

AN EXAMINATION OF THE MEANINGS ASSIGNED TO
PRINCIPAL-TEACHER INTERACTIONS AND THE
RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL CLIMATE

by

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A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the relationship between the meanings teachers assign to principal-teacher interactions and school climate. Snowball sampling was used to identify 15 teachers and 5 principals from five elementary schools in a Southern state. The interview questions were developed from the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Elementary (OCDQ-RE) (Hoy et al., 1991) and the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) (Hoy et al., 2002). Analysis of the data revealed that the types of interactions that took place between teachers and principals largely accounted for school climate.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Schools are filled with relationships that are interactive (Barth, 2006). By their interactions with teachers, principals model how teachers should interact with students (Gibb, 2000). Such interactions between principals and teachers account, at least partially, for school climate (Halawah, 2005; Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991; Kelley, Thornton, & Daugherty, 2005; Williams, 2000).

An important indicator of how schools operate internally is tied to “specific interaction patterns among principals, teachers, and students” (Hoy et al., 1991, p. 130). Trust is a fundamental component of interactions between individuals (Vodicka, 2006). If individuals are afraid that they will be used or mistreated by those interactions, they will be hesitant in contributing to the relationships. Trusting others involves taking risks that expected outcomes may not materialize as hoped or planned (Goddard, Salloum, & Berebitsky, 2009). Skepticism can negatively affect the commitment and performance of teachers (Rafferty, 2003). It is crucial that school leaders authentically listen to the ideas and concerns of teachers (Goldring & Greenfield, 2002).

Organizational climate sets the tone for efficient educational guidance (Hoy & Hoy, 2006). According to Hoy and Hoy (2006) and Hoy and Miskel (2006), schools with healthy climates have principals who possess resounding qualities that enable them to furnish guidance for their teachers in a supportive manner. Teachers in these schools are obligated to the educational process and sustain maximum standards of accomplishment. Teachers believe in

each other, trust each other, feel a sense of pride about their schools, and possess an eagerness to go to work. Principals ensure that they lead in a way that is parallel with the vision of the school (Halawah, 2005). Principals ensure that teachers are part of their vision, and that they will realize the vision together (Kelley et al., 2005).

According to Hoy and Hoy (2006), principals in unhealthy school climates lack effective leadership and do not provide adequate support for their teachers. Communication between teachers usually is not good, and they usually do not work as a cohesive group. Hoy and Miskel (2008) added that in such climates, teachers really do not trust each other, and morale in the schools is unfavorable.

Because principals' actions impact school climate, effective leadership is crucial (Awan, Zaidi, & Bigger, 2008; Howard, 2005). Many principals have moved from traditional, hierarchical leadership practices to more inclusive leadership practices that focus on employee needs (Ryan, 2006). This approach permits school principals to increase teacher efficacy and make the educational system suitable for everyone (Hess & Kelly, 2007; Witcher, 2003). In the event that principals discern that the climate is unacceptable, they may attempt to bring about change. Effecting such change may be difficult because organizational climate often remains constant even in the event of employee turnover. According to Hoy and Miskel (2008), leadership practices of school principals can have a significant, positive influence on the type of climate that exists in schools. The authors stated that the type of climate that exists in an organization affects the behavior of teachers.

Problem

Negative school climate has increased in this age of accountability because school administrators and teachers are under increasing pressure to improve student results on standardized assessments (Bevans, Bradshaw, Miech, & Leaf, 2007; George, 2001; Jones & Egley, 2009). These pressures have had a negative impact on teacher morale and have enhanced teacher stress (Egley & Jones, 2005). There is also increased public scrutiny and increased demands placed on the job responsibilities of employees that often filter over into their personal responsibilities (Skrla, Scheurich, Johnson, & Koschoreck, 2001). Although there has been much research conducted concerning school climate, research is lacking pertaining to the meanings teachers assign to principal-teacher interactions and the relationship to the existing school climate. This study seeks to add to the body of research in this area.

Bishop and Mulford (1999) conducted a case study to investigate how principals were required to implement mandated curriculum changes enacted by new politicians in the federal government. The changes were in the area of curriculum where teachers had no choice in implementation. The authors found that although principals had no choice in implementing the changes, the trust that teachers had in their principals was negatively affected. Although teachers knew that principals had no choice in the changes, they saw their principals as part of the establishment responsible for the changes. Many teachers also believed that they could not be honest with their principals about their true feelings or concerns. Teachers said that principals should have spoken up for their interests more during the process. Therefore, trust in the principals was compromised. Effective leadership calls for principals being able to lead in complex educational environments that are often layered with educational mandates and other educational constraints (Johnson, 1996).

Purpose of the Study

The broad purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the meanings teachers assign to principal-teacher interactions and the relationship to school climate. The following research questions were addressed:

1. What is the nature of the interactions that take place between principals and teachers?
2. What meanings do teachers assign to these interactions? A premise of the study is that the principal's leadership style influences the nature of principal-teacher actions and teacher interpretations of those interactions influences the climate of a school.

Egley and Jones (2005) examined the interactions between principals and teachers in a time of high-stakes testing in Florida. They examined how teachers' perceptions of their principals' inviting leadership behaviors were tied to climate in the schools, job satisfaction of teachers, and ratings associated with accountability. Inviting leadership behaviors were described as the type of behaviors that exhibit respect and sympathy for faculty members.

Because some teachers expressed greater stress levels and decreased morale due to mandated testing, Egley and Jones (2005) wanted to discover if testing might be negatively affecting the inviting leadership behaviors of principals. Third, fourth, and fifth grade teachers from 34 school districts in Florida were surveyed. Teachers rated their principals based upon their perceptions of their principals' leadership behaviors. Although principals had no choice in implementing the top-down directives concerning the mandated tests, teachers largely viewed principals with inviting behaviors in a positive manner. Principals received the most favorable ratings in the ways they showed respect and exhibited caring attitudes toward their teachers. The positive ratings from teachers were found to positively correlate to increased job satisfaction.

According to Egley and Jones, the findings suggested that when principals exhibit inviting personal and professional behaviors, healthier school climates exist.

Importance and Significance of the Study

School climate pertains to “basic patterns of behavior that exist in organizations” (Hoy & Hoy, 2006, p. 312). School climate “embraces the milieu of personalities, the principal and teachers, interacting within the sociological and psychological framework present in all schools” (Rafferty, 2003, p. 54). It is important that school leaders strive to build healthy relationships with school employees (Burmeister & Hensley, 2004). Harris (2000) stated that a positive school climate can be established by principals who listen earnestly to teachers, provide encouragement, and establish distinct expectations. She went on to state that if principals’ actions are contrary to what they say, the school climate can be negatively affected.

During interactions with teachers, it is important that principals exercise appealing behaviors that cultivate trust and respect from teachers (Egley & Jones, 2005). According to Rafferty (2003), the type of communication that exists in schools is important because it affects organizational effectiveness. Open communication is an important element in successful schools (Halawah, 2005). Because school success is considerably connected to the thoughts and actions of teachers, efficient communication exists at the core of generating and preserving productive schools (Arlestig, 2007; Halawah, 2005; Rafferty, 2003).

Conceptual Framework

This research examined the relationships between and among four major concepts. The following paragraphs provide an overview of each. As noted earlier, a premise of this study is

that the principal's leadership style accounts for the meanings teachers assign to principal-teacher actions and teacher interpretations of principal-teacher interactions amount to a description of school climate.

Leadership

According to Hoy and Miskel (2008), leadership is

a social process in which a member or members of a group or organization influence the interpretation of internal and external events, the choice of goals or desired outcomes, organization of work activities, individual motivation and abilities, power relations, and shared orientations. (pp. 420-421)

Williams (2009) stated that school leaders have the duty to ensure that schools operate efficiently. He stated further that the type of leadership that exists in schools is directly linked to the success that students experience. Leaders must be strong in their beliefs and be able to communicate those beliefs through their behaviors (Saban & Wolfe, 2009). They should be able to back up their words with their actions. If principals are to experience success, they should maintain good relationships with their teachers (Ediger, 2009).

Principal-Teacher Interactions

For the purpose of this study, principal-teacher interactions were defined as the process whereby principals share information and ideas with teachers, provide positive support, and contribute to a healthy school atmosphere (Walker, 1997). Principals should develop positive relationships with teachers because pessimistic attitudes and a lack of trust obstruct interactions between the two parties (Ediger, 2009). In each principal-teacher interaction, the principal uses a specific approach to leadership (Howard, 2005). Principals must understand their own leadership

behaviors and see how their actions are affecting the school environment (Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004).

Teacher Perceptions of Principal-Teacher Interactions

During effective principal-teacher interactions, principals promote dialogue with teachers, provide feedback, offer suggestions, model desired behaviors, provide praise, and encourage collaboration with teachers (Blasé & Blasé, 1999). Sometimes teachers' views of their principals are contrary to their desires or expectations (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002).

According to Leech and Fulton (2008), teachers often perceive that principals possess all of the information and dominate decision-making in schools. Principals can alter these perceptions by involving teachers in decision-making.

School Climate

School climate can be described as the personality of the school, and it influences the behavior of teachers (Egley & Jones, 2005; Hoy et al., 1991). Employees have feelings and overall belief systems about school organizations. These attributes affect and shape employee feelings and perceptions of the school (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). School climate emerges through the types of interactions that exist among teachers (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). A premise of this study is that teachers' perceptions of principal-teacher interactions are related to the existing climate.

In healthy school climates, principals are influential in their dealings with their superiors and the community. Principals support and encourage teachers. Teachers work together and trust each other (Hoy & Miskel, 2008).

In unhealthy school climates, teachers do not feel good about their colleagues or their jobs. Principals are ineffective, have little influence with their superiors, and do not protect teachers from external forces. Principals do not provide adequate support for their teachers (Hoy & Miskel, 2008).

Hoy and Miskel's (2008) typology assisted in analyzing the data. The study sites may have differed in terms of health. Was the site a healthy one where principals support and encourage teachers and teachers work together and trust each other? Or was the site an unhealthy one where principals do not provide adequate support for their teachers and teachers do not feel good about their colleagues or their jobs?

Theory

Symbolic interactionism functioned as the theoretical framework for this study. This theory holds that social reality arises from complex interactions between individuals (Blumer, 1969; Brickell, 2006). Meaning emerges as a product of human interactions and allows members of society to construct their proper places in this world. As applied to this study, teachers construct meaning based on their interactions with principals and, based on those meanings, construct their places in the school setting. Interpretations of interactions with others continually change because the meanings developed have to adapt to any new behaviors (Armstrong, 2007; Jeon, 2004). For example, a principal-teacher interaction during the first part of an academic year might change radically during the second part. In this case, the teacher must alter his or her interpretations of the interactions.

Definition of Additional Key Terms

Accountability--Accountability is holding school leaders and other members of school organizations responsible for student performance. Accountability is tied to high-stakes testing. Students' scores from testing have an impact on school funding, special programs, schools being placed on school improvement, high-school graduation rates, and other areas (Hoy & Hoy, 2006).

Communication--A process by which messages are transferred by the use of emblems and signals to affect conduct (Hoy & Miskel, 2008).

Empowerment--Empowerment deals with making sure that individuals receive opportunities to become knowledgeable about different things. This knowledge enables them to be able to stand alone and exist and grow on their own. School leaders who empower their employees usually have a good understanding of human relationships and exhibit the quality of listening to their followers (Hoyle, Bjork, Collier, & Glass, 2005).

Morale--According to Hoy and Hoy (2006),

[Morale] refers to a collective sense of friendliness, openness, and trust within the faculty. The teachers form a cohesive unit that is enthusiastic about teaching. They like each other, they like their jobs, they help each other, and they are proud of their school. (p. 323).

Trust--“A party's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent” (Tschannen-Moran, 2009 as cited in Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 233).

The remainder of this manuscript contains the following sections: related literature and methodology. The related literature portion is divided in the following manner: leadership, alternative leadership styles, principal-teacher interactions, teacher perceptions of principal-teacher interactions, and school climate. The methodology portion includes the following

sections: study purpose, research questions, study site, sampling procedure and participants, researcher positionality, study instruments, and data collection and analysis.

CHAPTER 2

RELATED LITERATURE

Leadership

Leadership in a school is probably the most significant ingredient in producing an environment that is conducive for learning (Kelley et al., 2005). Schools are constrained by strict regulations and layered with increased accountability from local, state, and federal governments (Jones & Egley, 2009). Consequently, principals must migrate away from traditional practices that do not require innovative ideas and transition to practices that foster continuous school improvement.

According to Johnson (1996), complexities in education increase as years pass. School leaders work to effectively guide organizations and create collaborative environments while being constrained by laws, educational issues and accountability mandates. Johnson went on to say that leaders should possess the ability to ensure that everyone works together so the organization can grow and improve. These circumstances call for administrators to lead in ways that address the various needs of students today in this ever increasingly complex educational environment.

In the present educational climate, there are increasing pressures on public school administrators and teachers (Egley & Jones, 2005; Tschannen-Moran, 2009). Due to these pressures, administrators employ different leadership practices to achieve results by way of their teachers (Gray & Smith, 2005). Strahan, Carlone, Horn, Dallas, and Ware (2003) commented that the majority of school systems are involved in some type of school improvement program.

Some of the programs are started at the school level while others are the result of federal, state, or school district mandates. The authors added that the ability of a school leader to guide his/her school through various challenges, maintain and boost staff morale, and get positive results is a continuous challenge. Principals should develop relationships with their teachers that will enable teachers to hone their teaching skills by supporting them and providing opportunities for professional growth.

According to (Kelley et al., 2005), the most likely determinant in having a positive school environment conducive for learning is the type of leadership provided by the school leader. It is critical that competent principals lead schools (Papa & Baxter, 2005). Kelley et al. stated school leaders must understand the increasingly complex policies and practices necessary for school improvement. They argued that school leaders must realize the needs of faculty members and equip them so they can have personal stakes in ensuring that the vision is realized. They also have the huge responsibility of leading the members of their organizations to continual improvement (Hess & Kelly, 2007). Leaders who are effective are sensitive to how their actions are affecting their followers (Goleman, 2000). They work to uplift others and modify their leadership styles accordingly to achieve optimum results. There is no widespread consensus on what defines good leaders (Gill, 2006; Goldring & Greenfield, 2002). Following is an overview of selected approaches to leadership.

Transactional Leadership

One such leadership style is transactional leadership. This leadership style is based on contingent relationships (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Reward and punishment are dependent upon performance. Compliance from followers is gained by the use of conventional reward and

punishment (Gill, 2006). Transactional leaders establish rules and procedures that are clearly understood by their followers (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Their subordinates know what is required of them. They are also aware of the rewards that they get for following directives from their superiors. These leaders recognize what their followers desire and work to fulfill their desires.

According to Gill (2006), rather than setting objectives, goals, and performance benchmarks in a participative manner, transactional leaders set them in a directive manner. He stated that they are also likely to utilize the practice of rewarding for performance based upon directives that are created about goals and objectives. He suggested that while these practices may result in achievement in the short term, employee growth may be stunted.

Friedman (2004) stated that educational institutions are transactional by nature. Educators are told what objectives students should master and follow curriculum guidelines specifically developed to guide students to mastery. She conducted a qualitative case study to explore transformational leadership through a transactional framework by investigating an urban high school in Massachusetts in a process of instructional change. Students in the school consistently underperformed on achievement tests. Four years prior to the study, only 34% of students passed the English portion of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Test (MCAT) and only 16% of students passed the English portion.

The study was conducted over a period of 4 years. Participants included administrators, teachers, and student teachers. Data included interviews, observations, field notes, recordings from instructional meetings, and formal and informal conversations. Friedman (2004) was brought in as a literacy consultant so she could work with teachers on improving reading and writing skills. She also closely collaborated with the school principal during the change process. At the beginning of the process, she was viewed as an outsider by some and had to gain their

trust. Everyone worked as individuals and not as a collective group. She gradually gained their trust and they started working together to improve the school through a collaborative process.

The school was separated into five learning communities identified as pathways. These pathways were led by a designated teacher and were designed to get students thinking about their futures after high school. The group met weekly and was called the Change Team. At first, the team was transactional but slowly transformed to one of shared leadership when they established an Instructional Leadership Team. Through a climate of collaboration for the benefit of students, over a period of three years, 60% of tenth grade students passed the English portion of the MCAT and 70% of tenth grade students passed the mathematics portion of the test. Friedman (2004) stated that they were able to transform the instructional process through a transactional environment.

Transformational Leadership

According to Gill (2006), transformational leaders motivate their followers to think beyond traditional norms to find solutions to issues. They challenge followers to perform beyond their personal interests and desires for the benefit of the entire organization. They set clear goals for all members of the organization to meet. Nir and Kranot (2006) found that transformational leadership had a positive effect on personal teacher efficacy which resulted in positive teacher experiences. They contended that transformational leaders are more likely to foster school environments that allow teachers to develop and feel confident in their professions. These positive experiences result in increased job satisfaction for teachers.

Printy, Marks, and Bowers (2009) explored how principals practiced transformational leadership and how the leadership practice fostered instructional leadership in teachers. Twenty

to 30 administrators and teachers from 24 elementary, middle, and high schools participated in the study. The authors further analyzed one elementary, middle, and high school from the sample that showed integrated forms of transformational and instructional leadership. Principals and teachers in each of the three schools experienced positive interactions. Principals encouraged teachers to assume leadership positions and respected them in those positions. Principals respected new and innovative ideas from teachers and encouraged teachers to express their opinions. Consequently, teacher leaders exhibited similar behaviors in helping other teachers to develop in their teaching roles. Consequently, stronger relationships developed and teachers were motivated to continually improve.

Authoritative Leadership

Authoritative leadership is a top-down, power-over leadership style in which decisions are usually made by the leader and are usually made to satisfy the leader. As with transactional leaders, authoritative leaders usually gain compliance rather than commitment from their followers (Gill, 2006). According to Hoy and Miskel (2008), it is difficult for authoritative leaders to garner trust from their employees because the employees dislike being continually subjected to authoritative control. Although authoritative leaders usually exhibit these qualities, Ripley (1997) argued that principals should understand that all followers should have a voice in decision-making and respect any differences of opinion.

Covey (1994) shared comments of Harold Geneen, the former president of ITT, concerning authoritative leadership. According to Geneen, many chief executives unconsciously assume authoritarian roles. They feel that they will exert less energy being authoritative. He commented that when people are involved in decision making, the leader risks losing control.

Some leaders would rather exert less energy in directing subordinates on what to do. He suggested that when subordinates are involved in decision making, they are more likely to commit themselves to helping the organization achieve desired goals. Covey argued that top-down communication patterns of authoritative leaders often cause employees to resist change. Consequently, they will not exert their best effort for the benefit of the organization.

Visionary Leadership

According to Kelley et al. (2005), visionary leaders are self-confident and strive for the realization of a better future. They realize the direction in which they intend to travel and clearly know their purpose. The vision for the organization is made clear to all stakeholders and serves as direction to which all members of the organization are to travel. They have a clear understanding of where they are in the present and where they expect to be in the future (Bossi, 2008). Visionary leaders think in a strategic manner and are innovators in the social arena (Gill, 2006). They visualize the larger picture and think in strategic terms by being change agents. They strive for a higher purpose with clear intentions. They do not only focus on the success of students in school but think deeper and look for success of students in life. They bring out the best in people and enable them to work together around a common purpose. They not only challenge students to be committed to their classrooms but committed to their communities (Bencivenga & Elias, 2003). They are not afraid to deviate from traditional methods.

Brown and Anfara (2003) stated that visionary leaders have dreams, but there is a direct link between their dreams and action. They use their power to understand various types of situations and work to accomplish desired objectives and goals. They investigated the visionary leadership practices of some middle school principals who were implementing school reforms.

The qualitative case study consisted of semi-structured interviews and surveys. Ninety-eight surveys completed by middle school principals from North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey were analyzed. Of the 98 principals surveyed, 44 agreed to participate in semi-structured interviews. The interviews allowed the investigators to expand on survey responses and gain greater insight into the visionary practices of the school principals.

Principals, according to Brown and Anfara (2003), responded that visionary leaders should be willing to set goals and prioritize effectively to meet those goals. They should value time and establish open lines of communication with their staff and work to ensure that they are part of the vision for the school. They added that visionary leaders should be willing to change and involve all stakeholders in the change process. They should be willing to explore and test different ideas and techniques. They should also continue to stay abreast of the latest educational trends and continually work on improving their schools and students in preparation for the future.

Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic leaders attract and inspire followers by using their personal qualities to influence them to perform as the leader desires (Wong & Sunderman, 2001). They are very convincing and pay a great deal of attention to scanning and reading their environment (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). They are good at picking up the moods and concerns of both individuals and larger audiences. They then will construct their actions and words to suit the situation. They are very persuasive and make very effective use of body language as well as verbal language. They gather followers through their personality and charm. The authority that the leader practices is mainly due to the personal appeal that he or she possesses.

Charismatic leaders inspire loyalty and obedience from followers (Gill, 2006). They bring individuals together with their personal appeal (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Gill as cited in Ciulla (1999) stated that charismatic leaders possess values that help shape organizations, but those attributes sometimes cease when the leader departs.

Crawford (2002) conducted a 3-year, single-site case study where he investigated the effects two charismatic leaders had on a school that was facing complex challenges which resulted in low student achievement. Data sources included interviews, reports, documentary studies, and participant observations. The site under investigation was the Almond Tree Combined School that was formed in 1995 by combining two other schools. Thirty-six percent of the students had learning, behavioral, and emotional problems compared to a district average of 19%. There was a 40% transiency rate compared to a district average of 11%. Forty-six percent of the students received free meals compared to a district average of 15%.

According to Crawford (2002), the school was placed on Special Measures which identified it as a school in need of improvement. These schools had to improve or be forced to close. According to monitoring reports, many of the problems were the result of poor leadership, poor teacher instruction, and poor student behavior. Simmons, an active head teacher of another school, was brought in temporarily to guide Almond Tree Combined School to improvement so the school could be removed from the list of schools in need of Special Measures. When he assumed the head position, Simmons stated faculty morale was low. He used his personal qualities and characteristics to help improve the school. He started having weekly meetings with teachers and was open with them. Teachers stated that he always made time to listen to them and was a constant presence throughout the school. He worked to improve the physical appearance of the school and encouraged collaboration among faculty members. Faculty members commented

that Simmons displayed a positive attitude and students' parents and teachers felt comfortable in his presence.

When Simmons had to return to his home school, he was replaced by White. White also used his personal attributes to continue improving the school. Although staff had favorable things to say about both leaders, opinions seemed to be more mixed concerning White's tenure. Although there were improvements in the school under their leadership, the school was not removed from the list of schools on Special Measures. Crawford (2002) stated that the charismatic leaders were effective in building faculty morale and positioning them to guide students to continuous improvement. Both leaders were considered as charismatic leaders as determined by Hoy and Miskel (2008) because they used their personal qualities and attributes to help improve the school. Their leadership styles were assessed by interview responses of teachers. Teacher responses revealed that the characteristics of both leaders enabled the school to improve. Although charismatic leaders can have a positive effect on failing schools, Crawford contended that the results may often be limited.

Situational Leadership

Situational leaders determine what is needed in any given situation and then employ the most appropriate response to that particular situation (Kelley et al., 2005). According to this leadership style, different leadership styles are more suitable in certain situations, and leaders must position themselves to adapt their style to the situations with which they are faced. This reaction is based on capability and competency of employees to perform certain tasks (Farmer, 2005). They must provide a sense of direction for those followers who are not as responsible or

knowledgeable concerning certain tasks while providing more non-directive approaches for those followers who are more competent and knowledgeable.

Awan et al. (2008) investigated the situational leadership practices of principals in colleges in Punjab, Pakistan. The authors investigated the interactions between principals and teachers in relation to job satisfaction, leadership behaviors, leader acceptance, and professional expectations. The leadership style of principals was defined as supportive, directive, participative, and achievement-oriented. The study consisted of six randomly selected teachers from six colleges in Punjab. The colleges were located in 34 districts in Punjab. Teachers completed a 5-point scale questionnaire that measured the following characteristics: need for autonomy, need for independence, locus of control, and perception about abilities. These leadership behaviors were separated into high, medium, or low categories and were connected to the particular leadership style of each principal.

Awan et al. (2008) found that, generally, high directive leadership had a negative effect on job satisfaction when faculty members were confident in their abilities. Directive leadership was also not well received by employees who favored greater employee autonomy. Participative leadership had a positive effect on employee motivation when they were confident in their abilities. Supportive leadership had a positive effect on job satisfaction when employees had a minimal need for achievement. Achievement-oriented leadership had a positive effect on job satisfaction when employees had a high motivation to achieve. The authors stated that the type of leadership a leader utilizes should depend on the situation. They should understand the strengths and weaknesses of employees and guide accordingly.

Servant Leadership

Servant leaders focus on doing what is best for their followers (Greenleaf, 1977). They serve the needs of their people and work to improve the human condition (Freeman, 2004). They are guided by a spirit that takes them from their usual comfort levels so they can help and uplift those in need. They give of themselves and possess a desire to be of service to others. “Servant leadership forces educators out of their heads and into their hearts” (Bowman, 2005, p. 259).

This leadership style does not involve the leaders performing the job tasks for their workers but helping them to learn and mature in their respective positions (Dess & Picken, 2000). It is not only about service of the leaders, but these leaders possess strong values and motivational traits (Gill, 2006). Servant leaders encourage the elements of care, trust, collaboration, listening, foresight, empowerment, and positive ethical use of their power and empowerment. They possess strong character. Individuals become servants first by what they are and not by what they do (Hunt & King, 1994). Servant leaders equip their followers to develop their beliefs and values that would be of benefit to the entire organization and its mission. Workers feel committed to improving the organization (Page & Wong, 1998).

Black (2010) conducted a mixed-methods study that investigated the relationship between perceptions of servant leadership and school climate. Surveys were first administered to principals and teachers. Qualitative data were then gathered from 10% of the sample. The Organizational Leadership Assessment (OLA) was used to measure servant leadership and the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire-Revised (OCDQ-RE) was used to measure school climate. The OLA consisted of 66 Likert items ranging *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The OLA was divided into the following six subscales of servant leadership: develops people, values people, displays authenticity, builds community, shares leadership and provides

leadership. Each subscale consisted of nine to 12 questions. The OCDQ-RE consisted of 42 items based on a five-point Likert scale that ranged from *no response* to *very frequently occurs*. The OCDQ-RE was divided into the following six subscales of school climate: restrictive principal behavior, intimate teacher behavior, directive principal behavior, supportive principal behavior, collegial principal behavior and disengaged teacher behavior. Qualitative data were collected from focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews. Participants consisted of 246 teachers from 12 schools in the Ontario English Catholic School Board district. Twenty-four teachers participated in focus group interviews.

Results from the OLA and OCDQ-RE revealed that there was a positive relationship between perceptions of school climate and perceptions of servant leadership practices. School climate was perceived to be more supportive when teachers and principals felt that they were valued and encouraged to develop. Black (2010) suggested that because there was a strong relationship between servant leadership practices and school climate, principals should practice servant leadership if they would like to improve the climate in their schools.

Principal-Teacher Interactions

Principals largely shape the atmosphere of schools under their direction (Quinn & Andrews, 2004). The types of daily interactions between employees are contributing factors to the amount of growth they experience in the organization (Saban & Wolfe, 2009). Angelle and Schmid (2007) examined the role of teacher leaders in their organizations. The qualitative study examined principals' and teachers' perceptions of practices of teacher leaders in their schools. For the particular study, teacher participants were chosen by the principals. They were chosen as teacher leaders because of their work ethic or because of their titles as teacher leaders. The study

consisted of semi-structured, open-ended interview questions that were asked of principals and teacher leaders. Angelle and Schmid found that the behaviors of teachers were guided by the structures of the organizations in which they worked. The relationships that teachers developed with each other in the organization were positively related to their job satisfaction. Teachers felt that positive relationships result when principals understand that leadership is not all about power but about developing their employees in being all that they can possibly be.

Liden, Wayne, and Sparrowe (2000) examined a type of empowerment that integrated job characteristics and social exchange relationships described as leader-member exchange (LMX). The study examined these exchange relationships and their relationship to work outcomes. Leader-member exchange described how leaders supported their workers and to what degree they empowered them. Participants consisted of 337 supervisors and employees of service organizations in three Midwestern states. Supervisors were interviewed, while employees completed questionnaires. Supervisors rated various aspects of employees' job performance. The authors found that the type of emotional support provided and the type of responsibilities delegated to teachers is related to the type of principal-teacher interactions that exist. They referred to these types of interactions as leader-member exchange. Liden and colleagues found that the empowerment of teachers and the positive social exchanges between teachers and principals enhanced teacher dedication and performance.

According to Jones and Egley (2006), principals should be willing to listen to their teachers. They should get to know the personalities of teachers and support them as needed and show teachers that they have faith in them. Principals should also lead the way in creating a free atmosphere in which teachers will not feel afraid to voice their opinions without any fear of repercussion.

In the study that Blasé and Blasé (2000) conducted, university professors administered an open-ended questionnaire identified as the Inventory of Strategies Used by Principals to Influence Classroom Teaching (ISUPICT) to 809 public school teachers who were enrolled in graduate courses. The universities were located in northeastern, southeastern, and mid-western portions of the United States. Blasé and Blasé developed the ISUPICT using Blumer's (1969) and Mead's (1934) approach to symbolic interactionism. The ISUPICT measured how principals influenced classroom teaching and the effects their behaviors and practices had on classroom instruction. The questionnaire asked participants to state the characteristics that had a positive impact on their classroom instruction and also asked them to state one characteristic that had a negative impact on their classroom instruction. From the questionnaires, teachers identified certain traits of their principals and how those traits impacted them. The authors found that effective principal-teacher interactions concerning instruction resulted in improved teacher reflection and professional growth. Effective principal-teacher interaction concerning instruction dealt with how principals collaborated with teachers that resulted in teacher reflection, exploration, inquiry and experimentation. Effective principals encouraged open discussions among teachers during formal and informal interactions on a daily basis. Principals talked to teachers and provided feedback in a non-threatening manner during their daily interactions. Teachers were positively motivated and experienced greater job satisfaction because principals listened to suggestions. Teachers were motivated by the fact that principals praised their efforts and collaborated with them. Teachers were encouraged to positively interact with their students because they saw their principals interacting with students on a common basis. Effective principal-teacher interaction was found to promote teacher reflection.

Mitchell and Castle (2005) conducted a study to determine the views that principals had concerning instructional leadership and how they implemented their leadership practices. Participants consisted of 12 elementary school principals in southern Ontario, Canada, who participated in semi-structured interviews. Principals were asked open-ended questions about how they conducted themselves, how they interacted with teachers and students, and how they involved teachers in the learning process. Principals expressed that although they evaluated teachers formally and informally, they really liked the informal interactions with teachers. They valued providing input, coaching teachers, motivating teachers, and providing any assistance that they could. They believed they could provide more positive assistance by helping teachers in this manner because they stated formal procedures limited their effectiveness with teachers. Principals stated it was important to establish affective climates in their schools because they believed it was important to have a positive climate that promoted teamwork. They encouraged and praised teachers and students and worked to meet their needs. Principals improved the environment of the schools because they worked to engage teachers in conversation, and interacted with them on a daily basis.

When examining the relationships between principal leadership behaviors and teacher instructional practices, Quinn (2002) suggested that principals build relationships with teachers so they can feel free to express themselves truthfully without any fear of negative repercussion from their principals. Piltch and Quinn (2007) proposed that principals encourage teachers to present new ideas and respect their opinions. Quinn (2002) argued for principals to continually encourage teachers to strive to excel because these actions will ultimately have a positive impact on student achievement.

Supportive Relationships

According to Liden, Wayne, and Sparrowe (2000), teacher commitment is largely dependent upon the type of supportive relationships that exist between administrators and their employees. Those interpersonal relationships have an impact on how teachers perform. Because weak administrative support can result in poor commitment from teachers, it is important that administrators support their teachers (Rafoth & Foriska, 2006). The ways in which principals show caring attitudes to teachers affect the types of experiences that take place between principals and teachers (Jacobson, Johnson, Ylimaki, & Giles, 2005).

The principals in the Brown and Anfara (2002) study believed that it was their responsibility to support their teachers and to value them. This qualitative study consisted of semi-structured interviews and surveys. Of the 125 surveys sent out, 75 were returned and analyzed. From the survey respondents, 17 principals from Pennsylvania and New Jersey were selected to be interviewed. Many of the principals made efforts to listen to teachers and value their opinions. They built positive relationships with their teachers by being visible and actively providing support through their interactions. They said that teachers were happy when they listened to their ideas and suggestions and they said that listening was directly linked to a sense of caring and trust. In order to break down barriers between teachers and principals, Brown and Anfara argued that principals must be willing to listen to the different opinions of teachers which would then help in developing a positive school climate. Ingersoll (2001) and Kukla-Acevedo (2009) proposed that principals allow teachers a voice in decision-making and provide support for them. They said this will aid in improving overall teaching and student performance in schools.

Turner (2005) reported how she, as principal, mentored one of her teachers who was working on an administrative degree. She worked to provide her with helpful information on how she would need to interact with teachers. During the mentoring process, she discovered areas in which she needed to improve as a principal. She received opportunities to reflect on her interaction patterns with her teachers. She realized that she needed to listen more attentively to teachers and to provide them opportunities to honestly voice their opinions without feeling threatened. Although she set out mentoring the future administrator, she benefited from the process as well.

Myburgh and Poggenpoel (2002) investigated the experiences of school teachers in a society that was experiencing political changes and provided guidelines for the improvement of school health. The qualitative study consisted of 48 secondary school teachers in school systems in the Gauteng Province of South Africa who participated in focus group interviews. The authors found that teachers experienced job dissatisfaction when they did not feel appreciated by the administrators. The changes caused teachers to experience more stress. They stated that principals must be careful about instituting change because change can lead to teacher stress and negatively impact teacher behavior. Instead of appreciating teachers for their efforts, administrators often found fault. Administrators practiced leadership in a top-down manner. Teachers said that communication was not good. Although teachers had to teach in a demanding atmosphere, administrators did not provide ample support.

Although all teachers need support, school administrators should especially make sure that novice teachers receive support and feel comfortable in their positions (Watkins, 2005). Quinn and Andrews (2004) investigated the support that first-year teachers received in relation to the amount of support they perceived they received from their principals. Questionnaires were

sent to all first-year teachers in a school district serving about 60,000 students. Of 182 questionnaires that were sent to teachers, 106 completed surveys were analyzed. The surveys were based on a 10-point Likert-type scale. Sixty-five of the teachers reported that they received good support from their principals by giving their principals a score of 8 or higher. Twenty teachers rated their principals between 5 and 7, and the remaining number rated their principals 4 and below. They found that principals who supported their first-year teachers usually supported their entire faculty, and they found that teachers who felt they had the support of their principals perceived that they had supportive coworkers.

According to Conderman and Pedersen (2006), there are different things that principals can do to help foster a positive school climate. They can encourage teacher collaboration, maintain good visibility throughout the school, maintain a clean and safe school environment based on student learning, and make fair decisions involving faculty members. Quinn and Andrews suggested that there is a need for principals to provide nurturing school climates for teachers and lead the way in providing supportive environments because the many challenges that teachers face often turn them away from the profession.

Kukla-Acevedo (2009) investigated to discover if administrative support, school behavioral climate, and classroom independence affected teacher retention. Teachers were selected from a random sample of schools. Data for the study were taken from the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and the Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS). The SASS contained detailed information concerning school and staff characteristics. After 1 year, 3,505 participants completed the TFS, which contained information concerning teacher mobility. The study examined mobility patterns over a 2-year period. Teachers who left the profession all together were identified as leavers. Teachers who moved to other schools were identified as movers. Of

the 3,505 participants, 8% moved to other schools, 5% left the teaching profession, and 87% remained in their schools.

Kukla-Acevedo (2009) found that there was a substantial relationship between teachers leaving the profession and the type of administrative support they received. There was decreased turnover when there was more support from principals. The support that teachers received consisted of better communication from the principal, clearly defined expectations, and a healthier school climate. These conditions affected the mobility decisions of first-year teachers more so than more seasoned teachers. Providing necessary assistance to novice teachers not only benefits those teachers but provides growth opportunities for all individuals involved (Collins, 2003).

Youngs (2007) investigated how principals interacted with their first- and second-year teachers. The qualitative study explored how elementary principals in three school systems in Connecticut impacted the work experiences of first- and second-year, full-time teachers. The participants were principals of K-6 schools. Six principals were randomly selected from a pool of qualified participants who volunteered to participate. Observations were conducted and participants were interviewed. Three of the principals supported the instructional practices of their new teachers, while three did not provide adequate support. In addition to other supportive practices, one principal met with her new teachers weekly, helped them develop their portfolios, and made time for them to meet with their mentors. One of the other principals in the study did not see his primary role as one of an instructional leader but saw his primary role as providing a safe and orderly environment. He did not provide sufficient guidance for his new teachers in their instructional practices. Consequently, one of his new teachers was unsure of how she should deliver the math curriculum. New teachers in the schools where they did not receive

ample support said they felt neglected. Eight of the teachers in those schools reported they were not planning to return to their teaching positions at end of the school year.

Ingersoll (2001) examined the factors and conditions that contributed to teacher turnover and migration to other schools. He conducted the study in elementary, secondary, and private schools to discover whether certain organizational conditions led to teacher turnover and migration to other schools. Data for the study were taken from the SASS and the TFS. Questionnaires were answered by principals and a random sample of teachers from a random sample of schools. After 1 year, all of the teachers from the original sample who had left the teaching profession or had moved to other schools were administered a second questionnaire to gain insight into their reasons for leaving their original schools. First, an examination was conducted on the overall magnitude of the teacher turnover issue and issues related to it. Second, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess workplace conditions on teacher turnover. Finally, an examination of the reasons for teacher migrations and departures was conducted. Although teachers reported that they left their teaching positions for various reasons, teacher dissatisfaction was found to be one of the main reasons that teachers left their positions. Teacher dissatisfaction was associated with a lack of principal support, student discipline problems, and lack of teacher input on school matters. For these reasons, many of the teachers often left for better job opportunities at other schools or in other professional fields.

Blankenship and Coleman (2009) examined wash-out conditions of novice, physical education teachers. Wash-out conditions were described as the extent to which teachers reported being burned out from their duties. Participants included two elementary, physical education teachers who were in their first and second years of teaching. Sources of data included video-taped lessons, interviews, documents, field notes, and psychometric instruments. Although new

teachers felt that many things happened that contributed to their washout, the strong support they received from their principals proved to be very helpful. One thing that contributed to their washout was the low interactive support they received from their principals concerning their instructional strategies. They wanted more substantive feedback as to what they were doing well and in which areas they needed to improve. The clear implication from this study is that because teachers desire help in improving their craft, administrators provide as much assistance as needed in fulfilling those desires (Dagenhart, Dianna, O'Connor, & Petty, 2005; Rafoth & Foriska, 2006).

Committed Relationships

School success is largely dependent upon the type of dedication and additional effort that teachers exert (Somech & Ron, 2007). According to Hess (2001), schools are more effective when they have committed teachers. This commitment will be more of a reality if clear, attainable expectations are set by principals in a manner so teachers will be motivated to meet them.

Ponticell and Zepeda (2004) stated that principals should work to gain commitment from teachers rather than compliance because it will help in creating a healthier school environment. They further stated that gaining commitment from teachers will help in fostering continuous, positive change in learning opportunities for teachers and students and enable teachers to be self-motivated to improve their teaching practices. According to Deal and Peterson (1999), leaders understand that success is created by the efforts of committed individuals. When individuals genuinely perform their duties, caring environments evolve. Despite the many

demands placed on them, dedicated teachers are not deterred in moving forward in providing learning opportunities for students (Weasmer, Woods, & Coburn, 2008).

Hollas (2001) identified ways principals can keep faculty members motivated because she argued that motivated and committed teachers positively contribute to a successful educational environment. She stated that principals might want to model the type of positive behavior that they would like for their teachers to practice. They can mold teachers by turning negative statements into positive ones and possess a jovial spirit when dealing with teachers as much as possible. She stated further that principals should strive to ensure that they all exhibit respect when communicating with each other.

According to Young and Castetter (2004), years in the teaching profession are often met with challenges that can affect teacher motivation, retention, and commitment for many teachers. Youngs (2007) pointed out that challenges often confront new teachers as they work to provide productive learning experiences for all of their students. He stated that during interactions, principals can help new teachers develop professionally by creating opportunities for them to meet with assigned mentors and other teachers. Knobloch & Whittington (2002) argued that principals should identify the changing needs of teachers throughout the school year and provide support as needed.

Collaborative Relationships

Teamwork can have a positive effect on school productivity (Schafer, 2005). According to Marks and Nance (2007), the types of student learning that take place in schools are dependent upon the types of collaborative relationships that exist between principals and teachers. Faculty members who work together can improve the learning experiences for students (Leech & Fulton,

2008). Blasé and Blasé (1999) commented that in productive schools, there is shared decision-making and teachers work collectively and not individually. When principals build relationships of collaboration with teachers, barriers that hinder collaboration may be removed (Brown & Anfara, 2002). Collaboration allows for teachers to learn from each other (Williams, 2009).

Jones and Egley (2006) examined survey responses by teachers and principals concerning high-stakes testing in Florida. Administrator participants included 325 elementary school principals and assistant principals from 264 schools in 32 districts in Florida. Teacher participants consisted of third, fourth, and fifth grade teachers from 235 schools from 30 school districts in Florida. Administrators and teachers completed questionnaires that contained Likert-type statements and open-ended statements. Findings revealed that principals usually provided more favorable responses than teachers concerning effects of testing in Florida. More principals than teachers felt that the testing program had a positive impact on teacher and student motivation. Administrators felt positive about the testing program because the data helped them improve as instructional leaders and helped improve teacher efficacy. Based upon findings, the authors stated that teachers work together and work toward a common goal to help foster a positive school climate where teachers can be successful. They stated further that disagreements sometimes arise if teachers and principals do not work toward a common goal in the organization. These disagreements can negatively affect the trust that teachers have in principals.

When teachers are given opportunities to help make decisions concerning school issues, they are empowered and feel better about their position status (Condermen & Pedersen, 2006). When teachers are involved in decision-making in areas such as curriculum, scheduling, and other areas that impact student learning, a positive impact on student learning more than likely will result (Roney, Coleman, & Schlichting, 2007). Teacher empowerment is also positively

related to teacher performance (Seibert, Silver, & Randolph, 2004). Although teachers expressed negative feelings concerning the actions of the administration in the study that Myburgh and Poggenpoel (2002) conducted, they did express positive feelings for the positive relationships that they had developed with fellow teachers and students. Teachers worked together as a team and they enjoyed teaching their students.

Teacher Perceptions of Principal-Teacher Interactions

Principals' views of their behaviors sometimes differ from the views of teachers (Bevans et al., 2007). In their examination of the supervision practices of principals, Ponticell and Zepeda (2004) examined what supervision meant through the eyes of principals and teachers.

Participants consisted of 100 elementary and secondary teachers who were enrolled in the educational administration programs in two Southwestern states. Principals participated in semi-structured interviews, while teachers were asked to respond in narrative form to writing prompts. The authors found that principals viewed teachers as listeners and teachers viewed their roles as subordinates to the principals. Teachers were not fully free to share their true feelings with principals because they were afraid of negative actions that could result. Ponticell and Zepeda argued that collaboration between teachers and the principal creates better trust between the two parties. They argued that supervision can be more meaningful if principals work to improve the types of interactions between teachers--the types that involve more collaboration and where teachers feel free to genuinely express themselves.

Bevans et al. (2007) investigated the interactions between staff and school-level predictors of school organizational health. Participants were 1,300 staff members from 37 elementary schools from five school districts in Maryland. Participants completed the

Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) (Hoy & Feldman, 1987) which measured the elements of staff affiliation, academic emphasis, resource influence, collegial leadership, and institutional integrity. Staff turnover was found to be an issue and was suggested to be a result of fragile relationships among staff members. Bevans and colleagues concluded that administrators tended to view their relationships with teachers more positively than did teachers. They suggested that principals should work to develop positive relationships among their faculty by involving them in more collaborative team meetings and informal social meetings where conversation can take place. As a result, a positive school climate with increased job satisfaction for teachers may result. If principals empower their staff, support them in solving problems, and provide a school environment where effective leadership exists, teachers will experience personal and professional growth (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002).

Bogler (2001) examined teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership behaviors and the relationship to teacher job satisfaction. Participants for the study consisted of 745 teachers from elementary, middle, and high schools from 98 schools in Northern Israel. Teachers completed questionnaires containing Likert-type items to assess the level of each principal's leadership style and workplace conditions. Bogler found that empowered teachers experienced greater job satisfaction. When teachers felt positive about the quality of their jobs, they had better self-esteem and felt satisfied in their positions. When teachers felt that they were valued in their positions, they were more satisfied in their teaching roles. He argued that principals need to be more cognizant of how their behaviors affect the morale of their teachers. He suggested that greater job satisfaction will directly impact teachers' job performance which would then enable students to benefit from better quality instruction.

Williams, Persaud, and Turner (2008) conducted a study that involved a Metro Atlanta school district where parents advocated for more diversified staff and principals in the schools. During the process of increased diversification, the school district developed an instrument that rated principals in the areas of interpersonal skills, decision-making skills, personnel evaluation skills, instructional planning and leadership, and planning and management of school facilities. There was also a climate measurement component to the evaluation. Teachers rated principals and assistant principals by completing the evaluation. After principals were rated by teachers, follow-up conferences were held with the principals' supervisors. Principals then worked to improve their interpersonal skills with teachers. The principals' behaviors were related to school climate. The majority of the principals were able to improve their interpersonal skills in their quests to improve the climate of their schools. The principals' leadership skills had a positive impact on student achievement.

Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, and Steca (2003) examined teachers' perceptions of the behaviors of principals, teachers, students, and parents and how those behaviors were related to teacher job satisfaction. Questionnaires were completed by 2,688 teachers in 103 schools in Italy. The questionnaires consisted of 52 items that assessed teachers' perceptions of the behaviors of principals, staff members, parents, and students. Caprara et al. found that there was a connection between teachers' self- and collective efficacy and job satisfaction. The behavior of other teachers was also related to teacher self-efficacy. The behavior of principals and other teachers was shown to have more of an effect on teachers' perceptions than did the behavior of students, parents, and staff members. They stated that it is the principals' responsibility to bring about a positive school climate. They further stated that teachers who are given responsibilities and allowed to team-build usually view their principal as an effective leader.

Menon and Christou (2002) investigated the perceptions of pre-service teachers concerning the climate of schools as compared to the perceptions of practicing teachers. Surveys were administered to 79 pre-service teachers and 66 practicing teachers. The pre-service teachers were in the final 2 years of their collegiate studies. Practicing teachers were from 11 public schools. Both groups of teachers completed questionnaires that contained 35 items concerning school environment conditions. Findings revealed that the perceptions of pre-service teachers differed significantly from the perceptions of practicing teachers. The perceptions of practicing teachers were more positive than the perceptions of pre-service teachers in the areas of school climate and the capabilities of the school leader. Menon and Christou suggested that the perceptions of the pre-service teachers were as such because of their negative expectations of what to expect in the teaching profession. They stated that it is up to teacher preparation programs to train future teachers about the realities of the profession because a negative outlook can damage the morale of pre-service teachers before they enter the profession.

Kelley et al. (2005) conducted a study where they assessed teachers' perceptions of elementary school climate and explored the relationships between teachers' perceptions of each principal's leadership style and each principal's preferred leadership style by administering the Staff Development and School Climate Assessment Questionnaire (SDSCAQ). The SDSCAQ assessed the climate of schools in the areas of decision making, attitudes toward development, evaluation, communications, innovativeness, and advocacy. Participants consisted of 155 elementary teachers and 31 principals from elementary schools. Teachers rated their principals' leadership styles based upon their perceptions of them in relation to school climate, while principals rated themselves. The ratings for school climate were higher when teachers felt that principals were consistent in their leadership. Conversely, teachers rated principals lower if they

felt that principals were not being consistent in the way that they treated teachers. In these cases, school climate was negatively affected. Principals rated themselves differently from the ways teachers rated them. Kelley et al. stated that this discrepancy was due to principals not genuinely listening to the concerns of teachers and not being open concerning their leadership behaviors. They suggested the need for principals to listen to teachers' perceptions of their behaviors so a positive school climate is created.

School Climate

Rafferty (2003) stated that the school environment shapes the behaviors of teachers. Those behaviors directly impact how teachers perform and how students learn. An instrument commonly used in measuring the climate of elementary schools is the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991). It measures dimensions of climate in elementary schools. The instrument measures to what degree teachers' behaviors are intimate, disengaged and collegial. The climate instrument also measures to what extent principals' behaviors are restrictive, supportive and directive. An instrument that provides an opportunity for teachers to explain the interpersonal exchanges that take place in their schools is the OCI (Hoy et al., 2002). The OCI assesses dimensions of school climate in the areas of teacher professional behavior, principal leadership, community vulnerability and student academic press. According to Watkins (2005), principals should provide a nurturing atmosphere where high expectations for student learning exist. This is especially important if new teachers are to remain in the teaching field because many fail to continue in the profession. He added that principals should allow teachers to be free to make individual decisions that will benefit the entire school. In addition to hiring teachers, he stated

that if principals focus on retaining them and helping them develop in the profession, they will persist.

Strahan et al. (2003) conducted a study to find how the administrators and teachers in an elementary school created a nurturing school climate with sustained student academic improvement. About 66% of the students in the school received free or reduced lunch and 90% of the students were minority. Administrators and four teachers participated in interviews. Principals were asked to nominate teachers who had good scores on state assessments. Data included observations of grade-level meetings, classroom observations, and focus groups. Interviews were conducted to discover how students were able to improve their academic performance. Results from the interviews revealed that principals and teachers worked together as a team to improve student learning. They were able to dialog with each other in order to change the school in a positive manner. The principal of the school supported teachers by giving them as much of what they needed as possible in order to build their self-efficacy. Administrators encouraged teachers to share in the responsibility of improving student learning. As a result, a nurturing climate was created with continued student academic success. A respectful and supportive climate will be an essential ingredient in increasing student performance (Norris, 2003).

Healthy School Climates

Halawah (2005) stated that principals are primary agents in creating healthy school climates that are conducive for student learning. He examined the relationship between effective communication of high school principals and school climate. Approximately 90 students from six high schools in the Abu Dhabi District of the United Arab Emirates completed a climate

survey. Thirty-five teachers from each of the six schools completed a survey to measure the communication effectiveness of their principals. School climate was assessed by averaging student responses while principals' communication effectiveness was determined by averaging teacher responses. Halawah found that positive school climate was related to good communication skills of the principal. Principals in healthier schools were more sociable and personable whereas principals in schools with closed climates were not as personable and open in their interactions. He contended that if principals model the types of behaviors that coincide with the vision of the school, school climate will improve. It is important that school leaders exhibit the type of actions they expect from their teachers and students because everything that they do is being seen by everyone (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

Egley and Jones (2005) advocated for a caring and inviting climate. They examined teachers' perceptions of their principals' supportive leadership behaviors and the relationship to school climate and teacher job satisfaction. Supportive leadership behaviors dealt with how leaders in schools strived to bring about success for all entities in the school. Participants consisted of 708 teachers from 30 school districts in Florida. Teachers rated their perceptions of their principals' leadership behaviors by completing a 12-item questionnaire. Teachers felt that their principals were caring administrators. Although it was found that principals' supportive leadership behaviors were connected to the climate of the schools, there was also a connection to how principals positively interacted with their faculty and improved student achievement. Although teachers dealt with the pressures of high-stakes testing, the positive behaviors of their principals enabled them to teach in a healthier school climate. They stated that it is important for principals to be able to relate to their teachers and work together with them in achieving objectives.

Reavis and Vinson (1999) told of a first-year principal who made positive changes to a school that historically had low performance results. He did make changes but did so in ways there were not too heavy-handed. He exercised a democratic approach when interacting with teachers and students. When stating his desires or expectations for different initiatives, he usually asked for input from the different groups with whom he was interacting. He openly praised his teachers and students. For example, when the passage rate for 10th grade students increased from 38% the previous year to 87% the next year, the school principal had a celebration and told the students to get up and applaud the teachers. He also asked the students to stand and applaud themselves. Although, the principal did make changes, he did not get huge resistance because teachers and students felt that he cared for them.

Kocabas (2009) conducted a study to determine the factors that motivate teachers. The study consisted of 225 randomly selected elementary teachers who taught in Elazig, Turkey. Participants completed questionnaires that consisted of two sections. One section concerned personal information of teachers and the second section contained 35 statements pertaining to the motivating factors of teachers. He found that some of the factors that motivated teachers were a safe and positive school environment, student success, and job satisfaction. The study found that a positive school environment motivated them as well. Kocabas stated that everyone possesses different needs, wants, and desires and is motivated differently. He suggested that principals realize that teachers have different needs and work to meet those needs in order to build positive relations that will result in a positive school climate.

According to Wahlstrom and Louis (2008), when principals empower teachers by allowing them decision-making responsibilities, the entire organization is strengthened and teacher motivation and efficacy is enhanced. Nir and Kranot (2006) examined the relationship

between principal leadership style and personal teacher efficacy. Questionnaires were completed by 755 teachers from 79 elementary schools in the Israeli school system. The leadership style of principals was measured using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ version 5x), which assessed various aspects of leadership behaviors. Teacher efficacy was measured using Gibson and Dembo's (1984) scale. Teachers completed questionnaires that rated principals. They found that a strong workplace contributed to teacher job satisfaction. Healthy workplace conditions were found to positively affect personal teacher efficacy.

According to Blegen and Kennedy (2000), principals are in control of setting the type of climates that promote teacher empowerment. They are in control of how many responsibilities are given to teachers. They added that the more principals share leadership with teachers, the stronger the organization is. For the entire organization to grow, they reported principals have to be willing to grow with teachers. They went on to state that the more principals entrust their teachers with responsibilities, the more secure teachers will feel in their positions.

The principals in Mitchell and Castle's (2005) study believed that it was more important for them to lead the way in fostering an affective climate in school more so than developing the intellectual aspect in schools. They stated that they believed in building positive relationships with teachers first by working to gain their trust. They reported if teachers are motivated about reporting to work, the positive climate for learning will automatically come. They believed that they would then fulfill their roles as instructional leaders. They stated that if teachers trusted their principals, they would work harder for them and be committed to the organization. The school should have a loving and caring environment where students would receive skills that will propel them throughout life (Richmond, 2002). Knowledgeable and responsible individuals in schools not only benefit schools, but contribute to a stronger society as well (Norris, 2003).

Communication in the Organization

Arlestig (2007) and Gooden (2005) claimed that communication in schools is vital. Arlestig found that the types of communication that exist in an organization was directly tied to how principals work with their faculty members in guiding students to academic success. Rafferty (2003) argued that improved communication led to a more positive school climate. According to Brown and Anfara (2002), traditional barriers often exist between administrators and teachers. One barrier was the lack of communication. Based upon their findings, Thornton, Perreault and Jennings (2008) stated that principals should work to improve communication with their faculty members and provide leadership that empowers teachers and motivates them to perform to their fullest.

Rafferty (2003) conducted a study that examined the relationship between communication between principals and teachers and the attitudes of the teachers and school climate. The study involved 503 teachers, librarians, and counselors from 26 high schools from the western portion of Ohio. Participants completed the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Secondary Schools (OCDQ-RS) and the Communication Climate Inventory (CCI). Findings from the study revealed that the behaviors of teachers were greatly influenced by the perceptions they had concerning their schools. He found that there was a positive relationship between effective communication and school climate. He found that teachers who worked in schools defined as open schools were more likely to communicate with their principals. They made suggestions and believed that the principals genuinely listened to their opinions. Hoy et al. (1999) described open schools as schools where there is good communication between principals and teachers and where teachers trust each other. Teachers in closed schools said that their input was not taken seriously. Therefore, they were reluctant to report any problems and possible

solutions concerning different issues to their principals. Hoy et al. described closed schools as schools that have teachers who really do not trust each other and where there is poor communication between principals and teachers. Rafferty stated that teachers in closed schools reported that they did not have much influence on decision-making because they did not have many opportunities for input. Teachers in open schools were found to have better communication than did teachers in closed schools. He stated that teachers in open schools tended to trust their principals more. Trust affected their motivation and dedication. He stated further that the more trust that exists between principals and teachers, the better the communication that will exist.

Richmond (2002) told how she as principal worked with three of her teachers who were aspiring principals. The teachers agreed to participate in a program to further develop their administrative skills. She explained the necessity for the aspiring administrators to effectively communicate with teachers so they could realize what good instruction should look like. They should provide teachers with substantive feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching. She further explained to them that principals should be able to create an environment where teachers, students, and parents can contribute so they will believe they are part of the school community. She contended that when principals earnestly listened to teachers, communication between principals and teachers improved. According to Given (1997), principals are different in how they receive information. Some are auditory learners while some are visual learners. For example, if a principal is a visual learner, teachers may want to express their concerns in writing. She further pointed out that teachers themselves can contribute to developing productive interactions with principals by respecting the different interaction patterns of principals.

A Climate of Trust

According to Page (2003), developing a culture of trust is important if leaders want to be successful. In order to be successful, leaders have to be sensitive to the beliefs and values that members possess in the organization. Decisions of school leaders should prove as evidence that they possess a genuine understanding of the differences that exist in individuals. He went on to assert that the success of leaders will not be realized unless the employees in the organization trust them. When they see their leaders exhibiting caring qualities, the followers will be more apt to trust them.

Hoy, Smith, and Sweetland (2002) examined the climate of schools and the relationship to trust in the organizations. The climate of the schools was assessed by administering the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) and trust was measured using the Faculty Trust Survey (FTS). The OCI was a questionnaire that contained 27 Likert items that assessed four dimensions of school climate identified as collegial leadership, environmental press, teacher professionalism, and academic press. The FTS was a 35-item Likert instrument that measured faculty trust in parents, students, other faculty members and principals. The instruments were administered to teachers in 97 high schools in Ohio. They contended that faculty trust is a prominent factor in creating healthy school climates. Teachers trusted principals who were personable, compassionate, and showed concern for them. This contributed to a healthier school climate. Additional characteristics that were found to be contributing factors to a healthy school climate were open interactions between teachers and a strong emphasis on student achievement. Schools with lower levels of trust operate less efficiently than schools with higher levels of trust (Goddard et al., 2009). When teachers felt that their principal cared about them and their opinions were being taken seriously, they were more inclined to trust them (Bulach, 2001). He

stated that faculty members can write on index cards expectations that would govern faculty behavior. The principals would then be asked to enforce expectations outlined by the faculty. He suggested that that would be a way for principals to build trust because teachers would see that their principals were open to their ideas.

As a result of their study, Krajewski and Trevino (2004) stated if principals' actions do not coincide with achieving the goals outlined for the organization, people will say that they are not walking the walk. They stated that while principals should strive to receive the trust of their employees, they should also be willing to trust their employees and their abilities to complete tasks. They further added that many leaders often are not successful because developing a culture of trust is not their prime objective. Board members in the study were considered caring politicians and they held a positive relationship with the superintendent. As a result, a healthy level of trust was maintained between all individuals, and the school system benefited as a result.

The types of communication that exist in organizations impact the level of trust that exists (Tschannen-Moran, 2009). Zimmerman and Deckert-Pelton (2003) conducted a study that examined the principal's role during teacher evaluation. Participants for the study consisted of 86 teachers who were enrolled in graduate school at the University of West Florida. Participants completed surveys that assessed their perceptions of their principals as evaluators. Participants expressed a desire for open communication between themselves and their principals. They also wanted more collaboration between themselves and their principals concerning the evaluation process. The participants also wanted to receive productive feedback concerning their teaching. Zimmerman and Deckert-Pelton argued that principals must possess the ability to communicate positively with their teachers because teachers look to principals for leadership. They stated that

principals' actions largely shape school climate, and if teachers do not see effective leadership, trust in the principal's ability will be compromised.

Moye, Henkin, and Egley (2005) examined the relationship between teacher empowerment and trust in the principal. Surveys were completed by 539 elementary school teachers in an urban school district in the southeastern portion of the United States. They found that teacher empowerment was tied to trust in the organization and that when teachers felt they were empowered by their principals, their level of trust in their principals increased. They also found that when teachers were afforded greater independence concerning their job roles and when they had more influence in school decisions, trust in their principals improved. They suggested that principals work to realize the strengths of each teacher, work to allow those strengths to improve the entire organization, and strive to improve the meaningful interactions between teachers. They suggested that if principals empower teachers, they would do much in removing some of the distrust that teachers have in their principals and more positive relationships will result.

Principals were primary agents in creating productive learning communities (Tschannen-Moran, 2009). Zepeda (2004) conducted a case study that examined the supervisory practices of an elementary principal in the development of a learning community in an elementary school in an urban Midwestern elementary school. The implementation of the learning community was led by the new principal and assistant principal. The administrators had to be careful in developing the learning community because they replaced top-down administrators. They believed that teachers were not fully benefiting from the staff development practices that they previously had because they were not collaborating as they should have been. The new administrators had to work to gain the trust of teachers. The administrators visited teachers' classrooms informally and

promoted collaboration, teamwork, and peer mentoring. The administrators were able to gain the trust of the teachers and worked to continually improve the school. The administrators talked to teachers, established rapport, spent time with them, and encouraged them. They respected their opinions. As a result of these practices, a nurturing learning community was developed in the school which contributed to a healthier school climate.

Blasé and Blasé (2000) suggested that principals work to create an environment where teachers feel free to teach in a variety of ways rather than being forced to follow a stringent teaching regiment. They asserted that if this is done, teachers will be genuinely interested in the teaching process and trust in the organization will improve. They stated that teachers will build their efficacy as well. Successful schools have teachers who have the freedom to showcase their expertise while modeling good skills for others in the organization (Meier, 2002).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Study Purpose

According to Awan et al. (2008), school leaders have to operate in complex educational environments where they must be versatile in dealing with faculty members with different strong points and desires. This versatility is key because leader behaviors are tied to organizational efficiency. “Every person that the leader interacts with has a different personality, perception of the world around him or her, abilities, attitudes, and skills” (Howard, 2005, p. 385). The broad purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study was to explore whether the meanings that teachers assign to the interactions between principals and teachers account for the climate of the schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed:

1. What is the nature of the interactions that take place between principals and teachers?
2. What meanings do teachers assign to these interactions?

Qualitative Research

Information communicated through words has been classified as qualitative data (Merriam, 1998). “Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use

of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring in the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2007, p. 37). Dyson and Genishi (2005) stated that the aim of qualitative studies is to gain insight into the phenomenon under investigation and attempt to comprehend how the phenomenon is significant to the participants. Qualitative research can be utilized to acquire information concerning certain phenomena such as thoughts, emotions, theories, and assumptions that may be difficult to obtain through other research methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Study Sites

The school district in which the study was conducted was a small, urban, public school district located in the Southeastern portion of the United States. It was one of five school districts in the county in which it is located. The district consisted of one high school, one middle school, and five elementary schools. It consisted of approximately 2,330 students. It was a majority, minority school district. Ninety percent of the students were Black, 5% percent of the students were White, 2.7 % were Hispanic, 1.7% were classified as “other,” and 0.3% were Asian. The total number of students in each of the elementary schools was as follows: 190, 192, 227, 279, and 319. There were 500 students in the middle school and 603 students in the high school. The number of full-time, certified teachers ranged from 24 in the largest elementary school to 20 in the smallest elementary school.

The study sites for this research study consisted of the five elementary schools in the school district. Although the school district consisted of a middle school and a high school, the researcher studied the five elementary schools because elementary teachers’ perceptions of certain issues may differ from those of teachers in middle or high schools. For example, teachers

in elementary schools may perceive discipline issues differently because discipline issues may not be as major a problem in elementary schools as they are in middle schools or high schools. Interview data was collected from principals and teachers in each of the five schools. The researcher analyzed principal leadership and teacher perceptions of principal-teacher interactions at the five school sites. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality of school sites, schools were identified as Site I, Site II, Site III, Site IV, and Site V.

Individual Study Sites

Site I was an elementary school located adjacent to a low-income, government housing complex. The student population consisted of 199 students. Approximately 93% of the students received free or reduced meals. Ninety-six percent of the students were Black, 3 % of the students were White, 1% of the students were Hispanic, 0% of the students were Asian, and 1% of the students were classified as “other.” The school consisted of 15 teachers, 1/2 librarian, and 1/2 counselor.

Site II was an elementary school that served three low-income, government housing complexes. The student population consisted of 185 students. Approximately 95% of the students received free or reduced meals. Ninety-five percent of the students were Black, 4% of the students were White, 1% of the students were Hispanic, 0% of the students were Asian, and 0% of the students were classified as “other.” The school consisted of 15 teachers, 1/2 librarian, and 1/2 counselor.

Site III was an elementary school that served two low-income, government housing complexes. The student population consisted of 236 students. Approximately 73% of the students received free or reduced meals. Seventy percent of the students were Black, 19% of the

students were White, 9% of the students were Hispanic, 2% of the students were Asian, and 0% of the students were classified as “other.” The school consisted of 17 teachers, 1 librarian, and 1/2 counselor.

Site IV was an elementary school that served two low-income, government housing complexes. The student population consisted of 277 students. Approximately 91% of the students received free or reduced meals. Ninety-eight percent of the students were Black, 0 % of the students were White, 2% of the students were Hispanic, 0% of the students were Asian, and 0% of the students were classified as “other.” The school consisted of 18 teachers, 1 librarian, and 1/2 counselor.

Site V was an elementary school that served two low-income, government housing complexes. The student population consisted of 319 students. Approximately 95% of the students received free or reduced meals. Eighty-eight percent of the students were Black, 8% of the students were White, 2% of the students were Hispanic, 0% of the students were Asian, and 2% of the students were classified as “other.” The school consisted of 20 teachers, 1 librarian, and 1/2 counselor.

Sampling Procedure and Participants

Snowball sampling was used to identify participants for the study. This type of sampling involved “asking each participant or group of participants to refer you to other participants” (Merriam, 1998, p. 63). Merriam stated that snowball sampling is “perhaps the most common form of purposeful sampling” (p. 63). In purposeful sampling, “the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research

problem and central phenomenon in the study” (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). The participants for this study consisted of 15 certified teachers and five principals.

Identifying participants involved a multi-step process. First, the researcher discussed the aspects of the interview process with all principals. All five principals were asked to be interviewed. They were asked to provide their consent to participate in the study. Principals were interviewed to gain multiple perspectives and also a balanced perspective on the phenomenon of interest. It was important to engage principals to discover how they interpret their leadership roles during interactions with their teachers. Principals were asked to provide candid responses to all interview questions without concerning themselves with how teachers were to respond to their questions.

Once interviewed, the principal at each of the five schools were asked to recommend one teacher to be interviewed. The researcher explained to principals that he wanted to interview participants likely to provide authentic, honest answers to interview questions that were asked of them. The snowballing method continued to be utilized to determine two additional teachers at each of the five schools to be interviewed for a total of 15 teacher participants. The purpose of the interview process was explained to all participants. The researcher gained consent from the teachers to participate in the study. Teachers were encouraged to answer all questions as truthful as possible so the researcher could derive to legitimate conclusions.

Researcher Positionality

I have been employed by the school system that is the object of this study since August of 2000. My first assignment was as an assistant principal at the middle school. From there, I served as principal of one of the system’s elementary schools for approximately seven and a half years.

I presently hold the central office position of Director of Federal Programs for the school system. I assumed this position in October of 2008 and am responsible for the efficient operation of federal programs and budgets. Additional areas of responsibility include transportation, student services, school safety, and textbooks.

I am also responsible for evaluating employees funded with federal funds and other teachers funded by local and state fund sources at all schools in the district. I also develop federal school budgets for each school with input from school personnel and community stakeholders. I determine suitable expenditures for each school. I ultimately determine appropriate expenditures of federal funds for each school based upon a formula determined by the Alabama State Department of Education. Once budgets are finalized, they are submitted to the state department for approval.

Because there was the possibility that my job responsibilities may influence the responses of participants, I worked to alleviate the potential for biased answers by telling participants that I was performing this study solely in the role of a researcher. It was explained to them that their responses would not be held against them in any manner and would not negatively affect any facet of their job future. I explained to them that any future evaluations will not in any way be negatively or positively influenced by their interview responses. I assured them that their responses would be kept confidential and not shared with their principals. Principals were assured that their responses will remain confidential as well.

Study Instruments

According to Merriam (1998), interviewing is one of the most familiar forms of gathering data whereby one individual draws information from another. Interviewing is also the best

method to utilize when conducting thorough case studies of a small number of chosen participants.

Overall, interviews are an essential source of case study evidence because most case studies are about human affairs. These human affairs should be reported and interpreted through the eyes of specific interviewees, and well-informed respondents can provide important insights into a situation. (Yin, 2003, p. 92)

Semi-structured, open-ended interview questions were devised for teacher and principal participants to answer. According to Creswell (2003), interviews usually consist of open-ended questions that are designed to evoke beliefs and viewpoints from the interviewees. Principal interviews were conducted to gain insight from the principals' perspectives. While developing the interview protocol, careful consideration was given to the number of questions to be asked of participants and the amount of time that would be needed to conduct the interviews. The questions were open-ended and narrative in nature.

Interview questions were developed from the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Elementary (OCDQ-RE) (Hoy et al., 1991) and the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) (Hoy et al., 2002). Both of the instruments were quantitative in nature. The climate instruments were utilized as guides in developing questions to be asked of participants during the qualitative interviews. Interview questions were developed from the climate instruments in order for the researcher to effectively discover the meanings that teachers develop from interactions with principals and the relationship to the existing climate in the schools. The interview questions were field-tested with two individuals to determine if the questions adequately addressed the phenomena of interest. For example, responses allowed for the researcher to clarify questions or change them as needed if the responses did not adequately address the questions. The interview questions for teachers were piloted with a teacher from a public elementary school in the Southeastern portion of the United States. The interview questions for

principals were piloted with an administrator from a public high school in the Southeastern portion of the United States. Based upon the responses of participants, the questions were modified as needed. The OCDQ-RE is a climate instrument that consists of 42 statements that characterize the actions of principals and teachers in elementary schools. The interaction patterns of principals and teachers are “along a general continuum from open to closed,” as defined by Hoy et al. (1991, p. 35). The instrument measures openness or closeness of principal leadership behaviors identified as directive, restrictive, and supportive. The instrument measures the openness or closeness of teacher interactions identified as intimate, disengaged, and collegial. Participants indicated to what degree each statement typified the schools by circling one of four choices: RO = *rarely occurs*, SO = *sometimes occurs*, O = *often occurs*, VFO = *very frequently occurs*.

The OCI is a climate instrument that consists of 30 statements that characterize the climate of schools. Hoy et al. (2002) suggested that the OCI provides an opportunity for teachers to satisfy their enjoyment of describing “the interpersonal relations in their school” in a confidential manner (p. 48). The instrument consists of the four dimensions of principal leadership, community vulnerability, student academic press, and teacher professional behavior. Principal leadership deals with how principals work to meet identified goals in schools and how they work to meet the needs of faculty members. Community vulnerability deals with to what extent schools are influenced by community pressures. Student academic press relates to how committed students, parents, teachers, and principals are toward high academic achievement. Teacher professional behavior relates to how teachers work with each other and how committed they are to their students. Twelve of the interview questions were related to principal leadership, and two of the questions were related to teacher professional behavior. Participants indicated to

what degree each statement typified the schools by circling one of four choices: RO = *rarely occurs*, SO = *sometimes occurs*, O = *often occurs*, VFO = *very frequently occurs*.

The interview questions were developed so the researcher could gain multiple perspectives on principal leadership and teachers' perceptions of principal-teacher interactions as in relation to school climate. Individuals have different perceptions of events (Howard, 2005). The questions were designed to gain an understanding of those interpretations which prompted certain teacher behaviors. The semi-structured nature of the interview protocol was designed so interviewees could feel free to answer questions without constraints. The protocol was also designed for the researcher to delve deeper into certain responses or expand on certain ideas that arose during interviewees' responses.

Principal interview questions were also developed from the OCDQ-RE and OCI. The principal protocol was designed to ascertain meanings that principals assigned to interactions with teachers and to see how their actions were perceived by teachers in relation to school climate. The interview questions were submitted to a university professor who possessed a doctorate for review, further input, and approval. The professor worked at another accredited university in Alabama and has no other connection to the research. The interview questions were also submitted for review to an elementary school principal who possessed a doctorate. The elementary school was located in a school system in Northeast Alabama. The principal had no other connection to the research. Once reviewed, the resulting interview questions were included in the study.

Data Collection

During this multiple case study, data were collected from five school sites. According to Creswell (2007), “case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system” (p. 73). Case study researchers search for multiple viewpoints concerning the phenomena they are investigating (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). Conclusions drawn from multiple case studies “will be more powerful than those coming from a single case” (Yin, 2003, p. 53).

Consent was gained from the superintendent to conduct the study in the elementary schools. The purpose of the research was explained to the superintendent. Consent was gained from the superintendent to conduct interviews with selected employees at each school site. Principals and teachers received an invitation to participate in the study. The purpose of the research was explained to all participants. Appropriate consent forms were provided to participants for their review and signature.

Participants were ensured that their identity would remain anonymous and their responses would be kept confidential. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality of research participants, teachers were identified as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D, Teacher E, Teacher F, Teacher G, Teacher H, Teacher I and Teacher J. Principals were identified as Principal A, Principal B, Principal C, Principal D, and Principal E. Principals were asked to participate in individual interviews prior to teachers completing their interviews.

The researcher approached participants with the understanding that although he was the Director of Federal Programs for the school system, he was conducting the study as a doctoral student. The participants were encouraged to answer all questions utilizing that understanding as a guiding force. Therefore, they could answer all questions as honestly as possible. Participants

were informed that they would be able to withdraw from the study at any time if they chose to do so.

Data were collected from teachers in the form of semi-structured, open-ended interviews. The interviews were designed to gain multiple perspectives from teachers on principal leadership and teachers' perceptions of principal-teacher interactions in relation to school climate. Principals were first interviewed. After principals were interviewed, teachers were interviewed. Questions for principals were also developed from the OCDQ-RE and OC.

The interview questions were designed so each interview could be conducted between 30 to 45 minutes. Participants were encouraged to answer questions as honestly as possible. There was no pressure placed on teachers and principals to answer questions in any certain way. The researcher attempted to make sure that participants were at ease during the interview by ensuring that he listened attentively to their responses without bias, by asking inviting questions, and by attempting to comprehend their viewpoints (Yin, 2003). "Skilled interviewers can do much to effect positive interaction. Being respectful, nonjudgmental, and nonthreatening is a beginning" (Merriam, 1998, p. 85). The researcher strived not to control or frame the views of participants so the honest opinions of participants could be revealed (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The researcher communicated with participants by phone or in person to arrange a date and time to conduct the interviews. The participants were provided the opportunity to be interviewed at a time that was convenient for them. During teacher interviews, all teacher responses were audio-taped. Because some interviewees may feel uncomfortable being audio-taped, participants were ensured that they could feel at ease because their interview responses would remain anonymous (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). After all interviews were audio-taped, all responses were transcribed verbatim. Principals were asked to participate in individual, follow-

up interviews after teachers had completed their interviews. Principals' interview responses were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim.

During teacher interviews, all teachers' and principals' responses were audio-taped. "Of the three basic ways to record interview data, the most common by far is to tape record the interview. This practice ensures that everything said is preserved for analysis" (Merriam, 1998, p. 87). After all interviews were audio-taped, all responses were transcribed verbatim. Merriam suggested that "verbatim transcription of recorded interviews provides the best database for analysis" (p. 88).

Data Analysis

All transcriptions were reviewed and coded for emerging themes within each site and then analyzed and coded for emerging themes across sites. According to Creswell (2003), researchers gather emerging, open-ended data with the foremost objective of creating and expanding themes from the information. In analyzing the data, they continually reflect on the data to make meaning of the data. The responses from participants were analyzed to discover which responses addressed the research questions identified for the study. The data were coded so all important and relevant data were included in the write-up of the results (Merriam, 1998).

Open-coding was used in analyzing the data. In open-coding, "researchers are, in a sense, brainstorming possible kinds of relevant information. They read through the data line by line, noting any words, phrases, or patterns of behavior that seem relevant" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 85). The data were analyzed and a detailed analysis of major ideas and themes was created (Stauss & Corbin, 1998). The final step was to analyze the relationships between the meanings teachers assigned to principal-teacher interactions in relation to descriptions of school climate as

found in the literature. As noted earlier, school climate or the personality of the school emerges through workplace interactions (Egley & Jones, 2005; Hoy et al., 1991).

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION

Data for this study were collected from all teachers and principals in the form of semi-structured, open-ended interviews. The interviews were designed to gain multiple perspectives on teachers' perceptions of principal-teacher interactions in relation to school climate. The questions were developed so teachers could provide unbiased answers in order to receive their honest opinions (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Yin 2003).

The principal at each of the five school sites was first interviewed. Once interviewed, each principal was asked to recommend one teacher to be interviewed. The snowballing method was utilized to determine two additional teachers at each of the five sites to be interviewed for a total of 15 teacher participants. Principals were asked the questions listed in Appendix A. Teachers were interviewed using the questions listed in Appendix B.

The participants were provided the opportunity to be interviewed at a time and place that was convenient for them. All teacher and principal interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. All transcriptions were reviewed and coded for emerging themes within each site and then analyzed and coded for emerging themes across sites (Creswell, 2003). Open-coding was used to analyze the data line by line, noting certain words, ideas, or patterns of behavior that seemed relevant (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). The data were analyzed and a detailed analysis of major themes was created (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In the section that follows, the findings are reported within their emerging themes at each school site. Next, the themes are compared across school sites for their similarities and differences through a cross case analysis.

Prevailing Themes

The following themes emerged during analysis of the interview data from all sites: appreciative, caring, open, friendly and approachable, unity, supportive, respect, listens, confidant, communication, negative, authoritative, need for better communication, lack of respect, uncomfortable, lack of openness, lack of appreciation, lack of concern, trust and positive. The following sections explore each prevailing theme that emerged from all sites. Tables 1 and 2 contain a list of the themes that emerged from the sites and identify the themes that were addressed by teacher participants with an “X” mark. Table 3 contains a list of the themes that emerged from the sites and identify the themes that were addressed by principal participants with an “X” mark.

Table 1

Themes Addressed by Teachers A through H

	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C	Teacher D	Teacher E	Teacher F	Teacher G	Teacher H
Appreciative	X	X	X		X		X	X
Caring	X	X	X				X	X
Open	X	X	X				X	X
Friendly and approachable	X	X	X				X	X
Unity	X	X	X					X
Supportive		X	X				X	X
Respect	X	X	X				X	X
Listens	X	X	X				X	
Confidant	X		X					
Communication	X	X						
Negative				X	X	X		
Authoritative				X	X	X		
Need for better communication				X	X	X		
Lack of respect				X		X		
Uncomfortable				X	X	X		

(table continues)

	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C	Teacher D	Teacher E	Teacher F	Teacher G	Teacher H
Lack of openness				X	X	X		
Lack of appreciation				X	X	X		
Lack of concern				X	X	X		
Trust								
Positive							X	

Table 2

Themes Addressed by Teachers I through O

	Teacher I	Teacher J	Teacher K	Teacher L	Teacher M	Teacher N	Teacher O
Appreciative	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Caring		X	X	X	X	X	X
Open		X	X	X	X	X	X
Friendly and approachable	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Unity	X	X		X	X	X	X
Supportive						X	X
Respect	X				X		X
Listens	X	X	X	X	X		
Confidant							
Communication							
Negative							
Authoritative							
Need for better communication							
Lack of respect							
Uncomfortable							
Lack of openness	X						
Lack of appreciation							
Lack of concern							
Trust		X	X				
Positive					X	X	X

Table 3

Themes Addressed by Principals

	Principal A	Principal B	Principal C	Principal D	Principal E
Appreciative	X	X	X	X	X
Caring			X	X	X
Open	X		X	X	X
Friendly and approachable	X		X	X	X
Unity	X		X	X	X
Supportive					X
Respect					
Listens			X	X	X
Confidant					
Communication	X				
Negative					
Authoritative		X			
Need for better communication					
Lack of respect					
Uncomfortable					
Lack of openness					
Lack of appreciation					
Lack of concern					
Trust					
Positive					X

Appreciative

Teachers A, B, and C thought that they were appreciated by Principal A. She often gave teachers verbal praise. Teacher A stated, “She always has a smile on her face and if she sees something that we’re doing, she’ll tell us we’re doing a good job. She’ll say, ‘Hey I like that lesson I had seen today.’” Teacher A believed that her principal was appreciative of her efforts. Teacher B added that Principal A sometimes made phone calls to teachers at home to let them know how much she appreciated them. Before and after each faculty meeting, Teacher B stated

that Principal A often told teachers that she appreciated them and everything that they were doing. Teacher C shared that Principal A often told teachers that they were doing a great job during faculty meetings and sometimes told them over the school intercom system.

In addition to her verbal praises, Principal A was a big tangible giver. All of the teachers spoke of the awards and tokens that she often gave them. Teacher B stated,

Our principal is a giver. Our principal is a materialistic giver also, but she awards us. She gives us medals. Every six weeks we have an honor roll recognition of the students who are on honor roll. She came up with that idea because she said, "Why wait until the end of the year for awards day." Every six weeks she honors the kids and she awards them with certificates, with medallions, with all types of things to help them stay on honor roll and for good behavior. Well, by the same token, she does the same thing with teachers. To our surprise, when they call for honor roll, she always gives us some type of reward for the things that we've done. She is constantly giving something and I think myself, maybe have about 15 medallions. She compliments us for any work that's done. We have data meetings, celebrations and all types of things. She's always coming up with something.

Principal A was creative in the way that she rewarded her teachers. She often gave teachers various types of awards and tokens. Teacher A stated that Principal A showed that she appreciated her teachers. To illustrate her statement Teacher A stated,

In our faculty meetings, she gives us a little teacher award. Last year we had a torch that looked like a lighthouse with all the colors. She said, "When you look at this, you think of peace." It's like a lighthouse on the seashore or whatever, and this year it's an E for excellence with an apple on it. The year before that, we had "going the extra mile with tennis shoes and for victory." There was a medal with a big star. We got a chance to hang it outside our door and all that. So it's nice. The kids have positive behavior strategies. She gives us some too.

Teachers were also recognized publicly for their accomplishments. Teacher C stated that teachers were recognized at academic pep rallies. Principal A would recognize them by announcing to the community that they were doing a great job and that she appreciated her teachers. Teacher C stated that that made them feel good because she was sharing their accomplishments with the community and let them know that she enjoyed having them with her.

During the academic pep rallies, Teacher A mentioned that Principal A acknowledged them for having perfect attendance. She stated that they felt good for being recognized for those types of accomplishments.

According to Teacher A, Principal A would even have a particular theme and token for them at the beginning of each school year. The tokens consisted of a trophy, an apple, sneakers, and a poem about “Believe.” Teacher A stated,

I mean, she just gives us those things to reach out to us and she always remembers teachers’ appreciation and gives us a little token to let us know that, “Hey, I see you doing a good job; I want to commend you for your efforts.”

Teacher C stated that the recognitions served as a motivator to other teachers. Teacher C stated that if certain teachers were not recognized, it motivated them to do what they were supposed to do so they could be recognized. Teacher C exhibited her particular motivation by making the following comment, “I want to be the one to be recognized this time; so I’m going to step up my game.”

Principal A’s comments concerning her appreciation of her teachers coincided with the comments of Teacher A, B, and C. Speaking to how she showed appreciation to her teachers, Principal A provided the following comments,

Well, I try every month. We acknowledge all faculty and staff and students who have a birthday for that particular month. We have them to stand up during our morning announcements at the beginning of every month, and we salute them in singing happy birthday. I also have an academic pep rally every six weeks and during that six weeks, acknowledge the whole child academically with honor roll, perfect attendance and good behavior. During that time, we acknowledge the parents for being committed to excellence; who attend the workshops that will help improve their students’ academics, as well as the teachers. We acknowledge the teachers every six weeks who have perfect attendance for that six weeks because we know that a substitute teacher cannot teach like a certified, highly qualified, experienced teacher. I try to acknowledge them every six weeks for those teachers who have given 100% in perfect attendance for our students to improve; so we acknowledge them every six weeks and every month.

Principal C pointed out that she always commended her teachers. When she commended them, she believed that they worked harder and did a better job. She also believed they felt good about themselves and felt that their leader was paying attention to what they were actually doing. She thought that if teachers were not commended, they may have gotten disgusted or felt that she really did not care about them. Principal C stated that she gave them commendations each time they had a meeting. She always commended them on the intercom because she felt that she had great teachers and the school would not have gotten to the point where they were if it were not for them. She provided incentives for them. Occasionally, she gave the teachers certificates and small tokens. She shared that she made positive comments on their lesson plans. She also praised them over the intercom. When they did a good job, she made sure that she commended them.

Teacher H stated that Principal C always told them how much she appreciated them and she said that her appreciation went a long way. She acknowledged when they were doing a great job. She provided lunch for them sometimes away from their students. Teacher H also stated that her principal did little things that showed that she appreciated their hard work. Teacher G stated, “It makes you feel good that she’ll just come up to you and say you’re doing a good job, verbal praise.” Teacher I mentioned that she might tell them on the loudspeaker, “A job well done.” She stated that those types of positive remarks occurred quite often.

According to Teacher H, Principal C was very complimentary. She tried to make them feel better but gave them a little bit of freedom to teach in their classroom as they saw fit. Teacher G acknowledged that she recognized them at faculty meetings. She provided awards for teachers if they were doing a good job. She let them know that they were doing a good job. She admitted that she tried to give teachers as many compliments as she could. As a result, she believed that morale was pretty good.

Teachers M, N, and O thought that Principal E was very appreciative. Teacher O stated that Principal E was very good about giving complements and saying “thank you.” He always thanked them if they performed a task for him. Teacher O noted, “Thank you goes a very long way.” Teacher N mentioned that Principal E always had a compliment coming out of his mouth. She stated that he always greeted them in the mornings and afternoons and always told them that they were doing a good job. She stated further, “It’s pretty good because sometimes you want high praise. It’s always good when somebody stops and they see the work that you’ve put in because a lot of people think that teaching is an easy job.”

Teacher M stated that Principal E did little things to show that he appreciated them. Some days he would go around and pass out chocolate to teachers and tell them that they had a good week. Teacher M and Teacher N mentioned how he would sometimes provide breakfast or lunch and give them little rewards. Teacher N continued on to explain that he nominated a teacher of the month to recognize a teacher. That teacher received a special parking space for a month. He sometimes gave them little gifts to make them feel special. Teacher O remarked,

Well, if he sees you in the hallway, he’ll pat you on the back and say “you did a good job.” A lot of times, when I come in the morning, there may be a little chocolate treat or a note on my desk. He will give personal comments. He will recognize you in faculty meetings or grade level meetings and just let you know that you’re doing a good job. He’s very encouraging.

Speaking with a shaky voice and teary eyes, Teacher M spoke more in depth about how Principal E treated them. She had this to say,

On the morning messages this past Monday, he said “I am so proud of you all for making our school what it is.” I mean, that was so good because he said, “I’m proud of you all.” You know, I’ve been working a long time and people just don’t say that a lot of times. He said it on the morning messages. Every Monday he has all these nice things to say. He says, “I thank you.” I really appreciate it, and that makes a difference.

Principal E remarked that he always told his teachers that they were doing a good job. He explained that he did not try to use a lot of negative words. He stated, “I try to turn a negative into a positive you know. When I talk to them, I try to do a lot of praising. I don’t use many negative words because you need these teachers to teach kids. You need to keep their morale built up.” He contended that they did not hear a lot of praising from the outside, so they needed to hear it from somebody. He believed that if he praised his teachers, they worked harder and went beyond the call of duty.

Principal D argued that individuals do not like to go with their work unnoticed. She explained how she appreciated her teachers by making the following remark,

I’m always saying “good job.” I believe in rewarding people, like you see me today. They’ve worked hard this semester; so you know I come in here and sacrifice to stay in the lunchroom and let them go fellowship and have a good time. You know, I look at them if they’ve done something outstanding. I don’t mind telling you and others, “You’ve done a good.”

Teacher J and Teacher K spoke concerning the appreciation that Principal D showed toward teachers. Teacher J cited some specific examples of how Principal D exhibited her appreciation. She said if a teacher received a grant or another type of award, she would announce it over the intercom. She continued on to say that in faculty meetings she might share that she walked by someone’s class and they were doing a good job. She said that Principal D would recognize teachers for their birthdays and give them Christmas gifts. She commented that every now and then they would have lunch provided through the office. Teacher L also commented that she provided praise at faculty meetings. She explained that if she saw a teacher doing something positive, she may mention it to the staff. She added that some of the teachers had been rewarded for having 100% of their parents to attend parent/teacher conferences. She noted that if her principal walked by someone’s classroom and heard something interesting, she would

mention it. During Christmas, Teacher L stated that Principal D was very generous. She stated further that they would have activities, and she would give them Christmas gifts.

Teacher L said that Principal D did several little things throughout the year to recognize teachers. She also said that teachers felt good about a faculty breakfast that was held at their school before they broke for the holiday season. She mentioned that Principal D watched all of the students in the lunchroom while the teachers ate breakfast and fellowshiped with one another. She commented, “We had breakfast and it was our get together time and everybody was like ‘wow.’ We had prayer and it just spread to everybody. It was like a lot of love.” Teacher K also spoke favorably of the faculty breakfast in the following manner:

Just this morning we had our faculty breakfast. She took all of the classes. She managed the whole school in the lunchroom to let the teachers fellowship and talk some adult talk for about thirty to forty minutes. That meant a lot to me, just to be out of the classroom for a couple of minutes.

Teacher K stated that Principal D would remain positive if some of them were not performing adequately. To illustrate her point, she stated if some teachers did not turn something in on time, she would encourage them to get the information in on time. It was that type of encouragement and positive feedback that Teacher K appreciated. Although Teacher J shared examples of Principal D’s appreciation, she stated that Principal D could have done a little better in showing her appreciation because the morale of the teachers was a big factor and teachers could have sometimes fallen into a rut and needed some encouragement.

Unity

Teachers A, B, and C believed there was unity among Principal A and teachers. Teacher A shared various comments concerning the type of unity that existed at her school. She stated that Principal A was very effective at trying to get the teachers on one accord and encouraged

teachers that if they remained focused, they should be able to achieve more. She stated further that when Principal A arrived at the school, she brought with her a spirit of unity. She went on to state,

When our principal came, she made us make a connection. She had us on one accord. We had one word which was to “believe” and then that was our vocal point; so every year she gives us a vocal point and that vocal point gives us some kind of unity because we know where there’s unity, there’s strength. When all of us start from the onset of believing from the beginning of school year, we know that this year we’re going to believe. Then we’re going to expect victory. We have strength as a whole unit.

Teacher A stated that there had been many ups and downs during her tenure at her school. She said that the strong faculty bond and love for her fellow teachers were prime factors in her remaining at the school. When conflicts of interest arose concerning certain issues, she commented that her principal would speak to each person individually first and then bring them together to see if they could find “some unity to fix the situation.” Teacher B also commented on how Principal A worked to resolve issues in a spirit of unity. She explained that just as in any family or business, there were clashing personalities, but her principal liked to bring the individuals face to face to iron out the differences. Teacher B stated that fortunately there was not much dissension in the school. She thought that this was somewhat due to the type of respect teachers had for each other.

Principal A spoke of how the climate in the school had improved from the time that she assumed the principalship. She mentioned that they had a pretty “close knitted faculty and staff.” She thought that everybody worked well together and that the climate had improved. Providing an explanation of why she thought the climate had improved, she stated,

You have teachers who now feel a sense of self-worth. They’re worth something. They mean something to the faculty and staff. I don’t know what type of administrator they’ve had in the past, but the input I’ve been getting from my teachers, they like the change that has taken place.

Teacher A commented that Principal A interacted with them like they were a cohesive unit. She worked to bring them together in school activities. For instance, she stated that if teachers were studying student data or having a data meeting, and teachers had different levels of progress, she would still view them as a grade level instead of as individuals. She stated that her principal believed the following way, “We’re all in this together. We’re learning together. We’re all trying to reach the same goals. I can’t do it without you, and you can’t do it without me.” She encouraged them to work together. For that reason, Teacher A likened the relationship among teachers to a close family. Teacher C pointed out that she would often bring them together in a group to address issues. Teacher C thought she did that to provide them opportunities to improve without signaling anyone out. Teacher A explained that they were there for the kids and that success could not be achieved unless they had teamwork. She stated that they had to learn to agree to disagree and had to remain focused on their goal of empowering their students.

Principal C strived to build a sense of unity at her school. She believed that when everyone came together and worked together as a team, the school was better for it. She thought of her school as a learning community where everyone listened to each other, shared ideas, and provided input. Teacher H and Teacher I believed that Principal C promoted a sense of togetherness in the school. She made teachers feel that they were all in it together.

Teacher H thought that the best feeling that she and the other teachers had was believing that their principal was not going to abandon them when they needed her. Further sharing her thoughts concerning unity at her school, she asserted, “It’s ours. It’s not mine. It’s not yours. It’s more of an “our.” I think it’s the shared load of being respectful and feeling that this is our school and we’re in this together.” She appreciated the level of unity at her school and the encouragement she received from her administrator because she had been assigned to other

schools where it was quite the opposite. Teacher I believed it was the principal's responsibility to create a family atmosphere in school. Principal C worked to get teachers to understand that they were a team and that they were all team builders.

According to Teacher J and Teacher L, Principal D tried to make sure they came together as unit. It made Teacher J feel good to know that her principal promoted a sense of togetherness. She thought that it would be bad if they did not work together as a unit. At times, Teacher J said they were just like a family. She stated that they sometimes fell out but they were always able to work through their differences. Teacher L said that Principal D encouraged them to work as teammates. She went on to say that she always referred to them as her teammates in their faculty meetings and always ensured that they had a lot of input on certain things.

When Principal D thought about the interactions between teachers and herself, she thought of coworkers. She explained, "We are at the point where we can just talk about the things that's going on. Very seldom do I have to step into the administrator's mode. We just communicate with each other as teammates." She considered herself a very open-minded person. She thought they all could work together instead of her just telling them everything to do. She asked them their input and stated that they would all agree. Principal D pointed out that once they sat down and made suggestions and worked together as a team, she allowed the majority to rule. She explained that everybody may not have gone along with the decision, but if the majority was in favor of a decision, that would be the final decision. She commented that she seldom had to say that she was the principal. Whatever they were doing, they worked together to get it done.

Teacher O stated that they worked together as a team at her school. She explained that each grade level got together and did whatever they needed to do to get the job done and if it

meant spending extra hours after school, they did it because they wanted it done right.

Explaining why she thought that there was good morale at Site V, Teacher M maintained, “We have good morale because we have good leadership, and we get along well with us coworkers and the administration.” She commented that the environment was a contributing factor to them getting along. Principal E commented that morale was good because teachers got along. He suggested that it was good for the students to see teachers getting along well.

Teacher M explained that each grade level was close because they were always together, but they all came together as a family when it was needed. Teacher N stated that if any of them were faced with trouble, everyone would join in and help. She stated, “Sometimes we have disagreements like any other school, but we’re able to solve the situation and move on.” Principal E noted that there was more of a family atmosphere at his school. He elaborated by saying, “I want us to be a family. We all learn together. We all hurt together.” He believed in teachers sharing their knowledge because the kids benefited as well.

Listens

Teachers A, B, and C agreed that their principal listened to their suggestions and concerns. Teacher A stated that her principal listened to them and gave thought to their input. As an example, she stated that at faculty meetings her principal would state her expectations of teachers and would ask them what they thought concerning the expectations. Teacher C stated that when they had faculty meetings Principal A would ask if there were any questions or suggestions. She also stated that she listened to their suggestions. When teachers had suggestions or concerns about any issues in the school, Teacher B said that her principal would talk to them during their release time, after school, or when they were arriving to school. Teacher B also said

that when her principal received suggestions, she would present the suggestions to the rest of the teachers in a faculty meeting to see what they thought.

Teachers identified methods Principal A utilized to gather input. Teachers B and C spoke of a suggestion box that was available to teachers. The suggestion box was a way for Principal A to listen to the opinions and concerns of teachers. Teacher C explained that teachers put suggestions, notes, or any questions they had in the suggestion box. When there was a principal advisory committee meeting, the suggestions were taken from the suggestion box and discussed. Speaking further concerning the suggestion box, Teacher B had this to say,

The principal would provide recommendations based upon the information learned or would explain whatever the teachers suggested. We have a principal's box where we put suggestions; a suggestion box where we put our suggestions in. She comes. She sits in on grade level meetings and she talks to us individually. She asks us if we have any concerns, to just let her know and then she'll get back with us. If we have any solutions to the problems, she also listens to those; not just the problems but also the solutions.

Teacher A stated that she listened to all sides when issues arose. Teacher A remarked, "Instead of talking to this one only and then making the decision after just talking to one, she'll listen to both and then bring us all together and then she would be that problem solver for us." She also said that Principal A would act as a mediator when conflicts arose. Principal A stated that when situations arose, she tried to resolve the issues by bringing both parties together. She stated,

I work to get both parties that are involved to sit down and give me their side of the story, and if it's something where they cannot work it out amongst themselves, then I do intervene at that particular time. At that time I try again to get both sides of the story and see what it is we can do to make it work.

Although Teacher C thought that Principal A listened to teachers' suggestions for the most part, she stated that some of the teachers felt that the Principal A would not listen to their suggestions. She suspected that they may have been afraid to reach out and talk to her. From Teacher C's

point of view, she interacted with teachers, listened to them, and was there to solve any problems that they had.

Teacher G and Teacher I stated that Principal C would listen to their opinions and concerns. From Teacher G's standpoint, Principal C would listen to all issues and opinions and try to find solutions for the most part. Even though she thought that she did listen to suggestions, she thought that she sometimes took the suggestions in and sometimes she did not. She added that she listened if it was constructive. Sometimes, she thought that Principal C got a little offended and thought that some of the suggestions were personal attacks.

Teacher G stated that if teachers really had a concern, she would try to handle it and fix it. She said that at the end of faculty meetings, she would ask if they had any concerns or provide any suggestions for anything. She did state that there were a couple of people who had issues with her listening to them. She said that it depended on how she was approached as to how she responded. Teacher G believed that she was very willing to change anything if it was in the best interest of their children. She thought that she was open to change if it was done the right way.

On a personal level, Teacher I thought that her principal was wonderful as far as listening to suggestions. Although she thought that her principal was good at listening to suggestions, she could not honestly say that suggestions were always carried out. She stated that Principal C may have intended to do some things but sometimes did not carry them through. Teacher I provided the following comments concerning how important she thought it was for a principal to listen:

I've had approximately 10 or 11 principals and I can honestly say that sometimes I felt that I wasn't listened to. I think when a principal does not listen to staff and concerns, whether it relates to the students or other faculty members, it does cause morale to be low. I feel that she is in charge of the school climate, and she's the captain of the ship and she needs to make sure that she keeps abreast of all issues relating to faculty members and her students. Everyone wants to have their own piece in the pie and everybody wants to feel important.

Principal C stated that teachers and she would sit down and talk about issues and she would listen to what they had to say. Sometimes, she thought that sometimes it may have been something that was not really going to benefit the school, but she listened anyway. She explained that she listened because she knew from listening, she would find out what was going on with that teacher. She acknowledged that other opinions did exist and that she was not the authority on everything. She admitted that she listened because a lot of times, others' opinions were good.

According to Teacher K, Principal D always had time to listen. If her principal did not have time to listen to them at any particular time, she would tell them to come back at another designated time. Teacher L believed that she listened to different things they had to say because they were the ones in the classroom working with the kids. Teacher J stated that if they needed anything from her, she would always tell them to go to her so they could talk. Principal D stated that she was a good listener. She commented in the following manner:

When a person comes, you know, I know that there is always more than one side to a story, but I just sit in there and listen. Everybody has an opinion and every opinion to me is important. Like you do with everything else, I listen to your opinion, and we weigh them out. If it's some validity to them, then we are going to do what you say because I don't have all the answers. As a team we got to come up with the answers together, and everybody has an opinion. Some opinions are good; some are not. We just weigh them out.

Principal E stated that he listened to his teachers and respected their intelligence. He shared that he tried to help them with what they needed. He stated that he listened to parents and was there for them as well. Teacher M stated that he listened to her all of the time. If he wanted some input about something, he would ask her, and she would give him her honest opinion. She offered the following words,

If we have a problem, we can go to Principal E. He'll respond to us, and he'll try to help us in any way. As far as interactions with Principal E, it's so easy because we can just talk and tell him what's going on. I can't think of any of us that would not go to him and tell him anything that's bothering us. He'll respond and try to help us in any way.

In order to grow, Principal E acknowledged that he did a lot of listening to other principals in the system as well.

Confidant

In addition to being a good listener, Teachers A and C thought of their principal as a confidant. They had faith that she would keep information shared with her in a confidential manner. Teacher C explained that whatever teachers shared with Principal A stayed between them. Teacher A stated that Principal A often shared suggestions anonymously. If a suggestion came up, she would say that a suggestion was brought to her and would ask them what they thought about it. She would provide them the option of determining if the idea was good or bad. If someone had a personal issue to share with her, Teacher A stated that her principal immediately turned into a free counselor. Teacher A continued on to state, "Once she closes that door, we have that sense of security knowing that it's going to be confidential. She's our confidant for that moment and hopefully she'll make things better for us."

Open

Being open related to how principals were open to change and suggestions brought to them by teachers. Although Teachers A, B, and C agreed that Principal A listened to them, they thought that she was receptive as well. Teacher B and Teacher C shared that Principal A was open to suggestions and change. According to Teacher C, Principal A was very open and supportive. Her principal made changes based upon input from the faculty. She would call faculty meetings and discuss issues with all of the teachers. She would give them opportunities to decide, not just her.

Principal A indicated that she valued her teachers' opinions. She made the following comments,

I do know that they have good ideas, and so I don't claim to know all the answers. I was put in the position as administrator, but again I don't have all the answers. Therefore, I value their opinion and I try to make sure that they're important because without them, I'm incomplete and I can't fulfill my job successfully.

Teacher B shared that her principal was very willing and was constantly looking for change that would result in improvement. Her principal did not mind changing if it benefited the students.

Although Teachers A and B commented that Principal A was open, Teacher C stated that some of the teachers were afraid to offer suggestions. She really did not know the reason but thought that it was probably due to the fact that they were new teachers, because most of the veteran teachers would freely approach her with suggestions. She was further perplexed concerning their apprehension because she believed that the doors were open so they could express what was on their minds.

Principal A thought they were pretty open at her school. She stated that she addressed issues as they came up and approached every situation based upon what it involved. Principal A stated that she did not have a problem with change, especially if it was positive, but she stressed that change that improved student growth was her number one concern. She did not have a problem with putting those types of changes into place. Speaking to how she valued the opinions of her teachers, Principal A had this to say,

I value the teachers' opinions. With the principal advisory meeting, we meet and they share their concerns, and I address them at that particular time. If there's something that needs to be addressed in a faculty meeting, I will put that on the agenda for our next faculty meeting and we will address it then.

All three teachers concurred that she accepted criticism positively. When criticisms arose, Teacher C stated that Principal A took them well. Teacher A mentioned that she would state her

opinion on particular issues but would consider the opinions of others whether she agreed or disagreed. Addressing how open Principal A was to criticism, Teacher B stated,

She sits back and reevaluates herself. Also, she's a sensitive person, but she's concerned about what people think about her. If it's criticism, she will come and ask someone else, "How do you think that the meeting went yesterday? Did I say anything wrong?" She takes that criticism, and she checks it out. She waves it out and you can see a change in her if it is something that she deems needs to be changed. She asks around to make sure she hasn't offended anybody in any way. She would definitely go to that person and let them know, "I didn't mean to offend you in any way," but I have seen her change and I have seen her change other people. She takes constructive criticism very well.

According to Teacher A, a leader should be their number one critic. They should examine themselves and to see what improvements are needed. Responding to criticisms of her leadership behaviors, Principal A remarked,

I don't wear feelings on my shoulder. I don't hold grudges; so I take it for what it's worth and try to move on so it would benefit us. I don't have a problem with change, and if that's what is necessary, then we can do that because constructive criticism can be beneficial.

According to Teacher H, Principal C was receptive to suggestions and was willing to change. She thought her principal appreciated their ideas but sometimes was a bit slow putting them into action. She did state that once her principal got started with an activity, she proceeded rather efficiently. On the other hand, Teacher H stated that she would sometimes not put the suggestions into action at all. She believed that it was not because she was not willing, because she encouraged ideas. She thought that it was mainly due to her not quite knowing how to implement those ideas. Teacher G stated that Principal C was willing to change if something was not working and would work with teachers to get it fixed.

Principal C indicated that she was willing to implement change because she considered herself to be very flexible. She stated that she readily accepted change depending on what type of

change it was. She stated that if she had to change for any particular reason, she would, but if she was given a choice, she would look at the pros and cons and make the appropriate decision.

Principal C explained that she tried to improve herself when she received constructive criticism. Even when she thought that the criticisms were not constructive, she would still take inventory of herself to see whether she was actually guilty of the accusations. Concerning criticisms of her, she stated that she would think to herself, “I need to do better. Within themselves, they’re feeling something. So you just can’t overlook it.” She said that she really took constructive criticisms to improve herself.

Teacher J stated that overall Principal D accepted their suggestions, although the suggestions were based on the chances they would be successful or not. Teacher L insisted that Principal D was very flexible in innovating change because she understood that the children were changing, and the teaching styles of teachers were changing. She added that her principal would try certain things, but if they did not work, they had to go back to the original plan. Teacher L also stated that Principal D would sometimes ask what types of things that they thought worked. Teacher K thought that when it came to the success of the students, Principal D was willing to change anything. She noted that if they needed to read more or test more, she would change it immediately.

Teacher J and Teacher L stated that Principal D listened but that she did not always go along with all suggestions unconditionally. Teacher J mentioned that she would listen, but if she was set on doing something, she was going to do it. Teacher L remarked that if teachers had a better way of doing something and could show her how that idea would work, Principal D would listen to them, but they had to have concrete evidence to show her. Once she saw that it would work, she would let them try it. Teacher L explained that her principal was open to constructive

criticism when it was directed towards her, but that it depended on the manner in which the criticisms were stated. She further explained that if the criticisms were said in a professional manner, she would listen to what they had to say.

Principal D stated that she was open to any suggestions that would help her. She said that she appreciated the suggestions or criticisms because without them, she may not have known some of her shortcomings. She added that the teachers' input made her think. She stated that it may not have made her change altogether, but it was in the back of her mind and made her approach the issue a little bit differently.

Teacher J was the only teacher who believed that Principal D did not take criticisms or change very well. She thought that she sometimes took things a bit personal. She said that she was very outspoken and would say what was on her mind. She thought that her principal sometimes cringed at that. Teacher J did raise the point that she was tenured. She stressed this point when stating that some of the younger teachers were hesitant to express their views or approach her with concerns.

Teacher N stated that when she thought about the conversations that took place between teachers and the principal at their school, she usually thought they were open and honest.

Principal E said the following,

I feel like I'm very friendly, very open. I always tell them my door is always open. If you have any concerns, problems about anything, feel free to come to me. You know, I'll never close my door to a teacher. I'm here to help them. That's my job to help them along with the students. I find an open door will do better than a closed door. I really do.

Principal E indicated that he was open for suggestions and recognized that he did not know it all because he was the administrator. He wanted their input. Principal E remarked,

I'm open for criticism. That's the only way you grow. You don't know it all. I don't take it personal. I don't take it negatively. I try to take it positively. I want people to tell me,

“Hey look Mr. Copeland, that’s not working.” They may tell me they have a better way of doing it.

He added that he was open for change. He contended that you have to change in order to grow.

The statements of Teacher M, Teacher N, and Teacher O coincided with the comments of Principal E concerning his openness. Teacher O stated that Principal E was very receptive to their opinions. Teacher N said that he would go to teachers first when there was a decision to be made. If he used an idea that a teacher gave him, Teacher O acknowledged that he would recognize the teacher who made the suggestion.

Teacher O believed that he always wanted to put the children first and that change had to be in their best interest. She stated he was always willing to change, but if he had any doubt, he would tell them that he had to think about it, or he would have to check with someone else who had more knowledge. She explained that he always got back with them and provided his reasoning for his decision.

Teacher N agreed that Principal E was very willing to deal with change. She maintained, “He knows that only through change we will evolve and become better than we are.” She went on to say,

Well, he pays attention to what we have to say. He’s not the belittling kind. He makes sure that we know that what we say has merit, though sometimes we can come up with a lot of uncanny things that have nothing to do with educating our children.

Teacher N appreciated the fact that he valued their opinions and did not look down on them.

Although Teacher M believed that Principal E was very open, she commented that he was sometimes a little hesitant in making some decisions. She thought that sometimes he tried to make all of them happy and, in her opinion, that was not good because he was not going to make everybody happy.

Friendly and Approachable

Principal A was considered friendly and approachable by all three teachers at Site I. Principal A considered herself to be very approachable. Teacher A commented that her principal always had a smile on her face and was very friendly. She said that she was very approachable. In addition to addressing Principal A's friendliness, Teacher A, Teacher B, and Teacher C stated that their principal had an open door policy. Teachers could go to her at any time if they had any problems.

All teachers spoke to the sense of comfort that they experienced because of Principal A's friendly nature. Teacher B felt free to approach her principal because she thought that she could speak to her without worrying about the information being shared with anyone else. Teacher B felt comfortable because she saw her principal as someone that she could freely approach and who would listen to her problems. Teacher A remarked, "She's just common folk." Teacher A shared that teachers felt at ease. Teacher C did state that although most teachers felt comfortable approaching their principal, some of them were hesitant to go to Principal A. She did not know the reason but did suggest that it could have been associated with their years in the profession, because some of the younger teachers were the ones who did not feel comfortable approaching Principal A.

Addressing how approachable she was, Principal C stated, "I'm very approachable, and if someone feels like they can't approach me, I really don't understand why because I am very approachable. I think everybody in the school knows that that I'm very approachable, even the students." Teacher G said that she was very friendly and had the type of personality where teachers felt free to go and speak with her. Teacher I agreed that Principal C was very friendly and approachable. She explained that her principal sat in on parent conferences and was friendly

and cordial with parents as well. Teacher G thought that most of the time, she was very approachable, but stated sometimes she questioned if their concerns were being heard.

In Teacher L's opinion, her principal was friendly. Teacher J thought that Principal D was very approachable. She had good rapport with her principal. Both Teacher J and Teacher L agreed that they could go to her and talk to her about anything, whether it was personal or professional. Teacher L commented that she could tell her principal anything and did not have to worry about hearing about it from someone else.

Teacher K believed that Principal D was friendly, but she thought she was not approachable. She explained that her demeanor was not inviting. She stated, "It's more of her demeanor, not what she says to me, because once I come out to her, she's just as nice as she wants to be. I think it's just her demeanor. I wouldn't say frightening but it's not approachable." She stated that some of the younger teachers may not have felt free to approach her because they thought that her demeanor was not inviting. She did not know the exact reason, but surmised that it may have been due to them being new teachers by stating, "I don't know. It's just the fear of being, I guess, the new teacher here. Not really sure."

Although Principal D considered herself to be very friendly and very approachable, she did admit that her staff sometimes did not see it that way. She said that they still saw her as the principal. She stated that she would sometimes hear teachers in the office a lot of times asking her secretary something when she was the one who knew the answer. She stated that for some reason they did not want ask her. She further stated, "They do try to skirt around me on some things." Principal D did not really know why they tried to avoid her sometimes because she said that she had an open door policy where they could always go to her. Principal D attempted to provide some rationale for some of the teachers feeling hesitant to approach her by stating,

Any time you've got a boss, there's some amount of fear, even though I don't ever want that. You know, they don't want to come to me. You know, if they need an answer to a question, I guess they say, "Well, if I go ask her, she'll know that I don't know," but I always tell them there are things that I don't know. I have to tell them that if they want the right answer, then you come to me because I'm the one who knows the answer and I'm not going to think bad of you. All of us have to ask questions.

She stated that when they went to her, she may have told them something that they did not want to hear, but she stated that they could always sit down and talk to her.

Teacher N said that most of the time, Principal E was very friendly and approachable. She stated that he was not stern but would take control of a situation if needed. She went on to state that he would open his door to them no matter what the problem. Teacher M stated that he was always available for teachers to approach him. She indicated that when they approached him, he did not look like he did not want to talk to them. She continued on to state, "When we walk up, he has a smile whether he wants us there or not. It's so easy to talk to Principal E." Teacher O remarked that he demonstrated self-control and always remained calm. She offered this statement, "Just to sum him all up, he's just a mellow individual."

Caring

Teachers A, B, and C believed that Principal A was very caring. Teacher A stated that Principal A showed that she cared for teachers. That caring attitude caused Teacher A to feel that she was not in it alone. She was grateful that her principal still remembered what it felt like to be a teacher. She added that Principal A's understanding made her job run a lot smoother and provided her a sense of comfort. Teacher B said that her principal constantly checked on her teachers. She went on to say,

I would say that each teacher in the school is a friend of the principal opposed to just an employee. She takes us under her wing as a family member. If we're ever out for illness or anything, she's constantly checking on us and making sure we're doing very well. She

knows our family members by name; our immediate family members by name. She constantly checks on us. Even on summer break, she calls us constantly to see how we're doing.

Teacher C stated that Principal A made home phone calls as well. She added that she sometimes called them in the office to see how she could assist them with problems. Teacher A indicated that if teachers had questions, her principal did her best to provide answers. If she did not immediately know the answer, she would seek to find an answer. Teacher A mentioned that her principal worked to solve problems that teachers had. Teacher A told of how her principal found her some help when she transitioned from first to fifth grade because of her uneasiness in making the huge jump.

Teacher G and Teacher H spoke concerning Principal C's caring nature. Words that came to mind when Teacher H described Principal C were attentive, caring, respectful, encouraging, and safety. She stated that her principal made them feel like everything was going to be all right no matter what was going on. She contributed this to her calming nature. Teacher H also stated that her principal was very friendly and motherly. She added,

She tries to take care of us. She tries to make sure that we get what we need. She's very good hearted like that. She's a peacemaker. She doesn't want anybody to get upset or fuss. She just wants everybody to try to get along.

Teacher H described Principal C as a peacemaker who tried to make everybody feel okay. She also described her as being motherly and grandmotherly.

Teacher H stated that if teachers did not have what they needed, Principal C did her best to get it for them. She stated that Principal C was very protective of her teachers. She would let them stay late when they needed to. Teacher H stated that she sometimes stayed when she had things to do because people said they needed to stay. She also went on weekends to open the

building. She stated that Principal C gave them her phone number and allowed them to call her at home. She told them that it was never too early or too late to call her.

Teacher H stated that Principal C was constantly seeing to their personal welfare. She cited one instance where she reported to school one day, and she was not feeling very well. Although she was not feeling well, she was pressing on trying to fulfill her teaching obligations. Her principal found out that she was sick and immediately sent someone to her classroom so she could go on home.

Teacher G stated that Principal C was very concerned, and she would work with teachers. She said that if they were having troubles, she would work with them to resolve them. She would also try to help them with issues that were outside of school if teachers brought them to her. Teacher G said her principal went around the school trying to help teachers. She stated that she knew in her heart that her principal was there for the children. She had no doubt that if they needed anything or extra support, Principal C would supply it.

Principal C stated that she was concerned for the personal welfare of her teachers. She elaborated by stating,

I'm really concerned about their whole being, which includes their physical, social, and morale. If they call in and say they're sick, then I want to check on them and know how they're doing. If they're at school, I want to know if they're having a problem.

She added that she was there to help them solve any problems whether they were personal or professional. She shared that she had empathy for her teachers.

Teachers J, K, and L believed that Principal D cared for them. Teacher J stated that most of the time, she was very considerate of her staff. Teacher K stated that she took care of them. If Principal D did not know how to help in certain situations, she would point them in the right direction. Further speaking to her caring nature, Teacher L stated,

I have had several instances where I have had to go to my principal on personal matters. They did not involve academics or anything dealing with the school, just on a personal level and as a person. She stepped out of the principal's role, and she stepped into a mother's role. She guided me properly into making certain decisions or just listened to me vent. She just helped me make the right decisions to handle some of the things life will throw at you as being a teacher.

Teacher J stated that they sometimes disagreed and that sometimes Principal D might have assigned them certain responsibilities that they did not like, but she believed the staff gave her what she requested.

Principal D's statements concerning how she cared about the personal welfare of her teachers substantiated the statements of Teacher L. She noted,

I'm very concerned about them. If there is something outside of the workplace that happens you know, I'm not asking them to tell me what it is, but if it's something that would affect their job, I do ask them to share that with me. I'm a person that listens and understands. I've seen and done a lot; so you know we can sit down and talk. I try to keep that kind of relationship where you can come and talk to me because whatever affects your personal life, affects your job performance also.

Principal D emphasized that she bent over backwards to find the help that her teachers needed. She stated that the only reason her teachers did not get help was because they did not ask. If she could not help, she stated that her teachers knew that she would go and try to find them some help. Although she said that she bent over backwards for her teachers, she noted that many times they still had to ask her for help because many of their needs were hidden. She added that some of them did a good job of masking their needs so she would not know if they did not ask her.

When Teacher N thought about Principal E, she thought about the care that he had with his teachers. She said that Principal E looked out for their welfare by making sure that they had everything that they needed. She also said that Principal E would check every morning, midday, and afternoon to see if they had everything they needed. Teacher M pointed out that Principal E went around all the time asking them about the type of day they were having, how he could help

them in any way, and if there was anything that he could do for them. Teacher M stated that he was never in his office because he was always around the school trying to help someone. She stated that those types of actions really made a difference to teachers. Teacher M stated further, “It makes me feel really good because I know that he cares. He cares about my day. He cares about what’s going on. He cares about me as a teacher.”

Teacher O believed that he was a very concerned individual and always had time for them. She noted that he thought critically about their ideas and listened to everyone. It did not matter whether they were teachers, parents, or students. Teacher O went on to say that if they had issues at home, he would make sure that they were okay. She cited a particular instance that typified the type of care that Principal E exhibited,

There was a situation that came this year at our school. My grandfather passed, and I was just hysterical. I did come in the morning of his death. He was just telling me to go home and he would take care of the substitute and don’t worry about it, but I wanted to make sure my kids were all taken care of. He was very concerned about me.

Teacher O stated that it made her feel very good because it let her know that he cared and he was concerned. She thought the other teachers were really on board with him.

Principal E believed that his teachers were enthused about entering their school. He said that he felt a lot of love in the building and believed that morale was very high. He also believed that the teachers and the students felt the love. He thought that the reason that the love was present was because he preached caring and loving to all of his teachers. Principal E remarked, “I have some good teachers. I appreciate all of them. I’m here for them first and for my students. I’m going to continue to care for my teachers because I need them. They are the backbone to my school.”

Communication

Principal A thought there was pretty good communication in the school. She said that she tried to keep communication open by talking with teachers on a regular basis. She was interested in how they were feeling and what they were thinking. She was confident that they knew that if they had a problem, they could go to her and the information would stay behind closed doors. Principal A noted, “If there’s something that is of a personal concern of theirs, I will talk to them on a regular basis to see how things are going.”

Teacher B concurred that there was open communication in the school. In Teacher A’s opinion, communication was not 100%, but she said that if certain teachers were not communicating, they were to blame because Principal A made herself available to them. Providing her rationale as to why some of the teachers thought there was not good communication, Teacher B assumed that they were the teachers who were not in teaching for the right reasons. She asserted that some of them were veteran teachers who were not as open to change and were set in their own ways.

Teacher B stated that Principal A explored all sides of issues and would talk to everyone involved. She not only talked but listened to create better communication. Teacher B maintained, “You have to listen and then need to talk also. Our principal listens well, and then she hashes out the issues; so she talks and communicates very well.” According to Principal A, some teachers thought there was a lack of communication sometimes because they would be asked to meet deadlines at the last minute. She would explain to teachers that the deadlines would sometimes arrive late from their central office and it was not a lack of communication within the school.

Respect

Teachers A, B, and C agreed that teachers had respect for Principal A. According to Teacher B, teachers respected Principal A as the leader. She only had to say something one or two times and it was done. If any teachers stepped out of line, she would pull them into her office to rectify the situation. If she had to correct the situation, they respected the way that she handled it. Speaking specifically to why teachers respected Principal A, Teacher C responded, “For number one, she is our boss. She’s not telling us anything to hurt us. She’s only telling us things to help us.” Teacher A said that everybody knew his or her role and stayed in his or lanes.

If there was a problem in the school, Teacher A indicated that Principal A would bring everyone together to discuss it, and would make a decision then. She commented that teachers respected the decision that was made. Some would voice their opinion but would eventually accept the decision because of the respect that they had for their principal. Teacher A said that it was great that her principal could be a leader and still be respected at the same time. She added that there was a calm, relaxed atmosphere in their school and that the faculty respected each other. As with any other workplace, she mentioned that there were disagreements but for the most, the atmosphere was very calm.

Teacher G and Teacher H shared remarks concerning the level of respect they had for Principal C and how Principal C respected teachers. Teacher G indicated that she did a very good job of trying to treat everybody with the utmost respect. Teacher H argued that her principal treated them with dignity and respect. She said that it meant a lot to teachers and allowed them to want to do for her. She stated that she had good rapport with her principal. She also stated that she had always believed that if you treat someone with respect, they would treat you with respect. She mentioned that she never had any kind of problem with being able to speak to her

principal. She stated that since Principal C treated her with respect and they had positive rapport with each other, she would do anything for her. She also stated, "I'll walk through fire if she needed me too as long as she treats me with respect." Teacher H stated that Principal C respected her opinion and there had been times when they did not agree, but respect still remained. She stated further that neither of them took anything personally and her principal did not hold grudges. Teacher H added that her principal treated people with respect even though they did not always deserve it.

Teacher H stated that the amount of respect that was exhibited by Principal C made her feel good and respect her even more. She told of how she had worked in other places where she was not respected. She went to work thinking about things with which her principal would find fault. She stated that her principal tried to make them feel better about who they were, and tried to make sure that their kids knew that she cared about them, which made Teacher H feel good. Teacher H said that Principal C's respect for them made her feel loyal to her. She said the following,

I want someone who is going to be loyal and I want somebody who is going to stick by me in thick and thin. You know, there are times when we all make mistakes, but you just don't throw somebody under the bus. You stick with them. They're your family. You know, we're a family here and I think sometimes we forget that in education.

Teachers M and O spoke in depth about the respect that existed between Principal E and teachers at their school. Teacher M maintained, "It's a matter of respect. He respects us and we respect him." Teacher O believed that everyone at their school respected that he was the head. Teacher O said that they respected him because of his goodness and kindness. She added that she had heard negative things said by some teachers, but he did not respond negatively to them. He would call that person into his office and talk to them at a later time. She went on to say that he behaved in the same manner all the time and did not try to embarrass them.

Providing her explanation why teachers respected Principal E, Teacher O stated that he was the type of individual who was very humble. When something came up, everyone knew he was in charge, but he was not the type of person who forced anything on them. She stated that he did not make things so stressful that they did not want to do them. She explained that everyone respected him because he was a cooperative and very loving person. She stated further,

He's open. You can definitely confide in him. If you tell him something, he's going to keep it between the individual; just very professional. I really appreciate him, and I respect him for that because you can't find that in a lot of principals and not just in principals, but in a lot of people.

Teacher O remarked that Principal E wanted everyone to value and respect the feelings of others. She said that when they had faculty meetings, and a teacher interrupted another teacher talking, he would ensure that those people quieted down so the person could be heard. He wanted everyone on one accord. According to Teacher M, the same type of respect existed among teachers at her school. They respected each other. She stated that the type of environment existed that promoted the thinking that teachers may not have liked each other, but they respected each other.

Supportive

From Teacher B and Teacher C's point of view, Principal A was supportive. Teacher C stated that Principal A was there to solve any issues that teachers had. She stated further that whenever they were experiencing any problems in school or with parents, she was very supportive. She made recommendations for teachers to let them know what needed to be done to correct the problems.

Teacher B commented that Principal A let them know that she was the leader of the school but also let them know that she was once in the classroom. She explained that Principal A

helped them tremendously and supported them in various ways. She let them know that she did not ask them to do anything that she would not do herself and proved that to them on several occasions. Further expounding on this thought, she made the following comment:

You name it, we've seen her do it. We've seen her paint the walls. We've seen her mop the floors. We've seen her sit in a classroom and teach a class. We've seen her model for some teachers who needed modeling. She would go in and model how to teach that particular subject. We've seen her in P.E. being the coach at P.E. We've seen her on the serving line in the lunchroom. I think the only thing I haven't seen her do is drive the bus, and I bet she could do that too.

Teacher B described the climate of her school as a healthy climate. She stated that she enjoyed going to work and did not dread getting out of the bed to report to work.

Teacher H spoke extensively concerning the support she received from Principal C. She stated that her principal tried to support teachers in their endeavors. Teacher H thought that her principal gave teachers the support they needed. She appreciated being able to teach without having someone standing over her shoulder constantly. That made her feel empowered to pull in resources and not be afraid to use different sources as she saw fit.

Teacher H stated that Principal C shared the workload with teachers. She served on committees if needed and did not mind rotating if they were performing certain tasks at school. Teacher H said that if Principal C needed a particular teacher to perform a certain task, she would sit with that teacher's class until the task was completed. Teacher H appreciated this because she recognized that was not something that she normally saw principals do. Teacher H mentioned that loyalty was huge in her vocabulary. She stated,

You do what you are supposed to do and you support me, I'll do my very best to make you look good. I'll work over. I'll hang off a sign in freezing temperatures. I don't mind doing those extra things if someone is supporting me, but if you don't support me, around 3:00, I'm out of here. I'm grabbing my stuff and I'm leaving and that's just how I feel. I think that's human nature when we feel appreciated we're going to do a lot better job and if we feel that we're being taken advantage of, we're out of here--we're done.

Teacher H believed that she was encouraged to grow and thought that she could not grow in a stagnant place. She also thought that her principal tried hard and really cared about making their school better. Overall, Teacher G thought that they had a great faculty where teachers supported one another.

Teacher N and Teacher O shared how Principal E exhibited his support for his teachers. Teacher O stated that Principal E was very supportive. She stated, “He tells us that he has our back and anything that he can do for us, he’s always there.” Teacher O shared that Principal E always walked the hallways and visited their classrooms to provide his support. She pointed out,

He’ll always ask if everything is okay or if everything is alright. That means a lot because it lets me know that he has my back. I may need some supplies or just anything. He always wants to make sure teaching and learning is going on in the classroom. If there’s anything that I need, he’ll be there for me to get it or contact whoever he needs to contact to get it done.

Teacher N also stated that Principal E was supportive in getting teachers everything that they needed. She said, “He’ll make sure he gets the materials that we need. I don’t know anything we’re lacking in. He’ll be the first one to get what we need here at our school.” She also shared that he provided his support in a calm manner without putting excessive stress on them. She added,

He makes sure that the job gets done but in an easy way. I don’t think I’ve ever seen him just pitch a fit or make you never want to come to work. Again, if he has to give you something that’s going to be loaded, and you are going to have to do a lot of, he’s going to make sure that he’s coming around to see if you have what you need.

Principal E’s statements concerning his supportive nature reinforced the statements of Teacher N and Teacher O. He stated that he did a lot of interacting and sharing ideas with his teachers. He said that he got a chance to walk into teachers’ classrooms and point out some things with which he could help them. He explained that he offered support but was not the type of principal that breathed down teachers’ backs. He explained,

If I hire you to teach, I want you to teach. I am there for support. I'm there to support you. If you need any help, I'm there. I'm there to correct your behavior in a positive way, not a negative way. If I see a teacher doing something that I know is not correct, I'm going to show her how to do it the right way. I'm going to point it out to her. I'm going to model that behavior for her or him.

Teacher O wished that there were more principals like her principal. She believed that he was interested in the welfare of teachers and students. She emphasized that she was blessed to have a principal like him.

Negative

Principal B believed that the interactions at her school were positive. Her thoughts were contrary to the thoughts of all three teacher participants at the school. She did state that she could sometimes see that, by their demeanors, they were unhappy with some of her decisions. They would be non-vocal and or very short when they responded to her. The first thought that came to mind when Teacher D thought about the types of interactions that existed at her school was a lot of negativity. She claimed that the negative interactions tended to hurt the morale in the school. She thought that situations were not always handled in the best manner by principal B. Teacher D believed that the negativity tended to bring teachers' feelings down. She thought that maybe she should not have taken things so personal, but it was difficult for her sometimes because although she worked hard to get things done, she mentioned that her principal would find something wrong and complain about it. She thought that the negativity made them feel diminished as teachers. She pointed out further that some of the teachers thought they were sometimes not good enough. Even though they were working hard, they sometimes questioned whether they were good enough in their positions.

Teacher F stated that Principal B did not have a positive tone. She thought that it negatively affected the morale more than anything else. Teacher E stated that Principal B came across very negative. She stated,

She believes you shouldn't have to tell people, you know, "great job" and all those things when you're doing what you are supposed to be doing anyway. Any person feels better when someone says "thank you." You're given something to do but yet micro-managed through every step of it and if you're not doing it specifically the way that she would have it done, then you're wrong, and that's very difficult. It makes you not even want to start anything because you know somewhere along the line, you're going to be put down.

Teacher D stated that her principal was sarcastic at times as well. Although she seemed to accept teachers' opinions at times, Teacher D shared that she would still find some way to turn back negative. Teacher D said that the negativity sometimes created resistance among teachers. She suggested that Principal B would not have been met with so much resistance if she was more positive toward teachers. She thought things would run a little smoother. She insisted that she would have gotten a lot more out of teachers by bringing them up instead of putting them down.

Lack of Compassion

Although Principal B stated that she thought it was very important for her to have a general concern for her faculty members, Teachers D, E, and F all thought that Principal B exhibited a lack of concern for their well-being. Teacher F stated that there were not a lot of personal interactions at her school. When she walked through the school doors, she said that her personal life stopped. She said that although she strived not to mix business with her personal life, sometimes she needed that personal interaction. Sometimes, she felt that she needed to talk with her principal behind closed doors but stated that she did not feel like could do that. She also stated that her principal was very readable. She often wore her emotions on her face. Teacher F stated that her principal was inconsistent with her behaviors. Some days she felt free to go and

talk to her about anything, but on other days, she knew to leave her alone because of the negative attitude that she would have.

Teacher E stated that teachers did not feel a relationship with Principal B. She said that Principal B made it known to teachers that she did not have friends at school and that her friends were outside of school. She stressed that she was the principal and they were the teachers. She told teachers that she was not there to be make friends. Those types of statements saddened Teacher F. She stated that she understood that they did not have to be buddies but maintained that her principal should have had the best interest of the teachers at heart but was not confident that her principal felt that way. Teacher E shared that some of the teachers who previously had a yearning to report to school every morning before Principal B was assigned principal, later began to dread to report to school. She stated that the days were almost stress-free when Principal B was not at school.

Teacher D cited some situations that reflected the lack of compassion of Principal B. She said that she had heard that another teacher had asked Principal B about not being at school because of a situation with her mother. The teacher was told that she could not miss the day although her mom was in the hospital. Teacher D told of another instance where the husbands of two of her colleagues had been in the hospital. As soon as they returned the next day from being with their husbands, they were in the office talking to Principal B about their test scores, which was not taken too well by either of the teachers. Teacher D could not recall an instance where her principal really went out of her way to do things to help any of the teachers.

Authoritative

Teachers D, E, and F spoke candidly concerning the authoritative behaviors of Principal B. From Teacher D's perspective, the teachers at her school saw Principal B as someone who wanted to be in charge. They saw her as an authoritative figure who wanted to do things her way and who did not really want to deviate from doing anything differently if she saw that students would benefit. According to Teacher E, morale declined drastically because of her micro-managing style. She was not fond of the way Principal B constantly watched her to see if she was doing everything in the exact way in which she was told to do it. She thought that it was very demeaning to be told to do something and be constantly watched and criticized every step of the way. She commented that teachers were not allowed to go forth and prove that they could complete tasks without being watched during every step.

Teacher D emphasized that she did not like Principal B's authoritative style. She shared that some teachers sometimes saw no use in talking to her because they thought that it would not change anything. She associated Principal B's career background to her authoritative leadership style. She candidly stated,

She has things that she wants done, and you're going to do them. You're going to get them done. In the main scheme of things, you have to run school to get people to do what you need them to do, but sometimes, I just think there's a little bit better way to go about getting people to do things rather than always on their back and fussing.

Teacher F also associated her principal's leadership style to her career background. She really did think that she had good leadership skills but argued that she did not implement them appropriately for the benefit of teachers. She mentioned that her principal was very demanding. Teacher D personally thought that Principal B tried to interact with the teachers but thought that her interactions were sometimes forced. She did share that it was a little intimidating at times.

She stated that she was not intimidated very easy but thought that a couple of her fellow teachers were afraid to say what they felt or thought because of what they thought might result.

Principal B did acknowledge that she could lead with an iron fist if needed. She stated that sometimes, as with children, you can ask someone to do something and will not receive the desired response. She stated that sometimes individuals would just blatantly disregard what was asked of them. She emphasized that she did not have a lot of patience for teachers who blatantly disregarded her directives or just blew her off. She said that she had no tolerance for that type of behavior. She understood that some decisions would not please everyone, but maintained that she did not have time to sit there and compromise or be diplomatic about it. She stated that sometimes she acted in a way that she saw fit and let the chips fall where they may.

Teacher F stated that her principal's authoritative behaviors lowered morale. She stated that the teachers at her school were used to being very open and honest with each other and interacting as a family. She compared the situation at her school to a family where there was one dominating parent where the mother and children were scared to do things. Teacher F remarked,

We've got that parent which is her, and we're all like terrified that at any moment she's going to walk through our door. I dread observations because I'm afraid I'm going to go in that office and get chewed out for something. Most of the time my observations are really good, but I know from personal experiences that have been shared with me, there are a lot of people who go in there and they spend an hour or longer in there. It's just nothing but chewing out and what they're doing wrong. To me, it is not affecting us in a good way at all.

Principal B did acknowledge that she had been told that she was not the most approachable person, but she thought that she was a very giving person who was very approachable.

Need for Better Communication

Teachers D, E, and F criticized Principal B concerning how she communicated with them. Teacher E thought there was a need for better communication between the principal and teachers. She did not always think that teachers were being heard. Teachers wanted Principal B to work on how she talked to them. Teacher E thought there was a problem with accurate information being shared between the principal and teachers. Teacher D stated that communication was lacking and it was something she said that her principal realized she needed to work on. Teacher D suggested that Principal B was trying to improve but said that it was still a work in progress. Teacher A also admitted that Principal B showed that she was trying to improve at times. She thought that she was probably trying to improve because of some of the input that she had received from the principal's advisory committee. Teacher A was encouraged that her principal was working to improve because teachers were not really responding well to her methods.

Teacher F stated that Principal B would listen and give input as to whether a suggestion was good or bad but did not provide specific methods for improvement. Teacher F mentioned a particular instance when teachers shared with Principal B some comments from the principal's advisory committee. Principal B told them that she really hoped the meeting was going to be about all things they could do to help their students. It seemed to teachers that she did not want to talk about the concerns on that particular day. Teacher F said that was the type of situation that caused a breakdown in communication. She also said that Principal B got suggestions but maybe they were not the suggestions that she wanted.

Need for Respect

Teacher D stated that she respected her principal, but that she could not speak for everyone. She pointed out that with several teachers she had already destroyed whatever respect that may have previously been there. Teacher F said that she felt diminished because of the way Principal B treated her because they were already burdened with the stress of education. She stated that she had lost respect for her. She stated further that instead of having respect for her, she had fear. Teacher D stated that students could see how the principal and teachers interacted. She stated that if they did not see that respect model, it could have affected the level of respect that students had for teachers as well.

Uncomfortable

Teachers D, E, and F spoke about how uncomfortable they felt in their positions. Teacher D said the atmosphere was tense at her school. The tension caused her to feel uncomfortable, and she thought that it negatively affected the school's climate. She thought Principal B's behaviors put a damper on the school environment as a whole. Principal B stated that principal-teacher interactions were professional but did acknowledge that they were strained at times. She stated that there was a very professional environment at her school.

Teacher F stated that she did not feel welcomed by her principal. She explained that Principal B had some leadership skills, but they were more authoritative-type leadership skills. As a result, she felt a little uncomfortable at times. Speaking concerning her uneasiness, Teacher E responded,

For me personally, it damages my self-esteem. I don't feel validated as a teacher as I once did. It makes me feel inferior and uncomfortable. It makes you as a teacher less willing to step out of the box to try something for fear of repercussions for doing so.

Teacher E felt very uncomfortable if she had to be out sometimes when she was sick. She stated that her principal once made the statement that a sick teacher was better than a substitute any day. Speaking further on the issue, she stated,

I do not totally agree with that because if we don't take care of our health, we're not at our best in being an effective teacher. If I'm out for instance; if I'm out truly sick, I feel like I have to bring a doctor's excuse. I have to over-explain, over-analyze. I feel bad for being sick and I work very hard at not being sick anymore because that's something that's been with me all my life. I love to be a healthy person, but I haven't ever been. I came to work three days with no voice and taught strictly from the board for fear of not being here, and I am not sure if that was really in my students' best interest but that's what I felt I needed to do.

Teacher F commented that she was also uncomfortable contacting Principal B when she was ill. She added that sometimes when she was sick, she dreaded calling her principal and telling her that she could not report to work on that day. She continued on to state that Principal B had a disapproving tone, and it made her feel like it did not matter to her principal if she was sick or not. She was expected to be there.

Lack of Openness

Teacher E and F spoke concerning Principal B's lack of openness. Teacher E said that she would listen to them, but it did not make much difference because she really did not see any changes that took place. Teacher E stated that Principal B was willing to implement change if it was something with which she agreed. If it was something that she did not fully understand, teachers had to do a lot of explaining before any changes took place. Principal B thought her students needed stability and did not need constant change. Teacher E thought that it was hard for her to understand someone else's point of view.

Teacher E claimed that constructive criticism really did not have a place there. If teachers brought anything forward with which Principal B may have had a problem, she said that it was

taken very defensively and nothing was resolved. She argued that if their opinion differed from Principal B's opinion, their opinion really was not validated. Teacher E told of how Principal B responded to comments and suggestions provided to her by PAC committee members. The PAC committee met so teachers could interact with the principal and discuss things that needed to improve. She indicated that Principal B did not take suggestions well and that suggestions were taken very defensively rather than productively. She said that Principal B took it as a direct attack. Consequently, Teacher E said that it was very difficult to bring up any suggestions.

Teacher F commented that Principal B did try to correct some of the things that were raised by the PAC committee, but she found it difficult to change some of her ways because it was part of her personality. Teacher F contended that a person's personality is something that is hard to change if he or she is set in a certain way. She said that Principal B would have times where she would do a lot better but would eventually revert back to her old ways. She went on to say that her principal got frustrated when they brought up the same issues all the time, but she said they would continue to raise them because her principal kept reverting back. Sometimes she stated that an argument sometimes would result.

Although teacher G and H believed that Principal C was open to suggestions, Teacher I sometimes thought that her principal was not open to suggestions. She believed that Principal C thought that she felt that teachers were stepping on her toes when she was being criticized. She thought that her principal did not handle criticism well. She stated concerning her principal, "She's not really open to suggestions. She wants to cut everything off and say, 'This is the way we're going to do it.'" She cited a couple of situations during faculty meetings where her principal kind of cut off some of the suggestions that were being made. She stated that Principal

C did not want any confrontations and did not want anybody disagreeing. She thought this affected her level of openness.

Teacher I stated that Principal C sometimes put suggestions and change into action, but she thought that for the past couple of years, she felt that they were “on auto-pilot.” She went on to state,

We’ve got a lot of seasoned teachers in this school that have been in the educational field for a very long time. We’ve got some new teachers and with all of our ideas together, we really know what works. We’re all going to workshops and we’re all keeping abreast of ideas. Sometimes, I wish that she was more involved in and would play a bigger role. I think the principal’s job is so important to the climate of the school. I can’t emphasize that enough.

Lack of Appreciation

According to Principal B, she showed her appreciation to teachers through monetary gifts, verbal praise, e-mails, and in writing. She would tell teachers how much she appreciated things they did. Sometimes, she would get teachers lunch, give them small tokens, and just walk by and tell them to take a break. She shared that she set up a recognition program for teachers. She would sometimes walk up to them and tell them that they were doing a really good job. She would also tell them if a parent spoke highly of them. She thought that complimenting was important. Principal B made the following statement,

Every chance I get when I think a teacher is doing well, I compliment even when they’re not doing well. You know, I don’t have a problem with making that correction, even knowing that they might be offended by being corrected. I’ll turn around once the correction is made and say, “You know, thanks for going ahead and taking care of that and I appreciate that.

Although teachers D, E, and F shared that Principal B did show her appreciation in certain ways, they largely spoke to the lack of appreciation that they felt from their principal. Teacher F did not feel that teachers were appreciated by Principal B. She stated that they were

told that they were appreciated, but there were no actions to back it up. She said that one minute she was saying how much she appreciated them and the next minute bombarding them with what they were doing wrong. She insisted as with a child, if that child is not given positive support, they would not give positive behavior in return.

Teacher D stated that every once in a while Principal B would compliment them and say that they were working hard and doing a good job. Teacher F said that her principal gave them praise sometimes, but it was far and between. She added that the interactions were business for the entire school day. Teacher D remarked,

I'm not going to lie. It's hard to get a compliment from her just on a daily basis. Every once and a while, you know, she might tell us that we are doing a good job in a faculty meeting or something, but she's not one to just give out a lot of compliments. She's not one just out to build your self-confidence I don't think.

Although teachers maintained that Principal B did not provide much verbal praise, they recognized that she did provide some tangible rewards. Teacher D stated that she gave out a teacher's award every 6 weeks to a deserving teacher. Teacher E stated that if any teacher had perfect attendance for a particular month, she brought something for breakfast and allowed volunteers to go watch their classes for 15-20 minutes. If teachers were at work on time every day, she would mention that she appreciated them. Teacher E also mentioned that after being out of school for one entire week, Principal B stated over the intercom how much she appreciated how smoothly everything went while she was out.

Although Teacher E stated that Principal B showed teachers appreciation sometimes, she stated that it was not enough. Teacher F commented that Principal B sometimes praised her for doing a good lesson or having a nice bulletin board but stated that those type positive remarks did not occur often. Teacher E said that she did have the teacher's award and that she did compliment teachers sometimes, but it was not frequent. Although Principal B provided some

tangible rewards and measured verbal praise, Teacher E said that some teachers believed that she was not genuine because of how bad she treated some of the teachers. She thought that some of the teachers may have thought her compliments to be genuine, but she knew that some did not because they were getting criticized on a weekly basis.

In spite of the challenges, Teacher F thought they had one of the best faculties around who possessed much passion for teaching. They loved their jobs but morale was not high. It had gotten to the point where some teachers were dreading going to work, and the passion for teaching was diminishing. Teacher D noted that in spite of the negative atmosphere, the teachers just worked together. If they had a bad day, teachers pulled each other up and kept right on going.

Positive

Teachers G and H spoke concerning how positive Principal C was. Teacher H stated that Principal C tried to be positive in her endeavors. Teacher G believed that principal-teacher interactions were positive. She commented that they interacted every day in some formal or informal capacity. She thought that she and her principal got along very well. If teachers had a problem within the school or with a student, she pointed out that her principal did listen to the concerns. Teacher G stated that she could not speak for anyone else, but she and her principal had positive interactions.

Teacher H said that Principal C constantly gave feedback in front of their parents and over the intercom. She also said that her principal always said something positive in their faculty meetings. Teacher H stated that even when someone was criticizing her principal or being blatantly rude to her, Principal C would continue to smile. She also stated that her principal was

a great role model for her. Principal C stated that she tried to listen to all concerns raised by teachers whether they were positive or not because she did not want her teachers to feel that their concerns were not important.

Teacher O indicated that it was a very positive climate at her school. She largely contributed the positive climate to the leadership of Principal E. She commented that Principal E made the school a very good place to work. She demonstrated her enjoyment in working for him by making the following remarks:

To my knowledge he is fair, and he treats everyone equally; the same. He looks for the good in everyone, and he just tries to remain positive. If he complements one, he proceeds and thinks about the things that other teachers have done and gives them compliments. He gives honor to whom honor is due, and he knows his teachers in the building. He treats everyone with the utmost respect.

Teacher M mentioned that even if she criticized him about something, he had never said anything negative to her.

Even when something negative was directed toward Principal E, Teacher O asserted that he would respond in a very positive manner. Teacher N noted that one thing she noticed was that he did not get mad about criticisms or negative responses. He would give thought to what they were saying. She did state that if teachers were just doing a lot of complaining, he would not bother with it, but if something was a good idea, he would go along with it. Principal E acknowledged that some teachers exhibited negative behaviors at times but recognized they were good teachers. He said that he would take their input and try to use it in a positive manner. He insisted they had strengths, just as his positive teachers did, so he tried to use their strengths to his advantage and for the enhancement of the entire school. He explained that a lot of times, they were go-getters, and he welcomed their strong personalities.

Trust

Teacher J spoke rather extensively concerning the trust factor between teachers and Principal D. She associated her trust with respect. Teacher J stated that overall, there was very good respect between Principal D and teachers at their school. She stated further that they had disagreements as in a family, but she did not see to any degree that they did not trust each other. Teacher K also thought there was a lot of trust between the principal and herself. She mentioned that she never had to go to her principal concerning a problem with another teacher, but stated that if she did have a concern, she felt confident that she could voice her concern and it would stay between the two of them.

Cross Case Analysis

During a cross case analysis of the interview data, the following theme emerged at all sites: appreciative. The interview responses of Teachers D, E, and F were strikingly different from the interview responses of teachers who worked at the other four sites. Upon further analysis of the data, the following prevailing themes emerged at the other four sites: caring, open, friendly and approachable, unity, and listens. The responses of Teachers D, E and F usually contrasted from the responses of teachers at the other sites pertaining to the themes stated in the previous sentence.

Appreciative

Consistent across all sites was the viewpoint of teachers that their principals were appreciative. Teachers mentioned how their principals usually provided them with tokens, commendations, and verbal praise. For example, Teacher B shared that Principal A was

constantly awarding teachers. She would acknowledge them over the intercom and during certain events open to parents and community stakeholders. Teachers M, N, and O mentioned how their principal would put chocolates on their desks sometimes to show his appreciation. Teacher H shared that Principal C constantly commended them for doing a good and tried to encourage them to keep up the morale. These types of actions were consistent across all sites. Principals from all sites shared how they appreciated their teachers. For example, Principal D stated that she believed in rewarding her teachers. Principal C believed in commending her teachers because when she did so, she believed they felt good about themselves and worked harder. The statements of principals were consistent with teachers at all sites except for the statements of Teachers D, E, F, and Principal B.

Principal B said that she believed it was important for her to compliment teachers. She stated that every chance she got, she told teachers that she appreciated their efforts. She mentioned how she set up a recognition program for teachers whereby she recognized deserving teachers periodically. Although teachers at her school did acknowledge that she did give out awards to teachers sometimes, they thought that those acts were not enough. They felt unappreciated by Principal B. They thought that her actions were not genuine and did not back up her words. For example, Teacher F stated, “We don’t feel appreciated. We get told that we’re appreciated but there is no action to back that up.” The teachers shared that that her compliments were far and in between.

Caring

Teachers at all sites except for one believed that their principals genuinely cared for them. Teachers A, B, and C stated that Principal A showed that she cared for them. For example,

Teacher C shared that Principal A would sometimes call them into her office or call them at home to check on them if they were having any problems. Teachers G, H and I described Principal C as being very motherly, compassionate, and caring. To sum up the thoughts of all teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F, Teacher M spoke these words concerning Principal E, “It makes me feel really good because I know that he cares. He cares about my day. He cares about what’s going on. He cares about me as a teacher.” Principals at all five sites believed that they showed a genuine concern for their teachers. The remarks of Principal A, Principal C, Principal D, and Principal E concerning their caring nature coincided with the remarks of teachers in their respective sites.

Principal B believed that she cared for her teachers by stating, “You have to show some resemblance of concern for their wellbeing and the wellbeing of their family because they’re not going to be good for you or for the students if there is a lack of care.” Her words did not support the thoughts of her teachers. Teachers D, E, and F did not think that Principal B possessed a genuine concern for them. None of the teachers thought that she went out of her way to help teachers. Teacher F stated that there were not a lot of personal interactions between Principal B and teachers at her school. She mentioned that sometimes she felt that she just needed to talk to Principal B, but she did not think that she had that privilege.

Open

Teachers A, B, C, G, H, I, M, N, and O believed that their principals were very open to ideas, suggestions, and change. They welcomed ideas and allowed teachers to present ideas during faculty meetings, individually, or through the Principal’s Advisory Committee (PAC). Teacher K and Teacher L believed that Principal D was open to ideas, suggestions, and change.

They viewed her as being flexible and willing to change. Teacher J also believed that Principal D was open, but she sometimes required teachers to prove how a new idea would work before she went along with it. If it was positive, she had no problem going along with it.

Teachers D, E, and F believed that Principal B was open but only to a certain extent. On a scale of 1 to 10, Teacher D rated Principal B's openness a five. She stated that she did not think that Principal B went out looking for the opinions of others. She said that Principal D was very open in some cases but had this to say, "There are some occasions where whatever you say is wrong, and it's not going to be." Teacher E and Teacher F believed that she was open to change if it was in the best interest of students. They also believed that if an idea was not something she liked, she was not that receptive. The statements from principals revealed that they believed they were open. The following statement from Principal E summed up the thoughts of all principals, "I'm open. I'm open for criticism. That's the only way you grow. You don't know it all."

Friendly and Approachable

Teachers A, B, C, G, H, I, M, N, and O viewed their principals as being very friendly and approachable. Teacher J and Teacher L believed that Principal D was friendly and approachable. Teacher K asserted that Principal D was friendly as she could be but sometimes she did not seem that approachable. She was a veteran teacher who had worked at the school for several years. She said that she and some of the older teachers felt free approaching Principal D but stated that some of the younger teachers did not feel as free because she thought maybe Principal D's demeanor did not seem that inviting. As a result, younger teachers were sometimes hesitant to approach her.

Teachers D, E, and F did not believe that their principal was friendly and approachable. Teacher D thought that she was intimidating. Teacher E said that she micromanaged many things that teachers did. Teacher F commented that she was sometimes afraid of going into her office sometimes for fear of being “chewed out for something.” Principal B’s comments concerning approachability were not consistent with the responses of her teachers at her school. Principal B believed herself to be very friendly and approachable. However, she did acknowledge that teachers at her school had told her that she was not very approachable. She addressed the opinions of teachers by stating that in previous years, her kindness had been taken for weakness and people had taken advantage of her. She justified some of her actions as a way of protecting herself.

Unity

All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F believed that their principals promoted unity. They shared that there was a sense of togetherness in the schools and believed that there was good teamwork among everyone. Teacher A pointed out that Principal A was good about trying to get teachers on one accord to develop unity. Teacher B stated that Principal A and teachers at her school got along very well. They had differences, but she shared that they were able to work through them. Teacher C remarked that she would routinely meet with teachers as a group to address issues and solve problems as a cohesive unit. Teacher H and Teacher I recognized that Principal C encouraged teachers to work together in their school. Teacher J and Teacher L stated that their principal created a family atmosphere and always referred to teachers as teammates.

Teachers M, N, and O believed that there was good teamwork at their school. For example, Teacher N stated, “We have good leadership and we get along well with us coworkers and the administration.” The statements of Principals A, C, D, and E were consistent with the statements of teachers at their respective schools. Principal B did not address any aspect of unity that was existent at her school. Teachers D, E, and F did emphasize that although the climate was stressed, they did stick together and pulled each other up during difficult moments.

Listens

All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F believed that their principals genuinely listened to them. If they had any suggestions or problems, they acknowledged that their principals were there to listen to them. Although all teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F agreed that their principals were good listeners, Teacher C and Teacher K reported that some teachers were uncomfortable reaching out and talking to their principals. Each teacher thought it may have been due to the fact that they were younger teachers and had not yet developed a strong rapport with their principals. Principals A, C, D, and E all thought that they openly listened to their teachers.

Teachers D, E, and F believed that Principal B listened to them but only to a certain extent. They said that she would listen, but oftentimes would not do anything with the information so they were hesitant at times to approach her. Consequently, there were fewer opportunities for Principal B to listen to their concerns. The teachers agreed that most of their interactions were largely professional, not personal. They stressed that sometimes they just wanted to be able to approach her and talk on a personal level sometimes. For example, Teacher F made the following comment,

I'm one of those people who try not to mix business and my personal life, but sometimes you need that interaction when you can just go in behind a closed door and say, "I just need to talk to you." I don't feel like I have that at this stage.

Principal B believed that she did listen to the suggestions and concerns of teachers. She stated,

I'm open to listening to any and all suggestions. I'm willing to listen to all of them, and I try to, in my mind, analyze whether or not that suggestion is good for or going to benefit the goals that are set forth in the school.

She did acknowledge that she did not always accept all suggestions but did state that she was willing to listen, most of the time.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

The broad purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the meanings teachers assign to principal-teacher interactions and the relationship to school climate. A premise of the study is that the principal's leadership style influences the nature of principal-teacher actions and teacher interpretations of those interactions influences the climate of a school. Data was collected in the form of semi-structured, open-ended interviews so the researcher could receive meaningful data from the perspective of participants. Snowball sampling was used to identify 15 teacher participants and 5 principal participants for a total of 20 participants. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of the interactions that take place between principals and teachers?
2. What meanings do teachers assign to these interactions?

Findings and Conclusions

Through analysis of the data collected from all sites, the following prevailing themes emerged: appreciative, caring, open, friendly and approachable, unity, supportive, listens, confident, importance of communication, positive, negative, authoritative, need for better communication, lack of respect, uncomfortable, lack of openness, lack of appreciation, and lack of compassion.

Appreciative

All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F believed that their principals were appreciative. They said that their principals appreciated them verbally and rewarded them tangibly. They also said that their principals did complimentary things for them such as providing them free time from their students, passing out treats or tokens to them, or praising them verbally. Teachers felt good when their principals appreciated them. The remarks of principals coincided with the remarks of teachers as far as the level of appreciation that was exhibited by principals.

Teachers D, E, and F believed Principal B was appreciative to a certain extent. They admitted that she sometimes gave them tangible rewards and praised them verbally, but they said compliments from her were not common. Even when Principal B complimented them or rewarded them tangibly, they believed that she was not genuine because her actions did not support her words. The teachers maintained that she did not treat them in a caring manner.

Caring, Open, Friendly and Approachable, Listens, Unity, Supportive, Respectful, Positive

All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F viewed their principals as being caring, open, friendly and approachable, and listened to their opinions and concerns. They also believed there was unity in the school as a result of their principals' leadership. Teachers A, B, C, G, H, I, J, K, and L pointed out that their principals were supportive and respectful. Teachers G, H, I, M, N, and O mentioned that their principals were positive. Teachers A, B, and C considered Principal A as a confidant. According to teachers and principals, teacher morale was good and the climate was positive at all schools except for the school in which Teachers D, E, F, and Principal B worked. For example, Teachers A, B, C, G, H, I, M, N, and O indicated that they

liked going to their jobs. These findings reinforce Nir and Kranot's (2006) contention that positive job experiences result in teacher satisfaction.

Lack of Compassion, Lack of Appreciation, Lack of Openness, Lack of Respect, Negative, Authoritative

Teachers at Site II believed that Principal B exhibited a lack of compassion, appreciative, openness, and respect. They also believed Principal B was negative and an authoritative. They felt intimidated by her authoritarian behaviors. They also believed that interactions between Principal B and themselves made them feel uncomfortable. Teachers maintained that teacher morale had declined and school climate was not positive. As a result, teachers were not enthusiastic about reporting to work. They insisted that there was a tense environment at their school. Principal B did acknowledge that the school environment was tense at times, but her thoughts of the climate in her school were more favorable. She considered the environment as very professional.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings of this qualitative study addressed the research questions that were identified for this study.

Research Question 1: What is the nature of the interactions that take place between principals and teachers?

The nature of the interactions at the sites was evident in various ways. According to Teachers A, B, and C, Principal A listened to their suggestions and concerns. If teachers had suggestions or concerns, she regularly addressed the issues with all teachers at faculty meetings. The faculty meetings provided opportunities for principals to receive suggestions and concerns and discuss them with all teachers as an entire entity. This finding is consistent with Egley and

Jones' (2005) research, which stated that principals should use professional dialogue that will foster cooperation with and between members in their school in order to achieve desired goals and objectives. For example, Teacher C stated that Principal A always asked teachers if they had any questions or suggestions at faculty meetings. She said that Principal A listened to them and if there was a problem, she worked to solve the problem.

Teachers also explained that they were able to present suggestions and concerns through the PAC committee. Teacher A usually discussed the information from the PAC committee at faculty meetings. Teachers were able to provide input by way of a suggestion box. If they had any suggestions or questions, they would put the notes in the suggestion box. Teachers B and C stated that Principal A would discuss the suggestions at their faculty meetings and elaborate on whatever issues that were identified.

Principal A stated that she valued the opinions of teachers that were raised through the PAC. She stated further,

We meet and they share their concerns, and I address them at that particular time. If there's something that needs to be addressed in a faculty meeting, I'll put that on the agenda for our next faculty meeting, and we'll address it then.

At the end of faculty meetings, Principal B would ask teachers if they had any questions, concerns, or anything else to add.

Teachers mentioned that Principal A regularly pulled certain teachers together to address issues if problems existed. Teacher A commented that she interacted with teachers as a cohesive unit. She strived to bring them together in school activities. When conflicts arose, Teacher A stated that Principal A would speak to one of the individuals first and then bring them together to see if they could find some resolution to the situation. Principal A acknowledged that when situations occurred between teachers, she would meet with all parties so the issues could be

resolved together. Principal A liked bringing teachers together to address issues to keep the line of communication open. This result is consistent with Arlestig's (2007) contention that principals should communicate with teachers in a democratic manner to gain different opinions from teachers.

According to Teachers A, B, and C, Principal A appreciated them in various ways. This finding is consistent with Quinn's (2002) research, which stressed the importance of principals building relationships with their teachers and letting them know that they are valued and appreciated. They commented how their principal would give them certificates for having perfect attendance, among many other complimentary acts. She recognized them at faculty meetings, over the intercom system, and at public meetings attended by parents and community stakeholders. She regularly provided them with tokens, rewards, and verbal praise. For instance, Teacher B said that at the beginning and end of every faculty meeting, she told teachers how much she appreciated them. Teacher B shared that Principal A sometimes called teachers at home to let them know how much she appreciated them. The comments of Principal A concerning the types of interactions at her school usually coincided with those of teachers.

Principal B believed that she listened to teachers' ideas, concerns, and suggestions. She said that she analyzed whether or not the suggestions were good or if they would benefit the students. Principal B usually addressed issues with teachers in faculty meetings. She also addressed issues that were submitted to her from the PAC in faculty meetings as well. Teachers also said that she would call teachers into her office individually to address issues with them. Teacher D believed that from the information shared with her from other teachers in the school, those type meetings were not positive. Teacher E acknowledged that Principal B would sit down and listen, but argued that it usually did not make much difference because they really did not

see many changes. She mentioned the Principal B sometimes became defensive concerning some of the suggestions that were brought to her from the PAC committee.

Principal B indicated that it was important for her to show teachers that she appreciated them. She shared how she exhibited her appreciation to teachers by giving an award to a certain teacher each 6 weeks. Teacher D acknowledged the awarding of the teacher's award as well. Principal B noted how she would sometimes provide lunch for them or other opportunities to eat. She also spoke of how sometimes she would tell them verbally how much she appreciated their efforts. Although Teachers D, E, and F acknowledged that their principals provided complimentary rewards and verbal praise, they thought her words did not coincide with her actions. This finding is similar to the research of Kelley et al. (2005) where they found that the perceptions of principals concerning school climate in relation to their leadership behaviors were different to the perceptions of teachers. They questioned whether some of the principals in the study were "walking the walk."

Teacher F remarked, "Most of the interactions that we have are going to be based on student achievement, not a lot of personal interactions. It's more like when you walk through the door, your personal life stops there." She shared further that there were times when she just needed to talk to Principal B, but she did not feel free to do so. This finding emphasizes the assertion by Myburgh and Poggenpoel (2002) that it is important for principals to be concerned for teachers' personal wellbeing as well as their professional wellbeing.

Teachers D, E, and F indicated that Principal B was not caring in the way that she treated them. They admitted that Principal B complimented them every once in a while, but it was not enough. Teacher F insisted that her positive words were really ineffective because they would come after she had treated teachers rather harshly. Teachers D, E, and F admitted that Principal

B would listen to them but stated that they were hesitant to approach her because of the harsh way she sometimes treated them. Consequently, teachers did not receive many opportunities for Principal B to listen to many of their concerns.

Teachers G, H, and I stated that Principal C regularly gave feedback and held discussions with teachers during faculty meetings. Teacher H added that she also provided feedback over the intercom sometimes. Principal C stated that she and teachers would regularly meet together in order to share ideas on particular issues. This finding coincides with the research of Brown and Anfara (2002) where they stressed the importance of principals communicating with teachers in a collaborative manner that brings about shared decision making. She said that she provided opportunities for her teachers to sit down and talk to her whenever they desired. She believed that she was open to suggestions and said that if she thought something would not benefit the school, she would still listen to what they had to say. She stated that she listened to all sides and weighed the positives and the negatives.

Teachers G, H, and I indicated that Principal C showed her appreciation for them in different ways. For example, Teacher H stated that Principal C would sometimes give them little rewards in order to build morale and try to get teachers to feel better. Teacher I mentioned how Principal C would sometimes tell them on the loudspeaker that they were doing a good job. She added that Principal C praised them in that manner quite frequently. In describing some of Principal C's appreciative actions, Teacher G stated,

Well, in faculty meetings, if someone did a great job on something, she would acknowledge it at faculty meetings. She will let you know that you're doing a good job. I think she does a good job on trying to give as many compliments as she can. If she feels that they are exceptional, she will recommend people for certain awards to encourage and keep the morale kind of going.

Teachers G, H, and I said that Principal C sat down with them, talked to them, and listened to what they had to say. They maintained that she would talk to them individually or together as an entire unit. Teacher H and Teacher I believed that Principal C promoted a sense of togetherness. Principal D thought it was important that teachers understood that they were a team. She made sure they all sat down together and worked together as a team.

Principal D stated that she was a good listener and every opinion was important to her. She stated further, “I listen to your opinion and we weigh them out, and if it’s some validity to them, then we are going to do what you say do because I don’t have all the answers.” She continued on to make the following statement,

I’m a person that listens and understands. I’ve seen and done a lot so you know we can sit down and talk. I try to keep that kind of relationship where you can come and talk to me because whatever affects your personal life affects your job performance also.

Principal D said that she told teachers that they could go to her and talk to her at any time. She also said that she commonly addressed some issues in faculty meetings with all teachers to gather their put. The statements of teachers supported the statements of Principal D. They felt free to talk to her at any time. However, Teacher K stated that some teachers were hesitant to approach Principal D. She said that she did not know why because Principal D was as nice as she could be. She proposed that it was due to the fact that she did not have the most inviting demeanor and some of the teachers were the younger teachers in the school. A reasonable explanation for this finding is that there is the need for a more inviting climate that cultivates respect and trust between teachers and principals that was proposed in Egley and Jones’ (2005) research.

Teachers J, K, and L said that Principal D did various complimentary things to show her appreciation for them. For example, Teacher K stated, “Just this morning, we had our faculty

breakfast. She took all of the classes, and she managed the whole school in the lunchroom to enable the teachers to fellowship and talk.” Teacher L commented how Principal D would recognize teachers in front of the staff in faculty meetings. She also stated how Principal D would sometimes see teachers in the hallway and compliment them for doing a good job on something.

Principal D stated that she was always complimenting teachers. She stated, “I’m always saying, “Good job.” If they’ve done something outstanding, I don’t mind telling you and others “you’ve done a good.” Principal C stated that she was always commending her teachers over the intercom because she believed she had great teachers and if it were not for them, their school would not have been as successful as it was. Teacher K did agree that Principal D did compliment teachers in different ways; however, she did state that Principal D probably could have provided a little more praise.

Principal E believed that he listened to his teachers and tried to help them with any problems that they had. His comments supported the thoughts of teachers at his school. For example, Teacher M said that Principal E would listen to teachers if they had a problem. She added that teachers could go to him at any time and tell them anything that was bothering them. She went on to say that he would respond and try to help them in any way.

Teacher O described the interactions between Principal E and teachers at their school as very professional. She said that he sometimes called them into his office to speak to them or he spoke to them in their classrooms or in the hallway. Teacher M pointed out that Principal E was never in his office. He was always around the school trying to help somebody. He would constantly ask teachers if they were having any problems. He was constantly walking the hallways to make sure everything was running smoothly. Teachers believed those types of

interactions helped build the morale in the school. This finding supports the research conducted by Egley and Jones (2005) where they found that there was a positive relationship between principals' supportive leadership behaviors and teachers' job satisfaction and school climate.

Teachers M, N, and O indicated that Principal E showed his appreciation for them in various ways. Teacher M stated that he did little things such as giving them chocolates on Fridays and telling them that they had a good week. Teachers emphasized that he often complimented teachers over the intercom or commended them personally. Teacher N mentioned that he always had a compliment coming out of his mouth. Teacher M shared that it made her feel good when Principal E told them how proud he was of them and how much he appreciated them.

Research Question 2: What meanings do teachers assign to these interactions?

All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F believed that the interactions between principals and teachers resulted in a certain degree of respect. Teacher B stated that teachers respected Principal A because of the respect that she exhibited toward them during their interactions. She indicated that Principal A had to give teachers a directive only one or two times, and it was done because they respected her as the leader. Teacher C said she respected her principal because she believed that she was not telling them anything to hurt them, but only to help them. This finding is consistent with the research of Zepeda (2004), which found that the administrators contributed to a healthier school climate by respecting the opinions of teachers.

Teacher H stated that she had great respect for Principal C because she believed that she had great respect for her professionally and personally. Although she stated that there were times that they disagreed, she believed that she respected her opinion. She stated further that she felt

loyal to Principal C because she respected her as a person and as a teacher. Speaking further concerning loyalty, she stated,

I want someone who is going to be loyal, and I want somebody who is going to stick by me in thick and thin. You know, there are times when we all make mistakes, but you just don't throw somebody under the bus. You stick with them.

She also said that she respected Principal C because she practiced what she preached. She was a great model for teachers and her actions backed up her words. She said she appreciated her principal for that and it made her feel good. Teacher K stated that she respected Principal D because she carried herself as a very respectful woman.

Speaking to the respect factor between Principal E and teachers at his school, Teacher M stated, "It's a matter of respect. He respects us and we respect him." Teacher O stated that the teachers at their school respected Principal E as the head of the school because he was very humble. She stated further that he did not force anything on them or make things too stressful that would cause them to resist. She liked the fact that he did not do things in a mean way. She also respected him because when teachers confided in him, he would not share the information with anyone. Teacher M respected Principal E because she thought he was a good person. She remarked that his goodness and kindness was why the teachers at this school respected him. She stated although someone may have said something negative, he always remained positive, which contributed to a healthier school climate. This finding was similar to Egley and Jones' (2005) research in that there was a relationship between how principals positively interacted with teachers and a healthy school climate. Teacher M said that he did not embarrass teachers.

Although Teacher D stated that there was respect between Principal B and herself, Teacher E and Teacher F did not think that Principal B respected teachers at their school. Teacher D did acknowledge that some other teachers did not think that Principal B respected

them. She believed that Principal D had destroyed whatever respect that may have been there with other teachers because of the negative ways that she treated them. Speaking to the amount of respect that Teacher F had for Principal B, she stated,

It's diminishing. It's diminishing daily. We're already over burdened with education going the way it is, and then when you come in and you have someone that you don't feel like cares about you, you're not going to have respect for them. I've lost my respect. It's more like fear instead of respect. It's not a respect but fear.

All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F believed that their principals were caring. This finding supported Egley and Jones' (2005) assertion that the type of care that principals show toward their teachers is one of the most important factors in bringing about positive behaviors from teachers. Teacher A stated that Principal A showed that she cared for her teachers by just saying "thank you." Teacher B stated that Principal A constantly checked on them. She stated further,

I would say that each teacher in the school is a friend of the principal opposed to just an employee. She takes us under her wing as a family member. If we're ever out for illness or anything, she's constantly checking on us and making sure we're doing very well. She knows our immediate family members by name. She constantly checks on us. Even on summer break, she calls us constantly to see how we're doing.

According to Teacher H, Principal C was very compassionate and understanding. She was protective of them. If teachers needed to stay late sometimes or needed to work in the schools during the weekend, she would allow them to do so. Principal C gave them her home number and told them to call her at any time if they needed her for anything. Teacher G believed that Principal C was very concerned for teachers, and she would work with them. She also stated that if teachers were having problems or troubles at home, she would work with them to work through them. Teacher G explained that Principal C understood that if teachers were having issues outside of school, their job performance could be affected.

Teacher J stated that Principal D was very considerate of her staff. Teacher L made the following statement concerning Principal D,

I have had several instances where I have had to go to my principal on personal matters. They did not involve academics or anything dealing with the school--just on a personal level, just as a person. She stepped out of the principal's role and she stepped into a mother's role.

According to Teacher O, Principal E was very concerned. If they were having any issues at home or family issues, he wanted to make sure that they were okay. He also wanted to make sure that they were able to function properly in the classroom. Teacher O stated that Principal E always had time for them and thought critically about their ideas. She stated that her grandfather passed earlier in the school year and she was very hysterical. She shared that she reported to work on the morning of his death. Principal E told her to go home and he would secure a substitute. He told her not to worry and he took care of everything.

Teacher M stated that Principal E constantly went around the school checking on teachers one by one making sure everything was okay. She stated that his actions made a difference to her, and it made her feel really good because she knew that he cared about her as a teacher. Teacher O stated that she also felt very good to know that Principal E cared for her and she thought that the other teachers at her school were on board as well. She stated that he did things in a loving manner.

Principal C explained that it was important for her to care about her people because if she did not, she believed that they would not care about anything themselves. This finding was similar to the research performed by Jacobson et al. (2005), which found that the degree to which principals cared about their teachers had an influence on the actions and development of teachers. It was important for her to know that they were healthy and that their families were healthy. She explained that it was important for her to show some resemblance of concern for

their well being. She believed that if she did not show care or concern for her teachers, they would not be as effective. She emphasized further,

I'm really concerned about the whole being of the teacher. That includes their physical, social, you know, morale. If they call in and say they're sick, then I want to check on them to know how they're doing. If they're at school, I want to know if they're having a problem. I am very concerned and I really show empathy and sympathy for my faculty. I also do a lot of incentives to try to build them up in that area.

Principal D stated that she was very concerned about her teachers. If there was something outside of the work place that happened to them that affected their job, she would ask them to share the issue with her. Principal E stated that he preached caring and loving at his school because he believed that his teachers were more enthused about going into the building. He believed that morale was really high at his school because of the love and care that was existent.

Principal B believed that she had a genuine concern for her teachers, but the teachers at her school believed that Principal B did not have a genuine concern for them. Teacher D did not believe that Principal B went out of her way to help anybody. Teacher E stated that teachers did not feel a relationship with her. She shared that Principal B told them that she did not have friends at school and that her friends were outside of school. She told teachers that she was not there to be friends with any of them. That was sad to Teacher E. She said that it had gotten to the point where those of them who previously could not wait to report to school every morning almost dreaded reporting to school.

Teacher E said that the days were almost stress-free when Principal B was not in the building. She remarked, "For me personally, it damages my self-esteem. I don't feel validated as a teacher as I once did. It makes me feel inferior and uncomfortable." Teacher F believed that Principal B was not a very personable person and kept much of her personal feelings to herself. Teacher F stated that she sometimes felt a little uncomfortable as a result. These findings

reinforce the research of Myburgh and Poggenpoel (2002) in that it is important for school leaders to address the affective aspect of the teaching profession because a lack of job satisfaction can result in negative behaviors and increased stress.

Teachers A, B, C, G, H, I, M, N, and O considered their principals to be very open. Principals were described as being very flexible. For example, Teacher H commented that Principal C was willing to implement change and that if someone made a suggestion, she was all for it. Teacher N stated that when she thought about the conversations that took place between teachers and the principal, she thought they usually were open and honest. Although Teachers J, K, and L thought that Principal D was open, Teacher K thought that she could have been a little more open to ideas and change. For instance, Teacher K shared that many things had not changed since she had been there, but she thought that when it came to the success of students, Principal D was willing to change anything.

All principals considered themselves to be open to ideas and change. Principal A said that she valued her teachers' opinions because without them she was incomplete and would not be able to fulfill her job successfully. Although Principal B considered herself to be open to suggestions and change, her teachers thought that she was open to change at times. Sometimes they thought that she did not change if she did not really like something. As a result, they were sometimes hesitant to approach her with new ideas.

All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F thought that their principals were appreciative of them. They stated that their principals complimented them in various ways. They spoke of the tokens, awards, and verbal praise that they provided them. Teachers stated that it made them feel good to be appreciated. This finding is consistent with research from Quinn (2002) where he found that effective instructional leadership involves principals letting their

teachers know that they are valued and appreciated. For instance, Teacher O commented that when Principal E saw teachers in the hallway, he would sometimes pat them on their backs and let them know that they were doing a good job. Teachers from all sites stated that their principals recognized them during faculty meetings, other meetings, and over the intercom. Teacher O stated that Principal E was very encouraging in his actions toward them. Teacher H stated that Principal C always told her teachers how much she appreciated them, and she said those words went a long way with her.

All principals believed themselves to be appreciative. For example, Principal C believed her teachers performed better when she would do complimentary things for them. She stated, “When I commend them, they work harder. They do a better job. They feel good about themselves, and they feel that the leader is paying attention to what they’re actually doing.” She contended that if teachers were never commended, they would become disgusted and not care as they should.

Principal D stated that it was important for her to let her teachers know that she appreciated them because no one wants to go unnoticed. Although teachers at her school stated that Principal B sometimes did things to show her appreciation, they thought that she was not genuine because they thought that she treated them rather harsh sometimes. They thought that her words did not support her actions. Teacher F stated, “We don’t feel appreciated. We get told that we’re appreciated, but there’s no action to back that up.” Teacher D stated that it was hard to get a compliment from Principal B. Neither Teacher D nor Teacher F felt appreciated by Principal B. Teacher F stated that she felt diminished as a teacher. The teachers thought morale was suffering as a result.

Teachers A, B, C, G, H, I, M, N, and O stated that their principals were very friendly and approachable. This finding emphasizes Egley and Jones' (2005) contention that principals should create an inviting climate where teachers will feel free to teach without constraints. Teachers J, K, and L agreed that Principal D was friendly and approachable. Teacher K stated that some teachers in the school did not think so because her demeanor did not seem inviting at times. She did state that Principal D was as nice as she could be. She explained that the younger teachers were some of the ones who were a little hesitant to approach her. She was not sure of the reason, but assumed that the fact that they were younger teachers was a contributing factor.

Although she considered herself to be very friendly and very approachable, Principal D did acknowledge that sometimes her staff did not see it that way. She explained how some of the teachers would sometimes go into the office and ask the secretary something when they should have been asking her. She explained that for some reason, some of them were hesitant to approach her. She did state that she had an open door policy.

Teacher A and Teacher B stated that Principal A's friendly nature made teachers feel comfortable and at ease. Teacher A stated that Principal A always had a smile on her face. Teacher G stated that Principal C had the type of personality that made teachers feel free to go and talk to her about anything and at any time. Teachers M, N, and O stated that they felt free to approach their principal at any time as well.

Although principals at all sites believed that they were friendly and approachable, Teachers D, E, and F did not believe Principal B to be so. Teacher F explained that she was afraid to approach Principal B sometimes because of fear of being chewed out for something. She believed sometimes her principal was approachable, but sometimes she was not. She stated that her mood changed frequently. Although she considered herself to be approachable, Principal

D did acknowledge the fact that teachers in her building had told her that she was not the most approachable person. She described the interactions at her school as being strained.

Principals A, C, and E were viewed as being very supportive. Teachers stated that their principals strived to get them whatever they needed and supported them with parents. Teacher O said that Principal E told teachers at their school that he had their back and if they needed anything, he would do his best to address their needs. She stated further, “Each week you may see him in the hallway or it can be him visiting your classroom. He’ll always ask if everything is okay or if everything is alright. That means a lot because it lets me know that he has my back.” This finding is consistent with research by Brown and Anfara (2002), which found that the supportive nature of principals resulted in the development of positive relationships with teachers in their schools.

Teacher C told of how Principal A supported them by involving them in decision making to address their needs and desires. Teacher H commented that she felt loyal to Principal C because of the support that she received from her. She made the following statement, “You do what you are supposed to do and you support me, I’ll do my very best to make you look good. I’ll work over. If you don’t support me, around 3:00, I’m out of here.” This statement from Teacher H supports research by Somech and Ron (2007), which found that the success of schools is connected to how teachers go the extra mile in performing their duties.

Teachers at all sites believed that there was unity among teachers. All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F thought that their principals promoted unity. Teacher L stated that Principal D regularly referred to her teachers as her teammates or coworkers and that made her feel good. She explained that it was important for the head of the school to promote togetherness because things would have been bad without it. She stated that it made her feel great to know that when

they had differences, they were able to work through them. Teacher J stated that Principal D made sure that they came together as a unit on a regular basis to address issues. Teacher A at Site I stated that when it came to the interactions between Principal A and teachers in her school, she thought of teamwork. She contended that they had to have teamwork in order to grow for the benefit of students. This result is consistent with prior research by Blasé and Blasé (1999), which maintained that productive schools are occupied with teachers who build relationships in a spirit of collaboration.

Teacher H and Teacher I stated that Principal C always strived to get them to believe that they were all in it together concerning any endeavors. Teacher I commented, “I think that the biggest compliment that a principal can have is knowing that your people feel like you’re in it with them.” She explained that they worked together and shared the load. Teacher M believed that morale was really high because they had good leadership and coworkers got along well with each other and with the administration. Principal D stated that when she interacted with her teachers, she referred to them as teammates. Although Teachers D, E, and F did not believe they had positive interactions with Principal B, they stated that they strived to support each other and hold each other up during difficult times.

All teachers and principals except for Teachers D, E, and F believed that principal-teacher interactions and school climate were healthy. Teacher G said that Principal C and teachers interacted everyday in some formal or informal capacity. She went on to say that Principal C and she had good, positive interactions. Teacher H commented that Principal C was a great role model for her because she would continue to smile at the individuals who were negative and sometimes gave her a difficult time. Teacher C stated that if anyone said something out of the way or criticized her during a faculty meeting, Principal A would not respond

negatively but would make a positive comment. Teacher M explained that Principal E also responded positively if someone approached him in negative manner.

Teacher O stated that there was a very positive climate at her school because of her principal's leadership. She explained that he made school more enjoyable. She explained further that it was a very good place to work, and she enjoyed working for him. Principal E's thoughts about his school's climate coincided with his teachers' thoughts. He believed that the school's climate was very positive and morale was good. He believed that they felt good about reporting to work and going to a place where they felt comfortable.

Principal B believed that the interactions were positive. Her teachers did not agree with her assertion. The teachers believed that Principal B was negative. Teacher D stated, "The first thought that comes to mind is a lot of negativity. The interactions are usually not positive. Sometimes that tends to hurt the morale. I think at times it does tend to bring people's feelings down." She explained that her principal's actions caused a lot of negativity to exist when it really did not have to exist. She stated further,

I don't want to say it hampers what we do, but it does make us feel less of a teacher. It makes us sometimes feel like we're not good enough, even if we're in there busting our tails. Sometimes we don't feel like we can ever be good enough, you know, like we're always lacking something.

Teacher F commented that Principal B lacked a positive tone. She thought that her negative tone hurt the morale more than anything. Teacher E stated that any person feels better when someone says, "Thank you," instead of constantly putting you down.

Teachers D, E, and F believed that Principal B was an authoritative figure. From her perspective, Teacher D believed that the feeling of the school was that Principal B just wanted to be in charge and do things her way. She believed that she forced the interactions between teachers and herself and it was a little intimidating to teachers at times. She stated that teachers at

her school did not like Principal B's authoritative nature. Teacher F stated that Principal B was very demanding and was a micro-manager. Teacher E stated that morale drastically declined as a result. Teacher F stated that their morale was suffering because they were used to being very open and honest and interacting as a family. Providing an analogy concerning Principal B's authoritative nature, Teacher F made the following statement,

If you think about a family, you got one parent that's totally dominating that family. The mom's scared to do things. The children are scared to do things. That's kind of what we're seeing here. We've got that parent which is her, and we're all like terrified that at any moment, she's going to walk through our door. I dread observations because I'm afraid I'm going to go in that office and get chewed out for something.

Teacher D stated that she did not feel comfortable interacting with Principal B, which resulted in tension in the school. She thought that the tension hurt the school climate. Principal B did admit that interactions between her teachers and herself were strained at times but did not share or express the same thoughts as teachers did about the unhealthy climate of her school.

Practical Implications

Based upon the review of literature, analysis of the data, and findings for this study, several implications are offered concerning the interactions that take place between principals and teachers and the relationship to the climate that exist in schools. First, positive principal-teacher interactions are crucial to positive morale in schools. All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F thought that the interactions between them and their principals were positive and school morale was good. They believed that their principals cared about them and supported them. They also believed that their principals were open, and they felt free to approach them with any problems or suggestions.

Teachers D, E, and F described the interactions between teachers and Principal B as negative and believed that school morale was not good. Principal B described the interactions between teachers and herself as strained at times but did not believe they were as negative as teachers thought. Teachers did not feel free to approach her with concerns or suggestions because they were worried about how she would respond. They thought that she was rather harsh at times and did not exhibit a genuine concern for them.

Second, principals should understand that their actions directly impact the ways teachers feel about themselves personally and professionally. All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F felt valued as teachers. Teachers thought that their principals appreciated them, and they felt good as a result. Teachers appreciated the fact that their principals were concerned about their personal wellbeing as well as their professional wellbeing. Principals indicated that it was important for them to show concern for their teachers' personal lives because they believed that whatever affected them personally, affected them professionally.

Teachers D, E, and F did not think that Principal B went out of her way to show concern for teachers. Teachers E and F did not feel validated as teachers and were not motivated to report to work. They also felt hesitant about approaching their principal with suggestions because they were afraid that she would automatically reject their suggestions. All teachers thought that school morale was negative.

A third implication is that teachers are more committed and perform better when they feel they are valued by their principals. All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F were motivated about reporting to work. They were committed to working hard because they believed that their principals supported them. They thought their ideas were valued and they felt free to approach their principals with ideas and suggestions. Teachers D, E, and F did acknowledge that Principal

B listened to them at times but believed that she did not value their opinions unless she agreed with them. They sometimes did not go out of their way to make new suggestions or implement some innovative ideas because they believed that she would not be open to them.

Fourth, because principals' perceptions of their behaviors are often different from those of teachers, principals are encouraged to examine how their behaviors affect the morale and behaviors of teachers. The behaviors of the principals directly impacted the behaviors of teachers and teacher morale. The opinions of teachers and principals were rather consistent except for the opinions of Teachers D, E, F, and Principal B. Teachers and principals agreed that interactions were positive. The perceptions of teachers and Principal B were not consistent. Principal B acknowledged that interactions between teachers and her were strained at times but she did not believe that they were as negative as teachers thought.

A final implication would be that principals should examine the impact that their leadership has on the climate in their schools. All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F believed that their school environments were positive. All principals thought that their school environments were positive. Teachers thought that their principals were supportive, caring, and promoted a sense of togetherness. They thought their schools were good places to work. Teachers D, E, and F thought that Principal B was an authoritative leader with intimidating behaviors. They believed that the environment at their school was negative and morale was declining drastically. Teachers were not motivated to report to work.

Theoretical Implications

This research examined the relationships between and among the major concepts of leadership, principal-teacher interactions, teacher perceptions of principal-teacher interactions,

and school climate. A premise of this study was that the principal's leadership style accounted for the meanings teachers assigned to principal-teacher actions and teacher interpretations of principal-teacher interactions amounted to a description of school climate. The leadership of principals accounted for the meanings that teachers assigned to principal-teacher interactions. All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F believed that their principals were caring, supportive, and valued them as individuals and teachers. Those interpretations by teachers caused them to have good morale and contributed to overall healthy school climates.

Teachers D, E, and F viewed Principal B as an intimidating authoritarian. As a result, they did not feel that they could confide in her and did not feel free to offer new ideas because they felt they she often responded negatively toward them. They thought that she was uncaring, unappreciative, and rather harsh in her interactions with them. Teachers believed that teacher-principal interactions and the school climate were negative.

Symbolic interactionism functioned as the theoretical framework for this study. This theory holds that social reality arises from complex interactions between individuals (Blumer, 1969; Brickell, 2006). As applied to this study, teachers constructed meaning based on their interactions with principals, and, based on those meanings, constructed their places in the school setting. Interactions between principals and teachers occurred on a daily basis and in various formats. Teachers and principals interpreted principal-teacher interactions in certain ways.

Aside from the interpretations of Teachers D, E, and F concerning their principals' behaviors, the other teachers' interpretations of their principals' behaviors were consistent with the interpretations of principals. Teachers and principals thought that teacher morale was positive and teachers felt good about being at their respective schools. Based upon the interactions between Principal B and her teachers, the teachers thought they were not appreciated and valued

by Principal B. They believed that Principal B's intimidating behaviors hindered their professional potential because they did not feel free to offer new ideas and make suggestions.

Recommendations for Future Study

Interactions between principals and teachers occur on a daily basis and to some degree account for the climate of schools. Therefore, based upon the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Although there are large amounts of studies that are on school climate, there is a need for additional study concerning the meanings that are derived from principal-teacher interactions and the relationship to the existing school climate.

2. Similar studies should be performed that will involve a larger sample of participants and a larger variety of school sites to gain additional insight on principal-teacher interactions and the relationship to school climate.

3. Additional study is needed to determine how principals' behaviors are related to teacher performance and teacher commitment.

Conclusion

The findings of this qualitative study showed that the types of interactions that took place between teachers and principals were related to the climate that existed in the schools. All teachers except for Teachers D, E, and F valued the care and appreciation that were shown to them by their principals. They believed that their school environments were healthy and believed they had supportive and caring principals. They felt valued as individuals and teachers and were motivated about doing their jobs. Teachers D, E, and F believed that principal-teacher

interactions and school climate were negative. They believed that their principal exhibited negative behaviors toward them, and they did not believe that they had their principal's support. Through examining how their leadership behaviors affect teacher behaviors and how their behaviors are related to the existing school climate, principals will be able to effectively work toward building positive interactions between teachers and themselves.

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APPENDIX A
PRINCIPALS' INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Questions for Principals

1. How would you describe the types of interactions that take place between you and teachers in your school?
2. How do you see to the personal welfare of teachers?
3. In what ways do you listen to and accept teachers' suggestions?
4. How do you put suggestions made by teachers into operation?
5. How friendly and approachable would you consider yourself?
6. How willing are you to implement change?
7. How enthusiastic are teachers about accomplishing their jobs?
8. How do you explore all sides of topics and admit that other opinions exist?
9. How do you compliment teachers?
10. Do you rule with an iron fist? Please explain.
11. How do you go about showing your appreciation to teachers?
12. How do you use constructive criticism?
13. How do you go out of your way to help teachers?
14. Please explain if and how you treat teachers as equals.

APPENDIX B
TEACHERS' INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Questions for Teachers

1. When you think about the types of interactions that take place between teachers and the principal in your school, what thoughts come to mind?
2. How does your principal see to the personal welfare of teachers?
3. In what ways does your principal listen to and accept teachers' suggestions?
4. How does your principal put suggestions made by teachers into operation?
5. How friendly and approachable is your principal?
6. How willing is your principal to make changes?
7. How enthusiastic are teachers about accomplishing their jobs?
8. How does your principal explore all sides of topics and admit that other opinions exist?
9. How does your principal compliment teachers?
10. Does your principal rule with an iron fist? Explain?
11. How does your principal go about showing his appreciation to teachers?
12. How does your principal use constructive criticism?
13. How does your principal go out of his or her way to help teachers?
14. Please explain if and how your principal treats teachers as equals.

APPENDIX C
PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY

Office for Research
Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
R E S E A R C H

December 3, 2010

Marlon Freddrick Jones
908 Sugarlaof Lane
Anniston, AL 36207

Re: IRB#: 10-OR-383 "The Relationship between the Meanings Teachers Assign to
Principal-Teacher Interactions and School Climate"

Dear Mr. Jones:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your
proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46.
Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not
limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language,
communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research
employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human
factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies

Your application will expire on December 2, 2011. If your research will continue
beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of Continuing Review and Closure
Form. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an
Approved Protocol. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval,
except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants.
When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of the Continuing Review
and Closure Form.

Please use reproductions of the IRB approved stamped consent forms to obtain
consent from your participants.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal,
please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Chair, Non-Medical IRB
The University of Alabama



152 Rose Administration Building
Box 870117
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0117
(205) 348-8461
FAX (205) 348-8882
TOLL FREE (877) 820-3066

APPENDIX D
IRB APPROVAL

10-02-383

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

I. Identifying information

	Principal Investigator	Second Investigator	Third Investigator
Name:	Marlon Freddrick Jones	Dr. Rose Mary Newton	
Department:	Department of Educational Leadership, Policy, and Technology Studies	Department of Educational Leadership, Policy, and Technology Studies	
College:	College of Education	College of Education	
University:	The University of Alabama	The University of Alabama	
Address:	908 Sugarloaf Lane, Anniston, Al. 36207	315 E Graves Hall, Box 870302, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487	
Telephone:	(256)236-5743	(205)348-1160	
FAX:	NA	NA	
E-mail:	jonesm@anniston.k12.al.us	rnewton@bamaed.ua.edu	

Title of Research Project: The Relationship Between the Meanings Teachers Assign to Principal-Teacher

Interactions and School Climate

Date Printed: October 26, 2010

Funding Source:

Type of Proposal: New Revision Renewal Completed Exempt

Attach a renewal application

Attach a continuing review of studies form

Please enter the original IRB # at the top of the page

UA faculty or staff member signature: _____

II. NOTIFICATION OF IRB ACTION (to be completed by IRB):

Type of Review: Full board Expedited

IRB Action:

Rejected Date: _____

Tabled Pending Revisions Date: _____

Approved Pending Revisions Date: _____

Approved—this proposal complies with University and federal regulations for the protection of human subjects

Approval is effective until the following date:

Items approved:

<input type="checkbox"/> Research protocol:	dated
<input type="checkbox"/> Informed consent:	dated
<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment materials:	dated
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	dated

Approval signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX E
INFORMED CONSENT (ADULT)

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT (Adult)

The Relationship Between the Meanings Teachers Assign to Principal-Teacher Interactions and School Climate

Dear Potential Participant:

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Marlon Freddrick Jones and Dr. Rose Mary Newton, from The University of Alabama, Department of Educational Leadership, Policy and Technology Studies. The researcher, Marlon F. Jones, is a doctoral student at The University of Alabama. Presently, he holds the central office position of Director of Federal Programs for the Anniston City School System. He is responsible for the efficient operation of federal programs and budgets. He develops federal budgets for each school with input from school personnel and community stakeholders. He ultimately determines appropriate expenditures of federal funds for each school based upon a formula determined by the Alabama State Department of Education. Once budgets are finalized, they are submitted to the state department for approval. Additional areas of responsibility include transportation, student services, school safety and textbooks. He intends to explore whether the meanings that teachers assign to the interactions between principals and teachers account for the climate of the schools. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because principals and teachers interact on a daily basis and various experiences result. The researcher would like to receive first-hand knowledge of how the interactions between principals and teachers are related to the existing school climate. Knowledge of the meanings developed from those experiences will be utilized to assist him in assessing the type of climate that exists in your school.

If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed by the researcher on one occasion. You will be asked to answer 14 semi-structured, open-ended questions and your answers will be recorded. You will be interviewed at a time and location that is convenient for you. You will be one of 20 participants that will be interviewed. The interview will be conducted between 30 and 45 minutes.

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with your participation in this study. You will be asked only to answer the 14 interview questions. You are free to answer the questions as you desire. You will have the right not to answer any of the questions for any reason during the interview. Aside from answering the questions from the interview, you will not be asked to perform any other task associated with this study. However, I cannot guarantee that you personally will receive any benefits from this research. Society may benefit in that we are adding to the information bank. There are no incentives for participating in this research study.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. To ensure confidentiality, all data and the names of participants will be coded. Subject identities will be kept confidential by coding techniques that will not use

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IRB
CONSENT FORM APPROVED: 12/3/10
EXPIRATION DATE: 12/2/2011

the actual names of participants. This will ensure that the true identities of participants will not be revealed. All data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet and maintained until the conclusion of the study. Upon completion of the study, all paper data will be shredded and all audio-recorded material will personally be destroyed until it is no longer functional and placed in the garbage.

Your participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with Anniston City Schools. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 1-256-236-5743. My address is as follows: 908 Sugarloaf Lane, Anniston, Al. 36207. My advisor's name is Dr. David Tarter. His phone number is 1-205-348-7827. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms. Tanta Myles, The University of Alabama Research Compliance Officer, at 205-348-8461 and toll free at 877-820-3066. You will be offered a copy of this form to keep.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to participate, that you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty, that you will receive a copy of this form, and that you are not waiving any legal claims.

Participant signature

Date

Researcher signature

Date

Please indicate your choice by placing a check in one of the boxes below:

Yes No

 I agree to be audio-recorded during my semi-structured interview

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IRB
CONSENT FORM APPROVED: 12/31/10
EXPIRATION DATE: 12/2/2011

APPENDIX F

SUPERINTENDENT'S PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY

City Schools
Office of the Superintendent

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

November 8, 2010

To: Mr. Marlon Jones

From: Superintendent of Education

Re: Request to Conduct Doctoral Research

I am in receipt of your memo dated October 26, 2010, requesting permission to conduct research for your doctoral dissertation at the five elementary school sites within the City School District.

Provided written consent is obtained from all Principals and participants, all requirements of anonymity are maintained, and City School hours are not used, I hereby grant permission.

If there is anything I can do to support you in these efforts, please let me know.

Thank you for your support of the City School System.

APPENDIX G
SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTER

October 26, 2010

Marlon F. Jones
908 Sugarloaf Lane
Anniston, AL 36207

Dear Superintendent:

I am a doctoral student at the University of Alabama and am in the process of completing my dissertation on the meanings that are derived for principal-teacher interactions and the relationship to the existing school climate. I am requesting your approval in using all five of the elementary schools in your school district as study sites. I plan to gain consent from all five principals and three teachers from each school site to participate in the study. Their participation will be strictly voluntary. There will be a total of 20 participants for the study. The participants will participate in semi-structured, open-ended interviews that will last between 30 and 45 minutes. Their participation will provide valuable information as I investigate my phenomenon of interest.

All participants will remain anonymous and their responses will be kept confidential. The study sites will remain anonymous as well. All of the participants will participate in only one interview. The interviews will be conducted at a time and place that is convenient for all participants.

I will greatly appreciate your approval in allowing me to gain access into the schools to conduct the study. If you should have any questions or need any additional clarifying information, please feel free and contact me 256-239-7814.

Sincerely,

Marlon F. Jones

APPENDIX H
PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

October 26, 2010

Marlon F. Jones
908 Sugarloaf Lane
Anniston, AL 36207

Dear Principal:

I am a doctoral student at the University of Alabama and am in the process of completing my dissertation on the meanings that are derived from principal-teacher interactions and the relationship to the existing school climate. I am requesting your participation in the study because the interactions that take place between you and your teachers will provide valuable insight as I investigate my phenomenon of interest.

You will be asked to participate in a semi-structured, open-ended interview that will last between 30 and 45 minutes. Your participation is strictly voluntary. Your participation will remain anonymous and your responses will be kept confidential. The study site will remain anonymous as well. You will participate in only one interview. I realize that your time as an educator is very valuable so the interview will be conducted at a time and place that is convenient for you.

I will greatly appreciate your willingness to participate in the study.

Sincerely,

Marlon F. Jones

APPENDIX I
TEACHER'S LETTER

October 26, 2010

Marlon F. Jones
908 Sugarloaf Lane
Anniston, AL 36207

Dear Teacher:

I am a doctoral student at the University of Alabama and am in the process of completing my dissertation on the meanings that are derived from principal-teacher interactions and the relationship to the existing school climate. I am requesting your participation in the study because the interactions that take place between you and your principal will provide valuable insight as I investigate my phenomenon of interest.

You will be asked to participate in a semi-structured, open-ended interview that will last between 30 and 45 minutes. Your participation is strictly voluntary. Your participation will be held in the strictest of confidence and your responses will be kept confidential. The study site will remain anonymous as well. You will participate in only one interview. I realize that your time as an educator is very valuable so the interview will be conducted at a time and place that is convenient for you.

I will greatly appreciate your willingness to participate in the study.

Sincerely,

Marlon F. Jones