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Georgia Teachers' Perceptions of Principals' Interpersonal Communication Skills as They Relate to Teacher Performance

Norma Vanessa Kambeya

GEORGIA TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS' INTERPERSONAL

COMMUNICATION SKILLS AS THEY RELATE TO TEACHER PERFORMANCE

by

NORMA VANESSA KAMBEYA

(Under the Direction of Linda Arthur)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' perception of their principals' interpersonal communication skills in relation to teacher performance. This was a qualitative study, where an authoethnographic mode of inquiry was employed. Authoethnography describes research studies of a personal nature (Ellis & Bochner, 2000).

Using an interactive interview technique, five teacher participants were asked questions in an effort to elicit teachers' perception of principal's interpersonal communication skills as they relate to teachers' performance. This study is significant in determining which interpersonal communication skills as perceived by teachers were most effective and essential in increasing teaching performance. Findings revealed that face-to face communication as the most common means preferred by teachers in the teacher-principal dyad. Attitudes, ideas, behaviors of the principals do affect the performance of teachers. Principals easily articulated goals and missions of the school, but face-to-face interactions were most difficult for principals. Poor interpersonal communication of the principal affected the emotional and

physical states of teachers such as depression, low-self esteem, feelings of incompetency, and seeking new place of employment. When principals demonstrated good interpersonal communication skills, the teachers were motivated to give more than 100% effort. Teachers' perceptions of their principal were manifested in their efforts to do their jobs. Chapter 4 presented a more detail descriptions of findings and chapter 5 reported a comprehensive analysis of the data.

Several conclusions emerged from this study. First, those principals who have excelled in demonstrating interpersonal communication skills have experienced a school where teachers were functioning in a climate conducive to teaching and learning. Secondly, those principals who have not demonstrated good interpersonal communication skills have experienced teachers who have chosen not to extend themselves beyond expectation. Finally, principals affected teacher performance in one way or another regardless of their ability to demonstrate interpersonal communication skills effectively.

INDEX WORDS: Interpersonal communication, Perception, Leadership, Emotional Intelligence, and Emotional Abuse.

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by

Norma Vanessa Kambeya

B.A., Stillman College, 1975

M. Ed., Troy State University, 2001

Ed. S., Lincoln Memorial University, 2003

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NORMA VANESSA KAMBEYA

Major Professor: Linda Arthur

Committee: Saba Jallow
Erik Brooks

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DEDICATION

Completing the work of a dissertation is a great achievement. I dedicate this dissertation first of all to my husband, Kambeya, who has supported me wholeheartedly. You constantly encouraged me. The sleepless nights of reading my work repeatedly have ended. You and I now can reap the rewards.

Secondly, I dedicate this dissertation to all my children. Your smiles, encouragement, and help will always be a memory close to my heart.

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No man is an island,

No man stands alone,

Each man's joy is joy to me,

Each man's grief is my own.

We need one another,

So I will defend,

Each man as my brother,

Each man as my friend

Joan Whitney
Alex Kramer

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Educational literature is replete concerning communication skills as a necessity

for school leaders (Hall, 2000). Effective principals, as detailed by the National

Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), must demonstrate competency in

all areas of communication, especially those of interpersonal communication skills.

NAESP further iterates that principals influence teachers' instruction through supervision

and practices that require effective interpersonal communication skills.

The premise that principals have an impact on the school remains constant in

educational history (Heck & Hallinger, 1999). For example, many studies throughout the

years concerning school reform have identified the principal as a key player in the

success of the school (Fullan 1985, 1991, Leithwood, 1992, Prestine, 1994, Day, 2000,

and Sergiovani, 2000). Mackey (2006) explains that the principal influences the learning

environment by articulating the vision and mission of the school. He argues that this

plays a very important factor in teacher and student success since the vision and mission

gives purpose and direction. Furthermore, Mackey reveals that the principal as an

instructional leader influences teaching and learning by supporting researched based

methods and using data to improve the curriculum or instructional strategies. Bogler

(2002) reports that principals, who view teachers as intellectuals, allow opportunities for

self-development, share decision-making and collaborative power make an impact on

teaching and learning by creating a positive school climate.

The No Child Left Behind Act is a law of accountability (U. S. Department of

Education, 2003). Its goal is to have all students proficient in Math and Reading by

2014. Principals will need to improve teaching and learning by supporting and inspiring

their staff in order to accomplish this goal (Herman & Diesel, 2005). Research

demonstrates the correlation between student academic achievement and teacher quality

(Heck & Hallinger, 1999). In addition, Dietel reports that school climate must be

conducive to meeting NCLB goals that is facilitated by strong interpersonal

communication skills of the principal.

Before the 1980s, there were very few empirical studies conducted to study the

effects of school leadership. There was a growing concern as to whether principals were

making a difference in student achievement (Glassman & Heck, 1992). The phrase

"effective schools" as it relates to effective principals will be used in the context of

correlates for effective schools. Edmonds (1979a; 1979b; 1981) first devised five

correlates for effective schools: (a) the leadership of the principal is characterized by

substantial attention to the quality of instruction; (b) there is a pervasive and broadly

understood instructional focus; (c) an orderly safe climate exists; (d) teachers' behavior

convey the expectation that all students are to possess at least minimum mastery; and (e)

pupil achievement is used as the measure for program evaluation. Edmonds explained

that each ingredient is directly related to the other. They are interactive, and they all are

present in an effective school. Gauthier (1982) and Villanover (1984) sharpened the

focus of the original five correlates by devising seven correlates: clearly stated and

focused mission; high expectation for students, teachers, and administrators; safe and

orderly climate for learning; instructional leadership by all administrators and staff

members; opportunity to learn and time-on-task; frequent monitoring of student progress;

and positive home/school relations. These correlates are now utilized in several school

reform initiatives such as Phi Delta Kappa's National Center for Effective Schools, the California Center for Effective Schools, the Association for Effective Schools, and the National Alliance for Effective Schools" (Garrison, 2005).

The key to effective schools is an effective principal (Fullan, 2002). Fullan further argues that the effective principal's role is critical to the success of any improvement efforts of the school. Halawah (2005) discussed characteristics that play a role in being an effective principal. Subordinates do not fear the effective principal; they respect the principal. An effective principal has knowledge of how humans learn. According to Halawah, this allows the principal to enhance an effective instruction program. Effective communication is another of the characteristics that Halawah discussed. He argued that effective communication plays a crucial role in the success of school principals. Effective principal must keep open communications with teachers and staff in order to foster positive school climate. Furthermore, effective communication is kept open by creating a climate of honesty, inquiry, and professional learning that is continuous (Halawah, 2005).

Effective communication is one of the proficiencies for principals defined also by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). NAESP (1997) depicts the development of skills and behaviors needed by effective elementary principals. The other seven proficiencies are leadership behavior, group processes, curriculum and instruction; assessment, organizational management; fiscal management, and political management. Effective principal's interpersonal skills are evidenced by regarding teachers as peers and by sharing a common purpose (NAESP, 1997). It further states that effective principals inspire a sense of confidence, loyalty, trust, and respect.

This helps to establish collaborative action and build up the school as a team according to the NAES.

The principal's leadership role has moved from that of a hierarchical system to that of an interactive one (Smylie & Hart, 1997). It has expanded to that of facilitator, a collaborative partner, a change agent, an effective communicator, a promoter of positive school climate, and an instructional leader (Bennis & Goldsmith, 1997; Blase & Blase, 2000; Dufour, 2001; King, 2002). As the principal becomes the instructional leader, the concept of teamwork, collaboration, and collegiality positions the principal to be effective in interpersonal skills in order to reach organizational goals (Barrie, 2005). Additionally, the principal's role includes that of a decision-maker that requires effective interpersonal communication skills (Parsons, 2001). Teachers are in a position to learn and change as they build on the social relationship in the principal-teacher dyad. Quigley (2000) explains this social relationship is a relationship built on support, friendliness, and fairness. Research shows that principals' support of teacher professional development is very effective in the enhancement of teacher knowledge and teacher performance (Wenglinsky, 2000).

Research studies characterize effective leaders as leaders who turn schools into emotionally and socially intelligent schools (Brearley, 2004 & Goleman, 2006). The emotionally intelligent school is a school where leaders lead learning; where influence replace authority; where dialogue replaces yelling; and reflection replaces punishment (Brearley, 2004). Emotional intelligence (EI) is best understood by four abilities or skills (Mayer & Salovey, 1997): perceiving emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. The research has shown that EI is very effective in forming

positive personal relationship and achieving success on the job. The socially intelligent school is characterized by a personal leadership style (Goleman, 2006). Goleman has extended the work of Mayer and Salovey in the area of EI. He believes that the failure and success of a leader has to do with the qualities of the heart in the person-to-person interaction established by the principals.

The literature reports positive effects of emotionally and socially intelligent leadership styles, and it reports abusive leadership style as well. (Blase & Blase, 2002). Emotional abuse (Keashly, 1998) is expressions of hostility through verbal and nonverbal cues. Examples are facial expressions, gestures, staring, dirty looks, silent treatment, ridicule, unfair evaluations and aggressive eye contact. Harlos and Pinder (2000) reveal that this type of leadership has an affect on an individual's psychological well-being, social relationship, and job performance.

Communication is an ongoing process of making and reaffirming the social realities that make the organization (Birk and Burk 2000). The role of effective communication and positive climates is stressed as a primary mechanism for effective organizational improvement (Halawah, 2005).

Many definitions of the meaning of interpersonal communication have been developed. Interpersonal communication is used interchangeably with soft skills (Koen, 2005, Smaglik, 2004, & Lewis, 2007). They identified soft skills as the ability to communicate, team building and solving problems. These soft skills or interpersonal communication skills may be instrumental in opening doors to employment opportunities (Smaglik, 2004). When soft skills are left unpracticed, even the most affluent leader is at risk of being derailed (Koen, 2005). Bennis (1999) uses the term people skills

synonymously with interpersonal communication. He defined these skills in terms of

leadership: ability to communicate, motivate, and delegate. The meaning may vary

according to the number of communicators involved, the nature of the interaction, and the

proximity of the interaction (Hartley, 1999). For example, it may be an interaction

between two people such as a teacher-principal dyad or a small group setting. The

interaction may be feedback from the principal. Heath and Bryant (2000) define as face-

to-face encounters, oral, written, and nonverbal forms of communication, but it usually

applies to verbal communication It involves at least two people as each one affects the

other. Feelings are shared through verbal and nonverbal messages (Heath et al.). As more

research is conducted, the process of defining interpersonal communication will give a

more precise definition and clarity.

There are several characteristics of interpersonal communication. Interpersonal

communication is transactional (Dickson, 2001). It moves from the sender to the receiver

and affects both the sender and the receiver. Additionally, interpersonal communication

is bound to happen with the end in mind (Dickson, 2001). Others characterize

interpersonal communication as multi-dimensional (Ellis, 2000), and irreversible (Hargie

& Dickson, 2004). In other words, what has been said cannot be taken back.

It has been mentioned that interpersonal communication may entail two people

(Hartley, 1999). This is significant since this study is concerned with the communication

in the principal-teacher dyad . It is important to examine an interpersonal model of

communication that focuses on dyadic communication. Hargie & Dickson (2004)

developed a skilled model of communication based on earlier theories of Argyle (1983).

The model is based on three assumptions: people communicate with a purpose; people

are sensitive to the effect of their communications; and they take steps to modify their communication. This two-person model identifies six components of skill interpersonal communication: (1) person-situation context. The researchers note that the interaction depends on the persons involved and what they bring to the encounter. Such elements as knowledge, motives, personality, attitudes, and emotions shape the interaction. (2) Goals pursued. Here a goal is desired results of the communication. (3) Mediation processes. This process is characterized by plans and strategies to accomplish goals. (4) Response. Responses may be nonverbal or verbal in interaction. (5) Feedback. The researchers emphatically noted that this is a fundamental element in communication. Harige & Dickson defined it as a reaction to what the speaker said. (6) Perception. Feedback is not always perceived accurately according to authors of this model. Additionally, they argue that how one views another and vice versa is crucial in interpersonal communication. The central features of each element were discussed in more detail in chapter two of the literature review.

The research literature on interpersonal communication has a broad list of skills or dimensions (Hargie & Dickson, 2004). Cameron (2000) declares that skill signifies practical expertise. In other words, one is considered skilled if he or she has acquired the ability to do something well. Some of these skills have been identified as face-to-face communication, trust, listening, empathy, authenticity, verbal and nonverbal cues, and feedback.

Goddard, Moran, and Hoy (2001), note that trust seems to stand out as vital in interpersonal communication. They argued that trust is what makes a relationship strong.

Pope (2004) stated that trust is paramount to establishing and maintaining positive

relationships at an organizational level and at an interpersonal level.

  Researchers in such fields as organizational communication and organizational behavior

have studied the importance of interpersonal communication relationships within

organization structures (Yousef, 2000, Owens, 2002).

Organization communication is defined as the means of transmitting information by an

organization to its members in the organization (Price, 1997). The communication

process is a relational one in the sense that there exists some interaction between the

sender and the receiver (Hall, 2002). The sender and the receiver's social relationship

affect the communication process. For example, if the sender is somewhat intimidated by

the receiver in the process of message transmission, the message and its interpretation

will be affected. Those who hold leadership positions spend 80% of their time in

interpersonal communications such as face-to-face interactions, attending meetings,

answering phones, attending to mail, giving feedback, and solving conflicts. This places

communication, particularly, interpersonal communication at the heart of the

organization, and efforts to make decisions rely on the communication process (Hall,

2002). The communication process includes communicators, medium, channel, noise,

feedback, and context (Hargie and Dickson, 2004). Communicators are sender and

receiver of messages simultaneously. The message is whatever the communicators wish

to share. Medium entails on how the message is shared. The channel of communication

connects the source and receiver. A code is simply a system of meaning that the group

shares. Noise is any interference that causes a disruption in the communication. This

interruption causes the message to be misunderstood.

Organization behavior is described as that discipline that seeks to understand human behavior in an organizational environment (Owens, 2004). In order to improve the performance of the organization, the leader must work through people to achieve organizational goals (Hall, 2002). For example, the principal confers with teachers one-on-one or in small groups. Additionally, understanding the behavior of people in the work environment is paramount to the success of the organization.

Interpersonal communication can be understood by considering the communicator's style. Communcator's style considers what and how things are said (Coeling & Cukr, 2000). Particular interest to this study is the communicator's image of himself. If a person views himself as a good communicator, communicating with others would not pose a problem or vice versa. According to this theory, perception of self plays an important role in the way one may communicate. Some types of communicating styles are dominant, contentious, and attentive. Dominant communication is characterized by speaking strongly in a take-charge manner. Contentious is communication that is argumentative and quick to challenge. Attentive is very careful and empathetic communication.

Styles of communication and personality have interested researchers (Leung and Bond, 2001 & Daly, 2002). Interpersonal communication research is incomplete without the inclusion of communication styles of behavior and personality (Leung et al.). Personality has been framed with the Five-Factor Model (Kornor & Nordvik, 2004). There are five domains of this model: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. Neuroticism is being anxious. Outgoing and assertiveness represent extraversion. Openness is the tendency to be creative.

Agreeableness is represented by kindness, gentle, trusting, and trustworthy.

Conscientiousness entails achievement and dependability. It correlates best with job

performance. The extraversion personality is equated with the Norton's (1983)

nondirective communication style (Weaver, 2005).

Theories or models of leadership can be viewed by two broad themes that come

from the literature: transactional leadership style (task-orientation) and transformational

leadership style (relationship-orientation). Transactional style of leadership is described

as authoritative and not conducive to change (Aldoory and Toth, 2004). They also

describe this leadership style as one that has "clear direction, certainty, personal

oversight, and perceptions of just treatment" (p.159) as being synonymous with

charismatic leadership. In other words, the leaders of this style are able to promote

interest and motivate followers. Transformational leaders are characterize by their "risk

taking, goal articulation, high expectation, self-assertion, vision, and emphasis on

collective identity" (Ehrhart and Klein, 2001, p.159). There are other scholars that do

focus on leadership styles but would rather focus on situation theory of leadership

(Casimir, 2001; Lord, Brown, Harvey, & Hall, 2002). According to this theory, the

leader may sometimes employ transactional style and other times employ

transformational style. Other styles of leadership such as trait, situation, and participative

will be fully discussed in Chapter 2 of the literature review.

Included also in the leadership category is leadership style. Leadership style is

defined as leadership behaviors that cane be measured (Richmond & Allison, 2003). A

few styles to name are collaborative or distributed, moral or ethical, authenticity, and

many more.

School leadership is described as "people intensive" which means that principals are constantly interacting with someone (Smith and Piele, 1997 p. 22). They explain that principals must have specific skills to cope with others. Bennis (1999) iterates that all skills are important; nevertheless, future exemplary leaders will be known by their mastery of people skills, taste, judgment, and character.

Interpersonal communication skills are vital in a workplace where new job requirements, new skills, and new ways of working with people are changing at drastically (North & Worth, 2002). In 1990, the Department of Labor formed a committee to conduct a longitudinal study on how schools were preparing students for the workforce. Entitle Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS); this momentous work became the platform for businesses to communicate to educators what students should know. Such as the importance of developing interpersonal competencies and skills in communication, that one needs to know to succeed in the workplace. The SCANS (U.S. Department of Labor, 1992) Report is a longitudinal study that identified such interpersonal skills as working collaboratively as a team, teaching others, serving others, leading others, working well with others from a diverse culture, and negotiating. Managers, business personnel, line workers, factory workers, restaurant personnel, and others across the U. S. were surveyed to seek information concerning skills needed to be successful in the work place. This work was completed in 1992, yet it is still of value today according to North and Worth.

Additionally, a study conducted by Charter Institute of Personnel and Development Training 2004 Survey surveyed personnel professionals in the private and public sector. The questionnaire ranked behavioral and interpersonal communication

skills as the sixth of seven of the most important skills in organizations. The other skills to mention were induction, health and safety, technical skills, professional development and government driven training.

Ingersol (2001) argues that diversity and pluralistic views now characterize public schools. Interpersonal communication difficulties will accompany the more "culturally diverse" workplace that is forecast. This signifies a need to stimulate more research in the area of interpersonal communication skills (Kikoski, 1999).

A solid and shared understanding develops among people as they interact over time (Hart, 1995). Hart explains that they interpret the communication they receive from one another. He contends that there is an importance of the meaning and symbols communicated through interaction in how people develop self-concepts and assess themselves based on their beliefs about how others see and evaluate them. The literature has shown that other people's perceptions of behavior are often the measure or test of skill effectiveness. If the teacher perceives the principal in a different way than he or she perceives himself, then it is almost certain that the principal will have problems in performing his or her duties; his or her staff will almost certainly behave towards the principal in the way they perceive the principal (Pashiardis, 2001).

This study examined teachers' perceptions of principals' interpersonal communication skills as they relate to teacher performance. It was important to conduct this study, because it provided new insights for improving administrative and teacher relations as a means to attain effective schools. Principals and those who aspire to become principals will become aware of the importance of interpersonal communication

skills in effectively building trust, promoting respect, raising teacher morale, and improving teacher performance in schools.

Statement of the Problem

The literature has evidenced the importance and the necessity that leaders must possess interpersonal communication skills in an organization. Education literature is replete with the concept that an effective principal is the key figure in creating effective schools. In the light of the literature, effective schools are understood from the correlates of effective schools as discussed in the literature.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) has listed communication skills as one of the eight proficiencies for effective elementary and secondary principals. It is well documented that the principal must keep the doors of communication open in order to foster good positive school climate for a successful school (Halawah, 2005). A positive climate involves interpersonal or people skills such as feedback, collaborations and shared decision-making. The principal of today must be able to lead a diverse workforce (Shim, 2003). A diverse workforce is described as being different in gender, color, nationality, and culture. An effective leader must be able to relate to people across cultures. As the literature has already revealed, the diverse workforce brings with it different perceptions, different value systems, and different languages to the workplace.

The literature lacks a consensus among researchers as to what constitutes essential interpersonal communication skills that promote effective teacher performance. This study was a step in alleviating this confusion by trying to determine which interpersonal communication skills as perceived by teachers were most effective and essential in

increasing teaching performance. There was an even greater need to establish and understand the role that these skills play in the principal-teacher dyad in promoting effective teacher performance.

The correlates for effective schools have revealed that school climate, which includes interpersonal communication, is important in promoting teacher performance as well as the student achievement.

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' perceptions of principals' interpersonal communication skills as they relate to teacher performance. It is important to study interpersonal skills or people skills. According to Hall (2002), organizations need people power to meet organizational goals. Organizations are moving from compartmentalizing and moving to team working (Charles, 2005). He argued that soft skills are at the heart of an organization. It is widely accepted that teachers have a direct impact on student success and achievement (Blanton, 2006). Studies have shown that the principal is the key player in the school affecting teachers as well as students.

<center>Research Questions</center>

The primary focus of this study was to examine Georgia teachers' perception of principal's interpersonal communication skills and to understand the role these skills play in teacher performance. It is important to understand the role that these skills may play since teacher performance is directly related to student achievement and success. The overarching question of this study is this: what role does interpersonal communication skills of the principal play in teacher performance? The following subquestions will also guide the research:

1. Which interpersonal communication skills of principals do teachers believe impact teacher performance in the school setting?

2. How does the teachers' perception of their principal affect teacher performance?

<p style="text-align:center">Significance of the Study</p>

There is a large body of knowledge concerning the importance of interpersonal communication skills of principals (Hall, 2000). It has been well defined in the literature that the effective principal is the key element of an effective school. His or Her impact affects the entire instructional organization of the school. It was clearly seen from the literature that interpersonal communication skills of principal are crucial in establishing trust, thus resulting in teaching that is more effective. There have been limited research studies that identify which skill or skills of interpersonal communication are most effective and most essential in promoting teacher performance. Research studies have relied greatly on surveys of principals and teachers for information. This qualitative study utilized multiple methods such as a, focus groups, and one on one interview, in order to gather information that surveys alone may not reveal.

This study may help principals become aware of the importance of collegiality, trust and respect in their relationship with their teachers, and help to improve teacher performance. This study is important to the principal because it increases awareness of which essential and most effective interpersonal communication skills promote teacher performance. Not only that, but also it increases awareness of the impact that his or her interpersonal skills have on teacher performance resulting in greater student achievement.

Procedures

This is a qualitative study, including authoethnographic mode of inquiry. Authoethnography is a qualitative research method where self is a source of data (Duncan, 2004). It describes research studies of a personal nature (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). They further explain that the researcher's style of writing is highly personal using his/her own experiences to further understanding of events in society. According to Ellis and Bochner, this method is best for this study in that the researcher will give voice to the study and will share invaluable inside knowledge that is not expressed through traditional forms of inquiry.

The primary method of collecting data for this study was through structured one-on-one interviews. Such data as dialogues, documents, stories, and personal reflections and testimonies were collected to address research questions for this study. Confidentiality of participants was maintained in compliance with IRB requirements.

The researcher interviewed five teachers from northeast Georgia schools. Three school levels were represented: elementary, middle, and high school. The researcher sought certified teachers of any age group who taught from K-12 grades. Classroom experience ranged from novice teacher to veterans. All teachers were employed in a public school and they were employed by the school district where research was conducted. The researcher sought a diverse group of teachers that differed in gender, age and ethnicity. Teacher participants were teachers of various subjects. The rationale for such a diverse group was to get various perspectives.

 Random sampling was used in selecting participants for this research. Upon the approval from the IRB (Institute Review Board), the researcher put the names of all

schools in the district in boxes according to levels labeled elementary schools- A, middle

schools- B, and high schools- C. There were 35 schools: 13 elementary schools, 11

middle schools, and 11 high schools. The researcher pulled from each box until ten

schools from each level had been randomly selected. From those ten schools randomly

pulled, the researcher emailed 150 letters seeking teacher participants for face-to-face

interviews. Teacher participants were provided information concerning this research

project and a demographic survey sheet. The researcher received responses from three

high schools, four middle schools, and three elementary schools conveying willingness to

participate. The researcher gathered those teacher responses and placed them in boxes

labeled: elementary schools A, middle schools B, and high schools C. Two names per

school level were selected randomly from the boxes. These teacher participants were

contacted through email to set up an interview time and place. One high school teacher

participant self-eliminated. This left a remaining number of five participants. Then the

researcher repeated the process of randomly pulling from the remaining teacher responses

in an effort to replace the participant who self-eliminated

        The researcher followed the interview procedures as outline by Leedy and Omrod

(2001). Setting up the interview was done in a timely manner and convenient for the

participants. All interviews were confirmed in writing. About five days before the

interviews, reminder notices were sent through email or standard mail. The researcher

obtained permission to tape the interview sessions

        In addition, the researcher employed an experienced panel of six teachers of

various grade levels. These teachers had thirty or more years of teaching experience in

the public school system, and were well-trained practioners in the field. These

experienced teachers were drawn from a cohort of Georgia Southern University doctoral

students in the Educational Administration program. This experienced panel of teachers

aided the researcher in developing questions for the interviews.

After a list of questions was generated, the researcher emailed the questions to the

methodologist for his view, comments and approval. Then, the methodologist emailed his

approval of ten interview questions that he believed would aid the researcher in

addressing the research.

The following steps were used to analyze the data: The researcher organized data

by using index cards, file folders. The index cards were used for note taking during

interviews. The researcher documented reoccurring themes that she thought were major

points of interest discussed by participants. These were filed into small file folders with a

theme written on them. This allowed the data to be broken down into smaller manageable

units. The researcher continued to revisit audiotapes, notes, words and stories of the

participants. Other themes were added as some were deleted from the small file. The

researcher's own knowledge and perceptions allowed her to identify common themes in

the data. Some of the themes were deleted as others were added. The researcher kept

records of revelations. A recording strategy of keeping memos was employed. A memo

is conversing with self about what has occurred in the research process (Jacelon &

O'Dell, 2000). The researcher spoke into a digital recorder to guard thoughts and

interpretations of the data. The recordings were revisited many times to gain

understanding of the data. As the recordings, stories, and small file folders were revisited,

it was then that themes were clearly revealed. The themes from the data were

verbal/face-to-face, written communication, feedback, trust, support, care, respect, and

worth. Each participant consistently expressed thoughts concerning these themes. After all information had been written on index cards and transferred to small file folders, the researcher typed information into a chart to review themes and how they connected to the review of literature.

Participants were invited to review statements and stories rendered to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. All audiotaped interviews were transcribed by using IBM Via Voice and again participants were given the opportunity to review audiotapes of the interview to ensure validity of the study.

The researcher reported data through a personal narrative style of writing, drawing on her personal experiences as well as the experience of others. In addition, the researcher created tables to report the data and used captions to explain findings.

Limitations

The study presented the following limitations: The demographic profile of the participants was not essential to the study findings; and one participant decided to end her involvement in this study due to time constraints.

Definition of Terms

Interpersonal communication – Encompasses oral, written, and nonverbal communication. It involves two or more people. Some examples are face-to-face, feedback, listening, and empathy.

Interpersonal skills – Skills that effectively engage with others and establish trust, credibility, and confidence (Hargie & Dickson, 2004).

Leader – One who motivates, empowers, inspires, others. In addition, one who collaborates with, encourages others, and creates an environment where employees feel a sense of ownership.

Perception - Perception is recognition and interpretation of sensory stimuli based on mostly memory. It is also defined as insight, intuition, or knowledge gained by perceiving; becoming aware; and using the senses to achieve understanding.

Communicator Style - The way one communicates with another.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Owens (2004) explained that leadership is not just something provided to subordinates, but it is a process involving dynamic interaction. He maintains that leaders tend to be elected to position according to the perceived ability or power to satisfy the needs of the group and accept responsibility for moving the group forward. The organizational environment is the key to influencing organizational behavior. Valuable information has been revealed concerning the importance of interpersonal communication skills of principals. Interpersonal communication has been discussed from the perspective of leadership styles and gender. Transformational and transactional leadership styles are the two styles that the literature supported.

There is overwhelming evidence in educational literature concerning the importance of interpersonal communication skills in attaining organizational goals. The principal's role is strongly tied to his or her ability to communicate and to manage any conflict that may arise. As an instructional leader, the principal must be an effective leader in interpersonal communication to build collaborative teams, instill a sense of collegiality, trust and respect in order to build a positive school climate among teachers.

The purpose of the study was to examine Georgia teachers' perception of principals' interpersonal communication skills as they relate to teacher performance. This study added new knowledge, and it helped raise the consciousness of the importance of the role of the principals' interpersonal communications skills. This study utilized auto-ethnographical qualitative method. In-depth interviews were conducted as well.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine Georgia teachers' perceptions of

principals' interpersonal communication skills as they relate to teacher performance. A

substantial amount of literature on interpersonal communication skills provides a basis

for the present study. It is a fact that interpersonal communication skills are important

and necessary in any dyadic relationship. It has been explained that leadership involves

dynamic reaction and interaction. There remains the unknown issue as to which

interpersonal communication skills of principals are most productive in promoting

effective teacher performance. Teacher performance is a major factor in student success.

With the No Child Left Behind Act, there is pressure to meet standards. In an

effort to accommodate this law, classroom sizes have been decreased, funds have been

allocated for supplies and materials, and research based strategies of teaching have been

employed. The role of the principals' interpersonal communication skills and knowing

which skills are most effective as they relate to teacher performance may help satisfy the

mandate not to leave any child behind.

The review of the literature examined the theoretical and empirical studies in the

field of education leadership.

An Overview of the History of Interpersonal Communication

Before the 1960s, there were few studies conducted under the title of interpersonal

communication, which marked the beginning of the field of interpersonal

communication. The usage of the term communication demonstrated that it indeed played

a significant role in human behavior (Health &Bryant, 2000). The 1960s research studies influenced the development of the interpersonal field of communication. The studies of personality and its influence on relationships revealed that many psychiatric problems are due to interpersonal relations as well as self-problem (Segrin and Flora, 2000). Studies in humanistic psychology conceptualized that relationships could be improved through effective communication (Gable & Shean, 2000).

Initially, interpersonal research focused on persuasion, social influence, and small group processes (Berger, 2005). These three focus points of interpersonal research that Berger points out need to be explained. Persuasion is one way that leaders influence teacher's attitudes, ideas, and behaviors. The principal as a persuasive communicator employs credibility, expertise, trustworthiness. Here, the principal may deliver a variety of degrees of reasons in his or her message. For example, he or she may deliver a message of fear, or comfort. The audience that receives the message is of a variety of demographics and personality traits. The principal normally chooses his or her best method of communication such as email, face-to-face or the printed word. Social influence is so tied to interpersonal communications in that people's thoughts, feelings, as well as behaviors affect others. Group processes are the way people interact and influence each other in a group setting. Principals employ groups to improve decision-making. The studies of Kurt Lewin (1939), the father of modern Social Psychology, influenced the emerging field of interpersonal communication. He proposed that an individual's environment had much to do with an individual's behavior. He also developed theories of individual personalities and interpersonal conflicts. The early research studies of Festinger (1959), Heider (1958), and Hovland (1953) were a direct impact from Lewin.

These three researchers studied under the tutelage of Lewin and further extended his work. Festinger became the father of cognitive dissonance theory that leads to a change in attitude and behavior. Heider explored the nature of interpersonal communications and developed the attribution theory. He also published The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations that was a major breakthrough in the field (Heath & Bryant, 2000). This is explained by the means in which people attribute the behavior of others. For example, a person may give because he or she is pressured to give. Hovland used his knowledge of applied psychology learned from Lewin to explore interpersonal communication process.

The 1970s ushered in a change in focus into the domain of social interactions, relational development, and relational control (Kelly & Thibaut, 1978).). Shannon and Weaver (1949) developed a mathematical theory called information theory of communication that led Berger's Uncertainty Reduction Theory. Berger and Calabrese (1975) have been accredited with the Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT) that paved the way for interpersonal communication. The URT is defined as the numerous ways in which an interactant may behave in a given situation. The greater the level of uncertainty in a relationship decreases the chance of predicting behaviors and occurrences.

The 1980s was the period of cognitive approaches to interpersonal communication. The work of Knapp (1984), Planalp and Honeycutt (1985) helped mold interpersonal communication as it is known today. Because of their research efforts, interpersonal communication not only focuses on language, social cognition, and social psychology, but also interpersonal communication focuses on dyadic communication (Elfenvein, Foo, Boldry, and Tan, 2006), face-to-face-interaction (Kikoski, 1998) or as a communication to develop others (Bennis, 1999 and Nuttall, 2004).

The Importance of Interpersonal Communication Skills

Within every human being, there is a need to interact with others (Affi &

Guerrero, 2000). The need to communicate satisfies the building of social bonds (Leary,

2001). For example, by observing our early ancestors who lived in groups to survive, he

hypothesized that those who lived in groups were more likely to survive than those who

lived alone. Coover and Murphy (2000) interjected that self develops identity through

interaction. In other words, a person becomes who he or she is through interaction with

others. This is significant to principals in that they are developed through interaction

with their teachers.

The importance of interpersonal communication is seen in the writings of ancient

writers. Kagemni, the son of Pharaoh Huni, advised him on good social behavior towards

authority and fellow human beings. He counseled on speech discretion when he wrote,

"The innermost chamber is opened to the man of silence."

(Http://egypt.thetao.info/texts.html). The saying means that when a person listens and

observes before speaking, he is able to see the heart or motives of another. Ptah-hotep,

who has been credited as author of the oldest book Precept, wrote elegantly about how

one should communicate with a disputant. Not all interaction is pleasant but even the

Holy Bible (Gen. 2:18, King James) emphasizes the importance of personal interaction: it

is not good that man should be alone. Engaging in effective communication contributes

to a healthy emotional state (Gable & Shean, 2000). In line with the same thinking, when

one engages in communication that is not meaningful, the result is usually loneliness,

unhappiness, and depression (William and Zadiro, 2001).

Individuals with strong interpersonal communication skills cope better with stress, handle major life transitions, and are less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety (Segrin and Flora, 2000). Those who are skilled in interaction are resilient to down falls in life (Segrin, 2000). In light of these research findings, training is now being offered for many organizations (Argyle, 1999). Successful managers are equated with having good interpersonal communication skills (Hargie & Tourish, 2000). Entrepreneurs who possess good interpersonal communication skills have advantages in obtaining funding, establishing a positive relationship with customers, and securing quality employees (Baron & Markman, 2000).

<center>The Nature of Interpersonal Communication Skills</center>

The literature reveals many definitions of interpersonal communication that is worth mentioning. In order to illustrate this point, it is necessary to examine some definitions of earlier theorists to the present.

Some earlier researchers conceptualized that interpersonal communication is synonymous with human communication (Applbaum, Anatol, Hays, Jenson, Porter, & Mandel, 1973). This is because communication takes place between people. The earlier work of Miller and Sunnafrank (1982) introduced another important concept: situationally bound criteria. In other words, there are certain situations that constitute interpersonal communications: those who are communicating are in small numbers; communicators are face to face; communicators are in close proximity; all senses are used; and there is an opportunity for feedback. There are disadvantages that this concept poses. First, the definition is not clear. Some situations may or may not fit in this definition. For example, is it to say that people cannot communicate by telephone or any

other mechanical mean and is it classified as interpersonal communication? Secondly, this definition implies that the process of communication is static, whereas it is dynamic and constantly moving. Miller and Sannafrank explained that the situationist defines interpersonal communication in the context of its situation:

> If two individuals engage in eyeball-to-eyeball
>
> interaction, they are communicating interpersonally,
>
> whether they are total strangers or close friends. For
>
> the situationist, a phatic greeting exchange between
>
> nodding acquaintances qualifies as interpersonal com-
>
> communication, but a telephone conversation between a husband
>
> and wife does not…. In short, the situational approach at large
>
> ignores quantitative and qualitative changes in the nature
>
> and outcome of a communicative transaction in the develop-
>
> ing relationship between the communicators (p. 222).

Sannafrank and Miller use the developmental approach to define interpersonal communication. Previously it was stated that interpersonal communication is dynamic and constantly moving instead of remaining static. This is the concept of the developmental approach. It moves from one point to another. Sannafrank and Miller described this as moving from impersonal to interpersonal. By impersonal, they explain that the communicators are simply functioning within their social roles and they are not getting to know one another as a person. They further explain if the communicators continue their relationship, interpersonal communication skills must sharpen to allow the relationship to grow. Brooks and Health (1993) define interpersonal communication as

the exchange of information, meanings, and feelings through verbal and nonverbal messages. Others use Interpersonal communication skills interchangeably with soft skills (Koen, 2005, Smaglik, 2004, & Lewis, 2007). These researchers iterate that these skills may encompass written and nonverbal communication. In addition, some researchers suggest that interpersonal communication skills are equated with people skills and communication skills (Wallis, Steptoe, & Miranda, 2006). They contend that there should be more emphasis on communication skills, which are the ability to work with people from different cultures. They further state that theses skills must be developed. Simply put, interpersonal communication skills are those skills needed to interact with others effectively. (Hargie & Dickson 2004).

In the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills Report (SCANS, 1992), interpersonal communication skills are described as a team player, assist customers, lead others, negotiate, and be culturally competent. Because of this report, organizations began to use this definition as a measure for employment. By 2002, 80% of ads included interpersonal communications as defined by the SCANS Report.

<div align="center">Understanding the Communication Process</div>

Communication does not just happen; it is a process of sending and receiving messages (Heath & Bryant, 2000). An understanding of interpersonal communication can be examined through models devised by earlier researchers of communication. There are several models to consider: Aristotle's Verbal Model, Lasswell's Model, Shannon-Weaver, Berlo Model, Ross Model as reported by Heath & Bryant.

Aristotle's model paved the way for interpersonal communication, as we know it today. It sets the foundation for the three major elements of communication: the speaker,

the message, and the audience. All interpersonal communications must include these three elements.

Another pioneer in the field of interpersonal communication is Lasswell. In addition to the speaker, the message, and the audience, he put importance on the channel and effect of the message. According to this model, channel is the medium in which the message is transmitted. Effect is how the message affects the receiver.

Shannon & Weaver (1949) labeled one communicator as the source and the other as the receiver. The communicators exchange thoughts, and feelings, which are messages. They argue that this is the content of communication.

David Berol published the Berlo Model in 1960 with the premise that one must understand human behavior in order to understand communication. Berlo's model reveals five factors that increase fidelity: Communication skills, attitudes, knowledge level, position within a social system, and culture. This model identifies the primary communication skills as speaking and writing. The second factor identifies attitude toward self, toward the subject matter, and toward the receiver. This model has the assumption that when the attitude is negative, so will the communications be. The knowledge factor according to Berlo's model is important for both the source and the receiver. One must have a good knowledge base in order to communicate with a purpose. The fourth and fifth factors are very much integrated in communication. The social system and culture have a great influence on communication. This model reveals that people in different social classes and those who have different roles do differ in communication styles. The weakness of this model is the lack of feedback.

The Ross model stresses climate as a powerful influence in interpersonal communication. The climate here is explained as the sender's information knowledge, the sender's past experience with the knowledge, his feelings, attitudes, and emotions at the time of reception. According to this model, the receiver decodes the stimuli for interpretation. Here the decoding process is defined as selecting and sorting out the stimuli that has something in common with the receiver's culture. Culture has the same influence as climate: feelings, attitudes, emotions, and knowledge. As the message is interpreted, the receiver gives feedback. This feedback is the receiver's reaction to the message. The strength of this model is the emphasis that Ross places on climate.

Having examined these models of interpersonal communication, the researcher will use as a conceptual model based on earlier theorizing by Argyle (1983). This includes communicator, message, medium, perception, emotion, and feedback.

The way in which the message is conveyed is medium. It is said that face-face communication is a more effective form of communication than emailing (O'Sullivan, 2000). The channel and medium are used interchangeably, but there is a slight difference. Channel is what connects the sender and the receiver. It entails the channel that carries speech, nonverbal communication, smell and touch. All communication has signs and symbols of meanings that are shared by the communicators. The use of Braile or Morse code would be examples. Finally, noise refers to anything that interrupts the communication process.

Interpersonal Communication Skills: A Humanistic Approach to Leadership

Abrell (1974) believes that releasing human potential in the supervisory teacher relationship is done through a humanistic approach of communication. A humanistic

approach to communications deals with human values. A few examples of these values or dimensions are perception, nonverbal, listening, feedback, empathy, trust, and authenticity.

<div align="center">Perception</div>

Perception is " a compromise between what the organism is given to see and what the organism is set to see or wants to see or even what the organism wants to avoid seeing" (Bruner and Postman ,1948 p.85). Perception plays a vital role in interpersonal communication.

Each person sees the world from a different perspective (Gaziel, 2003). He also explains that the world's view of leaders is derived from early personal experiences. In a research study, it was revealed how school principals perceive their world as leaders and how principal effectiveness is predicted. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was applied. Twenty-one elementary principals were chosen randomly from a list of twenty-six principals enrolled in an in-service training program at Bar IIan University in Israel in 2001-2001. Each participant was interviewed for approximately sixty minutes. For the quantitative component of the investigation, sixty primary school principals completed a survey instrument chosen randomly. The researchers categorized the principals' views into four different frames: (1) structural frame (goals and efficiency), (2) human resource frame (human needs), (3) political frame (group interests), and (4) symbolic frame (meaning to life). One finding showed the human resource frame from the perception of both principal and teacher was consistently the best predictor of both manager and leadership effectiveness. Another finding showed that when leaders valued relationships, feelings, and lead through empowerment, success

was the result. The human resource leader seeks to solve problems through interpersonal

means. Findings also showed that the political frame was the most frequent frame used.

From the perception of principal and teacher participants, the principal dealt with solving

problems through negotiations and persuasion among those with influence. The

perception of the principal and teacher differed from a structural frame view. Teachers

reported that principals used the structural frame, which dealt with timelines, planning,

attention to details and setting measurable goals. Principals reported using this frame as

necessary. Gaziel argues that perception plays a vital role in performance. He explains

that teachers perceived planning, timelines, and measurement as control forces. In other

words, teachers felt that professional autonomy was threatened. The principal viewed it

as a normal way of doing things. The study findings revealed that the structural frame

was the best predictor of manager effectiveness but not leader effectiveness. Both

principal and teacher viewed the symbolic frame as the worse predictor of manager and

leadership effectiveness

<div align="center">Nonverbal</div>

Not all face-to-face encounters rely on what is being said. Nonverbal

communication is a great source of information in portraying feelings about others and

self (Bull, 2002). Such emotional cues as anger, sadness, disgust, fear and surprise can be

manifested through facial expressions. Nonverbal communication (NVC) entails bodily

activity through facial expression, gestures, and movements. Remland (2000) notes that

NVC could be done simultaneously whereas verbal communication (VC) is done by

turns.

Listening

An even more important and a vital skill of interpersonal communication is that of

listening. The adult spends 70% of time communicating. Of this, 45% is spent listening,

30% speaking, 16% reading, and 9% writing. In the workplace, 55% is spent listening,

23% speaking, 13.3% reading, and 8.4% writing. Managers listening increased to 63%

(Janusik & Wolvin). Stewart and Cash (2000) report how:

> Surveys of thousands of corporations in the U. S. revealed
>
> that poor listening skills are a major barrier in nearly all
>
> positions from accountants to supervisors; good listening
>
> skills are considered critical to entry-level positions,
>
> effective performance, high productivity, managerial
>
> competency, and promotion within most organizations.

 Rosenbaum (2001) conducted a study of 1000 salespeople and found that the

ability to listen effectively defined success. Likewise, Goby and Lewis (2000) in a study

of the insurance industry found that the interpersonal communication was the primary

skill for success.

Petress (2001, p.261) defines listening as "the awareness of, the rending to, the

organization of, and the operationalization of data entering our nervous system via

hearing mechanism." Additionally, he maintains that listening is quite different from

hearing in the sense that listening is an active cognitive activity whereas hearing is not.

According to Petress, good listeners: (1) pay close attentions to details such as facts,

opinions, and inferences; (2) give the speaker a nonverbal cue that they are attentive; and

(3) give verbal cues that they are listening such as constructive feedback. The listener is

able to pose questions for clarity; paraphrase the speaker's intent and content of conversation; (4) show respect in tone; (5) do not distort what the speaker has said; (6) detect in speakers atypical communication and is able to find reasons for this communication behavior; and (7) give honest, respectful and clear acknowledgement of what the speaker said.

Listening defined in the interpersonal context is regarded as that process where the person attends carefully to verbal and nonverbal signals that are emitted by another (Hill & O'Brien, 1999). There are many types of listening such as discriminative, comprehension, evaluative, appreciative, emphatic, dialogic and active. This study will only be concerned with dialogic and active listening as it pertains to interpersonal communication. Halone and Pecchioni (2001) report that dialogic listening is two-way and relational mainly because there is an exchange of views. They further iterate that each person brings to the listening process culture and racial biases. In other words, there is a tendency to judge others from one's own perspective. On the other hand, Halone and Pecchioni report that active listening needs to involve both nonverbal and verbal behavior. Additionally, they report that there is a need for listeners to respond appropriately and not to just listen to words. Along this line of thinking, people normally listen with the intent to respond instead of the intent to understand (Van Slyke,1999). He further argues that one is concerned with his or her own point of view instead of the other person's perspective.

Orick (2002) ties listening to effective leadership. He reports that effective leaders give good attention by looking the speaker in the eye; leaders are able to paraphrase what the speaker said; leaders are able to communicate the message to a third party; leaders

keep an open mind and do not get emotional or defensive; and leaders keep confidence.

Taylor, Cook, Green, and Rogers, (1988) investigated the effects of training on the interpersonal skill of supervisors during interview with teachers. These skills included listening as a vital skill in teacher improvement. The study consisted of 4 building principals (3 males and 1 female) in central Utah schools. Of the 4 principals, 3 were elementary and 1 was middle school. The research design was a single-case design that took place in four phases: Pretraining; training and posttraining; extended history; and retraining. Trained observers rated the videotaping using Interview Rating Scale. The results of the study revealed that after interpersonal skill training in listening, supervisors viewed themselves as being more effective in establishing instructional goals. Teachers viewed their supervisors as being more attentive to their needs.

<div align="center">Feedback</div>

Hansen (2004) maintains that without feedback how will teachers know when excellence has been achieved. He suggests a feedback system that processes listening, hearing, gathering, and assessing critical performance information. This means that the organizations, even schools, should employ objective means of collecting data and soliciting unfiltered feedback. Additionally, he iterates that one advantage of feedback system is that it allows the principal or any leader to attack problems early and strengthen the values and goals of the school. He also maintains that feedback systems allow teachers to exchange ideas and expertise at an operational level.

Evans (2006) revealed that leaders often fail to give feedback such as praise and redirection to those who trust in their leadership. She adds that most people perceive feedback as criticism. She explains that feedback is something that is given in the

moment, and it is ongoing process. She believes that feedback is a number one problem in interpersonal communication. In addition, good leaders must invest in the people, which requires more than the minimum requirement. She argues that leaders, including principals, should have enough courage to ask for feedback as well as give feedback. This will help their leadership skills.

Kacmar, Zivnuska, Witt, and Gully (2003) tested the hypothesis that high frequency leader and subordinate interaction moderates the relationship between leader and member exchange (LMX). Leader member exchange suggests that supervisors determine the roles of their subordinates based on their relationship with them. They suggest that if a low frequency of communication exists between leader and subordinate, this may restrict feedback and attention that the leader needs to give to subordinate. This also creates uncertainty. In the case of principal-teacher dyad, the teacher will be uncertain as to work performance. If the LMX is more frequent, a high-quality dyadic relationship is formed and feedback occurs frequently as well. Subjects for this study were 254 employees of a distribution company. They were divided into small groups and were informed about the study. Workers were assigned to specific supervisors to perform such tasks as sorting, packaging, shipping and lifting. Within the first week, 19 first-line supervisors were asked to rate the performance of their workers. Communication frequency and job performance ratings were measured by using five-item scales. As hypothesized, the ratings of the supervisors were based on the frequency of communication. Those who had frequent communications with their supervisors received quality-job performance ratings. Performance ratings were much lower when supervisors and subordinate did not communicate frequently.

Empathy

Feng, Lazar, & Preece (2004) define empathy as inferring one's feelings and responding with sensitivity and compassion towards another person's distress. Documentation shows that empathy depends greatly on nonverbal cues in face-to-face communication (Ikes, 1997). The impact of nonverbal cues in face-to-face communication is illustrated in how Kennedy won the presidential debate (Jelphs, 2006). If the debate had not been televised, the outcome may have been different for Kennedy. Nixon was very articulate and the radio alone would have won it for him. Additionally, as Kennedy spoke, his body language communicated more meaning than words alone. Empathy gives emotional support in a relationship and opens the doors to good interpersonal communication skills (Vail, 2005).

Trust

Preece (2000) suggests that trust develops from empathy. When people have different knowledge bases and experiences, trust enables collaboration to takes place without much difficulty (Gefen, 2000) Applebaum (1973) maintains that trust is communicated by what one says and does in the interpersonal setting. For example, if one's language and behavior is perceived as being conflicting, then trust is reduced. Goddard, Moran, and Hoy (2001) state that trust is what makes a relationship strong. They define trust as a "willingness to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectations that that party will perform an action of importance. Pope (2004) states that trust is paramount to establishing and maintaining positive relationships at an organizational level and at an interpersonal level. He further states that when trust has been established, doors to good communication are open.

Rafferty (2003) argues that if there is distrust between organization members, their commitment, motivation, confidence, and perceptions at work may be negatively affected. Additionally, he iterated that trust influences individual member behavior and organizational dynamics. Furthermore, he gave four points on the trust relationship between teacher and principal: (1) the more trust perceived in relationships between the teacher and principal, the less risk is perceived when interpersonally communicating about professional issues; (2) when there is less risk, teachers are encouraged to participate in the continual improvement of the school's processes and systems; (3) participation in school improvement connects the teacher and principal in a collaborative contribution to a cause much greater than themselves.

<div align="center">Authenticity</div>

Authenticity is another element in the humanistic concept of interpersonal communication. Authenticity is the degree to which one is true to one's own personality, spirit, or character, despite external pressures. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Authenticity). Kerfoot (2006) describes authenticity as being real, true to self, and honest. This type of interpersonal communication inspires followers. Additionally, leaders themselves cannot attribute such title of authentic leadership to themselves (Goffee and Jones, 2005). Those who experience their leadership ascribe this title to them. If subordinates perceive a leader to be honest, kind, true to self and vision, this title authentic leader will be ascribed the leader. Leaders with a deep purpose that reflect their own values are authentic leaders (George, 2003). They see themselves as servants or stewards instead of the building administrator. In order to manage perception of authenticity, leaders must constantly keep words consistent with actions (Goffee & Jones, 2005).

Leadership Defined

Foster (2004) describe leadership as a social event that is shared by others. Many equate school leadership with the principalship (Foster & St. Hilaire, 2003; Gronn, 2002; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Others view leadership as being distributed among all (Barth, 2001, Donaldson, 2001, Spillane et al.2000, Gronn, 2002). Sharing or distributing leadership responsibilities may be done through strong interpersonal skills if collective action is to take place (Smylie, Conley, & Marks, 2002).

Foster (2004) conducted a study to show the need for more evidence of the relationship between leadership and successful schooling. The perspectives of principals, teachers, students, and parents were gathered through focus groups and individual interviews over an eight-month period. There were sixteen female and fifteen male participants. Field journals were and reviewed and transcriptions were read several times. Participants reviewed transcriptions to ensure integrity of the data. Findings indicate that the principal viewed leadership as a team working and sharing responsibilities to decrease the risk of overload and burnout. Teachers viewed leadership as building relationships and working collaboratively. They also viewed the principal as one who demonstrates extraordinary interpersonal communication skills to build a collaborative culture. Furthermore, they viewed the principal as one who understands how interpersonal relationships are built and maintained. The students viewed leadership as being involved in making decisions. Finally, the parents viewed leadership as simply making things happen.

Historical Overview of Leadership Theories and Styles

Gessner (1999) compares leadership theories to that of fingerprints in that

everyone has one and no two are alike. It is beyond the reach of the study to give a comprehensive review of all theories. Therefore, the researcher selected a few theories in leadership styles as they relate to interpersonal communications skills of the principal.

The trait approach holds that leaders are born with certain personality traits that set them apart from others, which allows them to lead. A fact that some research historians use is that Alexander the Great was a greater leader than his father (Hargie & Dickson, 2004). Hargie and Dickson also note that in the biblical times, the hand of God was placed on certain individuals to rule. Young and French (1996) observe that those American presidents polled as being successful were taller than those perceived as failure. In today's time, this theory receives little support. According to Bennis and Goldsmith (1999), all can learn leadership.

After examining leadership theory from the trait approach, the rise to leadership can be understood from the situational approach theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988). This theory focuses on the situation and not the person. This theory differs from the trait theory in that a person may be a dynamic leader in one situation and not in another. Additionally, the interaction of the leader, the follower, and the situation determine the leadership style that would be appropriate. The situation dictates the style of the leadership needed. The four different leadership styles that encompass this theory are telling, selling, participating, and delegating. Hersey and Blanchard explain that the telling style of leadership is directed to those subordinates who are not likely to work independently. They need constant direction. The selling leadership style is directed to those who needed even more direction. Those who were more motivated and ready to perform a task, the participation style of leadership is employed. Finally, the delegating

style is directed to those who are able to carry out task independently.

Building on the on the premise that effective leadership is a function of situational variables, Fiedler (1967, 1986) found evidence that the type of leader to enhance group performance was contingent on the nature of the situation in terms of three factors: (1) leader and member relationship; (2) task structure; and (3) position of power. He further explains that when leaders have good relationships with subordinates, tasks are well structured, and they are in a powerful position within the group, they are most effective.

Thinking that is more recent is the transformational approach (Burns, 1978). Burns focused more on the relationship of leaders and followers and made a distinction between the transactional and transformation approach. Burns distinguished between the two by noting that the transactional approach focuses on the exchange relationship between the leader and the follower. In other words, a reward is given for services rendered by the follower. The transformation approach as explained by Burns focuses on the leaders' interaction with followers in a way that motivates and aspires followers to reach new heights. This approach has received some criticism (Tourish and Pinington, 2002). They argue that this approach allows the leader to exceed limits of power and there is a lack of checks and balances.

The final approach shifts to how leaders conduct themselves when providing leadership. A behavioral approach to consider is House's (1971) path-goal theory. House argued that a leader's behavior could make a difference in the performance of followers. From this approach, four leadership themes emerged: supportive, directive, participative and achievement-oriented. In the supportive leadership, the needs of the followers are considered through positive organizational climate. Directive leadership

entails specific guidance and communication. The participative leadership takes in

consideration the opinions and ideals of followers. The achievement-oriented leadership

allows the followers to achieve high standards as the leader sets the goals and instills

confidence in the followers.

Effective Leadership: Leadership Styles and Interpersonal Communication

Research shows that effective schools were the results of effective principals

(Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom, 2004). Leithwood et al. contend

that there are three basics practices that describe an effective leader. These three basic

practices are setting direction, developing people, and redesigning the organization. They

argue that principals that set clear and precise goals give teachers a sense of purpose and

identity. Developing people has been understood in the context of giving guidance to

teachers to improve classroom practices. Here it is understood as leader's emotional

intelligence. They describe this term as the principal being cognizant of teacher needs.

The principal practices this concept by employing book studies, critical friend groups and

professional development sessions. Redesigning the school requires the principal to resist

pitfalls in education such as high-stake testing and financial rewards for achieving school

goals.

In this age of accountability, great demands are placed on schools to be effective

(NCLB). Edmonds (1979) correlates of effective schools set precedence for instructional

approaches to school leadership. In the initial movement of effective schools, the focus

was on helping students who did not do so well in school. The focus has now moved to

helping all students. Ron Edmonds first devised five correlates for effective schools: (a)

the leadership of the principal is characterized by substantial attention to the quality of

instruction; (b) there is a pervasive and broadly understood instructional focus; (c) an orderly safe climate exists; (d) teachers behavior convey the expectation that all students are to contain at least minimum mastery; and (e) pupil achievement is used as the measure for program evaluation (1979a; 1979b; 1981). Edmonds explains that the term correlate is used to convey that each ingredient is related to the other. They are interactive, and they all are present in effective school. In time, the focus of the original five correlates was divided into seven correlates that are widely accepted today. These seven correlates are: (a) clearly stated and focused mission; (b) high expectation for students, teachers, and administrators; (c) safe and orderly climate for learning; (d) instructional leadership by all administrators and staff members; (e) opportunity to learn and time-on-task; (f) frequent monitoring of student progress; and (g) positive home/school relations.

Education has borrowed theories from the business world (Day, 2000). Day further states that there needs to be more studies conducted gathering information from leaders who are acknowledged as effective leaders in education leadership or from those who know the business of education leadership. Through research conducted by the National Association of Headteacher in the United Kingdom, Day attempts to understand what makes an effective leader. Headteacher is equivalent to a principal.

For this study, twelve heads were selected from schools that had received good inspection results from the Office of Standards in Education. Schools selected differed in size, geographical background, and economic and sociocultural. Interviews were conducted over a three-day period. The data revealed a similarity in responses as to why these principals were successful: (1) they valued leadership as important; (2) people are

regarded as the center of their focus; (3) their goal was achievement; and (4) they were good managers in time of crisis or dilemmas. Other responses that emerged from the data are that these principals promoted a sense of care, equity, and encouragement. Additionally, they promoted professional development of staff, a collaborative culture, and effective use of intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. Furthermore, the data also revealed that the Heads were busy building and maintaining a vision as opposed to coordinating organizational activities. Day commented (2000) that if principals are not relating to teachers in a way to develop them, then the school will not develop either. The data revealed that developing teachers was a key focus for the Heads. It was also reported that the Heads had a balance between power with and power over. In other words, the Heads involved the teachers in decision-making, but they also made decision without the staff as needed. Finally, and most important, all Heads demonstrated the human dimension of leading: interpersonal trust, genuine respect, and effective listener.

Effective principals are builders of mutual trust, respect, openness, and positive relationships with teachers and staff (Blase & Blase, 2001; Glickman, Gordon, Ross-Gordon, 2001). Furthermore, principals are developers of positive climates that are evidenced through collaboration, coaching, reflection and encouragement (Fullan, 1997). Thus far, the researcher has presented findings that present interpersonal communication skills in a positive light. There is much to learn from the dark side of education administration within the context of interpersonal communication.

Keashly (1998) refers to mistreatment of teachers by principals as emotional abuse. Emotional abuse entails verbal and nonverbal abuse. Examples of verbal abuse may take the form of screaming, yelling, angry outbursts, put-downs, lying, threats of job

loss, unsolicited criticism of work abilities, dismissing an individual's thoughts, not returning phone calls, and fostering a master-servant relationship (Harlos & Pinder, 2000). Nonverbal abuse demonstrated by the principal entails silent treatment, fingerpointing, slamming objects, throwing objects, eye gazing, and dirty looks (Namie & Namie, 2000). This type of behavior that is demonstrated by the principal reduces work effort, and increases absenteeism and no commitment on the part of the teacher (Pearson, 2000). Yamada (2000) reports that psychological effects may occur such as stress, depression, and loss of sleep, high blood pressure, and digestive problems. He further argued that superior's behavior will not get any better with the rise of diversity.

In the first empirical study of its kind, Blasé and Blasé (2002) conducted study using grounded theory showing the dark side of education administration as it relates to interpersonal skills of the principal as perceived by teachers. The researchers feared that school districts would not grant permission to interview teachers for a study of this nature and teachers feared disclosure. Because of this, they employed a snowball sampling, which allows others to recommend teachers who may have experienced such abuse. There were fifty teacher participants: five were males and 45 were females. Elementary, middle, and high school levels were represented. In-depth interviews were conducted with each participant.

Teachers reported that mistreatment was via face-to-face interactions naming the most common offense was ignoring them especially in public places. Additionally, teachers reported that principals attempted to isolate them from social contact with other colleagues for collaboration and support. Another finding is that the principals undermined efforts of teachers to involve him or her in professional development.

Furthermore, teachers reported that the principals intimidated them adding that pounding on the desk and yelling all sorts of things.   Both veteran and beginning teachers experienced low-self esteem, which lead to a loss of confidence in their ability to teach. Teachers described the school as a climate of fear.

Leadership styles are included in the category of leadership. Leadership style, simply put, is defined as the "how what is done is done" (Hargie & Dickson, 2004, p. 431). Others regard leadership style as sets of measurable behaviors (Leithwood & Duke, 1999, Richmond & Allison, 2003). In a classical study (Lewin, 1939) involving juvenile boys in a recreational youth center, three types of leadership styles were identified: autocratic (authoritarian), democratic (participation and interaction), and laissez-faire (leaderless). The findings revealed that the authoritarian leadership style left the boys dependent on the leader. As this is related to school principals, this type of leadership will lead the teacher to be dependent on the principal and not be empowered to be self-motivated. Taking the same group of boys and employing the democratic leadership style, the boys showed an interest in the progress of the group. The principal who employs this type of leadership style empowers the teachers to use their expertise for the improvement of the school. From this study, implications are that teachers too will be interested in the progress of the school when the principal employs a democratic leadership style. Lewin grouped the boys without a leader. The boys lacked interest in their task, which resulted in unfinished tasks. This also can be applied to teachers when they are left without an effective leader. This classic study reveals that there must be effective leadership if productivity is going to occur. A laissez-faire style of leadership decreases productivity according to the study.

Empirical studies reveal that the principal's leadership styles have an influence on a teacher's performance on the job (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2003). It is important to discuss the different types of leadership styles of effective leaders according to research.

Nir and Kranot (2006) conducted research to connect transformational leadership style to teacher effectiveness. Questionnaires were administered to elementary teachers from 134 schools of which 79 participated. School principals gave permission to conduct research in their schools. Research team members administered the questionnaire. The researchers used a teachers self-efficacy measured Gibson and Dembo's scaled (1984). School principals' leadership styles were measured using the Multifactor Questionnaire developed by Avolio, Bass, and Dung (1996). The study findings were that transformational leadership style was likely to increase job satisfaction for teachers, and that this style of leadership supported teachers in their efforts to meet organizational goals. This study was inconclusive in that it did not conduct study on other leadership styles.

Successful leaders are faced with many challenges in interpersonal communication (Ford, 2006). Ford explains that the principal controls the tone and flow of interpersonal communication in the school setting. Therefore, if principals do not demonstrate strong interpersonal communication skills, this will negatively affect the confidence and trust that teachers have in their principals. Some leaders use their hands, voice tone, leg movements, and facial expressions to relate messages. Ford iterates that these types of communication styles must be used with care recognizing that success or failure may be a result of these actions. Additionally, Ford argues that communication style of the leader is the language of leadership. Effective leaders use a variety of

communications styles. Situational leaders will tend to employ a communication style that is appropriate for the situation (Fiedler, 1967, 1986). Ford suggests emails, memorandums, text messages, and newsletters.

Tyson (2006) argues that it is ludicrous to think that a principal can coordinate professional development, build leadership capacity, and celebrate individual and communal successes without master of interpersonal communication skills both verbal and written. Tyson argues that an effective leader demonstrates effective interpersonal communication. The effective leader demonstrates communication as relational. In other words, the principal will try to understand the point of view of the teacher. Tyson iterates that this will help in a successful exchange when the teacher feels the principal can relate to what is being said. The effective leader demonstrates calmness when communicating or interacting. He further states that when emotions are stirred, effective communication is impossible. Emotions make it impossible to see the real situation or problem at hand. The effective communicator must stay positive. When the principal demonstrate a positive tone and disposition, this dispels any negativity. This makes the interpersonal communication experience productive for teacher and principal. Furthermore, Tyson argues that the effective communicator's communication is mutually beneficial. The principal's job is not to judge, criticize, or tear down, but to build, act fairly, and serve as a diplomat. Finally, the effective leader's interpersonal communication is constructive. The dialogue must be constructive. In other words, the principal must focus on where the conversation is headed, lessons learned, consider implications, and set goals.

<div align="center">Climate and Interpersonal Communication</div>

School climate is a general concept that captures the atmosphere of a school: it is

experienced by teachers and administrators, describes their collective perceptions of routine behavior, and affects their attitudes and behavior (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). Rafferty noted that the environment has long been recognized as a powerful influence on the perceptions and behaviors of individuals (2003). He also argued that the climate sets the tone for the school's approach to resolving problems, trust and mutual respect, attitudes, and generating new ideas. Positive school climate is one in which the behavior of both teachers and principals is authentic; teachers and principals respect one another and are straightforward with each other.

Rafferty (2003) conducted a research study that interpreted the relationship between teacher perceptions and school climate as evidence by communications patterns that developed. He combined the Organizational Description Questionnaire for Secondary Schools (OCDQ-RS) (Hoy et al.) and the Communication Climate Inventory (CCI) (Dennis, 1975). He also used work-related school issues as a framework. Two of the primary categories represented in the OCDQ-RS are principal behaviors and teacher behaviors. Two subtests from Dennis's CCI were adapted to the high school contest and employed to describe teachers' perceptions of their opportunities for upward communication and the principal's supportiveness. School issues were categorized as either strategic or work-related. The strategic objects are related to personnel management functions and administrative policy. Work-related issues were items pertaining to jobs to be performed and who will perform them.

There were forty-one secondary schools located in the western portion of Ohio. The investigation involved 21 out of the 41 schools. There were 780 teachers, counselors, and library-media specialists. The participating schools were required to: (1)

be comprised of twenty-two to forty certified teachers, counselors, and library-media specialists in grades nine through twelve; (2) be comprehensive in curriculum; (3) be under the jurisdiction of a county office of education; (4) be free of special influences such as teacher association, contract negotiation; and (5) be approved by the principal.

Of the 821 survey instruments sent to the 26 principals for distribution, 503 teachers, counselors, and media-specialists completed and returned the surveys. Scores and deviations were computed. Participating schools were identified based on their overall openness ranging from the most open climate school to most closed climate school.

The findings in this study revealed that there is a correlation between organizational climate and communication as perceived by organization members. The presence of trust and open communication between the teacher and the principal serve as the foundation of day-to day operations and instructional practices in schools.

<div align="center">Leadership and Personality</div>

Personality research is defined within the frame of The Five-Factor Model (FFM) (Kornor & Nordvik, 2004). The FFM consist of Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness (McCrae & Costa, 1999). McCrae and Costa define personality trait as individual differences in patterns of thought, feelings, and actions. They further explain the domains of the FFM. Neuroticism is defined as emotional instability. Individuals worry about the unexpected and life's problems. It takes a long time for the person to bounce back to normalcy. Costa and McCrae characterize Neuroticism by anxiety, angry hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, and vulnerability. Warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement seeking, and positive emotions characterize extraversion. Openness represents

receptive to new ideas. It is characterized by fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actins, ideas, and values. Additionally, Agreeableness is an individual's eagerness to cooperate. Here trust, straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, and tender-mindedness are descriptive of this domain. Finally, Conscientiousness describes an individual who is dutiful, self-disciplined, and ambitious and a hard-worker.

In a research study conducted by Kornor and Nordvik (2004), findings show that personality plays a role in leadership behavior. The purpose of the study was to investigate relationships between the personality traits of FFM and leadership styles. They used 106 Norwegian respondents of which 64 were males and 41 were females. The respondents were leaders from a Norwegian School of Management, The national Police Academy, and the Norwegian School of Business Administration. They were given a 36-item questionnaire for the assessment of leadership behavior: Change/Development, Production/Task/Structure, and Employee/Relations. Extraversion and Openness were positively correlated, and Neuroticism was negatively correlated with Change/Development, Production/Task/Structure, and Employee/Relations. Agreeableness and Employee Relations, Extraversion and Conscientiousness were positively correlated with all three leadership behaviors. Kormor and Norvik conclude that personality traits are related to leadership styles.

Wanberg and Kammeyer-Mueller (2000) conducted a longitudinal study of 156 managers and found Extraversion and Openness to be positively related to proactive behavior. They describe proactive behavior as taking the initiative to make one's environment better. They contended that this is a personality trait that is a major characteristic of effective leaders.

Judge and Bono (2000) conducted study to link leader personality to transformational leadership behavior. Participants were enrolled in community leadership programs in the Midwest. There were 14 samples of leaders of in about 200 participating organizations. The study did link Extraversion and Agreeableness to transformational leadership. Neuroticism and Conscientiousness were unrelated to transformational leadership.

Emotions and Interpersonal Communication

Emotions play a crucial role in leadership practices (Rubin, Muntz, and Brommer, 2005). They further iterate not everyone utilizes emotion stimuli in ways that are beneficial to the organization. Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to understand the emotions of others and to use that understanding to solve problems (Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey, 1999). It takes skills to be able to discern the emotions of others. Perceiving emotions through one's facial expressions, body language, pictures, or music, perceiving one's thoughts through emotions, understanding another's emotions, and managing emotions are skills that principals need to become effective communicators in understanding the emotions of others. (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, and Sitarenios, 2003). These skills are descriptive of transformational leadership and since transformation leaders are interested in meeting the needs of followers, perceiving emotions skillfully is an avenue in fulfilling this task. (Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000).

When leaders are able to recognize the emotions of subordinates, they also discern true feelings (Rubin, Munz, and Bommer, 2005). True feelings manifest themselves through face, body language, and voice of the individual. The ability to decode accurately the feelings of others is a very important social skill (Nowicki and

Duke, 2001). The leaders' ability to build relations and to inspire others is dependent on this skill (Caruso, Mayer, and Salovey, 2002). They feel that this is the reason why leaders should stay in tune with the emotions of their followers.

Transformational leaders are likely to use emotions to communicate vision and motivate followers (Lewis, 2000). Consistent with this line of thinking, George (2000) adds that leaders communicate with followers in such a manner to arouse emotions.

In a study conducted by Rubin, Munz, and Brommer (2005), 145 managers or leaders from the Midwest biotechnology/agricultural company were surveyed to examine the ability of a leader to recognize the emotions of followers and how it influenced transformational leadership behavior. The study revealed that emotion recognition predicted transformational leadership behavior. Additionally, the study reported that transformational leaders are more interpersonally sensitive than those of other leadership behaviors.

More Research Studies

The study, Making Sense of Leading Schools (Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003) from the Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE), conveys that leadership is a shared experience affording leadership needs to be met in a variety of ways. The study consisted of principals, assistant principals, and teachers in 21 schools. These schools were private, public, elementary, secondary, traditional, and charter schools. Portin, the lead researcher, says that the findings show that the one-size-fits-all is not beneficial to the development of the principal or the school. Additionally, the study findings indicate that all principals need not get the same training or attend the same workshops due to different leadership styles. Portin further argues that leadership should

not be treated as a "uniform proposition." There were five major conclusions drawn from the study: (1) the heart of the principal's job lies in diagnosis. The principal determines the needs of his or her school; (2) disregarding the type of school, principals must focus on leadership needs in seven areas; instructional, cultural, managerial, human resources, strategic, external development, and micro-political; (3) Principals need to make sure that leadership is happening in all seven areas and understand that they don't have to provide it by themselves; (4) Principals should be granted governance over budgets, and staffing, and (5) Principals think that they learned the skills they need on the job. Job skills were learned on the job not in leadership training.

The professional development of principals is crucial to successful leadership (Davis, Darling-Hammond, & LaPointe, 2006). In a 2005 study conducted by Stanford School of Education, a team of researchers examined the professional development programs of both pre-service and in-service school principals. They examined different programs based on the literature on effective schools. Qualitative and survey data was collected. Samples of principals were drawn from the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Elementary School Principals. Their findings showed that the programs examined focused on leading teachers and improving instruction, building a collaborative community, and providing and communicating positive feedback to teachers. The programs differed in that some focused on the principal as a learner and others focused on the principal as a leader.

Pashiardis (2000) conducted a research study with four main goals: to find out about the leadership of their principal; to find out about how the principal sees herself in regards to leadership style; to compare teachers perceptions with those of the principal;

and to find out if there are any discrepancies between the views of the two groups of people. The author began with the assumptions that the effectiveness of a leader is mainly dependent on how others view him and how the principals view themselves as leaders. According to Pashiardis, the assumption is that principals act and perform their duties based on these ideas and based on their perceptions of themselves as leaders.

The researcher used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. A questionnaire was constructed and pilot-tested regarding a principal's duties and style of leadership. This was conducted in Cyrus in a secondary school. A Likert-type scale was used with intervals from 1-4. Statistical analyses were collected using SPSS descriptive statistics such as means, medians, standard deviations and frequencies. In addition, principals were observed, shadowed, and interviewed.

The name of the school was kept confidential to protect the identity of the school and its population. The setting was an urban school with about 700 students and 62 teaching personnel, and one principal. The principal is a 50-year-old female with 3 of administrative experience and 25 years of classroom experience. She is required to teach about six 45-minute periods per week. Cyprus is a highly centralized, bureaucratic system where the Ministry of Education provides the curriculum.

Results showed that both teachers and principal felt that the school had a positive and humane climate. According to the results, the principal scored the lowest mark in the area of interpersonal relationships as perceived by her teachers. The teachers perceived her as not being open where the principal perceived herself as being the opposite.

Additionally, the principal was being perceived as one who does not clearly communicate expectations. The researchers suggested that the principal needed to

investigate further the views of the teachers and try to find out how and to what extent are teachers aware of performance expectations. The principal received fairly good marks as being a good communicator with parents and building relations between the community and school. As for personal development and in-service, the faculty thought that the principal rarely used her own training for her personal development and her staff's improvement.

Pashiardis suggested that the principal needed to make her expectations more clear, use in-service and staff development more widely, and listen to and accept different views and approaches other than her own (2001)..

The ability to work collaboratively is now a requisite in school leadership (Slater, 2005). The leader agrees that it must be done, but the know-how poses a problem. When a leader does build a collaborative climate, he or she is referred to as a facilitator, supporter and a reinforcer (Beatty, 2000). Most leaders have not learned to relinquish control in order to build a collaborate climate (Blase and Blasé, 2001).

Collaboration involves an emotional component. Slater (2005) conducted study to analyze the emotional components involved in collaboration. The study was qualitative in nature and used a purposive sampling. Sixteen people participated in two focus groups. Participants were principals, assistant principals, parents, and teachers. Results were significant. Data reveals that the supporter leader is concern with healthy interpersonal relationships. Collaboration is emotional in that it requires commitment and trust (Emihovich and Battaglia, 2000).   The participants also identified communication behaviors that support collaborative climate such as listening and openness. The participants shared that principals never listen and often time do not solicit the input from

others. Openness is truthful sharing and disclosure of information. When principals can be open, this is the beginning of building trust (Kouzes and Posner, 1999). Another finding is that principals do not value people. Principals do not take the input of others to solve problems or make decisions. Another revelation is that principals do not understand the feelings of others. They felt that principals should sense how one feels and respect the views of others. Participants also felt that principals should be able to manage his or her emotions. Individuals who know their emotions know are aware of self-value. (Goleman, 1998). One key factor that the participants expressed was the building of relationships as the building block of a collaborative climate and a successful school.

Summary

The body of research compiled in this literature review revealed that interpersonal communication is a necessary ingredient in all facets of life particularly for those in leadership. The importance of interpersonal communications has been viewed from ancient times to present. Models of communication have been instrumental in understanding the process of interpersonal communications.

Throughout history, the field of interpersonal communications has emerged into an important domain of human behavior and has crossed into other domains as well: business, and education. Interpersonal communication plays a role in leadership and styles, personality, climate and culture, and emotions. The literature has shown how effective leadership strengthens performance of subordinates. It has also shown that most leaders do not value effective interpersonal communications as a means of improving organizational goals.

The literature lacks a consensus among researchers as to what constitutes essential

interpersonal communication skills that promote effective teacher performance. There is

a need to determine which interpersonal communication skills as perceived by teachers

are most effective and essential in increasing teaching performance. There is an even

greater need to establish and understand the role that these skills may play in the principal

teacher dyad in promoting effective teacher performance.

This study is important to the principal, because it will result in increased

awareness of which essential and most effective interpersonal communication skills

promoted teacher performance.

Table 1

Research Studies Related to Leadership Styles & Personalities

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design	Outcome
Judge & Bono (2003)	To link personality to transformation leadership & behavior	24 managers from	Questionnaires and surveys	Extraversion and agreeableness were linked to transformational leadership
Kornor & Nordvik (2004)	To examine the relationship between Five Factor Model of and leadership behaviors	64 males and 41 females from a Norwegian school of Management	36-item questionnaire	Personality plays a role in leadership behavior: extraversion & openness were positively correlated; and neuroticism was negatively correlated with change, development, production, task, and structure.
Wamberg & Mueller (2000)	To examine personality and leader behavior	156 managers	Longitudinal	Extraversion & Openness are positively related to proactive behavior of the leader.
Nir & Kranot (2006)	To examine the relationship between leadership styles and teacher effectiveness	79 participants: teachers, principals and students	Questionnaires	Transformation leadership increases job satisfaction, supports teacher efforts. Study did consider other leadership styles.
Lewin (1939)	To examine the affects of leadership styles on teaching and learning	Youth juvenile boys		Findings show that leaders who demonstrate authoritarian leadership leave subordinates dependent on them; democratic leadership style motivates interest in goals and vision of the organization; laissez-faire- leadership produces no gains in productivity from subordinates.

Table 2

Research Studies Related to Effective Leadership

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design	Outcome
Pashiardis (2000)	To examine the effectiveness of leadership	1 female principal & 62 teachers	Questionnaires and interviews	The principal scored high in positive school climate. Teachers rated her low in interpersonal communication, not open to suggestions
Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, Gundlach (2003)	To explore the development of effective leaders	21 particpants: principals, assistant principals in private, public and charter schools	Surveys	One size fits all is not beneficial to principal and school. All principals need same training due to leadership styles. The principal determines the need of his or her school. The heart of the principal is job diagnosis.
Davis, Darling-Hammond, &LaPointe, (2005)	To examine professional development programs of principals	Pre-service and in-service programs for principals	Qualitative and quantitative Surveys and interviews	Most programs focused on leading teachers and improving instruction; building a collaborative community & positive feedback to teachers. Some focused on principal as learners while others focused on principals as leaders
Day (2000)	To identify what makes an effective leader	12 Heads or principals	Quantitative	Findings revealed that effective principals value leadership and put people at the center of focus. They view goal as achievement.
Foster (2004)	To examine the relationship between leadership & successful schooling	Principals, teachers, students 16 females 15 males	Qualitative design Interviews Journal & field work	Successful schooling is synonomous with building relationship; working collaboratively; extraordinary interpersonal skills; maintain interpersonal relationship; and making decisions making thins happen.

Table 3

Research Studies Related to Leadership and Humanistic Approach

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design	Outcome
Slater (2005)	Analyze the emotional components involved in collaboration in the principal-teacher dyad	16 participants: principals, assistant principals & teachers.	Qualitative and purpose sampling	Collaboration involves emotion such as commitment, trust, listening, & openness. Teachers perceived principals as poor listeners, & do not understand feelings of others. If principals are to create a collaborative community, they must be able to build relationships.
Blasé & Blasé (2002)	To examine interpersonal communications behaviors of education administrators: the darker side	45 females and 5 males elementary, middle, and high school teachers.	Ground theory In-depth interviews	Most interactions were face-to-face. Principals intimidated teachers by yelling and pounding on the table; they isolated teachers from colleagues; and the undermined the efforts of teachers
Kacmar, Zivnuska, Witt, & Gully (2003)	To test the hypothesis that high frequency leader & subordinate interaction moderates the relationship between leader and member exchange	254 employees of an distribution company	Quantitative	Those who had frequent interpersonal communication with supervisors got good ratings and feedback. When communication between supervisor and subordinate did not occur frequently, ratings and feedback was not favorable.

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design	Outcome
Gaziel; (2003)	To examine principal effectiveness and perception	21 school principals and teachers from elementary, middle, & high schools	Quantitative and Qualitative	Perception is a good predictor of leadership effectiveness. When the leaders value relationships, feelings, and lead through empowerment, success is the result. Perception plays a vital role in performance.
Rosenbaum (2001)	To examine the role of listening on performance	1000 sale people from businesses	Quantitative	Listening effectively defines success
Goby & Lewis (2000)		Insurance Industry	Quantitative	Listening was the primary skill for success
Taylor, Cook, Green, & Rogers (1988)	Examine the effects of training principals on interpersonal communication skill of listening.	4 principals 3 males and 1 female	Single case design took place in 4 phases	Listening is a vital skill in teacher improvement. After the principals were trained in listening, teachers viewed principals as being more attentive. Principals were more effective in establishing instructional goals.
Rubin, Munz, & Brommer(2005)	To examine the ability of a leader to recognize emotions of subordinates its on affects on transformation leadership behavior	145 managers from a Midwest biotechnology company	Surveys	Emotions recognition predicted transformation predicted transformation leadership. Transformation leaders are more sensitive than other leadership behaviors.

Table 4

Research Studies Related to Interpersonal Communication and Leadership

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design	Outcome
Rafferty (2003)	To examine school climate and interpersonal communication patterns	780 teachers, counselors, and media-specialists	Quantitative Organizational Description Questionnaire	There is a correlation be-tween organizational climate and communication. Trust &* open communication be-tween teacher & principal serves as a good foundation of day to day operations & instructional practice.
Charter Institute of Personnel & Development & Training School	To examine skills needed to for organizational success	Managers & supervisors from various businesses	Questionnaire	The findings ranked interpersonal communication as seventh most important skills in organization.
Department of Labor SCANS Report(1992)	To examine skills that are needed for the workplace	Public employers, managers, union officials, line workers across the United States	Longitudinal Study	Findings identified interpersonal skills as being vital in succeeding in the workplace. Such skills as collaboration, team player, teaching others, serving others, leading others, working with divers groups, and negotiating.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine Georgia teachers' perceptions of principals' interpersonal communication skills as they relate to teacher performance. This research was valuable since it is widely accepted that teachers have a direct impact on student success and achievement (Blanton, 2006). This study explored this facet of teachers' perception to discover which interpersonal communication skills are most effective in teacher performance, thus affecting student performance.

The literature has evidenced the importance and the necessity that leaders demonstrate interpersonal communication skills in an organization. Education literature is replete with the concept that an effective principal is the key figure in creating effective schools through effective interpersonal communication skills. Other areas of study that surfaced from the literature review were leadership and personality, and leadership and gender.

In this chapter, the research design, participants, sampling procedures, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis, were discussed and concluded with a brief summary.

Research Questions

The primary focus of this study was to examine Georgia teachers' perceptions of principals' interpersonal communication skills and to understand the role these skills play in teacher performance. It was important to understand the role that these skills may play since teacher performance was directly related to student achievement and success.

The overarching question of this study was this: what role does interpersonal communication skills of the principal play in teacher performance? The following questions also guided the research:

1. Which interpersonal communication skills of principals do teachers believe impact teacher performance in the school setting?

2. How does teachers' perception of their principal affect teacher performance?

Population

The population for this research study included teachers from northeastern Georgia schools. The operating budget for this northeastern district is $108,777,454.00. For each student, $9,616.00 is spent. Sixty-three percent of the budget is devoted to instruction. The district employed 902 teachers, 522 of whom possessed advanced degrees, 13 years of average experience, 232 paraprofessionals, and 12,108 enrolled students. Of these students enrolled, there are 2% Asians, 55% African-Americans, 18% Hispanics, 21% White, and 3% Multiracial.

The district housed 13 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, and 11 high schools. Only five schools were included in this study: two high schools, two middle schools, and one elementary school. Demographics for each school that participated have been charted in Chapter 4.

Participants

The researcher interviewed five teachers from northeast Georgia schools. Three school levels were represented: elementary, middle, and high school. The researcher sought certified teachers of any age group who taught from K-12 grades. Classroom experience ranged from novice teacher to veterans. All teachers were employed in a

public school and they were employed by the school district where research was

conducted. The researcher sought a diverse group of teachers that differed in gender, age

and ethnicity. Teacher participants were teachers of various subjects. The rationale for

such a diverse group was to get various perspectives.

Sample

Random sampling was used in selecting participants for this research. Upon the approval

from the IRB (Institutional Review Board), the researcher put the names of all schools in

the district in boxes according to levels labeled elementary schools- A, middle schools-

B, and high schools- C. There were 35 schools: 13 elementary schools, 11 middle

schools, and 11 high schools. The researcher pulled from each box until ten schools from

each level had been randomly selected. From those ten schools randomly pulled, the

researcher emailed 150 letters seeking teacher participants for face-to-face interviews.

Teacher participants were provided information concerning this research project and a

demographic survey sheet. The researcher received responses from three high schools,

four middle schools, and three elementary schools conveying willingness to participate.

The researcher gathered those teacher responses and placed them in boxes labeled:

elementary schools A, middle schools B, and high schools C. Two names per school level

were selected randomly from the boxes. These teacher participants were contacted

through email to set up an interview time and place. One high school teacher participant

self-eliminated. This left a remaining number of five participants. Then the researcher

repeated the process of randomly pulling from the remaining teacher responses in an

effort to replace the participant who self-eliminated

Research Design and Instrumentation

The research design for this study was autoethnography. This is a qualitative research method where self is used as a source of data (Duncan, 2004). Autoethnography is a form of ethnography research. With its roots in anthropology, ethnography began in the 1900's. Duncan states the difference between autoethnography and ethnography:

> The essential differences between ethnography and
>
> autoethnography are that in an autoethnography, the
>
> researcher is not trying to become an insider in the research
>
> setting. He or she, in fact, is the insider. The context is his
>
> or her own (p. 3).

Hayano (1979) coined the term autoethnography in 1979. It describes research studies of a personal nature (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). Danahay (1997) defines autoethnography as a research method that connects the person to the culture. This means that the researcher places himself or herself within the social context. Pelias (2003) says it "lets you use yourself to get to the culture" (p. 372).

Wall (2006) suggests that if the researcher's voice is not included in the research, then the research is minimized to just a summary of what others have said. The researchers as well as other participants revealed emotions, stories, dialogues, documents, and personal reflections and testimonies (Ellis & Bocher, 2000).

This method of inquiry has been widely criticized (Sparkes 2000; Atkinson, 1997). Sparkes argues that when the researcher is the only source of data, the researcher is criticized as being self-indulgent. Atkinson states:

The narratives seem to float in a social vacuum.

The voices echo in an otherwise empty world.

There is an extraordinary absence of social context, social

action and social interaction (p. 339).

Philaretou and Allen (2006) point out that validity and reliability are very important in qualitative autoethnography research since they depend on the accuracy of the researcher's memory to reconstruct events.   Kleinman and Copp (1993) suggest that personal issues do create awareness. At the same time, the researcher of autoethnography may be exposed to hurtful and embarrassing issues.

Research studies that deal with perceptions, attitudes, or opinions are well suited for qualitative research methods (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). This specific design was appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to be an insider sharing personal experiences as well as the testimonies, stories, and experiences of others (Ellis & Bocher, 2000). Much was learned through this design that traditional methods may not offer. This design was significant in that personal testimonies, experiences, stories and reflections revealed much more that traditional surveys.

<div align="center">Data Collection</div>

The primary method of collecting data for this study was through structured one-on-one interviews. Such data as dialogues, documents, stories, and personal reflections and testimonies were collected to address research questions for this study. Confidentiality of participants was maintained in compliance with IRB requirements.

This was a qualitative study, including authoethnographic mode of inquiry. Authoethnography is a qualitative research method where self is a source of data

(Duncan, 2004). It describes research studies of a personal nature (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). They further explain that the researcher's style of writing is highly personal using his/her own experiences to better understand events in society. According to Ellis and Bochner, this method was more suitable for this study in that the researcher gave voice to the study and shared invaluable inside knowledge that was not expressed through traditional forms of inquiry. Additionally, the researcher acted as both subject and participant in that she shared a full descriptive account of her experiences.

The researcher sought approval from Georgia Southern University's IRB to conduct research. Upon the approval from the IRB, the researcher put the names of all schools in the district in boxes according to levels labeled: elementary schools A, middle schools B, and high schools C. There were 35 schools: 13 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, and 11 high schools. The researcher pulled from each box until ten schools from each level had been randomly selected. From those ten schools randomly pulled, the researcher emailed 150 teachers from school email list, seeking teacher participants to schedule face-to-face interviews. Teacher participants were provided information concerning this research project and a demographic survey sheet. The researcher received responses from three high schools, four middle schools, and three elementary school that conveyed that they would participate. The researcher gathered those teacher responses and placed them in boxes labeled: elementary schools- A, middle schools- B, and high schools- C. Two names per school level were selected randomly from the boxes. These teacher participants were contacted through email to set up interview times and place. One high school teacher participant self-eliminated. This left a total number of five participants. Then the researcher repeated the process of randomly pulling from the

remaining teacher responses in an effort to replace the participant who self-eliminated. The participant was not replaced because the remaining teachers from the sample were involved in other activities that prevented their participation. All participants received proper information concerning this research according to IRB guideline. Participants' permission forms were signed at the time of the interview. Interviews were audio-taped with permission of the participants. The researcher chose to conduct interviews away from the school to protect the identities of the participants. Interviews lasted approximately 45-60 minutes.

Furthermore, personal experiences of the researcher allowed the researcher to become a participant. The researcher integrated experiences and dialogue throughout the research as it became relevant. The researcher was careful not to influence the response of the participants. Furthermore, the researcher became a participant in sharing personal experiences.

The researcher followed the interview procedures as outline by Leedy and Omrod (2001). Setting up the interview was done in a timely manner and convenient for the participants. All interviews were confirmed in writing. About five days before the interviews, reminder notices were sent through email or standard mail. The researcher obtained permission to tape the interview sessions. Notes were transcribed in a Microsoft Word document using IBM Via Voice.

In addition, the researcher employed an experienced panel of six teachers of various grade levels. These teachers had thirty or more years of teaching experience in the public system, and were well-trained practioners in the field. These experienced teachers were drawn from a cohort of Georgia Southern University doctoral students in

the Educational Administration program. This experienced panel of teachers aided the researcher in developing questions for the interviews.

After a list of questions was generated, the researcher emailed the questions to the methodologist for his view, comments and approval. Then, the methodologist emailed his approval of ten interview questions that he believed would aid the researcher in addressing the research.

<div align="center">Data Analysis</div>

Data analysis is the process of searching and arranging data into manageable parts (Jacelon & O'Dell, 2005). Marshall & Rossman (1999) characterize data analysis as the process of constructing order and interpretation of collected data. The following steps were used to analyze the data: The researcher organized data by using index cards, file folders. The index cards were used for note taking during interviews. The researcher documented reoccurring themes that she thought were major points of interest discussed by participants. These were filed into small file folders with a theme written on them. This allowed the data to be broken down into smaller manageable units. The researcher continued to revisit audiotapes, notes, words and stories of the participants. Other themes were added as some were deleted from the small file. The researcher's own knowledge and perceptions allowed her to identify common themes in the data. Some of the themes were deleted as others were added. The researcher kept records of revelations. A recording strategy of keeping memos was employed. A memo is conversing with self about what has occurred in the research process (Jacelon & O'Dell, 2000). The researcher spoke into a digital recorder to guard thoughts and interpretations of the data. The recordings were revisited many times to gain understanding of the data. As the

recordings, stories, and small file folders were revisited, it was then that themes were clearly revealed. The themes from the data were verbal/face-to-face, written communication, feedback, trust, support, care, respect, and worth. Each participant consistently expressed thoughts concerning these themes. After all information had been written on index cards and transferred to small file folders, the researcher typed information into a chart to review themes and how they connected to the review of literature (Table VII).

 Participants were invited to review statements and stories rendered to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. All audiotaped interviews were transcribed by using IBM Via Voice and again participants were given the opportunity to review audiotapes of the interview to ensure validity of the study.

<div align="center">Reporting the Data</div>

The researcher reported data through a personal narrative style of writing, drawing on her personal experiences as well as the experience of others. In addition, the researcher created tables to report the data and used captions to explain findings.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

The purpose of this study was to examine Georgia teachers' perceptions of principals' interpersonal communication skills as they relate to teacher performance. The overarching question was what role does interpersonal communication of the principal play in teacher performance? The following sub-questions also guided the research:

1. What interpersonal communication skills of principals do teachers believe impact teacher performance in the school setting?

2. Which interpersonal communication skills of principals do principals believe impact teacher performance in the school setting?

The focus here was to gain knowledge and meaning from the participants' experiences in their own words as well as the narrative account from the researcher. The research was conducted by interpreting personal documents such as letters or notes, recollections of events, interviews, self –statements (personal testimonies), self-revelations, and self-perceptions.

CHAPTER 4

REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine teachers' perceptions of principals' interpersonal communication skills as they relate to teacher performance. Five teachers were interviewed to gain knowledge about their principals' interpersonal communication skills and the role these skills play in their performance. These five teachers were elementary, middle, and high school teachers from northeast Georgia schools. This study did not focus on race, gender, or age.

Interpersonal communication in regards to this study refers to listening, feedback, face-to-face communication, nonverbal cues, trust and authenticity in the principal-teacher dyad.

The researcher sought approval from Georgia Southern University's IRB to conduct research. After permission was granted, the researcher began to select randomly participants from schools located in northeast Georgia. The researcher put the names of all schools in the district in boxes according to levels labeled: elementary schools A, middle schools B, and high schools C. The researcher pulled from each box until ten schools from each level had been randomly selected. From those ten schools randomly pulled, the researcher emailed 150 letters seeking teacher participants for face-to-face interviews. Teacher participants were provided with information concerning this research project and a demographic survey sheet. The researcher received three high school, four middle school, and three elementary school responses that conveyed their willingness to participate. The researcher gathered those teacher responses and placed

them in boxes again labeled according to level. Two names per school level were selected randomly from the boxes. These teacher participants were contacted through a written letter and email to set up an interview time and place. Participants also received written confirmation of scheduled interviews and a follow-up call as a reminder of the interview. One participant self-eliminated after the interview had taken place. Then the researcher repeated the process of randomly pulling from the remaining teacher responses in an effort to replace the participant who self-eliminated. Those remaining teacher respondents did not want to participate. Participants' permission forms were signed at the time of the interviews.

Interviews were not conducted during school time nor on school property. This protected the identity of the participants. Steps were taken to make sure all participants understood the Participant Informed Consent Form before interviews were conducted. Interviews were audio-taped with participants' permission, and participants were permitted to read all transcription to ensure accuracy of testimonies.

All audiotaped interviews were transcribed using IBM Via Voice. The data were organized into common themes, thoughts, or ideas that emerged from the interviews.

Research Questions

The overarching question of this study is this: what role do interpersonal communication skills of the principal play in teacher performance? The following subquestions will also guide the research:

1. Which interpersonal communication skills of principals do teachers believe impact teacher performance in the school setting?

2. How does the teachers' perception of their principal affect teacher performance?

Research Design

This is a qualitative design and is termed autoethnography. Ellis and Bochner describe it as being an evocative, personal narrative focusing on the academic life as well as the personal life of the author. Its purpose is embedded in understanding self as lived in a cultural context (2000). Danahay defines autoethnography as a research method that connects the person to the culture (1997). Normally, autoethnographical writings are in the first person voice in the form of short stories, poems, journals, novels or dialogue.

I employed this research design because it gave me the opportunity to contribute to my profession in a personal and natural way and within the life stories of others. Holy explains that this is not a traditional method and is not seen as being reliable or rigorous (2003). Nevertheless, my own experiences were a rich source of data as were the experiences of others. This design was most effective in that I and the other participants were able to relate similar and somewhat different experiences, and in the process, self was improved. My struggles, pains, and joys as well as those of the participants were exposed in an effort to improve the environment in which we work. With this in mind, the effort and time invested in this study was a worthwhile endeavor.

Respondents: Five Northeast Georgia Teachers

The respondents included five teachers possessing degrees beyond a Bachelors. The ethnic makeup of these five teachers was one African American female (AA), two white females (W), one female who did not reveal her origin, and one white male. Teachers were classified as Mary, Betty, Janet, Molly, and David. The average experience in the field of education was 22 years (see Table 5).

Table 5

Teacher Demographic Profile

Teacher	School Level	Gender	Race	Highest Degree	Yrs. Exp.
Mary	High	Female	W	M	13
Betty	Middle	Female	W	M	3
Janet	Elementary	Female	W	M	30
Molly	Middle	Female	AA	Ed.S.	15
David	High	Male	W	M	10

W:White,   M:Masters,   AA:African-American,   ED.S.:Specialist

Demographic Profile of Schools

The demographic profile represents the five schools where the participants teach. The participants spoke of previous experiences that may not be associated with the schools represented in the chart. This information is also presented in Table II.

Mary's school is a high school serving 1514 students in a suburban area. The racial/ethnic comparison of students revealed 54.6% African American, 31.7% White, 10.2% Hispanic, 0.1% American Indian, 2.5% Asian. There are 51.7% males and 48.3% females. Of the school's student population, 41.4% qualified for reduced or free lunch. There are 110 teachers with 72 holding advanced degrees. Average years of teaching for the faculty was 12.

Betty's school is a middle school serving 541 students in a rural area. The racial/ethnic comparison of students showed 55.6% African American, 20.7% White, 18.7% Hispanic, 0.2% American Indian, 1.8% Asian. There were 47.9% males and 52.1% females. The school reported 70.1% of its student population qualified for reduced or free lunch. There were 47 teachers, 25 of whom hold advanced degrees. Average years

of teaching were 15.

Janet's school is an elementary school serving 429 students in a rural area. The racial/ethnic comparison of students reflected 62.9% African American, 42% White, 24.0% Hispanic, 0.7% American Indian, 0.2% Asian. There were 49.2% males and 50.8.% females. The school has 40.1% of its student population on reduced or free lunch. Advanced degrees are held by 34 of the school's 53 teachers. Average years of teaching were 10.

Molly's school is a middle school serving 655 students in a rural area. The racial/ethnic population of the students was 64.7% African American, 23.2% White, 10.2% Hispanic, 9.5% American Indian, 0.5% Asian. There are 51.0% males and 49.0% females. The school reported 73.4% of its student population on reduced or free lunch. There are 58 teachers, 34 of whom hold advanced degrees. Average years of teaching were 10.

David's school is a high school serving 1588 students in a suburban area. The racial/ethnic comparison of student population showed 56.9% African American, 9.8% White, 24.0% Hispanic, 0.7% American Indian, 0.2% Asian. There are 49.2% males and 50.8% females. The school has 92.6% of its student population on reduced or free lunch. There are 90 teachers with 34 holding advanced degrees. Average years of teaching were 10.

Table 6

Demographic Profile of Schools

Sch	L	CO	TE	AD	AY	STD	AA	W	HIS	AMI	AS	RL	MA	FE
Mary	H	SU	110	72	12	1514	54.6%	31.7%	10.2%	0.1%	2.5%	41.4%	51.7%	48.3%
Betty	M	RU	47	25	15	541	55.6%	20.7%	18.7%	0.2%	1.8%	70.1%	47.9%	52.1%
Janet	E	RU	53	34	10	429	62.9%	42.0%	24.0%	0.7%	0.2%	40.1%	49.2%	50.8%
Molly	M	RU	58	34	10	655	64.7%	23.2%	9.5%	0.2%	0.5%	73.4%	51.0%	49.0%
David	H	SU	90	34	10	1588	56.9%	9.8%	24.0%	0.7%	0.2%	92.6%	49.2%	50.8%

Sch:school, L=Level, CO:Community, RU:Rural, SU:Suburban, TE:teacher, M:Middle, H:High, E:Elementary, AD:Advanced Degrees, STD:Student, AY:Average Years of Experience, AA:African American, W:White, HIS:Hispanic, AMI:American Indian, AS:Asian, RL:Reduced Lunch or Free Lunch, MA:Male, FE:Female

Qualitative Data Analysis

The question came to mind as to how I was going to recruit teacher participants to discuss their current or previous administrators with a perfect stranger. Professionally, teachers are skeptical about discussing their administrators or their schools. With this in mind, I was thankful to anyone who responded to my email concerning this study. My focus was to recruit teachers from the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Northeast Georgia area was chosen for the convenient sample. Selecting participants based on personal demographics did not fit in the purpose of the study even though demographics may reveal pertinent information.

Five teachers agreed to be interviewed by responding affirmatively to a letter requesting participation after I gained Georgia Southern University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. After participants agreed to be interviewed, I contacted the participants by their personal telephones and personal emails to schedule interviews. All interviews were conducted away from school premises. Participants requested early

evenings as the best time to schedule interviews. A panel of expert teachers from Georgia Southern University developed interview questions in an effort to address the research questions of the study.

The interview sessions were conducted in a timely manner. Teacher participants were free to discuss current or previous principals and to compare principal to principal. Positive experiences as well as negative experiences were shared between the participants and me.

The data derived from the interviews were presented to correspond with the research questions of this study. Data were presented in autoethnography format and followed by brief discussions of themes, patterns, insights, thoughts, and reflections that emerged from the interactive interviews. My personal account was narrated through interludes. In this study, I wanted to employ a nontraditional touch such as autoethnograhy. More importantly, I wanted to crystallize my findings. Crystallization takes place with the reflecting and refraction of light being dispersed in different directions in a prism (Denzin & Lincoln 2003). Likewise, in this study, I have reflected on the stories of the participants, which led me to consider my own interpersonal communication skills as a teacher leader. I have compared and contrasted their stories with mine and with each other's in an effort to find meaning in the culture of education as it relates to interpersonal communication skills of principals.

After collecting the data, I reread it as many times as necessary. Then I began to see common themes emerge. I pondered if it would be best to organize the data by teacher or by theme. The themes that were identified from the interviews were verbal/fact-to face communication, written communication, feedback, sensitivity, care,

support, worth and trust. I thought it to be more expedient to organize data according to these themes that reflect the research questions in narrative form interjecting my thoughts and personal experiences through the use of interludes. This is where autoethnography proved to be the best method for this type of research study (Duncan, 2004).

The researcher created an Item Analysis Chart (Table 3) to show the frequency of reoccurring themes. The themes were not discussed in the order in which they occurred in the study. Verbal/face-to-face reoccurred at least 15 times consistently by all participants. Feedback reoccurred about 10 times in the study; perceptions reoccurred only 5 times; and trust, care, respect, and worth reoccurred 7 times.

Figure 1

Qualitative Item Analysis Qualitative Chart and Frequency of Reoccurring Themes
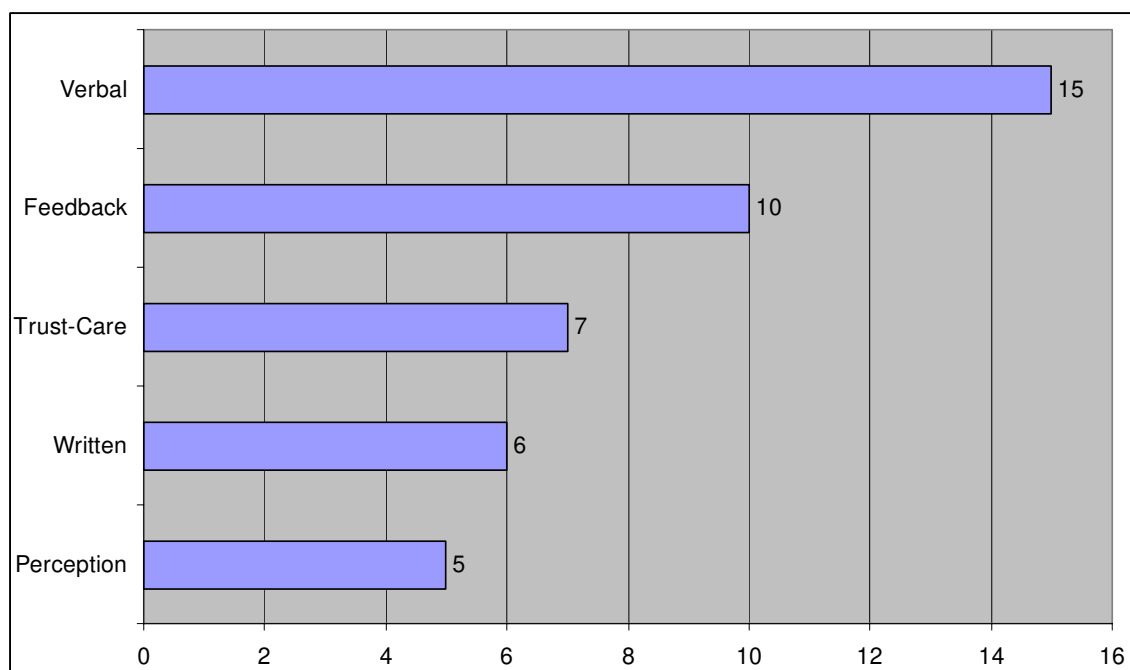
My research questions guided this study and the interview questions afforded a means to reach answers to the research questions. My story was narrated within the stories of the participants. The interactive interviews helped me not only to look outward, but also to look inward as I pondered on the participants' stories. Finally, a discussion of the data was rendered in an effort to find meaning and resolutions to this research study.

Each teacher participant was given a pseudonym Mary, Betty, Janet and Molly and David to protect his or her identity. During the transcribing, I edited the passages to avoid redundancy and circumvent comments that were irrelevant to the focus of this study by using (…). Then I used brackets { } to insert words or phrases to avoid ambiguities for the reader. Additionally, I omitted comments that made references to actual persons, school systems, and geographical locations in Georgia. This was done in an effort to insure the confidentiality of participants.

<div align="center">Research Subquestion #1</div>

Which interpersonal communication skills of principals do teachers believe impact teacher performance in the school setting?

Verbal/Face-to Face

The interviews revealed similar responses among the five participants. The participants agreed that verbal skills were significant in impacting teacher performance. Each participant presented different examples of verbal skills or scenarios. Face-to face communications and verbal skills were articulated during faculty meetings. There were common concerns that participants shared concerning the interpersonal communication skills of the principals in a face-to-face communication situation. The principals articulated well in faculty meetings compared to face-to-face communication. In

interacting with participants, their lived experiences of both previous and current

principals were shared. Mary expressed thoughts concerning this.

> My previous principal exercised very good verbal communication skills when it
>
> came to articulating goals and expectations. He expressed himself well in faculty
>
> meetings even though he was bad about making blanket statements to the whole
>
> staff rather than dealing with the offender so to speak. I have seen some of this
>
> {blanket statements} in my current principal as well. He {current principal} is
>
> very difficult to deal with . . . .I don't really deal with him that much since he just
>
> blasted me for supposedly saying something I didn't say. Someone told him I had
>
> said something to a student. He did not ask me if I said it. He just caught me in
>
> the hall and blasted me in the hall in front of students and other people. I just
>
> basically avoid him if I can.

Betty expressed that her principal was a polite person, but sometimes his encounters were

more like an attack.

> My principal communicating in the hall as anyone can see is always polite. Once
>
> in a while, he and I are both sarcastic people. We go back and forth with sarcasm
>
> even in front of the kids or walking by the kids with a newspaper and he will hit
>
> me on the head with it. But in the office, when you come in his office, he may not
>
> always look up at you. He'll say yes and just tell him what you need and he'll
>
> give you more answers and say "Get out" sarcastically. You get a little tired of
>
> the "get out of my office" part. If he is concerned with the things you are saying,
>
> he starts rubbing his head. He never yells or screams. He is not a quiet talker. He
>
> has a loud voice, but it's not a yell. He is sarcastic in his office unless he's mad at

me for something in which case it is automatically my fault, and then he walks up

to me. I don't know what I've done until he says "So and so is in my office." And

I say that's a complete lie. Then he says, "No problem, I'll take care of it." So

being attacked right off the bat when I don't even know what I've done and I

haven't done anything is a little stressful. So I kind of learned that when he

comes up to me, no matter what he says, I didn't do it. When he comes up to me

about what some kid told mom . . . .The first approach is an attack . . . He just

walks up like a bulldozer.

Janet described her principal's face-to-face encounters as being verbally abusive and

demeaning. Her emotions revealed her pain as she remembered what had taken place. She

found the courage to speak.

Five years ago, I had a principal who was very monstrous. I mean that he had a

devious spirit and his motives were to intimidate and break your spirits in order to

demonstrate his authority. He did a lot of yelling when he called you into the

office. To me, that was not very professional. It was very demeaning. It is a very

poor way to motivate the staff to work for you. Sometimes words can be more

hurtful than if someone physically touched you. You can heal from the effect of

being physically touched better than negative words. I found out later that it was

not something that happened only to me, but it was the way he handled many of

his teachers. He was able to communicate in the faculty meetings. He

communicated face-to-face very poorly in turns of motivating and supporting me.

There were often times when he would take a parent or student account and start

yelling at the teacher. Many times people would do things out of fear of a tongue-

lashing. . . .It was verbal abuse. There was an instance when I was seeking a transfer, but I was not able to get the transfer. When I did not receive that job at the end of the year, I had to go back to my same school and to the same principal I spoke about previously. He called me in to speak with me. He said I did not get a transfer because nobody in the county wanted me. He said it in such a way that was very callus, very cold, and very unprofessional. It really hurt me to have him say that no one wanted my expertise or wanted me at their school. He was not very sensitive or professional.

On the other hand, participant Molly shared her experience of working with a principal that value her through good face-to-face communication skills. She also shared her principal's wisdom in dealing with issues concerning individuals.

The fellow {principal} that I enjoyed the most talked to me directly, adult to adult: "This is what we need, this is not working." We would hash out whatever we had between the two of us. The principal would talk to me as a person and respect me as an educated intelligent adult. When there was an issue with an individual, he did not preach to the whole faculty. When he talked to me one on one, he said, "This is where I see the problem." Then he would give me a chance to respond, and we would talk back and forth until we came to an understanding as to how we were going to do things.

David described his principal as a good communicator who knows what to say and how to say it when dealing with faculty.

He (principal) has a pleasant tone, even when he is chastising us. He has never raised his voice at us. He's a good communicator . . . When he first started at this

school, he seemed to have some times where he would trip over his words and go

back and restate his statement another way n faculty meetings. Sometimes, our

principal comes off as a bit cold and by the book, but that's what we needed when

he first came on. . . . He has warmed up a bit and has even become more visible to

the students, but he still knows what needs to be done and what needs to be said to

get the job done and students improving.

Interlude #1

I listened attentively and interjected whenever necessary during the

interviews being careful not to lead their thoughts or words. My thoughts and

feelings concerning interpersonal communications skills of principals began to

surface in my memory. As I listened to each respondent during his or her time

interviewing, I began to relate to each story in a different way. I began to realize

that my experiences were not unique but a part of a culture in which I was a

member. I began to reflect on my first thoughts concerning this dissertation topic.

As a child, my parents taught me to speak those words that heal. If the

words you say do not heal, then do not speak them. Living a sheltered life has

somewhat blinded me to the fact that everyone does not speak words that heal.

Throughout college, my professors conversed with sensitivity and grace. In the

world of education, I expected my superiors to have that same grace about them.

In most of my professional career, my principals have demonstrated a weakness

in interpersonal communication skills, which includes face-to-face

communications as being most critical. As one of the participants expressed

feelings of hurt, I too join her in expressing feelings of hurt and pain and that of

grace and joy.

One thing that interfered with my joy of teaching was face-to-face encounters with one of my previous principals. Face-to-face encounters with her gave me feelings of inferiority complexes. She always made inappropriate comments about my voice, my last name, and my morals when we were face-to-face. She made me wonder all the time if there were something wrong with me. I pondered whether my colleagues and students saw me in the same light. I too have experienced verbal language that has offended and bruised me to the point of anger and resentment.

I remember an incident when I was at fault. I unknowingly broke a spelling contest rule at the last phase of the contest. I was really sorry and took responsibility for my action. The principal used harsh language in the presence of students and parents. Such language as "Are you crazy? Any first year teacher knows better. When this is over, get in my office." One does not use this type of language in a professional environment. Language is so beautiful when words are chosen with care. My response was to be as nice as possible and not to stoop where I do not belong. The words and tone of voice of my principal continue to sound long after the offense has passed. I have always wondered what my principal had hoped to accomplish be using such a tone with me.

On the other hand, there were principals who brought joy into my teaching. I remember one of my principals would go out of his way to say hello. He made it a point to visit each classroom in the morning. His words were always well chosen and full of wisdom. When communicating unpleasant news

concerning parental disappointment in me, he gave his personal approval of my

work.

Written Communications

Written communications found its way into the expressions of the participants. It was consensus among participants that written communications, like verbal communications, might set the tone for a good working relationship and instill motivation to improve performance. The following passages extracted from the interviews expressed the role of written communication in teacher performance in the school setting. Mary expressed her thoughts on this issue.

> I would rather spend 5 minutes reading an email than have to sit in a faculty
>
> meeting for 30 minutes of announcements of stuff that people could have put in
>
> an email and I could have read in 5 minutes. So I mean I'm perfectly fine with
>
> him dealing with people through email. I prefer that because it seems like less of a
>
> waste of time. He is very professional in that sense. I do not know if he does not
>
> think before he hits the send button or go back and reads what he wrote. Because
>
> he would write things to the whole faculty…and this is the same problem that
>
> goes back to the first principal I worked with at my current school. He would
>
> address the people who are not the problem, but just blast it out at the whole staff
>
> instead of addressing the two or three who are the actual problem. The language
>
> and the tone depend on the email. The last one of the big ones {email} he set
>
> out…He blasted the whole staff for not following his instructions; which were not
>
> very clear from the beginning. He admitted they were not very clear. But then
>
> continued to talk about the things we did wrong without actually telling us what

he wanted from us.

Betty's principal used email effectively and was described as a good communicator in the area of written communication.

His {principal} emails are always to the point. There is no beating around the bush. And, if he has something to say that he doesn't want to be brought up ever, he won't send it in an email or he denies the whole thing. I think we all do that. That is his communication style. He is a good communicator.

Some principals elect to use written communication, such as email, as a quick way to get information to faculty. Janet explained that her principal never used written communication because it would reveal his abusive behavior.

Many times the principal dealt with me in an insensitive manner. He always felt the need to yell and slam books or even papers on desks. He loves to intimidate and he knows he intimidates me. He knew I would not challenge him. The way I felt inside was that I was inferior to him and my colleagues. At some point, I thought I was truly in the wrong profession. He very seldom used written communication, because it would be traceable.

Molly expressed how written communication from her principal did not allow her to explain herself. She also expressed how written communication is open to interpretation of the reader and should not be the sole means of communication.

The fellow {principal} that I enjoyed the most talked to me directly, adult to adult, "This is what we need, this is not working." We would hash out whatever we had between the two of us. I have had principals who would send you a note! To me a written communication is often open to interpretation as to what a person

means; that was their sole means of communication, "I'll write you up, I'll put

something in your box for you to respond to, because you didn't do this little thing

whatever it was." You didn't get face-to-face encounters; you didn't get a chance

to explain yourself. It was predominantly written stuff. It makes you feel like "if

I'm so dumb, if I'm so slow that you have to write me notes about every little

thing, maybe I ought not to be in this classroom! Maybe I don't know how to do

this job." When I first started teaching that was incredibly threatening to me

because I really did not know a whole lot about what I was doing. I was insecure

about it. Once I passed about 20 years . . . . I was confident enough in what I was

doing to go on and do my teaching. However, back early in my career, that could

have wrecked my whole week!

Molly gave a more specific incident that occurred to give better insight of the impact of

written communications from her principal.

A specific incident that took place with my class was on the playground during

their mandated recess. There were probably six classes on the playground at that

time. There were four teachers on one side of the playground and I was standing

with another teacher in a whole other area. The teacher and I were just chatting, in

fact about a student we shared in reading group. We were talking about how we

could connect to better help this child! My principal put a note in my box that she

had observed me talking to a teacher on the playground. She further wrote that I

was not to do that because safety was of utmost importance and I needed to have

my eyes on the children. When I got the note I was furious. Fortunately for me I

was confident enough in who I was and what I was doing that I knew where my

kids were. I knew what they were doing pretty much on the playground, but it made me so mad! I felt like a kindergartner and I just had my hand spanked. I was required to do a response. I responded, "I will attempt to de better." It was a good month before I totally absorbed it. It still makes me mad when I think about it.

Email use was very common among principals. David expressed similar thoughts to those of participant Betty. Emails from the principal were quick, efficient and professional.

He's a good communicator. He sends us emails regularly and keeps us abreast of what is going on and what needs to be done. He is always to the point and the tone of the email is very professional. He mostly communicates with us {teachers} through email and faculty meetings held twice a month. He will also answer your emails in an efficient manner.

Interlude #2

Written communication is a very important skill that all principals demonstrate with ease. What one writes and what one says, should be communicated with care and respect. I agree that written communication is left to the interpretation of the reader and sometimes what was communicated was really misunderstood. An example of this is seen in a note that my principal put in my box as a written reprimand. When I checked my box, I was surprised to receive a note from her, because she very seldom communicated through written communication. As I read the note, I was dumbfounded to know that I was being accused and reprimanded for screaming at a child. She punctuated some of the sentences in all capitals, bold type, and multiple exclamation marks. For me, this meant she was raising her voice through written communication. I tried to replay

the activities of the day and especially any reprimands given to this student. My

entire day was consumed by thoughts of this note. On that particular day, there

were parents in my class during the entire day. These are the actual words and

punctuation of the note:

*Mrs._____, as I walked by your class today approximately 1:15, I observed that you were **SCREAMING** at a child and in the child's **FACE!!!**. This behavior is **NOT TOLERATED** at **THIS** school. We have many visitors in the school today and let's hope that they have not witnessed **YOUR** behavior. Be in my office **PROMPTLY** after the last bus to discuss **YOUR BEHAVIOR!!!***

The exclamation marks and the entire tone of this letter stunned me. I did reprimand the

child, and I kneeled down to get on the child's level. I leaned over to grab crayons. This

action caused me to become closer to the child. She used the phrase in the child's face.

In what context was I supposed to understand "in the child's face"? In the culture of the

school, these were fighting words. She assumed from my lip moving and expression that

I was yelling even though she did not hear my voice to such intensity.

When written words have not been carefully chosen, the hurts and pains are felt the same

as abusive verbal language. In her note, she was concerned about the possibility of a

visitor witnessing my behavior, not knowing that there were parent visitors who

witnessed her peeking through the window. Teachers try to be on their best behavior in

the presence of parents.   She later apologized for using non-professional language and

making a hasty judgment after finding out that indeed there were parent visitors. My

principal never attempted to come in the classroom to get a good understanding of the

situation. When principals interact appropriately with teachers, written reprimands can be

avoided. They might, instead, turn the written communication into helpful criticism,

praise, and encouragement which would in turn encourage better teacher performance.

When my principal approaches me through written communication, I need to feel that sensitivity reigns in the tone of the communication. For me, this prepares me to receive the communication.

Feedback

Most of the participants felt that feedback was significantly important in improving their performance. Their stories differ, but only slightly. Mary shared an extract from her interview session.

> My previous principal never gave me any individual feedback as to what I was doing was correct or not correct, so I just continued to do the things that I'd been doing. I figure well if it is wrong, eventually someone will get around to telling me . . . And then there was the week that contract renewals were supposed to be given to the Board at that particular County. I was called in and told that I was not being renewed. I was given this long list of things I had supposedly done wrong. I was not given any sort of professional development, guidance or anything in terms of improving myself.

> My current principal never evaluates me other than passing through my class for 3 minutes at a time. He gave me no feedback. He never said a word to me. He sat in my class for 3 minutes and did not say anything to me about what he observed. He didn't ask any questions. Nothing!

> I didn't think he can give me reliable feedback because I don't think he knows a lot about my curriculum. And I think to do a fair evaluation or observation, you have to have some knowledge of the subject matter. I don't think someone who knows nothing about music can walk in a classroom and do a reliable observation.

I don't think he can teach me how to communicate to my students, because he doesn't communicate with me. I don't think he's been in my classroom and has seen me operate with my students to the extent where he can give a reliable report. I believe that at least 50% of what he'll say about me would be based on what he has read on my yearly evaluation written by assistant principals or department heads that did my evaluation.

Betty shared similar thoughts.

He knows I can make awesome results, but he has never seen me teach. He's not the one who does my evaluation. It has always been the assistant principal. This is the first year where he is supposed to do my evaluation, but he's never come into my room to evaluate me. He'll come in my room; he'll stay about a minute, and he'll walk back out so everyone will be able to see his face once in a while.

Janet shared how her principal gave much of the responsibility of evaluation feedback to the assistant principals. She also shared that the principal's feedback was a time for tongue-lashing. When the principal did say something good, this participant did not take her principal's words to heart.

I did not have a good relationship with the principal that I had 4 or 5 years ago. I felt if I did something in contrary to what the principal wanted, I was going to get another tongue-lashing. That type of feedback I did not want to experience again. There was a time he would say "Good job." I had been so beaten down by him that I did not think he really meant it. I remember I was working myself up and trying to get prepared for the next year. I was trying to go beyond what I was supposed to do. He said, "The school year has ended, go home." Maybe he was

saying I was doing my best or he did view what I was doing was worthy. The

principal I have now just tells her assistants to approach you instead of

approaching you directly. They may deal with you, but she will not voice her

disposition. Her assistants do her dirty work.

Molly preferred face-to-face feedback with her principal. This is the not the preferred

style chosen by the principal. Only in extreme cases will the principal utilize face-to-face

feedback. She expressed that feedback was needed to improve.

I would like to have face-to face feedback with my principal. My principal does

not utilize this type of communication unless something dynamic has taken place

between teacher and student. Evaluations are done and placed in teacher boxes for

signature. There is no other interaction for discussion of what has taken place.

Remember the recess incident? She (principal) put a written reprimand in my

box, requested a written response, and it is finished. She is the kind of principal

where everything is filed for a day of need. Feedback is always helpful in trying

to get you to become a better teacher.

David expressed encouraging thoughts. His principal's feedback has proven to be

instrumental to him as a professional.

My principal is to the point in all communications. His feedback in any given

situation has proven to be helpful to me as a professional. There was a time he

prevented me from getting the AP US History position at the end of my second

year, giving it to a person who was just finishing his first year. He said I had "too

much on my plate" for an AP course and that I could take the course to learn how

to teach it; I was not getting the job. He has told me several times that he has

noticed my love and passion for history. I appreciated that. He knows I stumbled a bit since I started there, and while he gave me NIs on my evaluations, he said there was progress and that the NIs should be seen as things to improve.

Interlude #3

My personal children try very hard to please me even though they are adults. They cherish the thoughts that I may have concerning their lives. They may disagree many times with my perspective, but they want and need to know how I feel concerning them. In the same way, teachers have a need and desire to know the thoughts that their principals have concerning them. Feedback is a need not just a duty that principals render. The manner in which feedback is given is even more important. I remember very clearly how one of my principals said these very words. "If I was a student at this school, I would die to be in your class." I was on cloud nine the entire day. I felt so encouraged that she appreciated the efforts that I gave to my teaching. She had confidence and trusted my professional judgments concerning my students. This gave me the motivation to read, research, and execute best practices in my classroom.

In my early days of teaching in Georgia, I experienced principals that were not good at giving feedback. During the time of evaluations, my previous principal just wanted me to sign the paper work. There was no time to ask questions. If any questions were asked, it was an offense to her. Mostly, feedback came in the form of a reprimand not so much as praise, or a collaborative effort to improve teacher performance or to reach school goals. Feedback will not always be praise to the ear, but it should always encourage the teacher in some way. Another one of my former principals used demeaning terminology such as "get off your butt," or "I will not give you a good

evaluation unless you agree to…" Sometimes he used vulgarity such as "ass, hell, and

shit." He often used his favorite phrase: "All black people used these words, why do you

look at me as if you are not black?" I hated when he offended my personal being. This

type of feedback was never productive.

> *Sensitivity, Care, Support, Worth and Trust*

During the sessions, several of the participants discussed such skills as showing a

sense of care for teachers as people and professionals. The discussion extended into

valuing teacher opinions, their expertise, and their work in the principal-teacher

relationship. They spoke adamantly as they shared emotions and honesty. Mary shared

her story.

> If I wanted to try a particular thing and I needed certain resources or supplies, I
>
> have no indication from my administration that I would get any kind of support
>
> for it. I offered to teach advanced placement Chemistry during my planning
>
> period this particular school year without being paid for extended days. The
>
> request was not acknowledged much less accepted. I made the offer in writing
>
> because I know there were students who wanted to take advance placement
>
> chemistry and it had not been put on the schedule.   I offered twice in writing to
>
> the principal to teach the course without asking for extended day pay and he did
>
> not acknowledge that I made the offer…. I would not trust him; I don't trust him.
>
> I've known administrators that were 15-year teachers, and then became
>
> administrators. And we have one now, he's doing very good for a first year
>
> administrator. He remains very sympathetic. It seems like after people have been
>
> an administrator for 3 or 4 years, they go from understanding what the teachers

are going through to not caring what the teachers are dealing with. I've seen it

happen with four different assistant principals over my time at my school. This is

my tenth or eleventh year. It is very common.

Betty shared expressions of praise concerning principals support and care of teachers at

her school.

My principal is a huge defender of my orchestra. And he has gone to the Board

and the superintendent and has told me how to get my parents to go to the Board

and Superintendent for orchestra needs. So in that, I absolutely love my principal.

We needed about $500 worth of new instruments. So I got everything I wanted

minus one instrument. It made me happy. I did not want to work anywhere else

because I heard so many bad stories about principals who don't support their

orchestras or don't support their Fine Arts Programs at all and mine would fight

for it and I loved it. I have one of the rare principals who actually cares what I do.

This is awesome. He comes to all of our concerts. He lets me take the kids out

once in a while to have rehearsal in the mornings before concerts to do a

fundraiser presentation. And you know a lot of people {principals} will not let

you take students out of instructional time. And he's very good about assisting me

in writing my proposals for field trips: "This will not make it past the Board…fix

this and I think you will have no problems." So he's very good with that.

She also shared thoughts on her principal's expressions of kindness and sensitivity

concerning her as a person and teacher.

I lost a lot of sleep living in an apt. My neighbor had a newborn baby. Every four

hours I awaken up with the parents for every feeding, every bad dream, and every

dirty diaper. It caused clinical insomnia. It lead to depression, and I actually had

to go and get medication for everything. I was having a really hard time.

Because of the lack of sleep, I could not get to work on time to save my life.

When he saw things were getting really bad, he caught me in the hall and said

come into my office and asked, "What is going on?" I told him I have got this

problem. I'm on medication and dealing with it, and I'm trying really hard to

make it on time. He was very sensitive about that: "What can I do? Why didn't

you tell me? I could have been helping you. What can I do?" He's also big on our

physical health. For Christmas, he got us two weeks membership to the Y. He'll

randomly pull you into his office and asks "How're you doing? What are you

doing to keep yourself healthy?" He's very much into that. He was doing a lot of

research where teachers were having burn out and had a lot of health problems

that they were so caught up in the job that they forgot to take care of themselves.

It's something we do all the time.

Janet expressed thoughts that somewhat differed.

A lot of times people would do things out of fear of a tongue lashing or fear of

losing their job because of the lack of full cooperation and support of

administration. I remember when we had a dessert concert. I wanted them to eat

their dessert while the performance was going on. It was sort of like a dinner

theater. And I remember that he criticized me and I was told that no one would be

moving around during the performance. No one would be setting up the table or

doing anything until after the performance. Things like that are very minute when

you look at the big scheme of things. Really, if the children are learning, if the

children are happy, if they are succeeding, and if they go from the beginning of

the year knowing more at the end of the year, that should have been more

valuable than small things like that {minute things}.

Molly shared how her principal valued her over job responsibilities. The principal

invested in the person not the job. She also shared her principal's personal philosophy on

leadership.

The principal I remember the most is the principal I worked for 11 years. I always

felt like he supported everything I did. For instance, my child got sick at school

one day. The school called me at my school, and I hung up the phone and told

him that my son had passed out at school. He said "Then you need to leave now!"

and headed out toward the room and he said "Don't go back to your room, you

need to go" and I said "but I've got to go get my purse, my car keys!" And he

said, "Oh, ok!" He was more concerned with me, my personal self, and my child,

than he was for my classroom! He had already called for a person to come and

cover my classroom until he could get a substitute there. It was a very rewarding

experience during those years. Because I always felt like he was behind me in

whatever I was doing. I loved working for him. Now there were a couple of

people who butted heads with him on different things, and he and I butted heads

on things, there was always a great deal of respect on his part for me on what I

was doing. His philosophy was, "My job is not to run the school; my job is to

make sure that teachers can do their job!" And he really lived up to that. If you

needed something for the classroom, then he did everything that he could to meet

that need. That doesn't mean that you always got it, because in schools there is

never money for anything. But it wasn't because he didn't try; he tried to work around, he'd arrange something, he would do everything that he could to make sure that you had that need met. With him I felt like we were friends, and we were partners in teaching these children. . . We were not friends on a personal level. I never saw him outside of school, maybe occasionally. I did not have any kind of relationship with him away from school. If he called me up now and say "I'm the principal of a school and I need you to come teach for a year." I would go teach for him. I had that type of relationship with him. I felt valued. I felt that my professional opinion was an important thing and he truly cared about me.

Interlude #4

Principals are people and they do lack skills in communication, but teachers do also. The key word is skill. This study has caused me to look within self, as well as others for answers. What skills do I lack as I try to prosper my students academically? This question comes to mind as I make sense of this study. My students may have trouble grasping certain skills because of what I may lack. I, too, may lack some skills because of what my principal lacks. I have worked under the supervision of great and not so great principals. Even under the supervision of the great principals, it has taken me some time to feel self worth as a professional.

There is one experience that I continue to remember over and over again as I insert my feelings here. It is a major incident in my teaching profession that has prompted me to share my story in this study. I am indeed a participant with a story to share.

I was so excited as I began to fulfill my dream of getting my specialist degree. I had a great relationship with my principal. She was so cooperative and signed any paper work that my school required of her. The time came when I had to shadow her. This simply means that I had to follow her around for a given amount of time to observe the daily activities of a principal in the most natural form. I was excited. The shadowing never took place. I was asked to come to school at 7:00 A. M. and make sure that all the trash cans were placed on the outside of the restroom doors. I never found out exactly what principals do during their daily activities except for what I observed throughout the day. I trusted this principal to mentor me and give me some guidance since I aspired to be an administrator. She sat me down in her office and said that I was not "principal material." Therefore, there was not a strong effort to help me know the things that I needed to know concerning school administration. I was never given leadership responsibilities such as team leader, or director of the after school program. The principal appointed an EIP teacher who was in her first year teaching as director over the after school program. The first year teacher only had a bachelor's degree without classroom teaching experience. My principal signed all necessary paperwork, but she would not allow me to learn what I needed to know through observation and practice. I was devastated. When my professor asked us to share in class, I made up things. She was characterized as a principal that only helped those who measured up to her standards. I did not believe it at first until I fell victim to her power as an administrator to make me or break me. Our relationship began to go down hill. Many times, she would let me know that my

professional career was in her hands. She began to harass me through my grandchild who attended the school. She disrespected me by not referring to me as Mrs. Kambeya, but instead as "her" or "she" when speaking to others in my presence. She threatened to put things in my professional folder. Our friendship turned to a ship of horror overnight. Everyday it seemed like my mistakes were being magnified. I was summoned to her office throughout the day. There were private confrontations constantly. Several times she conveyed to me that teaching might not be for me. "Take some time off and think about it," she would say. Close to the end of the year, she celebrated the accomplishments of all the teacher graduates except mine. She never mentioned that I had received my Ed.S degree. She tried to block anything that I tried to do to prosper even a transfer to another school. It was so devastating that I had to get assistance from GAE. Finally, I made a decision to transfer. When transfer efforts were blocked, I knew I had to resign. She refused to give any professional references, which I thought was better than giving a bad reference.

I lost all trust in her as a friend and especially as an leader. I found it hard to confide in others because I did not trust anyone any more. I received counseling from my husband and my pastor. It was like the death of a dear friend. I came to realize in the healing process that she was never a friend and never actually cared for me as a professional. Her actions conveyed to me that I was no more valuable than the desks in my classroom. I was an invisible entity at this school. I was at my lowest point and feelings of inadequacy followed me from school to school. It was difficult bringing myself out of this depression.

Research Subquestion #2

How does the teacher's perception of their principal affect teacher performance?

Teacher Perception and Effects

Interactions, or the lack of principal interactions, with the teachers left lasting

effects. Mary again shared her thoughts on this matter.

> A lot of the principals, once they became an administrator, forget what is
>
> supposed to happen in a classroom. They forget how to do things in a classroom.
>
> They forget how to think on their feet when they have to deal with issues that
>
> arise in a classroom. I really think that a lot of administrators lose their minds
>
> when they become administrators.

She shared how her principal viewed her as a professional.

> I think my principal might think I am just an irritating person. When he sees me,
>
> he tends to find someone else to talk to or he tends to turn away. I really don't
>
> know how he feels about me. I'm not going to ask. I probably don't want to
>
> know the truth. I'm not at the school to be liked. And I really don't care if he
>
> likes me as long as he respects the job that I'm doing. But I'm really not sure if
>
> he does. I have virtually no interaction with him whatsoever. He does not speak
>
> to me and many times I pass him in the hall and say hello Dr.____ and he's not
>
> even looked at me. Does he view me as an excellent teacher? With this type of
>
> interaction and behavior it is obvious that I'm not valued as a good teacher.

She also discussed the affect this had on her performance as a teacher.

> I don't do my best teaching, and my attitude towards self, students, and the
>
> school has become so negative. I really did not even try to find another position.

Every school system is going to have its own set of problems and with the amount

of time I have put in, I'm finally teaching a subject that I enjoy.

Betty revealed quite a different perspective.

He thinks I'm awesome. He knows I do a good job. He knows that I fight really

hard. I whipped the kids around 180 degrees on their first concert. I got a

standing ovation. No one knew his or her kids could actually play. He knows I

can make awesome results, even though he has never seen me teach. He is down

to earth guy and this has been a big motivational force for me. Overall his

dealings with me have been very good. If my principal doesn't trust me to get the

job done then I must ask myself, "Why am I here at your school?" By trusting

me, this gives me confidence and motivation to do even more.

Janet could barely speak without shedding tears. She spoke about how her principal's

facial expressions toward her were synonymous with hate. She recounted the following

experience.

If hate could be defined in a facial expression, my previous principal of 5 years

expressed that to me constantly. I knew he did not value me first as a person let

alone as professional. He looked down on me as if I did not belong in this

profession. I began to question myself as to where I really belonged.

She gave an example to substantiate her feelings.

There was another instance I was ready to start a new year. I always look at a new

year as a new start. I was very positive at that time and willing to do the very best

that I could do at my job even before he approached me. It was not my mindset to

be negative or not to be a team player. Just because someone is seeking a transfer

doesn't mean they are not putting forth an effort to do their best. I was seeking a

transfer because there was nothing I could do right to please this particular

principal. I was seeking a transfer to get away from the verbal abuse. A lot of

things he was doing were negative and I felt that another position would be better

for me. I could not function in the classroom with feelings of low esteem, no

confidence, a principal that I thought hated me and made me feel that everybody

else did too. I could not give to my students what they needed because I thought I

was not qualified to do so. A lot of things he was doing were negative and I felt

that another position would be better for me.

She discussed how this affected her.

This perception affected me in two different ways. It really can depress you and

make you feel like you're just marking time. What you are doing is not just good

enough. It has taken me a lot of years to realize that it's really not about what that

individual thinks but overall you have to be satisfied with yourself. If you have

done the very best that you can do with the children that you teach, then the

satisfaction you feel no one can take from you. It was very difficult for me to be

comfortable in my classroom. There were times he supported me to make himself

feel good. I did not trust him and I have not been able to really trust any

administrator. My current administrator is quite different in the way she

reprimands. Because she doesn't always do it directly from self; she sends others.

To me that seems a little sneaky.

Molly offered similar expressions. She adds to the discussion the difficulty in following
administrators who have caused you to have a poor perception of them.

I always felt like my principal thought I was doing a fairly good job. I had one
that did not value me as a teacher. His thoughts were, " as long as you stay out of
my way, you are fine." I didn't feel valued as a teacher and yet the other fellow
{principal} I worked for valued me as a teacher. It made a difference for me.
This principal was a team player and saw himself a team member not so much as
the boss. We (faculty) gave him that respect automatically. His sense of
collegiality motivated the entire staff and raised the respect we had for him. My
perception of him was positive and encouraging. It is difficult to trust, confide in,
and be led by a principal who has given you a terrible perception of himself and
of you as a teacher. This may be the big reason why many teachers who are
considered weak teachers leave a school and blossom elsewhere. Principals
should be able to see inside of teaches what they do not see in themselves and find
a way to bring it out. This will enable them {teachers} to go beyond what they
know to do and make a difference in the life of a child. The principal I worked
for did just that for me and I worked my all for him.

David expressed similar thoughts. He describes his principals as being firm yet sensitive
to the difficult work of teachers.

My principal has expressed to me many times the good job that I am doing. I
perceive him to be a sensitive person and a caring even though he pulls no
punches. He knows that it is a struggle to teach and teach and students still fail.
He offers encouragement and wisdom because has traveled this same road. I
appreciate that. It encourages me when I'm trying to do my job and the students
are still failing. I know it is not me; it is them {the students}. Of course, he pushes

student achievement and improvement, and while we as teachers here try, it is an uphill climb.

Interlude #5

It is a natural feeling to feel good about yourself when you know that your superior sees you in a positive light even though there are flaws. Flaws exist in everyone. I still remember the statement that one of my principals made to me, "If I were a student in this school, I would die to be in your class." This will forever ring in my ears. I also remember how I felt inside. It was a feeling that soothed all the confusion that a school day brings. It made me forget about the mistakes I had made that day and it made me think how I was going to be better on tomorrow. This principal was the greatest principal in the world. But I could see in her eyes and facial expressions that she really meant what she said. My morale was boosted. Knowing that she saw something good in me and voiced it motivated me to give more than what she expected of me. That same day, I extended my lesson plans and called parents of students that I had been putting off for so long. I found time, because I felt good about myself and what I was doing. On the other hand, my former principal that I have spoken so adamantly about did not see me in a positive light. This made me focus inward and I began to see all of my shortcomings. She made me see all of my flaws and suggested that I might be in the wrong profession. When I started to believe that, my love for teaching and my students went out the door. My duties became mediocre and my students became just a room full of bad kids. I felt bad that I would even feel that way. When things are not working well in the principal-teacher relationship, the students are directed affected.

Emotional and Mental Effects

The respondents shared thoughts of avoidance, giving only the minimum requirements, seeking other employment, and remaining in isolation as results of not trusting administration and others. This is what Mary recounted.

I basically try to avoid my principal and try to continue to teach my students. I would be motivated to do more or extend myself further. It would make it a more pleasant place to work . . . I feel like if I am not appreciated, then I am not going to work myself to death, not literally . . .. I have no motivation factor from the administration to make me want to push hard . . .To some degree, I don't give a hundred percent to my classes. I feel more comfortable having as little interaction with him as possible. I feel like I am able to be less anxious, less knotty stomach if I am just not around him. I have been taking anxiety medicine for about three years now. This helps me get through my teaching.

Janet gave an emotional account of the affect of her principal's interpersonal communication skills on her performance as a music teacher. She recounts how she feared him more than making the mistake.

The communication skills especially the verbal skills of my previous principal have affected me in a very negative way. By this I would second-guess everything that I did in regards to the way that I teach and the decisions I made regarding my program. It made me more indecisive and anxious about decisions. I had fear of him {principal} not of making a mistake. Therefore, I could not grow from my mistakes. Usually when he gives me a verbal lashing, it is no way I could not finish the rest of the day because I would just be torn up. Usually I would go

home or take a little time away and get myself back together. These episodes stole
time from my students. I could not function properly in the presence of my
students. I became detached from them and those around me. He was so abusive
and so derogatory—slamming books on the table, making accusations, yelling,
and all of these different things. It was as if he was trying to break me down. He
would say things like—"Nobody wants you anyway." I almost believed him.
Looking back on all of that: what doesn't kill you make you strong. Even though
I don't like verbal abuse, it made me a whole lot stronger of a person because I
did have to go through that. I had to learn from the things that he did that was
wrong. It made me look at my job in a different way. When I first started
teaching I was having fun. Everyday I went to work; it was fun for me. The kids
were learning. Now it is not like when I first started. The verbal abuse causes
other to talk. It has grown me up. I wouldn't want to see anyone come through
the abuse. I considered quitting. I finally said that I was not going to let
something so detrimental make me quit something I love to do.

Janet shared words of wisdom.

A teacher ought to have a sense of comfort (not too much) and a level of trust
above them. Administrators can use their power for good to uplift teachers. They
need to find ways to help those who are deficient. There must be a more positive
approach. His knowing that a principal is more of a facilitator than a dictator
would have improved my performance. It makes you feel like you are a team and
like the principal is with you and not against you. Putting the fear of God in one
does not improve performance. I can respect a principal who is equitable and fair.

It is better than someone who is verbal abusive.

Molly expressed thoughts of avoidance and defending what is right. She also discussed the importance of administrators having a working philosophy as an instructional leader.

I worked hard to be a better teacher because my principal expected me to. The interpersonal communication skills that hinder my performance are disrespect and written notes rather than face-to-face communication. The principal does not have time for me, if I come and say "I need to talk to you about something." I understand their jobs are intensely diverse. A principal should be able to make him or herself available in a reasonable amount of time. It holds you back. You are sitting on hold until the issue is dealt with. Having a philosophy to build and value me as a teacher motivated me to give my all. Give time to teachers when it is needed and a positive respect and a valuing of them. Without teachers principals will not have a job. They need teachers to supervise. Even if there is a teacher who is not doing so good of a job, she has something going or she would not be in the classroom to start with. Positive respect carries a long way and a ton of weight. Give lots of encouragement. Most principals say, "I'm the principal and I run this show." That is not true, because the secretaries run the show. Principals are here to help us as teachers do our jobs. Anything else is a hindrance. How a principal interacts with a teacher gives that teacher the motivation to perform in that classroom. Despite of all the challenges that a classroom may bring, the principal really influences the teacher's attitude toward self, students, and the school itself. The teacher knows that he or she is not alone on the playing field, and those who are the on field have each other's backs.

Interlude #6

As I remember good times and bad times as a teacher, the profession is very rewarding. I have no regrets here. I am responsible for the education of my students no matter what problems I may be having with my principals. I offer no excuses for my behavior, but I must look at what I let myself become because of maltreatment from my former principal. Through all the turmoil, I did teach. It was not with the joy and enthusiasm that I had experienced. If a child did not understand the first time, he or she had to get it the best way they could after that. I did not put forth a strong effort to teach. I became cold and bitter to anything positive concerning this particular school. In my heart, I did not care if the school met AYP (Annual Yearly Progress). I did not meet on weekends to tutor students in an effort help them pass the Criterion Reference Competency Test (CRCT). I would not work more than my contract hours stated. I began to miss days out of school. After all, I was invisible to the principal. If she did not think I could do the job, then I was not up to doing the job. I am so glad that there were colleagues who had experienced this same episode. They came to me and told me to rethink what I was doing. It really did not matter what a principal said or did, I needed to realize who I am and what I am capable of doing in the lives of children. My confidence is not found in what a person says but it is found within me. I became so ashamed of my attitude toward my students and my school. The joy of teaching was missed so much. I did not experience all the enthusiasm for teaching that year, but it did return later on as time passed. Regretfully, my students did not get my best teaching that entire year. There were four students who did not pass the CRCT. They were capable with proper coaching. I let them down. It was the first year that all of my students did not

pass the CRCT. I have matured in the teaching profession. I realized now that it is not about me but all about the students. I have found the confidence to retire in this profession. My principal should have conducted herself in a more responsible manner by employing appropriate interpersonal communication skills. I too must respond using good interpersonal communications skills. Instead of retaliating, I must respond in a way that improves the principal-teacher relationship. There is an old saying, "It takes two." Sometimes it may need to take whoever is willing to give and not take. Teachers can respond responsibly to maltreatment of principals. Principals must accept their responsibility toward the trust, respect, and care of teachers. If a principal develops the teaching skills of a teacher, he or she has enhanced the learning of students. If a teacher finds trust, confidence, and honesty in his or her principal, the principal has found a committed teacher.

Summary

The method employed in this research project examined teachers' perception of their principals' interpersonal communication skills. Not only were the perceptions of others shared but I also shared my personal experiences allowing self to become an active participant in this research project. The participants were not identified by demographic information. There were four females and one male. They all had advanced degrees with a minimum of three years experience.

Qualitative data for this research were collected through interactive interviews. An experienced panel of teachers from the Georgia Southern University Doctorate program in Educational Administration devised the interview questions. The group was considered experienced because of knowledge and years of practice in the field of education. After

approval for Georgia Southern University IRB, random sampling was used in selecting

participants for this research. There were 35 schools: 13 elementary schools, 11 middle

schools, and 11 high schools. Interviews were conducted, audio-recorded, and

transcribed by using IBM Via Voice. Participants were allowed to review all

transcriptions for accuracy. To maintain the confidentiality of participants, no interviews

were conducted on school campuses. Names in this research study were not revealed.

Recurring themes and patterns, along with responses to the interview questions, were

categorized. The significant findings were presented in text selections from the

participants, and I voiced my experiences through interludes. The following gives a

description of the findings:

The participants consistently identified face-to-face communication as the most valuable

interpersonal communication skill among principals.

Principals easily articulated goals and missions of the school, and face-to-face

interactions were most difficult for principals.

Communication styles of writing and speaking, as well as verbal communication affect

teacher performance as well as verbal communication.

The use of blanket statements is an ineffective interpersonal communication skill. Written

communication is left up to the interpretation of the reader and can set the tone for

positive or negative interactions.

Attitudes, ideas, and behaviors of the principals do affect the performance of teachers.

When principals yelled, screamed, slammed books, and used abusive language, teachers

did not do their best teaching.

Principals who use a collaborative style of leadership experienced teachers who respected and honored them as instructional leaders.

When principals valued their teachers through positive interaction, teachers were willing to give more than 100% effort.

Teachers felt that principals did not value them when firsthand feedback did not take place.

Poor interpersonal communication skills of principals caused depression, emotional stress, indecisiveness, feelings of incompetence, compounded thoughts of suicide, search for a new school, and little effort in work.

Good or poor interpersonal communications skills do affect teacher performance.

The teachers trusted their principals when the principals trusted them to make good decisions, supported their decisions, and cared about their families and personal beings.

The teachers behaved toward the principal based on their perception of the principal. If they thought the principal valued them, it reflected in their efforts. If they thought otherwise, their attitudes and work efforts declined.

 In Chapter 5, a discussion of the significance and implications of the findings as well as recommendations for further research were presented.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine Georgia teachers' perceptions of principals' interpersonal communication skills as they relate to teacher performance. The qualitative method of research was autoethnography. These research techniques allowed me to become an active participant. I was an active participant in the sense that I shared my personal experiences. During the interview sessions, I was careful not to influence the responses of the participants. Data from interview questions were analyzed and important themes and patterns wererevealed concerning teachers' perception of principals' interpersonal communication skills. A discussion of the findings was presented in Chapter 5.

Summary

Communication skills, especially in the area of interpersonal communication are a necessity for principals and for anyone who aspires to be a principal. Principals have the responsibility of supervising teachers, which involves good interpersonal communication skills. How the principal applies these skills may very well determine a teacher's performance.

Much emphasis has been placed on raising test scores through teacher professional development, but little attention has been placed on the principal's interpersonal communication skills as having a direct impact on a teacher's performance. In order to give attention to this concern, a qualitative including autoethnography research design was conducted to address this concern. It is important to understand the role that these skills play since teacher performance is directly related to student

achievement and success. The overarching question of this study is this: what role do interpersonal communication skills of the principal play in teacher performance? In addition, the following subquestions guided the research:

1. Which interpersonal communication skills of principals do teachers believe impact teacher performance in the school setting?

2. How does the teacher's perception of their principal affect teacher performance?

Teachers from northeast Georgia were randomly chosen as participants after the researcher received IRB approval. Altogether, there were 13 elementary schools, 10 middle schools, and 10 high schools. Only five schools were included in this study: two high schools, two middle schools, and one elementary school. Using an interactive interview technique, five teacher participants were asked questions in an effort to elicit teachers' perceptions of principals' interpersonal communication skills as they relate to teacher performance.

The following steps were used to analyze the data:

- The researcher organized data by using index cards, file folders. The index cards were used for notetaking during interviews.

- The researcher documented reoccurring themes that she thought were major ideas of interests by participants. These were filed into small file folders with a theme written on them. This allowed the data to be broken down into smaller manageable units.

- The researcher continued to revisit audiotapes, notes, words and stories of the participants.

- Other themes were added as some were deleted from the small files.

- The researcher's own knowledge and perceptions allowed her to identify the ideas in the data.

- The researcher kept records of revelations. A recording strategy of keeping memos was employed.

- The researcher spoke into a digital recorder to guard thoughts and interpretations of the data.

- The recordings were revisited many times in order to gain understanding of the data. As the recordings, stories, and small file folders were revisited, it was then that themes were clearly revealed.

- The themes from the data were: verbal/face-to-face, written communication, feedback, trust, support, care, respect, and worth.

- After all information had been written on index cards and transferred to small file folders.

Discussion of Research Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine Georgia teachers' perceptions of principals' interpersonal communication skills and to understand the role these skills played in teacher performance. The qualitative data gave much insight into teachers' perception of principals' interpersonal communication skills. In addition, the data provided valuable information regarding impact of good and bad interpersonal communication skills of principals; benefits of good interpersonal communication skills of principals; and identified which interpersonal communication skills of principals were most effective in boosting teacher performance.

I began reading through the data as an effort to unfold the findings and make sense of them. It seemed at first that the findings were so basic, and consistent with the literature. There had to be more. I began to ponder deeper into what I had learned about the participants, about myself, and about shared experiences. First, it was our own personal account of what we experienced. Secondly, we ventured into a past that reminded us of feelings of pain and joy by being transparent through this research study. Finally, we reflected within and found strength to be a beacon in our world of education. For it is through our own experiences, good or bad that we have been empowered to be greater than good.

Research Subquestion #1

Which interpersonal communication skills of principals do teachers believe impact teacher performance in the school setting?

The interaction through face-to-face communication presented itself to be the number one expression of effective or ineffective communication in a variety of scenarios. In several scenarios, principals used abusive language, yelling, screaming, slamming of books, put-downs, and avoiding teachers. Keashly (1998) refers to this treatment as emotional abuse. Keashly further states that this kind of principal behavior produces a decrease in work effort and an increase in absenteeism not to mention any commitment on the part of the teacher. These were key findings in this study.

Another scenario revealed that one principal had a playful sarcastic nature, very practical verbal skills, and interacted with a positive approach when interacting with the teacher. Written communication was considered to have the same effect as verbal face-to-face

communication. There were other times when the principal did not give feedback concerning teacher evaluation and performance or did not offer help.

According to data findings, principals articulated well the missions and goals of their school. The teachers saw this interpersonal communication skill of their principals as strength. There was a consensus among the participants that the major interpersonal communication skill of the principal that impacted teacher performance was verbal communication between principal and teacher. First, principals used blanket statements in faculty meetings to deal with a person or an issue. Consensus was that this was a waste of teacher time and somewhat offensive. They would rather that the principal use his or her interpersonal communications skills by going directly to the offender to resolve any problems. An interesting finding was that teachers felt that their principals were good communicators when they did not yell, scream, or slam things. On the contrary, those who did the latter were considered poor communicators and were described as abusive. One teacher described her principal as monstrous with abusive language. She considered him monstrous, because she feared him and did not want to experience the lashing of his tongue. This was described as a norm for her principal. In other words, her principal used fear to motivate teacher performance.

An even more interesting finding was that good principal verbal skills were identified as the use of words that are well chosen and an opportunity for the teacher to respond. Findings showed that principals knew what was needed to get the job done, but needed to use good verbal skills as a strategy to get the job done. As one teacher said about her principal: "His job is to make sure I can do my job."

Additionally, the data revealed that the hallway was the most inappropriate place where face-to-face communication took place. It was not stated as to why this was the most common place. Teachers were concerned that this was another interpersonal communication weakness that principals demonstrated when dealing with delicate issues. The principals did not take in to account who was watching or listening when a teacher concern arose. This offered students and others an open door to matters that did not concern them. Inappropriate places to interact often brought about embarrassment and shame for the teacher and a poor reflection on the principal. One teacher expressed that her principal "blasted her out" in the hallway on more than one occasion. She described it as an attack and compared her principal to a "bulldozer." On the other hand, she expressed that her principal was sarcastic in a playful manner in the hallway and that was great. The hallway was appropriate in some scenarios and inappropriate in others.

Another interpersonal communication skill of the principals identified by participants that impacted teacher performance in the school setting was that of written communication. They all agreed that in written communication, many administrators' messages were direct and left question as to their meanings. Some messages could have been misinterpreted. The incident of the recess and playground and the incident of the student misbehaving in the classroom were prime examples from the data. These two incidents brought me back to the literature concerning communicator's style. Communicator's style considers of what, and how, things are said or written for that matter (Coeling & Cukr, 2000). Some types of communicating styles are dominant, contentious, and attentive. Dominant communication is characterized by speaking strongly in a take-charge manner. Contentious is communication that is argumentative and quick to challenge. Attentive is very careful and empathetic

communication. In these incidents, the teachers felt a need to challenge the principal, because the tone of the written reprimand was considered contentious.

Data reveal that written communication was just as important as verbal communication, which warrants careful choices of words and tone. Written communication brought with it reprimands and encouragement. Email was a common way that principals communicate with teachers. It was also a time saver and to the point. Nevertheless, some principals still used it as a means to make blanket statements. The teachers noted the style of written communication and used it to determine the tone and heart of the principal. One teacher stated that written communication by her principal was not practiced, because it would be a way to trace his insensitivity and abusive language.

Moreover, feedback from principals was another concern that teachers expressed as having an impact on their performance. I found this to be an interesting finding, because most of the participants were not actually evaluated by their principals. This may have been the norm in middle and high schools. Teachers wanted very much to be evaluated by their principals. Data revealed that principals spent very little time if any in the classrooms, and they had to rely on the testimony of the assistant principals in making yearly evaluations. This practice of not evaluating teachers is contrary to the literature concerning effective principals. Edmonds (1979a; 1979b; 1981) stresses that the effective leadership of the principal is characterized by substantial attention to the quality of instruction. As an instructional leader, the principal must position himself or herself to improve the performance of teachers. When feedback was given, one teacher said it was not reliable because it was not firsthand evaluation. This means that the principal gave feedback on the testimony of the assistant principals. The teachers did not value the words of the principal

since he did not evaluate them. When the principal did not come in himself/herself to make an evaluation, teachers believe that the principal did not value or respect them.

Finally, support, care and trust of teachers were expressed as an interpersonal communication skill that impacted teacher performance. One teacher shared how her principal was concerned about her personal being and family. Her principal recognized that teachers must be cared for like any other asset. The care and support of the teacher was the survival of the school. Still, another teacher said her principal would make it a point to inquire about the health of his teachers. He had read something about burnout in an education magazine, and he was concerned about his teachers' burnout. If the teachers were experiencing burnout and poor health, it would mean the death of the school. He gave each teacher a membership to the gym. Support and trust were to be considered as well. Teachers wanted to be trusted and supported in making decisions about their classrooms. They wanted to be trusted as someone who could make decisions about teaching and learning.

<div align="center">Research Subquestion #2</div>

H*ow do the teachers' perceptions of their principals affect teacher performance?*

According to the literature, perception plays a vital role in interpersonal relationships. The data are consistent with this concept. Principals influence behaviors, attitudes and ideas of those who work under their supervision.   Principals must earn such credibility as being a trustworthy person, a strong leader, an expert in the field, and respect of subordinates (Gaziel, 2003).

The teachers' perception of their principals affected their performance in a variety of ways. Data findings showed that those who saw their principals as good communicators, respectful, polite, hard working, very cordial, and sources of support had a positive

perception of their principal. They gave more than 100% in work efforts. One participant saw her principal as a source of wisdom and encouragement and gave this as a reason to work harder even though the students were making low grades. This participant felt confidence in himself as a professional, because his principal thought well of him also. Another participant said she would go beyond duty for her principal, because she had seen in him a caring heart when he was concerned about her family. This is consistent with the literature in that perception is derived from early experiences or observation. Positive experiences promote incentives for teachers to improve their performance.

Another interesting finding from the data was that those teachers who perceived their principals as being insensitive, non-supportive, exhibiting poor interpersonal communication skills, and possessing an overall negative perception of their principals were experiencing low self-esteem, job dissatisfaction, and avoided contact with the principal.

The most interesting findings from the data were not so much how they perceived their principals that affected their performance but, instead, how their principals perceived them as teachers. For example, one participant explained that she knew that her principal saw her as an irritant. When he saw her in the hallway, he would avoid talking to her but would talk to other teachers. The principal's avoidance of her influenced the attitude and behavior of the teacher. She stated that she did not do her best teaching. They did not have a good working relationship. She resolved that since her principal did not take the time to assess her work, then she was not valued. Here the principal delivered a message of fear not of comfort.

Depression, difficulty to function in the classroom, mediocre teaching, and change of attitude toward school goals were all associated with teachers who had poor perceptions of their principals. Teachers' perceptions of their principals affected teacher performance. The

literature revealed that teachers will almost certainly behave towards the principal in the way they perceive the principal (Pashiardis, 2001).

Segrin and Flora (2000) stated in chapter two page thirty-four that self-problems such as depression and low self-esteem are the results of interpersonal problems and interpersonal communication.

The profound effect of fear on a teacher's performance has lasting effects. Halawah (2005) argues that subordinates do not fear the effective principal; they respect and trust their principals. One participant reported that the principal's strategy was to put the fear of God in the teachers. Her fear of the principal was greater than the fear of making a mistake. She reported that she could not do her job, because she was too emotional. There were times when she left school early, because she was too torn inside. This she says stole time from her students. She would have episodes of emotional crying. The tongue-lashing gave her a poor perception of her principal and his "putdowns" caused her to look at herself in a negative way. She became indecisive and anxious concerning her program. She detached herself from students and colleagues as a result of this abusive treatment. She reported that she used this situation as a learning experience and this abusive treatment made her strong in the end. She also reported that she began to look at her job in a different way.

The data showed that teachers' efforts were influenced by their principals' interpersonal communication skills. One participant reported that she was not motivated to extend herself. In other words, she was just going to do the minimum requirement of her job. She resolved that since there was not an appreciation of her as a professional, she would not work herself to death. She said, "I would not give 100% to my class." She also reported that medication got her through classes.

Another finding that the data revealed was that teachers performed better when their principals' interpersonal communication skills were good. One teacher reported that because of her principal's high expectation, she became a better teacher. Whenever the principal had time for her, he valued and respected her as a teacher. She also reported that her principal did not have a "boss mentality." He was a team player and a colleague. In her reflection, this participant stated that principals do influence a teacher's attitude toward self, the school, and the student.

Overarching Research Question

What role do interpersonal communication skills of the principal play in teacher performance?

From the analysis of the qualitative data, I found that the principals' interpersonal communication skills played a pivotal role in the teachers' performance. It was very evident that teaches wanted very much to have a good working relationship with their principals and they wanted to do their best teaching for their students. That relationship depended much on how the principal demonstrated his or her interpersonal communication skills.

The participants identified verbal/face-to-face, written communication, feedback, sensitivity, care, support, and trust as interpersonal communications skills of their principals that they believed had an impact on their performance. It was not a surprise to me that face-to-face communication was the most common way that the principals interacted with their teachers. This was consistent with the literature in that 80% of a principal's time is engaged in interpersonal communications such as face-to-face (Hall, 2002).

The participants spoke emotionally concerning verbal abuse, poor discretion in where to reprimand, no feedback, and avoidance to interact. This created a poor climate that was not

conducive for teaching. Halawah (2005) maintains that a positive climate involves good interpersonal communication skills. This contributed to teachers not being motivated to do more in the classroom. Once the teacher's attitude toward the principal was tainted, classroom performance suffered. All participants wanted to be valued and respected by their principals. These teachers who experienced a poor working relationships with their principals sought other school systems for employment. They found it very difficult to function in the classroom after having bouts of confrontation with their principals. Data also revealed that a teacher felt a sense of guilt after learning that a couple of her students failed the CRCT because she did not give more of herself.

Whatever the perception that the participants had concerning their principals, good or poor, it affected their performance. If teachers perceived that the principal was supportive, caring, genuine, trusting, attentive, and respectful, this motivated the teacher to excel in the classroom. They also experienced increased self-esteem. The teachers were able to be creative and to do their best teaching. On the other hand, if teachers perceived that principals were non-supportive, verbally abusive, contrary, disrespectful, and not trustworthy, the teachers were not supportive of school goals, gave little effort in the classroom, and sought to leave their school. There were feelings of incompetence; therefore, performance in the classroom was not at its best.

<div align="center">Analysis of Research Findings</div>

The findings showed that principals' interpersonal communication skills did have an impact on teacher performance. From the interviews, all of the participants were consistent in identifying interpersonal communications skills of their principal that impacted teacher performance. They identified face-to-face communication, written and verbal, support and

caring, and trust and support. Listening attentively and avoidance were also mentioned. The findings were very clear to point that the impact on teacher performance depended much on how principals demonstrated their interpersonal communication skills as instructional leaders.

One may think that the places where interpersonal communications skills take place are of little importance. It appeared that most of the participants identified the hallway as being the most common place to interact without regards to positive or negative interaction. Most teachers did not like the hallway as a place for reprimand.

The teachers identified common practices of how principals interacted with their teachers. Face-to face communication was the most common factor. Teachers wanted that type of interaction. Written communicating saved time, but it was not the preferred. Teachers all agreed there was a genuine need to interact with their principals face-to-face at some point in the principal-teacher dyad.

The data showed both sides of the coin concerning teaching performance: principals who demonstrated good interpersonal communication skills and principals who demonstrated poor interpersonal communication skills. Those principals who were perceived as good communicators using the interpersonal communication skills identified by the teacher participants, experienced teachers at their best. On the contrary, principals who were perceived as poor communicators experienced teachers at their worse.

In conclusion, attitudes and productivity of teachers were certainly affected by the principals' interpersonal communication skills. Based on how those skills were communicated by the principals, the teachers' responses were manifested in their performance as professionals. Teachers expressed feelings of grandeur, giving 100% of

themselves, experienced high self-esteem, and felt apart of the team when their principals respected them and valued them. They all agreed that they did their best teaching. When principals did not demonstrate good interpersonal communication skills, teachers expressed feelings of poor self-esteem, victims of verbal abuse, and feelings of incompetency.

In review of the literature, the leader who demonstrated a collaborative leadership style (Slater, 2005) was more of a facilitator who trusted the teachers to make good decisions and their decisions were supported. Teachers expressed this as a concern when the principal did not trust their expertise. In the study, the teachers needed the support and approval of the principal. Principals are described as finding it difficult to relinquish control when building a collaborative climate in the school Blasé & Blasé, 2001). The transformational leadership style can be attributed to those principals in the study who motivated, valued, empowered, trusted, and respected their teachers (Burns, 1978). They found that their teachers were exceeding contract efforts to make a difference in reaching the goals and mission of the school.

Foster's (2004) research findings are consistent with findings in this study that leadership is vital in building relationships and working collaboratively. Interpersonal communication skills of the principals as identified by the teachers are needed to build a collaborative culture.

<div align="center">Implications</div>

Based on the findings of this study, there are implications for principals, policy-makers, school districts, and classroom teachers. They are in a position to make a change and implement change.

Principals are considered the instructional leaders of the schools. It goes without

saying the principal is that source that has an impact on the direction of the school as well as individuals that trust his or her supervision. With that, goes a great responsibility to get the job done in a respectful and a professional manner. The implication here is that principals need to become aware of the emotions of others and how he or she provokes those emotions. Another implication for principals is that he or she must constantly interact with teachers as a team player not as a boss. Finally, principals must be reminded that a leader builds, not tears down: inspires, not discourages: offers help, not criticism: and offers hope, not despair.

This study has shown that teachers' performance is being influenced by the interpersonal communications skills of their principals. All schools are required to meet the expectations of No Child Left Behind Act by 2014. The implications for policy-makers are that funding may be allocated to help principals develop those interpersonal communication skills that they need to impact teachers' performance in a positive way. When teachers are impacted positively, students will be impacted as well.

School districts need to put in place a system of principals' evaluation that includes input from teachers. This may help principals stay abreast on how they are being perceived by their teachers. As a result, they can work on weak areas of interpersonal communication skills.

Teachers are the force in the classroom that promotes success or failure. The job of the teacher is not taken lightly. Teachers need to put in place a support system. This support system is not a mentoring system, yet mentoring is included. Teachers must come together to encourage and to inspire one another when things are looking down and looking up. The life of a teacher has been described as lonely and isolated. It doesn't

have to be when teachers purposely form a power system of encouragement and inspiration.

<div align="center">Recommendations</div>

This study has yielded a wealth of information and yet there is still a greater need to expand this research. Further study could: examine the relationship between personalities of principals and poor or good interpersonal communication skills; examine the role of a principal's age in demonstrating interpersonal communication skills; examine those interpersonal communication skills that improve teacher performance; show the relationship between different genders of principals and their interpersonal communication skills. Future investigations should be designed` to include more participants of a variety of race and gender and to include unlimited geographical areas.

<div align="center">Dissemination</div>

The results of this research will interest diverse audiences. The findings from this study will be offered to investigators through electronic dissertation files. Principals and aspiring principals will find connections to this study as they are challenged with the task of developing, sustaining, and maintaining productive interactive relations in the teacher principal dyad. Moreover, the finding may be reported in faculty meetings, to groups of principals, and to school boards. Educators may find a wealth of information concerning the interpersonal communication behaviors of principals that will aid in efforts to reform and improve the performance of schools. This study offers teachers motivation and encouragement as they continue to remain faithful to the profession and to the children.

This research adds to the educational literature by identifying those interpersonal communication skills that teachers believe have an impact on their performance. By

identifying these interpersonal communication skills that impact teacher performance, school leaders are provided with the knowledge needed to improve the skills necessary for a productive and effective school.

Concluding Thoughts

Many thoughts came to mind as I bring closure to this study. First, those principals who have excelled in demonstrating interpersonal communication skills have experienced a school where teachers were functioning in a climate conducive to teaching and learning. These teachers experienced greater work satisfaction and were open with their principals. They have been empowered to excel because they have been valued and respected by their principals. From this study, we have seen the evidence that teachers will extend themselves beyond expectations when interaction is positive, respectful, and trusting.

Secondly, those principals who had not demonstrated good interpersonal communication skills experienced teachers who chose not to extend themselves beyond expectation. Because of this, the classroom setting became a place where the best teaching did not take place. Principals who demonstrated poor interpersonal communication skills have demonstrated poor leadership skills. These principals were more like bosses and not team players. When leadership interacted in positive ways, teachers were inspired to move beyond mediocre work. Most teachers were willing to move beyond mediocrity.

Additionally, principals affected teacher performance in one way or another regardless of their ability to demonstrate interpersonal communication skills effectively. All principals have the potential to affect the quality of work, attitudes, and behavior of

teachers, thus, requiring school leaders to accept and perform such a responsibility.

Finally, good interpersonal communications skills of principals are essential in meeting school goals. The study brought a greater awareness of the importance of interpersonal communication skills in the principal-teacher dyad. With this in mind, principals must understand that developing and demonstrating good interpersonal communication skills in day-to-day activities is crucial in creating an effective school. School excellency is conferred to those principals who have demonstrated effective interpersonal communication skills that improve teacher performance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL CORRESPONDENCE

Georgia Southern University
Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs
Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Phone: 912-681-5465		Veazey Hall 2021
		P.O. Box 8005
Fax: 912 681 0719	Ovrsight@GeorgiaSouthern.edu	Statesboro, GA 30460

To: Nouma Vanessa Kambeya
60 Wisteria Circle
Covington, GA-30016

CC: Dr. Linda Arthur
P.O. Box-8131

From: Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees
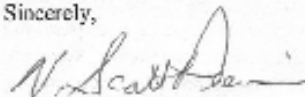(IACUC/IBC/IRB)

Date: October 19, 2007

Subject: Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

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After a review of your proposed research project numbered: **H08051**, and titled **"Georgia Teacher's Perceptions of Principals' Interpersonal Communication Skills as They Relate to Teacher Performance"**, it appears that (1) the research subjects are at minimal risk, (2) appropriate safeguards are planned, and (3) the research activities involve only procedures which are allowable.

Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that the Institutional Review Board has approved your proposed research.

This IRB approval is in effect for one year from the date of this letter. If at the end of that time, there have been no changes to the research protocol; you may request an extension of the approval period for an additional year. In the interim, please provide the IRB with any information concerning any significant adverse event, **whether or not it is believed to be related to the study**, within five working days of the event. In addition, if a change or modification of the approved methodology becomes necessary, you must notify the IRB Coordinator **prior to** initiating any such changes or modifications. At that time, an amended application for IRB approval may be submitted. Upon completion of your data collection, you are required to complete a *Research Study Termination* form to notify the IRB Coordinator, so your file may be closed.

Sincerely,

N. Scott Pierce
Director of Research Services and Sponsored Programs

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

GEORGIA
SOUTHERN
UNIVERSITY

Norma V. Kambeya
P. O. Box 5874
Greenville, South Carolina 29606

Dear Teacher Participant;

My name is Norma V. Kambeya, and I am a doctoral student enrolled at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, Georgia. My dissertation is entitled Georgia Teachers' Perceptions of Principals' Interpersonal Communication Skills as They Relate to Teacher Performance. **Interpersonal communication in the context of this study is defined as an interaction between two people such as the teacher principal dyad. The interaction may be feedback from performance evaluations, face-to-face encounters during class visits, oral or written praise, oral or written reprimand, and nonverbal forms of communication such as facial expressions.**

I will be gathering information through one-on-one interviews. Interview questions will be sent in advance as a means to help prepare you for the interview. I am requesting your assistance in gathering this information. The interviews will be audiotaped. You will have an opportunity to review the data for accuracy. Additionally, all participants will have the right to withdraw from this investigation at any time for any reason. Your identity will not be revealed to your principal and your identity will not be revealed in this research. All interviews will not be conducted on school premises. The interview place and time will meet your approval. All information will remain confidential. After all interviews are completed, data will be used for analysis. All data gathered from the study will be included in my published dissertation.

I am interested in learning the role that principals' interpersonal communication skills play in teacher performance. When the study has been completed, it is my desire that it will raise an awareness of the importance that these skills play in reaching organizational goals such as student achievement.

If you agree to participate, you will be requested to sign an Informed Consent Form at the interview. You will be contacted through school email to complete a profile sheet and a schedule of the interview. The interviews should last approximately 45-60 minutes. If you agree to participate, please check the bottom of this letter indicating so. Highlight your desire in and email this letter by clicking reply.

_____Yes, I agree to participate in the research study.
_____No, I am not able to participate in the research study at this time.

If you have any questions or concerns about this proposed research project, please contact me at 404-917-7874 or nvunk434@bellsouth.net. My academic advisor is Dr. Linda Arthur and she may be contacted at larthur@georgiasouthern.edu or 912-681-5307. The Institutional Review Board may be contacted at 912-681-5465 for any other concerns. I would like to thank you in advance for your assistance in this study. I believe the results of this study will be valuable for all educational leaders in Georgia.

Sincerely,

Norma V. Kambeya

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC SUSRVEY

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

The information gathered in this survey is confidential and will be used only for the purpose of data analysis for this doctoral research project at Georgia Southern University. Please complete each item.

Name_____   School_____

Grade/Department_____

School Location   Urban___   Rural___   Suburban_____

Position/Title_____

Subject Area Taught_____

Years of Experience_____

Area(s) of Certification_____

Education: Bachelor_____   Masters_____   Specialist_____   Doctorate____

Sex: Male____   Female_____

Race: Black_____   White_____   Asian_____ -Native American_____   Other_____

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF LEADERSHIP, TECHNOLOGY, AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Dear Participant:

You are invited to participate in a study conducted as part of my requirement for my doctoral degree at Georgia Southern University. The title of the study is Georgia Teachers' Perceptions of Principals' Interpersonal Communication Skills as They Relate to Teacher Performance. The purpose of this study is to investigate answers to three research questions: Which interpersonal communication skills of principals do principals believe impact teacher performance in the school setting? How does teachers' perception of their principals affect teacher performance? In what ways do interpersonal communication skills of principals affect teacher performance?

Each participant will be contacted through school email. The perspective participant may accept or decline to participate. There will be one-on-one interviews conducted approximately for 45-60 minutes. There will be no compensation for completing interviews. All interviews will be audiotaped for data analysis. Audio equipment will be placed in plain view for all participants to see.

This study poses minimal risks or discomfort to participants. For example, talking to someone about your administrators to someone you do no know. The researcher has taken strong measures to keep your identity and information shared confidential. For the sake of confidentiality, **no interviews will be conducted on school sites** Names, social security and employee identification numbers will not be used. All participants are kept in total confidentiality. There have been limited research studies that identify which skill or skills of interpersonal communication are most effective and most essential in promoting teacher performance. This study allows you as a participant to play a vital role in gathering information that may improve the principal-teacher dyad relationship in order to meet organizational goals. Knowledge gained from the study may aid in more practical and tangible means of achieving success for all students as mandated by NCLB.

The study is voluntary and at any time during the study, you are free to withdraw your participation. If you decide to withdraw **from** the study, use the information provided below to inform the researcher. There will not be a penalty if you choose to withdraw for any reason. There will not be any compensation for participating in the one-one-one interviews.

All participants must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this research study. If you consent to participate in this research study and to the terms above, please sign your name and indicate the date below. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your records.

Thank you very much for your valuable input in this study.

Title of Project: Georgia Teachers' Perceptions of Principals' Interpersonal Communication Skills as They Relate to Teacher Performance.

Principal Investigator: Vanessa Kambeya, P. O. Box 5874, Greenville, South Carolina 29606, 404-917-7874, nvank434@bellsouth.net

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Linda Arthur, P. O. Box 08131, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia, 30460, 912-681-0697, larthur@georgiasouthern.edu

_____   _____
Participant Signature   Date

I, the undersigned, verify that the above informed consent procedure has been followed.

_____   _____
Investigator Signature   Date

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Interview Questions for Teacher Participants

Please think on these questions and answer truthfully. Take in consideration that your principal does not have to be your current principal but a previous principal as well. Any experiences you have to share is most useful. Thank you for your participation.

1. How would you describe your principal in terms of interpersonal communication skills? Example: Does your principal yell, scream or shout? Does your principal have a pleasant and inviting tone of voice? Is your principal a good or poor communicator? (Explain all answers)

2. How would you describe your working relationship with your principal?

3. How does your principal normally communicate with you?

4. Describe a time (if any) when your principal was or was not sensitive to you as a professional. Describe your feelings and response.

5. Which interpersonal communication skills of your principal have hindered or improved your performance as a teacher?

6. What is your perception of how your principal views your performance?

7. How does that perception affect your performance as a teacher?

8. Describe how your principal's interpersonal communication skills have or have not impacted your performance.

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW CONFRIMATION LETTER

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Date_____

Dear Participant:

This letter is confirming the interview time and date that has been scheduled. Your interview has been set for _____ day of the _____ month of 2007. No interviews will take place on school campus. Therefore, the interview will take place at _____ at _____ P.M. If there are any changes, please contact me by email nvank434@bellsouth or by phone at 404-917-7874. Thank you again for participating in this very important study.

In education,

Norma V. Kambeya

APPENDIX G

INTERVEIW SCHEDULE LETTER

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Date

Dear participant;

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this very important study. As said before, no interviews will take place on school campus. Interviews must be at your convenience. Be reminded as well that the interviews will be approximately 45-60 minutes. Please fill out the form below and return it using the self-addressed stamped envelope for your convenience. Please insert three choices. Again, thank you for your valuable time.

In education,

Norma V. Kambeya

Choice	Time	Place