LEADERSHIP AND TRUST: A MIXED METHODS STUDY OF THE RURAL

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

with a

Major in Educational Leadership in the

Department of Graduate Education

Northwest Nazarene University

by

Sherry Ann Adams

March 2017

Major Professor: Sarah Quilici, PhD

AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT

DISSERTATION

This dissertation of Sherry Ann Adams, submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education with a major in Educational Leadership and titled LEADERSHIP AND TRUST: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY OF THE RURAL ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL has been reviewed in final form. Permission, as indicated by the signatures and dates given below, is now granted to submit final copies.

Major Professor _____ Date 4/6/17
                                Dr. Sarah Quilici
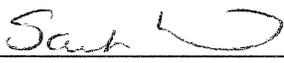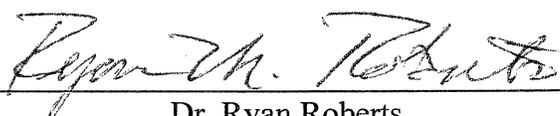
Committee
Members _____ Date 4/6/17
                                Dr. Ryan Roberts

_____ Date 4-6-17
                                Dr. Andy Grover
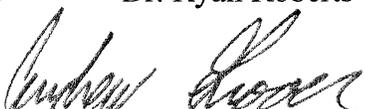
Program
Administrator _____ Date 4/6/17
                                Dr. Heidi Curtis

Discipline's
College Dean _____ Date 4/19/17
                                Dr. Paula Kellerer

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

I must dedicate this to Mrs. Anita Beebe Morfin, my first-grade teacher. I want you to know what an impact you have been on my education and life. We all remember just how much you cared about us.

To my Grandparents, who told me to keep an eye on where I wanted to go, but never forget where I came from.

Finally, in memory of my Dad, Dale Alvin Meador, whose love and perpetual optimism allowed me to achieve so much.

ABSTRACT

Principals who are able to develop a high level of trust and establish positive relationships with teachers in a given school have greater opportunities to increase student achievement. This study reviewed the leadership factors that can increase or decrease the level of trust between teachers and the principal in rural elementary schools. A mixed methods study allowed for the most thorough review and interpretation of the data. Quantitative data was gathered from surveys regarding trust level and leadership styles. The results from the quantitative data indicated significant differences in faculty trust in the principal and the leadership styles between two principals from the six studied. This provided two schools in which to conduct the qualitative research. Interviews were held with the principal and four teachers at each school. The interviews provided rich data for analysis regarding the factors that enhance or decrease the faculty trust in the principal. Four themes were found to impact the faculty trust: relationships, communication, interpersonal skills, and a direct style of leadership. Of equal value were the development of relationships and possessing good communication skills. Having the potential to greatly influence both relationships and communication was the interpersonal skills of the principal. A principal who used a direct style of leadership and watched too intently for the mistakes teachers make was determined to have a negative impact upon trust. It was demonstrated that trust takes time and consistency to develop, but it may be destroyed easily. All of this was evaluated within the unique environment of the rural elementary school.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Many factors influence the success of a school. In schools where a high level of trust resides between the administration and staff, a higher level of collaboration, cooperation, and student achievement exists (Barth, 2006; Ebmeier & Nicklaus, 1999; Forsyth, Adams, & Hoy, 2011; Louis, 2007; Peterson, 2002; Tahir, Musah, Al-Hudawi, Yusof, &Yasin, 2015). When individuals within a school share similar values and beliefs, they tend to reflect on the events that occur within a school in a similar manner (Sagnak, 2005). This includes events such as change initiated from the district-level, professional development opportunities, and curriculum changes (Cranston, 2011; Louis, 2007). A school staff that views situations within the school from a similar viewpoint will maintain a higher level of cohesiveness (Sagnak, 2005).

In schools where teachers are not willingly working together, lack of trust frequently is the root issue (Blase & Blase, 2006; Daly, 2009; Ebmeier & Nicklaus, 1999) often causing teachers to withdraw to their classrooms (Adams & Jean-Marie, 2011). Studies have determined that school teachers' level of trust does not vary according to gender, educational level, school size, or seniority (Barnett & McCormick, 2004; Fox, Gong, & Attoh, 2015; Tahir et al., 2015; Tasdin & Yalcin, 2010). In the research conducted by Daly (2009), he concluded that leadership factors have a significant positive association with trust. This would demonstrate the possibility of increasing trust within any elementary school given the known factors of trust development.

Statement of the Problem

The values, beliefs, and relationships within any organization contribute heavily to the culture of that organization (Barth, 2006; Peterson, 2002). Elementary schools are certainly not an exception to this organizational standard. The culture of a school has an effect on the learning

that takes place in either a positive or negative direction (Peterson, 2002). A study conducted with 349 primary teachers indicated a positive and significant relationship between principal leadership and school culture (Turan & Bektas, 2013). Additionally, a study conducted with five highly effective elementary schools found that relationships were the key to the great work that was being completed in each school (Parsons & Beauchamp, 2012). A variety of leadership styles exist to which an elementary principal may subscribe. A school principal should be seen as the "trust broker for themselves and others in a school organization" (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014, p. 3). Teacher job satisfaction has been shown to vary depending on the leadership style of the principal for which they work (Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; Egley & Jones, 2005; Shaw & Newton, 2014).

Connections exist between the leadership style of elementary principals and the level of student achievement (Egley & Jones, 2005; Fox et al., 2015; Ross & Gray, 2006). Furthermore, research has indicated that one of the most significant qualities of a leader was the ability to articulate the vision of the school district (Devono & Price, 2012; Garcia, Duncan, Carmody-Bubb & Ree, 2014). Leadership tasks in rural schools are often more difficult because of the dual roles encompassed in the position. Rural school principals frequently work alone to complete all required paperwork and accountability reporting while simultaneously providing the leadership of the building (Canales, Tejeda-Delgado, & Slate, 2008; Cruzeiro & Boone, 2009). The purpose of this study is to determine the factors that either maintain or destroy the trust between a school administrator and the teachers in rural elementary schools.

Background

During the current era of high accountability for schools, it is critical that schools maintain a high level of cooperation between teachers, as well as between teachers and the

principal (Finningan, 2010; Fox et al., 2015; Zheng, Yin, Liu, & Ke, 2016). With the increased focus on accountability, there has been an increased focus on school leadership (Gedik & Bellibas, 2015; Ham, Duyar, & Gumus, 2015). Many schools increase structure and turn to more formalized rules in response to increased expectations at the state and federal levels. Both responses may be detrimental to the culture of the school. However, a high level of trust within the organization may offset this formality (Hoppes & Holley, 2014). The educational goals of a school will be more readily achieved when a high level of trust exists between the principal and teachers (Daly & Chrispeels, 2008; Tahir et al., 2015). Numerous circumstances allow for the deterioration of relationships among staff members within the school buildings. A school leader should be conscious of the relationships within their school and make a concerted effort to keep the relationships positive and trusting.

The relationships that exist among the educators in a school building will set the tone for all relationships within the school building (Barth, 2006). Therefore, the manner in which the adults treat each other will establish the foundation for how the students, parents, and staff interact with one another. A principal who is supportive of teachers will increase the collegiality of the teachers. The collegiality of the teachers will increase the amount of trust between teachers, which is directly connected to the effectiveness of the school (Adams & Forsyth, 2013; Forsyth et al., 2011; Zheng et al., 2016). There is an increase in effectiveness because teachers feel supported enough to work collaboratively with their colleagues, therefore showing the vulnerability that is present when working as a team (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Alternately, when the relationships between the educators in the building are negative, teachers fear the administrator, or there is an aura of competitiveness, the culture will be more corrosive in nature (Barth, 2006). The focus becomes survival instead of increasing student

learning. Teachers and students alike will be unwilling to take a risk with new learning (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). The culture in a low trust school becomes teacher-centered with the focus on controlling student behavior not increasing instructional practices (Adams & Forsyth, 2013). Trust is a critical component of a school system and will impact its effectiveness (Van Maele, Forsyth, & Van Houtte, 2014).

Research Questions

This research study intended to enhance educators' understanding through the increase of knowledge (Creswell, 2015). This may be accomplished with the construction and exploration of valuable research questions (Creswell, 2015; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The research questions in this dissertation were:

1. What leadership style is most likely to nurture a trusting relationship between the elementary school principal and the teaching staff in a rural school district?

2. What leadership factors have the greatest positive influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

3. What leadership factors have the most negative influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

Description of Terms

The following terms are defined to enhance the understanding of the research study:

Collective Trust. "A faculty's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open" (Forsyth et al., 2011, p. 35).

Interpersonal Trust. The trust that develops between one individual and one other individual from a situation that contains risk (Forsyth et al., 2011).

Rural. A school district in which there are less than 20 students per square mile enrolled or in which the majority of the property for market value purposes contains a population less than 25,000 (Rural School Districts, 2009).

Servant Leadership. Servant leadership is defined as the leader being a servant to his/her followers with the leader's emphasis on empowerment of the followers (Smith, Montagno, & Kuzmenko, 2004).

Transformational Leadership. Defined as when a leader provides a vision, motivates a shared vision with followers, and provides the resources to strive toward the vision (Smith et al., 2004).

Trust. "The extent to which one engages in a relationship and is willing to be vulnerable to another (i.e., assume risk) on the basis of the interaction and on the confidence that the latter party will possess benevolence, competence, integrity, openness, reliableness, and respect" (Daly, 2009, p. 175).

Significance of the Study

Schools throughout the United States are currently undergoing great amounts of reform. While the primary focus of this reform may be the instructional outcomes for students, schools are increasingly expected additionally to enhance the relationships within the school (Louis & Murphy, 2017). This provides new opportunities for educational leaders to make extensive changes to the instructional program of schools. Making these changes requires a substantial commitment from the teachers in the building. When an educational leader demonstrates concern, and connects to teachers on an individual basis, teachers respond positively and work harder (Barnett & McCormick, 2004). For school leaders to effectively question the current status and facilitate the learning of new methods by teachers, there will have to be a high level of

trust within the school (Daly & Chrispeels, 2008; Handford & Leithwood, 2013). "Trust is important and needs to be researched with greater intensity as we consider various dimensions of educational reform and evaluation" (Noonan, Walker, & Kutsyuruba, 2008, p. 2).

Providing leadership in a rural elementary school comes with a unique set of challenges (Beesley & Clark, 2015). In the current educational times, with the increased focus on accountability and transparency, rural principals are facing greater trials. The added expectations from the state and federal levels require additional reporting requirements. Typically, in rural schools the elementary principal is the only administrator in the building (Cruzeiro & Boone, 2009). This means that the rural principal must be flexible and versatile, able to shift roles quickly, and perform a variety of tasks (Cruzeiro & Boone, 2009). Therefore, there is an increased workload for the rural elementary principal. An increased workload may result in less time spent on the development of relationships with the teachers in the school. Even after there is an established level of trust between the principal and teachers within a school, this relationship must be maintained. Preserving trust has been found to be one of the most difficult tasks that a principal must undertake (Noonan et al., 2008). Trust must be sustained, or preserved for the future. If it is taken for granted, it may gradually fade away (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014). When there is a lack of trust between the teachers and the principal of the school, the everyday challenges of providing quality education are intensified (Forsyth et al., 2011; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). This research provides insight into leadership factors that can increase the level of trust between teachers and the principal. This study adds to the literature regarding rural elementary schools and adds to the research on increasing the level of trust within all schools.

Theoretical Framework

Forsyth et al. (2011) spent over 20 years studying the concept of trust in schools. Through the research, they found there are three elements that are present when trust occurs: vulnerability, risk, and interdependence. This means that one group is vulnerable to another with the elements of risk and interdependence present (Forsyth et al., 2011). Additional research conducted by Tschannen-Moran (2014) found the existence of five factors of trust: benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. The five factors of trust were utilized by Forsyth and his colleagues as they continued to study the development of collective trust in the schools. Considering all the research conducted on trust, Forsyth et al. (2011) concluded that collective trust occurs within the social environment of schools between the various interdependent groups.

The conclusion of the research conducted by Forsyth et al. (2011) was the creation of the model of collective trust formation. This model provides the theoretical framework for the study conducted here. Utilizing this framework in the specific confines of rural elementary schools will assist in the answering of several research questions.

Overview of Research Methods

Mixed methods research recognizes that both quantitative and qualitative data is important and beneficial (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This mixed method research study looked at the leadership style of elementary principals in six rural school districts found in the Northwest United States. In order to determine the leadership style of the elementary principal, the Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2007) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio & Bass, 2004) were administered at each school site to the principal and all certified teachers. The results of these assessments were analyzed to understand the leadership style of each rural elementary principal.

A third survey, the Omnibus Trust-Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003), was administered to the principal and all certified teachers in each building. This assessment provided three subscales of trust; faculty trust in the principal, faculty trust in colleagues, and faculty trust in clients (students and parents). The mean trust score for each subscale was determined. Using the standardized protocol established by the authors of the survey the standard score was determined for each subscale.

Following the mixed methods design to better explain the quantitative results (Creswell, 2015) qualitative data was also collected. To gather the qualitative data and tell the story (Merriam, 2002) of the specific factors influencing the development of trust between principal and teacher, semi-structured interviews were conducted at two schools. While interviews provide flexibility for the researcher to garner more specific information, a general set of questions should be prepared for the beginning of the interview (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). To start each interview common questions regarding trust within the school were asked. The next series of questions focused on getting information for clarification from the surveys conducted at each building. The final series of questions was used to illuminate any points that arose earlier in the interview. The interview questions were created from the findings of the quantitative research and the literature review. The initial questions were reviewed with the researcher's doctoral committee. Modifications were made to the questions and a pilot of the questions completed with teachers not participating in the research study. Based on the input from the pilot, adjustments were made and the final set of questions was created.

Conclusion. "Blowing out someone else's candle doesn't make yours shine any brighter" this quote from an unknown author is used by Carol (teacher, Central) in her kindergarten classroom. She also explained that this quote defines a good leader. "I think a good leader cares way more

about helping others to shine brightly and I see that so clearly in Marissa" (principal, Central). Carol (teacher, Central) went on to describe that a good principal makes their teachers feel like they are always shining, even on the darkest of days. "Although identifying predictors of trust is important, of greater significance is the explanation of how and why individual and organizational factors influence the formation of collective trust" (Forsyth et al., 2011, p.53). Great leadership and the specific factors that create a high level of trust in the school, critical elements in the success of a school, are the reasons that led to the completion of this research study.

Chapter II

The Literature Review

Introduction

There is a great body of research that exists regarding principal leadership styles and the effect on teachers and school climate (Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; Black, 2010; Blase & Blase, 2000; Bogler, 2001; Devono & Price, 2012; Fox et al., 2015; Shaw & Newton, 2014). This literature review further investigates the leadership style of school administrators and the connections to teacher relationships in the following categories: (a) the leadership styles of principals, (b) principal and staff relationships, (c) trust levels and leadership, (d) the rural principalship, (e) the role of the principal in establishing school culture, and (f) the effect of school culture on achievement. This chapter concludes with a summary of the literature.

The term leadership is a familiar word. As Smith et al. (2004) describe, there is no clear definition of a good or effective leader, nor is there a "comprehensive understanding" of leadership (p.80). Teachers can provide their perception of a principal's leadership style and they can provide information regarding their job satisfaction. Research has reviewed the manner in which leadership style appears to influence teacher perception and school climate (Black, 2010; Bogler, 2001; Devono & Price, 2012; Kelley, Thornton, & Daugherty, 2005). Research has evaluated trust, at the individual and collective level, and its impact upon relationships within the school (Adams & Forsyth, 2013; Bateh & Heyliger, 2014). Ultimately, there is a clear indication that the leader of a school has the responsibility to establish the culture within the school (Black, 2010; Kartal, 2016), which bears a great impact upon the student achievement levels and teacher satisfaction (Barrett & Breyer, 2014).

The Leadership Styles of Principals

While the research conducted by Coulon and Quaglia (2001) indicates that the principal plays a crucial role in the success of a school, they determined that there is no one best leadership style for every school. A variety of leadership styles exist for which a principal may qualify. One leadership style that has shown to have positive consequence on the staff within a school is that of a transformational leader (Bass, 1990; Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; Bogler, 2001; Moolenaar, Daly, & Sleegers, 2010; Oguz, 2011; Smith et al., 2004). James MacGregor Burns introduced transformational leadership in 1978 (Smith, 2005). Bernard Bass enhanced the definition of transformational leadership. Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass further explored the leadership style and developed an assessment tool to measure a leader's tendency to follow a transformational leadership style. A transformational leader in a school is a principal who has developed beyond that of being simply an instructional leader by also working to bring vision to the organization (Bogler, 2001; Hauserman & Stick, 2013; Smith, 2005). Defined further by Smith et al. (2004), a transformational leader motivates those within the organization to share a vision, empowers them to reach the vision, and provides the means for personal growth of individuals on the path to achieving the vision. Bass (1990) reiterates that definition of a transformational leader and explains the four methods in which the transformational leader achieves results. The four methods include being charismatic, inspirational, individually considerate, and providing intellectual stimulation. Transformational leadership moved to the premise of the principal creating an environment of problem solving (McKinney, Labat Jr., & Labat, 2015) and collaboration with the goal of increased student achievement (Marks & Printy, 2003). A transformational leadership style may prove to be more beneficial in organizations that are dynamic and/or in need of change (Smith et al., 2004). Ultimately, the goal of the

transformational leader is to achieve the mission of the organization (Smith, 2005). Leaders who

demonstrate the traits of a transformational leader have followers who demonstrate a high level

of citizenship, as long as there is also present a level of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Generally, a leader adhering to the behaviors of a transformational leadership style will benefit

from increased levels of interpersonal trust (Asencio & Mujkic, 2016). This central premise of

achieving the goal of the organization by use of the four methods of a transformational leader is

depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Characteristics of a Transformational Leader
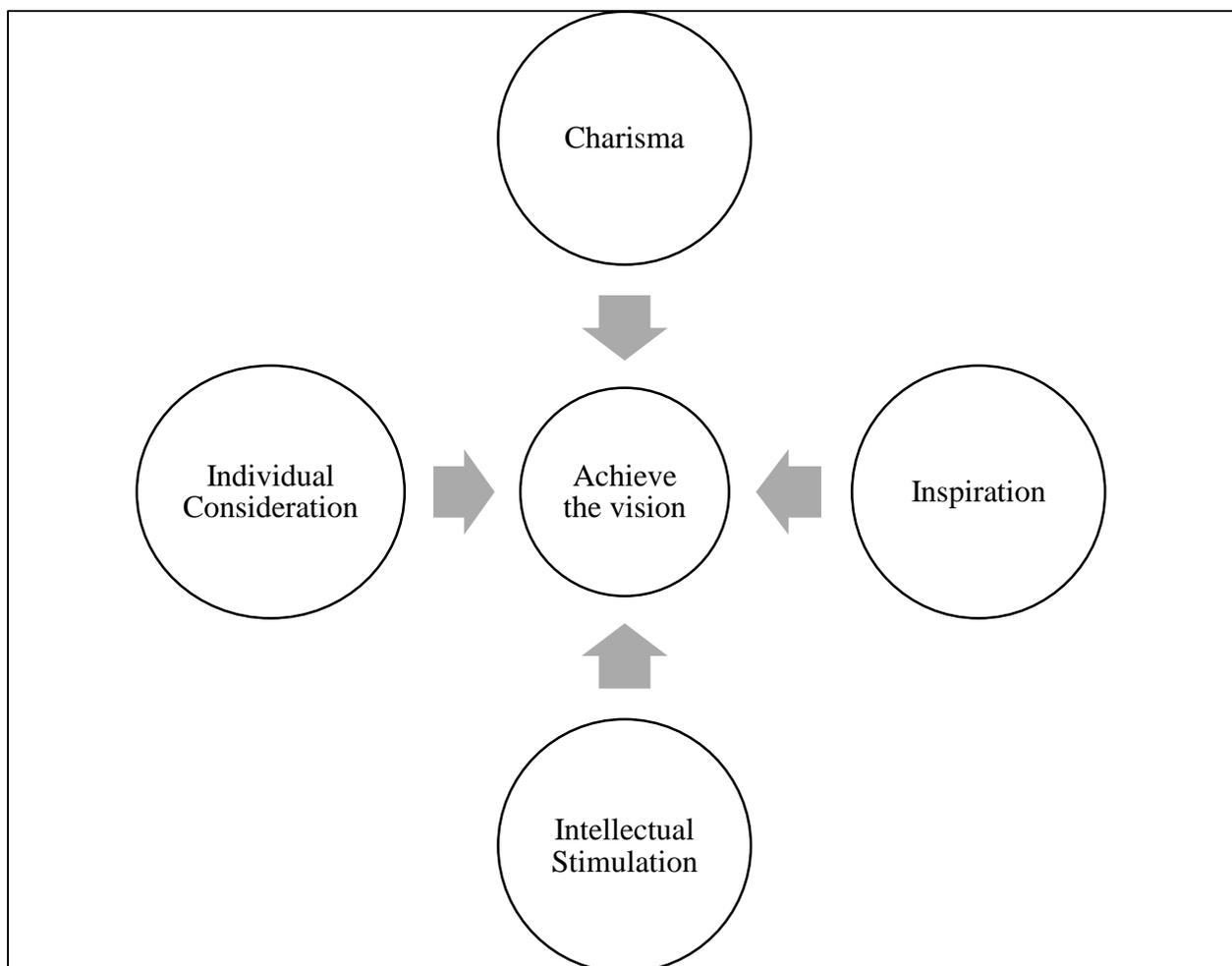
Adapted from Bass, 1990.

In studies reviewing the job satisfaction of teachers, results indicated that when teachers perceived their principal as a transformational leader, the teachers had a higher level of job satisfaction and a positive view of organizational justice in the school (Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; Bogler, 2001; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Hauserman & Stick, 2013; Oguz, 2011). Schools in which the principal was found to be a transformational leader were found to have teams with higher levels of innovation (Moolenaar et al., 2010). Principals who rate high in transformational leadership ability place an importance on cooperation (Hauserman & Stick, 2013). A combination of transformational leadership qualities needs to be used by an administrator to be effective and to increase teaching and learning (Thoonen, Sleefers, Oort, Peetsma, & Geijsel, 2011).

The study conducted by Blase and Blase (2000) did not focus on transformational leaders, but instead instructional leaders, the characteristics that teachers stated had the greatest impact were promoting reflection and promoting professional growth. This would further indicate that principals who demonstrate transformational leadership qualities have a positive impact on the teachers. Devono and Price (2012), found the ability to articulate the mission of the school was one of the most important roles of a school leader. Principals who demonstrate a highly transformational style of leadership can reach teachers more quickly with professional information due to the relationships associated with a transformational leadership style. Therefore, they are able to share and advance the vision of the school with teachers (Moolenaar et al., 2010). Thus, providing further evidence of the importance for the leader of a school to demonstrate a transformational leadership style.

A second principal leadership style, which supports a positive impact upon teachers within a school, is servant leadership. Servant leadership is a theoretical framework introduced in

1970 by Robert K. Greenleaf (Smith, 2005). This framework includes four central tenets that

describe the beliefs of a servant leader. The tasks accomplished by a servant leader utilize ten

characteristics. Figure 2 provides a visual representation of this framework.

Figure 2

Characteristics of Servant Leadership

Service to Others	Holistic Approach	Promoting Sense of Community	Shared Decision-Making
Listening	Healing	Persuasion	Foresight
Empathy	Awareness	Conceptualization	Stewardship
	Commitment to Growth of People	Building Community	
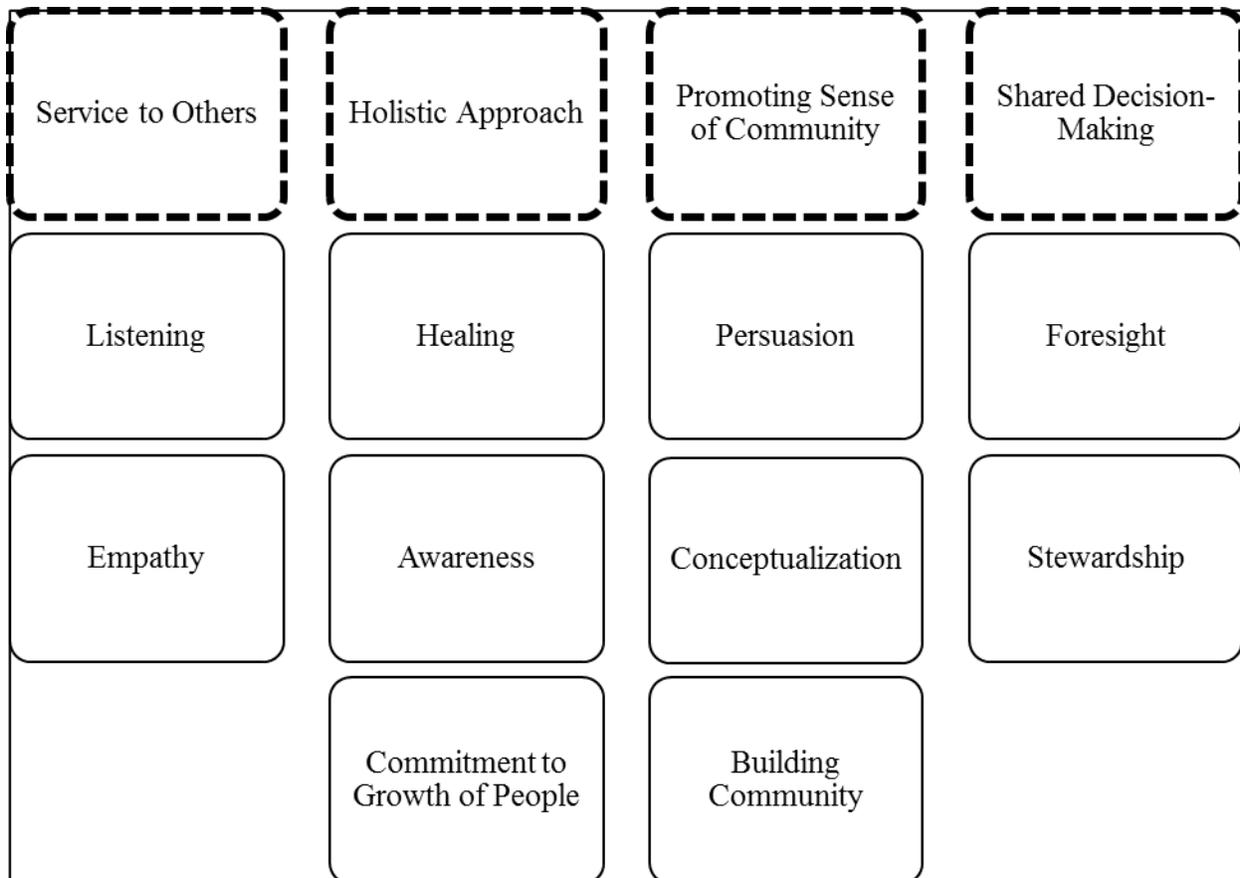
Adapted from Smith, 2005.

Additional descriptions of servant leadership compiled by researchers over the years,

break down the characteristics of a servant leader in various forms, however, the basic

framework remains static (Black, 2010; Smith, 2005). Servant leadership has been found to fit

the definition of a virtuous theory. There are seven constructs which make up the values of

servant leadership: agapao love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service

(Patterson, 2003). These seven constructs were the focus of the Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument created by Dennis and Bocarnea (2007).

Ultimately, a servant leader is one who places the needs of others above the needs of himself/herself (Black, 2010; Insley, Iaeger, Ekinci, & Sakiz, 2016; Patterson, 2003; Shaw & Newton, 2014, Smith et al., 2004; Smith, 2005). As Black (2010) explained, being a servant leader does not equate to the leader doing for others, but it means that the focus of the leader is to enhance the natural abilities and qualities of the people served. This in turn, makes all members of the organization better prepared to serve the vision of the organization; therefore, indicating that servant leadership would be more successful in organizations that are relatively stable in order to enhance the development of the personnel within the organization (Smith et al., 2004; Smith, 2005).

Servant leadership in an educational setting is demonstrated by the principal of the school enhancing the leadership abilities of teachers, which increases teacher ability to work with students in the classrooms as well as with other teachers. During the study conducted by Shaw and Newton (2014), a positive correlation proved to exist between teacher perception of their principal as a servant leader and the job satisfaction of the teacher. The researchers further supported the notion that teachers demonstrate a higher desire to remain in a building in which the principal is perceived to be a servant leader (Shaw & Newton, 2014). Teachers may have increased job satisfaction and greater desire to remain in a building led by a servant leader due to the more positive climate created within the school. Further indications of this include the research conducted by Black (2010), which found that there is a significant positive relationship between teachers' perceptions of servant leadership and school climate. The level of servant

leadership demonstrated by the principal predicts the trust level of the followers (Sendjaya &

Pekerti, 2010).

Transformational leadership and servant leadership are often compared (Bass, 1990;

Insley et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2004; Smith, 2005). Smith et al. (2004) indicate in their

comparison of the two styles, that both are rooted in the theory of charismatic leadership while

being inspirational and moral. Both leadership styles have demonstrated positive effects upon the

schools served. Both leadership styles focus on the individuals within the organization, but

through a different lens. While some characteristics of one leadership style may be matched with

a characteristic of the other style, there is not a clear connection between all characteristics. Two

clear distinctions were made in the research conducted by Smith et al. (2004). Transformational

leadership includes a clearer focus on intellectual stimulation and servant leadership includes a

more intense focus on the emotional well-being of the employee. In addition, the focus of the

transformational leader is to achieve the goal of the organization, whereas the focus of the

servant leader is to grow the individuals within the organization (Smith et al., 2004). As Smith

(2005) concludes, "servant-leadership places a greater emphasis on people over production, and

transformational leadership places a greater emphasis on the reverse" (p. 9). Figure 3 displays a

graphical representation of the differences between transformational and servant leadership.

Figure 3

Comparison of Leadership Models

Transformational leadership

| More Success in a Dynamic Environment | Less Success in a Static Environment |

Resulting Organizational Culture

Proactive
Empowered
Dynamic
Innovative

Organizational Systems

Rewards
Communications
Policies and Procedures, etc.

Leader Initiatives

1. Idealized influence
2. Inspirational motivation
3. Intellectual stimulation
4. Individualized consideration

Leader's Philosophy

Leader's Motivation
Desire to Lead

External Forces
Situational Factors

Servant leadership

| More Success in a Static Environment | Less Success in a Dynamic Environment |

Resulting Organizational Culture

Spiritual
Personally generative
Passive
Preserving status quo

Organizational Systems

Rewards
Communications
Policies and Procedures, etc.

Leader Initiatives

1. Valuing people
2. Developing people
3. Building community
4. Displaying authenticity
5. Providing leadership
6. Sharing leadership

Leader's Philosophy

Leader's Motivation
Desire to Lead

External Forces
Situational Factors

Note: Reprinted with permission – See Appendix A.

There are also principal leadership styles that have a negative effect upon the teachers within a building. When a principal demonstrates more manager than leader behavior, teacher job satisfaction resides at lower levels (Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; Bogler, 2001; Okutan, 2014; Tschannen-Moran, 2009). Laissez-faire leadership and passive leadership have been determined to be destructive forms of leadership (Brandebo, Nilsson, & Larsson, 2016). Lorinkova, Pearsall, and Sims (2013) found in their experimental study that leaders who utilized a directive leadership style had teams that outperformed teams with an empowering leader in the beginning stages of a task. However, their research indicated that in the long term, directive leaders did not prepare their teams effectively to make decisions on their own. Tschannen-Moran (2009) describes how every school contains some bureaucratic structures; however, principals would do well not to overly rely on these dimensions. Too much of this hierarchical structure will undermine the mission of the school and district (Devono & Price, 2012). The bureaucracy in schools will undermine the trust of leaders by teachers. Due to the bureaucracy that will always be present in schools, principals must be able to coordinate the administrative duties alongside the relationship building activities (Insley et al., 2016). Otherwise, the disintegration of trust decreases the collaborative climate of the school (Daly, 2009). In educational organizations, it is desirable for teachers to be able to work cooperatively with other teachers and for those teams to initiate decisions without the direct input of the principal. Schools that maintain a positive organizational culture will require less bureaucratic focus (Kartal, 2016). A positive organizational culture will include a high level of collective trust. As Tschannen-Moran (2009) explains, schools will not be able to live up to the expectations of patrons if the school is not able to function as a professional learning organization.

Principal Training. In his explanation of transformational leadership, Bass (1990) explains that since the factors used by transformational leaders are delineated, guidance programs should be developed to enhance those characteristics within leaders. In addition, research indicates that principals can be provided training that will improve their leadership skills (Overholt & Szabocsik, 2013). Training should focus on leadership development as well as providing a more experienced mentor to increase the effectiveness of the rural principal (Renihan & Noonan, 2012). Goff, Guthrie, Goldring, and Bickman (2104) conducted an experimental study to investigate the effect of coaching and teacher feedback on principals' leadership. It was determined that using coaching along with teacher feedback had a statistically significant correlation to principals' ability to assist teachers in becoming better leaders. One area recommended for principal training would be in the creation of a school-wide vision and how to communicate that vision with staff (Barnett & McCormick, 2004; Ghavifekr, Chellapan, Sukumaran, & Subramaniam, 2014). In addition, principal preparation programs should focus on the connection of leadership and trust in the training of future principals (Northfield, 2014; Walker, Kutsyuruba, & Noonan, 2011). According to the research of Fox et al. (2015), if trust is the desired area of training, institutions should be looking to train principals and school leaders in authentic leadership. Authentic leadership is not a behavioral style, but rather a description of leading with transparency while building trust and collaboration (Fox et al., 2015).

To further the ability of the schools, principals should provide training to teachers. This will enhance the trusting relationship between principals and teachers as well as increase the collective efficacy of the teachers in the school (Angelle, Nixon, Norton, & Niles, 2011; Barrett & Breyer, 2014). As demonstrated by the model of collective trust formation framework, the collective trust in a school is developed by the repeated interactions between the groups of the

school (Forsyth et al., 2011). When a principal is leading a professional training for the teachers in the building, there are additional opportunities for interactions between the leader and teachers. This also provides for those interactions to demonstrate the competence of the principal, which is one of the five facets of trust.

Principal and Staff Relationships

While there are many traits that principals may demonstrate, it is critical that principals find a way to positively motivate teachers and as a result increase student achievement (McKinney et al., 2015). Barth (2006) explains that the relationships among the educators in a building has a greater impact on the quality of the school than any other factor. In a study completed in primary schools by Sagnak (2005), a high level of congruence existed between the personal values of teachers, principals and the organizational values. This finding illustrates the understanding that individuals within an organization who share similar value systems will perceive events in a similar manner. When individuals perceive the events within an organization in a similar manner, the relationships tend to be more positive (Sagnak, 2005; Tasdan & Yalcin, 2010; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). However, it has been found that when there is disagreement between the principal and teachers regarding the principal's leadership performance, teacher self-efficacy will be negatively impacted (Ham et al., 2015).

The literature verifies that relationships exist within a school and that these relationships influence the quality of the school (Tschannen-Moran, 2009; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). The influence felt may be positive or negative (Barth, 2006; Blase & Blase, 2006; Dunaway, 2011; Goddard, 2001). Barth (2006) explains that creating positive relationships between the professionals in a building is the most important task that a principal will complete. In a study reviewing the impact of a collaborative model of supervision, Ebmeier and Nicklaus (1999)

found that when the principal of a building conducted the supervision, it was more effective than when completed by a graduate student with the exact same training. This provides further proof that the principal is the primary key in establishing the relationships throughout the building.

One of the ways in which a principal may increase the positive relationships within the building is to establish an environment in which teachers share the leadership (Kocabas, 2009; Mullen & Jones, 2008). As Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) studied shared leadership in schools, they concluded that the use of shared leadership diminished the power differential between principals and teachers, which in turn positively affected instruction. Principals must do more than simply provide teachers a voice in the decision-making process; they need to foster the leadership ability of teachers (Mullen & Jones, 2008). Shared leadership within a school is demonstrated with the ownership of all students' learning and the pursuit of common goals (Musselman, Crittenden, & Lyons, 2014). Pushing teachers to use more reflection in their daily routines enhances the leadership skills of teachers (Blase & Blase, 2000; Mullen & Jones, 2008).

Violation of trust. Trust is often an expected condition in school organizations. This makes the gradual erosion of trust more difficult to notice (Walker et al., 2011). Often it is simply minor disruptions of trust such as not keeping one's word, spreading gossip and withholding important information that begin the betrayal (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014; Noonan et al., 2008). Trust may also begin to break apart when principals take themselves too seriously or when principals take issues personally (Noonan et al., 2008).

One of the most damaging behaviors is that of a principal who mistreats teachers. Mistreatment may present in a variety of ways from withholding materials to physical acts (Blase & Blase, 2006). Results of the study on principal mistreatment indicated far-reaching effects existed no matter the level of mistreatment (Blase & Blase, 2006). These effects were felt

throughout the entire school, in many cases affecting the actual classroom instruction. Even if not through mistreatment, once a principal violates the trust established with teachers, it may be very difficult to gain back (Angelle et al., 2011).

Trust may be compared to a clay pot. It is fragile and may be easily broken. However, even after being broken into small pieces, with enough time and patience it may be repaired. The new pot may be stronger than before the break, but many times there are still visible scars that never completely fade (Kutsyuruba, Walker, & Noonan, 2011). When trust has been violated, both parties must be able to see a benefit in the repairing of the trust before it will be fixed (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014). Distrust in a school setting is very costly. As the level of trust decreases, teachers are less willing to take a risk, instead focusing on more self-serving behaviors (Moye, Henkin, & Egley, 2005; Walker et al., 2011). This reaffirms the importance of ensuring positive relationships are developed and maintained within each school.

Trust Levels and Leadership

Trust is an important component in any organization (Crum, Sherman, & Myran, 2010) and is evident in two forms, collective and relational (Northfield, 2014). According to Adams and Forsyth (2013), there is a small but important difference between the two forms of trust. Relational trust is the feelings of one individual. However, collective trust is that which forms within groups of people in a school. At the center of the creation of this trust is the school principal. They serve as the primary creator of the trust level of the school (Kutsyuruba, Walker, & Noonan, 2016). Collective trust becomes a part of the culture of the school that remains consistent until there are great changes in the school staff (Adams & Forsyth, 2013). This carries a meaningful implication for leaders. For example, once the faculty of a school has established a collective trust idea about the principal, that feeling is going to remain constant. The established

collective trust may change with staff turnover, but that tends to take years. Therefore, a principal needs to be aware of the concept of collective trust and work to establish a good trusting relationship with the faculty of a school (Northfield, 2014). This is one of the reasons for the use of the model of collective trust formation (Forsyth et al., 2011) as the theoretical framework for this study. As Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, and Stecca (2003) determined, teachers' perceived self-efficacy alone was not sufficient to build a collective efficacy within a school, the perception that colleagues were completing their tasks well had to be present. This would further emphasize the need for principals to work on creating high levels of trust within the school as a whole. Higher levels of trust provide additional opportunity for teachers to work collaboratively with other members of the teaching staff (Daly, 2009) and to feel comfortable and confident to demonstrate leadership (Demir, 2015).

Trust is especially important in today's school systems (Adams & Forsyth, 2013; Cranston, 2011; Daly, 2009; Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002; Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi, 2010; Tasdan & Yalcin, 2010; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). In a study conducted by Jerome Cranston (2011), results indicated that trust played a significant role in creating effective professional learning communities. Additional studies indicated that trust of a principal requires a nurturing demeanor over time (Cranston, 2011; Kochanek, 2005; Meyer, Macmillan, & Northfield, 2009; Northfield, 2014). Tasdan and Yalcin (2010) further reinforced the importance of teachers developing trusting relationships through a variety of sources and supports. Trust is a circular process; the principal extends trust to the teachers and the teachers return trust in the principal (Angelle et al., 2011; Forsyth, Barnes, & Adams, 2006; Kutsyuruba et al., 2016). The foundation for building trust with teachers resides in the knowledge and skills of the principal (Northfield, 2014). While the knowledge of the principal is critical, the behavior of the principal is important

as well. Teachers will determine their level of trust in the principal by watching the behavior of the principal (Forsyth, Adams, & Hartzler, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a). The verbal and non-verbal components of communication play a role in the creation of the trust level of a principal (Kutsyuruba et al., 2016). Predictability must be in existence with both principals and staff members in order for a high level of trust to be present (Noonan et al., 2008). Authenticity is also critical when principals make decisions. Trust will be greatly depleted if a principal fails to follow through on a decision made by the school staff (Kutsyuruba et al., 2016). Principals who demonstrate the concern for teacher growth in professional development and career improvement have deeper and more meaningful relationships with teachers (Wang & Bird, 2011). These behavioral interactions create the social construction frame of reference for the development of collective trust as shown in the model of collective trust formation (Forsyth et al., 2011).

In a study of high schools, it was found that a principal who demonstrated cooperative leadership gained the trust of the faculty (Hoy et al., 2002). A study conducted with schools across all grade spans, found that principal leadership behavior had a great impact upon the instructional practices that teachers utilized (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). Two leadership behaviors, trust and shared leadership, were analyzed in this study. It was determined that shared leadership held a higher importance than trust when considering instructional practices (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). Trust is crucial to creating an organization in which leadership and decision making is shared between principal and teachers (Angelle, 2010).

Schools may be categorized as high or low trust settings as in the study completed by Louis (2007). She found that in schools with a high level of trust, teachers were more willing to take on changes suggested by the administration. Whereas, in schools with a low level of trust,

changes were viewed as another way that administration was undermining teachers (Louis, 2007). As teachers are the individuals who must implement the curricular programs often determined by principals in the capacity of school leader, a higher level of trust is necessary for the success of the school and students (Kutsyuruba et al., 2016; Tahir et al., 2015). This is further explained by Angelle (2010) who states that it is equally important for teachers and principals to model trust and collegiality.

Trust researched in many forms, such as trust between colleagues within a school and faculty trust in the principal, plays a role in determining the climate of a school (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a). Adams and Forsyth (2013) found that regardless of which level of trust is studied, there is a correlation between trust and school culture. The principal of a school may behave in a manner that increases faculty trust and thereby indirectly increase the level of perceived organizational justice (Hoy and Tarter, 2004; Zeinabadi, 2014). While trust is crucial to the success of a school, both teachers and leaders must remember it takes time and hard work to form well-developed trust levels (Zheng et al., 2016). Ultimately, the principal must remain conscious of the role of trust within a school, how fragile trust is, and the consequences of broken trust (Walker et al., 2011).

The Rural Elementary Principalship

There are many definitions utilized for the term rural in research studies (Greenough & Nelson, 2015; Yettick, Baker, Wickersham, & Hupfeld, 2014). A critical first step in conducting research in a rural area is to determine the operational definition for the study (Koziol et al., 2015). The definition for this study was based on the definition created by the State Department of Education which is focused on the population of the area enclosed within the school district boundaries. Specifically, there must be less than 20 students per square mile in the area covered

by the school district. Utilizing this definition, the potential school districts for study were identified.

While the rural life establishes a lifestyle not commonly understood, a rural principal must lead in a manner appropriate to the lifestyle of that community (Klar & Brewer, 2014; Preston, Jakubiec, & Kooymans, 2013; Wood, Finch, & Mirecki, 2013). This difference creates extra challenges for the rural principal or intensifies the impact of challenges found in other schools (Starr & White, 2008). A unique challenge for rural principals is the high visibility they maintain in the community (Cruzeiro & Boone, 2009; Stewart & Matthews, 2015). Within a small community, the school principal is someone familiar to all in the area and may be expected to uphold a higher standard of character than other residents. At the same time, a rural administrator is expected to understand the lifestyle of the residents living within the school boundaries. "In a small community the principal is never off duty" (Cruzeiro & Boone, 2009, p. 7). This fact may greatly affect trust within the school as teachers hear the discussion from community members regarding actions of the principal even outside of the school day.

Rural communities are often portrayed as uneducated, backwards or second class (Burton, Brown, & Johnson, 2013; Klar & Brewer, 2013; Strange, 2011; Surface & Theobold, 2014). This creates a situation for educational leaders in which they must create an environment of academic importance. It is critical for rural school leaders to increase the focus on academics and achievement in order to attract and retain better teachers to the rural communities (Fishman, 2015; Strange, 2011). As trust requires time to develop, a teaching staff that lacks consistency will also lack a solid trusting relationship. This is a common problem for rural school administrators as many rural schools are often a springboard for teachers to move to more affluent schools.

Rural school districts face many unique challenges (Beesley & Clark, 2015; Klar & Brewer, 2013). Often schools in rural districts have fewer staff to take on the same number of tasks required in a larger, urban school district. A principal of a rural school must provide the leadership of the school while also fulfilling many other roles (Canales et al., 2008; Preston et al., 2013; Renihan & Noonan, 2012; Starr & White, 2008; Versland, 2013; Wood et al., 2013; Yettick et al., 2014). As a result, they must have the ability to quickly shift roles and complete various tasks, in other words be "versatile and flexible" (Cruzeiro & Boone, 2009, p.6). Rural principals report working the same number of hours as their urban counterparts, however, they do so in less days. This would indicate that rural principals are working on non-contract days (Beesley & Clark, 2015). A similar situation is typical of current elementary schools, where principals are often expected to complete many tasks without the aid of assistant principals (Cruzeiro & Boone, 2009; Crum et al., 2010). One answer to this challenge is to develop teacher leaders in the school. Developing this shared leadership in rural schools provides an opportunity for increased student success (Musselman et al., 2014). Principals in rural districts are often better able to accurately assess the needs of teachers in order to increase the opportunities for shared leadership (Mette, 2014; Renihan & Noonan, 2012). One difficulty faced by rural principals is when dealing with a staff that is created from insiders and outsiders. A teacher who works in a rural school of the community they grew up in is often seen as an insider and will have additional power and privilege (Burton et al., 2013). Whereas, a teacher who is hired from outside the community will face some resistance from the community until able to prove themselves worthy. This creates a unique situation for a principal to develop a trusting staff that is collaborative.

Many rural school districts are geographically isolated from more populated cities. This decreases the opportunities for both administrators and teachers to receive professional development opportunities. This lack of outside opportunities creates a need for the principal to be an even greater instructional leader as they are frequently expected to provide necessary training to teachers (Wood et al., 2013). Geographic isolation and lack of networking contributes to teachers in rural schools being more resistant to change (Budge, 2010; Burton et al., 2013). In many school districts, principals are able to network with other administrators in order to increase learning opportunities, however, in rural districts this is difficult if not impossible (Preston et al., 2013; Stewart & Matthews, 2015). The lack of good networking opportunities leaves the rural principal with the arduous task of providing training for staff and at the same time evaluating the implementation of the new knowledge. This dual role expectation increases the importance of having a high level of trust throughout the school. If teachers are to take a risk trying out new learning; they must trust that the principal will allow some mistakes along the way.

Funding is frequently a concern for rural school districts (Strange, 2011). Federal funding specific to rural areas is minimal and restricted by stringent guidelines (Fishman, 2015; Yettick et al., 2014). As described earlier, there is a shortage of personnel within rural school districts, therefore, the writing of additional grants is too difficult to be of true benefit (Yettick et al., 2014). Special education is another area of concern for rural school districts. The enrollment of even one high needs special education student may push a rural school to the brink of bankruptcy (Strange, 2011).

Rural schools may be more challenging for administrators and staff, however, they are places where great learning may take place. The small size allows adults within the school to

develop a clear understanding of the needs of the students (Burton et al., 2013; Surface & Theobold, 2014). There is an increased opportunity for rural elementary principals to influence the curriculum that is used within the school (Beesley & Clark, 2015).

The Role of the Principal in Establishing School Culture

The environment of the school is also called school climate or the school culture. School climate has been a subject of frequent research (Black, 2010; Coulon & Quaglia, 2001; Cranston, 2011; Johnson & Stevens, 2006; Kartal, 2016; Kelley et al. 2005; Peterson, 2002; Van Houtte & Van Maele, 2011). The research of Coulon and Quaglia (2001) indicated that the principal has a direct effect on the environment of the school. There are as many different definitions for school climate as there are research events (Johnson & Stevens, 2006) and many times the two terms are used interchangeably (Van Houtte & Van Maele, 2011). For the research conducted by Johnson and Stevens (2006), they used the definition of school climate credited to Fischer and Fraser from 1991 that explained school climate as the environment in which teachers work with other teachers, students, and administrators. Similar to school climate, there are numerous definitions for school culture. School culture consists of the unwritten values and beliefs that shape the school (Peterson, 2002). The culture of the school is most influenced by the behavioral interactions of the administrators, staff, and students within the school (Kartal, 2016). Most researchers would believe that the difference between culture and climate is minimal and when determining research outcomes would make no difference (Van Houtte & Van Maele, 2011).

Hoy et al. (2002) tested three hypotheses involving trust and climate. The first hypothesis was that the various components of faculty trust would influence the school climate differently. The second hypothesis stated that the collegial leadership of the principal would be the greatest determinant for faculty trust in the principal. The third hypothesis indicated that higher levels of

agreement on academic achievement would increase the teachers' trust of parents and students. In conclusion, all three hypotheses were found to be true (Hoy et al., 2002). Furthermore, all three demonstrated a connection between the trust and climate of the school. Given this connection and the key role of the principal, it is critical for school leaders to maximize opportunities to build trust with their staff as frequently as possible (Forsyth et al., 2011).

To assist in the successful establishment of the school culture it is crucial the school leader be able to describe the district's mission (Devono & Price, 2012) and to connect that mission to the school culture in a cohesive manner (Turan & Bektas, 2013). The results of their study verified this belief as they found a positive relationship existed between the leadership practices of the school principal and the school culture (Turan & Bektas, 2013). Therefore, the school administrator is the driving force behind the school culture (Kartal, 2016).

A study completed with elementary schools resulted in the same conclusions. Significant positive relationships exist between how teachers perceive the principal's leadership and the school climate (Forsyth et al., 2011; Kelley et al., 2005). Furthermore, when a principal participates in supplementary training to gain content knowledge, the resulting communication provided to teachers effectively creates a more positive school climate (Arlestig, 2007; Overholt & Szabocsik, 2013). The principal is the most important person to develop the sense of organizational justice in the school (Hoy & Tarter, 2004; Zeinabadi, 2014), thus is the most important person in developing the climate of the school.

The Effect of School Culture on Student Achievement

Ross and Gray (2006) completed a study on school leadership and student achievement. The findings from the study indicate no significant direct effect on student achievement from leadership. Noteworthy, a connection between the commitment of teachers to the organizational

values and student achievement existed (Ross & Gray, 2006). The literature review described previously reveals the connection between leadership and school culture. This would further indicate an indirect connection between school culture and student achievement (Uline & Tschannen-Moran, 2008). School culture affects a variety of aspects of the school from the performance of teachers to the relationships present in the school (Kartal, 2016). Black (2010) demonstrates a connection between the school climate and students in that the daily experiences of school staff as well as students' educational experiences feel the impact of the school climate. In research conducted regarding school facilities, school climate was found to be powerful enough to overcome several issues found in old or poor quality facilities (Uline & Tschannen-Moran, 2008; Uline, Tschannen-Moran, & DeVere Wolsey, 2009).

Previous descriptions of the literature exposed the importance of building collective trust within a school setting. The research conducted by Adams and Forsyth (2013), demonstrated that in schools with a climate of collective trust among the faculty, there was greater academic achievement. If schools with collective trust utilized self-regulated learning, student achievement was high, regardless of poverty level and other environmental factors. In addition to collective trust, teachers who are collaborative will increase the level of collective efficacy within the school. This is the belief that teachers have in regards to the capabilities of the faculty as a whole (Forsyth et al., 2011; Goddard, 2001). The perception of efficacy will influence both individual teacher behavior as well as the collective group behavior. Teacher behavior can be an enhancement or a detriment to student achievement (Goddard, 2001). Collective efficacy increases the belief by teachers that students are capable of academic achievement. Providing the opportunities for teachers to work collaboratively will provide the foundation for increased collective efficacy. The school leader is essential to creating those opportunities, thereby

demonstrating the connection from leadership to collective efficacy (Goddard, Goddard, Kim, & Miller, 2015). Increased academic optimism increases student achievement (Forsyth et al., 2011). This provides evidence that principals should establish a school culture that fosters the collaboration of teachers and allows the staff to engage in instructional practices that encourage student-centered learning. In schools where there is a high level of trust, a high level of collective efficacy is known to also exist (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Research has been conducted on the connection of school climate and student achievement (Johnson & Stevens, 2006). In their study, they used the definition of school climate to be the environment in which teachers worked with other teachers, students, and administrators. This study found a statistically significant link between elementary teachers' perception of school climate and student achievement (Johnson & Stevens, 2006). In an additional study conducted in which probationary and non-probationary schools were studied, the probationary schools rated the principal leadership lower in all areas (Finnigan, 2010). Johnson and Stevens (2006) further summarized, "school climate probably influences and, in turn, is influenced by student achievement" (p. 118).

Teachers are constantly making decisions during the school day. Many of these decisions are complex and impact students (Adams & Forsyth, 2013). Creating a school climate in which teachers are willing to work together and collaborate on those decision points will create the ideal condition for the support of student learning (McKinney et al., 2015; Tschannen-Moran, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). In an additional study completed by Uline and Tschannen-Moran (2008), it was determined that teachers' attitudes and professionalism directly link to student achievement. Therefore, an additional indirect link can be established between leadership and student achievement.

"If knowledge creation drives capacity as many scholars claim, then trust is the ignition that starts the process moving forward" (Adams & Miskell, 2016, p. 679). Schools in which there is a high level of trust are better places for student learning (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Forsyth et al., 2011; Kochanek, 2005). Higher student achievement will generally increase the level of trust within the school. Therefore, a leader should recognize the impact of trust on student achievement (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). This reciprocal process will not continue without the focus of the principal on both pieces. Principals may work tirelessly to present research-based instructional strategies, data for decision making, and the latest innovative ideas, but unless they have developed positive relationships within the groups of the school, there will be limited impact on student achievement (Louis & Murphy, 2017).

Collective Trust Model

Schools are comprised of a web of relationships. Where there are relationships trust will also be present. This research is focused on the collective trust found between teachers and the principal in rural elementary schools. In this situation, collective trust is defined as the expectation of the faculty of the school that the principal will act in the best interest of the faculty and follow through with action what is stated (Forsyth et al., 2011). Trust does not just happen; it must be developed over time (Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014; Kutsyuruba et al., 2016).

There are a number of factors that influence the development of collective trust. Forsyth et al. (2011) describe three contextual elements: external, internal, and task. External context refers to the outside factors that influence each individual. Internal context explains all of the factors within the school, such as culture, that influence individuals and groups. Task context includes the difficulty of the job or task and how that will influence the group.

Within the constraints of the contextual factors, trust will be developed over time with repeated interactions between the members of the groups (Forsyth et al., 2011). Throughout all of the interactions, faculty will be viewing the leader of the school to determine whether the leader is observed to comply with the expected behavior. These exchanges will be viewed with a diagnostic lens, searching for specific factors of trust. The factors most commonly associated with a positive level of trust are: openness, honesty, benevolence, reliability, and competence (Forsyth et al., 2007; Forsyth et al., 2011; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). This collective trust development is depicted with a model of collective trust formation and its consequences included here as Figure 4.

Figure 4

Formation of Collective Trust
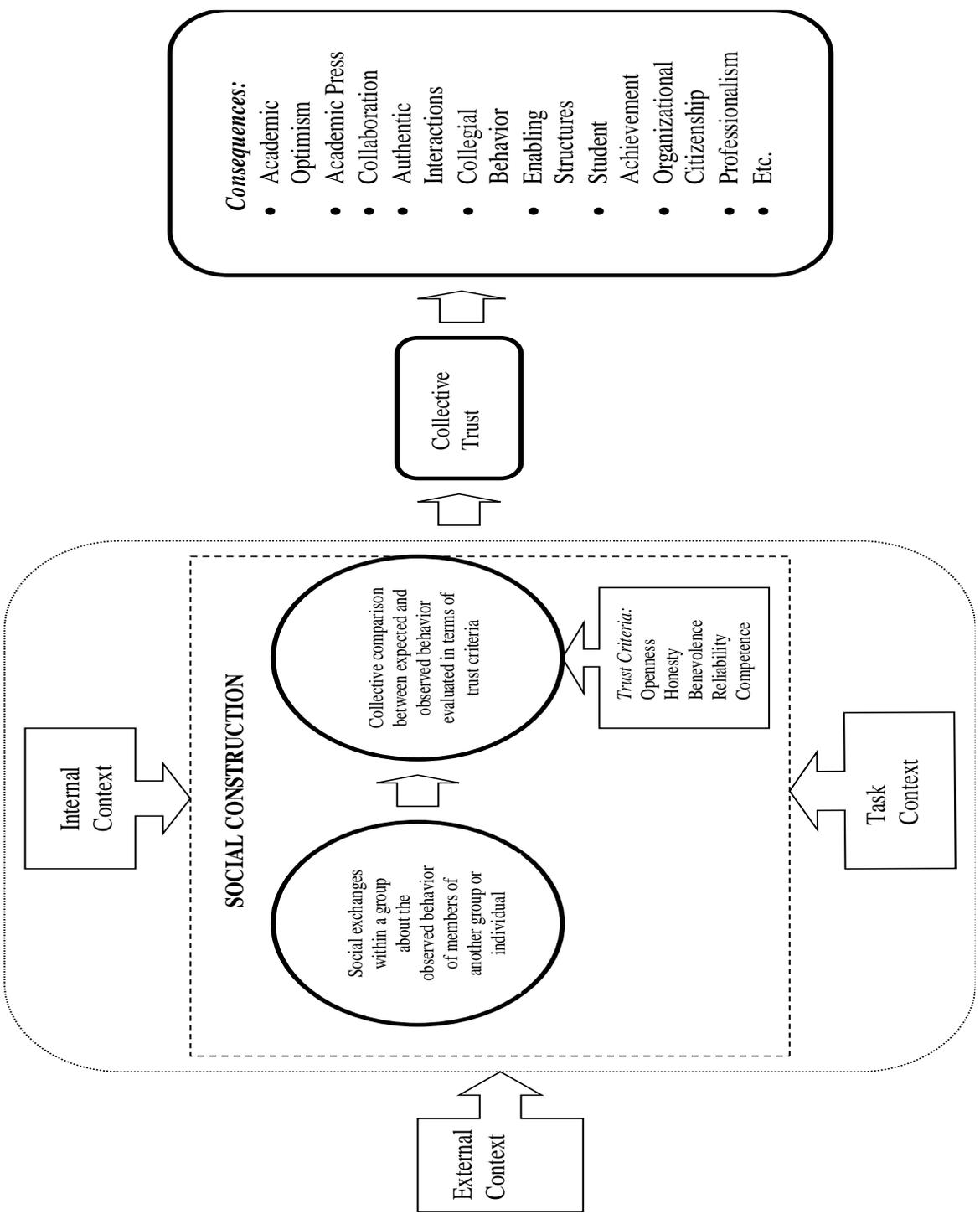
Note: Forsyth et al., 2011. Collective Trust: Why Schools Can't Improve Without It. p. 25.

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Conclusion

The literature review focused on six areas regarding leadership and the connection to the school environment. The six areas of focus were: (a) the leadership style of principals, (b) principal and staff relationships, (c) trust levels and leadership, (d) the rural principalship, (e) the role of the principal in establishing school culture, and (f) the effect of school culture on achievement. Each focus area will provide background for the problem statement of this research: The purpose of this study is to determine the factors that either maintain or destroy a positive working relationship between an elementary school administrator and the teachers in rural school districts.

Throughout this literature review, evidence indicated a connection between the leadership style of the principal and the culture of the school (Black, 2010; Cranston, 2011; Fox et al., 2015; Kelley et al., 2005; Moolenaar et al., 2010; Turan & Bektas, 2013; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). The two leadership styles, transformational and servant, were defined and it was determined that each style would create a slightly different culture in a school (Smith, 2005). Positive results were found in schools that had leaders utilizing either transformational or servant leadership behaviors (Black, 2010; Bogler, 2001; Marks & Printy, 2003; Moolenaar et al., 2010; Quin, Deris, Bischoff, & Johnson, 2015; Ross & Gray, 2006; Shaw & Newton, 2014; Smith et al., 2004). It was indicated for a setting that was more static a servant leadership style would probably be more successful. However, in a more fluid setting needing a large-scale change a transformational leader would be a better fit (Smith et al., 2004).

Barth (2006) explained that the most important job a principal would complete was to establish the relationships within the school. In the current era of education, with the increased focus on student achievement and school accountability, the relationships between principals and

teachers is even more important (Robinson, 2010). Increasing student achievement takes the hard work and dedication of the entire school staff. As Mullen and Jones (2008) summarize, there are three key features within a high performing school: the leadership style of the principal, opportunities for teachers to lead at the school level, and the creation of professional learning teams.

The literature clearly established the importance of trust within a school (Cranston, 2011; Louis, 2007; Mullen & Jones, 2008). Teachers shared a desire to work with principals they could trust (Mullen & Jones, 2008). Research demonstrated a willingness by teachers to take more risk and accept additional tasks if the teacher felt they could trust their administrator (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Louis 2007). Cranston (2011) researched trust in connection with professional learning communities, he concluded that the principal is key to establishing the climate of trust and the faculty trust of the principal was essential for professional learning communities. The cost is great when the trust level is low in a school, turnover increases, achievement decreases and the culture suffers (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

The literature surrounding rural schools indicated that serving as a rural principal provided opportunities but incorporated unique challenges (Starr & White, 2008). While a rural elementary principal must wear many hats, they have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the needs of the teachers in the building (Mette, 2014; Renihan & Noonan, 2012). As Forsyth et al. (2007) explain, the behavior of the principal is closely examined in order for teachers to fully develop trust. As shown in the model of collective trust formation by Forsyth et al. (2011) social exchanges play a large role in the development of collective trust. Therefore, a principal in a rural school will be involved in more social exchanges due to the many roles

fulfilled within the school. A rural elementary principal that understands this process will enhance the many relationships with all stakeholders.

The fifth area of focus in the literature review was the role of the principal in establishing the school culture (Adams & Forsyth, 2013; Black, 2010; Cranston, 2011; Daly, 2009; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Hoy et al., 2002; Moolenaar et al., 2010). This area was found to have many connections to the previous areas of focus. Hoy et al. (2002) determined that collegial principal leadership was the greatest factor in developing faculty trust. Their study further indicated that to create a more open and positive climate, faculty trust was an absolute prerequisite. These facts would indicate a positive relationship between the role of the principal and the establishment of school culture.

The final area of focus in the literature review was the effect of school culture on student achievement (Adams & Forsyth, 2013; Blase & Blase, 2000; Johnson & Stevens, 2006). Adams and Forsyth (2013) concluded in their research that poverty and other environmental risks could be offset by the interactions between teachers and students. This provides evidence that establishing a climate in which teachers are more open to try various instructional strategies (Blase & Blase, 2000) increased the possibility of greater student achievement. In the study conducted by Johnson and Stevens (2006), they found a positive and relevant relationship between teachers' perceptions of school climate and student achievement. While a strong instructional leader is not needed to provide good teaching in isolation, if there is to be a school wide focus on exceptional instruction, a great leader is necessary (Quinn, 2002).

Research studies indicate the importance of positive relationships between administrators and teachers (Blase & Blase, 2006; Insley et al., 2016; Moye et al., 2005; Northfield, 2014; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b). Positive relationships are important for the establishment of

a positive culture for the school. Research indicates the connections between the culture of the school and student achievement (Johnson & Stevens, 2006; Marks & Printy, 2003). Where the research appears to be lacking is in the specifics of what factors create positive, enriching relationships in the school (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002) and which factors destroy the working relationship between teachers and administrators.

Chapter III

Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

Today's schools are facing ever increasing demands for accountability. This requires school staff to work together collaboratively to insure student success. Therefore, it is imperative that school administrators establish an environment of high trust (Kutsyuruba et al., 2011). In order to create a school culture where all staff members are working to increase the achievement of all students, a principal must be aware of how their leadership style influences the level of trust in the school.

The theoretical framework for this study (Figure 4) illustrates how the various trust criteria impacts the formation of the collective trust within a school. While the demands placed on the school from outside sources will influence the culture of the school, having a high level of collective trust will allow teachers to overcome the outside pressures resulting in positive consequences for the school (Forsyth et al., 2011).

The purpose of this study was to determine the leadership factors that either maintain or destroy a trusting relationship between an elementary school administrator and the teachers in rural school districts. Chapter Three provides further detail and explanation on the chosen methodology, research design, data collection and analysis.

Research Questions

The following were used to guide this inquiry:

1. What leadership style is most likely to nurture a trusting relationship between the elementary school principal and the teaching staff in a rural school district?

2.   What leadership factors have the greatest positive influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

3.   What leadership factors have the most negative influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

Research Design

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) explain that research approaches should be used in a manner that enhances the opportunity to answer the research questions. The interests of the research, the setting, the people being studied, and constrictions of the researcher should influence the method of the research (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016). For those reasons, this study was conducted using a mixed methods design. To effectively use mixed method design, researchers must consider all the best practices of quantitative and qualitative methods (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). For this study, quantitative data was gathered from six rural elementary schools with surveys. The leadership style of the principal was determined using surveys administered to the principal and all teachers in each building. The two different surveys utilized in the determination of the leadership style of the principal were: The Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2007) and Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio & Bass, 2004). A third survey, the Omnibus Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003) was employed to determine the level of trust within each school. This survey was given to the principal and all teachers in each school.

Following the analysis of the quantitative data, two schools were selected for the qualitative portion of the study. The school demonstrating the highest level of faculty trust in the principal and the school showing the lowest level of faculty trust in the principal were selected for further study. For the qualitative portion of the study, semi-structured interviews were utilized

to pursue the leadership factors that contributed to the level of trust between the principal and teachers. The principal of each school was interviewed in order to gather their beliefs on what leadership activities affected the level of trust within the building. Within each school, four teachers were selected to participate in the interview process. The teachers were randomly selected from those who indicated during the initial staff meeting their willingness to participate in further research. Each teacher was interviewed individually at a location of comfort for the interviewee.

Participants and Setting

The State Department of Education defines a rural school district as meeting one of two potential criteria. For this study, all school districts met the first criteria which states that a school district is defined as rural when there are less than 20 enrolled students per square mile within the district's boundaries (Rural School Districts, 2009). Utilizing this definition created a set of school districts for study that were significantly similar. All six school districts participating in this study were comprised of a single elementary school along with at least one secondary school and a district facility. Three of the school districts were on a four-day school week and three of the school districts maintained a five-day school week. There was one school district in which the superintendent of the school district also served as the principal of the elementary school.

The superintendents of each school district were initially contacted via email to introduce them to the researcher and the purpose of the study. Follow up contact was made via phone and/or email to determine interest in the research study and to establish the next steps in obtaining permission. Once permission was secured from the superintendent, each elementary principal was contacted via email to introduce the researcher and the study. Follow up contact was made with each principal to determine options for the researcher to attend a staff meeting to

introduce the study to teachers, collect informed consent from participants, and distribute the surveys. The list of schools, how they participated, and participant names are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Schools and Participants

School Name	Participation	Principal	Teachers
Central	Surveys and Interviews	Marissa	Wendy Carol Leslie Marilyn
East	Surveys and Interviews	Lori	Susan Kathy Judy Julie
Junction	Surveys		
North	Surveys		
South	Surveys		
West	Surveys		

After the analysis of the quantitative data and selection of two districts was completed, four teachers were randomly selected from each of the two chosen districts. This random selection was completed by drawing four participant contact cards from the teachers at the research school who indicated they would be willing to participate in an interview if their school was selected. Due to the fact that it would not be feasible to collect qualitative data from all participants, the smaller sample size was selected. The goal in qualitative research is to select a sample size that will allow for the acquisition of information to answer the research question (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, & McKibbon, 2015; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). When conducting, research involving interviews, the sample size should be set near the end of the research rather than created as a goal at the onset of the project (Taylor et al., 2016). In qualitative research, it is common to study a few individuals or cases (Creswell, 2015), "an N of 1 can be just as illuminating as a large sample" (Taylor et al., 2016, p. 106).

As it was critical to select participants from which the best information might be gathered (Merriam, 2002) participants were selected from the schools demonstrating the highest and lowest levels of faculty trust in the principal. The eight selected teachers were contacted via their preferred email address to determine preferences for interview time and location. If a response was not received to the initial email to the selected teachers, a follow up email was sent. After a third email was sent, an alternate teacher was drawn from the remaining participant cards. At one school site, an additional call for participants was sent out to acquire four teachers for interviews. All interviews were conducted individually with the teacher at a time and location comfortable for the interviewee. This was done in order create an environment in which the interviewee felt comfortable to interact naturally (Taylor et al., 2016).

Data Collection

Prior to any collection of data, the researcher completed the training "Protecting Human Research Participants" through the National Institutes of Health to ensure the safety of all participants (Appendix D). Permission was also sought and granted from the Human Research Review Committee at Northwest Nazarene University (Appendix E). Written permission had been secured from the superintendents of all six school districts (Appendix F-K). Principals from each elementary school were contacted via email to establish a time for the researcher to attend a staff meeting with the intent to introduce the study, secure an informed consent (Appendix L) from each participant, and provide survey packets to each teacher and the building administrator. The six building principals were willing to participate in the study and arranged an opportunity for the researcher to attend a staff meeting during the month of September.

At each building presentation, the researcher introduced herself and presented the background for the research study. A survey packet was presented to each participant. Each

packet contained a paper copy of the three surveys, a participant contact card, and a copy of the informed consent form. This presentation was given consistently at each site to increase the reliability of the research.

Each participant was asked to complete and return the informed consent form from their packet. The three surveys were completed and returned to the researcher in an envelope coded for the school being studied. Participants were asked to complete the contact card indicating whether they would like to participate in individual interviews should their school be selected and if so to indicate an email address at which they would like to be contacted. This contact card was placed in a separate sealed envelope coded for the school being researched and presented to the researcher. These steps were completed to provide the highest level of confidentiality for the research participants. Participants were provided a copy of the informed consent form for their personal use if desired at the time the survey packets were submitted to the researcher. In five of the six sites, additional packets were left for teachers who were absent from the staff meeting. These packets were then picked up by the researcher at a later date.

Survey One. To determine how closely the leadership style of the principal at each rural elementary school matched the Servant Leadership Style, The Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2007) was administered. The Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument (SLAI) has been frequently used in research studies to provide insight into the characteristics that match a Servant Leadership style. Each characteristic has been found to have a reliability coefficient of at least .89 using Cronbach's alpha. This survey was administered to the principal and teachers at each school. The surveys were completed by the principal and teachers during a staff meeting at each school site. The average response rate for the six schools

was 89%. Each school had a response rate of at least 70% as shown in Table 2. The mean score for each principal regarding the Servant Leadership Factors is demonstrated in Table 4.

Survey Two. To evaluate the principal for other leadership styles, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio & Bass, 2004) was administered. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) has been utilized in numerous studies to determine the leadership style of individuals. Each of the six leadership factor scales have demonstrated a reliability of .63 to .92 using Cronbach's alpha. This survey was administered to the principal and teachers at each school during a staff meeting. The average response rate for the six schools was 89%. Each school had a response rate of at least 70% as shown in Table 2. The mean score for the factors of the additional leadership styles were computed as shown in Tables 5 – 7. This survey also provided information on three outcomes of leadership. The mean score for each school is shown in Table 8.

Survey Three. Determining the trust level at each school was critical to the research study. Therefore, the Omnibus Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003) was used. This assessment has been frequently utilized in trust research. The reliability of the instrument has been found to range from .90 to .98 in each of the subscales. The survey was completed during a staff meeting at each school site. The average response rate for the six schools was 89%. Each school had a response rate of at least 70% as shown in Table 2. Using the protocol established by the authors of this instrument the standard score for each school was calculated. Using this standard score, the six schools were ranked based on the faculty trust level in the principal as shown in Table 3. This ranking provided the schools with the highest trust level and lowest trust level in the principal to be included in the qualitative portion of the research.

Interviews. Qualitative research seeks to understand from the participants' perspective (Marshall & Rossman, 2016) and yield rich descriptions (Taylor et al., 2016). A key to the successful completion of qualitative research is the conducting of interviews (Merriam, 2002). Central Elementary and East Elementary were selected to participate in the qualitative portion of the research. Four teachers at each school were randomly selected from those who indicated a willingness to be included in individual interviews. The principal at each school was also interviewed. Semi-structured interviews were held at locations deemed to be comfortable by the interviewee. The questions for the qualitative portion of the research were determined from the results of the quantitative analysis. Prior to conducting interviews with the participants, potential questions were discussed with the researcher's doctoral committee members. Pilot questions were then administered to teachers not participating in the research study. The final set of questions was then determined (Appendix M, Appendix N). Using a semi-structured format allowed the researcher the opportunity to ask follow up questions for additional information or clarification (Creswell, 2015; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Merriam, 2002). The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

Analytical Methods

The leadership style of each principal was determined from the SLAI (Dennis & Bocarnea, 2003) and the MLQ (Avolio & Bass, 2004). These surveys provided the leadership style of each building principal as perceived by the teachers in the building as well as the principal themselves. The mean of each leadership style characteristic was determined for each principal as shown in Tables 4 - 7.

The Omnibus Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003) was administered to all teachers and the principal at each building. This survey determined the level of trust for three

distinct categories: faculty trust in the principal, faculty trust in colleagues, and faculty trust in clients (students and parents). The standard scores were calculated for all three categories within each school. The standard score of the highest-ranking school in terms of faculty trust in the principal was compared with the standard score of the lowest ranking school using the protocol established by the authors of the Omnibus Trust Scale. As shown in Table 3, there was a significant difference between the standard scores of the lowest and highest trust level schools. Utilizing the normative data provided by the authors of the Omnibus Trust Scale one school scored lower than 97% of the schools and the comparison school scored higher than 84% of the schools (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). This equates to one school scoring two standard deviations below the average score on faculty trust in principal and the comparison school scoring one standard deviation above the average.

The principal and four teachers from the two selected schools were interviewed for the qualitative portion of this study. Each interview was held in a place of comfort for the interviewee. The interviews took 45 – 90 minutes each and were recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The transcripts were reviewed multiple times to determine relevant themes. The five factors of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2014) were utilized as a beginning of the coding process. The five factors are critical in the development of the collective trust level established at the school site. As teachers observe the principal, each action will be evaluated in terms of the trust criteria, this will then increase or decrease the teacher trust in the principal (Forsyth et al., 2011; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Additional codes were developed to indicate leadership characteristics found in the transcripts to influence trust. To narrow down the themes to a manageable quantity, the researcher returned to a review of the literature on trust in schools.

When the qualitative data was analyzed and a summary of the themes completed, member checking was prepared. To enhance the validity of qualitative research it is recommended to share a summary and interpretations of the data with the participants (Creswell, 2015; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). This process allows the researcher to check with the interviewees for accuracy of the information. Therefore, a summary of the themes along with the graphical representation of the connection between the themes was sent to the interview participants for comment (Appendix O). There were no respondents who provided recommended changes to the summary. One respondent stated that the information would be beneficial to use with her leadership team.

Role of the Researcher

As a researcher one must keep in mind potential bias. I have worked in elementary schools since 1993 and served as an administrator since 2001. I have worked all that time in rural elementary schools. This experience provides me with a complete understanding of the rural elementary school culture. While there are numerous leadership styles to which an elementary principal may subscribe, my personal preference for leadership style may pose a potential bias. Even more important than staying neutral, one must be aware of their own perspective and maintain an honest understanding about where one stands as a researcher (Taylor et al., 2016). To minimize this bias, I prepared a description regarding my leadership style and the beliefs I held regarding leadership practices in an elementary school. This allowed me to retain a focus on being an observer as I conducted the research and documented the facts of the study.

As I completed the quantitative portion of this study I found myself with mixed emotions. As a researcher, I was pleased to see that there was a difference in the trust levels of two schools. However, as an educator, I was concerned that there was a difference in the trust level of two

schools. As I conducted the literature review for this study, it was clear that the trust level of the school impacted the learning and achievement of the students. As an educator, I wanted to fix that low trust school, but as a researcher, I had to make sure that I was listening and gathering data. I had to remind myself why I was completing this study and that the information I gathered could be used to benefit many others. As I conducted each interview, I had to consciously prepare to maintain the focus on my role as the researcher.

Limitations

All research is faced with some limitation (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The most obvious limitation of this study resides in the fact that it was completed in only one region of one state within the United States. The fact that the research was conducted only with rural elementary schools poses both a limitation and benefit. The benefit comes from the increase in transferability of this research to other rural schools, an often-neglected segment of schools. The limitation is the lack of transferability to schools that are not located in a rural area. Difficulty may be found when applying the results of this study to secondary schools due to differences in the leadership styles between elementary and secondary administrators. However, research indicates schools are better learning environments when there is a high level of trust present (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Forsyth et al., 2011; Kochanek, 2005). Therefore, all school leaders may derive a benefit from this research in learning more about the factors that increase or decrease the faculty trust in the principal.

Chapter IV

Results

Introduction

A high level of trust within a school and between the various groups in the school must be present for a school to be successful. The school principal is the primary person to create and sustain that level of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). The purpose of this study is to determine the factors that either maintain or destroy the trust between a school administrator and the teachers in rural elementary schools. The following research questions provided the focus for the research:

1.   What leadership style is most likely to nurture a trusting relationship between the elementary school principal and the teaching staff in a rural school district?

2.   What leadership factors have the greatest positive influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

3.   What leadership factors have the most negative influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

This chapter includes a description of both the quantitative and qualitative results from the research, providing insight into the research questions.

Quantitative Results

To begin the research study six school districts were selected that met the definition of rural. The superintendent of each school was contacted first for permission to conduct research in the district. This was followed by an email contact to the principal of each elementary school. A time and date was established to conduct the surveys. The researcher attended a staff meeting at each school to provide information to the teachers about the research, distribute the surveys and collect responses. Conducting this face to face meeting enhanced the response rate from each

school. This was consistent with studies done comparing response rates of online versus paper-based surveys, where the response rate for paper-based surveys ranged from 32% to 75% (Nulty, 2008). The response rate for all six schools in this research were within or higher than that average.

At one school a teacher requested to not be included in the research as they were a brand-new teacher to the school. Two surveys were partially completed during the staff meeting and not returned to the researcher at a later date. The remaining non-completed surveys represent teachers who were absent from the school on the day of the staff meeting and did not complete and submit the survey left for them. The final response rate for each school is illustrated in Table 2. The number of completed surveys submitted totaled 113. Teachers submitted 107 and principals submitted six.

Table 2

Response Rates

School Name	MLQ	Trust Scale	SLAI
Central Elementary	100%	100%	100%
East Elementary	70%	70%	70%
Junction Elementary	82%	82%	82%
North Elementary	100%	100%	100%
South Elementary	84%	88%	88%
West Elementary	96%	96%	96%

Survey One: The Omnibus Trust Scale

The Omnibus Trust Scale uses a 6-Point Likert Scale with 26 items to evaluate the Faculty trust in Principal, Colleagues, and Clients (Appendix P-Q). This instrument was

developed with research conducted at The Ohio State University (Forsyth et al., 2011). The reliability and validity of the survey is strong and has been verified in the research (Forsyth et al., 2011).

This survey was administered paper-based at each school site. The responses were input into Microsoft Excel to conduct the calculations for the Standard Scores of each subscale. The results from each school are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Omnibus Trust Scale Standard Scores

School Name	Trust in Principal	Trust in Colleagues	Trust in Clients
Central Elementary	678	664	637
East Elementary	334	461	593
Junction Elementary	599	453	590
North Elementary	674	664	663
South Elementary	616	634	663
West Elementary	575	673	665

Although the Omnibus Trust Scale provided data on the faculty trust in colleagues and faculty trust in clients, the focus of this study was on the faculty trust in principal. Reviewing the scores for each school in terms of the faculty trust in the principal a clear difference was seen between Central Elementary and East Elementary. Utilizing the normative data from the studies conducted at The Ohio State University, Central Elementary with a standard score of 678 scored higher than 84% of the schools in the sample, or one standard deviation above the average. East Elementary with the standard score of 334 scored lower than 97% of the schools in the sample, or two standard deviations below the average (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). This gives a

total of three standard deviations between the two schools in terms of faculty trust in the principal.

The next step was to determine whether the difference between the two schools was statistically significant. In other words, to demonstrate that the results did not happen just by chance (Tanner, 2012). To verify the significance an Independent Samples T-Test was conducted. This test was selected because the two schools were mutually exclusive, teachers could not belong to both groups. The mean faculty trust in principal scores were analyzed using the SPSS program. There was a statistical difference between Central Elementary (M=5.71, SD=.514) and East Elementary (M=3.27, SD=1.01) resulting in t(26)=7.78, p=0.00. Thus, the difference in faculty trust in principal between the two schools was statistically significant. Therefore, these two schools were selected to participate in the qualitative portion of this research.

Even though faculty trust in the principal is the primary focus for this research, the other subscales should be reviewed as well. It is interesting to note that while Central Elementary scored highest in faculty trust in principal, it was not the highest scoring school in either faculty trust in colleagues or faculty trust in clients. While Central Elementary's scores were in the 600 range (one standard deviation above the average) there were other schools with equal or higher scores. The literature reviewed indicates that the principal plays a key role in the trust level within the school, however there are additional factors that influence some areas. As noted on the model of collective trust formation, these influences may be either internal or external. For example, poverty level and the number of minority students will influence the faculty trust in clients (Forsyth et al., 2011).

Additionally, while East Elementary scored the lowest in faculty trust in principal, it was not the lowest scoring in the two additional subscales. East Elementary showed greater variance

between the three trust measures than any other school in this study. Trust in colleagues for East

Elementary was higher than one other school in the research group. One reason for a slightly

higher subscale score in faculty trust in colleagues might be attributed to what one interviewee

summarized as a willingness of the teachers to support one another against the perceived attacks

of the administrator. Judy (teacher) from East Elementary explained the importance of colleagues

as, "We have already been through two principals in three years and through it all we have been

great and we can trust each other."

While East Elementary scored two standard deviations below the national mean in faculty

trust in the principal, they scored one standard deviation below the national mean in faculty trust

in colleagues and were at the national mean in faculty trust in clients. This difference may be

explained by Forsyth et al. (2011) as they describe that leadership matters for the development of

trust, but "teachers, parents, students, and principals share responsibility for the existence of

internal conditions associated with collective trust" (p. 57). Research indicates that each time

groups have successful interactions the amount of trust between them grows (Kochanek, 2005).

As the principals at both schools included in phase two of this research study were second year

principals in their buildings they may not have had the opportunity for the number of interactions

necessary to create a full level of trust. Therefore, teachers have had more opportunities to build

trust with one another, students, and parents potentially causing the difference in the trust scores.

Survey Two: Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument

The Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument (SLAI) was created through the research

and work of Robert Dennis and Mihai Bocarnea (2007). This survey provides data on how well a

leader matches up with the seven constructs of the Servant Leadership Style. The survey uses a

7-point Likert Scale with 42 items (Appendix R-S). The survey has been repeatedly used in research and has held up to the standards of reliability and validity.

The survey was administered paper-based to the principal and teachers at each school site during a staff meeting. The results were entered into Microsoft Excel and the means of each construct calculated. The results for each school are found in Table 4.

Table 4

Servant Leadership Factors

School Name	Loving	Humble	Altruistic	Visionary	Trusting	Serving	Empowering
Central Elementary	5.65	5.74	5.38	5.29	5.77	5.65	5.64
East Elementary	3.52	3.21	3.05	2.47	3.30	3.52	3.41
Junction Elementary	4.93	4.90	4.23	5.09	4.98	4.93	5.13
North Elementary	5.45	5.46	5.25	4.86	5.43	5.45	5.34
South Elementary	4.90	5.25	4.45	4.35	5.08	4.90	4.85
West Elementary	4.68	4.70	4.52	4.21	5.03	4.68	4.94

A review of the data reveals that the principal in Central Elementary matches the Servant Leadership Style more closely than the other five leaders measured in this study. This is the case across all seven constructs. The leadership style of the principal in East Elementary was least like that of a servant leader from the six leaders measured in this study. The research in which the SLAI was utilized did not indicate one leadership construct to be more important in the

development of faculty trust in the principal than any other construct. However, the schools that scored higher in faculty trust in the principal generally scored a higher mean in all seven constructs of the servant leadership assessment. This would indicate that all seven constructs may play a role in the development of the trust level faculty hold in their principal.

Central Elementary had the highest ranking for trust in principal as measured with the Omnibus Trust Scale, the principal also scored the highest of the six principals in all areas measured by the SLAI. The principal at Central Elementary scored the highest in the construct of trusting out of the seven measured constructs. This verifies the high level of trust found at Central Elementary. East Elementary had the lowest rating in trust in principal as measured by the Omnibus Trust Scale and in all areas of the SLAI the principal has the lowest scores. Thus, the principal in East Elementary demonstrates less match to the Servant Leadership Style than the other five principals in the research group.

Survey Three: The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was designed by Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard Bass (Appendix T-U). Utilizing 45 questions with a 5-point Likert scale, the MLQ provides information on how closely a leader matches the characteristics of a Transformational Leader, a Transactional Leader, and a Passive/Avoidant Leader. The MLQ also provides information on three outcomes of leadership behaviors. The MLQ is frequently utilized in research regarding the leadership style of an individual in a variety of organizations. The MLQ meets the expectations for reliability and validity.

The results from this survey provided information regarding how closely each leader matched the transformational or transactional leadership style. Both transformational and transactional leaders focus on getting their followers to move toward a collective goal. The

difference comes in how each leadership style achieves the goal. A transformational leader will develop the individuals to exceed the normal expectations of achievement. A transactional leader will determine the roles and tasks that must be completed to achieve the task as they move toward the goal (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This difference in leadership style is critical in the environment of great change taking place in today's schools.

The survey was administered using a paper-pencil method to the principal and teachers during a staff meeting at each of the six school sites. The results were input into Microsoft Excel for data computation. The means for each scale were calculated and the results are exhibited in Tables 5-8.

Table 5

Transformational Leadership Factors

School Name	Idealized Attributes	Idealized Behaviors	Inspirational Motivation	Intellectual Stimulation	Individual Consideration
Central Elementary	3.52	3.69	3.90	3.35	3.16
East Elementary	2.32	2.50	2.62	1.93	1.70
Junction Elementary	3.19	3.40	3.67	3.00	2.75
North Elementary	3.57	3.21	3.67	3.38	3.32
South Elementary	3.18	3.23	3.31	2.80	2.52
West Elementary	3.20	3.16	3.36	2.83	2.61

In reviewing the factors that characterize a transformational leader, a difference is present between the principals of Central Elementary and East Elementary. In all areas, the principal of

Central Elementary more closely matches the characteristics of a transformational leader than does the principal of East Elementary. Of the six schools surveyed, the principal of Central Elementary achieved the highest means for two of the five factors of transformational leadership. In the three areas that the principal of Central Elementary did not achieve the highest mean, they scored the second highest. When considering the national norms (Avolio & Bass, 2004), the principal of Central Elementary scored above the 60th percentile in all 5 areas, demonstrating a tendency toward a transformational leadership style.

In all five areas regarding the style of transformational leadership, the principal of East Elementary received the lowest match. This would indicate that out of the six principals considered in this research, the principal of East Elementary was less transformational than the others. When comparing to the national norms (Avolio & Bass, 2004), the principal of East Elementary scored below the 40th percentile in all five areas, demonstrating leadership characteristics less like that of a transformational leader. The results would indicate a connection between the transformational leadership style and trust development in schools.

The review of this section of data revealed that the leaders of all six schools scored highest in the factor of inspirational motivation out of the five transformational leadership factors. Inspirational motivation is demonstrated by the leader's ability to describe the vision and mission of the school (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This would indicate that the principals in all six schools are able to describe what a successful elementary school would look like. However, the overall results indicate that the message may not be inspiring all groups to achieve or move toward accomplishment of the vision and mission.

For five of the six leaders in this research, the factor of individualized consideration was the area in which they achieved the lowest mean score. Individualized consideration is

demonstrated by understanding the needs of the individuals within the organization, treating individuals uniquely, and assisting the professional development of each individual (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Two principals scored above the 60th percentile, three principals scored between the 30th and 40th percentiles, however, the principal of East Elementary scored below the 10th percentile in this area. Avolio and Bass (2004) describe individual consideration as crucial in making the difference between a leader and a manager. When a leader demonstrates concern, and is connected to teachers on an individual basis, teachers are more likely to respond positively and work harder (Barnett & McCormick, 2004). Therefore, the low score for the principal of East Elementary in this area may indicate one reason for the lower faculty trust in principal score.

This result was in contradiction to research conducted in rural schools. The previous research indicates that in rural schools the principal works with less staff and therefore has an increased ability to know the individuals in the school and their needs (Mette, 2014; Renihan & Noonan, 2012) which would be demonstrated by a higher mean score on the factor of individualized consideration. One possibility for this difference may be the fact in today's schools, teachers are treated more similarly, rather than as unique individuals. Another facet for consideration would be the fact that professional development has been greatly reduced over the last several years in schools in response to funding cuts.

Table 6

Transactional Leadership Factors

School Name	Contingent Reward	Management by Exception: Active
Central Elementary	3.52	1.29
East Elementary	2.09	2.62
Junction Elementary	3.30	1.35
North Elementary	3.40	1.31
South Elementary	2.94	1.22
West Elementary	3.20	1.37

Within the MLQ, two scale items provide information on the characteristics of a transactional leadership style. The transactional leadership factors encompass the management activities that a leader would complete (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Contingent reward is providing clear goals and recognizing followers when goals are achieved. Management by exception: active (MBEA) means to set expectations for compliance, monitor closely for mistakes, and to act quickly when errors are noticed (Avolio & Bass, 2004). A well-developed leader should be fulfilling the management duties as well as the leadership activities.

A review of the six schools in this study demonstrates that for the principals in five of the six schools, there was a distinct difference between the mean score for contingent reward and MBEA. The principal of East Elementary scored similar means for the two transactional leadership factors. However, when comparing the means to the national norms (Avolio & Bass, 2004), the difference is enhanced. The principal of East Elementary scored at the 10th percentile for contingent reward. The principal of Central Elementary scored just above the 80th percentile and the other four principals scored near or above the 50th percentile. For the factor of MBEA,

the principal of East Elementary scored at the 80th percentile while the other principals' scores were below the 40th percentile. Scoring below the 50th percentile for these two factors would indicate that a leader was less transactional. Therefore, the principals in this study do not clearly demonstrate a leadership style that is more or less transactional. Research conducted within the public sector in the United States demonstrated that the transformational leadership style increased the trust level of employees at a higher rate than transactional leadership. From all the factors of both styles, individualized consideration had the greatest effect on the trust level (Asencio & Mujkic, 2016). Reflecting on these results alongside the other data in this study would indicate that contingent reward is a factor that increases trust while management by exception: active decreases teacher's trust.

Table 7

Passive/Avoidant Leadership Factors

School Name	Management by Exception: Passive	Laissez-Faire
Central Elementary	0.60	0.30
East Elementary	1.52	1.54
Junction Elementary	1.09	1.05
North Elementary	0.76	0.24
South Elementary	0.94	0.48
West Elementary	1.16	0.66

The last leadership style assessed by the MLQ is that of passive/avoidant behavior. This leadership style is characterized as a reactive leadership style. Two scale factors were measured with the MLQ: management by exception: passive and laissez-faire. Management by exception: passive is defined as not becoming involved until problems become persistent or chronic (Avolio

& Bass, 2004). Laissez-Faire is described as lacking leadership or being absent from situations when leadership presence is needed. Utilizing this leadership style has a negative effect on the followers and the culture of the organization (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

The means for all six leaders were relatively low in this area. The principals scoring the highest faculty trust in the principal had the lowest mean scores for both components of the passive/avoidant leadership style. Lori (principal, East), who had the lowest score in faculty trust in the principal scored the highest mean scores in both components. This holds true to the literature that a passive leadership style will result in decreased performance and trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Forsyth et al., 2011; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

When comparing Central Elementary and East Elementary, there was a difference between the means. Using the national norms to determine the percentile scores, the principal of Central Elementary scored below the 40th percentile in both categories while the principal of East Elementary scored near or above the 80th percentile for both categories. This would indicate that the principal of East Elementary demonstrated more characteristics of the passive/avoidant leadership style than the other principals in this research study.

Table 8

Outcomes of Leadership

School Name	Extra Effort	Effectiveness	Satisfaction with the Leadership
Central Elementary	3.87	3.80	3.85
East Elementary	2.10	2.19	2.11
Junction Elementary	3.40	3.23	3.43
North Elementary	3.54	3.68	3.78
South Elementary	3.08	3.41	3.41
West Elementary	3.14	3.37	3.54

In addition to providing information about the leadership styles, the MLQ assesses the success of the group to which it is administered. Success is demonstrated in the outcomes of leadership scores. These scores demonstrate the perceptions of the teachers regarding the performance of the principal. Extra effort is the motivational impact of the leader on the group. Effectiveness is the perception that the principal can work well with all groups in the school. Satisfaction is the rating of how satisfied the teachers are with the leadership methods of the principal in working with others (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

The principal of Central Elementary had the highest mean in all three of the leadership outcomes with only minor variation between the three scores. The principal of East Elementary received the lowest mean in all three leadership outcomes with minimal differences between the scores. When the means are compared to the national norms, the principal of Central Elementary scored above the 70th percentile in all three areas while the principal of East Elementary scored below the 30th percentile in all three areas. This would indicate a difference in the teachers' perceptions as to the success of the leadership methods between the two schools.

Teacher perception in all schools except East Elementary indicate that the principal provides for the three outcomes of leadership "fairly often". This result demonstrates that for the six schools studied there is a connection between the trust level in the school and the culture of satisfaction of teachers. This connection is consistently demonstrated in the literature on school trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Forsyth et al., 2011; Kochanek, 2005; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Qualitative Results

During the second phase of this research, interviews were conducted with eight teachers and two principals. The purpose of the interviews was to provide data for research questions two and three.

2.　　What leadership factors have the greatest positive influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

3.　　What leadership factors have the most negative influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

The analysis of the quantitative data revealed a difference between the faculty trust in principal scores from the Omnibus Trust Scale of Central Elementary and East Elementary, therefore these two schools were selected to participate in the second phase of the research. The principal and four teachers at each school were interviewed to collect the qualitative data. The semi-structured interviews were held individually at a time and location convenient for the interviewee. The interviews were transcribed and coded. To provide a more thorough analysis of the qualitative data, themes were developed from the interview transcriptions (Creswell, 2015). The themes that were developed along with their relationships are illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Relationships of Themes in Qualitative Data

Interpersonal Skills

- Communication
- Support
- Cooperation
- Recognition

Five Trust Factors

Relationships
- Advocacy
- Collaboration
- Staff Loyalty
- Consistency

Direct Style of Leadership

Negative Focus
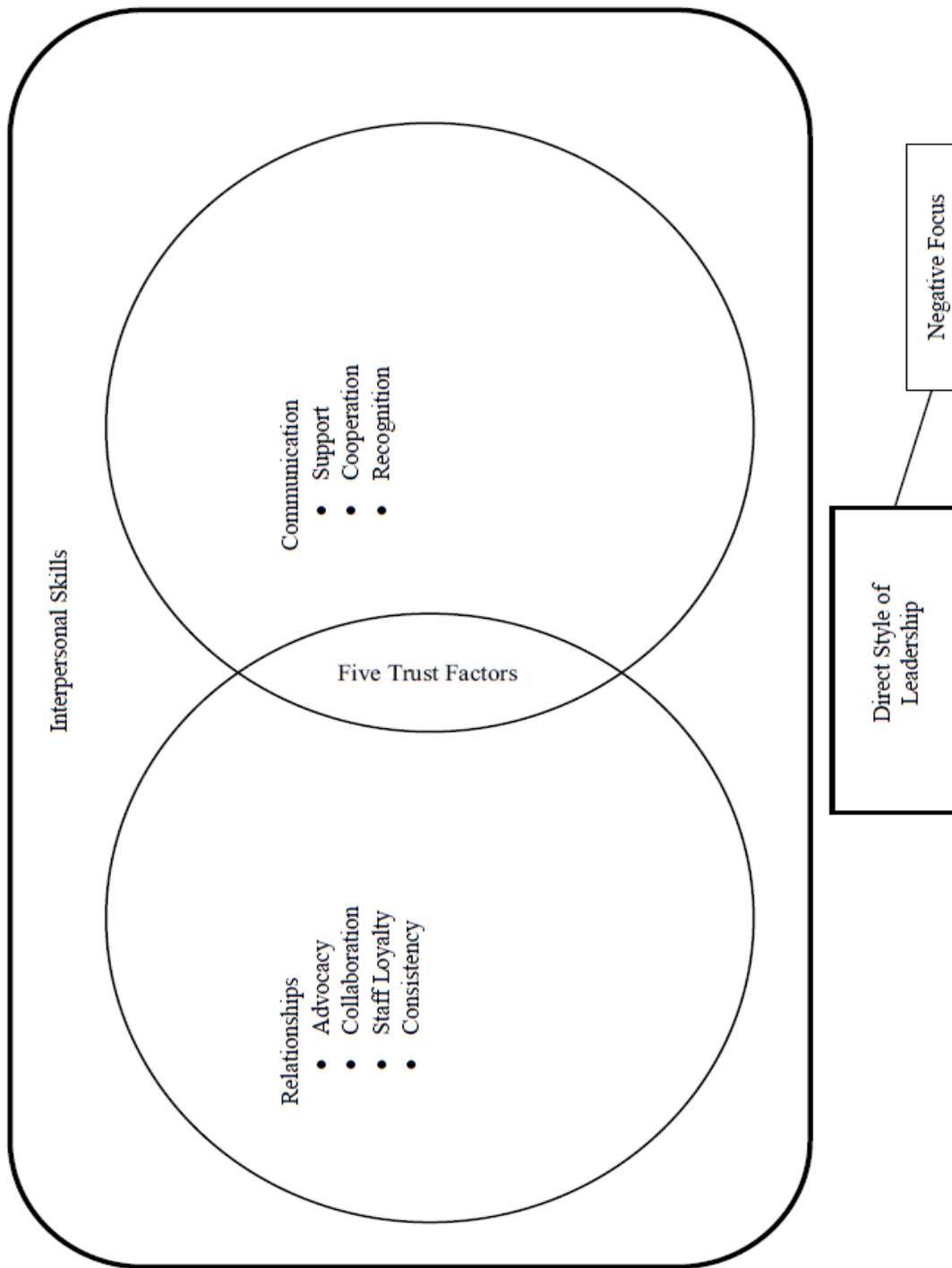
Theme One: Communication

> If you don't feel like you can talk to the principal throughout the year about things that
> come up then there's not going to be trust….so having that open communication where
> you don't feel like you are going to get in trouble if you have messed up, you are going to
> get help improving if you have messed up.

Susan (teacher, East) shared these words as she discussed the importance of open lines of communication between the principal and teachers in a school. Effective communication is an important aspect in a school system. A principal must be able to communicate their vision, but also have those typical day to day conversations with staff and students. Teachers need to have the confidence that they can share concerns, ideas, and successes with the principal. In schools where there is a low trust level, the communication system is often found to be lacking and teachers evade conversations with the principal, further preventing the development of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Communication was the code that appeared the most often throughout the transcripts for this research. Wendy (teacher, Central) explains how her principal's communication makes her feel, "She has excellent communication skills. She makes you feel like you're more than valuable, like you have a purpose there, you are loved and your talent and your skills are everything that she was looking for." However, other teachers shared that communication was often a struggle, while relevant information was shared, concerns were seldom heard. Lori (principal, East) shared her goal of changing conversations, "So just trying to be more aware of even when I communicate with them, how I communicate with them, to hopefully change our discussions and our conversations." The teachers interviewed stressed the importance of being able to discuss a variety of topics with the principal and feel confident that the discussion would

be held in confidence, be heard with an open mind, and not be used as a piece of the evaluation process. Transformational leaders demonstrate this ability to communicate in the factor of individualized consideration as they discuss matters openly and honestly without retaliation (Hauserman & Stick, 2013). Servant leaders utilize communication to better understand the individuals that they are leading (Van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). Teachers from Central Elementary repeatedly discussed how comfortable they felt talking with their principal about any issues that may arise. However, in East Elementary, where the trust level was lower, teachers frequently stated that they did not feel confident in going to the principal to discuss issues. This would be consistent with the model of collective trust formation which indicates that collective trust is developed when there are repeated social exchanges that are evaluated through the lenses of the five trust factors (Forsyth et al., 2011). When mutual trust between the leader and the teachers is present, both sides are more likely to view the behavior of the others in a more positive light (Louis & Murphy, 2017).

Another form of communication discussed regularly was the way the principal of the school communicated with the staff. Communication skills have been found to be a central factor in the development of trust in organizations (Insley et al., 2016; Kutsyuruba & Walker, 2014). Many forms of communication were represented throughout the interviews. Consistently, teachers stated that when principals provided open communication that kept the staff informed it enhanced the trust in the principal. When communication was delivered in a negative tone or was inconsistent, the trust was diminished. Carol (teacher, Central) made a point that this did not mean communication had to always be positive, "she is willing to hear the hard things and she is willing to say the hard things, but she does it in a way that you hear the care and the concern from her." Having an open communication system throughout the school is critical to a principal

who wants to institute change (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Consequently it would be beneficial to the principal of a school to pay attention to the manner of communication utilized in the school and constantly work on improving all channels.

Support. The first subtheme of communication is support. The idea of being supported by the principal was discussed by teachers from both the high and low trust schools. Getting support from the principal was typically described as the help given to solve problems or increase student achievement. Support did not have to be in the form of praise or positive reinforcement in order to increase the trust in the principal. Carol (teacher, Central) gave an example of this:

> She was helping our team kind of troubleshoot and problem solve some things and was able to really deal with each of us involved in a very straight-forward manner and then say, okay this is what I can do to help with the situation. And then following through on that and making sure that we were being held accountable. Then she gave us the support that we needed in a very honest forthright way even if it was a little painful probably for all of us.

A supportive principal will allow teachers to grow with constructive criticism (Kochanek, 2005) and will facilitate the formation of the collective trust (Forsyth et al., 2011). When teachers felt that support was missing they indicated that their trust in the principal declined. Marilyn (teacher, Central) expressed concern about the possibility of an administrator that was not supportive, "Some administrators make it feel like there is something wrong with you if you have to ask for help, you have to act like you have it all together or it is going to be a mark on your evaluation."

For principals in rural elementary schools, providing support to teachers in addition to the numerous other tasks can often become difficult. The increase in the availability of funding for instructional coaches has assisted some schools. However, many rural schools still do not have the luxury of instructional coaches or assistant principals (Starr & White, 2008). Both principals involved in part two of this study were the single administrator in their building, while also filling additional district roles such as federal programs. Judy (teacher, East) shared how the principal could demonstrate support, "Spend time in people's classrooms and be in their collaboration meetings. Be involved with your teachers, not just be in your office and wait for there to be a problem."

Cooperation. The second subtheme of communication is cooperation. While resembling the subtheme of collaboration, cooperation in this context refers to the connections of communication and working together as a team in the school. Marilyn (teacher, Central) shared an example of how the principal used communication skills to enhance the cooperation at her school. "She [the principal] was careful to choose which things she changed…. It was, can we try it this way type of thing instead of this is how it is going to be."

Throughout the interviews cooperation was discussed as the ability of the principal to create a culture in which staff members were willing to work together. The literature would indicate that cooperation and trust are reciprocal factors in a school. "A spirit of cooperation lays a foundation for trust to develop, and greater trust helps create greater cooperation" (Tschannen-Moran, 2014, p. 130). Susan (teacher) described the cooperation in East Elementary as "Some of us are willing to put in that extra effort and that extra time and other people are kind of resentful that they have to do that." At Central Elementary, Wendy (teacher) described the cooperation as, "I think we are trying really hard to become one because a year and a half ago they were a totally

separate group, so I think we are trying to." The data from the interviews would validate what was found in the literature, building a level of cooperation in the school will increase the trust and building trust in the school will increase the willingness to cooperate. Kathy (teacher, East) explained that effective communication was the "scaffolding" that was necessary to get the cooperation of teachers regarding a change in the system.

Recognition. The third subtheme of communication was recognition. Recognition is providing positive feedback to teachers for activities completed. Teachers are vulnerable to the principal of the school. The principal holds significant power over the teachers. As Bryk and Schneider (2002) explain, any actions that a principal may take to reduce the feeling of vulnerability on the part of the teachers assists in increasing the trust level. Therefore, a principal who provides recognition to teachers demonstrates an attitude of caring that may decrease the feeling of vulnerability on the part of the teacher.

Teachers from both schools in this study indicated how receiving recognition from the principal for the extra effort as well as the regular work they completed increased the trust in the school. Wendy (teacher, Central) summarized this,

> She acknowledges staff when there is something really, even just insignificant things, but also significant things, she sends out an email and she makes a list of all the people that really showed extra effort that week or maybe she just wanted to say, hey, I'm proud of you, so I think that really builds trust because they feel valued.

Providing recognition to teachers is a task that can easily be completed by principals and based on the information from this study, it enhances the trust between teachers and principal. While the form of the recognition did not appear to make a difference in the development of trust, several teachers expressed the need for this recognition to be apparent to their peers as well. This

would demonstrate the importance of the development of not just faculty trust in the principal, but also the faculty trust in colleagues as both will contribute to the collective trust of the school.

In elementary schools, communication is at the heart of everyday functions. The trust in a school is built over time with repeated interactions between the groups in the school (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Forsyth et al., 2011; Kochanek, 2005; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Placing trust in another incorporates being vulnerable to others and includes some risk. Using Kochanek's model of trust building in schools, the first step is to ease the vulnerabilities in order to provide low and high risk interactions to take place (Kochanek, 2005). The principal of a school must establish an effective system of communication to allow teachers to feel less vulnerable to each other and the principal. In the rural elementary school setting, this may be complicated by the fact that the school is central to the community and "everything that occurs in a rural school is accessible to the community and news travels quickly" (Cruzeiro & Boone, 2009, p. 7). This adds another dynamic to the communication system within the school of which the principal must be aware.

Theme Two: Relationships

> Relationship based would probably be my number one, I like to be part of the team. I always joke that I am a great principal but that I am a sucky boss, because I don't like that piece of micromanaging, oh they are not at school on time. Well, it's because I get it, they have three kids and they are single and they are trying to get out the door or they are in grad school and they are exhausted. You know, so it's sometimes that relationship piece will color my lenses a different shade than sometimes a principal needs.

This was how Marissa (principal, Central) described her leadership style. While her description includes a slight negative tilt to the formation of relationships with her teachers that was not seen in the results of the trust survey. Her school demonstrated the highest level of faculty trust in the

principal of the six schools surveyed. The scores were one standard deviation above the mean when compared to the national standard scores. The teachers from her school described her as developing an appropriate relationship that was friendly, but not a friend. It is apparent that Marissa (principal, Central) understands how important relationships are to the collective trust in a school.

"I think building relationships is the most important thing you can do to get people to trust you," Wendy (teacher, Central) stated. The themes of relationships appeared frequently throughout the interviews conducted in this research study. High quality relationships that increase the community togetherness is a key aspect of servant leadership (Van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). In order to build a high level of trust within a school the stage must be set for positive interactions to take place between the individuals within the school (Kochanek, 2005). The principal is key to creating the opportunities for interaction. As teachers are vulnerable to the principal, positive relationships must be demonstrated between the principal and teachers for teachers to feel safe enough to trust the principal (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Forsyth et al., 2011; Kochanek, 2005; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). The words of the principal as well as actions and inactions contribute to the establishment of the relationships between the leader and teachers. This matches the model of collective trust formation as repeated exchanges develop the collective trust found in the school.

The presence of positive and caring relationships between the principal and teachers increased the level of faculty trust in the principal. On the other hand, the lack of relationships or an undesirable relationship was damaging to the development of trust. Schools have a hierarchical structure that provides the principal with significant control over the teachers. This uneven power structure makes it the responsibility of the principal to develop and sustain the

trusting relationships in the school (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). In the majority of cases, developing positive relationships with the school staff is not a difficult feat, although it takes time. Even in those schools marked by dysfunction, in which teachers may have poor attitudes and possibly attempt to undermine the leadership, it is the responsibility of the principal to remain trustworthy (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

When asked what a principal should do to build trust in a school, Susan (teacher, East) responded, "They need to take the time to get to know their staff, because I don't think that my principal could really tell you anything about me as a person." The principals from both schools in this study indicated the importance of finding the time to meet with teachers and get to know them on a more personal level. Finding the time to achieve that goal was expressed as the biggest stumbling block to achieving the personal connection. Julie (teacher, East) described how she was able to establish that relationship with her principal, "When I started out here in East Elementary, before school began I had many conversations with Lori on a more personal level because we were both trying to arrange and organize our offices, and get to know the school layout." This statement indicates the need for that connection between the leader and teacher on a personal level, as Julie was unique in her relationship with Lori.

Establishing the initial relationship with teachers is important for the principal. Each principal needs to determine the manner that best meets their leadership style and consciously make the effort to establish that personal relationship with faculty. However, it does not end with that effort, the principal's daily interactions demonstrate their regard for teachers. Teachers watch these actions to determine the value and respect they are receiving from the principal (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Principals must maintain awareness of their daily interactions, even in a culture of high trust. Demonstrated within the model of collective trust formation is the repeated

interaction between groups, this continues over time either increasing or decreasing the trust level. The exchanges do not stop when a level of trust is achieved (Forsyth et al., 2011). As teachers are vulnerable to the power of the principal, a minor action may have great significance to the teacher (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). When considering the rural school setting, where the principal is known by everyone in the community, the principal must be even more alert to this possibility. An action or statement occurring within the community that betrays the trust of the faculty will have egregious impacts on the school culture.

As the theme of relationships was explored in the transcripts, four subthemes were discovered. The subthemes are: advocacy, collaboration, staff loyalty and consistency. Each subtheme was found to contribute to the development of the relationship between the teachers and the principal of the school. All four subthemes could make a positive or a negative contribution to the relationship development.

Advocacy. The first subtheme occurring within relationships is that of advocacy. Kathy (teacher, East) describes her perception of advocacy:

> Advocate for staff, advocate for kids, advocate for what you know is right, even if it looks like a bumpy journey, even though it looks like people aren't going to agree, especially maybe your boss or the board, you know what's right, fight for it – you know your staff are so just be on their side, get on their team.

Throughout the interviews, teachers expressed the need to know that the principal would be on their side, fight for what they needed when necessary, and make sure the voices of the elementary teachers were heard at the district level. Carol (teacher, Central) explained how she felt her principal was an advocate for the teachers:

She really has your back, she really does. I feel like, and not in a way that is unrealistic, because she will say the hard things to you too. She will stand up for you, but then later say, okay, I had your back on that; so, this is what we need to work on so that I can continue to support you.

The principals of both schools indicated that it was their desire to be the advocate for the staff when discussing professional development and schedules with the district team. Teachers stated that having a principal who was on their side, had their back, or consistently advocated for the good of the school significantly increased their feeling of value and in turn increased the trust they felt in the principal.

Collaboration. The subtheme of collaboration was described as the willingness and ability of the principal to work alongside the teachers to accomplish a task as well as setting the stage for teachers to be able to work together. Marissa (principal, Central) shared how this collaborative style helped to increase the trust in her school:

We implemented a new writing curriculum last year that I'm really familiar with and that I believe in….At this time last year when we started looking at the first unit, just being willing to jump in and do it with them…I think that helped them realize that I make mistakes or I work just as hard as they do on this and I believe in it, so you know let's figure it out together and so I think that was a big thing last year as far as building that trust.

Marissa's (principal, Central) ability and desire to get involved in the writing curriculum and assist teachers did make a positive impact. All four teachers interviewed from Central Elementary reflected on how their principal would help with the writing curriculum and how this helped to increase trust and create a more productive climate in the school. Carol (teacher,

Central) summed it up as, "She wouldn't ask you to do anything that she wouldn't be willing to do herself and I think that's pretty amazing."

Another dimension of collaboration that was discussed was the principal creating opportunities for the staff to be able to collaborate. The condition of principal leadership was determined to be a requirement for teacher collaboration to function well and provide assistance to increasing student achievement (Goddard et al., 2015). However, when principal leadership is not enhancing teacher collaboration, teacher dedication will decline. Judy (teacher, East) described her frustration:

> There are a few things that are like that where information is not shared, it's kind of like these are the only people who get to make these decisions and so other people aren't going to be consulted…. There needs to be some more transparency, more people involved in how that operates. But there is not a lot of willingness to let people in.

Often in rural elementary schools, there are few teachers to serve on teams and committees and therefore, the same people tend to always be appointed. However, it is important for a principal to continue to attempt to coach other staff to prepare for leadership positions on committees.

Staff loyalty. The next subtheme of relationships was staff loyalty. Staff loyalty was defined as the manner in which the staff was loyal to the principal, the principal loyal to the staff, and the staff loyal to one another. A common method to begin a new program or change is to institute a small group or committee. This is generally beneficial to making change and growing trust. However, when the groups become exclusionary they become detrimental to the development of trust within the school (Kochanek, 2005). This was evident in the statements of two teachers from East Elementary as they described the same group of three to five people receiving training on new initiatives and those teachers being the ones who get to make the decisions. The erosion

of trust was further explained by Kathy (teacher, East), "Then I think it kind of makes you maybe start making other people distrustful…. How come the fifth-grade team got that information but nobody else did?"

Carol (teacher, Central) was asked whether the leadership style of the principal impacted the trust in the school, this was her response:

> Absolutely, in fact that is why I came to this school, because she was my principal before and an opening came up. I really enjoyed working with her and she provides a vision that lines up with what my vision is for kids so it is really easy to jump on board.

This response expresses the manner in which a positive relationship with a teacher leads to increased trust as well as loyalty.

Lori (principal, East) shared the difficulty when taking on the leadership of a building with an established staff:

> If I sum it up in one word it is just hard. You know especially with a leadership when you inherit a staff it is not people that you hire on, it's people that have been here and so you are having to build that trust with those people that have been here because somebody else thought that they should be here and whether you agree or disagree you have got to build the trust with them.

This demonstrates another reason for the development of relationships with the staff and conscious work on developing trust within the school. Even though East Elementary scored lower in the faculty trust in the principal and the interviews indicated some concerns about the collective trust in the school, frequently the teachers described a loyalty to the principal. It can best be summed up with the statement from Kathy (teacher, East), "She has a phenomenal staff

that wants her to be successful, if she can just figure out how to I guess, lead them you know in a more positive way."

Consistency. The final subtheme under relationships is consistency. Throughout the interviews there were two areas discussed in regards to consistency: consistency of expectations between different groups and the consistency of the principal's actions. A principal must demonstrate consistency in their actions to permit teachers the assurance they can trust the principal to respond in a reliable manner (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Marilyn (teacher, Central) described how the staff can count on the principal to complete the tasks they need, "Someone says I need this, and she said okay I'll do that, she writes it down and it gets done. We know that it is going to happen." When expectations are not consistent between the principal and the teachers then feelings such as these described by Kathy (teacher, East) transpire, "I think that is where that kind of mistrust comes from, it is like well gosh, really, that is good for you, but that is not good for me?" This result is an example of the comparison made when developing the collective trust between the observed behavior and the expected behavior. When there is a mismatch between the two, trust will not likely develop.

Kathy (teacher, East) explains how she feels regarding the connection between consistency and relationships:

I think making yourself visible in those classrooms. If you say you are going to be at a meeting, you need to be at the meeting. If you are going to say that you are going to hold people accountable for notes or for minutes from collaborations, then hold them accountable.

She went on to describe how teachers are willing to do the work when the leader is consistent about reviewing the information. However, when that consistency is not applied trust begins to fade and the desire of teachers to complete tasks begins to diminish.

As demonstrated in the model for collective trust formation (Forsyth et al., 2011), trust develops over repeated interactions between groups. As these repetitions occur, teachers are watching the behavior of the leader to determine whether the actions match up with what the leader has verbally expressed (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Forsyth et al., 2011; Kochanek, 2005). If a disconnect between the two is found to exist, trust has no chance to develop.

An additional domain of consistency was found in response to the question, how does a leader sustain trust? Lori (principal, East) stated, "Bringing the staff in and having them be a part of that trust building because I think that is what is going to sustain everything. It's got to be a group effort and it's all the time, all the time."

Wendy (teacher, Central) summed it up nicely with this statement:

> Well it can't be just a one-time thing it has to be consistent. I mean people know when something isn't genuine or fake. You can just tell the difference between when someone actually cares about you and what you are saying or when they really don't. So, I think just making sure that you're continuing to build those relationships and it doesn't stop.

A leader who wants to develop and maintain a high level of trust in their school must make sure that their actions are consistent with the words that they use. They also must be willing to work on trust over time, even after it has been initially built.

Trust is crucial to the success of a school. While most people will place some initial trust in others, it must be nurtured to grow into a level of trust that will allow for leaders to ask of teachers the tasks necessary for change and school improvement. Principals must take advantage

of that initial trust in order to develop positive relationships with their faculty. Developing the relationships and maintaining them with consistency will in turn increase the amount of faculty trust in the principal. However, as was stated several times in the interviews it is hard work and should not be left to chance.

Five facets of trust. Years of prior research has led to the determination of the five facets of trust: benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). A person who is trusting another is willing to be vulnerable based on the expectation that the trusted one will demonstrate the five facets of trust. In the work on collective trust, it was explained that collective trust developed over time as groups interacted and compared the expected and observed behavior in terms of the five facets of trust (Forsyth et al., 2011).

As this research study was conducted the five facets of trust were frequently found in discussions, the literature review, and the interview process. As demonstrated by Figure 5 (page 66) the facets of trust were found to reside at the intersection of communication and relationships. Communication and relationships were found to be central to the development of the trust level within the school. They also appear to be of approximately equal importance, a leader must spend time developing both to create a high level of functional trust. A leader must be cognizant of the five facets of trust as they work to develop both relationships and communication systems. Creating positive and productive relationships must be done by a leader who holds all five facets of trust. Likewise, communication must be done with all five facets present or it will fail to produce the expected results. There is not one facet that stands above the others in importance for the formation of trust, however, the absence of even one will impact the presence of the others (Adams & Miskell, 2016). During each interview, questions were asked regarding the ability of each principal in the five areas of trust. Consistently, teachers of Central

Elementary rated their principal as demonstrating all five facets dependably and effectively. At the same time, teachers from East Elementary had more difficulty stating that their principal demonstrated all five facets of trust criteria at a high level. They also had more difficulty finding examples of the traits in the behavior of the principal. This information provides evidence to demonstrate a connection between the five facets of trust and a higher level of faculty trust in the principal.

Theme Three: Interpersonal Skills

While communication and relationships are central themes to the development of trust in a school, both themes are highly impacted by the interpersonal skills of the leader. "Interpersonal skills involve emotional and political capabilities that are manifested in what leaders do and lend themselves to effective leadership" (Mencl, Wefald, & Van Ittersum, 2016, p. 638). To be a trustworthy leader requires courage, wisdom, and sensitivity (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). As Kathy (teacher, East) explained,

> Rather than to greet people with, oh, I noticed you were 10 minutes late. Why not, gosh, I noticed you were late I was really worried about you, is everything okay? I mean so come from that concerned part before you come to that accusatory.

Being a leader that understands the difference between a teacher who is five minutes late one day and taking the necessary steps when a teacher is five minutes late every day requires the effective use of interpersonal skills. The interpersonal skills of the principal and how they are used will either make or break the relationships and communication systems within the school. Those hard conversations with teachers when they are not meeting expectations should be conducted, but they should be done with a caring attitude that does not damage trust. Marissa (principal, Central) explained her style as:

I think when there is something that you think needs to be repaired or fixed, being very

transparent and helpful. So, it is not like oh, I see that you are not doing this, and this, and

this, let's put you on a plan. But it's like okay I am seeing that you are struggling with

your reading instruction let's do some planning together, so I think just being a part of the

team is helpful and offering those resources.

Both the servant and transformational leadership styles have components indicative of good

interpersonal skills (Ekinci, 2015, Mencl et al., 2016). Accordingly, making those styles more

likely to have a positive impact on the trust in the school.

Judy (teacher, East) describes:

I guess the one thing I have experienced that really affects whether there is trust or not is

when there is a problem how it is handled or if the principal sees something that she

doesn't particularly like, how that is handled.

Having the courage to tackle problems head on, while using wisdom to determine potential

impact on relationships, and communicating in a manner that demonstrates caring is the art of

leadership that enhances trust.

The personality displayed by the leader will influence the perception teachers have

regarding the leadership style of the principal (Garcia et al., 2014). This was further described by

Susan (teacher) from East Elementary as:

I don't really feel like supported by her because I feel like she always points out the

things that I maybe make a mistake on or you know forget to do and I don't get

recognized for the things that I do extra or the hard work that I put in…so this my third

school and this is the first time that I have felt that way so like I don't think it's a

common thing, but I think that she just maybe doesn't have great interpersonal skills.

What Susan describes here is the epitome of the impact of interpersonal skills. The principal had tried to create relationships and she had set up a communication system. However, the application of negative interpersonal skills made both the relationships and communications decrease the level of trust within the school.

As the collective trust is formed within the social construction of the organization (Forsyth et al., 2011), the trust in the principal will be formed within the framework of the interpersonal skills displayed by the principal. Marissa (principal, Central) explained her interpersonal skills in this manner:

> When there is an icky situation, just being very honest with them and I think it is helpful when you have those hard conversations, if you have a third point in your conversation, you know, not a letter of reprimand, but this is a plan for us to work on making sure that explicit reading instruction is happening in third grade. What do you need from me, this what I need from you, can we do this together? Instead of sometimes I feel like if there is a situation, it's sneaking behind their back, oops you are not doing this, yes, you're basic.

Principals should be conscious of the fact that the behavior they model for the staff is the behavior they want to see replicated in the school by the teachers with each other, students, and parents (Kochanek, 2005). A trustworthy leader understands how to say the hard facts in a manner that maintains a caring attitude for the other person (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

The results of this study demonstrate the critical importance for the leader of a rural elementary school to establish a system to communicate with staff and to develop positive relationships within the school. However, even more important, is the way the principal utilizes their interpersonal skills in coordination with the relationships and communication. Having a highly effective communication system established but using it only to tell teachers when they

have done something incorrectly will decrease the trust between the faculty and the principal. Similarly, establishing relationships with the school staff without continuous follow up in a positive manner will have a negative impact on the trust level. In sum, all the work done by a principal to lay the foundation for trust will be demolished without the consistent application of effective interpersonal skills.

Theme Four: Direct Style of Leadership

The final theme found in the interviews was that of a direct style of leadership. This style is defined as more manager, less leader. The teachers interviewed felt that a direct leadership style was more concerned about the mistakes that were made and trying to catch someone breaking rules. This style of leadership was viewed as a negative style and detrimental to the faculty trust in the principal. Some teachers commented on the fact that this leadership style may also decrease the faculty trust in colleagues. However, one teacher commented that teachers might become more trusting of their grade level team while working under a direct style leader. This would happen because the team would huddle together against the abrasiveness of the leader.

Summary

The focus of this study was to determine what leadership style and specifically what leadership factors would have the greatest influence on the development of a trusting relationship between the principal and teachers in a rural elementary school. Six rural elementary schools were selected to participate in the research. Each school participated in surveys to determine the trust level in the school and the leadership style of the principal. These surveys provided data that demonstrated a difference between two schools in terms of both trust level and leadership style. One school included a principal that was perceived to be more like a servant leader with

tendencies toward a more transformational style. This school also demonstrated a higher level of faculty trust in the principal. A second school included a principal that was perceived to be less like a servant leader with more characteristics of the passive/avoidant leadership style. This school recorded a lower level of faculty trust in the principal. Therefore, the two schools were selected for the second phase of this research.

To gain a deeper understanding of the specific factors that increase or decrease the faculty trust in the principal, interviews were conducted with both principals and four teachers from each school. The interviews provided rich data for analysis. Four themes were harvested from the data and their connections were presented in this chapter. The next chapter will provide added explanation of the data, recommendations for further study, and how this research might impact current practice.

Chapter V

Conclusion

Introduction

Well, with any leadership model, it has to flow from the top and if you don't trust the person that you are supposed to be following, people won't follow. I think that there's too many questions, too much doubt, and then people start thinking they know better. I think it falls apart pretty quickly. I couldn't work for somebody that I didn't trust.

Carol (teacher, Central) shared those words when asked if a school could develop a high level of trust with an ineffective administrator. While the words may seem simple, they summarize a great deal of research that has been conducted on trust in schools. Trust is critical in the successful operation of a school (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Forsyth et al., 2011; Kochanek, 2005; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

The literature is clear regarding the fact that trust in the principal is crucial for a school. Therefore, the focus of this research was on what leadership factors would enhance or decrease the trust in the principal. Specifically, the research questions for this study were:

1. What leadership style is most likely to nurture a trusting relationship between the elementary school principal and the teaching staff in a rural school district?

2. What leadership factors have the greatest positive influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

3. What leadership factors have the most negative influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

Chapter V reviews the results of this research, summarizes the connection with the model of collective trust framework, and provides implications for professional practice.

Summary of the Results

There are numerous principal leadership styles found in elementary schools. This research focused on two of the commonly utilized leadership styles; servant leadership and transformational leadership. The faculty trust in the principal was analyzed in six different rural elementary schools. While this research is not exhaustive enough to be able to provide a statistical correlation between leadership style and trust level, it did demonstrate consistency within the six schools studied. In all six schools the higher the principal scored on the seven servant leadership factors, the higher the faculty trust in the principal score. The literature on servant leadership consistently states that it is a leadership style that is marked by social conscience, emotions, and caring (Smith et al., 2004) making it an ideal style for schools as they are highly relational (Ekinci, 2015).

The same connection held true for the five factors of transformational leadership style. The schools with the higher faculty trust in the principal held a higher perception that the leader's style was more transformational. A transformational leader is focused on the vision of the organization while pushing followers to achieve above the standard performance level (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This drive and focus toward creating a better school enhances the environment of trust for all members. Therefore, it would be expected to see a higher trust level present in a school led by a transformational leader.

While this study clarified that either a servant or transformational leader will result in a higher level of trust, it also illustrated that the use of a passive/avoidant leadership style or a direct style of leadership that spends too much time focused on mistakes made by teachers will decrease the trust within the school. This is supported by the literature stating passive leadership styles had the strongest negative impact on the trust in the immediate supervisor (Brandebo et al.,

2016). Teachers who fear reprisal for making a mistake will decrease their willingness to try new instructional strategies or take risks with their teaching methods. This leads to a stagnant learning environment with disengaged staff and students. This was clarified by Susan's (teacher, East) comment, "I would rather just keep my head down and do what I think is right than try to talk to her because I am afraid she will think I have done something wrong."

In addition to reviewing leadership styles, this research aimed to determine specific leadership factors that increase or decrease the trust in the principal. Conducting interviews with principals and teachers revealed four themes that describe principal behaviors that impact the trust level of the teachers in the school. The relationships developed by the principal and the manner in which they communicated with staff held the greatest influence on the development of trust. However, both factors are either enhanced or diminished by the interpersonal skills of the principal. The final leadership behavior, which was found to decrease trust, was using a direct style of leadership. This style was marked by a focus on the mistakes made by the staff. Ultimately, the interpersonal skills of the principal sways the trust level of the school, especially the teachers' trust in the principal.

Quantitative Data. To begin this study six rural elementary schools were selected to participate. At each school the researcher attended a staff meeting and distributed three surveys to be completed. These surveys determined the trust level of the school and provided information as to the leadership style of the principal.

Qualitative Data. Upon completion of the analysis of the quantitative data, it was clear that a difference in faculty trust in the principal and leadership style existed between Central Elementary and East Elementary. Therefore, the two schools were selected to participate in part two of this study. The principal and four teachers at each school were interviewed using a semi-

structured format. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded. The transcripts were evaluated for relevant themes. Four themes were found to illustrate the factors that had a positive or negative influence on the trust level between a principal and the teachers in a rural elementary school. These themes were: communication, relationships, interpersonal skills, and direct leadership style. The interrelationships between the themes along with the subthemes are demonstrated in Figure 5 (page 66).

Research Question 1

Research question one asked, what leadership style is most likely to nurture a trusting relationship between the elementary school principal and the teaching staff in a rural school district? In sum, the quantitative data of this research held true with the literature review indicating that servant leadership and transformational leadership styles increase the trust and positive culture of a school. Opposite that, a passive or reactive leadership style will decrease the trust in the principal by the faculty.

Research Questions 2 and 3

Research questions two and three were looking for the specific leadership factors that would either increase or decrease the level of trust between an elementary principal and the teachers in a rural school district. The key factors that were discovered included: communication, relationships, interpersonal skills, and a direct style. Throughout the interviews, it was determined that the factors found could be both a positive influence as well as a negative influence. For example, the theme of communication was the most common factor. If a principal was effective with their communication skills then the level of faculty trust in the principal would increase. However, if the principal was not able to communicate with their faculty in a

manner that presented the information necessary in a caring manner then their communication skills would decrease the faculty trust in the principal.

This reciprocal relationship existed for all the themes except that of using a direct style of leadership. Consistently in the interviews, teachers and principals discussed the fact that having this focus on the negative was a great detriment to the level of faculty trust in the principal. According to the teachers in this study, having a leader who relied on a direct style left the teachers feeling uncomfortable and on edge. These are not feelings that allow for the blossoming of a high level of trust between groups.

In the end, the interpersonal skills demonstrated by the elementary principal had the greatest impact upon the trust level within the school. A leader who has the aptitude to develop the relationships with teachers necessary to be friendly, but not a friend will develop an increased level of trust with teachers. A leader who has the skill to conduct the hard conversations with teachers while expressing care and concern will see teachers place even greater trust with the principal. A principal who is unable to utilize the five trust factors to assist them with the relationships and communication within the school will find only a struggle to develop a high level of faculty trust. This lack of trust will slowly erode the culture of the school potentially defeating any chances of school improvement.

To summarize, the words and actions of the principal will be reviewed by the staff to determine if they match the expectation of the staff. This is demonstrated in the model of collective trust formation framework as taking place within the social construction of the school (Forsyth et al., 2011). If there is not a match then the development of trust is going to be constricted. A principal must consider the expectations of the faculty when developing relationships and communication systems, they will be a determinant of the success of the leader.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that either maintain or destroy the trust between a school administrator and the teachers in rural elementary schools. Specifically, the research questions for this study were:

1. What leadership style is most likely to nurture a trusting relationship between the elementary school principal and the teaching staff in a rural school district?

2. What leadership factors have the greatest positive influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

3. What leadership factors have the most negative influence on the level of trust between an elementary principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

There is no single correct leadership style for every elementary school principal to utilize. Each principal must determine the leadership style that works for them and is best suited for the situation. This research study reviewed the leadership styles of six rural elementary school principals. The data revealed that principals with a leadership style matching the components of a servant leader demonstrated a high level of faculty trust in the principal. Additionally, those elementary principals that scored more transformational also demonstrated a higher level of faculty trust in the principal. However, when a rural elementary principal demonstrated more of a passive/avoidant leadership style, the faculty trust in the principal was lower. The scores measuring the transactional leadership style did not indicate a clear positive or negative impact on the faculty trust in the principal.

Transactional leadership behaviors include both constructive and correctional (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This incorporates setting goals, recognizing achievement of those goals, and correcting those who are not performing to standards. The reason for the imprecise information

from the transactional leadership style may be credited to the fact that in elementary schools, leaders must demonstrate some transactional leadership skills. A well-rounded leader will complete the management tasks as well as the leadership behaviors.

The data derived from the semi-structured interviews aligned with previous research concluding the principal as the key figure in establishing the trust level in the school. This trust will be developed using the following factors: communication, relationships, interpersonal skills, and a direct leadership style. The attitude and behavior of the principal will set the tone for the culture of the school. The interpersonal skills of the elementary principal have great bearing on the amount of trust that teachers are willing to give. Teachers expressed regularly during the interviews that they appreciated when their principal would speak to them with genuine care and concern. Even the painful and difficult conversations were bearable when spoken gracefully.

Rural school districts commonly contain only one elementary school with a single administrator. This often leaves the superintendent as the mentor for the principal. This appeared in the interviews as having the potential to decrease the trust that teachers display in their principal. The principal shares with the superintendent about an issue, but the teachers regard this as a break in honesty because of the status of the superintendent. While this could be a potential trust destroyer, a principal using good communication skills may be able to diffuse the issue and demonstrate the necessary behaviors to illuminate the situation as one of coaching.

The multiple hats worn by rural elementary principals influence the trust in the school. This influence was discussed as decreasing the trust because the principal had to be out of the building addressing the other components of the job, the principal focused more on some of these areas instead of the areas the staff felt to be important, or teachers felt the other hats caused the principal to not have the time to really be a principal. "You know probably, probably could go

either way, very easily it seems like the balance could be tipped one way or the other, because of those different roles." Carol (teacher, Central). The interpersonal skills of the principal would be that tipping point.

The model of collective trust formation indicated that collective trust forms within a social construct between the groups in a school (Forsyth et al., 2011). The conclusions from this research study would indicate the social construct between the principal and teachers is created from the communication and relationships developed by the principal considering the five trust factors. Furthermore, the interpersonal skills of the principal will impact all areas of trust.

The principal is the key actor in the development of trust within the school. They must maintain an awareness of the trust level in the school as simple missteps may destroy the trust in the school. The time principals spend on developing communication and relationships in a positive manner provide for the creation of the conditions for the achievement of school goals. "Trustworthy leaders create a culture of trust within their building; this trust is at the crux of successful schools" (Tschannen-Moran, 2014, p. 266).

Recommendations for Further Research

Researchers have studied the impact of trust and leadership on schools for many years. This research has focused in many areas. As long as there are institutions led by humans with the goal of increasing student achievement and learning, there will need to be research on what makes them effective. Leadership will always remain an important part of that research. This research study focused on the factors that impact trust between an elementary principal and the teachers in rural school districts. Specific recommendations derived from the conducting of this research are summarized in this section.

The rural elementary school includes some unique components. Commonly, a rural elementary principal will serve multiple roles within the district. It was determined that this may have either a positive or negative impact upon the trust depending on the interpersonal skills of the administrator. The first recommendation for further research would be to conduct similar research with rural secondary schools. Secondary administrators often face similar circumstances to their elementary counterparts. However, at the secondary level the extra responsibilities typically involve extra-curricular activities, such as serving as the athletic director or even a coach. Conducting a comparison between the effect on trust between elementary and secondary principals in rural school districts has the potential to enhance the research on rural schools.

A second group to expand the research with would be elementary principals in non-rural districts. This comparison would provide additional information regarding the effect of extra responsibilities upon the level of faculty trust in the principal. Conducting a research study that includes an elementary principal from a rural school district and an elementary principal from a non-rural school district who demonstrated similar leadership styles would lead to additional insight into the effect of the unique factors found in rural school settings.

While conducting this research study the question surfaced regarding the potential impact on faculty trust in the principal between teachers that were hired by a previous administrator versus those hired by the current administrator. This question leads to additional recommendations for future research. A study that was conducted over a five-year period, evaluating the trust level each year may provide answers. This question may also be answered by including additional demographic information from teachers when conducting the research.

This study focused on servant and transformational leadership primarily. There are many other well-developed leadership styles along with some more recent styles. Developing an

additional research study that included other leadership styles would add to the literature on leadership and rural elementary schools.

Ultimately the goal of a school is to provide an opportunity for students to learn and achieve. Research is conducted to enhance the conditions for student achievement. Therefore, a logical next step for additional research is to conduct this study with the inclusion of a component of student achievement. Providing principals with recommendations for leadership factors that will enhance trust and increase student achievement would be beneficial for many.

Implications for Professional Practice

While significant research has been conducted on the correlation of leadership and trust in schools, little research has looked specifically at rural elementary schools. This research will add to the literature enhancing the opportunities for rural schools. Rural school districts often lack the means to obtain training for teachers and administrators. The results from this research may provide rural school districts a starting point to determine the type of professional development that will best assist principals.

Previous research has demonstrated a correlation between a high level of faculty trust in the principal with increased school success (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). The results from this study indicate that a principal who demonstrates a servant leadership or transformational leadership style will have a higher level of faculty trust in the principal. This would lead to the conclusion that principals should be provided training in both servant and transformational leadership. While training may be provided to principals in servant leadership and the specific constructs of the leadership style, the actual performance may be more difficult. "Servant leadership behaviors and attitudes about serving, rather than planned and targeted, should be seen as a kind of heartfelt and enjoyable endeavor" (Ekinci, 2015, p. 342).

The final implication stems from the determination that the interpersonal skills of the principal have a great impact on all other leadership factors in the development of faculty trust. This fact provides principals with the knowledge that may be used to increase their communication skills with faculty. This awareness should offer principals the prospect to increase the positive relationships with their staff. This directly matches the conclusions of the research stating the "emotional content of principal leadership" may be the key to increased organizational learning and both school improvement efforts as well as leader preparation programs should increase the focus on the dynamics of principal-teacher relationships (Louis & Murphy, 2017, p. 119). The interviews completed for this study consistently included a strong desire on the part of the teachers for the principal to be successful, whether from the high trust school or the lower trust school. These facts should provide the motivation for any principal to work on increasing the trust level within their school.

Final Reflection

While completing this study, I was the principal of a rural elementary school. During the time of this study, I was involved in two construction projects. The first was the completion of a new elementary school for our community. A project that required a high level of trust between the numerous parties involved. This trust development also required great communication skills in conjunction with the development of relationships all dependent upon the five factors of trust. And yes, the interpersonal skills used to work with the various groups could make or break the project.

The second construction project was more personal. I believe that I have benefitted both professionally and personally as a result of this research study. I have first learned just how far I can push my limits, just how much sleep I need to function, and that I do have to take care of

myself in order to be able to take care of others. Professionally, I hope that I have constructed a better leader in myself. Listening to the voices of the teachers in the interviews provided wonderful insight into what qualities matter to those we lead on a daily basis. Listening to the principals describe the successes and struggles they experienced renewed my excitement about what is happening in my school.

Most importantly, I hope to be able to share some insight that may benefit the world of education. Whether it is helping a new administrator discover something that helps them develop trust with their staff or assisting another researcher in the completion of a study. Ultimately, we have the greatest opportunities before us – to make a difference in the lives of students. We must never forget that is the reason we do this work.

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Appendix A: Leadership Chart Permission

NORTHWEST
NAZARENE
UNIVERSITY

Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>   Fri, Nov 27, 2015 at 5:17 PM

To: brien.smith@indstate.edu

Dr. Smith,

I am a doctoral student at Northwest Nazarene University in Idaho. I am currently

completing my dissertation on the leadership style of elementary principals and how the specific

leadership factors influence the trust level within the school. I am looking specifically at

transformational and servant leadership.

My research led me to an article you authored in 2004 titled "Transformational and

Servant Leadership: Content and Contextual Comparisons". This article had a figure within it

that showed a chain of relationships between the two leadership styles. I would like to utilize this

figure in my dissertation, which leads me to pen this email with two questions.

First, may I have your permission to use this figure in my dissertation?

Second, would it be possible to get a clean copy of this figure from you? The one I take

from the article does not transfer neatly.

I thank you for your assistance as I complete this grand adventure to my PhD.

Sherry Ann Adams

Brien Smith <Brien.Smith@indstate.edu>   Mon, Nov 30, 2015 at 11:35 AM

To: Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>

Ms. Adams,

You have my permission to use the figure providing you include a citation to the journal.

I am chagrined that I no longer have a clean copy of the figure. If you would like to use graphic tools to redraw it, that would be fine with me. Let me know how you progress with your dissertation. Best regards,

Brien N. Smith, Ph.D.

Dean, Scott College of Business

Indiana State University

812-237-2000 | Fax 812-237-8135

Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>   Tue, Dec 1, 2015 at 8:33 PM

To: Brien Smith <Brien.Smith@indstate.edu>

Dr. Smith,

Thank you for granting me permission, I will make certain that I include the appropriate citation.

If I recreate the figure, I will be sure to send you a copy as well.

Thanks again,

Sherry Ann

Appendix B: Collective Trust Permission

NORTHWEST
NAZARENE
UNIVERSITY

Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>

Collective Trust
2 messages

Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>   Fri, Dec 11, 2015 at 12:14 PM
To: Curt.Adams-1@ou.edu

Dr. Adams,

Greetings from Idaho. My name is Sherry Ann Adams. I am a PhD student attending Northwest Nazarene
University in Nampa, Idaho.

My dissertation is focusing on leadership style and trust in rural elementary schools. I have read a great
deal of your research and would like to seek permission to use one of your items in my research study and
dissertation.

Specifically, I would like permission to use Figure 2.1 A Model of collective trust formation and its
consequences (page 25) from "Collective Trust". This model is serving as the framework for my study. I
will make sure that it is properly cited in my work. I would be even more thrilled if you had a copy that is
more clear than what I am able to download or photocopy.

Thanks so much for the assistance. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sherry Ann Adams
Principal
Melba Elementary School

Adams, Curt <Curt.Adams-1@ou.edu>   Fri, Dec 11, 2015 at 1:14 PM
To: Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>

Please do.

Curt Adams
Sent from my iPhone
[Quoted text hidden]

Appendix C: Forsyth Permission

Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>

Collective Trust
2 messages

Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>   Fri, Dec 11, 2015 at 12:13 PM
To: patrick.forsyth@ou.edu

Dr. Forsyth,

Greetings from Idaho. My name is Sherry Ann Adams. I am a PhD student attending Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa, Idaho.

My dissertation is focusing on leadership style and trust in rural elementary schools. I have read a great deal of your research and would like to seek permission to use one of your items in my research study and dissertation.

Specifically, I would like permission to use Figure 2.1 A Model of collective trust formation and its consequences (page 25) from "Collective Trust". This model is serving as the framework for my study. I will make sure that it is properly cited in my work. I would be even more thrilled if you had a copy that is more clear than what I am able to download or photocopy.

Thanks so much for the assistance. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sherry Ann Adams
Principal
Melba Elementary School

Forsyth, Patrick B. <patrick.forsyth@ou.edu>   Fri, Dec 11, 2015 at 2:15 PM
To: Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>

Dear Ms. Adams,
You are welcome to use the model of collective trust formation (Figure 2.1) and the discussion of consequences is your own work, provided you attend to conventional citation procedures. Best wishes on your research. I have attached the original figure from our files. PBF

Patrick B. Forsyth
  Professor of Education &
  Co-director, Oklahoma Center for Education Policy
    www.okedpolicy.org
  The University of Oklahoma
  918-660-3870 patrick.forsyth@ou.edu

From: Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>
Date: Friday, December 11, 2015 at 1:13 PM
To: Patrick Forsyth <patrick.forsyth@ou.edu>
Subject: Collective Trust
[Quoted text hidden]

Appendix D: NIH Certificate

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Sherry Adams** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 01/23/2015

Certification Number: 1660949
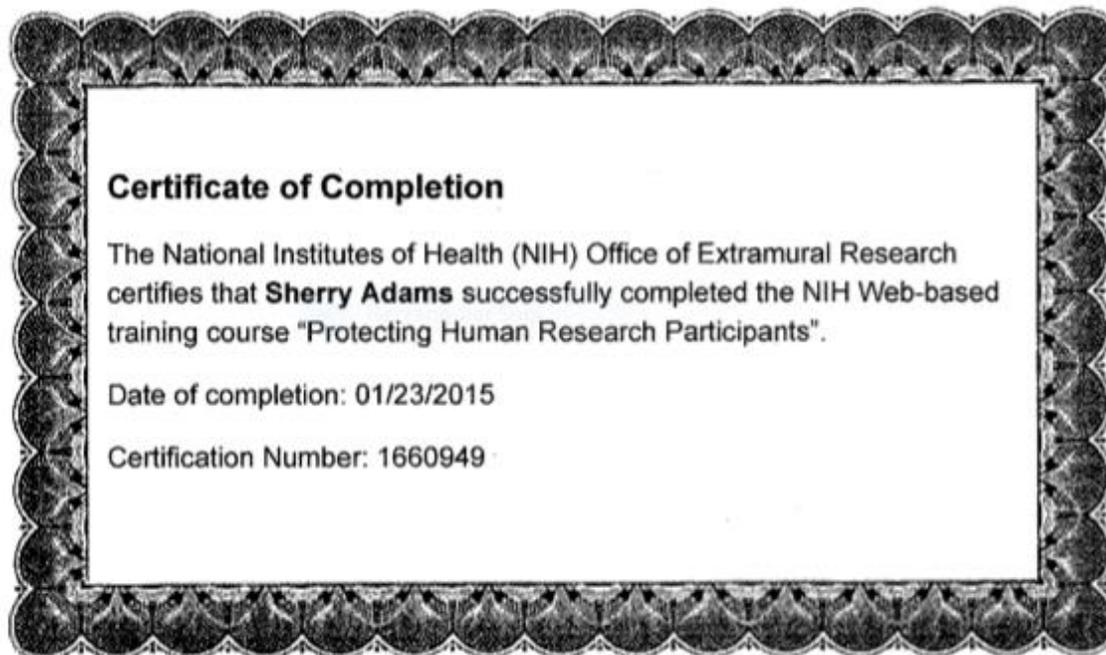
Appendix E: HRRC Approval

Northwest Nazarene University <hrrc@nnu.edu>   Mon, Mar 14, 2016 at 6:55 AM
Reply-To: hrrc@nnu.edu
To: Sherry Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>

Dear Sherry,

The HRRC has reviewed your protocol: Protocol #30032016 - Rural Elementary School Principalship: A Mixed Methods Approach on How Leadership Style Affects Teacher Relationships and Trust. You received "Full Approval". Congratulations, you may begin your research. If you have any questions, let me know.

Northwest Nazarene University
Barbara Lester
HRRC Member
623 S University Blvd
Nampa, ID 83686

Appendix F: District A Permission
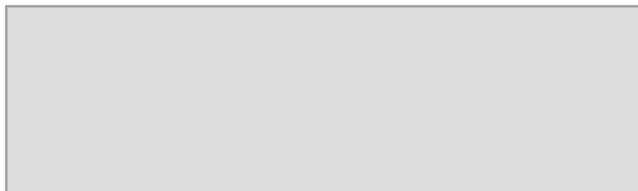
OUR VISION

To provide effective schools that have the following characteristics:

Commitment to learning as the number one priority

Strong community involvement

Strong instructional leadership

High expectations for students and staff

Commitment to mastery of all basic skills by all Students

Clear and focused school mission

Positive school climate

Consistency among staff in the treatment of students

Frequent and careful monitoring of student progress

OUR MISSION

To educate all students to lead productive, satisfying and responsible lives now and in the future.

January 14, 2016

Northwest Nazarene University
Attention: HRRC Committee
Helstrom Business Center 1st Floor
623 S. University Boulevard
Nampa, ID 83686

RE: Research Proposal Site Access for Mrs. Sherry Ann Adams

Dear HRRC Members:

This letter is to inform the HRRC that Administration at [   ] has reviewed the proposed dissertation research plan including subjects, assessment procedures, proposed data and collection procedures, data analysis, and purpose of the study. Mrs. Adams has permission to conduct her research in the district of and with the staff of the [   ]. The authorization dates for this research are July 2016 to April 2017.

Respectfully,

Superintendent

WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESS ONE STUDENT AT A TIME

Appendix G: District B Permission

December 17, 2015

Northwest Nazarene University
Attention: HRRC Committee
Helstrom Business Center 1ˢᵗ Floor
623 S. University Boulevard
Nampa, ID 83686

RE: Research Proposal Site Access for Mrs. Sherry Ann Adams

Dear HRRC Members:

This letter is to inform the HRRC that Administration at [   ] has reviewed the proposed dissertation research plan including subjects, assessment procedures, proposed data and collection procedures, data analysis, and purpose of the study. Mrs. Adams has permission to conduct her research in the district of and with the staff of the [   ]. The authorization dates for this research are July 2016 to April 2017.

Respectfully,

Superintendent

Appendix H: District C Permission

January 27, 2016

Northwest Nazarene University
Attention: HRRC Committee
Helstrom Business Center 1st Floor
623 S. University Boulevard
Nampa, ID 83686

RE: Research Proposal Site Access for Mrs. Sherry Ann Adams

Dear HRRC Members:

This letter is to inform the HRRC that Administration at ⬚⬚⬚⬚⬚ has reviewed the proposed dissertation research plan including subjects, assessment procedures, proposed data and collection procedures, data analysis, and purpose of the study. Mrs. Adams has permission to conduct her research in the district of and with the staff of the H⬚⬚⬚⬚⬚ he authorization dates for this research are July 2016 to April 2017.

Respectfully,

Superintendent

Appendix I: District D Permission

January 7, 2016

Northwest Nazarene University
Attention: HRRC Committee
Helstrom Business Center 1ˢᵗ Floor
623 S. University Boulevard
Nampa, ID 83686

RE: Research Proposal Site Access for Mrs. Sherry Ann Adams

Dear HRRC Members:

This letter is to inform the HRRC that Administration at ⬚ has reviewed the proposed dissertation research plan including subjects, assessment procedures, proposed data and collection procedures, data analysis, and purpose of the study. Mrs. Adams has permission to conduct her research in the district of and with the staff of the ⬚ The authorization dates for this research are July 2016 to April 2017.

Respectfully,

Superintendent

Appendix J: District E Permission
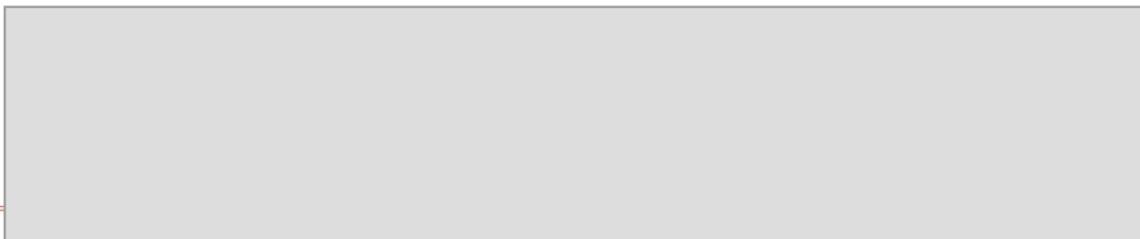
January 29, 2016

Northwest Nazarene University
Attention: HRRC Committee
Helstrom Business Center 1st Floor
623 S. University Boulevard
Nampa, ID 83686

RE: Research Proposal Site Access for Mrs. Sherry Ann Adams

Dear HRRC Members:

This letter is to inform the HRRC that Administration at _____ has reviewed the proposed dissertation research plan including subjects, assessment procedures, proposed data and collection procedures, data analysis, and purpose of the study. Mrs. Adams has permission to conduct her research in the district of and with the staff of the _____ The authorization dates for this research are July 2016 to April 2017.

Respectfully,

_____ Superintendent

Appendix K: District F Permission
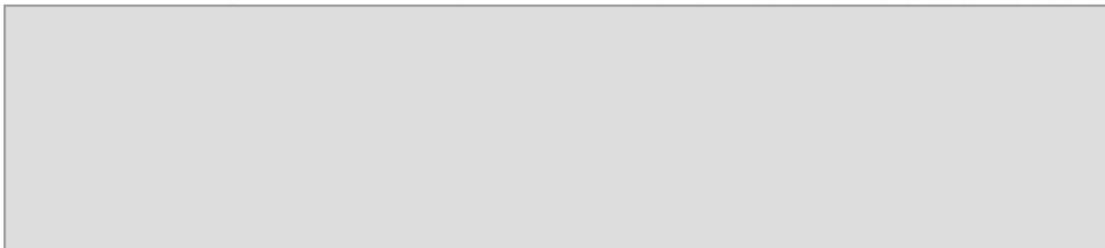
February 19, 2016

Northwest Nazarene University
Attention: HRRC Committee
Helstrom Business Center 1st Floor
623 S. University Boulevard
Nampa, ID 83686

RE: Research Proposal Site Access for Mrs. Sherry Ann Adams

Dear HRRC Members:

This letter is to inform the HRRC that Administration at [   ] School District has reviewed the proposed dissertation research plan including subjects, assessment procedures, proposed data and collection procedures, data analysis, and purpose of the study. Mrs. Adams has permission to conduct her research in the district of and with the staff of the [   ] School District. The authorization dates for this research are July 2016 to April 2017.

Respectfully,

Superintendent

<center>Appendix L: Informed Consent</center>

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

A. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND
Sherry Ann Adams, Ed.S., a doctoral student in the Department of Graduate Education at Northwest Nazarene University is conducting a research study related to the leadership style of elementary principals in rural schools. The relationships between the principal and teachers in the schools will be reviewed. Possible factors that increase or decrease the relationships will also be reviewed. We appreciate your involvement in helping us investigate how to better serve and meet the needs of principals and teachers.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a healthy volunteer, over the age of 18.

B. PROCEDURES
If you agree to be in the study, the following will occur:

1. You will be asked to sign an Informed Consent Form, volunteering to participate in the study.

2. You will be asked to complete three surveys.

3. You may be asked to answer a set of interview questions and engage in a discussion on your perception of the level of trust and the factors that affect the trust in the school. This discussion will be audio taped and is expected to last approximately 60 minutes.

4. If you participate in an interview, you will be asked to read a debriefing statement at the conclusion of the interview.

5. If you participate in an interview, you will be asked to reply to an email at the conclusion of the study asking you to confirm the data that was gathered during the research process.

These procedures will be competed at a location mutually decided upon by the participant and principal investigator and will take a total time of about 120 minutes.

C. RISKS/DISCOMFORTS
1. Some of the discussion questions may make you uncomfortable or upset, but you are free to decline to answer any questions you do not wish to answer or to stop participation at any time.

2. For this research project, the researchers are requesting demographic information. Due to the make-up of Idaho's population, the combined answers to these questions may make an individual person identifiable. The researchers will make every effort to protect your confidentiality. However, if you are uncomfortable answering any of these questions, you may leave them blank.

3. Confidentiality: Participation in research may involve a loss of privacy; however, your records will be handled as confidentially as possible. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications that may result from this study. All data from notes, audio tapes, and disks will be kept in a locked file cabinet, password protected computer or in password protected files. In compliance with the Federalwide Assurance Code, data from this study will be kept for three years, after which all data from the study will be destroyed (45 CFR 46.117).

4. Only the primary researcher and the research supervisor will be privy to data from this study. As researchers, both parties are bound to keep data as secure and confidential as possible.

D. BENEFITS
There will be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study. However, the information you provide may help educators to better understand the factors that enhance the school environment to be a place of positive staff relationships.

E. PAYMENTS
There are no payments for participating in this study.

F. QUESTIONS
If you have questions or concerns about participation in this study, you should first talk with the investigator. Sherry Ann Adams can be contacted via email at shadams@nnu.edu, via telephone at XXXX or by writing: XXXXX. If for some reason you do not wish to do this you may contact Dr. Sarah Quilici, Doctoral Committee Chair at Northwest Nazarene University, via email at XXXXXX.

Should you feel distressed due to participation in this, you should contact your own health care provider.

G. CONSENT
You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH IS VOLUNTARY. You are free to decline to be in this study, or to withdraw from it at any point. Your decision as to whether or not to participate in this study will have no influence on your present or future status as a student at Northwest Nazarene University.

I give my consent to participate in this study:

_____   _____

Signature of Study Participant   **Date**

I give my consent for the interview and discussion to be audio taped in this study:

_____   _____

Signature of Study Participant   **Date**

I give my consent for direct quotes to be used in this study:

_____   _____
Signature of Study Participant   **Date**

_____   _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent   **Date**

THE NORTHWEST NAZARENE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW COMMITTE HAS REVIEWED THIS PROJECT FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH.

Appendix M: Teacher Interview Questions

1. What would you state is the primary focus of your school?

2. How would you describe the leadership style of your principal?

3. What opportunities are available for social interaction within the staff of your school? Who arranges these opportunities?

4. In rural schools everyone is responsible for many different tasks. Do you think this affects the trust within the school? Would you explain why you think that?

5. Please describe for me a time when your principal did something that increased the trust within the school.

6. How divergent are the values and beliefs among the staff at your school? Can you give me an example how that is seen?

7. How does the principal react if a staff member disagrees or opposes a decision or idea presented?

8. What recommendation would you give to a new principal to build and sustain trust within a school?

    Through my research, I have found five criteria for the development of trust. I would like to talk about each factor.

1. Benevolence is the confidence that the trusted person will protect one's interests. Is this a trait you believe your principal to demonstrate? Can you give me an example?

2. Reliability is the extent to which one can rely upon another for action and goodwill. Do you believe your principal to be reliable? Can you give me an example?

3. Competence is demonstrating the skills to complete an expected task. Do you feel your principal is competent? Would you elaborate on that for me?

4. Honesty means using truthful statements and keeping one's word about future actions. Is this a trait consistently demonstrated by your principal?

5. Openness is the extent to which relevant information is shared and actions or plans are transparent. Is this a trait demonstrated by your principal? Can you give an example?

Appendix N: Principal Interview Questions

1. What would you state is the primary focus of your school?

2. How would you describe your leadership style?

3. What opportunities are available for social interaction within the staff of your school? Who arranges these opportunities?

4. In rural schools everyone is responsible for many different tasks. Do you think this impacts the trust within the school? Would you explain why you think that?

5. Please describe for me a time when you did something that increased the trust within the school.

6. How divergent are the values and beliefs among the staff at your school? Can you give me an example how that is seen?

7. How do you react if a staff member disagrees or opposes a decision or idea presented?

8. What recommendation would you give to a new principal to build and sustain trust within a school?

Through my research, I have found five criteria for the development of trust. I would like to talk about each factor.

1. Benevolence is the confidence that the trusted person will protect one's interests. Is this a trait you believe you demonstrate? Can you give me an example?

2. Reliability is the extent to which one can rely upon another for action and goodwill. Do you believe you demonstrate this trait? Can you give me an example?

3. Competence is demonstrating the skills to complete an expected task. Do you feel competent in your current role? Would you elaborate on that for me?

4. Honesty means using truthful statements and keeping one's word about future actions. Is this a trait you are able to consistently demonstrate?

5. Openness is the extent to which relevant information is shared and actions or plans are transparent. Is this a trait you demonstrate? Can you give an example?

Appendix O: Member Checking Email

February 7, 2017

I hope that this email finds you surviving these crazy winter conditions. Thank you for your participation in my study entitled Rural Elementary School Principalship: A Mixed Methods Approach on How Leadership Style Affects Teacher Relationships and Trust. I wanted to share with you the themes that I gathered from the interviews conducted for this study. Please let me know if these themes represent our interview. If you have any suggestions or questions, please let me know by Monday, February 13, 2017.

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that either maintain or destroy the trust between a school administrator and the teachers in rural elementary schools.

The research questions for this study were:

1.   What leadership style is most likely to nurture a trusting relationship between the elementary school principal and the teaching staff in a rural school district?
2.   What leadership factors have the greatest positive influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?
3.   What leadership factors have the most negative influence on the level of trust between an elementary school principal and the teachers in a rural school district?

After repeated reading and coding of the transcripts, a series of themes emerged. Many of these themes also contained sub themes within them. I created a graphical representation that helped me to better understand how they all worked together. I have attached this graphic below.

The first theme found was that of interpersonal skills. The interpersonal skills of the principal impacts both the communication and the relationships within the school setting. The hard conversations with teachers that are not meeting expectations must take place, but they should be done with a caring attitude that does not damage trust.

The next theme was relationships. As the theme of relationships was explored in the transcripts, four sub-themes were discovered. The sub-themes are: advocacy, collaboration, staff loyalty and consistency. Each sub-theme was found to contribute to the development of the relationship between the teachers and the principal of the school. All four sub-themes could make a positive or a negative contribution to the relationship development. Advocacy for the school and staff by the principal was the most commonly referenced sub-theme throughout the interviews. Teachers consistently stated the importance that they feel their principal had their back or was on their side in order to have a positive relationship with the principal and as a result to increase their willingness to trust the principal. The second most common sub-theme under relationships was collaboration. This was represented by situations in which the principal created opportunities for the staff to be collaborative as well as situations in which the principal worked in collaboration with the teachers. Staff loyalty was the next sub-theme found within relationships. Staff loyalty was defined as the manner in which the staff was loyal to the principal, the principal loyal to the staff, and the staff loyal to one another. The final sub-theme found within relationships was consistency. Throughout the interviews there were two areas discussed in regards to consistency: consistency of expectations between different groups and the consistency of the principal's actions.

The next theme found in the interviews was communication. Effective communication is an important aspect in a school system. A principal must be able to communicate their vision, but also have those typical day to day conversations with staff and students. Teachers need to have the confidence that they can share concerns, ideas, and successes with the principal. Within the theme of communication, three sub-themes were found. These sub-themes are: support, cooperation, and recognition. The data revealed that teachers had a high desire to feel supported by their principal. They believed that support was demonstrated through the communication of the principal. A high feeling of support elevated the level of trust a teacher felt in the principal, while a lack of support from the principal decreased the trust of the teacher. The next communication sub-theme was cooperation. While similar to the sub-theme of collaboration, cooperation in this context refers to the connections of communication and working together. The third sub-theme for communication was recognition. Recognition is providing positive feedback to teachers for activities completed. As was described earlier, teachers are vulnerable to

the principal of the school. The principal holds significant power over the teachers. Therefore, a principal who provides recognition to teachers demonstrates an attitude of caring that may decrease the feeling of vulnerability on the part of the teacher.

There are five factors of trust that are present throughout the literature. These five factors are included in the model of collective trust that frames this research: benevolence, reliability, competence, openness, and honesty (Forsyth et al., 2011). These five factors were present throughout the interviews conducted with teachers and principals. As the interview transcripts were analyzed, it became evident that the five factors of trust resided within the overlap of relationships and communication as illustrated in the graphic below. For example, the communication from the principal will be filtered through the lens of the teacher based on how honest the teacher believes the principal to be. This filtered communication will in turn condition the type of relationship that the principal can achieve with the teacher.

The final theme found to be present in the interview transcripts was the direct style of leadership. This theme contained one sub-theme which was a focus on the negative. In the graphical representation of the themes from this research this theme resides on the outside of the remaining themes. The reason it rests outside is due to its negative impact upon the trust development within the school. Even when used by a principal with effective interpersonal skills, using a direct leadership style in which the focus of their attention is on the negative components the trust within the school will erode.

If these ideas are contrary to what you wanted to express during your interview or if you would like to provide additional comments, please respond to this email or contact me at the number below. Thank you so much for your participation, this would not have been possible without you.

Sherry Ann Adams
Doctoral Student
shadams@nnu.edu
████████

Appendix P: Omnibus T-Scale Permission

NORTHWEST
NAZARENE
UNIVERSITY

Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>

Doctoral Research

2 messages

Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>   Wed, Dec 9, 2015 at 9:35 AM
To: whoy@mac.com

Dr. Hoy,

Greetings from Idaho. My name is Sherry Ann Adams. I am a PhD student attending Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa, Idaho.

My dissertation is focusing on leadership style and trust in rural elementary schools. I have read a great deal of your research and would like to seek permission to use a couple of items in my research study and dissertation.

Specifically, I would like permission to use Figure 2.1 A Model of collective trust formation and its consequences (page 25) from "Collective Trust". This model is serving as the framework for my study. I will make sure that it is properly cited in my work. I would be even more thrilled if you had a copy that is more clear than what I am able to download or photocopy.

Second, I would like to seek permission to use the Omnibus T-Scale. This will be the measure used to assess the trust level of teachers in the schools I work with during my research. Again, I will make certain that it properly cited throughout my dissertation.

Thanks so much for the assistance. I look forward to hearing from you.
Sherry Ann Adams
Principal
Melba Elementary School

Wayne Hoy <whoy@mac.com>   Wed, Dec 9, 2015 at 12:59 PM
To: Sherry Ann Adams <shadams@nnu.edu>
Cc: "Patrick Forsyth Sr." <patrick.forsyth@ou.edu>, Curt Adams <Curt.Adams-1@ou.edu>

HI Sherry—

You have my permission to use the Omnibus T-Scale in your research. You can find further information on the scale on my web page [**www.waynekhoy.com**].

As for the figure in our book, I have no problem with you using Figure 2.1 in *Collective Efficacy*; however, you should contact Patrick Forsyth and Curt Adams for ther permission also. Professor Forsyth may be able to send you a better copy of the figure. Their addresses are given in the CC of this email.

Good luck.

Wayne

Wayne K. Hoy
Fawcett Professor Emeritus in
Education Administration
The Ohio State University

Appendix Q: Omnibus T-Scale

Omnibus T-Scale

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Directions: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your school from **strongly disagree** to **strongly agree**. Your answers are confidential.						
1. Teachers in this school trust the principal.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
2. Teachers in this school trust each other.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
3. Teachers in this school trust their students.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
4. The teachers in this school are suspicious of most of the principal's actions.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
5. Teachers in this school typically look out for each other.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
6. Teachers in this school trust the parents.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
7. The teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of the principal.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
8. Teachers in this school are suspicious of each other.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
9. The principal in this school typically acts in the best interests of teachers.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
10. Students in this school care about each other.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
11. The principal of this school does not show concern for the teachers.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
12. Even in difficult situations, teachers in this school can depend on each other.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
13. Teachers in this school do their jobs well.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
14. Parents in this school are reliable in their commitments.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
15. Teachers in this school can rely on the principal.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
16. Teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of their colleagues.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
17. Students in this school can be counted on to do their work.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
18. The principal in this school is competent in doing his or her job.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
19. The teachers in this school are open with each other.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
20. Teachers can count on parental support.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
21. When teachers in this school tell you something, you can believe it.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
22. Teachers here believe students are competent learners.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
23. The principal doesn't tell teachers what is really going on.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
24. Teachers think that most of the parents do a good job.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
25. Teachers can believe what parents tell them.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
26. Students here are secretive.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

(Copyright© Hoy and Tschannen-Moran, 2003)

Appendix R: SLAI Permission

Rob Dennis <dennis_robbie@hotmail.com> Fri, Nov 27, 2015 at 7:11 PM To:

"shadams@nnu.edu" <shadams@nnu.edu>, Mihai Bocarnea <mihaboc@regent.edu>

Dear Sherry Ann Adams,

I received your message for using the SLAI instrument. You may use it for your

research/project, and slightly modify it for your use (i.e., change organization & company to

group) if needed.

Send an abstract/synopsis of expected use of the instrument, in addition to the modified

instrument you plan to use (if applicable).

Please send me a copy of finished work (or article publication/draft).

Enclosed are: Updated Instrument – SLAI; URL address, if applicable (most requests use

paper forms), and factor breakdown for coding.

I will send follow-up request every three months or so to check on progress. You may

only see my name in the email address ("To:"), but in the "blind copy" will be about other

researchers using the instrument.

Blessings, Rob Dennis, Ph.D

Appendix S: SLAI Survey

Servant Leadership Survey Instrument

This anonymous and confidential survey asks you to evaluate your leader.

The 42 items in this survey cover a variety of attitudes and behaviors. Please use the following 0-6 scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the items. Please provide your response to each statement by selecting one of the seven boxes, the higher the number the stronger the agreement with that statement. The selection is a continuum along which "0" equals zero amount or zero agreement and the highest number equals the maximum amount possible.

Please respond to each statement as you believe your leader would think, act, or behave.

Survey Item	Scale						
1. My leader sees serving as a mission of responsibility to others.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. My leader is genuinely interested in me as a person.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. My leader trusts me to keep a secret.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. My leader models service to inspire others.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. My leader has shown unselfish regard for my well-being.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. My leader desires to develop my leadership potential.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. My leader creates a culture that fosters high standards of ethics.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. My leader talks more about employees' accomplishments than his or her own.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. My leader has endured hardships, e.g., political, "turf wars," etc. to defend me.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. My leader shows trustworthiness in me by being open to receive input from me.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. My leader lets me make decisions with increasing responsibility.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. My leader does not overestimate his or her merits.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. The level of trust my leader places in me increases my commitment to the school.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. My leader has sought my vision regarding the school's vision.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

15. My leader understands that serving others is most important.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. My leader gives of him or herself, expecting nothing in return.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. My leader has shown his or her care for me by encouraging me.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. My leader gives of his or herself with no ulterior motives.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. My leader has shown compassion in his or her actions toward me.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. My leader is not interested in self-glorification.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. My leader makes me feel important.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. My leader is humble enough to consult others in the school when he or she may not have all the answers.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. My leader has made personal sacrifice(s) for me.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. My leader gives me the authority I need to do my job.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. My leader turns over some control to me so that I may accept more responsibility.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. My leader has made sacrifices in helping others.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. My leader shows concern for me.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. My leader empowers me with opportunities so that I develop my skills.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. My leader understands that service is the core of leadership.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. My leader communicates trust to me.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. My leader seeks to instill trust rather than fear or insecurity.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. My leader has encouraged me to participate in determining and developing a shared vision.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. My leader entrusts me to make decisions.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. My leader and I have written a clear and concise vision statement for our school.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. My leader aspires not to be served but to serve others.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. My leader has asked me what I think the future direction of our school should be.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. My leader does not center attention on his or her own accomplishments.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

38. My leader models service in his or her behaviors, attitudes, or values.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. My leader's demeanor is one of humility.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. My leader has shown that he or she wants to include teachers' vision into the school's goals and objectives.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. My leader knows I am above corruption.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. My leader seeks my commitment concerning the shared vision of our school.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Appendix T: MLQ Agreement

mind garden

www.mindgarden.com

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for the above named person to use the following copyright material for his/her research:

Instrument: *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire*

Authors: *Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass*

Copyright: *1995 by Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass*

Five sample items from this instrument may be reproduced for inclusion in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation.

The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any published material.

Sincerely,

Robert Most
Mind Garden, Inc.
www.mindgarden.com

Appendix U: MLQ Sample

MLQ   Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™
Leader Form (5x-Short)

My Name: _____   Date: _____

Organization ID #: _____   Leader ID #: _____

This questionnaire is to describe your leadership style as you perceive it. Please answer all items on this answer sheet. **If an item is irrelevant, or if you are unsure or do not know the answer, leave the answer blank.**

Forty-five descriptive statements are listed on the following pages. Judge how frequently each statement fits you. The word "others" may mean your peers, clients, direct reports, supervisors, and/or all of these individuals.

Use the following rating scale:

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

1. I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts...............0 1 2 3 4
2. I re-examine critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate 0 1 2 3 4
3. I fail to interfere until problems become serious................................0 1 2 3 4
4. I focus attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards 0 1 2 3 4
5. I avoid getting involved when important issues arise.............................0 1 2 3 4