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A Mixed-Methods Study of How Middle School Principals Build Trust with Staff using Weisman's Five Domains of Trust Model

Wendy Ryerson
Brandman University, wandlpringles11@gmail.com

A Mixed-methods Study of How Middle School Principals Build Trust with Staff using

Weisman's Five Domains of Trust Model

A Dissertation by

Wendy Renee' Ryerson

Brandman University

Irvine, California

School of Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Committee in charge:

Douglas DeVore, EdD, Committee Chair

Jonathan Greenberg, EdD
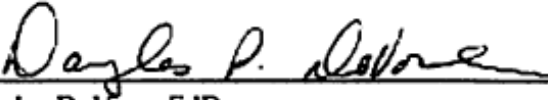
Lisa Simon, EdD

BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY
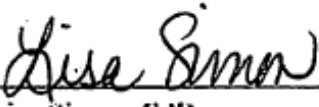
Chapman University System

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

The dissertation of Wendy Renee' Ryerson is approved.

_____, Dissertation Chair
Douglas DeVore, EdD

_____, Committee Member
Jonathan Greenberg, EdD

_____, Committee Member
Lisa Simon, EdD

_____, Associate Dean
Patricia Clark-White, EdD

March 2019

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ABSTRACT

A Mixed-methods Study of How Middle School Principals Build Trust with Staff using
Weisman's Five Domains of Trust Model

by Wendy Renee' Ryerson

Purpose. The purpose of this explanatory mixed-methods study was to identify and
describe how middle school principals established trust with teachers using Weisman's
(2010) five domains of trust: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency
(5Cs). In addition, it was the purpose of this study to determine middle school principals'
perceived degree of importance of the 5Cs for building trust.

Methodology. This explanatory mixed-methods study used surveys and face-to-face
interviews with 12 middle school principals to gather data regarding the approaches used
to build trust. The survey assessed the degree of importance of the 5Cs for building trust,
whereas the interviews gathered data regarding strategies and behaviors they used to
build trust within the 5C domains.

Findings. The study revealed middle school principals perceived listening, meeting staff
needs, maintaining an open-door policy, connecting on a personal level, maintaining
regular communication, developing shared values, referencing vision and mission
statements, using a shared leadership approach, analyzing data together, offering rewards,
demonstrating transparency, keeping staff informed, and providing and receiving
feedback are strategies perceived as important to build trust with staff.

Conclusions. The study supported the conclusion that middle school principals build
trust and develop a positive school culture when they engage in active listening, have an
open-door policy, communicate regularly, and keep their staff informed. Overall, it was

concluded the 5C are important for building trust in middle schools, although

communication was the factor that tied the 5Cs together and was found relevant to each

domain.

Recommendations. Further research is suggested for the replication of the study from

the perspective of the school staff to create a deeper understanding of how principals

build trust and what strategies staff view as most important. In addition, this study was

delimited to southern California, so it is recommended the study be replicated in other

states.

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PREFACE

Following discussions regarding the opportunity to study principal trust with various populations, six doctoral students in collaboration with faculty researchers developed a common interest in investigating how principals establish trust with staff. This resulted in a thematic study conducted by a research team of six doctoral students. This mixed-methods study was designed with a focus on five domains of trust developed by The Values Institute: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency (5Cs); this framework was selected to describe leadership practices principals used to establish trust with staff. This study sought to determine principals' perceived degree of importance of the 5Cs. Principals were selected from various public K-12 school districts in California to examine trust leadership strategies site leaders used.

Each researcher first administered a survey to 12 principals to determine the perceived degree of importance for building trust using the 5Cs; the researchers then interviewed the same principals who were surveyed to determine what leadership strategies helped them to establish trust with teachers. To ensure thematic consistency and reliability, the team co-created the purpose statement, research questions, definitions, interview questions, survey instrument, and study procedures.

Throughout the study, the term *peer researchers* was used to refer to the other researchers who conducted this thematic study. The peer researchers studied principal trust with the following populations: Amy Brower, elementary school principals in Apple Valley; Danielle Clark, high school principals in San Diego and Orange County; Diana Escalante, elementary school principals in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties; and Iyuanna Pease, high school principals in Sacramento.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Without trust we don't truly collaborate; we merely coordinate or, at best, cooperate. It is trust that transforms a group of people into a team.

Stephen M.R. Covey

The United States of America is going through a series of changes economically, technologically, organizationally, and educationally. During times of great change, trust is a critical component (Covey, 2008; Horsager, 2009; White, Harvey, & Fox, 2016). Trust permeates all aspects of people's lives, from personal relationships to critical business decisions; as Covey (2006) explained, the one thing that could either build up or destroy organizations, teams, nations, or governments, was trust. In addition, the speed of the development of trust, especially during times of change, required leaders to foster high levels of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

One economic challenge currently facing the country related to the unemployment rate. Over the last three years, the unemployment rate was reduced, but remains at 4.1%, which equated to approximately 6.7 million people out of work (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). Low trust in organizations hinders growth, whereas having a high level of trust between CEOs and employees yields a successful business (Covey, 2006; Zak, 2017). Covey (2006) stated, "When trust goes up, the speed goes up and the cost goes down" (p. 13), highlighting the critical role of trust in business and other organizations.

According to Friedman and Mandelbaum (2011) and Weisman (2010), the fusion of technology increased the rate in which people interacted with others. Technology and globalization allowed people to work together across states and countries, meaning people often engaged with others from different cultures who held differing customs and beliefs. Shifts between the 20th and 21st centuries led to drastic changes in organizations,

facilities, and jobs, as well as how people interacted with each other (Friedman & Mandelbaum, 2011; Weisman, 2010). Although the changes in technology and innovation led to everything being produced or developed faster (Weisman, 2010), it also introduced challenges in the workplace resulting from greater diversity among staff, requiring companies to engage in new strategies to develop trust among coworkers from different backgrounds (Covey, 2006). Trust is a necessity in all business fields and pertinent in the education world.

Chief executives for local school districts typically include superintendents and their assistants. A typical school leadership structure in the K-12 environment includes a principal, assistant principal, counselors, department chairs, instructional staff (e.g., content leaders, teachers), and students. Dara Barlin (2016), education consultant, explained trust was critical for management of both schools and districts. The absence of support for educational leaders to create and sustain trust impacted K-12 schools. School progress was stunted from the lack of trust between teachers, principals, and district personnel (Barlin, 2016; Zakrzewski, 2015).

Trust is collapsing in America, especially as the use social media continues to flood the public with the concept of *fake news* (Freidman, 2018; Tencer, 2018). Levels of trust were also declining in business and non-governmental organizations, and only one-third of Americans trusted the current administration (Freidman, 2018). Trust remained top-of-mind in 2016-17 as 28 countries surveyed the perception of trust among social media platforms. Results revealed 21 of the 28 countries showed a decline of trust in social media (Tencer, 2018). Although world levels of trust weakened, record drops were reported in the United States. The results showed 53% used to trust the media; however,

that number dropped to 42%, while 58% of the US population reported not trusting the news, with growing distrust among younger and higher-income Americans (Freidman, 2018). The demise of trustworthiness could be related to fake news, with long reaching effects including the US education system.

Background

Rotter (1967) explained the most pertinent factor of organizations was the eagerness of more than one stakeholder to trust another. In addition, trust related to high expectations that parents, employees, employers, and stakeholders could be relied upon (Rotter, 1967). Several theories about trust and leadership were developed in the 1900s. A well-known social psychologist, Morton Deutsch (1957, 1958, 1960), conducted a series of experimental studies on trust behaviors. Deutsch (1958) claimed he was the first to examine trust as the contemporary texts and authors showed no evidence or discussion on the topic. Deutsch's (1960) experiment included terms to help understand the definition of trust, such as confidence, expectations, and predictability. The experiment included a game where half the subjects chose between being trusted or suspicious, and the other half chose between being trustworthy or untrustworthy. Trusting subjects tended to be trustworthy and untrusting subjects tended to be suspicious (Deutsch, 1960). Rotter's (1967) focus on trust was more generalized and defined trust as expectations made by the person or group's words while considering a person's instinctual motives and behaviors.

Theoretical Foundations of Trust

Seminal studies of trust and leadership provided a foundational overview. For this study, a backdrop of trust was offered through various theories, including socio-

cognitive theory of trust, organizational trust theory, transactional and transformational leadership, and the speed of trust framework.

Socio-cognitive theory. The socio-cognitive theory of trust was explained by Castelfranchi and Falcone (2010) as trust-based interactions measured by the relational construction between people and situations. The degree of trust stemmed from a series of cognitive primitives that could be totaled and related to the beliefs and goals the trustor already expected based on prior experiences (Venanzi, Piunti, Falcone, & Castelfranchi, 2011). The beliefs were considered mental ideas the trustee could do that were best and necessary for the relationship. Within socio-cognitive theory, trust was a mental state based upon beliefs, goals, evaluations, and expectations.

Organizational trust theory. An integrative model of organizational trust was developed by Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995). Their theory was derived from a struggle between the definitions of trust and risk in the context of organizations and proposed a model of trust to eliminate organizational problems. This model was based on the willingness to trust and the ability of individuals to influence the larger group. It assumed each member had important experiences in different areas and brought differing perspectives to the group based on those experiences. Additional model components included benevolence, integrity, and levels of risk-taking (Mayer et al., 1995). Under organizational trust theory, the concept of benevolence aligned with socio-cognitive theory in respect to the trustee and a desire to do good.

Transactional leadership theory. Leadership was considered important for encouraging supporters and assembling resources toward fulfilling an organization's mission; it was also vital for organizational innovation, adaptation, and performance

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(Antonakis & House, 2014). The transactional leadership theory proposed that leaders inspired their supporters by trading rewards for services rendered (Bass, 1985; Hoy & Miskel, 2008). In turn, transactional leaders were responsive to followers' interests to identify rewards that would be motivating (Bass, 1985). Managerial in nature, the theory focused on supervision, organization, and group performance. In this quid pro quo theory, managers trusted their employees to perform and employees trusted that they would be appropriately rewarded for their efforts (Hoy & Miskel, 2008).

Transformational leadership theory. In comparison to transactional leadership theory, transformational leadership theory was based on a visionary, charismatic, and developmental outlook (Burns, 1978; House, 1977). Transformational leaders engaged followers based on their ideals, individual needs, and common goals. Bass (1985) explained, "Transformation can be met by increasing the level of awareness of the subordinates, by followers changing self-interests or by subordinates expanding portfolio of needs and wants" (p. 20). This inspirational style of leadership worked on the scaffolding of strong relationships to motivate people, manage the vision, and create even stronger, trust-based relationships. Followers needed to trust leaders had their best interests in mind and everyone was working toward a greater good.

Speed of trust framework. Covey (2006) noted trust changed everything; trust was considered the most important category for the leadership of companies, churches, and homes. The framework used the word confidence to describe the definition of trust and the word suspicion to describe distrust (Covey 2006; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998). The speed of trust directly related to the degree of trust (Covey, 2006). The more trust present between peers and leadership, or between peers, related to

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decreased organizational costs. Conversely, low levels of trust directly related to increased organizational costs. The speed of trust framework revealed to leaders a direct correlation between how quickly trust was built and the economics of the organization (Covey, 2006).

Trust in Education

Recently, educational researchers acknowledged the increased importance of trust within the social structure of schools (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Hoy & Kupersmith, 1985; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999, 2003; Tschannen-Moran, 2001, 2003; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The foundational social structure of trust was necessary for a school to reap the rewards of its environment and serve its constituents. Five facets of trust in education arose from Tschannen-Moran (2004): benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence. To employ the five facets, leaders needed to show a trusting relationship with the five functions of instructional leadership: visioning, modeling coaching, managing, and mediating. In turn, trustworthy leadership formed effective and productive schools as people worked collaboratively toward common goals for students (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Theoretical Framework

During a time of corporate profit and growth, Weisman (2016) reported a diminished sharing of the wealth, and an erosion of personal relationships between leaders and employees. In response, a new definition of trust for organizations was developed into what was called the Pyramid of Trust (Weisman, 2016). The pyramid described five distinct domains of trust referred to as the *5Cs*. Deduced from extensive

years of research regarding personal and corporate trust in business and organizations, the 5Cs were competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection (Weisman, 2016).

Competence. Competence was defined as the ability to perform a task or fulfill a role as expected (Weisman, 2010). Leaders and employees needed to be competent in their specific area of work (Covey 2009; Farnsworth, 2015; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman; 2016; White et al., 2016). Competence led to credibility. Covey (2006) noted trust could not be built among those who lacked credibility, highlighting the importance of competence in building trust.

Consistency. Consistency was defined as a measure of a person's stability or reliability in standing behind their commitments (Blanchard, Olmstead, & Lawrence, 2013; Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman, 2016; White et al., 2016). Covey (2006) explained you could not establish trust without consistency. In terms of education, Tschannen-Moran (2014) indicated a teacher needed dependability from the principal and when the principal was inconsistent, there was less trust.

Concern. Concern was defined as non-business-related reactions to peers or employees regarding respect and care about individuals (Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman, 2016; White et al., 2016). In the business environment, the more concern detected by leaders and peers led to the creation of bonds that developed into loyalty and commitment (Weisman, 2016). In education, this was measured as the most vital component in developing trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). When people showed concern for others, it established a level of support that helped build trust so teachers were more willing to participate to go beyond expectations (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Candor. Candor was defined as communicating information in a precise manner and being truthful despite not wanting to provide such information (Blanchard et al., 2013; Gordon & Giley, 2012; O'Toole & Bennis, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman, 2016; White et al., 2016). When someone was trusted, they were given more information, and the information they shared was more likely to be considered true automatically (Blanchard et al., 2013; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Tschannen-Moran (2014) described how teachers considered principals more trustworthy if they were open and honest when communicating to the staff.

Connection. Connection was defined as how well the employees related to each other (Blanchard et al., 2013; Weisman, 2016; White et al. 2016). Blanchard et al. (2013) provided a deeper definition by using an assessment for connection; the survey asked the person their level of "listening," "effort for praising others, show interest in others," being open, and the level of "working with others" (p. 129). Weisman (2016) explained that connection "is all about creating emotional engagement" (p. 149).

The Role of Trust in Organizations

High levels of trust played a positive role in organizations. Increased trust was related to increased happiness and joy among employees (Covey & Link, 2012). Additional studies found a connection between high levels of trust in an organization and high productivity (Zak, 2017; Zak & Knack, 2001). Covey (2006) also found higher levels of trust correlated with greater levels of performance and increased profits. Trust was also related to the capability of teams to work together, with trust needed among members to work effectively and efficiently (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2001).

Organizational Leadership Theories

Over the years, many studies focused on leadership theories (Williams, 2005). To define key leadership traits, myriad theories were developed throughout history, each containing aspects or characteristics of leadership (Miner, 2002). Six seminal theories were developed between the 1840s and through the 1970s: (1) great man theory, (2) trait leadership theory, (3) behavioral leadership theory, (4) contingency leadership theory, (5) transactional leadership theory, and (6) transformational leadership theory.

Great man theory (1840s). Thomas Carlyle developed great man theory, which prescribed that certain men were born as leaders (Chemers, 1997). The theory posited that leaders were born with intrinsic leadership skills rather than developing such skills. Destined by birth, great men became leaders. Great man theory was later disputed by theorists who believed leaders were a product of environmental and social conditions (Chemers, 1997).

Trait leadership theory (1930s-1940s). Similar to the great man theory, trait leadership theory asserted people were born with leadership qualities (Matthews, Deary, & Whiteman, 2003). The difference in the theory was the focus on specific leadership qualities known as traits. Theorists and researchers focused on the traits of strong leaders. Traits of a good leaders were considered intelligence, creativity, social skills, and responsibility. This theory focused on mental, physical, and social skills, also noting the importance of physique among leaders (Matthews et al., 2003).

Behavioral leadership theory (1940s-1950s). In contrast to great man theory and trait leadership theory, behavioral leadership theory evolved as a new perspective (Cooper, Smith, & Upton, 1994). Rather than focusing on mental, physical, and social

characteristics of leaders, behavioral leadership theory focused on a person's behaviors during different situations. This theory posited that leaders were made rather than born with leadership skills. The theory offered two categories of leadership: (1) autocratic for leaders who were task oriented and (2) democratic for leaders who were people oriented. Autocratic leaders valued deep knowledge about the work and focused on task completion whereas democratic leaders valued teamwork and treated subordinates more like peers (Cooper et al., 1994).

Contingency leadership theory (1960s). Contingency leadership theory focused on situations rather than a single way of leading (Bligh, 2005). Some considered contingency leadership theory an extension of trait leadership theory as traits could be tied to situations where leaders displayed specific leadership qualities (Bligh, 2005). Others felt contingency leadership theory lacked specific methods and connections to organizational leadership (Gill, 2011). Contingency leadership theory was soon replaced as the focus of leadership explored more managerial aspects of leadership in corporations (Gill, 2011).

Transactional leadership (1970s). Transactional leadership theory emerged from organizational roots examining the interactions between leaders and individual employees (Bass, 1998; Burns, 1978). Transactional leadership described an exchange of rewards based on performance, where leaders motivated employees by offering personalized rewards that were meaningful to the individual. The name of the theory stemmed from the quid pro quo nature of getting something, the reward, in exchange for strong performance (Bass, 1998; Burns, 1978).

Transformational leadership theory (1970s). Transformational leadership theory focused on an expansion of transactional leader with greater attention to organizational and group goals (Bass, 1985). Hoy and Miskel (2008) described the theory as the leader taking actions to enact positive change by ensuring followers were informed and assisting to produce high-performance outcomes. Under transformational leadership theory, the leader was considered inspirational and provided a strong foundation for the change (Bass, 1985).

Leadership and Trust in K-12 Education

In the education field, the word trust is often used, but with varying definitions. Also, the concept of trust was not researched in education as it had been in prior business settings. In school settings, trust was defined as "one's willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent" (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 17). Hoy and Miskel's (2008) model of trust also included benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness, but excluded the focus of vulnerability to others. The definition of trust in these settings was similar, providing some consistency in the components comprising trust in the educational environment.

History of principals in K-12 leadership. Initially in America, schools were unstructured in the areas of administration, academics, and attendance requirements. Rousmaniere (2013) explained Colonial and Early Republic societies funded schools, but lacked common standards, curricula, goals, and administrative practices. Furthermore, Rousmaniere (2007) expressed principalship in America was missing both politically and socially before the state school systems were formed. In the early 1800s, the position

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Principal Teacher was identified to correspond to the development of larger schools with teachers for multiple grade levels, moving away from the single schoolhouse that served all students in a community (Kafka, 2009). The position was predominantly occupied by a male who performed instructional, clerical, and administrative duties, which evolved into the principal and then district superintendent positions (Kafka, 2009; Rousmaniere, 2013). It was during the mid-1800s to the early 1900s that urban elementary principals veered away from teaching duties and became leaders of schools (Kafka, 2009; Pierce, 1935; Rousmaniere, 2007, 2013). However, high schools were not developed until the late nineteenth century. By the 1920s, the modern school principal had more managerial responsibilities communicating duties for teachers, students, and the community (Kafka, 2009). In addition, the principal had to inform the superintendent of all the findings, conclusions, and new ideas being proposed to better the school environment. In the 1940s, the school principal continued occupying a managerial position, and in the 1960s and 70s they began to oversee federal programs (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Hallinger, 1992; Kafka, 2009). From early days through today, the principal maintains responsibility as the instructional leader for the school, including mentoring and evaluating teachers (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Hallinger, 1992).

Role of the principal in K-12 leadership. School principals were accountable for leading America's K-12 institutions (Howe, 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). As the lead administrator, the principal was held responsible for the establishing the school culture, promoting student achievement, keeping faculty and students safe, and fostering positive learning environments (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Responsible for myriad tasks, the principal managed multiple relationships among

students, parents, and faculty. Thus, it was important for principals to build trust within their school environments (Howe, 2016; Ogens, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015).

Principals and trust. Ample research is available focusing on the relationship between trust and leadership in education and schools in general. K-12 leadership research concentrated on the principal-teacher relationship (Babaogln, 2016; Battle, 2007; Fox, Gong, & Attoh, 2015; Fromme, 2005; Torres, 2016; Wahnee, 2010). Some studies also examined trust among teachers (Babaogln, 2016; Battle, 2007; Fromme, 2005) and between teachers and students (Battle, 2007; Salazar, 2016). Battle (2007) found that when a teacher was trusted by the principal, they returned that level of trust to colleagues, parents, and the principal. Trust had a positive impact on K-12 schools, as schools with higher levels of trust were shown to be more effective (Battle, 2007).

Principal role in building trusting relationships. Trust was extremely important to school success (Battle, 2007; Dinham 2005; Fox et al., 2015; Salazar, 2016; Wahnee, 2010). Trust created a positive learning culture, which led to greater success and outcomes (Dinham, 2005; Fox et al., 2015). Trust from principals and teachers was greater when the principal and teachers were performing their duties and meeting expectations (Wahnee, 2010), which also related to positive school values, relationships, and student achievement (Battle, 2007; Fox et al., 2015; Wahnee, 2010). Principals can increase trust through engaging in positive social interactions and building relationships both within and outside of the school (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Johnson, Berg, & Donaldson, 2005).

Principal role as a transformational leader. Tschannen-Moran (2003) explained principals and staff must perform greater than the minimum criteria to enact change and function effectively as a school. Principals who engaged in transformational leadership were better at motivating and getting the most from their teachers, often encouraging them to work beyond their job description and give more than expected (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). As a transformational leader, the principal motivated staff by setting a clear vision and focusing on students (Tschannen-Moran, 2003).

Statement of the Research Problem

Principals in the 21st century are often confronted with high levels of pressure to foster a positive school culture (Fox et al., 2015; Habegger, 2008). The challenge is even greater as they are faced with "societal, financial, legal, cultural, and beaurocratic" tensions (Fox et al., 2015, p. 6). Positive school cultures results in increased encouragement from the principal to the teachers, increased engagement with students and parents, and improves educational achievement for students while building strong working relationships (Habegger, 2008; Rhodes, Stevens, & Hemmings, 2011). Building a positive school culture requires trust. Tschannen-Moran (2014) indicated that when principals did not gain trust from the faculty and other stakeholders, they were unable to establish a positive school culture.

Trust was necessary for teachers to feel encouraged by their principals, and when teachers were encouraged, student achivement increased (Rhodes et al., 2011). Trust was important to all stakeholders in a school environment if the outcome desired was functioning productively (Tschannan-Moran, 2014). Trust was considered important for building a positive school culture that provided an environment for increased

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achievement and social emotional development for students (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). In addition, trust was essential in schools; in a high-trust classroom, security, courage, commitment, and relationships were bred (Covey, Covey, Summers, & Hatch, 2014).

Although the importance of trust was clearly established in the literature, the concept of trust was defined differently based on the field and other factors. Even within education, the research describes several different definitions for trust. Relational trust in schools was defined as the relationship between the principal and teacher, the principal or the teacher and student, or the teacher and student; these relationships were based vulnerability, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). In the business world, Weisman (2016) defined trust based on what was referred to as the 5Cs: competence, consistency, concern, candor and connection. Although similar descriptions of trust existed in education, little research examined how trust based on the 5Cs could be built and sustained in schools.

Although research was found on the idea of trust in leadership, trust between principals and teachers, and principal trust with parents in secondary education (Battle, 2007; Dinham 2005; Fox et al., 2015; Salazar, 2016; Wahnee, 2010), little research occured in the middle school environment. Additionally, few studies examined trust in terms of the 5Cs (Weisman, 2010), but instead used other components or descriptors of trust (Rhodes et al., 2011). More specifically, there was no research to date on how principals used the 5Cs to build and sustain trust.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed-methods study was to identify and describe how middle school principals established trust with teachers using the five

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domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency (Weisman, 2010). In addition, it was the purpose of this study to determine middle school principals' perceived degree of importance of the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection for building trust.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of connection?

2. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of concern?

3. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of candor?

4. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of competence?

5. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of consistency?

6. How do middle school principals perceive the degree of importance for the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection for building trust?

Significance of the Problem

The 21st century field of education is undergoing immense change. For example, the implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in California is requiring new assessments, new curriculum, and new ways of teaching (Baumstark-Ford, 2015).

Schools principals are at the helm and largely responsible for overseeing implementation

of large-scale changes. As instructional leaders, principals must develop positive

learning environments to enact change, which requires building trust with the faculty and

staff to manifest high-quality educational programs (Baumstark-Ford, 2015; Tschannen-

Moran & Gareis, 2015).

The role of principal to create a positive school culture to bring about

improvements was well-documented in the literature (Deal & Peterson, 1999; Jones, Gill,

& Sherman, 2005; Jones, Sherman, Combs, & Gill, 2005; Kruse, Louis, & Bryk, 1994;

Sergiovanni, 2004). Building trust was also important for developing a positive school

culture (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

However, minimal research examined secondary education principals in terms of how

they created and maintained trust with teachers and other staff members.

The concept of trust varied by field with different definitions and core

characteristics. For example, descriptors of trust included vulnerability, benevolence,

honesty, reliability, openness, candor, and competence (Mishra, 1996, Tschannan-Moran

& Hoy 1998, 2000; Weisman, 2010). Another definition for trust included ability,

believability, connectedness, and dependability (Blanchard et al., 2013). In the business

field, Covey (2006) described trust as confidence in following through on promises, and

Horsager (2009) similarly defined trust as a "confident belief in someone or something"

(p. 8). In the personnel and organizational leadership field, Weisman (2010) described

trust in terms of the 5Cs: competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection.

Weisman (2010, 2016) researched the 5Cs within the framework of corporate culture and

organizational values, which resulted in several positive outcomes because employees

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and customers were acknowledged by new connections with honesty, transparency, and interest from leaders.

In the 21st century, it is essential for middle school principals to create a positive school culture. They must build trust with teachers and other stakeholders to thrive during times of great changes in curriculum, cultures, attendance, economics, or other circumstances affecting the education realm (Tschannan-Moran & Hoy, 1998, 2000). This research examined how middle school principals developed and sustained trust among their staff. The researcher sought to provide clarity on the 5Cs (competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection) in the context of the school environment. By assessing how principals established and sustained trust with staff members through the domains of the 5Cs, this research could influence administrator training programs and professional development opportunities to enhance principals' abilities to build trust, establish positive school cultures, and enact change to better support student learning and achievement outcomes.

Definitions of Terms

The following theoretical and operational terms relevant to the study are defined to provide clarity and alignment for the reader. Theoretical definitions provide meaning in relation to concepts from research studies performed in the past, whereas operational definitions deliver clarity regarding the purpose of this study and have two essential purposes: (a) establish guidelines and actions for the researcher to use to measure key variables of the study, and (b) provide clear meaning to terms that might be construed different ways.

Theoretical Definitions

Competence. Competence is the ability to perform a task or fulfill a role as expected (Covey, 2009; Farnsworth, 2015; Handford, & Leithwood, 2013; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Consistency. Consistency is confidence a person's pattern of behavior is reliable, dependable, and steadfast (Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman, 2016).

Candor. Candor involves communicating information in a precise manner and being truthful even if one does not want to provide such information (Gordon & Giley, 2012; O'Toole & Bennis, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman, 2016).

Concern. Concern is the value placed on the well-being of all members of an organization, promoting their welfare at work and empathizing with their needs. Concern entails fostering a collaborative and safe environment where leaders and members show vulnerability and support, motivate, and care for each other (Anderson & Ackerman Anderson, 2010; Covey, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Livnat, 2004; Weisman, 2016).

Connection. Connection is a shared link or bond where there is a sense of emotional engagement and inter-relatedness (Sloan & Oliver, 2013; Stovall & Baker, 2010; White et al., 2016).

Operational Definitions

Middle School. A school that provides comprehensive academic instruction to students either during 6th-8th grade or 7th and 8th grades.

Principal. For the purposes of this study a principal is defined as the instructional leader and chief executive of a public education institution.

Trust. For this study the peer researchers used the definition developed by Weisman (2010): Trust is willingness, given people's culture and communication behaviors in relationships and transactions, to be appropriately vulnerable based on the belief another individual, group, or organization is competent, open, honest, concerned, and reliable, and identified with common values and goals (Weisman, 2010).

Delimitations

The study was delimited to 12 middle school principals with a minimum of 30 staff members in southern California, and specifically the Orange and Riverside County areas for geographical proximity to the researcher. It was also delimited to principals with three or more years of leadership experience at their school site. In addition, Convenience and purposeful sampling due to geographical proximity and availability.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters, references and appendices. Chapter I introduced the study, including background information about leadership, the principal's role and trust theories. It also presented the significance of the problem, purpose statement, research questions, and theoretical and operational definitions applicable to the study. Chapter II provides a review of relevant literature pertaining to trust and principals. Chapter III explains the methodology and research design utilized to conduct the study, including descriptions of the population, sample, data collection and analysis procedures. Chapter IV presents the findings of the study. Chapter V comprises a summary of findings, conclusions, implications for actions, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential ingredient in effective communication; it's the foundational principle that holds all relationships.

- Stephen R. Covey

The school principal position was developed approximately 150 years ago in America (Rousmaniere, 2013). The principal role contains many facets depicting position such as lead administrator, employer, supervisor, supporter, professional figurehead, protector; safety monitor, and director of school policies (Rousmaniere, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). To accomplish these roles, principals must build trust with teachers and stakeholders to create a positive school culture (Covey et al., 2014).

Chapter II presents a review of the literature related to principals building and sustaining trust defined by the five domains: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency. A synthesis matrix of relevant research was established (Appendix A) and utilized to guide the development of this review. The literature review is organized into six sections and was prepared by analyzing, synthesizing, and organizing information in a funneling manner. The first section provides an introduction of the requirement of trust in leadership due to worldly deviations. Section two reveals the historical foundations and development for leadership theories. The third section focuses on the theoretical framework regarding trust in leadership and introduces the five domains of trust. Section four examines organizational leadership and trust within organizations. Section five emphasizes the leader role and trust in the educational environment. Section six provides a summary of the funneled discoveries.

The Changing World

Global and internal economics, technology, organizations, and education are changing in the United States. With this in mind, trust is essential (Covey, 2008; Horsager, 2009; White et al., 2016). Horsager (2009) maintained that no matter what position was held or the business level owned, small or large, trust altered the person or business' influence and accomplishment. In other words, the level of trust corresponded to the level of influence. Covey (2006) explained trust more comprehensively, stating trust was the backbone to building up or destroying organizations, teams, nations, or governments. In addition, trust was essential to build, especially throughout times of change (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Economic Change

The last 10 years showed economic changes affecting several countries, including the United States. Before the recession, several countries believed the U.S. to be first in the economic global order, followed by China (Wike, Poushter, Silver, & Bishop, 2017). The order changed and now China is the leader globally (Lim & Ming, 2018; Wike et al., 2017). The U.S. and European countries' leadership built "The World Trade Organization, The International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank" to establish a global order (Lim & Ming, 2018). However, now both the United Kingdom and U.S. have reduced trust in the global order they established (Lim & Ming, 2018; Lynch & Liao, 2014). Edelman (2014) led a survey using the Edelman Trust Barometer regarding the level of global trust; the findings revealed that due to the economic changes, the U.S. lost almost 60% of their trust in the financial part of the global financial system. Zak and

Knack (2001) and Zak (2017) expressed their study results as trust being an interpreter of economic growth.

The U.S. internal economic challenges started with the unemployment rate. Unemployment affects families in every state in America. Chapman, Mantell, and Hamman (2018) analyzed the U.S. employment to population ratio with ages considered to be the prime working ages from 25-54 years old. Their results depicted the unemployment rate as decreasing in 2017 compared to 2016. However, the statistic remained 1.3% lower than the pre-recession percentage. The Bureau of Labor (2017) also portrayed results for unemployment dropping from 2007 by 0.9% across the entire workforce. Thompson (2010), three years after the recession began, described the public as untrusting of the government and unemployment was part of the problem dating from the 1970s until 2010. In addition, Weinchenk and Helpap (2015) surveyed 48 states, omitting Hawaii and Alaska, which showed unemployment had statistically significant effects on trust in state governments. As unemployment increased, trust in the government decreased (Galston, 2010; Stevenson & Wolfers, 2011; Thompson, 2010; Weinchenk & Helpap, 2015). Therefore, trust was a key driver for organizations and the relationship between employees and leaders (Covey, 2006; Zak, 2017).

Technological Change

Friedman and Mandelbaum (2011) described one of the greatest issues for the U.S. as the need to catch up in the technology realm by adapting to the latest information systems. Technology is progressing quickly, making global communication simple and creating the largest industries globally (Friedman & Mandelbaum, 2011). Technology and globalization provide a means for people with diverse cultures and backgrounds to

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communicate and work together from different regions of the world. Drastic changes in

organizations, facilities, and jobs occurred, as well as how people interacted with each

other due to the faster development during the 20th and 21st centuries (Friedman &

Mandelbaum, 2011; Weisman, 2010).

Sarker, Ajuja, Sarker, and Kirkeby (2011) expressed that in virtual teams, the

individual levels of trust predicted whether the communication would improve

performance; participants who were untrustworthy did not increase performance.

Chakravorti (2018) described distrust in technology in both businesses and individuals.

Distrust was found in mature digital markets such as Western Europe, America, Japan,

and South Korea, where the markets expected rapidity. If a specific site did not work at

speeds the market was accustomed to, then clients went elsewhere (Chakravorti, 2018).

Fake news purposely distorts or falsifies information, advertises disingenuous, or

misleading content, or overwhelmingly distorts actual news reports (Allcott & Gentzkow,

2017; Novotny, 2017). Marchi (2012) defined fake news more as a focus on

entertainment intended to be humorous, caustic, and harsh. Fake news was often shared

through technology, especially social media, and affects organizations as much as

individuals. Fake news shared through technology and social media also affect trust in

both the government and news organizations (Marchi, 2012).

Over the past year political leaders in Burma, Cambodia, China, Egypt, France,

Germany Hong Kong, Hungary, Kuwait, Libya, Malaysia, the Philippines, Poland,

Russia, Singapore, Somalia, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, the USA, and Venezuela

participated in making accusations to the public regarding journalists reporting fake news

(Lees, 2018). In addition, leaders from six countries imprisoned 21 reporters due to their

fake news reports. Lees (2018) claimed fake news was used to impair the trust in independent media and Newman (2017) contended trust in the media dropped significantly in the last 10 years.

Social media allows for quick internal and external organizational communication. Internally, such platforms promote social interaction whereas externally social media is a method to disseminate information quickly to customers or external groups (Leonardi, Huysman, & Steinfield, 2013). However, fake news spread through social media typically had negative effects on individuals, society, and news organizations. Fake news via social media was used for financial and political gains, persuaded consumers to accept biased or false beliefs, and triggered distrust (Shu, 2017). With the increasing instances of fake news, fewer people are trusting social media and even media in general. Technology can be used to build trust, but improper use of technology can equally cause distrust.

Organizational Change

Chief figures in an organization characteristically signify the trustworthiness of that organization (Sørensen, Hasle, & Pejtersen, 2011). Faster production and development introduced trials in both worldwide organizations and local organizations. To meet the demands of globalization and beating the opposition, transformation happens at an increased rate of change much faster than even a decade ago (Ben-Gal & Tzafrir, 2011). Some of the dilemmas resulted from greater diversity among staff, requiring companies to participate in new strategies to develop trust among colleagues from different backgrounds (Covey, 2006; Horsager 2009). In addition, Stevenson and Wolfers (2011) showed when unemployment was high, there was a decrease in trust in

corporations, major companies, and alleged honesty business executives. Leading figures in an organization typically represented the trustworthiness of that organization. Thus, revealing the level of trust in leadership corresponded to the production and performance in the organization (Stevenson & Wolfers, 2011).

Organizational change produces challenges on leaders to help employees adapt to innovation, sustain the transformation, and maintain growth (Battilana & Casciaro, 2012; Lawrence, Ruppel, & Tworoger, 2014; Lyman, 2012; Nastase, Giuclea, & Bold, 2012; Shin, Taylor, & Seo, 2012). In addition, leaders must become skillful at executing effective organizational change build trust among employees (Anderson & Ackerman Anderson, 2010; Castaldo, Premazzi, & Zerbini, 2010). Furthermore, leaders with high trust levels with employees yielded higher performing businesses (Hurley, 2012).

Educational Change

The U.S. is experiencing substantial changes in the K-12 education system. Changes include an increase in charter school attendance rates, parents choosing private schools over public schools, initiatives to allocate vouchers to assist in cost for children attending private schools, implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the need for a social and emotional curriculum, and questions regarding how to meet the needs of 21st century students (Wolf & Egalite, 2016). For this study, the researcher focused the literature review on implementation of the CCSS, 21st century students, and social emotional learning because these three initiatives represent common challenges for the principal, staff, and students.

CCSS. The CCSS, developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers and National Governor's Association in 2010, were widely adopted by states, including

California (Warren & Murphy, 2014). The CCSS cover fewer topics at each grade but require a deeper understanding of the content compared to the old state standards. The CCSS also stress reading and understanding informational texts whereas the old standards focused on literature (Warren & Murphy, 2014). By 2015, California was implementing the CCSS in mathematics and English across all grades.

Implementation of new standards also required new assessments. California adopted the assessment system developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), the SBAC test was pilot-tested in 2014-15 and administered statewide beginning in the 2015-16 school year (Timar & Carter, 2017; Warren & Murphy, 2014). SBAC testing is a computer-based assessment that adapts based on the number of correct responses to better assess a student's knowledge and skill level. To prepare students for these new standards and assessments, teachers needed extensive professional development and a new curriculum. The first step was for educators to become familiar with and fluent in CCSS-aligned curricula (Timar & Carter, 2017; Warren & Murphy, 2014).

School districts face several obstacles implementing the CCSS, which currently only offer standards in mathematics (CCSS-M) and English language arts (CCSS-ELA). CCSS-ELA require students to "read and understand complex literary and informational text independently and proficiently" (Bunch, Walqui, & Pearson, 2014, p. 534). Meeting this standard required teachers to integrate complex and varied reading in their lessons (Bunch et al., 2014). CCSS-M also emphasized language, problem-solving, and critical thinking (Hakuta, Santos, & Fang, 2013). The shift in the mathematics standards aligned

with changes required for meeting the needs of 21st century learner (Kitchen & Berk, 2016).

   Meeting the needs of 21st century students. In the past, education focused strictly on reading, writing, arithmetic, science, and history using direct instruction where teachers typically presented information to students. Presently, leaders are faced with facilitating a structure and efforts to ensure students prepared to master the multi-dimensional abilities necessary for the 21st century workplace (Alismail & McGuire, 2015). These 21st century skills include application of academic subjects within a project-based curriculum that emphasizes collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and communication (Carroll, 2007). Additionally, 21st century skills require digital learning consisting of informational literacy, media literacy, and use of various communication technologies (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). Other necessary skills include collaboration, social and cross-cultural interaction, career and life skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving, which were deemed necessary 21st century skills for positions students will occupy in the future (Alismail & McGuire, 2015). Research also showed current K-12 students were more engaged when technology was used during lessons and content related to their interests (Aydin, Ozfidan, & Carothers, 2017).

   Social and emotional learning. Social and emotional learning (SEL) initiatives and programs help students grow in skills needed for institution and life (CDE, 2018). Eight U.S. schools are co-designing a program to benefit other states through the organization named Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), which aids states with training in SEL (Blad, 2016). CASEL is in the process of developing standards for emphasis in five emotional intelligence skills: self-awareness,

self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. If the standards are adopted by states, they would require teacher and administrator professional development similar to that required for implementation of the CCSS.

In education, new initiatives often start at the state level, moving progressively to districts and schools, and within schools from principals to teachers. Implementation of initiatives within schools require relationships between the school administrator and faculty. Strong relationships need trust to develop. Covey (2006) explained the more trust, the easier the business grows. The same holds true for schools and their staff, necessitating trust. The following section presents literature related trust and theoretical frameworks regarding trust.

Organizational Leadership

Organizational leadership is an area of business management explicitly related to assessing challenges and reaching goals created by both individual employees or an entire organization. Organizational leadership abilities must include understanding both the strengths and weaknesses of a company's individuals, business plan, and day-to-day operations. Strong organizational leaders must have ethics, effective communication, and a vision to manage and strengthen an organization by implementing change, confronting problems, and creating a positive and productive workplace for all the employees. Research showed organizational leaders who built trusting relationships with employees produced social capital and reciprocity in the relationship, which related to satisfaction and reduced turnover (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2001). Today's research on organizational leadership developed from various organizational theories studied over the years.

Organizational Leadership Theories

Over the years, many studies focused on leadership theories (Williams, 2005). To define key leadership traits, myriad theories were developed throughout history, each containing aspects or characteristics of leadership (Miner, 2002). Six seminal theories were developed between the 1840s and 1970s: (1) great man theory, (2) trait leadership theory, (3) behavioral leadership theory, (4) contingency leadership theory, (5) transactional leadership theory, and (6) transformational leadership theory. After delving into the leadership theories, four out of the six theories lacked in building effective relationships with trust as an essential part of leadership.

Great man theory (1840s). Great man theory, developed by Thomas Carlyle, prescribed that certain men were born as leaders (Chemers, 1997). The theory posited leaders were born with intrinsic leadership skills rather than developing such skills. Destined by birth, great men became leaders. According to Priyadarshini (2017), great man theory explained people born with exceptional qualities to be leaders could always be identified as a leader. Leaders like Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, and Alexander the Great fell into these categories. Under this theory, great men were considered heroic, legendary, and uniquely destined to rise to leadership when their skills were needed (Carlyle, 1840).

The theory portrayed leaders as having specific human traits without scientific evidence (Slater & Bennis, 1990). Great man theory was later disputed by theorists who believed leaders were a product of environmental and social conditions (Chemers, 1997). In addition, this theory lacked any discussion of trust as being an essential part of leadership.

Trait leadership theory(1930s-1940s). Trait leadership theory evolved from great man theory to incorporate personalities and specific leadership qualities known as traits that were inherited or developed (Bligh, 2009; Matthews et al., 2003). Theorists and researchers focused on the traits of strong leaders. More than 100 years of research studied common settings such as the highest level of organizations. From the research, traits of a good leaders were considered intelligence, self-confidence, perseverance, sociability, and integrity (Bligh, 2009; Cherry, 2018). This theory focused on mental, physical, and social skills, also noting the importance of physique among leaders (Matthews et al., 2003).

Intelligence. A great deal of research suggested leaders have above average intelligence (Bligh, 2009). Intelligent individuals are associated as being good with language, perception, and reasoning skills. In addition, the action of processing mental reasoning skills, the ability to communicate concepts and thoughts to others, and the perceptual ability to recognize important situational factors are noted as intelligent leadership skills (Bligh, 2009; Northouse, 2016). Research focused on the link between intelligence and good problem-solving skills in leaders, their capacity to sufficiently evaluate social situations, and their ability to comprehend complex organizational matters (Bligh, 2009; Northouse, 2016).

Self-confidence. Leadership effectiveness and self-confidence are directly proportional to each other. Self-confidence includes an awareness of self-esteem and self-assurance and the certainty one can make a difference (Northouse, 2016). Having confidence helps leaders communicate clearly and competently, which is a common

leadership trait (Bligh, 2009). Self-confidence related to leadership, although it was unknown if leadership led to greater confidence or greater confidence led to leadership.

Determination and perseverance. Many leaders also display determination. Determination is the yearning to persevere until the task is completed and includes characteristics such as initiative, persistence, and drive (Bligh, 2009; Northouse, 2016). Thus, the capability to assert oneself when necessary, be hands-on, and endure in the face of complications is a key component of leadership (Bligh, 2009; Northouse, 2016).

Sociability. Effective leaders seek close social relationships with employees and possess the capability to sustain and if necessary, restore positive relationships during a crisis; this ability is referred to as sociability (Bligh, 2009; Northouse, 2016). Sociability is also considered a key trait for leaders. Leaders who show sociability are approachable, outgoing, polite, and diplomatic. They are sensitive to others' needs, and at times, to the detriment of their own needs (Bligh, 2009; Northouse, 2016).

Integrity. Integrity is a major leadership trait. Individuals adhering to principles related to honesty, ethics, and trustworthiness showed integrity (Bligh, 2009; Northouse, 2016). Leaders with integrity increase trusting relationships and other employees show loyalty and reciprocity for their ethical deeds (Xu, Loi, & Ngo, 2016).

All these personal traits characterize a leader's ability to be effective (Goff, 2003). However, traits unaccompanied with role modeling, formulating a vision, setting goals, and other actions or abilities a leader must accomplish only places the individual as having the prerequisites of a leader (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). These traits could be acquired and developed through training and experience, not just by birth, which differentiated trait theory from great man theory (Goff, 2003; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991;

Sharma & Jain, 2013). Trait theory requires the leader to have integrity, which is essential to leadership and building relationships between the leader and employee. However, the theory showed little connection to trust, which could also be developed through experience (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991).

   Behavioral leadership theory (1940s-1950s). In contrast to great man theory and trait leadership theory, behavioral leadership theory evolved as a new perspective (Cooper et al.1994). Behavioral leadership theory focused on a person's behaviors during diverse situations rather than concentrating on mental, physical, and social characteristics of leaders. This theory suggested leaders were created rather than inherited abilities through instruction, learning, and observation. Rather, leadership skills were obtained by training and preparation, awareness, practice, and experience over time (Goff, 2003; Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Kurt Lewin in 1930 developed a framework with three types of behaviors revealed in behavioral theory: (1) autocratic for task-oriented leaders, (2) democratic for people-oriented leaders, and (3) laissez-faire leaders. Autocratic leaders value deep knowledge about the work and focus on task completion whereas democratic leaders value teamwork and treat subordinates more like peers (Cooper et al., 1994). In contrast, laissez-faire leaders allow others in the group or company to make many of the decisions, limiting their role as a leader. This can be considered effective when the entire team is competent, informed, capable, and employees do not need constant supervision; however, it can lead to disaster depending on the distraction of the leader (MBA Caribbean, n.d.).

   Contingency leadership theory (1960s). Contingency leadership theory focused on circumstances rather than a single way of leading (Bligh, 2005). Contingency or

situational models determine the effectiveness of the behavior of the leader based on expected results. Certain factors come into play that define whether a leader or leadership style will be effective for the situation at hand. Those factors include the task, personality of the leader, and team composition. Several sub-theories fall under the universal contingency theory umbrella: Fiedler's contingency theory, situational leadership theory, path-goal theory, and decision-making theory (Villanova University, 2018). Although all theories are comparable on the surface, each offers its own distinct views on leadership.

      Fiedler's contingency theory. Fiedler's contingency theory suggests effective leadership centers on leader's experiences, the style used by the leader, and the control held over the situation (Villanova University, 2018). For success in the completion of the task, there must be strong leader-member relations (Travis, 2018; Villanova University, 2018). In other words, there must be confidence and trust between team members and the leader. Leaders must also introduce and describe the tasks clearly and with defined objectives and procedures. The leader must provide reprimands and incentives based on the outcomes, thus the contingency (Travis, 2018; Villanova University, 2018).

      Situational leadership theory. Situational leadership theory suggests no specific leadership style is superior; rather, the situation decides the style and strategy. The more formal name for this theory is Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory, which focuses on leadership style and the maturity of followers. The theory puts forth the idea that leadership styles hinge on four behaviors: leaders telling employees what to do, leaders selling information to gain buy-in, followers participating more with less direction, and followers making decisions (Cherry, 2018; Villanova University, 2018).

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Path-goal theory. Path-goal theory was introduced in 1970 by Martin Evans and then expanded by House in 1971. This theory merges goal-setting and expectancy into one more comprehensive theory (House & Mitchell, 1974). Effective leaders are responsible to assist the employees with styles or behaviors that portray the best work environment characteristics and provide support for them to reach company goals. This theory is used to increase employee motivation and satisfaction, which ensures productive members in the company (House & Mitchell, 1974).

Decision-making theory. Also known as the Vroom-Yetton-Jago Decision-Making Model of Leadership, this theory provides no specific decision-making process that fits every situation. However, it provides different ideas to direct the leader to the most appropriate process for the situation at hand. Before the model is used, the leader must consider three factors: decision quality, team commitment, and time constraints. The factors guide decisions and help move the work forward.

Some consider contingency leadership theory an extension of trait leadership theory as traits could be tied to situations where leaders displayed specific leadership qualities (Bligh, 2005). Others felt contingency leadership theory lacked specific methods and connections to organizational leadership (Gill, 2011). Contingency leadership theory was soon replaced as the focus of leadership explored more managerial aspects of leadership in corporations (Gill, 2011). Thus, these theories were seen as incomplete or lacking, so new leadership theories emerged.

Five practices of exemplary leadership theory. Kouzes and Posner (2011) conveyed leadership corresponds to relationships containing at least a one or several followers. One of the greatest tasks for a leader is the need to inspire others to buy-in on

collaboration toward common goals. Exemplary leaders did not focus on self-success but focused on assisting others to achieve (Kouzes & Posner, 2006). Instructors teaching strategies based on the leader's experiences portrayed good leadership. Several leaders began their journey with the five practices of exemplary leadership outlined by Kouzes and Posner (2011).

Model the way. Kouzes, Posner, and Biech (2017) stated being a good leader consists of having complete honesty and competence. Mugavin (2018) provided six tips to accomplish this: (1) become familiar with personal values at and outside of work, (2) compare personal values with the business values, (3) talk with others about personal values, (4) discover the values of peers, (5) demonstrate personal and team values to others, and (6) be accountable for those expressed values and ensure others also display the set norms. Through such behaviors, leadership modelled expectations.

Inspire a shared vision. Inspiring a shared vision is one step for an exemplary leader (Kouzes & Posner, 2011). Leaders empower others by sharing their best experiences as a leader and having a clear image for the company moving ahead (Kouzes & Posner, 2011). Thompson (2017) gave four steps to creating a shared vision with the organization. The first was to be completely clear on the desired achievement for the organization. She explained the vision helped guide the destination. Clear objectives and collaboration stemmed from a common vision and common goal. Step two was to ensure the vision served as an inspiration for followers. Step three was to ensure all followers thoroughly understood the purpose, thus causing a deep focus on the strategies to be taken to achieve the goal. The final step was to set SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound) goals to accomplish the vision (Thompson, 2017).

Challenge the process. Challenging the process is a crucial practice for organizations to grow. Coats (n.d.), a managing partner and co-owner of International Leadership Association, expressed the importance of change and growth; however, the change should not be related to personal values. Additionally, strategies and tasks that are working should not be removed. Kerrigan (2018) conveyed six steps in challenging the process and portraying an effective leader: (1) pursue challenging opportunities that assess personal skills and capabilities, (2) challenge others to attempt innovative methods to do their jobs, (3) actively explore innovative steps to better oneself and different groups within the organization, (4) inquire about next steps if the method did not work, (5) recognize measurable indicators that sustain change in a positive direction, and (6) respond and anticipate changes.

Enable others to act. Effective, efficient, and exemplary leaders must be part of a team effort. For the shared vision to be realized, there must be long-lasting, resilient relationships and solid trust (Kouzes & Posner, 2011). Good leaders work at trying to unite others into the same journey. Vander Ark (2015) described actions preventing others from having more impact, by not having a clear goal, by individuals or the group refraining from risk taking, and by misperceptions and individuals not recognizing personal gains. Kerrigan (2018) expressed the necessity for leaders to have openness and trust to maintain productive relationships and enable others to act. She outlined six actions to help the leader engage followers: (1) listen for ideas and different views, (2) develop relationships with co-workers, (3) treat others with honor or respect, (4) include coworkers in decisions related to areas of expertise, (5) allow coworkers to choose the strategies to fulfill their tasks, and (6) grow in their job skills (Kerrigan, 2018).

Encourage the heart. Encourage the heart by identifying contributions and verbally recognizing individuals who perform well (Kouzes & Posner, 2011). Kerrigan (2018) provided ways leaders could encourage the heart, such as praising individuals who perform well, informing employees about confidence in their abilities, recognizing any contributions in the project, recognizing people publicly regarding their extreme commitment to shared values, encouraging workers by telling stories, and celebrating accomplishments. Encouraging the heart allowed leaders to appreciate good work among peers (Kouzes & Posner, 2011).

Transactional leadership theory. Leadership is regarded as vital for inspiring supporters and assembling resources toward satisfying an organization's mission; it is also important for organizational innovation, adaptation, and performance (Antonakis & House, 2014). Transactional leadership is a style defined as a contact between two individuals with an intentional exchange of valued information or items (Burns, 1978). The name of the theory stemmed from the quid pro quo nature of getting something, the reward, in exchange for strong performance (Bass, 1998; Burns, 1978). Burns (1978) explained relationship outcomes stemming from a transactional leader and his or her followers. The examples described the leadership interaction with a subordinate in which the leader motivated a follower based on the provision of an exchange, such as pay for work or the provision of jobs for a follower's vote (Burns, 1978). Bass (1985) described transactional leaders as determining employee desires and rewarding them if performance was comparable expectations. The leader set a goal for the subordinate and rewards or consequences resulted based on meeting or missing the goal. The objective for a

transactional leader was to seek cost-effective, economic exchange based on

subordinates' resources and needs (Bass, 1985).

Transactional leadership theory emerged from organizational roots examining the

interactions between leaders and individual employees (Bass, 1998; Burns, 1978).

Transactional leadership theory focuses on a directive leadership style and is concerned

with day-to-day activities or operations and management. Burns (1978) believed such

transactions comprised the bulk of the relationships among leaders and followers. Burns

(1978) also described transactions or exchanges to be either political, economic, or

psychological in nature. For example, the exchange could be a swap of one or more good

for money, votes between candidates and citizens, or hospitality in exchange for hearing

venting of troubles. Under transactional leadership theory, both parties are aware of the

exchange (Burns, 1978). Although trust could be inferred as an underlying assumption of

the reward being provided, the theory lacked any consideration for the concept of trust.

Organizational Theories and Trust

Given the number of organizational leadership theories developed since the

1840s, few described the role of trust in the leader-follower relationship. Three

organizational theories that include a mention of trust are authentic leadership, servant

leadership, and transformational leadership.

Authentic leadership. Leadership in organizations should be authentic to create

effective and successful leadership over the long term (Kruse, 2013). Authentic leaders

are conscious of their own appeal, strengths, emotional state, and sincerity. They also

show their real selves to followers (Kruse, 2013). Authentic leaders display strong

performance in four dimensions: self-awareness, transparency, balanced information

processing, and internalized moral perspectives (Gardner, Cogliser, Davis, & Dickens, 2011; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). These dimensions include self-understanding, openness, actions, and orientation toward interpersonal relationships, and are theorized to create elevated levels of trust, hope, and positive emotions (Walumbwa et al., 2008). In addition, Kernis (2003) explained trust among teams was is elevated when leaders were open and transparent; elevated trust increase positive relationships between leaders and followers.

Servant leadership. Servant leadership is a spiritual foundation theory centered on the premise leaders serve first by cultivating the best abilities of followers (Greenleaf, 2002; Liden, Wayne, Zhao & Henderson, 2008). Leaders behave like mentors and use one-on-one interaction to identify specific areas followers need and want to carry out to encourage employees. A servant leader's highest priority is the drive to serve before lead, which ensures other people's critical needs are addressed (Baggett, 1997; Block 1993; Covey 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2006; Spears 1996, 1997).

Davis (2017) conducted a literature review on servant leadership concepts to analyze definitions and identify core themes. He divided recurring themes into four categories, (1) personal growth, development, and empowerment of employees; (2) spiritual, affirmational, and ethical approach toward employees; (3) dedication to serving the community and placing others first; and (4) trait-based leadership (Davis, 2017).

Davis (2017) found servant leaders were wholeheartedly compelled to focus on the growth of followers. Leaders must build their own work efforts to inspire employees (Blanchard, 2002). Additionally, leaders must empower their followers by sharing insights and talents to aid in the employee's ability to grow in decision-making (Spears,

2010). Servant leaders are moral and compassionate people who hold strong in their beliefs (Davis, 2017). They are dedicated to their company, it's workers, and the community around them (Davis, 2017). In addition, servant leaders are unbiased, tolerant, and open-minded toward individuals (Belton, 2016). Spears (1995, as cited by Phipps, 2010) also noted servant leaders were good listeners, empathetic, persuasive, healers, stewards, and committed to building a sense of community.

Servant leadership builds trust with employees, customers, and communities. Servant leaders build trust by unselfishly helping others first (Greenleaf, 1977). "Trust develops in the relationship as a result of the subordinate finding the leader's judgments and actions to be thoughtful, dependable, and moral" (Liden et al., 2008, p. 174). In addition, a servant leader's importance is based on meeting the needs of his or her followers and fostering the belief within subordinates the leader is actively pursuing a quality relationship (Kouzes & Posner 2006; Liden et al., 2008; Spears, 1996). Further, assisting subordinates to grow involves servant leaders' attention to the affective and emotional needs of subordinates, which leads to increased effectiveness in individuals and teams (Page & Wong, 2000; Parris & Peachy, 2012). Servant leaders often offer support that encompasses more than the formal employment criteria.

Transformational leadership theory. In contrast to transactional leadership, transformational leadership focuses on vision, charisma, and developmental outlooks (Burns, 1978; House, 1977). Transformational leaders identify the necessary change for an organization, then with vision, energy, enthusiasm, and passion, help the transformation occur. Bass (1985) described transformational leaders as those who recognized and built off the benefits of transactional needs of followers, but also tried to

arouse and satisfy deeper needs related to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow (1954)

explained individuals had specific physiological needs that had to be met before higher

level needs such as prosperity and security could be met. By meeting employee needs,

transformational leaders utilized their efforts on organizational reform by acquiring

followers who bought in and became involved as a team member (Bass, 1985). In

comparing transactional and transformational leadership, both theories ensure leaders

care for follower needs; transactional leaders focus more on monitoring and the final

outcomes, whereas transformational leaders build and strengthen their relationship with

followers (Bass, 1985). For a transformational leader to build relationships and gain buy-

in for the transformational change, there must be trust (Ackerman-Anderson & Anderson,

2010).

Transformational leadership theory provides engagement and raises the level of

motivation and morality with everyone interacting (Burns, 1978). Hoy and Miskel

(2008) described the theory as the leader taking actions to enact positive change by

ensuring followers were informed and assisting to produce high-performance outcomes.

Under transformational leadership theory, the leader was considered inspirational and

provided a strong foundation for the change (Bass, 1985). The underlying objective for

transformational leadership theory is for the leader to empower followers to develop their

full potential. These interactions lead to the inspiration of positive change (Chou, Lin,

Chang, & Chuang, 2013). Transformational leaders make great effort in empowering

people to reach their full potential (McCarthy, 2005; Northouse, 2016). It is

characterized by highly effective team performance and development portrayed by

followers after gaining knowledge, direction, and influence from the transformational

leader (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir 2002; Northouse, 2016; Wang & Howell, 2012).

Among the progression variables related with the transformational leadership process,

trust was recognized as one important factor necessary for both the follower and leader

(Burke, Sims, Lazzara, & Salas, 2007).

Trust

Seminal sources regarding trust and leadership theory span 60 years. This section

delves into definitions of trust and the history of trust before presenting theoretical

foundations related to trust and organizational leadership theories. For this study, the

researcher focused on trust with an emphasis on the socio-cognitive theory of trust,

organizational trust theory, transactional leadership theory, and transformational

leadership theory.

Trust is crucial for any relationship, whether between family members, friends,

peers, or leaders and employees in an organization (Covey, 2006, Horsager, 2009; Hoy &

Tschannen, 1999; Tschannen & Hoy 1998, 2000; Weisman, 2016). Trust cultivates

collaboration in an organization (Dawes, van de Kragt, & Orbell, 1990; Deutsch, 1958,

1960; Wrightsman, 1974) whereas distrust reduces teamwork (Farrell, 2004; Hardin,

2004). Trust is essential for effective collaboration; characteristics to ensure trust include

an environment that allows openness to expressing positive, negative, and different ideas

for change (Kelly & Schafer, 2014).

Multiple definitions and theories of trust exist in the literature. Covey (2006)

defined fives types of trust (self-trust, relationship trust, organizational trust, market trust,

and societal trust) as a continuum where self-trust was necessary before moving to the

next level, relationship trust. These were similar to five key factors of trust in school

leadership: benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Benevolence meant caring and related to the support colleagues and leaders provide for staff. Honesty reflected truthfulness and following through on promises, such as having integrity. Openness was described as sharing personal information with others at the school. Reliability equated to consistency and dependability. The last ingredient was competence in that the individual had skills and knowledge of specific tasks to be performed (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Weisman (2016) defined trust in business based on five Ps: power, position, prestige, pleasure, and prosperity. These ideas were working when Wall Street was flourishing, and by 2009 Weisman co-founded The Value Institute (TVI), which developed the 5Cs of trust: competence, candor, concern, connection, and consistency. The 5Cs proved beneficial in the business and non-profit fields (Weisman, 2016). For this study, the researcher used the definition of trust developed by Weisman (2010): trust is willingness, given people's culture and communication behaviors in relationships and transactions, to be appropriately vulnerable based on the belief another individual, group, or organization is competent, open, honest, concerned, and reliable, and identified with common values and goals.

The Role of Trust in Organizations

Trust in organizations is an underlying mechanism for behavior demonstrated in a work environment. Increased trust plays a positive role in organizations. Strong positive relationships regarding employee trust in management also permeate a trusting organizational atmosphere (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004). High levels of trust related to increased energy, engagement, joy, creativity, health, and

wellbeing among employees (Covey & Link, 2012). Additional studies found a connection between high levels of trust in an organization and high productivity (Zak, 2017; Zak & Knack, 2001). Covey (2006) found higher levels of trust correlated with greater levels of performance and increased profits. Trust also related to the capability of teams to work together, with trust needed among members to work effectively and efficiently (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2001).

Increasing trust in an organization stemmed from listening to subordinates and executing fair decision-making (Neubert, Wu, & Roberts, 2013; Xu et al., 2016). Furthermore, Xu et al. (2016) focused on the importance of a trusting rapport between employees and the organization. Employee trust acts as a vital mechanism for ethical leadership behavior in an organization (Xu et al., 2016). In addition, ethical leadership behavior provides the foundation for trust (Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 1998). When followers perceive leaders as ethical, they develop more trust in the organization, and hence rate the organization's procedures and outcomes more favorably.

When trust levels are low, effective business leaders find it necessary to build and sustain trust. Covey and Link (2012) explained the world is in a trust crisis and this is a time where trust can be the catalyst to the organization's performance. In addition, there is an indisputable connection between trust and success because trust affects speed and cost in an organization (Covey, 2006). Therefore, the role of trust in any organization is essential.

History of Trust

Morton Deutsch (1957, 1958) was the first examiner of mutual trust and social suspicions. He explained the phenomenon of trust through understanding the person's

social life and personality development. He related trust to whether an individual's

expectation was fulfilled or severed socially between two people. In other words, did the

presumed outcome occur or not. If it occurred, the level of trust increased and it was

considered a benevolent event. However, if the expectation did not prevail then trust was

severed and it was identified as a malevolent event (Deutsch, 1957, 1958). Rotter (1967)

expanded on Deutsch's study, using game theory and identified the trust as interpersonal.

Rotter (1967) agreed with Deutsch in the respect trust, cooperation, and trustworthiness

were equivalent. If a person cooperated, he or she was considered trustworthy (Good,

1988; Rotter, 1980). Where Rotter (1967) disagreed related to alignment with the setting

in game theory versus family relationships; game theory measured two unfamiliar

individuals in competition against each other, which led to a competitive type of trust

rather than a cooperative form of trust. Additionally, competitive trust was not a clear

explanation for interpersonal trust for family members, or big businesses, where

cooperation is an absolute to produce positive results (Gambetta, 1988; Good, 1988;

Rotter, 1967).

Most trust researchers focused on cooperation, but Zand (1972) focused on

vulnerability, or risk taking, which acknowledged deeper levels of trust in organizational

theory. In 1988, Good defined trust as equivalent to self-assurance or reliance in a

specific quality of another individual. He explained trust was progressive and took time

to develop. However, to measure trust Good (1988) noted the assessment should include

social cognitive operations, which he defined as a person's social performance related to

his or her view and understanding of the world. This concept led to the socio-cognitive

theory of trust.

Organizational Trust Theory

Mayer et al. (1995) expressed the importance of trust in the American workplace, citing trust would increase due to diversity, the rise in self-directed team work, and the decrease in autocratic management. Organizational trust theory defined trust as the state of preparedness to be susceptible to the actions of another individual or group centered on expectations the task would be performed (Mayer et al., 1995). These expectations related to perceptions of ability, benevolence, and integrity.

In 2007, Schoorman, Mayer, and Davis revisited their research on organizational trust theory and made some edits and additions. Since 1995, the need to analyze organizational trust in multilevel and cross-level perspectives grew (Rousseau et al., 1998). Schoorman et al. (2007) researched micro and macro levels of trust within and between organizations focused on the same three factors used in 1995, ability, benevolence, and integrity. The results conveyed trust contributed to groups or organizations from all three factors. Additionally, the longer relationships lasted, greater levels of benevolence and integrity were found (Schoorman et al., 2007). Also, with higher trust, greater risks were taken; however, the reverse was also true in that greater willingness to take risks could lower levels of trust (Mayer et al., 1995; Schoorman et al., 2007). In their 2007 study, Schoorman et al. also examined reciprocity and propensity of trust. The 1995 study assumed the level of trust was the same between two individuals, but the 2007 study showed trust could be unequal and lack reciprocity.

Given the importance of trust within organizations, recent theories emerged specifically looking at trust within organizations. Such theories included the socio-cognitive theory of trust and the speed of trust framework.

Socio-Cognitive Theory of Trust

Seligman (1997) described a vital part for all sustaining social relationships is trust. For the socio-cognitive theory of trust, Falcone and Castelfranchi (2001) described trust with specific beliefs and goals, a social attitude, and a relationship. The socio-cognitive dynamics of trust convey trust is important in groups, markets, states, and organizations requiring computer mediation. Castelfranchi and Falcone (2011) described social trust as a mental state between two people cognitively. Falcone and Castelfranchi (2001) also described social trust as a dynamic phenomenon both in the mind of individuals and in society because each episode provided historical data about the other person's level of trustworthiness or untrustworthiness. Due to the social constructs of trust, the trust of one individual could influence the trust of a different person based on reputation. Essentially, if person X trusted person Y and person Z perceived person X as credible, then person Z had greater trust of person Y (Falcone & Castelfranchi, 2001).

Speed of trust framework. Covey (2006) stated the following about the importance of trust,

> There is one thing that is common to every individual, relationship, team, family, organization, nation, economy, and civilization throughout the world – one thing that if removed, will destroy the most powerful government, the most successful business, the most thriving economy, the most influential leadership, the greatest friendship, the strongest character, the deepest love. On the other hand, if developed and leveraged, that one thing has the potential to create unparalleled success and prosperity in every dimension of life. (p. 1)

When trust was cultured, it produced successful organizations, families, and relationships (Covey, 2006; Horsager, 2009; Hoy & Tschannen, 1999; Tschannen & Hoy 1998, 2000; Weisman, 2016). Trust was defined as the view, judgement, or belief that one could rely on someone or something whereas distrust was a feeling or judgement one could not rely on the other individual or group (Covey, 2006; Deutsch, 1958, Gambetta, 1988; Hardin, 2004). Trust is considered inversely proportional to cost and proportional to speed. Covey (2006) explained as trust increased, speed increased and cost decreased. In contrast, as trust decreased, speed decreased and cost increased. With low trust, less was accomplished because of increased suspicion between individuals regarding their reasons or who the outcomes would truly benefit. For example, Covey (2006) found before the U.S. was attacked in New York, travelers had to arrive at the airport less than one hour before their flight. After 9/11, it takes at least two hours because of increased security measures and additional staff were hired to investigate every traveler entering an airplane.

Another example Covey (2006) shared about trust was a company selling donuts. The company sold daily, but lost business due to the length of time customers waited to pay. The attendant left out a drawer of cash trusting customers to get their own change to speed the process. Feeling trusted, customers left more money than necessary and there was not an increase in cost for the company (Covey 2006). Similar sentiments of trust were also found within education. Tschannen (2014) expressed how teachers who trusted each were willing to be open and share strategies, materials, resources, and equipment.

Covey's (2006) speed of trust theory states, "Trust is a function of two things: character and competence. The character includes your integrity, your motive, your

intent with people. Competence includes your capabilities, your skills, your results, your track record. And both are vital" (p. 30). Covey (2006) developed a model of trust identified as the five waves of trust. The waves identify how trust flows from inside to outside similar to a ripple effect. The five waves are self-trust, relation trust, organizational trust, market trust, and societal trust.

Self-trust. Self-trust is considered the first wave. People's self-assurance level relates to their ability for setting goals and accomplishing those goals. In turn, specific behaviors relate to an individual's credibility, such as keeping commitments, accomplishing goals, verbalizing abilities, and inspiring others.

Relation trust. Relation trust is the second wave. It refers to how a leader creates trust and then increases the trust between others. This trust issue is related to constant and consistent behavior that builds trust. In this wave, Covey (2006) described 13 behaviors, including talking straight, demonstrating respect, creating transparency, admitting mistakes, showing loyalty, confronting reality, clarifying expectations, practicing accountability, and extend trust.

Organizational trust. Organizational trust is the third wave. Organizational trust relates to all organizations, such as "businesses, not-for profit organizations, government entities, educational institutions, and families, as well as teams and other micro units within an organization" (Covey, 2006, p. 34). This wave focuses on alignment with the organization's mission and goals. How the company is structured and its systems relate to trust in terms of preparing the company for increased value, growth, innovation, collaboration, execution, and loyalty (Covey, 2006).

Market trust. Market-trust is the fourth wave. This wave relates to both the company and individual's reputation. This wave describes the trust an individual portrays with customers and staff. Covey's (2006) description and directions could assist leaders in building trust amongst customers and help to better the company itself.

Societal trust. Societal trust is the fifth wave. This wave relates to contributing to society. Societal trust helps people to want to give back. This is the most external-facing level of trust.

Theoretical Framework for the Study

The Watson Wyatt Human Capital Index is a tool used to measure links between human capital management and financial performance (Gold, 2015). Gold (2015) found in 2002, 286% greater performance from high-trust organizations compared to low-trust organizations, and in 2007 found a 42% higher return rate on shareholder investments compared to companies with low-trust. A study by Interaction Associates (2009) also found better performance with high-trust companies. Employee retention was 80% with high-trust corporations compared to 42% in low-trust corporations. Additionally, the study revealed 76% of employees recruited new talent at a high-trust company compared to only 24% in a low-trust company (Interaction Associates, 2009). These results showed the importance of trust in an organization.

Trust Value Institute (TVI) is a research and consulting organization founded in 2009 focused on values-based corporate culture. The company's mission is to inspire other companies to utilize their predominant values to drive a purposeful and sustainable values economy (TVI, 2010). TVI designed by the pyramid of trust (Figure 1), represented by competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection (5Cs).
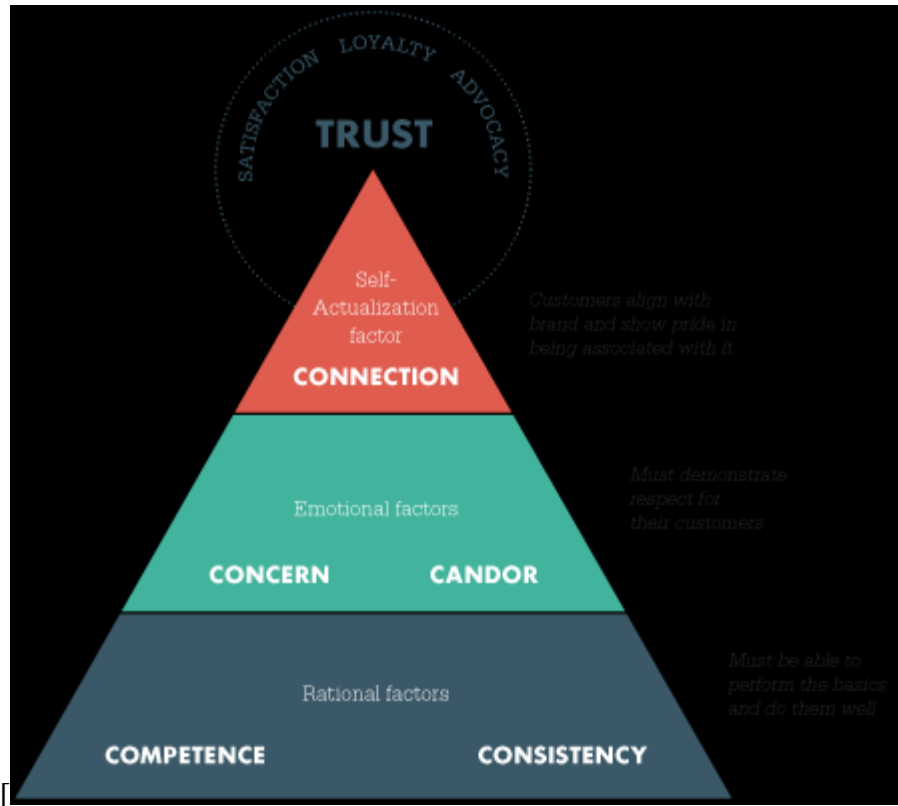
Figure 1. Pyramid of trust. Source: TVI, 2010.

Initially, TVI was geared toward five Ps (5Ps), power, position, prestige, pleasure, and prosperity, which embraced the transactional economy (Weisman, 2016). The company focused on short-term gains for organizations that were self-focused for either one individual or a single company. In addition, the 5Ps were outcome-focused on gaining more power, pleasure, or prosperity. The 5Ps flourished for a time, but organizations needed a direction not just focus on instant gratification, but also sustainability (Weisman, 2016). The 5Cs were chosen to replace the 5Ps and the 5Cs serve as the framework of trust used for this study.

The 5Cs

TVI situated the 5Cs within a pyramid of trust defining stages that need to be built and maintained for any relationship. Weisman (2016) described how lasting workplace

contentment and satisfaction derived from relationships built on trust. The theoretical

framework integrated the five variables in such a way that they cannot be dissected into

five separate portions. He explained how the five elements must be united when

reporting the act of trust (Weisman, 2016).

Competence. Competence in business includes measuring operational efficiency,

responsiveness to feedback, and the quality and capacity to provide what the customer

wants or needs (Weisman, 2016). Competence in business is providing service wherein

the employer must ensure employees are completely trained and capable of

accommodating customer desires. Covey (2006) agreed when he described the first

dimension of competence as capabilities, and one capability vital in every situation is

"trust ability" (p. 94). Tschannen-Moran (2014) and White et al. (2016) also described

ability to do a task as competence. Blanchard et al. (2013) included competence as one

category of four in an assessment revealing level of trustworthiness. Horsager (2009)

presented eight pillars to create trust, with competence as the fourth pillar bringing

intense results to business and leaders. Hill and Lineback (2011) agreed competence

created productive influence from the leader, which was based on competence and

character; however, their competence definition related to three imperatives, technical

knowledge, operational knowledge, and political knowledge.

Technical knowledge is based on the responsibilities to be accomplished in every

aspect of the job, including management knowledge for a leader. Technical knowledge is

the abilities and knowledge needed to complete specific jobs, and often relates to

mechanical, information technology, mathematical, or scientific duties and some

examples include knowledge of programming languages, mechanical equipment, or tools

(Doyle, 2017). Although the leader does not need to know everything, understanding enough to make good decisions and guide employees is essential (Larson, 2012).

Operational knowledge relates to how team members and leaders accomplish their duties. Operational knowledge refers to the practical understanding of how things are done within the company (Hill & Lineback, 2011). In technical knowledge the leader is concerned with individual tasks; however, in operational knowledge, the leader must focus on how the whole team functions and necessary supports for each individual and department.

Political knowledge refers to how to accomplish tasks in a political environment. Effective leaders use political knowledge to gain necessary resources and attention from higher-ups in the company (Larson, 2012). White et al. (2016) described the steps a leader must accomplish using internal strategies based on political knowledge of the organization. White et al. (2016) suggested looking at the company through four questions:

- What are the key issues internally?
- Who are the individuals or groups that yield power inside the organization?
- Who are the manipulators, and independent thinkers?
- What tends to be persuasive with key opinion makers? (p. 53)

Competence is one necessary component of trust. Employees must believe their leaders are competent in the job to be willing to follow them, take direction, and learn from them.

Consistency. Consistency relates to how stable and reliable an organization's daily actions occur with customers (Weisman, 2016). Horsager (2009) and Tschannen-

Moran (2014) explained consistency as predictability and reliability. In other words, following through on promises. Inconsistency led to distrust whereas trust increased when interactions were reliable (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). An example of inconsistency in schools would be when a principal was constantly distracted and over-committed, and thus failed to follow through with teachers or give equal attention. Blanchard et al. (2013) developed an assessment for trustworthiness and dependability, which paralleled Weisman's (2016) definition of consistency. In the assessment, leaders are asked to measure how often "they do what they say they will do, how timely, organized, accountable for actions, follow up, and how responsive to requests are performed from the leader" (Blanchard et al., 2013, p. 129). Consistency builds trust as employees know they can rely on their leaders.

Concern. Concern measures whether an organization is recognized as caring for its customers, employees, clients, or peers (Weisman, 2016). Caring occurs in activities outside the normal work or school tasks. The relationship is focused more on non-business exchanges between leadership and employees or customers. Non-business transactions build trust due to bonds built. "Concern creates bonds among individuals and adds social purpose to a person's reason to exist" (Weisman, 2016, p. 147). People who show more interest in listening and acting to support others' interests before their own portray a more trustworthy environment (Hurley, 2012). Less trust is formed with self-centered individuals. Leaders who portray their interests as self-centered results in employees with less trust (Hurley, 2012).

Barsade and O'Neill (2014) claimed the results of organizations caring about employees led to higher employee satisfaction and attendance. When SAS Institute

provided an onsite daycare for employees, employee turnover dropped to 2%, which was the lowest in their industry (Zak, 2017). In addition, Zak (2017) found increased engagement, productivity, and joy at work when the organization had a caring environment. Therefore, effective leadership in an organization should increase caring activities to move toward a more productive and innovative environment.

Principals assessed teachers and how much they could be trusted based on their competence, reliability, and commitment; in contrast, teachers assessed principals based on perceptions of caring, integrity, and openness (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Tschannen-Moran (2014) found principals portraying caring behaviors toward staff resulted in staff showing confidence in their leader and a schoolwide culture of trust. Essentially, fostering concern for employees, peers, and communities built trust.

Candor. Candor is a measure of a person's honesty and openness. Weisman (2016) described candor as how the public perceives a corporation's honesty, transparency, and genuineness. When focused on an individual, candor also includes a person's character, integrity, and authenticity (Bennis, Goleman, & O'Toole, 2008; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Trust depends on transparency (Weisman, 2016). Zak (2017) expressed credibility for leadership is maintained if the individual is honest. Moral character has a bearing on public leadership. Horsager (2009) explained trusted individuals such as leaders, teachers, and politicians with high character are honest and foster positive success in organizations, schools, and government. Hurley (2006) also agreed with Horsager and Tschannen-Moran, describing how companies with a solid unifying culture enjoy higher levels of trust–principally if their cultural values include candor, integrity, and fair process compared to organizations without these values.

Dishonest individuals participate in behaviors or activities such as lying, cheating, or stealing. Another form of dishonesty, neglecting to mention the whole truth or leaving out pertinent information also gives the wrong impression (Covey, 2006; White et al., 2016). Open and honest communication is considered the most important trust-building and repairing tool in an organization (Hurley, 2012). Internal and external transparency are more predominant due to the emergence of electronic technology; the free flow of information in and between organizations and stakeholders describes a culture of candor (Bennis et al., 2008). White et al. (2016) listed candor as one category for building and sustaining trust in an organization, whether business or education. As such, candor plays an important role in building and sustaining trust.

Connection. Connection was identified of the most valued relationship between the customer and leader, company, and family. "The potent combination of rational and emotive trust factors build up to the one dimension of self-actualization which requires the participation of customer: connection" (Weisman, 2016, p. 148). Connection is the most difficult trust value for the customer, employee, or leader to achieve because it depends on the other four Cs on the pyramid (Weisman, 2016). The more an individual understands other members' backgrounds, beliefs, ideas, and important information, the greater the level of trust (Horsager, 2009). Hurley (2012) explained team member connections made the most trusting relationships when members knew making a human connection was critical. Randall, Gravier, and Prybutok (2011) explained how connection was rooted in emotional attachment that bolsters the effect of trust and commitment on future intention among customers of a service-intense organization. Connections built bonds between peers, employers, principals, and teachers.

The 5Cs (competency, concern, candor, consistency, and connection) are needed to build trusting relationships. They are necessary to build and sustain trust, but if one of the essentials or dimensions weakens, then the connection is difficult to maintain. Connection is the strongest dimension and without it, trust is short-lived (Weisman, 2016).

K-12 Leadership and Trust

In the education field, the word trust is commonly used but with numerous diverse definitions. The concept of trust was not researched in education as it had been in prior business settings. In school settings, trust was defined as "one's willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent" (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 17). Hoy and Miskel's (2008) model of trust also included benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness, but excluded the focus of vulnerability to others. Louis (2007) defined trust as "Confidence in or reliance on the integrity, veracity, justice, friendship or other sound principal, of another person or group" (p. 2). In addition, Bryk and Schneider (2003) discussed relational trust, which focused on the vulnerability administrations experienced during change. Paralleling to relation trust, Forsyth, Barnes, and Adams (2006) considered the simultaneous relationships with respect to each group's perspective of expectations and obligations. Other authors discussed leadership trust, organizational trust, or faculty trust in the principal, which were central in the relationship between leaders and employee perception of a positive work environment (Engelbrecht, Heine, & Mahembe 2014; Owen, 2018). The definition of trust in had some similar concepts,

providing consistency in the components comprising trust in the educational environment.

History of Principals in K-12 Leadership

Initially in America, schools were unstructured in the areas of administration, academics, and attendance requirements. Rousmaniere (2013) explained Colonial and Early Republic societies funded schools, but lacked common standards, curricula, goals, and administrative practices. Further, Rousmaniere (2007) expressed principalship in America was missing both politically and socially before state school systems were formed. In the early 1800s, the position Principal Teacher was identified to correspond to the development of larger schools with teachers for multiple grade levels, moving away from the single schoolhouse that served all students in a community (Kafka, 2009). The position was predominantly occupied by a male who performed instructional, clerical, and administrative duties, which evolved into the principal and then district superintendent positions (Kafka, 2009; Rousmaniere, 2013). It was during the mid-1800s to the early 1900s urban elementary principals veered away from teaching duties and became leaders of schools (Kafka, 2009; Pierce, 1935; Rousmaniere, 2007, 2013). However, high schools were not developed until the late 19th century. By the 1920s, the modern school principal had more managerial responsibilities communicating duties for teachers, students, and the community (Kafka, 2009). In addition, the principal had to inform the superintendent of all the findings, conclusions, and new ideas proposed to better the school environment. In the 1940s, the school principal continued occupying a managerial position, and in the 1960s and 1970s they began to oversee federal programs (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Hallinger, 1992; Kafka, 2009). From the early days through

today, the principal maintains responsibility as the instructional leader for the school, including mentoring and evaluating teachers (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Hallinger, 1992).

1800s. In the early 1800s until approximately 1860, teachers in America occupied an elementary school position like an unidentified principal title (Rousmaniere, 2013). Teachers worked in one room with multiple levels and ages of students to the early 1800s. Teachers were primarily chosen based on religion and worked by themselves with broad and vague administrative directions (Kafka 2009; Rousmaniere, 2013). The teacher principal position was carried out predominantly by males and the job description included secretarial and administrative tasks to keep the school organized and functioning properly (Kafka 2009; Rousmaniere, 2013). The duties included taking attendance, assigning classes to both students and teachers, conducting discipline, and maintaining the building. However, some elementary academies established principal positions (Rousmaniere 2013).

"In the middle of the nineteenth century a loose collection of government officials and educational reformers developed the outlines of what we now know as common schools" (Rousmaniere 2013, p. 17). America created a hierarchical relationship between district supervised teacher principals or head teachers, which in turn supervised other teachers whom performed for different grades during this era.

During the late 19th century, school founders and principals were largely solitary figures who fended for themselves in their ventures. At this time, leaders were unprotected by any matrix of school structure, dismissed by community members as social outsiders with little claim culturally on the child's lives, and roles overlapped

between principal and superintendent. Their roles consisted of school founder, teacher, fundraiser, and manager (Kafka 2009; Rousmaniere, 2013).

1900s. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, high schools were born. The principal became a separate position from the teacher, giving school leaders easier and more modern ways to supervise schools. The principal position now involved reports, assessments, and interviews of parents and others involved in education reform (Kafka 2009; Rousmaniere, 2013).

In the 1930s, a checklist of qualifications designed for principals was developed (Rousmaniere, 2013). The main characteristic was teaching experience. Principals could hold master's or bachelor's degrees, but experience held greater weight. In California, a principal needed 15 semester hours of college work in the administration area. (Rousmaniere, 2013). Principals linked socially to the community and made the school open to the community by providing different evening activities; adult education, parent-teacher groups, and local community organizations were only a portion of what was expected (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Rousmaniere, 2013).

In the 1950s, America initiated considerable changes for principals, both social and political. Principals needed certification in administrative specialties (Rousmaniere, 2013). Additionally, principals had to "be the person responsible for knowing and applying the highly objective laws and principles that organizational and administrative science are discovering" (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 85). This included being grounded in the minute facts of educational preparation and training (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

During the 1960s school administrators became responsible for management of instruction programs, student enrollment, housekeeping, and teacher oversight (Beck &

Murphy, 1993; Rousmaniere, 2013). By the 1970s, more expectations were added related to community roles. The school leader was expected to interact with community members and participate in political views. In the 1980s, principals were expected to serve as instructional leaders, supervising teachers and students toward productive educational experiences (Beck & Murphy, 1993). The instructional leader was responsible for solving problems, building relationships, and providing resources. Principal positions continue to evolve, building stronger relationships with community members, teachers, parents, and other leaders.

K-12 Educational Leadership and the Role of the Principal

School principals are accountable for leading America's K-12 institutions (Howe, 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). As the lead administrator, principals must establish the school culture, improve teacher efficiency, promote student achievement, keep faculty and students safe, and foster positive learning environments (Louis, Dretzke, & Wahlstrom 2010; Ogens, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Principals must share a vision with students, faculty, and the community that includes fostering an environment of learning among stakeholders (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Other characteristics of administrators include the ability to be calm, cool, and collective under trying situations (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Principals are held accountable for decision-making; thus, they must build trust within their school environments (Howe, 2016; Ogens, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015; Waldron & Mcleskey, 2010).

Establishing school culture means to create structures to support effective teacher preparation and implement teacher driven, job-embedded peer coaching to assist in the professional developments necessary for the school (Moss, 2015). Moss (2015)

explained how principals encounter several barriers as school leader; hurdles include time, training, scheduling, isolation, stress, culture, and trust between leader and employee. Waldron and Mcleskey (2010) also believed success in school improvement was accomplished by improving teaching practices and increasing student achievement, for which increased collaboration was necessary. More collaborative activities in terms of sharing, analyzing, and decision-making helped increase trust and respect among colleagues (Waldron & Mcleskey, 2010).

K-12 Educational Leadership and Trust

Tschannen-Moran (2014) stated, "Without trust schools are unlikely to be successful in their effort to improve and realize their core purpose" (p. x). Tschannen-Moran (2004, 2014) explained the relationship between leadership and staff in the K-12 environment as characteristics of being vulnerable to another individual based on the assumption the other person was benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent. Trust plays an important role for K-12 leadership functions such as the visioning, coaching, managing, and mediating between staff. Trust studies in both elementary and secondary schools revealed a parallel to school improvement in the areas of positively changing the school culture (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Hoy & Tarter, 2004; Louis, 2007; Tarter, Bliss & Hoy 1989; Tschannen-Moran, 2004, 2014; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Tarter et al. (1989) described the level of trust in middle and high schools with principals, how leaders can build trust with staff, and how increased trust related to higher levels of teacher engagement and positive change. Further, after collecting data for three years from five schools, Louis (2007) found trust was an essential resource for school improvement in secondary schools.

Principals and Trust

Ample research was available focusing on the relationship between trust and leadership in education and schools in general. However, K-12 leadership research concentrated on the principal-teacher relationship (Babaogln, 2016; Battle, 2007; Fox et al., 2015; Fromme, 2005; Hogg, 2013; Hoy & Tarter, 2004; Ogens, 2008; Louis, 2007; Louis et al., 2010; Louis & Murphy, 2017; Torres, 2016; Wahnee, 2010). Some studies also examined trust among teachers (Babaogln, 2016; Battle, 2007; Fromme, 2005; Hogg, 2013; Hoy & Tarter, 2004; Louis, 2007; Ogens, 2008) and between teachers and students (Battle, 2007; Salazar, 2016). Battle (2007) found when a teacher was trusted by the principal, they returned that level of trust to colleagues, parents, and the principal. Trust had a positive impact on K-12 schools, as schools with higher levels of trust were shown to be more effective (Battle, 2007, Tschannen- Moran & Gareis, 2015).

Teachers must trust their principals for an extremely successful school culture (Zayim & Kondacki, 2015). Hogg (2013) studied middle school principals and staff in professional learning communities (PLCs). His conclusion was higher trust between teachers and principals fostered better PLCs and development of PLCs built school culture. Tschannen-Moran & Gareis (2015) explained how trustworthiness from the principal linked to "three aspects of a school's culture: academic press, collective teacher efficacy, and teacher professionalism" (p. 267). In addition, Hoy & Tarter (2004) studied 75 middle schools in Ohio for faculty and organizational trust and stated, 'if schools are to prosper and succeed, trust is essential" (p. 253). Scott and Halkias (2016) covered relational trust between teachers and leaders in middle school and found school leaders needed tactics for developing relational trust to enable school improvement. Despite the

few studies that examined principal trust so far, research specifically examining middle school leaders is insufficient. The current studies lack a specific definition to trust and often focused more on PLCs (Hogg, 2013).

Principal role in building trusting relationships. Trust was extremely important to school success (Battle, 2007; Dinham 2005; Fox et al., 2015; C. Patton, 2017; Salazar, 2016; Wahnee, 2010). Trust created a positive learning culture, which led to greater success and outcomes (Dinham, 2005; Fox et al., 2015). In addition, C. Patton (2017) specifically studied a middle school environment and found a new principal entering a school must build trust, respect, and support from all the staff. Another study with elementary and middle school principals was performed by Ogens (2008) and showed building trust was essential, especially for transformational leaders. Transformational leadership provided leaders the ability to motivate and inspire stakeholders during change. Northfield (2014) studied building trust for principals in middle school, but his focus was on new principals. Other studies of secondary schools explained how trust from principals and teachers was greater when the principal and teachers were performing their duties and meeting expectations (Wahnee, 2010), which also related to positive school values, relationships, and student achievement (Battle, 2007; Fox et al., 2015; Wahnee, 2010). Principals could increase trust through engaging in positive social interactions both within and outside the school (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Johnson et al., 2005).

Principal role as a transformational leader. Trust is a pertinent factor in the relationship between transformational leaders and their followers, stakeholders, or employees (Burke et al., 2007; Northouse, 2016). Tschannen-Moran (2003) explained

principals and staff must perform greater than the minimum criteria to enact change and function effectively as a school. Principals who engaged in transformational leadership were better at motivating and getting the most from their teachers, often encouraging them to work beyond their job description and give more than expected (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). As a transformational leader, the principal motivated staff by setting a clear vision and focusing on students (Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Transformational change leaders require focus on both internal and external dynamics (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). They must reflect and work on their own emotional intelligence to build trust and empower their followers.

Summary

The review of the literature concentrated on trust between principals and their staff and the use of the 5Cs: competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection. Tschannen-Moran (2004, 2014) described theories of trust related to benevolence, honesty, competence, openness, and reliability, which was the closest research in education related to the 5Cs. However, the research lacked studies that examined the 5Cs in connection with each other. To fill the gap, the researcher examined the 5Cs to understand trust with principals in the middle schools.

Ample research was available focusing on the relationship between trust and leadership in education and schools in general. Trust was studied between teachers and principals, teachers and teachers, and teachers and students. Trust was important to all stakeholders in a school environment if the outcome desired was functioning productively (Tschannan-Moran, 2014). Trust was considered important for building a positive school culture that provided an environment for increased achievement and

social emotional development for students (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). However, there was a lack of clarity about the definition of trust and how trust is developed in the context of the school environment.

Chapter II was a critical review of the literature associated with the research problem related to trust based on whether the 5Cs could be built and sustained in schools. The concept of trust was discussed as essential in leadership, specifically as a principal and success in school and was conferred by scholarly theorists. However, little is known about trust on how middle school principals build and sustain trust using the 5Cs with key stakeholders.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Chapter III presents the study methodology. Roberts (2010) explained the methodology portion of a dissertation thoroughly illustrates how the study was administered. An explanatory mixed-methods study was used to analyze how middle school principals in American public schools established trust with their staff using the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency (5Cs; Weisman, 2010). This study also ascertained middle school principals' perceived level of importance of the 5Cs for building trust.

This chapter begins with a reiteration of the purpose statement and research questions. The quantitative and qualitative research design and rationale for a mixed-methods study follows. Next the population and sample are presented. The chapter then describes the process to develop the data collection instruments. As this was an empirical study, the procedure used to collect data from participants are detailed along with the data analysis procedures. This chapter concludes with a description of the study limitations and a summary pertaining to the methodology used in the research study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed-methods study was to identify and describe how middle school principals established trust with teachers using the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency (Weisman, 2010). In addition, it was the purpose of this study to determine middle school principals' perceived degree of importance of the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection for building trust.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of connection?

2. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of concern?

3. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of candor?

4. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of competence?

5. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of consistency?

6. How do middle school principals perceive the degree of importance for the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection for building trust?

Research Design

The research design utilized in this study to identify and describe how middle school principals establish trust with their staff was an explanatory mixed-method study. An explanatory mixed-methods study design uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to perform a more detailed examination. Creswell (2015) explained how the mixed-methods researcher provided "statistical trends with stories" integrating quantitative data with personal experiences, which results in a better understanding of the research problem compared to using only one method by itself (Creswell, 2015, p. 2).

Similarly, Roberts (2010) contended using qualitative and quantitative data combined *what* with *why*, which delivered power and richness to explain the data.

The mixed-method study used a sequential explanatory approach, which first gathered and analyzed quantitative data then followed-up with qualitative data to help explain the quantitative findings. However, the information received in the quantitative data was not used for the creation of the interview questions. Rather, the qualitative data helped provide clear explanation and interpretation of the quantitative results (Creswell, 2015; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

The quantitative portion of the study was accomplished by having principals participate in a digital survey with a distinct set of predefined responses options. The quantitative survey assessed the principals' professed degree of importance of the 5Cs for building trust. The qualitative portion of the mixed-methods study involved face-to-face interviews with the same middle school principals. Therefore, the sequential explanatory design consisted of the assistance of interview data to explain and interpret the digital survey data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Quantitative Research Design

"The quantitative research design focuses on objectivity in measuring and describing a phenomenon" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 21). The quantitative research approach typically starts with a theory that leads to a hypothesis or comprehensive questions for inquiry (Creswell, 2015; Roberts, 2010). The next steps include drafting corresponding research questions with a set of variables to compare and identify any differences by gathering quantifiable data on close-ended scales (Creswell, 2015; Roberts, 2010).

Patten (2012) stated, "Quantitative researchers are able to work with large samples because objective measures such as anonymous, objective questionnaires usually are easy to administer to large numbers of participants in a short amount of time" (p. 23). The quantitative research was performed by administering a digital survey through Survey Monkey to 12 middle school principals to assess their professed degree of importance for the 5Cs for building trust. However, the in-depth understanding of the quantitative values was better understood through the qualitative portion of the study.

Qualitative Research Design

A qualitative design is where the researcher learns from participants by posing general, open-ended questions allowing the individuals in the study to provide information without constraints (Creswell, 2015). Qualitative data collection was through face-to-face interviews pertaining to the 12 principals' experiences with trust in relation to the 5Cs. Scripted, open-ended interview questions were used to inquire and collect "verbatim quotations with sufficient context to be interpretable" (Patton, 2015, p. 14). The interviews were transcribed and coded.

Method Rationale

Fifteen peer researchers participated in a thematic study across an interdisciplinary set of organizations including K-12 schools, superintendents and board members, non-profit organizations, and military agencies to explore leadership and establishment of trust in their organizations using the 5Cs. The large group of thematic researchers worked in smaller teams consisting of 4-6 researchers with each team using different methodologies. The researcher for this specific study was a part of a six-member team who used an explanatory mixed-methods study to identify and describe

how K-12 principals established trust with staff using the 5Cs. All six K-12 researchers used the same methodology, an explanatory mixed-methods study, and interview and survey questions, which allowed the researchers to examine the breadth and depth of the phenomenon studied using both quantitative and qualitative methods. This mixed-methods study approach addressed the gap in the literature regarding the 5Cs and principal sustainability of trust.

Population

A population was defined as a "group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events that concern to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 129). Salkind (2014) and Roberts (2010) had a more direct definition as all the possible or total groups of interest. Creswell (2003) described a population as, "A group of individuals who comprise the same characteristics" (p. 644). The population for this study was middle school principals. Principals serve as the top administrator in a school setting. Although principals serve several roles in this position, one important role is to build strong relationships with teachers, counselors, other staff members, parents, students, and the community (Rieg & Marcoline, 2008).

In the United States in 2014-15, there were 24,181 public secondary schools, with typically one principal per school (NCES, 2017). This population had to be reduced due to the scattered geographic distances and costs to perform the research; therefore, the population was narrowed geographically to California. California had 1,296 public middle schools in the 2017-18 school year (CDE, 2018). With nearly 1,300 schools, this

size again was too great for the researcher examine. Refining of the population resulted in a target population.

Target Population

The target population was defined as the portion of the overall population narrowed to specific participants with explicit characteristics of concern and relevance (Creswell, 2003). The target population was the total group of individuals from whom the sample might be drawn, and the sampling frame was the list of sampling units from which the sample was selected (Creswell, 2003; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). McMillan and Schumacher (2010) explained the necessity for the researcher to "carefully define both the target population and the sampling frame" (p. 129). The target population was set as principals employed at middle schools with 50 miles of Brandman University to facilitate face-to-face interviews. More specifically, the target population was narrowed to middle school principals in Orange and Riverside Counties. In Orange County, 23 of 27 districts included 77 middle schools and in Riverside County 22 of 23 districts included 52 middle schools. Therefore, the target population was the principals from the 45 districts with middle schools.

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Sample

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A sample was defined as a subset or a portion of a population (Salkind, 2014). Similarly, McMillan and Schumacher (2010) described the sample as a "group of individuals from whom data are collected, often representative of a specific population" (p. 490). From the target population, a sample needed to be selected. Purposeful or purposive sampling referred to purposefully select participants representative of the population based on their experience with the phenomenon (Creswell, 2015; McMillan &

Schumacher, 2010). Purposeful sampling allowed the researcher to focus on the characteristics of middle school principals. "Convenience sampling is a nonprobability method of selecting subjects who are accessible or available" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 486). In convenience sampling, participants are readily available, making it an inexpensive, simple way to sample. In convenience sampling, "Researchers infer that the characteristics of the sample probably are the characteristics of the population" (Patten, 2012, p. 45).

Sample selection began with the target population of middle school principals in Orange and Riverside Counties. The researcher then used convenience and purposeful sampling to identify participants. To participate in the study, principals needed a minimum of three years experience at their current school and needed to be willing to participate. The researcher selected 12 principals to participate in the study. More specifically, four participants each were selected representing three different school districts, two from Orange County and one from Riverside County.

Instrumentation

Instrumentation and measures are considered having the same definition when discussing a researcher's study (Patten, 2012). For this study, a survey was administered and interviews were conducted. The survey was developed by the team of six peer researchers examining trust and the 5Cs in K-12 principals. The questions were derived from the literature, reviewed by the team, and approved by two experts in qualitative instrument development. The survey was comprised of 30 items asking principals to rate the level of importance of the 5Cs in developing and sustaining trust (Appendix B).

For the qualitative portion, an interview protocol was developed (Appendix C). The scripted questions and support guide for the qualitative interviews were developed by the larger 15 group of peer researchers participating in the thematic study across K-12 schools, superintendents and board members, non-profit organizations, and military agencies. The qualitative questions explored leadership and establishment of trust in organizations using the 5Cs.

Researcher as an Instrument of the Study

Pezalla, Pettigrew, and Miller-Day (2012) contended the researcher interpreted empirical materials, which was an attribute of the instrument. Similarly, Xu and Storr (2012) agreed the researcher was the instrument, but the inquirer's focus was also on the researcher being the medium. Through the inquiry, the researcher created an atmosphere where participants feel free to voluntarily answer questions and reveal stories about phenomena. However, this introduces bias based on the researcher's ability, charisma, and interview style (Pezalla et al., 2012; Xu & Storr, 2012).

To increase credibility, it should be noted the investigator of this study was employed as a staff member in the K-12 environment, specifically middle school and high school. Therefore, the researcher generated a potential bias to the study based on her personal role as a lead teacher in the education environment. Multiple steps were taken to limit researcher bias. The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with middle school principals with whom she was unfamiliar and utilized a digital recorder to capture the questions and responses.

Quantitative Instrumentation

In quantitative studies, researchers use close-ended, scaled items to gather numerical data (Creswell, 2015; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The instrument used was constructed and reviewed by six peer researchers exploring K-12 education and one doctoral chair. Two peer researchers were surveying elementary school principals, two middle school principals, and two high school principals. The survey consisted of questions designed from the literature review and definitions already constructed with peer collaboration. Collaborative discussions and Google drive edits with peers and a faculty member led to the development of the survey draft using a six-point response scale. After the first draft, each team member received one of the 5Cs to check for consistency and clarity of the questions. All six peers and the faculty member evaluated and edited each draft. Once the draft was prepared, the survey was field tested by each of the six peer researchers. For the field test, each peer researcher administered the survey to a principal who met the study criteria but was excluded from the study. Rather, the field test participants provided feedback to the researchers about the clarity of the questions and the time required to complete the survey. Based on the field test, no changes were required and the survey was considered finalized. After the survey was finalized, all six peer researchers received a copy to administer to his or her sample.

Qualitative Instrumentation

"Interviews, observation, questionnaires, document review and audiovisual materials" are five predominant methods for collecting data for qualitative research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 343). For the qualitative portion of this study, 15 peer researchers agreed on conducting and contributed to instrument development. The

group created four teams that collaboratively developed the definitions and items for the 5Cs. The interviews were conducted using a standardized open-ended, semi structured process agreed upon by the peer researchers. The semi-structured interview questions and probing questions were generated to obtain more detail as needed. The interview items were used to clarify the relationship of the 5Cs to trust and provide descriptive data based on the personal experiences of principals building trust in a middle school environment.

The 15 peer researchers participated in collaborate development and revision of the interview questions until the questions corresponded directly to the 5Cs. After several edits, the team prepared an interview protocol to be field tested.

Field Testing

The scripted interview questions were created for the 15 peer researchers on a thematic team exploring leadership and trust using the 5Cs. However, for this field test the peer researchers working in their smaller groups of 4-6 focused on a specific population, in this case, K-12 principals.

A field test is necessary to assess bias in the procedures, interviewer, and questions, and identify defects, limitations, or weaknesses (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). A field test is also a means to establish reliability and to practice obtaining detailed information and using probing questions or prompts (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). A field test was completed to gather feedback about questions and find errors. The field test participant met the criteria of the study but were not involved in the actual study. Each member of the six-person team conducted a field test with a K-12 principal. During the field test, the researchers asked all 10 questions in the same sequence to be

used for the study. The pilot interview was also observed by a professional researcher with a doctoral degree and years of experience conducting qualitative and quantitative studies. After the field test interview, the participant answered additional questions about the clarity of interview items, the process, and if there were any suggestions to improve the clarity of the question. The observer assessing the investigator answered the same questions as the interviewee, but also provided feedback to improve the researcher's methods to ask detailed questions. Following the field tests of all six peer researchers, a meeting was held to review the feedback and revise the wording of questions as needed. During this activity, the questions, probes, and prompts were altered, finalized, and prepared for institutional review. The final qualitative interview questions were used to conduct interviews with 12 middle school principals.

Validity

Validity in research pertains to the precision of an instrument measuring the findings accurately; common types of validity include construct, internal, and external (M. Patton, 2015; Roberts, 2010).

Content Validity

For an instrument to have content validity, the researcher depends on the fundamental construction of the instrument to clearly measure what was intended to be measured (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Content validity is especially important when the test includes low face validity for measurement of domains such as tests of honesty. Content validity is based on assessments by experts in the field (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). For this study, the survey and scripted interview questions were

developed by the peer researchers and reviewed by four experts in qualitative instrument development to ensure the items were aligned with trust and the 5Cs.

Criterion Validity

Criterion validity "determines whether the scores from an instrument are a good predictor of some outcome they are expected to predict" (Creswell, 2005, p. 165). The thematic team members worked to gain consensus from the field test phase about both the interview protocol and survey questions. The team meet with faculty chairs to clarify field test feedback and adjust both instrument as needed. The protocol was revised based on feedback from the pilot test. Two scripted questions and two prompts were reworded, and the order of the questions were revised.

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Reliability

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Reliability refers to consistency and obtaining the same response at different times (Roberts, 2010). In qualitative inquiry the researcher is the main instrument for data collection; therefore, the investigator must list any potential bias or errors that occurred (Patton 2015). The first step in establishing reliability was the field testing of both the qualitative and quantitative instruments (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). In this study, interview questions and the script provided an increased opportunity for reliability as the researchers provided the same questions for every interviewee to ensure consistency in how questions were asked. Reliability was also increased by having principals check their transcriptions for accuracy.

Intercoder Reliability

Intercoder reliability is a widely used term for an independent researcher double-coding data to determine if both researchers reached the same conclusions (Patton, 2015).

For this thematic study, the six peer researchers paired up and performed intercoder reliability checks for each other. A peer researcher double coded 10% of the data to establish an 80% or greater reliability. Any discrepancies were discussed to ensure greater reliability in the data.

Data Collection

This explanatory mixed-methods study involved qualitative and quantitative data. A survey was used to collect quantitative data and interviews were used to collect qualitative data. Before any data collection was completed, the researcher applied for and received approval from the Brandman University Institutional Review Board (IRB). IRB approval ensured the rights of the participants were protected throughout the study. The participant electronically signed a form to confirm their consent in participating in the study (Appendix B). The steps used to collect data were:

1. Principals who fit the study criteria were contacted by phone at their school site to explain the purpose, benefits, and possible risks of joining the study. Upon agreement to participate in the study, a letter providing information and consent was sent to the principal.

2. After agreeing to participate, the principal was sent a link to the survey.

3. Once the survey was completed, the researcher scheduled a 60-minute interview with each principal.

4. Interviews were conducted at the place and time arranged with the participant. The interviews were recorded on a digital device, transcribed, and prepared for analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis included analyzing and interpreting the data from the quantitative and qualitative approaches to answer the six research questions guiding this study. The quantitative data were collected through an online survey and the qualitative data were collected through face-to-face interviews. The data were gathered from middle school principals in Orange and Riverside Counties. The quantitative data were gathered first and qualitative data collection followed. After completion of both data collection approaches, the data were analyzed revealing the findings.

Quantitative Data Analysis

As the intent of this study was to describe principal perceptions about trust and the 5Cs, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The survey questions focused on the degree of importance the principal placed on each of the 5Cs for building trust. A 6-point scale for response options was used in which 1 = *Very Unimportant*, 2 = *Unimportant*, 3 = *Somewhat Unimportant*, 4 = *Somewhat Important*, 5 = *Important*, and 6 = *Very Important*. For each question, Survey Monkey calculated the arithmetic mean, median, mode, range, and frequency of responses. These descriptive statistics were used as measures of central tendency to explore how the principals rated the importance of the 5Cs in building and sustain trust with faculty members.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data analysis began by preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then coding and condensing the codes into themes for interpretation. The data were gathered from 12 face-to-face interviews that were recorded and transcribed. Steps in the data analyzing process:

1. The researcher reviewed transcriptions by playing the recording and comparing the text

2. Transcripts were uploaded to NVivo and reviewed

3. The uploaded transcriptions were reviewed again and an initial set of codes were generated

4. The data were coded using the initial codes, with additional codes added as needed

5. Frequencies of codes were calculated in in relationship to the 5Cs

6. Codes were grouped and consolidated into larger themes that became the basis of the findings

According to Patton (2015), "Triangulation of data sources within and across different qualitative methods means comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times and by different means from interviews, observations, and documents" (p. 662). After all interviews were transcribed, the researcher triangulated findings across the descriptive data from the survey and themes that emerged from the interviews and literature review. The theoretical framework and 5Cs helped guide the triangulation process.

Limitations

Limitations are specific characteristics of a study not directly controlled by the researcher that possibly impact the researcher's ability to generalize the findings of the study (Roberts, 2010). This thematic study was conducted concurrently by six peer researchers who used the same methodological style and instrumentation. The six researchers focused on leadership at different levels of K-12 education. Although this

improved the validity and reliability of the findings, several limitations existed: time, geography, sample size, interviews, and researcher as an instrument.

Time

Time was a limitation to the study due to the approval time of IRB and need to finish the study. In addition, the interviews had to be completed within 60 minutes to be respectful to principals. Additionally, the researcher did not have control over the scheduling of the interviews with the principals, so occasionally the interview times were reduced. Also, due to time constraints, the survey was sent to principals who first agreed to participate, potentially creating bias.

Geography

California had 1,296 middle schools operating in the 2017-18 school year. Due to the geographical constraints based on the need for face-to-face interviews, the sample distance was within 50 miles of the University. This reduction in distance allowed the researcher to conduct the 12 interviews closer to home but limited the generalizability of the findings.

Sample Size

To keep data collection manageable, the sample size was limited to 12 participants. The sample size was determined during the collaboration of all four thematic teams. The small sample size limited the generalizability of the findings.

Interviews

The researcher used semi-structured interviews with scripted questions determined by the peer researchers. This made it difficult to determine if the interviewees had the same perspective as the researcher related to the questions

(McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Patton, 2015). Additionally, data were limited to the openness and honesty of the participants and what they were willing to share during interviews.

Researcher as an Instrument of the Study

With qualitative data collection, the researcher is known as the instrument of the study (Patten, 2012; Patton, 2015; Xu & Storr, 2012), which could lead to credibility issues. In addition, the researcher conducted training sessions as a leader in the organization. To help maintain neutrality and increase credibility, the middle school principals were accurately quoted throughout the presentation of findings to provide examples using their own words. Although the researcher took measures to reduce limitations, personal bias, emotional state, human error, and the desire to complete the study were all factors.

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Summary

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Chapter III presented the research methodology used to conduct this study. It consisted of the research design, population, sample, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis procedures. Chapter IV presents the findings derived from the data analysis. Lastly, Chapter V provides a summary of the findings, conclusions, implications for actions, and concluding remarks from the researcher.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Chapter IV opens with a brief overview providing a structure of reference and understanding of the qualitative and quantitative data revealed in this chapter. The chapter reiterated the purpose statement, research questions, and methodology, including a summary of the data collection procedures, population, and sample. Chapter IV then details comprehensive report of the results of the research study.

This explanatory mixed-methods study analyzed how middle school principals in American public schools established trust with their staff using the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency (5Cs; Weisman, 2010). This study also ascertained middle school principals' perceived level of importance of the 5Cs for building trust. The data from the quantitative surveys measured the principals' perceived degree of importance of the 5Cs for building trust with staff, whereas the qualitative data explored the perceptions of trust with middle school principals using the 5Cs in a narrative format.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed-methods study was to identify and describe how middle school principals established trust with teachers using the 5Cs (Weisman, 2010). In addition, it was the purpose of this study to determine middle school principals' perceived degree of importance of the 5Cs for building trust.

Research Questions

1. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of connection?

2. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of concern?

3. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of candor?

4. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of competence?

5. How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of consistency?

6. How do middle school principals perceive the degree of importance for the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection for building trust?

Research Methodology and Data Collection Procedures

The explanatory mixed-methods study design used quantitative and qualitative methods to perform a more detailed examination. This study consisted of 15 peer researchers applying the trust framework from the business sector to the education region. The peer researchers participated in a thematic study across an interdisciplinary set of organizations including K-12 schools, superintendents and board members, non-profits, and military agencies. Six of the 15 researchers delved into K-12 education to identify and describe how principals established trust with their staff. Two of the researchers studied elementary school, two studied middle school, and two studied high school principals using the same survey and interview questions for the investigation.

The quantitative portion of the study was accomplished by having 12 principals complete a survey developed by the team of six peer researchers examining K-12

education. The quantitative survey assessed the degree of importance of the 5Cs for building trust. The same 12 principals also participated in face-to-face interviews to gather more data regarding their perceptions of the 5Cs.

Population

The population for this study was middle school principals as they serve as the top administrator in a school setting. In the United States in 2014-15, there were 24,181 public secondary schools, with typically one principal per school (NCES, 2017). This population had to be reduced due geographic distances and costs to perform the research; therefore, the population was narrowed geographically to California. California had 1,296 public middle schools in the 2017-18 school year (CDE, 2018). With nearly 1,300 schools, this size again was too great for the researcher examine. Refining of the population resulted in a target population. The target population was narrowed to middle school principals in Orange and Riverside Counties. In Orange County, 23 of 27 districts included 77 middle schools and in Riverside County 22 of 23 districts included 52 middle schools. Therefore, the target population was the principals from the 45 districts with middle schools.

Sample

The researcher then used convenience and purposeful sampling to identify participants. All principals participating in the study met at least 5 of the 7 following criteria:

1. Principal was employed at a school with a minimum of 30 staff members within Orange or Riverside County

2. Principal participant has a minimum of three years of experience at his or her current site

3. A minimum of five years in the profession

4. Membership in professional associations in their field

5. Evidence of leading a successful organization

6. Articles, paper, or materials written, published, or presented at conferences or association meetings

7. Principal was willing to be a participant and agreed to the informed

More specifically, six participants from each county were selected representing four different school districts, two from Orange County and two from Riverside County. Table 1 shows how each participant met the research criteria.

Table 1

Selection Criteria met by Principals

	Principals											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Criterion 1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Criterion 2	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Criterion 3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Criterion 4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Criterion 5	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Criterion 6												
Criterion 7	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Demographic Data

Twelve middle school principals were selected to participate in this study. All principals considered for this study were selected due to their qualifications meeting the criteria defined by the researcher's thematic team. From Riverside County, five middle school principals were from Corona-Norco Unified School District and one was from

Moreno Valley Unified School District. From Orange County, three principals were

from Saddleback Valley Unified School District, one from Huntington Beach Unified

School District, one from Anaheim Union High School District, and one from Brea

Olinda School District. Seven of the participants were male and five were female.

<h2 align="center">Presentation and Analysis of Data</h2>

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected related to the six research

questions. This section presents the data analysis pertaining to both the qualitative and

quantitative findings. The findings from the interviews and surveys are described below

in relation to each of the research questions.

Findings for Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was: *How do middle school principals establish trust with

staff through the domain of connection*? For this study, connection was defined as how

well employees related to each other. Weisman (2016) explained connection "is all about

creating emotional engagement" (p. 149). The two interview questions posed by the

researcher related to the domain of connection were: (1) "How have you developed

positive relationships and rapport with your staff?" and (2) "In what ways have you

developed shared values with your staff?" Both questions were used to understand how

the middle school principals establish trust through the domain of connection. From the

first inquiry, five themes became apparent: meeting staff needs, listening to staff,

maintaining an open-door-policy, connecting on a personal level, and maintaining regular

communication (Table 2).

Table 2

Principal Behaviors to Develop Positive Relationships and Rapport

Major Themes	n	# References to Theme
Meeting Staff Needs	11	16
Listening to Staff	9	13
Maintaining an Open-door Policy	9	11
Connecting on a Personal Level	8	17
Maintaining Regular Communication	8	12

Meeting staff needs. The middle school principal's ability to meet staff needs was the most common theme related to building relationships and rapport, stated by 11 of 12 participants and referenced 16 times. This concept was highlighted by Principal 2 who stated, "I think the first thing is to know I am going to address their concerns. The other area is to give the staff what they need." Similarly, Principal 6 suggested, "Visiting their team time, talking to them, finding out if there is anything I can do to help them, support them." Meeting their needs helped develop trust and staff knew they could count on their principals.

Listening to staff. Nine of the 12 principals interviewed stated listening to staff was an essential behavior to develop positive relationships and rapport with staff. For example, Principal 3 noted, "The biggest thing you have to do is listen, and just listen." Likewise, Principal 7 said, "I think it's critical not just to ask for the opinions, but actually to be responsive and a good listener." Listening to staff was the second most common theme referenced 13 times, showing its importance to building connections.

Maintaining an open-door policy. Nine principals also explained maintaining an open-door policy was relative to trust and connection, which was referenced 11 times during the interviews. Having an open-door policy related to being available and

accessible to the staff. Principal 8 shared, "I think the biggest thing is to be available.

For me, personally, my staff know I have a very open-door policy." This sentiment was

echoed by Principal 10 who commented, "I think a big part of [connecting] is just

listening to people, being open and available. Thus, maintaining an open-door policy was

essential to developing trust through connection.

 Connecting on a personal level. Eight of the 12 principals reported connecting

with staff on a personal level directly related to trust and connection. For example,

Principal 9 shared, "It's more about really each other as people. You have to maintain

professionalism to an extent. But we are also people." Principal 4 contended "I think it's

building those personal connections and doing those special things to celebrate them as

individuals." Small celebrations, asking about family, and remembering birthdays were

associated with connecting on a personal level. Although only mentioned by eight

principals, this theme was referenced 17 times, making it the more referenced theme

related to building rapport and trust.

 Maintaining regular communication. How principals communicated varied

greatly but communicating to staff often was a shared value. Principal 9 explained,

"Whether it is talking about family, talking about things they are interested in, asking

them about something I saw in the classroom, or something kids have told me, they're

doing in their classroom, just really communicating." Principal 11 also described the

importance of regular communication, sharing,

  Making sure you said hello to people, ask them how their people was, that

  type of thing, and checking with them to make sure that you see every

person on your staff, that you kind of check in and take advantage of moments in time.

Maintaining regular communication was considered a key piece for middle school principal's development of trust within the domain of connection, as it was referenced 12 times by eight of the principals.

From the second interview question related to connection was: *In what ways have you developed shared values with your staff*? Three common themes were identified: maintaining regular communication, developing shared values together, and referencing the mission and vision.

Table 3

Developing Shared Values

Major Themes	n	# References to Theme
Maintaining Regular Communication	11	22
Developing Shared Values Together	10	14
Referencing the Mission and Vision	7	13

Maintaining regular communication. Maintaining regular communication was a common theme for building rapport and developing shared values, highlighting its importance to the domain of connection. Communication helped identify shared values. This was highlighted by Principal 4 who said, "Through conversation and dialogue, we discovered what we value…But what we solidified for us through those conversations and the dialogue and the voting and the debate and the honesty, was that we valued opportunities for our kids." Principal 2 suggested, "Build up those conversation to gain the trust." This theme was noted by 11 of the 12 principals and referenced 22 times, showing the importance of regular communication to make connections and build trust.

Developing shared values together. Ten principals suggested developing

school-level shared values as a method to create a common vision and build trust. This

theme was referenced 14 times, including by Principal 2 who shared, "We get that

information collected and then we talk about how do we prioritize our shared values,

creating professional development opportunities, creating coaching opportunities,

reflecting on best teaching practices, and then restarting that evolution all again."

Principal 1 also explained, "For me, shared values is critical and it's also a way to

empower your professional learning community, not only your students and your staff,

but your community."

Referencing the mission and vision. Middle school principals establish shared

values by developing mission and vision statements and consistently referring to them.

Referencing the school mission and vision was noted by seven middle school principals,

such as Principal 6 who said, "We really looked at what the teachers really valued about

what we were doing so far and put that into a vision statement.

Findings for Research Question 2

The second research question was: *How do middle school principals establish*

trust with staff through the domain of concern? For this study, concern was defined by

the value placed on the well-being of all members of an organization, promoting their

welfare at work and emphasizing their needs. Concern entailed fostering a collaborative

and safe environment where team members could show vulnerability, offer support, and

motivate and care for each other. Weisman (2016) found showing concern was done by

distinctly focusing on relationships and human needs before concentrating on the

business transaction part of work.

The two interview questions posed by the researcher related to the domain of concern were: (1) "Tell me about some of the ways that you show you care for your staff and their wellbeing?" and (2) "What are some of the ways you create a collaborative work environment for your staff?" Both questions were used to understand how the middle school principals establish trust through the domain of concern. From the first inquiry, four common themes emerged: meeting staff needs, listening to staff, maintaining an open-door-policy, and maintaining regular communication (Table 4).

Table 4

Behaviors Demonstrating Caring for Staff Well-Being

Major Themes	n	# References to Theme
Meeting Staff Needs	12	22
Listening to Staff	11	13
Maintaining an Open-Door Policy	8	9
Maintaining Regular Communication	7	10

Meeting staff needs. Meeting staff needs was the most common behavior principals used to demonstrate caring for staff well-being. This theme was mentioned by all 12 principals and referenced 22 times. Meeting staff needs was a strategy used to show concern, as Principal 6 explained,

We have a teacher that had a heart attack this year, so I kept in touch with him, just to find out what he is doing, whether he is okay. If there are people here on site that have issues and they need to leave, we will go sub their class. Whatever we need to do, really, just to make them understand we're here to support you.

Another principal showed staff needs were met by,

> Doing things on an individual basis, asking about their families, checking
>
> in with them, asking about the things they're working on at school,
>
> validating the work they are doing, asking them what support they needs,
>
> checking with their secondary chairs for their departments, and providing
>
> other resources to help them.

Listening to staff. Listening to staff was another way to demonstrate concern for staff wellbeing linked to trust. Eleven of the 12 principals spoke about listening to staff as an important behavior or strategy for demonstrating concern of wellbeing. A strategy conveyed by Principal 4 was explained how a school wide change desired by all staff would not have occurred without listening to them. This principal shared,

> We used to have two lunches and we needed to go to one lunch to fit in
>
> the schedule. And staff 100% we were all on board for one lunch. And
>
> then the last minute, we had some district administration and some school
>
> board leadership that did not like the idea of one lunch. And I think what
>
> my staff saw was my fight for them… What I've done for them,
>
> advocating for them. Really listening to what they wanted.

Maintaining an open-door policy. Maintaining an open-door policy is also a strategy expressed by eight principals and referenced nine times. This was highlighted by a principal who shared having an open-door policy created accessibility, adding,

> Each and every day I care for my staff. I let them know how I feel both
>
> personally and professionally and that open line of communication and
>
> that transparency… I always remind my staff, "Is there anything I can be

of assistance? Is there anything I can do to help make you the best?"

Whether it's training, whether it's resources, whether it's looking at their

class sizes, looking at opportunities.

Middle school principals believed having an open-door policy showed concern for

staff because they were always available to meet staff needs. For example, one principal

said, "It's being open to providing whatever support I can, whether it's having some

flexibility for what they need, [such as] 'I can't make the staff meeting today because I

have a doctor's appointment. I'm not feeling well,' or, 'I have to go pick up my kids.'"

Maintaining regular communication. Maintaining regular communication was

described as a strategy for demonstrating caring for staff wellbeing. This strategy was

described by seven principals and referenced 10 times during the interviews. One middle

school principal's behavioral description for this theme was expressed as,

In January, we just did a team building activity that was a lot about New

Year's resolutions. And picking ones that mattered for our wellbeing,

health, having those after school luncheons and parties, that downtime

where you can connect as a staff that isn't just school or work driven.

The second interview question related to the domain on concern was: *What are*

some of the ways you create a collaborative work environment for your staff? As shown

in Table 5, this question generated five themes: meeting staff needs, using a shared

leadership approach, serving as a coach, analyzing data together, and offering flex time

and common preps.

Table 5

Developing a Collaborative Work Environment

Major Themes	n	# References to Theme
Meeting Staff Needs/Providing Resources	8	11
Using a Shared Leadership Approach	6	12
Serving as a Coach	6	10
Analyzing Data Together	6	9
Offering Flex-time and Common Preps	6	7

Meeting staff needs/providing resources. In terms of building a collaborative work environment, principals groups meeting staff needs with providing resources. Meeting staff needs through providing resources was mentioned by eight principals and referenced 11 times. Providing resources showed concern for staff. For example, Principal 4 said,

I'm a leader that chooses to always say usually yes. I really don't find a situation where a teacher or staff member hasn't come to me with an idea that, of course, supports kids or something for their program and that I've said no to. My first answer is usually yes and we can always figure out the details later.

Several principals also discussed the costs associated with creating a collaborative environment related to resources. Principal 6 described paying for every teacher to be provided a substitute so they could have a collaboration day. Similarly, Principal 12 stated,

It cost me $150 a day for a substitute to come into a classroom to allow teachers to get together. Last year I told all the teachers you guys get four days of collaboration this year and it cost me a lot of money. But I believe

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that you can find the priorities of a school with their budget and their

master schedule, because that's where you're allocating your resources.

Using a shared leadership approach. A shared leadership approach was another

theme described by six principals and was references 12 times. Principal 6 explained

how their leadership teams wanted a collaborative environment with the administration

present, saying, "Teachers are nicer to one another when administration is in the room."

Principal 4 described this theme in the context of collaboration, commenting,

I think by giving staff opportunities to be true leaders on their campus,

making those hard decisions, again, grounded by the shared vision and

obviously our values. I think when you allow them and give them that

respect and responsibility to lead something they're very passionate about,

you get a very collaborative team effort.

Serving as a coach. Serving as a coach was suggested by six principals and

referenced 10 times during interviews. Principals described providing coaching during

teacher evaluations related to behaviors of concern furthered their learning. Providing

coaching to teachers was also shared and not just the responsibility of the principals. One

example came from Principal 1 who explained, "If for whatever reason you didn't feel

like you've got enough training or coaching from that evaluation, then you can work one-

on-one with our academic coach that can go even deeper or define what exactly it is that

it's going to take you to be at your best or your fullest potential no matter what subject

you're in. That's very powerful."

Analyzing data together. Analyzing data together was another theme for

collaboration related to concern. Six principals suggested this behavior for building

collaboration, referencing it nine times. In relation to analyzing data together, Principal 1 said, "On flex days, students go home early and teachers have time to articulate and plan and collaborate on best teaching practices, analyzing data, creating smart goals." Principal 2 talked about his goal to have teachers collaborate and analyze data, noting,

> My principal goal is around the data team cycle. To really doing a solid
>
> unit where they're working together, pre-testing the students, analyzing
>
> the results and looking at the data, finding the areas of weakness or their
>
> areas that are working well, and then strategically designing lessons that
>
> address those areas, and then common formative assessments throughout
>
> to kind of see how things are going. And then, ultimately, whatever the
>
> posttest is and comparing it and looking for the growth. Also, checking,
>
> making sure that there's some information there about what to do next
>
> year… Continuous improvement.

Offering flex-time and common preps. Offering flex time and common preps was mentioned by six interviewees and referenced seven times. Principal 2 stated, "Collaborative work is really important. What I really would like, and I did in my first year and now we're getting smaller as a school, is common preps." Principal 1 discussed this in relation to analyzing data, explaining flex days…

> Gave the teachers the window of opportunity to have quality designated
>
> time to collaborate with their team members, to vertical articulate with
>
> other departments, and to bring harmony to the needs of the school and
>
> talk about data and talk about what is working in the classroom.

Findings for Research Question 3

The third research question was: *How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of candor*? For this study, candor was defined as communicating information in a precise manner and being truthful despite not want to provide such information. In addition, candor is taking personal responsibility for mistakes (Weisman, 2016).

The two interview questions posed by the researcher related to the domain of candor were: (1) "The literature for trust indicates leaders who communicate openly and honestly tend to build trust with their employees. Please share some ways that worked for you as the leader to communicate openly and honestly with staff," and (2) "Two characteristics for a transparent leader are accessibility and being open to feedback. Please share some examples of how you demonstrate accessibility and openness to feedback." Both questions were used to understand how the middle school principals establish trust through the domain of connection. As shown in Table 6, four common themes emerged: demonstrating transparency, conducting fair investigations during situations, informing staff of decisions/outcomes, and involving necessary departments and staff.

Table 6

Behaviors Demonstrating Dependable Leadership

Major Themes	n	# References to Theme
Demonstrating Transparency	9	12
Conducting Fair Investigations during Situations	9	11
Informing Staff of Decisions/Outcomes	9	11
Involving Necessary Departments and Staff	8	10

Demonstrating transparency. Demonstrating transparency emerged as one of key themes within the domain of candor, mentioned by nine principals and referenced 12 times. Principal 1 expressed an instance of transparency when describing,

If we had any questions or concerns, it was discussed and it was very transparent. I think that really showed the team that I am here in every way, whether it's academics, programmatic needs, but also facilities and the health and wellbeing of each and every one of our team members.

In addition, Principal 2 explained how being transparent with the staff helped them recover after a tragic incident, sharing,

I think being genuine, being sincere, being transparent, letting them know that this is really hard for me, personally, and we're going be together as a team and we're going get through this, and then just checking up constantly… I think that's where the dependability and the steadfastness comes in and I think that went a long way for the staff to see that there was genuine sincerity and concern for them.

Conducting fair investigations during situations. Conducting fair investigations was another key theme to establish trust within the domain of candor. This

theme was mentioned by nine principals and referenced 11 times. Principal 9 described

how she performed remained fair, open, and honest during a situation, saying,

> Someone was writing in the restrooms, threats. They started off
>
> something. I think the first one was like, "I'm going to shoot up the
>
> school," or something like that. We took it seriously and then the next day,
>
> it said something like, basically, "You're not taking me seriously." I
>
> forget what it was. But it just got continually threatening. First of all, I
>
> could have panicked, but I know that my reaction is going to affect
>
> everybody else's reaction. I just remained calm. We ended up having a
>
> police detective here several days because we couldn't figure out who it
>
> was and it was just constant communication with the staff. I know a lot of
>
> times, people, we want to filter, and you do sometimes have to filter. But
>
> people want to keep as much away from the staff as possible. But I just
>
> was honest with them.

Another instance of investigating a situation and keeping staff informed to build

trust was shared by Principal 1 who explained,

> I was made aware of the situation as far as the air quality and teachers
>
> feeling not good about it or maybe even feeling ill. Within that
>
> confinement, I immediately took notes, listened, and I did a lot of
>
> investigating and as I was doing my investigation, I would immediately
>
> turn to the teachers and let them know what's going on, what are the
>
> updates. I was getting the district office, maintenance, risk management,
>
> all the stakeholders involved knowing that this is my staff.

Informing staff of decisions/outcomes. Informing staff of decisions/outcomes was mentioned by nine principals. This theme also related to transparency and conducting fair investigations. Principals built trust by being open, honest, and explaining decisions to staff. However, some principals also described the need to balance sharing information and protecting privacy. For example, Principal 9 indicated, "it really was just keeping communication open with them, being honest with them, and transparent. Even if I couldn't say, I would tell them, 'I wish I could tell you that, but I can't tell you that piece.'" Similarly, Principal 8 reported the need for ensuring staff received factual information and carefully wording communications, saying,

> When there's a situation, like a school safety or a sensitive personnel
>
> matter or something like that, we literally have mentors that will sit down
>
> and, before I send that blast to parents, for example, or before I send that
>
> email to staff about something that's very, very sensitive or very, very
>
> critical, crisis type situation, it's not just my eyes sending it to my staff.
>
> There're another set of eyes from a legal, from a factual, from a how is
>
> this being read by the reader, how is this being heard by the person
>
> listening.

Involving necessary departments and staff. Involving necessary departments and staff was another component for establishing trust through the domain of candor. Eight principals expressed how establishing trust happened through candor when necessary departments or staff were involved. An example of this was from Principal 6 talking about his leadership groups. After learning student supports were not being implemented with fidelity, the leadership team facilitated several staff meetings to

understand why. Through involving staff from across departments, the leadership team

identified the issues then "formed the little subcommittees. They said, 'Okay, we're

taking your feedback. We're going to revise.' They revised all the different structures

that we have so that it aligned better to what the staff said they wanted."

The second interview question related to candor was: *Please share some examples*

of how you demonstrate accessibility and openness to feedback. Four themes emerged:

being honest and to the point, consistently sharing information with staff, actively

listening, and staying responsive (Table 7).

Table 7

Behaviors Demonstrating Accessibility and Openness to Feedback

Major Themes	n	# References to Theme
Being Honest and to the Point	11	18
Consistently Sharing Information with Staff	9	13
Actively Listening	6	9
Staying Responsive	6	7

Being honest and to the point. Being honest and to the point emerged as

essential for middle school principals to establish trust through the domain of candor.

Eleven principals referenced this theme a total of 18 times. Candor was demonstrated

through honest and direct communication by Principal 12 who reported "I don't know

any other way to do it, but it's sharing some personal stories, I think that allow for that

open and honest communication to happen." Another example was shared by Principal 3

who described,

I'm very open and honest, and I think because I'm open and honest, that's

what built that trust… Sometimes I just say, "Oh, we have to do this. I

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don't necessarily agree with it either, but it's something we have to do." I

made a decision a couple of years ago to realign some electives, and I'll be

honest with you, I don't know if I did it for all the right reasons. But I was

young and green and so I mixed some teachers up teaching with other

teachers kind of thing. They were so upset with me. A couple of teachers

were so upset with me, and they came in and they met with me, and I just

held true to the fact that I'm trying to expose kids to more electives and

not just pigeonhole them into one.

Principal 3 reported it was a tough conversation, but by being open and honest

with the staff, it built trust.

Consistently sharing information with staff. Nine principals described

consistently sharing information as an essential behavior for establishing trust. This

theme was referenced 13 times by principals when asked about the connection of

openness to candor and trust. One principal described having weekly meetings and

walking the halls to build trust. Due to having a staff of 80 teachers, another principal

mentioned,

Sending out a weekly message that comes from me and has something

personal in it does help to give them just a glimpse into where I'm coming

from or what direction we need to go… I think that's worked quite well

for me because this is a huge school… To put out something where they

feel like they've heard from me and they've seen a bit of me and they

know it's important to me, I think that helps to create that connectedness.

Principal 10 also discussed the importance of sharing information with staff, but also cautioned about knowing what can be shared. This principal explained,

I'm very open in sharing information. There are some things that, just by contract or FERPA laws or who knows what, you can't be as open… I'm not lying to people by any stretch. Just some information you can't share. There are some things where people want to know different things that legally I'm not able to share, so at times it feels as though people are asking you questions that I know information that I can't share and tell them… There're times where it's not that I'm lying to people, I just can't share.

Actively listening. Another behavior described as a necessary for trust in the domain of candor was actively listening. Six principals described actively listening as a strategy conducive to trust. Principal 4 highlighted the need to "give them communication, but also listen… The more you demonstrate as a leader being a good listener and responding in a positive nature, that reputation lends itself to being someone that will always gain staff member's trust." Another example of actively listening was shared by principal 7, who described,

I was working with a teacher, and he was resistant to do something for another administrator, and so I just gave him a phone call. Because I had already developed that trust with him, it went very well… I was methodical and I wanted to shift his mindset a little bit, so he saw a different way of looking at it, and he made the shift, and he's very happy that he did.

Staying responsive. Six principals explained staying responsive was conducive to showing trust in connection to candor. Principals reported responding to their staff through meetings, emails, texts, and call. Principal 4 related responsiveness to accessibility, saying being "visible is the way I am accessible. Being very responsive to emails, text messages, those are the ways that I make myself accessible." Principal 9 talked about responsiveness to staff and to situations that may occur on campus. Principal 9 describe the response after threatening notes were written in the bathroom, commenting,

> That day, staff knew from me through an email in detail that this had been done. We recorded a call to go home to parents… We had handouts ready to go the next morning in case parents came in to ask questions. We had bulleted script of talking points for clerical staff that was going be taking calls asking questions about what occurred.

Findings for Research Question 4

The fourth research question was: *How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of competence?* For this study, competence was defined as the ability to perform a task or fulfill a role as expected. Covey (2006) expressed how the speediest way build trust was to demonstrate competence.

The two interview questions posed by the researcher related to the domain of competence were: (1) "Two characteristics for a transparent leader are accessibility and being open to feedback. Please share some examples of how you demonstrate accessibility and openness to feedback?" and (2) "Can you describe a time in which you feel your competence as a leader may have contributed to developing trust?" Both

questions were used to understand how the middle school principals establish trust

through the domain of competence. From the first question, four themes emerged:

maintaining an open-door policy, soliciting feedback from staff, actively listening, and

conducting walkthroughs (Table 8).

Table 8

Behaviors Demonstrating Accessibility and Openness to Feedback

Major Themes	n	# References to Theme
Maintaining an Open-door Policy	10	16
Soliciting Feedback from Staff	10	14
Actively Listening	9	13
Conducting Walkthroughs	7	9

Maintaining an open-door policy. The top theme related to accessibility within

the domain of competence was maintaining an open-door policy, which was mentioned

by 10 principals and references 16 times. Principal 1 stated, "As far as accessibility, I

have an open-door policy. Not only with my teachers, staff members, district office

members, I also have an open-door policy with my community." Similarly, Principal 2

explained,

> Accessibility is an open-door policy and my door is always open… If I'm
>
> not here in this moment, I'm in a meeting. But I very, very, very rarely
>
> will close my doors and I will always stop if someone comes in, and they
>
> are very comfortable with just walking in and starting to talk to me. I do
>
> have to say, "Can I just finish this sentence, please?

Soliciting feedback from staff. Soliciting feedback from staff was also a top response, mentioned by 10 principals and referenced 14 times during interviews. Principal 3 expressed,

> Openness to feedback. I do a lot of surveys throughout the year; they're very short, but it's really to give me perspective if I feel like I'm not getting it, just observing. We do it with parents, we do it with students, we do it with teachers as well… The parents have great suggestions too, sometimes.

Principal 5 also described the importance of soliciting feedback, explaining, "Feedback piece is something that we seek out… People need to know that I'm committed to hearing feedback, even if it isn't always good."

Actively listening. Actively listening was expressed by nine respondents and referenced 13 times, showing it is necessary to establish trust through competence. One participant stated, "My office manager would always get mad at me because my door was always open, and people just… felt comfortable coming in to talk to me about anything, which is great… It's important that I listen." Likewise, Principal 7 stated, "I am very open-minded and I'm here to listen and to also know that it's not just me as a principal that's an educational leader." In addition, Principal 4 stated,

> I would obviously listen to the staff member, but then say, "What are your thoughts? What are you thinking? What are your needs?" I'm very purposeful in some of the questions that I ask. And then, I usually try and brainstorm a couple of choices or opportunities in response to what the staff member has given me.

Conducting walkthroughs. Conducting walkthroughs was suggested by seven principals and referenced nine times. Middle school principals used this theme to describe a way to checking-in with staff. Principal 9 stated, "If I haven't seen somebody for a while, I make it a point to go wherever they are, whether it's out to the library or whether it's just go walk to their class or walk around after school." Principal 6 stated, "We try to make sure we're always around in the halls. We attend every single team meeting. Every single week on Wednesday, we pop in on all of them. We find out if there's anything we can do and help."

The second interview questions asked: *Can you describe a time in which you feel your competence as a leader may have contributed to developing trust*? The coding process showed great variation in the responses and only one theme was common across five or more participants, maintaining regular communication with stakeholders, which five principals each mentioned one time. Communicating regularly demonstrated competence and built trust. One participant explained how communication helped build trust, sharing,

> I think it was just by being honest in what I felt my role and responsibility
> as a leader was. I think it's also about taking the time to ask them, "What
> do you need from me as a leader in that sense?" I think by showing my
> leadership abilities, to not micromanage them and to give them that shared
> leadership and that respect for what they do as true professional educators,
> that's when we developed that trust.

In terms of showing competence, Principal 1 suggested, "We always have to put students in the center of all of what we do." Other individual comments related to

competence to build trust described asking question, balancing transparency and confidentiality, and holding people accountable for their actions.

Findings for Research Question 5

Research Question 5 was: *How do middle school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of consistency?* For this study, consistency was defined as the confidence a person's pattern of behavior is reliable, dependable, and steadfast. Blanchard et al. (2013) described consistency as dependability and reliability by doing what the leader says he or she will do, staying timely, responding to requests, being accountable for actions, and following up with what was expressed.

The two interview questions posed by the researcher related to the domain of consistency were: (1) "What are some of the ways that you model leadership that is reliable and dependable?" and (2) "Can you provide an example of a crisis situation when your leadership was dependable and steadfast and developed trust with and between staff?" Both questions were used to understand how the middle school principals establish trust through the domain of consistency. From the first question, three themes emerged: engaging in collaborative work, gaining buy-in from staff, and conducting soliciting feedback from staff (Table 9).

Table 9

Strategies to Involve Staff in Decision-Making

Major Themes	n	# References to Theme
Engaging in Collaborative Work	9	14
Gaining Buy-in from Staff	9	11
Soliciting Feedback from Staff	8	11

Engaging in collaborative work. Nine principals referenced engaging in collaborative work, suggested it is a behavior used to develop trust through consistency. Middle school principals perceived engaging in collaborative built trust in relation with behaving consistently. Principal 11 explained staff were involved in setting goals for the year and guiding other topics of discussion, saying, "The secondary chairs as I mentioned earlier is a group where we keep the topics focused not on just the daily nuts and bolts, but on our overall goal for the year." In addition, Principal 3 described teams for collaborative work, noting, "I have focus teams, we have our PLCs, I have my site leadership team. I have a lot of different teams to ensure that things aren't just coming from me, but that it's shared." Similarly, Principal 8 shared, "Our PBIS leadership team, that's a huge decision-making group on our campus involving teachers, school psychologists, classified staff members, a lot of stakeholders in the process." Collaborative work also related to gaining buy-in from staff.

Gaining buy-in from staff. Gaining buy-in from staff was also mentioned by nine principals and referenced 11 times, making it the second most common theme for this question and portraying gaining buy-in from the staff is a behavior to build trust related to consistency. For example, Principal 8 shared, "If there's a way we can seek teacher input, we do, and that leads to [buy-in]. The teachers that want to be involved and want to have a voice, it definitely empowers them to be part of the process." Principal 7 described a process for gaining buy-in by being "specific and intentional on who you talk to, and knowing your staff well enough where you can push things out to people…that will be interpreted the right way, and that will help do a ground movement from below."

Soliciting feedback from staff. Soliciting feedback from staff was suggested by eight principals and referenced 11 times. By soliciting feedback, principals gave teachers a voice, which helped build trust. Principal 7 suggested giving teachers parameters when soliciting feedback to keep options focused, saying, "We can go anywhere between these two lines, let's make a collective decision about what that looks like, and then we'll move in that direction." Principal 9 indicated that when asked for a response to decision, the default answer was, "I'm going to get input from the staff… I know you want me to make a decision right now, but I need time to get the staff involved." The principals also suggested using different mechanism for soliciting feedback, including through staff meetings, one-on-one meetings, and schoolwide surveys.

The final question related to the domain of consistency asked principals to describe how they modeled consistency for the staff. Four themes emerged: following through on commitments, staying visible on campus, demonstrating transparency, and listening to staff (Table 10).

Table 10

Strategies to Model Consistent Leadership

Major Themes	n	# References to Theme
Following through on Commitments	7	8
Staying Visible on Campus	6	10
Demonstrating Transparency	5	8
Listening to Staff	5	7

Following through on commitments. Following through on commitments was the most common theme related to building trust through consistency, which was mentioned by seven principals and referenced eight times. Principal 1 stated, "My most

important thing is that I always value my teachers, I always stand up for my teachers, I always care for my teachers, I give my teachers all the training that they need. Principal 11 commented, "The things that are important just keep on doing them and make sure to make it happen." In addition, Principal 2 described, "Follow-through is one important way. Knowing that the consistency is there because whatever we decided to do… we follow up with it…and knowing that the follow-through is there."

Staying visible on campus. Staying visible on campus was mentioned by six principals as important to build trust. The theme was referenced 10 times. This theme was exemplified by Principal 12 who explained,

> Something that is so difficult for administrators is to get into classrooms.
> There's always an email that's going to pop up, there's always a phone
> call that's going to pop up too as well. What I've informed our folks and
> what we work on too is protecting our time… We're in classrooms and
> it's blocked off. Our office staff knows that we're off and we're in
> classrooms as well. If people drive by in the community, they should see
> us walking around in order to see that we are in classrooms, too. Because
> if we don't know what's going on, we don't have a pulse on that, we're
> going to be off anyway.

Demonstrating transparency. Transparency was described by five principals and referenced eight times as a way to build trust. For example, Principal 1 noted, "In my eyes as true leaders it's being visible and transparent with your staff every morning of every day, being there for them to let them know that you care." Principal 9 expanded on this idea, responding,

Transparency, I'm honest. I think they know when they come to me that

I'm going to tell them the truth. I'm either going to tell them, "I can't tell

you," or I'm going to give them an honest answer. I maintain that because

what's important for me is that respect for others and their opinions.

Listening to staff. Listening to staff was also mentioned by five principals and

referenced seven times. Principal 3 stated, "I think being a leader is listening to people."

Principal 5 described the importance of listening, accessibility, and visibility, and how

those related to relationships and trust, sharing,

I'm really committed to [listening], being out and about, letting people see

you, being supportive of staff when they need it, always offering those

support pieces. A lot of times, staff members will need help and support,

but they're afraid to ask for it. Just making it so you're continually

working on that relationship so they're not afraid to ask for it or to offer it

and make it okay that they accept it.

Findings for Research Question 6

Research Question 6 was, *How do middle school principals perceive the degree of*

importance for the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and

connection for building trust? Data were obtained for this research question by

administering a web-based survey via Survey Monkey to the 12 middle school principals.

The participants who answered the survey were the same as who were interviewed. The

survey (Appendix B) included 30 questions, six for each of the 5Cs. For each item,

respondents indicated their level of agreement using the following scale: 1 = *Strongly*

Disagree, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Somewhat Disagree*, 4 = *Somewhat Agree*, 5 = *Agree*, and 6

= *Strongly Agree*.

The survey results for research question were disaggregated by the 5Cs. A total

of 12 surveys were deployed with 11 principals completing the survey. The data across

the 11 completed surveys were aggregated and descriptive statistics were used to analyze

the data. Looking across the 5Cs, the highest mean was for competence (M = 5.58, SD =

.27), with 61% of respondents marking *Strongly Agree* and 36% marking *Agree*. This

was followed by connection (M = 5.47, SD = .19), for which 49% marked *Strongly Agree*

and 48% marked *Agree*, and consistency (M = 5.47, SD = .25), for which 50% marked

Strongly Agree and 41% marked *Agree*. Candor and concern were the lowest rated of the

5Cs, but still were highly rated overall. Candor had a mean of 5.44 (SD = .13) with 52%

strongly agreeing and 41% agreeing. Similarly, concern had a mean of 5.39 (SD = .37)

with 53% strongly agreeing and 33% agreeing. Table 12 presents the means and

standards deviations for the five domains.

Table 11

Average Ratings Across the 5Cs of Trust

	Mean	SD
Competence	5.58	.27
Consistency	5.47	.25
Connection	5.47	.19
Candor	5.44	.13
Concern	5.39	.37

Note. n = 11

Competence. Reviewing the questions focused on competence, the practice

respondents rated highest was: *I create opportunities for staff to learn and grow*, with a

mean of 5.91 (SD = .30) and 91% of participants responding *Strongly Agree*. Three items

had the next highest mean of 5.64, *I work with the staff to achieve the school's vision, I promote the capability of my staff members,* and *I promote collaborative decision-making with staff.* The lowest mean (*M* = 5.09, SD = .70) was for the item *I focus staff work on the quality of services the district provides to students, families and community* (Figure 2).
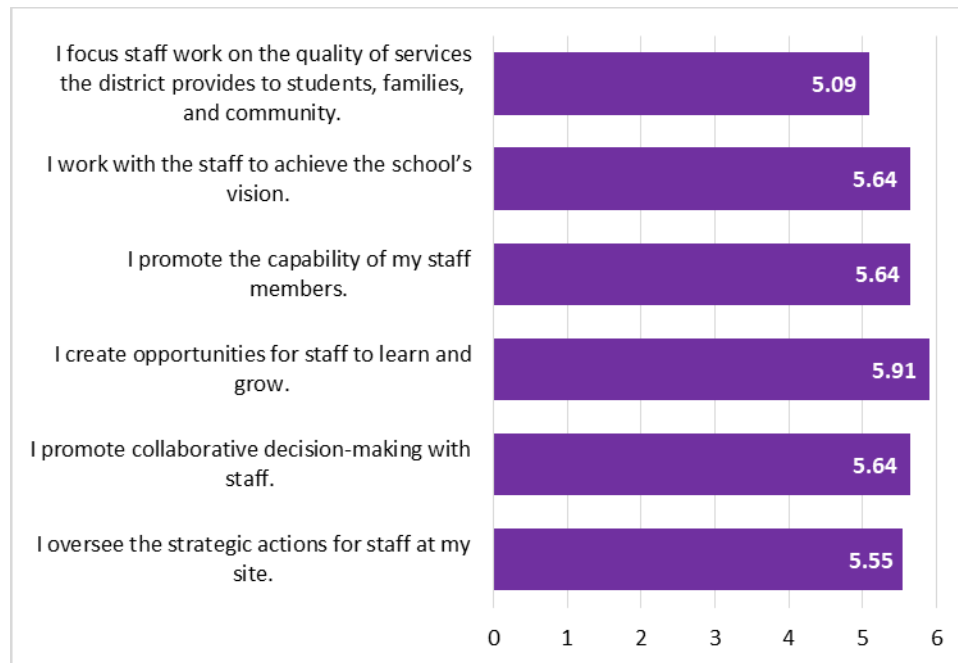
Figure 2. Mean ratings for survey items related to competence.

Consistency. Looking across the questions focusing on consistency, the item *I create an environment where staff can accomplish their goals and responsibilities everyday* was rated as the most critical with a mean of 5.73 (SD = .47). This was followed closely by *I make commitments to staff that I can keep* with a mean of 5.70 (SD = .48) and *Behaving in a manner consistent with my role and responsibilities* (*M* = 5.64, SD = .50). Two items tied for the lowest rated with a mean of 5.18, *Overall the school operates efficiently* and *I hold myself and staff accountable for actions* (Figure 3).

Although these two were the lowest rated, principals still considered them important

aspects of building trust.

Item	Rating
I behave in a manner consistent with my role and responsibilities.	5.64
Overall, the school operates efficiently.	5.18
I create an environment where staff can accomplish their goals every day.	5.73
I let staff know what is expected from them.	5.36
I make commitments to staff I can keep.	5.70
I hold myself and staff accountable for actions.	5.18

Figure 3. Mean ratings for survey items related to consistency.

Connection. Looking across the questions focused on connection, the highest

rated item was *I am accepting and receptive to the ideas and opinions of all staff* (*M* =

5.73, SD = .47). This was followed by two items that received a mean rating of 5.55, *I*

display behavior aligned with the values and belief of our school site vision and *I give*

voice to the site vision and shared values. As shown in Figure 4, one question was rated

somewhat lower than the others within this domain, which was the item *I am truthful and*

frank in all interpersonal communications with staff (*M* = 5.18, SD = .60).
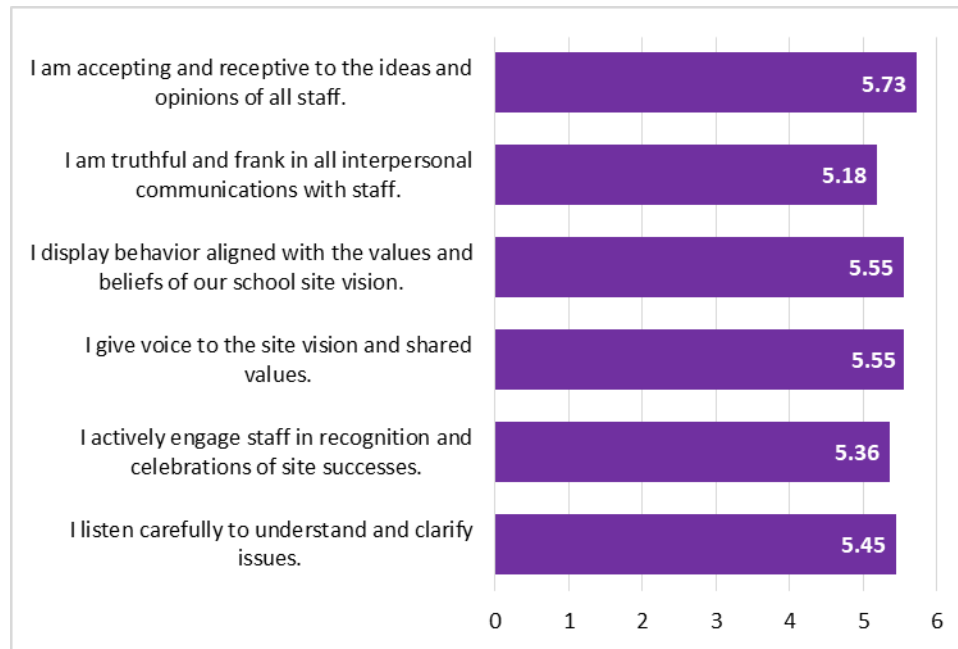
Figure 4. Mean ratings for survey items related to connection.

Candor. The mean ratings for the items related to candor clustered closely together, with means ranging between 5.27 and 5.64. The highest rating was for the item *I engage staff in discussion about the direction and vision for our school* (M = 5.64, SD = .50). This was followed by *I am open, authentic, and straightforward with all staff*, with a mean of 5.55 (SD = .69). At the other end, the question with lowest mean rating of 5.27 (SD = .65) was *I take issues head on, even the undiscussables* (Figure 5).
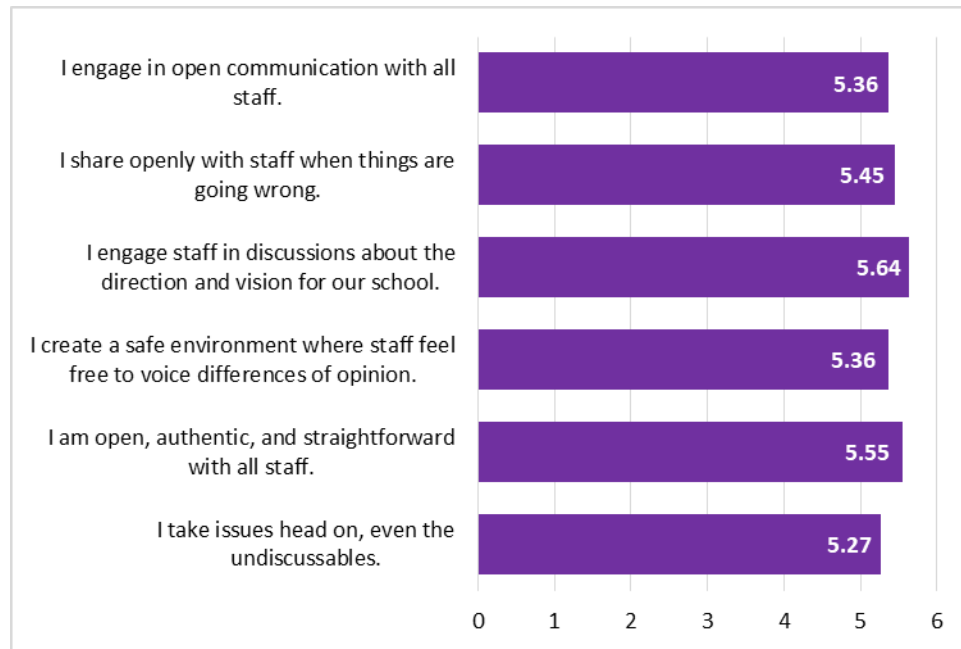
Figure 5. Mean ratings for survey items related to candor.

Concern. The questions related to concern had one of the highest rated items and the two lowest rated items across all the 5Cs. The highest rated item for the domain of candor was for *I always treat staff positively and with respect,* with a mean of 5.82 (SD = .40) and 82% of principals responding *Strongly Agree*. This was followed closely by the item *I demonstrate respect for and concern for every staff member* (M = 5.73, SD = .47). In contrast, the two lowest rated items related to the domain of concern were *I take time to meet personally with each staff member to understand their concerns* with (M = 5.00, SD = .77 and *I demonstrate appropriate work and life balance* (M = 4.91, SD = .77). Demonstrating work-life balance received the lowest mean of all 30 survey questions with 34.4% who respondent *Somewhat Agree*. Figure 6 presents the mean ratings for each of the survey questions related to concern.

Figure 6. Mean ratings for survey items related to concern.

Summary

Chapter IV presented the findings from this mixed-methods explanatory study regarding how principals built and sustained trust through Weisman's 5Cs. The findings were presented by research question, resulting in the qualitative data being presented first and then followed by the quantitative data. The quantitative data measured participant perceptions about the importance of each of the 5C domains: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency.

Within the qualitative data, the primary themes that arose as crucial elements to establish trust through all five domains included different forms of communication, specifically active listening and regular communication. In addition, the principals perceived maintaining open-door policies and meeting the needs of staff, including the provision of resources, as building trust across the domains of connection, concern and competency. Soliciting feedback was primarily found in the domains of competency and

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consistency, demonstrating transparency was identified in candor and consistency, and developing personal relationships was found predominantly in the domain of connection.

The quantitative data measured participant perceptions about the importance of each of the 5C domains for building and maintaining trust. The survey data revealed the domain of competence was highest rated among the principals. In addition, one of the highest rated items was within the competence domain, *I create opportunities for staff to learn and grow*. Two domains tied for being rated second highest, consistency and connection. These were followed closely be the domain of candor. Although the domain of concern was the lowest rated of the 5Cs, it was still considered highly important for building and sustaining trust.

Chapter IV described the data collected from quantitative and qualitative tools used in this study. Chapter V presents a summary of key findings, along with conclusions, implications for action, recommendations for future research, and closing remarks.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter V begins with an overview of the study, which includes a brief summary of the purpose statement, research questions, methodology, population, and sample. Chapter V describes the major findings, the conclusions established from the major findings, implications for actions, recommendations for further research, and concluding remarks from the researcher.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed-methods study was to identify and describe how middle school principals established trust with teachers using the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency (Weisman, 2010). In addition, it was the purpose of this study to determine middle school principals' perceived degree of importance of the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection (5Cs) for building trust.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How do middle school principals establish trust with teachers through the domain of connection?

2. How do middle school principals establish trust with teachers through the domain of concern?

3. How do middle school principals establish trust with teachers through the domain of candor?

4. How do middle school principals establish trust with teachers through the domain of competence?

5. How do middle school principals establish trust with teachers through the domain of consistency?

6. How do middle school principals perceive the degree of importance for the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection for building trust.

Methodology

An explanatory mixed-method study design uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to perform a more detailed examination (Creswell, 2015). This study consisted of 15 peer researchers applying the trust framework from the business sector to the education and other fields. Fifteen peer researchers participated in a thematic study across an interdisciplinary set of organizations, including K-12 schools, superintendents, school board members, non-profits, and military agencies. Six of the 15 researchers delved into K-12 schools to identify and describe how principals established trust with their staff. Two of the researchers studied elementary school, two studied middle school, and two studied high school principals using the same survey and interview questions for the investigation.

The quantitative portion of the study was accomplished by having participants complete a web-based survey with a distinct set of pre-defined responses options developed by the team of six peer researchers. The quantitative survey assessed the principals' professed degree of importance of the 5Cs for building trust. Following the surveys, the qualitative portion involved face-to-face interviews with the same 12 middle school principals.

Population

The population for this study was middle school principals. Principals serve as the top administrator in a school setting. Although principals serve several roles in this position, one important role is to build strong relationships with teachers, counselors, other staff members, parents, students, and the community (Rieg & Marcoline, 2008). In the United States in 2014-15, there were 24,181 public secondary schools, with typically one principal per school (NCES, 2017). This population had to be reduced due to the scattered geographic distances and costs to perform the research; therefore, the population was narrowed geographically to California. California had 1,296 public middle schools in the 2017-18 school year (CDE, 2018). With nearly 1,300 schools, this size again was too great for the researcher to examine. Refining of the population resulted in a target population. The target population was principals employed at middle schools with 50 miles of Brandman University to facilitate face-to-face interviews. More specifically, the target population was narrowed to middle school principals in Orange and Riverside Counties. In Orange County, 23 of 27 districts included 77 middle schools and in Riverside County 22 of 23 districts included 52 middle schools. Therefore, the target population was the principals from the 45 districts with middle schools.

Sample

From the target population, a sample needed to be selected. Purposeful and convenience sampling were used to identify participants. Purposeful sampling allowed the researcher to focus on the characteristics of middle school principals. Convenience sampling allowed the research to include readily available participants, making it an inexpensive, simple way to sample.

Sample selection began with the target population of middle school principals in Orange and Riverside Counties. The researcher then used convenience and purposeful sampling to identify participants. All principals participating in the study met at least 5 of the 7 following criteria:

1. Employed at a school within the Orange or Riverside County with a minimum of 30 staff members

2. Had a minimum of three years of experience at his or her current site

3. Had a minimum of five years in the profession

4. Held membership in professional associations in their field

5. Shown to be leading a successful organization

6. Wrote articles or published papers, or presented at conferences or association meetings

7. Agreed to participate and signed the informed consent form

Major Findings

The study used an explanatory mixed-method design delving into K-12 leadership to identify and describe strategies principals used to established trust with their staff. Qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used, namely surveys and face-to-face interviews. Quantitative data were provided by 11 of the 12 principals surveyed. Qualitative data were gathered through interviews with the same principals to gain their perceived ideas about the most vital strategies to build trust with the school staff, through the 5Cs.

Once the interview was completed, the recording was sent for transcription. The researcher then assessed and coded the data to establish themes and patterns from the

transcribed interviews. From the coding, several major findings were identified. A

summary of the key findings is identified below.

Major Finding One: Actively Listening to Staff is a Key Element

Actively listening to staff was considered a major finding because it was

identified in all five domains for middle school principals developing trust with their

staff. Listening to staff was mentioned by 11 of 12 principals when discussing the

domains of connection and concern, 9 of 12 for the domain of competency, and 6 of 12

for consistency, and 5 of 12 for candor. Actively listening was more focused when

middle school principals spoke about candor and competency. Horsager (2009)

described showing appreciation consists of "listen to their needs and expectations and

listen to feedback" (p. 84). In addition, Horsager (2009) expressed what listening means

and tips to show one is listening, equating listening to caring. Covey (2006) described

trust was developed by listening first, and listening with the ears, eyes, and heart. When

leaders are driven by values greater than their own, they better the system by receiving

inputs from others (Weisman, 2016). Leaders try to receive the best input or ideas to

better their system. Middle school principal talked about how actively listening built

trust, as one mentions, "As long as I've developed that trust with people and they know

that they have a voice and that you'll listen, I think that's part of it."

Major Finding Two: Maintaining an Open-Door Policy

The second major finding in the study of middle school principals developing

trust with the staff was agreement that an open-door policy is a predominant skill needed

to build trust. The open-door policy was mentioned by at least 8 of 12 principals in the

domains of connection, concern, and competency. Through their open-door policies, the

principals allowed and actively encourage teachers to voice their thoughts, ideas and frustrations openly, even including feedback for the principal. This aligned with the work of Tschannen-Moran (2014) who also described the importance of an open-door policy for obtaining feedback.

Major Finding Three: Maintaining Regular Communication

The third major finding was the principals' necessity in maintaining regular communication with the staff. For the strategy of maintaining regular communication with the staff, at least 7 of 12 middle school principals agreed during the interview that regular communication was important in the domains of connection, concern, and competency. This aligned with Hoy and Miskel (2008) who describe communication as a skill used for tightening and loosening control in organizing and allocating school resources, accomplishing organizational goals, and maintaining positive relationships.

Major Finding Four: Meeting Staff Needs

One of the key ingredients and a frequently known facet of trust is a sense of caring or benevolence (Baier, 1994; Zand 1997). "Teachers and principals are interdependent in their shared project of educating the students in their school" (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 18). This idea aligned with the fourth major finding in this study, principals meeting staff needs builds trust. This concept was found in the domains of connection, concern, and competency. At least 8 of 12 middle school principals perceived caring and meeting staff needs as one of the most important strategies for building trust, which included provision of resources for instruction, provision of planning time, and genuine concern for staff wellbeing. Meeting staff needs showed a form of concern and benevolence that built trust with staff.

Major Finding Five: Soliciting Feedback from Staff

Middle school principals perceived soliciting feedback from staff as important in building trust. Soliciting feedback from staff was predominantly discussed within the domains of competence and consistency; at least 8 of 12 principals reported feedback from staff was essential to building trust within these domains. Middle school principals conveyed the importance of soliciting feedback for decision-making, and indicated they obtained feedback through surveys, during staff meetings, and by walking through the halls. Soliciting feedback also increased teacher buy-in because they felt their voice was heard. This finding aligned with Horsager (2009) who explained regaining trust as a leader required listening to feedback.

Major Finding Six: Demonstrating Transparency

The middle school principals agreed demonstrating transparency built trust among staff. The was specifically pronounced in the domain of candor where 11 of 12 principals talked about being honest and speaking to the point. In addition, 9 of 12 mentioned demonstrating transparency with the staff. According to Weisman (2016), candor was the deciding factor when a choice had to be made between two companies; the company considered most open and honest prevailed. White et al. (2016) also indicated the leader must be open and clear about their thoughts and intentions, which was a sentiment also expressed by the principals.

Major Finding Seven: Informing Staff of Decisions/Outcomes

The middle school principals agreed staff needed to be informed of decisions or outcomes. This behavior was perceived as a way for principals to build trust through the domain of candor. Nine of 12 principals described the importance of following through,

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which was done by informing staff of the decision. Principals also noted the need to share outcomes consistently, although also highlighted the need to balance informing staff and protecting privacy in some situations. This finding also aligned with prior research that found teachers viewed principals as trustworthy when they shared information accurately and openly (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Handford & Leithwood, 2013).

Major Finding Eight: Following Through on Commitments

Middle school principals agreed keeping commitments was an important aspect of building trust with the staff within the candor domain. Seven of 12 principals mentioned this strategy. According to Tschannen-Moran (2014), when a person trusts another person, that individual believes the statements made by the trusted person and he or she portrayed exactly what occurred. In this case, to build trust, the principals needed to follow through with what they said they were going to do to build trust. When principals could be relied upon to follow through with their commitments, trust was developed.

Major Finding Nine: All 5Cs were rated of High Importance

Overall, all the 5Cs were rated highly, with domain means between 5.39 for concern and 5.58 for competence. Competency also had one of the highest rated individual items; *I create opportunities for staff to learn and grow* had a mean rating of 5.91. Two domains tied with the second highest mean of 5.47, consistency and connection. This was followed closely by candor with a mean of 5.44. Although the domain of concern was rated lowest of the 5Cs, it still had a mean of 5.39, indicating the principals believed it was an important factor in developing trust with teachers.

Unexpected Findings

The researcher identified five unexpected findings. The first three unexpected findings related to the qualitative data results and the other two related to the quantitative results. The strategy of listening to staff was a major theme in all five of the trust domains. Although the literature identified communication and listening as important to build trust, it was not expected to be identified across all 5C domains.

The second unexpected finding was the strength of the theme maintaining an open-door policy, which was found for the domains of competence, connection, and concern. Maintaining an open-door policy was not a common theme for the domain of candor, which was unexpected because candor is about openness. However, the data indicated principals interpreted candor as one-directional with them sharing information with their staff opposed to having an open-door policy where teachers could be candid with them.

The third unexpected finding related to communication. Maintaining regular communication was a major theme found for the domains of connection, concern, and competency. Given the importance of communication in building trust, this theme was expected to be found across all domains. For example, candor requires someone to communicate openly and honestly; therefore, constant communication should be a factor, but it was not identified among the principals.

An unexpected finding for the quantitative data was competence being the highest ranked domain from the 5Cs and concern being the lowest ranked. This seemed to contrast with the qualitative data where few common themes emerged related to

competency and principals spoke highly about caring for their staff and meeting their needs as a strategy for building trust.

The second unexpected finding was the lowest mean of any individual item, 4.91, was within the domain of concern: *I demonstrate appropriate work and life balance.* Only 27.3% of middle school principals strongly agreed with this item, 36.4% agreed, and 36.7% somewhat agreed. It is possible the principals viewed modelling work-life balance as an interpersonal trait and not a component of showing concern for staff.

Conclusions

This study identified strategies and behaviors middle school principals perceived as important in building trust with staff utilizing the 5Cs. Weisman (2016) expressed 5Cs "should not be separated from one another in the final analysis, because they are individual stages of a single journey toward the ultimate goal trust" (p 138-139). He also explained the connection between each domain and the revelation on how a person expresses their values are just as important as each element (Weisman, 2016). Several conclusions were drawn based on the major findings and review of the literature.

Conclusion 1: Connection is a Major Element of Middle School Principals Building Trust with their Staff

Based on the findings, it was concluded middle school principals who foster and promote positive relationships build trust with their staff. Middle school principals who meet staff needs, actively listen, connect on a personal level, maintain regular communication, and maintain an open-door policy develop profound connections that establish positive relationships and rapport with staff. Connection also means the principal is accepting and receptive to the ideas and opinions of all staff. Other strategies

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that govern the domain of connection for the principal to build trust included the leader displaying behaviors aligned with the values and beliefs of the school vision. Although connection was considered the most difficult trust value to achieve because it depends on establishment of the other four Cs, when connection occurred, both the leader and the follower obtained great rewards (Weisman, 2016). "Trust is a two-way street. Before we can be certain that peace will reign in the household, we must find out if the feelings are mutual" (Blanchard et al., 2013, p. 26). Additionally, Horsager (2009) suggested friendship started with connection. Strategies middle school principals identified to make connections with staff and build trust included listening to the staff, soliciting feedback, asking about personal or family lives, and meeting staff needs.

Conclusion 2: Showing concern is a Major Element of Middle School Principals Building Trust with their Staff

Based on the findings, it was concluded middle school principals with strong, positive relationships established trust with their staff by caring for everyone's wellbeing. Concern is the value placed on the wellbeing of all members of an organization, promoting their welfare at work and empathizing with their needs. Principal behavior that showed concern and caring for the individual's well-being included listening to the staff, maintaining regular communication, meeting staff needs, and maintaining an open-door policy. Meeting staff needs can be something a leader does for followers either professionally or personally. According to White et al. (2016), to express care and concern, a leader takes time to learn about the staff personally and professionally to build context on how they live and work. Additionally, Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2010) suggested if people believe their core needs will be met, the leader will observe

greater commitment. Thus, to build trust middle school principals focused on the staff

members' personal and professional lives to be supportive and demonstrated respect and

concern for each staff member.

Conclusion 3: Candor is a Major Element of Middle School Principals Building

Trust with their Staff

Based on the findings, it was concluded middle school principals who

demonstrate transparency by being open, authentic, and straight forward build trust with

their staff. Candor involves communicating information in a precise manner and being

truthful even if one does not want to provide such information (Gordon & Giley, 2012;

Tschannen-Moran, 2014; O'Toole & Bennis, 2009; Weisman, 2016). When the middle

school principal was open and informed staff of decisions and outcomes, they built trust.

White et al. (2016) also found openness, honesty, and transparency led to increased trust

among staff. Thus, principals who want to build trusting relationships with staff must be

consistent and open with their communication to staff.

Conclusion 4: Competency is a Major Element of Middle School Principals Building

Trust with their Staff

Based on the findings, it was concluded competent middle school principals

create opportunities for the staff to learn and grow, thus developing trust. Competence is

the ability to perform a task or fulfill a role as expected (Covey, 2009; Farnsworth, 2015;

Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Principals needed to show

competence in their skills to be trusted by the staff. Competency also helps staff and the

principal achieve the school's vision. According to Covey (2006), competence is vital to

trust and competent leaders develop trust quicker. Displayed behavior of competence

included sharing the decision-making process, soliciting feedback, and promoting

professional development among staff.

Conclusion 5: Consistency is a Major Element of Middle School Principals Building Trust with their Staff

Based on the findings, it was concluded middle school principals who are

consistent create an environment where staff can accomplish their goals and

responsibilities daily. Consistency is the confidence a person's pattern of behavior is

reliable, dependable, and steadfast (Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman, 2016).

According to White et al. (2016) honoring commitments leads to establishing trust

quickly. Leaders who are consistent follow through on commitments, solicit feedback,

demonstrate transparency, and operate the school efficiently.

Conclusion 6: Communication is the Factor Bonding the 5Cs of Trust

Forms of communication saturated all five of the domains. The permutation

caused significant purpose in establishing trust between middle school principals and the

staff. Weisman (2016) suggested all five domains were necessary for building trust. The

significant part of the trust pyramid related to the relationship of the 5Cs interconnecting

in some way (Weisman, 2016). This interconnection was done with forms of

communication.

The researcher discovered actively listening, which is a form of communication,

was found in all domains of the 5Cs. The middle school principals exhibited positive

connections with their staff members and better relationships were established when

listening occurred, and more listening than talking. Bryk and Schneider (2002) explained

how teachers perceive principals as trustworthy when their communication is both

precise and forthcoming. The study also found trust was built through communicating on a personal level, maintaining regular communications, soliciting feedback, maintaining an open-door policy, informing staff of decisions, and using a shared leadership approach, all of which involved communication (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). "When principals exchange thoughts and ideas freely with teachers, it not only enhances perceptions of those leaders' trustworthy but leads to greater openness on the part of teachers as well" (Tschannen-Moran, 2014, p. 29). Therefore, communication that was honest, truthful, caring, and informal helped create trust. Forms of communication are a way to build trust, thus leading principals into a more positive school culture. All five domains are relevant to building trust between the staff and principal. The following implications for action were derived based on the findings and conclusions of this study.

Implications for Action

The results of this study identified what middle school principals perceive as the most vital strategies to build trust among the staff through the 5Cs. Building and sustaining trust within a middle school environment is essential to the development and success of the school. The research supported that middle school principals who sustain trust with their staff promote a safe and effective environment. In addition, the research affirmed the importance of all five domains in building trust between the staff and principal. The following implications for action were derived based on the findings and conclusions of this study.

Implication 1: Principals should Receive Training on Active Listening and Communication

To build trust with staff, principals must engage in active listening and consistent communication. Actively listening and communication are essential in sustaining strong relationships and building trust. Given their high level of importance inf building trust, all principals should receive training specifically related to actively listening and communication. Such training should be included as part of the education program for the administrative credential, and ongoing training should be provided through ongoing professional learning opportunities.

Implication 2: Principals should be Provided ongoing Professional Development on Building Trust using the 5Cs

Principals lack a clear set of directions or defined practices for their positions (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). In addition, most districts provide teachers with opportunities, funds, and resources to support professional development, but principals' groups and other educators have long laminated the needs of school leaders were last to be addressed (Prothero, 2015). However, school leaders influence teachers, staff, student learning, and the school environment (Coelli & Green, 2012; Leithwood et al., 2004; Louis et al., 2010). Because the principal leads and oversees any changes within the school, the leader must know the position to increase student achievement and promote a positive school culture. To accomplish this, leaders need to understand and use the 5Cs to build and sustain trust. Therefore, funding should be provided from the district to assist principals' growth through ongoing professional development on the 5Cs.

Implication 3: Principals should Provide Training on the 5Cs to Staff

This study found middle school principals perceive competence as a domain to build trust with staff. Once the principal attended professional develop directed to building and sustaining trust, he or she should then apply the learnings to a training program for their staff, which could portray the principal's competence and build relationships with the staff. Additionally, principals could demonstrate their competence and expertise as an instructional partner rather than as a boss utilizing authority to dictate teacher direction. Although the 5Cs should not be separated, the instructional strategy for each domain should have the same amount of deep understanding and practice to help both staff, principals, and peers to encounter, build, and share trust.

Implication 4: Administrators should Participate in a Two-year Induction Program with a Focus on the 5Cs

Competence was one of the highest rated domains on the survey. Therefore, new administrators should participate in an induction program similar to that teachers take during their first two years of practice. The induction program for teacher uses experienced teachers as mentors who assist the new teacher. This procedure for new principals should be replicated with experienced principals. When trust permeates through these relationships, a positive school culture is developed. Therefore, the induction program should include practices that also mirror the trust pyramid. To maintain trust in relationships, administrators should be taught about the 5Cs and how to reflect on and practice the strategies within the first two years.

Implication 5: Districts should Implement Professional Learning Communities for Principals and Assistant Principals

It is vital that administrators continue to have group with whom he or she can collaborate with to build trust and assist in building a positive school culture. Every leader should have a coach or peer partner to continually develop as a leader. A professional learning community for administrators would provide them opportunities to share ideas, learn best practices, gain advice, and discuss issues. This could help drive reform efforts, build a positive school culture, develop relationships, and increase collaboration across schools.

Implication 6: Districts should Implement 360-degree Reviews of Principals

Performance feedback is important, and this study found middle school principals perceive feedback as a strategy that creates and builds trust. To provide feedback, districts should implement 360-degree reviews in which teachers and staff perceptions about principal performance are aggregated and used to develop growth plans. The reviews should include questions related to aspects of the 5Cs to determine the level of trust teachers have of their principals. The feedback could be incorporated into principal performance reviews and personal growth plans.

<center>**Recommendation for the Future Research**</center>

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, the following recommendations for future research are suggested:

- This study focused on the perceptions of the school principal. Therefore, it is recommended to replicate this study from the perspective of the teachers to ascertain their perceptions about how principals build trust using the 5Cs.

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- This study was delimited to two counties in southern California. Therefore, it is recommended to replicate this study with a broader population to determine if there are similarities in other regions of the state and country.

- This study showed there was possibly a different mindset for what competence means. Given competence revealed a different idea of the meaning from each principal, it is recommended to study the characteristics for competence.

- The findings of this study revealed principals described an open-door policy in three of the five domains. Candor, which includes an open and honest behavior did not include open door policy for the middle school principals. In addition, the open-door policy was not a predominant characteristic for the domain of consistency. Therefore, a future study about open-door policy is recommended to explore what the open-door policy covers as far as definition and characteristics.

- The findings of this study indicated forms of communication such as active listening and maintaining an open-door policy permeated all five domains. Without such communication building strategies, it would be difficult to build trust. It is recommended a mixed-methods study be performed to recognize and describe specific strategies in each domain solitarily. Replicating this study utilizing an individual domain would enable the researcher to delve deeper into each domain and compare the results with those of this study to determine whether the strategies principals or staffs perceive as most important in building trust includes a form of communication.

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

Initially, one factor that led me to this study was the desire to become an administrator in the middle school setting. Early in the study, research showed trust was extremely important to school success. Trust created a positive learning culture, which led to greater success and outcomes. Patton (2017) found a new principal entering a school must build trust, respect, and support from all the staff. The literature reviewed for this study demonstrated the importance of trust within the school environment.

After understanding the trust model and Weisman's definition of trust, the journey for the study began. Weisman (2016) explained competency and consistency were the basic levels and connection was the hardest aspect of trust to fulfill in a business environment. In the quantitative portion of this study of middle school principals, results were similar. However, I was shocked at competence being the highest rated across the 5Cs, which paralleled Weisman's findings. Individuals need the basics to have a trusting relationship. Concern was rated the lowest among these principals, which according to the pyramid is the demonstration of respect for staff. However, their connection ratings were at the same level as consistency and both were just below competence. All 5Cs were relatively close in their ratings, with a range of only 0.19 between the highest and lowest rated domains. This too paralleled Weisman's theory about needing all five domains. Middle school principals must use all 5Cs to build trust.

Although the principal must use all 5Cs to build trust, I noticed listening was a strategy that intertwined all five domains. Given actively listening is linked to all 5Cs, an administrator must use this strategy to sustain trusting relationships and produce a positive school impact. A second strategy noticed was the intertwined nature of the

domains in terms of strategies, such as four domains associated with maintaining an open-door policy, which also related to active listening. Maintaining an open-door policy will be a strategy I implement to aid in building and sustaining trust.

Another strategy I plan to adopt based on this research is providing regular communication with staff. This strategy was found in the domains of connection, concern, and competence, and indirectly in the domains of candor and consistency. Therefore, regularly communicating with staff can be used to describe strategies in each domain. This observation will be an asset in helping myself as the new principal. White et al. (2016) explained whether the leader is dealing with minor or major problems, people appreciate being heard, which requires sincere and active listening. This taught me that when I initially start a new role, my desire should be wanting to see what is working and what is not before making changes. To accomplish this task, I will communicate with all the staff in a face-to-face setting.

Through communication and listening, I want to establish trust and build a positive school atmosphere. Because building trust among staff improved school culture, the principal can then focus on the crucial areas, crucial conversations, common core dilemmas, state testing, and any other areas to increase student success. However, building trust is insufficient; leaders must constantly work on maintaining trust. Therefore, it is pertinent the school leader creates and maintains an atmosphere of trust.

I would like to obtain a position as a middle school principal where I can build trust using all the 5Cs with a focus on listening and communication. I look forward to the opportunity to put this research to work, and I hope others find it useful and can implement strategies using the 5Cs to build and maintain trust to improve schools.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – SYNTHESIS MATRIX

	Concern/Empathy	Candor/Honesty	Competence	Consistency	Connection	Trust	Framework	Leadership	Principal Trust
Antonakis, J., & House, R. J. (2014).								X	
Bass, B. M. (1985).								X	
Bass, B. M. (1990).								X	
Bass, B. M. (1998).								X	
Battle, A. (2007).	X		X	X	X	X			X
Baumstark-Ford, S. B. (2015).			X						X
Blanchard, K., Olmstead, C., and Lawrence, M. (2013).		X	X	X	X		X		
Bryk, A. S., & Schneider, B. (2003).	X	X	X					X	
Burke, C. S., Sims, D. E., Lazzara, E. H., & Salas, E. (2007).		X	X		X	X		X	
Burns, J. M, (1978).								X	
Castelfranchi, C., & Falcone, R. (2010).			X		X	X			
Chemers, M. M. (1997).								X	
Dinham, S. (2005).									X
Fox, J., Gong, T., & Attoh, P. (2015).		X	X	X					X
Friedman, T.L. & Mandelbaum, M. (2013).									
Freidman, U. (2018, January 21).									
Fromme, C. A. (2005).	X		X		X				
Gill, R. (2011).									
Gordon, G., & Giley, J. (2012).							X		
Grandy, G., & Silwa, M. (2017).	X								
Handford, V., & Leithwood, K. (2013).		X	X	X	X		X		
Holt Burbank, S., Marques Burbank, J., Hu Burbank, J., & Wood Burbank, A. (2017).	X				X				
Horsager (2009).		X	X	X	X				
House, R. J. (1977).									
Howe, A. T. (2016).									X
Hoy, W. K., & Kupersmith, W. J. (1985).									

Reference								
Hoy, W. K., & Tschannen-Moran, M. (1999).	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Hoy, W. K., & Tschannen-Moran, M. (1999).	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Hoy, W. K., & Tschannen-Moran, M. (2003).	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2008).	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Ito, A., & Bligh, M. C. (2016).	X								
Jones, T. B., Gill, P. B., & Sherman, R. (2005).									
Jones, T. B., Sherman, R., Combs, J. P., & Gill, P. B. (2005, February).									
Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2011).									
Kruse, S. D., Louis, K. S., & Bryk, A. S. (1994).									
Louis, K., & Wahlstrom, K. (2011).								X	X
Malone, P. (2017).	X				X				
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Mayer, R. C., Davis, J. H., & Schoorman, F. D. (1995).	X	X				X	X		
Miner, J. B. (2002).									
O'Toole, J., & Bennis, W. (2009)		X							
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Tschannen-Moran, M. (2001).	X	X		X	X	X			
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Tschannen-Moran, M. (2004).	X	X		X	X	X			
Tschannen-Moran, M. (2014).	X	X		X	X	X			
Tschannen-Moran, M., & Gareis, R. C. (2015).	X	X		X	X	X			X
Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, W. K. (1998).	X	X		X	X	X			
Tschannen-Moran, M. & Hoy, W. K. (2000).	X	X		X	X	X			
Wahnee, R. L. (2010).			X						X
Weisman, M. (2010).	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Weisman, M. (2016).	X	X	X	X	X	X			
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Zand, D.E. (1972).	X								

Survey of Principal Trust Behaviors

Introduction: The success of any organization may depend on the trust that is developed between leadership, employees, and other organizational stakeholders. The purpose of this inquiry is to seek your perceptions of the importance of developing trust with staff in five specific domains: **competency, consistency, candor, concern, and connection**.

Completing this survey will take approximately 10 minutes. Please choose to become a part of this important undertaking.

It is important to read the following consent information carefully and click the agree box to continue. The survey will not open until you agree.

INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMATION ABOUT: Developing Principal Trust with Staff

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Wendy Ryerson

THE FOLLOWING WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE ELECTRONIC SURVEY:

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by [Amy Brouwer, Danielle Clark, Diana Escalante, Iyuanna Pease, Cynthia Smith-Owen, Wendy Ryerson], a doctoral student from the School of Education at Brandman University. The purpose of this explanatory mixed-method case study is to identify and describe how principals across several education levels and geographic areas establish trust with staff using the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency. In addition, it is the purpose of this research to determine principals' perceived degree of importance for the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection for building trust.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate in this electronic survey, you can withdraw at any time.

The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your responses will be confidential. The survey questions will pertain to your perceptions regarding the impact of the specific domains on developing trust with your staff.

 Each participant will use a three-digit code for identification purposes. The researcher will keep the identifying codes safe-guarded in a locked file drawer to which the researcher will have sole access. The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes only.

No information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. I understand that the Investigator will protect my confidentiality by keeping the identifying codes and research

materials in a locked file drawer that is available only to the researcher. I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Also, the investigator may stop the study at any time. I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

If you have any questions about completing this survey or any aspects of this research, please contact [Researcher Name] at [researcher Brandman email] or by phone at [researcher phone number]; or Dr. Doug DeVore, Advisor, at [advisor email].

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the "agree" button indicates that you have read the informed consent form and the information in this document and that you voluntarily agree to participate.

If you do not wish to participate in this electronic survey, you may decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button.

The survey will not open for responses unless you agree to participate.

__AGREE: I acknowledge receipt of the complete Informed Consent packet and "Bill of Rights." I have read the materials and give my consent to participate in the study.

__DISAGREE: I do not wish to participate in this electronic survey

TRUST SURVEY

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research on developing trust with your school site staff. This study is focused on the following five domains for establishing trust:

Competence - how effective is the organization in its ability to accomplish what it's designed to do

Concern - how much does the organization show empathy or care for its employees

Connection - how do your values or goals align with the organization, the people and their behavior behind it

Consistency - how well is the organization's ability to perform consistently and dependability over the long term

Candor - how transparent is the organization communicating or making information available to employees

It is best to not 'overthink' the statements and respond with your first perceptual thought. It is anticipated you can complete this survey in approximately 10 minutes. After you complete and submit the survey the researcher will contact you to schedule an interview to explore your thoughts on how to establish trust with staff.

Directions: Using the 6-point scale below please rate your perceived importance for each of the following statements for you to build and maintain trust with your school site staff.

1 = Very Unimportant

2 = Unimportant

3 = Somewhat Unimportant

4 = Somewhat important

5 = Important

6 = Very important

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
O	O	O	O	O	O

Consistency - How well is the organization's ability to perform consistently and dependability over the long term.

1. I behave in a manner consistent with my role and responsibilities.
2. Overall, the school operates efficiently.
3. I create an environment where staff have the opportunity to accomplish their goals and responsibilities every day.
4. I let staff know what is expected from them.
5. I make commitments to staff I can keep.
6. I hold myself and staff accountable for actions.

Competence - How effective is the organization in its ability to accomplish what it's designed to do.

1. I focus the work of staff on the quality of services the district provides to students, other staff, families, and community.
2. I work with the staff to achieve the school's vision.
3. I promote the capability of my staff members.
4. I create opportunities for staff to learn and grow.
5. I promote collaborative decision making with staff.
6. I oversee the strategic actions for staff at my site.

Candor - How transparent is the organization communicating or making information available to employees.

1. I engage in open communication with all staff.

2. I share openly with staff when things are going wrong.
3. I engage staff in discussions about the direction and vision for our school.
4. I create a safe environment where staff feel free to voice differences of opinion.
5. I am open, authentic and straightforward with all staff.
6. I take issues head on, even the "undiscussables."

Concern - How much does the organization show empathy or care for its employees.

1. I take time to meet personally with each staff member to understand their concerns.
2. I demonstrate appropriate work and life balance
3. I am a good listener.
4. I always treat staff positively and with respect.
5. I am patient with the questions and issues of interest to staff.
6. I demonstrate respect and concern for each staff member.

Connection - How do your values or goals align with the organization, the people and their behavior behind it.

1. I am accepting and receptive to the ideas and opinions of all staff.
2. I am truthful, and frank in all interpersonal communications with staff.
3. I display behavior that is aligned with the values and beliefs of our school site vision.
4. I give voice to the site vision and shared values.
5. I actively engage staff in recognition and celebrations of site successes.
6. I listen carefully to understand and clarify issues.

APPENDIX C – INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

My name in Wendy Ryerson. I'm a doctoral candidate at Brandman University in the area of Organizational Leadership. I'm a part of a team conducting research to determine what strategies principals use to build trust with their site staff. We are seeking to better understand what is it that you do to build trust with your school staff.

I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in the interview on trust and agreeing to our follow up electronic survey. The information you give, along with the others, hopefully will provide a clear picture of the thoughts and strategies that principals use to build trust with their site staff.

The questions I will be asking are the same for everyone participating in the study. The reason for this is to guarantee, as much as possible, that my interviews with all participating principals will be conducted pretty much in the same manner.

Informed Consent

I would like to remind you any information that is obtained in connection to this study will remain confidential. All the data will be reported without reference to any individual(s) or any institution(s). For ease of our discussion and accuracy I will record our conversation as indicated in the Informed Consent sent to you via email. I will have the recording transcribed to a Word document and will send it to you via electronic mail so that you can check to make sure that I have accurately captured your thoughts and ideas. The digital recording will be erased.

Did you receive the Informed Consent and Brandman Bill of Rights I sent you via email? Do you have any questions or need clarification about either document? If so, would you be so kind as to sign the hard copy of the IRB requirements for me to collect.

We have scheduled an hour for the interview. At any point during the interview you may ask that I skip a question or stop the interview altogether.

Do you have any questions before we begin? Okay, let's get started, and thanks so much for your time.

1. Connection is about creating positive relationships & rapport with others. How have you developed positive relationships and rapport with organizational stakeholders [*staff, board, use your sample]*?

2. In what ways have you developed shared values with organizational stakeholders [*staff, board, use your sample]*?
Prompt: How do you see the establishment of shared values as contributing to trust with organizational stakeholders [*staff, board, use your sample]*?

3. Research shows that leaders develop trust when they care for their employees' well-being. Tell me about some of the ways that you show you care for your employees [*staff, board, use your sample]* and their wellbeing.

4. What are some of the ways you create a collaborative work environment for your employees [*staff, board, use your sample*]?

Prompt: Can you provide some examples of how you make teams feel safe to dialogue in a collaborative environment?

Prompt: How do you manage failures among employees [*staff, board, use your sample*] in the organization?

5. Can you provide an example of a challenging situation when your leadership was dependable and steadfast and developed trust with and between board (*employees, staff*)?

Prompt: How do you ensure that your message to board members (*employees, staff*) is consistent and true during a time of crisis?

6. The leaders who communicate openly and honestly tend to build trust with their employees. Please share with me some ways that have worked for you as the leader of your site to communicate openly and honestly with the staff [*staff, board, use your sample*].

Probe: Can you describe a time when you perceive your communication with staff [*staff, board, use your sample*] may have contributed to developing trust?

7. Two characteristics for a transparent leader are accessibility and being open to feedback. Please share some examples of how you demonstrate accessibility and openness to feedback.

Probe: How would you describe your feedback strategies for staff? Can you give me some examples?

8. The leaders who demonstrate competence by fulfilling their role as expected establish credibility and develop trust with their employees [*staff, board, use your sample*]. Can you describe a time in which you feel your competence as a leader may have contributed to developing trust?

Probe: Please share with me some examples in which you feel you established your credibility within your role as the principal [*use your sample*].

9. Competent leaders value the expertise of others and invite participation of team members to solve problems through shared decision making. Please share with me

some ways that have worked for you as the leader of your site [*use your sample]* to invite participation in decision making with the staff [*staff, board, use your sample]*?

Probe: Can you describe a time when you perceive your staff [*staff, board, use your sample]*. participation in decision making may have contributed to developing trust?

10. What are some of the ways that you model leadership that is consistent?
Prompt: How do you establish expectations that help you to lead the board (*employees, staff*) in a way that is dependable?

"Thank you very much for your time. If you like, when the results of our research are known, we will send you a copy of our findings."
Possible Probes for any of the items – For your eyes only:-)

1. "Would you expand upon that a bit?"
2. "Do you have more to add?"
3. "What did you mean by ……."
4. "Why do think that was the case?"
5. "Could you please tell me more about…. "
6. "Can you give me an example of …."
7. "How did you feel about that?"