 percent) of the principals mentioned

that factor as the most important. The other purposes mentioned were as follows: providing information for making decisions about principal's promotion: 25 percent of the supervisors and 4 percent of the principals. Providing evidence needed to remove incompetent principals: 13 percent of the supervisors and 8 percent of the principals. And finally providing public accountability: 25 percent of the supervisors and 4 percent of the principals.

When comparing with the subjects' opinions regarding the values of the Ministry of Education the findings reveal the following: professional development of the principals was identified by 25 percent of the supervisors as the most important factor, as expected by the Ministry of Education authorities, while 12 (50 percent) of the principals believe that. Improving student performance; 25 percent of the supervisors and 8 percent of the principals. Providing public accountability as the most important purpose in evaluating principals from the point of view of the Ministry of Education authorities, was identified by two supervisors (25 percent) and four principals (16 percent). As regarding the purpose of providing information in making decisions for principals promotion one supervisor and four principals mentioned that as the most important purpose for the Ministry of Education in assessing principals, while the purpose of providing evidence needed to remove incompetent principals was mentioned by one supervisor and two principals. To summarize, while supervisors mentioned various purposes in assessing school principals, the principals stressed the promotion of their professional development as the most important purpose for assessing principals.

Procedures in Assessing Principals

All the supervisors we interviewed formally assessed the principals in their districts. All the supervisors assessed principals annually as it is expected by the Ministry of Education decrees. However, feedback throughout the year occurred, for example if the principal was new in his job or if there is a crisis, problem or issue. Each of the principals was required to write school goals and vision statement which were discussed with the supervisor during the summer preceding the school year. None of the districts required either self-assessment or portfolios. Usually the supervisor reviewed and discussed the principal's evaluations. Those who were subject to promotion or dismissal received written feedback in the form of narrative that summarized strengths, accomplishments, weaknesses and areas needing improvement. Most of the supervisors interviewed said that their feedback was predominantly qualitative and subjective in nature. Six supervisors (75 percent) said that they constantly visited the schools which they supervised, no matter how busy they were, while others (25 percent) admitted that it depended upon how busy they were.

When analyzing principals interviewed it seems that their reports are different. Twelve of the principals (50 percent) said that they were evaluated yearly. Eight reported that they did not see their evaluators regularly and/or

frequently. As one of them said: 'I am lucky if I see the supervisor once a year. I realize that she is busy. I want her to see what I am doing. I keep sending her a copy of everything I do—newsletter, agendas and minutes of staff meetings, letters to parents and anything else that is positive'. Four said that they were waiting for the first meeting.

The principals added that most of the feedback was qualitative and subjective. Usually the feedback was verbal, but sometimes it was written.

Components of Principals' Assessment Process

Participants were asked: what are the approaches used by supervisors to evaluate school principals?

A content analysis of the supervisors interviews reveal that they are using approximately the same approaches. The following statement illustrates a theme which is repeated by the supervisors: 'It is important for me to know how the principal deals with school problems; how he overcomes difficulties and how he manages teachers' work, students, and his/her relationship with parents'. Although there were similarities among the supervisors' reports, it is possible to find in their interviews' differences in the components of their evaluation process. Five supervisors of the eight interviewed (62 percent) attached great importance to school outcomes such as student achievements. When asked to explain their attitudes one stated, 'We do what is expected from us by the Ministry of Education authorities, the public in general and by parents in particular'. The other supervisors put an emphasis on school principal behaviors how he/she is fulfilling their roles; managing curriculum, shared decision making, planning school activities, financial management. One supervisor, who had under his control some self managing schools stressed the importance of principal efficiency. That is to say, how a principal makes best use of available resources. In addition, the majority of supervisors indicated that data used were qualitative, although some of them mentioned using quantitative data such as test scores, attendance figures and the decrease or increase in students drop-out.

In contrast to the supervisors' reports, principals differed in their perceptions regarding (1) how the supervisors assessed them and (2) how they had to assess them. Regarding the first question, half of the school principals (50 percent) believed that they were assessed according to school results. In the past supervisor had been interested in school processes, today they seemed more interested in school results. The other 50 percent of the school principals were divided in two groups, eight (of 12 principals) reported that supervisors assessed principals according to various approaches. If a school was poor in its results, supervisors put emphasis on results, and if schools had severe students' discipline problems such as violence, principals would be evaluated according to how they dealt with violence. Supervisors used different approaches in different situations.

The other four principals (of 12) believed that supervisors based their assessment mostly on information derived from sources such as parents, the local authority administration, and partially upon results. One stated, 'Usually, supervisors visit schools seldom, and their visits are short and superficial.' Another said, 'We have never really clear on what and how we are assessed.'

Regarding the second question, which was the ideal type of principals' performance assessment, twenty two principals (90 percent) of the sample believed that supervisors' assessment had to be formative in nature to visit the schools more often, and the evaluation process had to be a part of professional development of the principal. They believed that summative evaluation had to be done every three, four or even five years and based on various sources using various approaches, it had to be grounded also upon the changes that occurred in the principal's job performance, as a result of the formative evaluation. Most principals believed that they had to take part in their assessment process.

Political Factors that Exert Influence on Principal Assessment

While most of the supervisors during the interview process stated that they rejected any political pressure on school principals' assessment, which stemmed from parents, local authority mayor, council members or anyone else, two supervisors, however, admitted that parents, and community groups could have an adverse influence on principal's assessment. As one said, 'It is amazing what these people can do to a principal.'

The principals interviewed expressed a concern that judgments sometimes were being formed by political influences without accurate information and honest and forthright communication. Most of the principals expressed their concern about the increase in the number of parents, teachers and even political members who take their complaints directly to the supervisor, whether they are valid or invalid. The majority indicated that some of the political factors could negatively or positively affect principal. As one principal stated, 'It depends on how parents, community groups and teachers are saying good things about you. If the supervisor catches wind of something good happening with school and the community, like famous politician at the local level, influential parents, then your evaluation could be much better.' One common theme throughout the interviews was the importance of building coalitions with influential persons at the community level and with the teachers' unions representatives. Fourteen of the principals (58 percent) stressed the importance of 'being visible at the community, by taking part in the community activities and highly spoken of, if they wanted to have good assessment'.

Impact of Principal Assessment upon Effectiveness

In order to understand the impact of the principals' evaluation upon their effectiveness, the subjects were asked about their perception of the usefulness

of the principals' evaluation. The supervisors indicated that, the formal process was helpful, however it had to be completed by informal processes such as site visits, meetings, conversations and it had to lead to professional development of the principal. The supervisors mentioned the shortcoming of the process, for example, insufficient time to observe and evaluate principals, inadequate performance standards or competencies, lack of specific levels of desired performance of each standard, lack of rewards for outstanding performance.

In contrast, the principals' responses were most disheartening. Only six of the 24 principals (25 percent) felt that the assessment process was helpful, while 75 percent of the principals viewed the assessment process as shallow, inconsistent and a waste of time. They were negative about Assessment viewed as summative in nature and not formative. That is to say, assessment that was conducted for dismissing a principal and not for improving him/her.

All the principals indicated that the assessment system could be more meaningful if it was done more often and they could dialogue more with the supervisor. The assessment system could be effective for the principals if it could contribute to the improvement of the principal's performance. To achieve that purpose, principals had (1) to be involved in the assessment process to have a dialogue between them and the supervisors. A dialogue which should reflect the development needs of individual principals in addition to the needs and the goals of the educational system,(2) supervisors had to sharpen their perspectives through regularly scheduled visits to schools throughout the year, during which they should observe principals in action and provide feedback to principals about various aspects of their performance, and not to ground their assessment upon imaginative complaints of teachers or parents, (3) supervisor had to be aware of the cultural and contextual variables (such as schools with special needs) in assessing principals.

The supervisors' attitudes for improving the assessment system could be summarized as follows: first and foremost, a detailed analysis of the purposes of the principals' assessment must be conducted. Second, performance assessment of the principal has to be based on valid and reliable data, therefore, performance criteria must be standardized and externally defensible. As principal assessment becomes a priority, then resources must be increased to mobilize other supervisors and conjecture to limit the number of school inspected per supervisor. Third, each supervisor needs assistance in order to fulfill all his/her job duties.

Discussion

The principalship has become the focus of considerable discussion in the context of initiatives designed to increase school effectiveness. Creating an evaluation system which encourages excellence in the school principalship is important for all whom may be significantly affected by how well a principal is performing. The few previous studies conducted in this arena have already

reported that the principals' assessments have been superficial and based on informal feedback from the supervisors (Heck and Marcoulides, 1996; Holdaway et al., 1997). Ginsberg and Thompson (1992) have commented on the lack of empirically supported information about actual procedures used to evaluate school principals and about the nature, role or quality of those procedures, therefore, the present study was designed in order to learn more about actual practices to assess principal in Israel's centralized educational system in which its educational policies and practices are influenced by the Western world.

Obviously, our sample of eight supervisors and 24 principals provides a fairly narrow glimpse of how school leaders perceive the principal assessment process. There are many principals who find their formal assessment to be quite helpful, meaningful, and reasonably devoid of politics. However, in our sample only six of the 24 principals interviewed felt good about the assessment system. Most of the principals believed that the assessment system had not reached a high degree of formalization (contrary to supervisors' views) and was not guided by an established theoretical framework. The interview yielded data in that concert with the few studies conducted in that arena, and point to the several issues. The differences captured between the supervisors' and principals' perceptions regarding the purpose of the principals' assessment, the assessment procedure in assessing principals, approaches to the assessment of principals and the usefulness and effectiveness of principal assessment provide evidence that. These studies reveal that assessment systems can be designed to achieve two basic purposes: accountability and professional development. Accountability systems are designed to help supervisors make personnel decisions (i.e. promotions, retention, seek to facilitate professional development and school improvement [Ginsberg and Thompson, 1992; Hellowell, 1997]).

The main difference between both groups could be described by using the continuum of performance appraisal in this study suggested by Middlewood (2002: 121), that is to say, supervisors' perception of the principals' appraisal is more oriented toward accountability, while the principals' appraisal perceptions are more oriented toward professional development. This suggests that more discussion is needed with both groups about all the aspects of the assessment process, but most importantly, its purpose.

Both groups agreed that the assessment system tended to provide summative ratings regarding principal performance rather than formative assistance. While supervisors generally agreed that formal evaluation processes provided useful information about principal performance, (although it has to be completed by informal assessment processes,) most principals did not find the formal assessment process helpful in shaping their professional growth or promoting their effectiveness.

Both groups agreed that the supervisors' evaluations were the product of the evaluator's subjective interpretations and qualitative in nature rather than the

result of quantifiable performance indicators and this finding is in line with those of Holdaway et al. (1997) in their study in Alberta, Canada.

Most of supervisors reported that their assessment was not influenced by political influences or pressures, however they added that principals had need to accept the fact that public perceptions about their performance whether real or imagined are inescapable. While most of the principals believed that the assessment process is influenced by political pressures particularly by few noisy parents and teachers who voiced complaints about the principal or the school.

Approaches or theories of principals' evaluation are not effectively applied in practice. While the literature provides seven approaches in evaluating principals, formally only three of these used in practice. Informally, parents' satisfaction and teachers' satisfaction are taken into account, which is contrary to Heck and Marcoulides (1996) findings. Most of the principals believed that supervisors did not take account of cultural and contextual school variables in their assessment processes, which is contrary to Stufflebeam's (1988) argument that contextually sensitive approaches to evaluation are obviously desirable.

Regarding the usefulness of the assessment of principals, the findings of the present study are in line with previous studies conducted in other countries. That is to say, in order to be useful the formal assessment process has to be completed by informal processes such site visits, meetings, conversations (Kowalski, 1999)

The results of the present study support Holdaway et al. (1997), that assessment process is viewed by principals as shallow and inconsistent and a waste of time.

Finally, we may say, that the perceptual differences between the supervisors and the principals could be explained also by Bolman and Deal (1997) argument that political behaviors in the educational system are generally framed around value conflicts, competing interests and status.

Conclusion

Three contributions are made by this study: first, it provides empirical data about the perceptions of supervisors and school principals regarding principal assessment purposes, processes and effectiveness. The marked differences evident between the supervisors' and principals' perceptions suggests need for a dialogue between supervisors and principals about several issues. This dialogue should focus on clarifying the following aspects of principal appraisal: (1) What targets or goals should be set. (2) Who should be involved in the assessment process, what is expected of, as a result of the assessment system. (3) What assessment approaches and procedures have to be employed. (4) How frequent the assessment has to be done. (5) What criteria should be used to assess the effectiveness of the principal's performance. (6) What rewards for outstanding performance. Second, the study supports and confirms findings

from previous studies about the need to use a variety of approaches in assessing principals, to balance the needs of the organization and the individual and achieve both accountability and development purposes (Middlewood, 2002). Third, the study highlights the importance of cultural and contextual variables in assessing principals (as mentioned by both sides) rather than being satisfied that homogeneous assessments' procedures, with suffice.

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