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A Mixed Methods Study of How High School Principals Build Trust With Staff Using Weisman's Five Domains of Trust Model

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I look forward to what the future holds and know that I am a changed and better person for taking this journey.

ABSTRACT

A Mixed Methods Study of How High School Principals Build Trust With Staff Using Weisman's Five Domains of Trust Model

by Danielle Clark

Purpose. The purpose of this mixed method case study was to identify and describe how high school principals establish trust with teachers using the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency (TVI, 2010). In addition, it was the purpose of this study to determine the high school principals' perceived degree of importance of the five domains for building trust.

Methodology. This mixed methods research design used quantitative and qualitative data to analyze the research questions related to trust between high school principals and their staff. The study combined surveys and in-person interviews. The quantitative data were gathered via a 10-question online Likert scale survey. The results of the quantitative survey guided qualitative data gathering. The population for this study included high school principals in San Diego County.

Findings. The qualitative findings of this study suggest that high school principals utilize trust-building strategies from all five trust domains, with connection receiving more than one third of the responses. Concern was second with 22% of all responses. The quantitative results showed candor as most important followed by connection, with all five domains very close in overall ratings.

Conclusions. The conclusions are trust is not hierarchical or sequential, leaders must demonstrate competence in responsibilities to be trusted, word and deed must be consistent, staff needs to feel the concern and care of leaders, candor and honesty must

characterize communication with staff, and leaders must build and support personal connections with staff.

Recommendations for Action: Universities should incorporate the findings of this research on the five domains of trust into their programs for aspiring principals. Further, more emphasis needs to be placed on trust building strategies in credential courses. A self-assessment instrument should be developed for principals and aspiring principals to help them determine their level of proficiency in using strategies in the five domains. School districts should provide coaching for principals in small peer groups to help them examine their strengths and needs and to expand their trust strategies.

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PREFACE

Following collaborative discussions regarding the opportunity to study principal trust leadership with various populations, six doctoral students in collaboration with faculty researchers developed a common interest in investigating how principals establish trust with teachers. 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 the five domains of trust: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency using the values institute's trust framework in order to identify and describe the leadership practices principals use to establish trust with teachers. In addition, it was the purpose of this study to determine principal's perceived degree of importance of the five domains for trust. Principals were selected by the team from various public K-12 school districts in California to examine the trust leadership strategies these site leaders used.

Each researcher interviewed 12 school site principals to determine what leadership strategies helped them to establish trust with teachers; the researcher then administered a survey to principals to determine the perceived degree of importance for building trust utilizing the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection. To ensure thematic consistency and reliability, the team cocreated the purpose statement, research questions, definitions, interview questions, survey, and study procedures.

Throughout the study, the term *peer researchers* was used to refer to the other researchers who conducted this thematic study. My fellow doctoral students and peer researchers studied principal trust leadership with the following populations in California

K-12 school districts: Amy Brower, elementary school principals in Apple Valley area; Diana Escalante, elementary school principals in Chino (San Bernardino and Riverside counties); Iyuanna Pease, high school principals in Sacramento County; Wendy Ryerson, middle school principals in Orange County; and Cynthia Smith-Ough, elementary school principals in San Diego County. This study was focused on high school principals in Orange and San Diego counties.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

> The issue of trust has been increasingly called into question in this era of "fake news," whether it's the accuracy of the president's tweets or the creepy notion that Alexa is recording your private conversations with sinister intent.
>
> —Nial McCarthy, "The Institutions Americans Trust Most and Least"

Each day the news headlines remind people of the significance of trust in their daily lives, starting with the highest office in the land. *The Washington Post* ran an article titled "Most Americans don't trust President Trump with the nuclear button" (Guskin, 2018), and America On Line (AOL) News shared an article titled "Poll: US endures 'unprecedented crisis of trust' in Trump's first year" (Barkin, 2018). According to the Pew Research Center (2017), only 18% of Americans trust the government to do what is right. Listhaug (1998) found that the general public was losing confidence in politicians along with the political system. Now, 24 years later, this theme is recurring.

Gallup asked Americans about their confidence levels in 15 societal institutions, finding that only three reached a majority level of trust: military, small business, and the police. Falling short of that standard were the presidency, the Supreme Court, banks, labor, big business, newspapers, the criminal justice system, TV news, and Congress. All of these American institutions scored at 38% or below. The nation's public schools scored at a dismal 29% in public trust (McCarthy, 2018).

Van Maele and Van Houtte (2009) contended that trust is not only linked to the better functioning of organizations, but it also can be assumed to positively affect the functioning and effectiveness of schools. According to the University of Chicago (2008), student achievement improved when trust among adults improved.

Current research in school leadership highlights this and the important leadership strategies effective school leaders must have. Trust is a key element for principals whose mission is to improve learning and teaching (B. Brown, 2015). In a 10-year study of schools in Chicago, Bryk and Schneider (2003) concluded trust can be lost or sustained depending on the principal's behavior and interaction with staff. Relational trust was a critical factor in schools that showed marked improvement over time. Trust is recognized as a critical component of effective leadership (Sutherland & Yoshida, 2015). Therefore, trust is a crucial area to focus on when examining the relationship between school faculty and the school principal. Modoono (2017) agreed,

> In schools, the safety and performance of our students is what we value most. In a culture of trust, the principal and teachers trust one another to maintain that focus. This does not happen by accident, but rather by implementing a thoughtful plan—one that is embraced by everyone. This culture of trust and collaboration becomes the foundation from which everyone can grow. (para. 22)

For these reasons, researchers have seen the need to take a closer look at the impact that trust has in the relationships that exist between school staff and principals and to learn what strategies effective principals use in building that climate of trust.

Background

Trust is defined by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) as one's willingness to be vulnerable to another based on confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, reliable, and competent. People are living in a world of increased complexity and interconnectedness (Petrie, 2014), which suggests that trust is more difficult to attain and, at the same time, more essential than ever. Interest in this area has grown because there

is evidence that building trusting relationships has benefits for an organization's culture and outcomes (Battaglio & Condre, 2009).

Trust has long been viewed from a business management standpoint and more recently is being examined from a school leader perspective. Costigan, Liter, and Berman (1998) found that without trust people become self-protective and defensive, which inhibits learning. In the business sector, they also found that an organizational climate of trust enables employees to share their ideas and feelings, share resources, and learn together (Costigan et al., 1998). Researchers are now studying similar areas in the school systems.

Trust is recognized as a critical component of effective leadership (Sutherland & Yoshida, 2015). Kouzes and Posner (2003) purported that leadership can be learned. Studying trust practices can be helpful in learning how school leaders can positively affect the function and effectiveness of schools to improve teaching and learning (B. Brown, 2015, Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2009).

Wood (2014) found that trust provides a common purpose between the work of the school principals and that of their staff members because of a joint commitment to achieve the goals of the school. Brewster and Railsback (2003) found that relational trust among teachers and principals serves as a key factor in leading school reform.

Defining Trust

There are many different definitions of trust. Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) offered a definition that is frequently cited in research literature. Mayer et al. defined trust as "the willingness to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor,

irrespective of the ability to monitor or control the other party" (p. 712). Mishra (1996) posited that trust can only exist when each party is disposed to share their vulnerability with the other. Weisman (2010), founder and CEO of The Values Institute (TVI), had a similar definition that he developed out of his work with corporate businesses. According to Weisman, trust is

> individuals' willingness, given their culture and communication behaviors in relationships and transactions, to be appropriately vulnerable based on the belief that another individual, group, or organization is competent, open and honest, concerned, reliable and identified with their common values and goals. (p. 1)

The notion of vulnerability is present in all three definitions. This shows that experts in this field agree that leaders must be willing to share their own vulnerabilities openly and appropriately in order to gain the trust of their team.

Business Model of Trust Leadership

Models of trust leadership developed for use with businesses, such as the TVI model (Weisman, 2016), have not been used with school leaders before and provide a new lens for considering trust as it relates to educational leadership. Building and maintaining trust is an ongoing struggle for school leaders, and the outcomes of a trusting relationship between school principals and teachers not only impact those two groups but also impact a school's entire culture, which includes students, parents, and the community it serves. It is important to consider trust as it relates to the foundational theories of leadership that can guide today's high school principals whose roles are perhaps the most complex among school leaders.

Leadership Theories

Trust has been linked to a number of leadership theories, and with each one, leaders build trust with their followers (Legood, 2013). Transformational leadership theory focuses on how leaders manage followers' meaning and purpose in the workplace (Bass, 1985; Bass & Bass, 2008; Burns, 1978). Transformational leadership uses four primary principles: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985; Bass & Bass, 2008; Burns, 1978).

Conscious change leadership posits that organizational culture is based on the principle that "culture must evolve just as the mindset of its leaders and staff must also evolve" (Anderson & Ackerman Anderson, 2010, p. 25). With this leadership style, leaders must consciously create meaningful work environments for themselves, for their followers, and for the organizations they serve. Greenleaf (1991) described servant leadership as a style by which the leaders serves their followers first and their own needs second. Spears (2002) explained this leadership style as one of shared decision-making and building a sense of community—the characteristics of leaders who have built trust in their organization.

Trust in Leadership

Lencioni (2002) explained that trust is a necessary component for cohesive and functioning teams. When people are connected in the worlds in which they live and work, productivity and sense of belonging dramatically improve (Mandelbaum & Friedman, 2011). Tschannen-Moran (2014) found that trust is what is needed in schools to keep everything together. Trust is at the center of productivity, belongingness, and

connectedness, all of which are reasons why school leaders must build and maintain trust at their schools.

Theoretical Considerations

Shaw (1997) defined trust as a "belief that those on whom we depend will meet our expectations" (p. 307). He said that the people others trust should meet their needs. He used this basic idea to create his framework based on three important ideas, which are the premise of his framework for building trust within organizations. The three imperatives that Shaw described are results, integrity, and concern, which make up his model of trust. Historically, trust had been looked at from an emotional standpoint, and Shaw believed that the actual results (or outcomes) must be examined as well. The outcomes that leaders establish for organizations are also important. This same idea could be generalized to a school site organization today in which student outcomes are a central focus.

When Kouzes and Posner (2012) identified their five practices of exemplary leadership, they were able to share the behaviors that enabled success in the leaders they interviewed. To make extraordinary things happen in organizations, "Leaders engage in what we call The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership. They model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, encourage the heart" (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 15).

When leaders model these practices they are connecting with the people in their organizations and empowering them with the confidence to perform. This connection between the leaders and the people they work with increased the commitment and satisfaction levels of the organization's teams (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). Current

research has shown that strong leadership traits can be developed and that the factors that support this are found in many noted models of trust.

Much like Shaw (1997) and Kouzes and Posner (2003, 2012), Covey's (2006) 13 traits of successful leaders focus on character and competence. These traits focus on the language and behaviors that are used by leaders to create and sustain trust within organizations. Covey supported the idea that these traits can be learned. The TVI trust model (Weisman, 2016), however, examined five of these factors—competence, consistency, candor, concern, and connectedness—and how they relate to leadership trust. Weisman's (2010) model of trust defined trust as

> an individual's willingness, given their culture and communication behaviors in relationships and transactions, to be appropriately vulnerable based on the belief that another individual, group, or organization is competent, open and honest, concerned, reliable, and identified with their common values and goals. (p. 1)

Theoretical Framework

TVI was founded in 2009 by Michael Weisman to study and communicate the role of values in building trusting relationships in organizations and communities. Weisman had a 4-decade career in advertising and marketing before founding this strategic think tank. TVI sponsors regional and national research studies related to this mission. The TVI framework uses five variables in order to measure trust. This model examines trust from a hierarchical standpoint. It begins with looking at competence and consistency, which are considered rational factors. Then, two emotional factors are considered: concern and candor. Lastly, the factor of self-actualization is considered

when looking at connectedness. These five variables, when present, lead to trust (Weisman, 2016).

Competence

Competence examines the effectiveness of a leader. Much like Shaw (1997) noted the importance of results, competence is similar. Hipp (1996) found that teacher efficacy had a direct link to principal leadership. When teachers felt supported and empowered to do their best work, job performance and student outcomes improved. Bryk and Schneider (2003) recognized that the understanding of one's role of teacher and/or principal was important for establishing expectations of one another. This understanding helped to increase the feelings of competence both parties had of each other. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) found competence to be one of the five components that measured trustworthiness. Can principals do what is expected of them? A school's staff needs to believe in the skills of the principal in order to trust in their leader.

Consistency

The consistency of a leader can be observed when they are being dependable so that others can count on them. Melnyczenko (2014) found that consistency of words and actions was an important contributor to trust. One of the characteristics of trustworthiness included in the research of Makiewicz (2011) was that a leader must be reliable and demonstrate goodwill. The people within an organization need to be able to count on what the leader says and does. Faculty need to be able to trust their school principals to follow through and be consistent with their messages and actions.

Candor

Leaders show candor when they are sincere, authentic, and honest. These are traits important for school leaders to demonstrate. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) found that one of the factors that creates trust in schools is the authenticity that leaders show when working in their organizations. A good leader wants to do the right thing and not let others down. Common decency leads a leader to be sincere and authentic in communicating openly and honestly. Transparency facilitates the development of trust. The Dalai Lama cautions, "A lack of transparency results in distrust and a deep sense of insecurity" (Elkington, van der Steege, Glick-Smith, & Moss Breen, 2018).

Concern

Leaders demonstrate concern by sharing emotional connections like caring, empathy, tolerance, and safety with the people of their organization. Leithwood and Riehl (2003) studied school leadership and found that strong leaders develop people, empower others, and provide instructional guidance. This caring for others is part of a growing improvement effort for educational leaders. People must believe their leaders care for them in order to trust them (Covey, 2006). Caring and empathy that concerned leaders demonstrate is powerful, and leaders must not take this lightly. Wood (2014) noted that when trust is broken, it can be difficult to regain, though not impossible. Leaders who show concern for their people will take this into careful consideration.

Connectedness

Leaders who show connectedness have values, norms, goals, and shared beliefs that are communicated with the staff and are a part of the vision of the organization. Wood (2014) found emotional bonds to have a significant impact on school leadership

that directly relate to the trusting relationships formed between principals and their staff. Maintaining this connectedness allowed for strong working relationships and improved school operations. Principal interrelatedness with staff was found to directly impact the teachers' belief in themselves and their abilities (Gallante, 2015). The trust between the principal and teacher can be directly influenced by the strong positive connection between the two. Teacher efficacy was also increased with this connection and therefore student learning improved.

The Role of the High School Principal

The high school principal's role has evolved over the last 3 decades. Trail (2000) suggested that in addition to a manager and leader, a high school principal is also a psychologist, teacher, facilities manager, police officer, cheerleader, philosopher, diplomat, social worker, public relations director, mentor, and coach. Weisman (2010) explained that a high school principal must be a visionary and a goal setter who leads with passion and mentors staff members to ensure their growth. With this shift away from that of a manager (Allen, 1998), high school principals must be able to focus their attention on what is important, at the right time, with many varying groups of people. It is essential for the high school principal to develop trusting relationships with all stakeholders, especially the teachers who work directly with students.

Statement of the Research Problem

The volatility and complexity of this world has created a great deal of chaos, uncertainty, and ambiguity. This volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world produces situations in which trust is often a casualty (Orem, 2016). Orem (2016) pointed out that situations in which change forces arise suddenly and create perceptions

of instability and unpredictability can produce anxiety and confusion. When multiple factors exist concerning a single issue, they can be misread and can cause confusion about pending decisions. This VUCA condition erodes trust and calls for superior leadership to rebuild it.

Judiciary Committee hearings to approve Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh demonstrated these characteristics in front of a national audience. It was clear to onlookers that in this volatile, chaotic situation, with many colliding factors and huge ambiguities, committee members on the left and right did not trust each other. Democrats did not trust the nominee, and Republicans did not trust the stories of the accusers. This national, high-stakes situation in a governmental organization, such as the Senate, is an example of how trust in both the culture and the organizations is diminishing in this VUCA environment (Covey, 2009; Mandelbaum & Friedman, 2011).

In many of today's organizations, the vision and the mission is delivered through effectively functioning teams (Harvey & Drolet, 2016). Lencioni (2002) contended that trust is the single most important factor of a functioning and cohesive team. Fullan (2014b) maintained that principals play an important role in leading teams toward instructional improvement. Transforming a school culture to achieve breakthrough results is dependent on developing relational trust (Kratzer, 1997). Trusting relationships between principals and teachers is a key factor leading to school reform (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Bryk & Schneider, 2003). Principals who have built trust with their faculty are more likely to be successful in school improvement goals of increased student success and achievement (Mees, 2008; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Because building trust with their teaching teams is crucial to accomplishing the vision and mission of school improvement, more information is needed on how principals build trust with their teachers. While there is some research on the importance of trust for school leaders, there is less research done on what factors contribute to building trust among principals and teachers. There is no research to date on how principals use the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency (Weisman, 2010). Using The Science of Trust Framework, developed by TVI, this study described how high school principals build trust with their teachers through five dimensions: competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection (Weisman, 2016).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to identify and describe how elementary principals establish trust with staff using the five domains of trust: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency (Weisman, 2010). In addition, the purpose of this study was to determine elementary principals' perceived degree of importance of the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency for building trust.

Research Questions

1. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of connection?
2. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of concern?
3. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of candor?
4. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of competence?
5. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of consistency?

6. How do high 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 job of the school principal has changed significantly over the years from that of site manager to a school leader (James-Ward, 2011). There used to be a focus on the operational aspects of leading a school, and now that has changed. Petrie (2014) referred to these as horizontal competencies. These competencies were aspects of leadership that could simply be told to another and little skill was needed. Research is now focused on more complex leadership skills, such as the impact the school principal has on overall school effectiveness (Hallinger & Heck, 1996).

Tschannen-Moran (2014) found that principals and teachers who trust each other work better together to help solve school issues. Bryk and Schneider (2003) found that trust is foundational for school improvement. Vodicka (2006) asserted that trust was the single most important factor in developing an effective learning community. Trust appeared as one of the single most significant factors principals can use to effect overall school improvement (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Leadership trust impacts employee efficacy, work performance, a school's culture, and ultimately the relationship that school principals have with their staff.

Although research has been completed relating to the importance of trust in school leadership practices (Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). there still is a deficit in trusting relationships in the public schools. Research has not been conducted on using the five elements of the Weisman's (2016) trust model. This study was designed to fill in the gap in the research regarding the impact that the factors

of competency, consistency, candor, compassion, and connectedness (Weisman, 2016) have for high school principals building trust with faculty.

The results of this study may assist districts when designing leadership professional development for their school principals. Information gathered may also assist universities with course development for administrative credentialing programs. Additionally, the findings can be used when evaluating school culture, including student performance and teacher retention. Professional organizations like the Association of California School Administrators and the School Superintendents Association will also find the information valuable for their members' own professional learning and future professional development opportunities.

Definitions

The theoretical and operational definitions of this research are included within this section. The theoretical definitions are based upon previous research and provide meaning to specific terms that are relevant to this study. The operational definitions serve two essential purposes: (a) they establish the rules and procedures the research investigator will use to measure the key variables of the study, and (b) they provide unambiguous meaning to terms that otherwise might be interpreted in 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).

Candor. Candor involves communicating information in a precise manner and being truthful even if one does not want to provide such information (Gordon & Gilley, 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 are able to show their vulnerability, support, motivation, and care for each other (Anderson & Ackerman Anderson, 2010; Covey, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 1988; Livnat, 2004; Weisman, 2016).

Connection. Connection is a shared link or bond in which there is a sense of emotional engagement and interrelatedness (Sloan & Oliver, 2013; Stovall & Baker, 2010; White, Harvey, & Fox, 2016).

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

Operational Definitions

High school. A high school is a comprehensive educational institution providing academic instructional leadership to students in Grades 9–12.

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 purposes of this study, trust is defined as an individual's willingness, given his or her culture and communication behaviors in relationships and transactions, to be appropriately vulnerable based on the belief that another individual, group, or

organization is competent, open and honest, concerned, reliable, and identified with the individual, group, or organization's common values and goals (Weisman, 2016).

Delimitations

This study was delimited to the following:

1. Twelve high school principals in the Southern California counties of Orange and San Diego who had 3 or more years of principal experience at their school site.
2. Convenience and purposeful sampling because of geographical proximity and availability.

Organization of the Study

This study was organized in five chapters. Chapter 1 introduced the study with current context, background and theory, a statement of the problem, purpose and research questions, significance, definitions, and delimitations. Chapter II presents a review of the literature, including the foundational theory and theoretical framework for this study as well as a description of the high school principal's role in public education. Chapter III sets forth the methodology, including instrumentation, validity, reliability, data collection and data analysis procedures, and the limitations of the study. Chapter IV presents the findings, and Chapter V presents the major findings, conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The social bond that connects us as people is based on *trustability.* (Paul Taylor, 2018, para. 17)

Across the globe, headlines portray a deteriorating lack of trust in organizations of all types. From the Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan to the United Kingdom Members of Parliament expense scandal, the people's trust has been shaken in their leaders. In the United States, credit card hackers have created doubt in how corporations are treating the personal information of their customers. The Volkswagen emission fraud, the steroid-taking athletes, the police who have tampered with evidence, the teachers who have changed test scores, all have contributed to a less trusting, more skeptical culture in 21st-century organizations. How leaders build trust over time is a crucial question for every organization, especially for those places of learning that are responsible for developing the future citizens and leaders of this country.

This study explored trust leadership in the public schools from the point of view of high school principals who have successfully built and maintained trust in their schools. Chapter II reviews the literature and research relevant to this topic as viewed through the lens of Weisman's (2010) five trust-building domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency. Several online databases (ProQuest, Google Scholar, and EBSCOhost) were searched through the Leatherby Library. This review is a synthesis of books, dissertations, reports, peer-reviewed journal articles, and other current sources.

Chapter II is organized in five parts. Part I describes the state of trust in the 21st century. It defines trust and its importance to leaders, organizations, and stakeholders,

including the public schools. Part II describes selected theoretical foundations related to trust building. Part III presents the theoretical framework proposed for this study from Weisman's (2010) five C's of trust: competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection. Part IV examines the role of K-12 leadership and trust, trust in the schools, and the role of the high school principals in building trust with their teachers. This chapter provides the conceptual framework for understanding the role of the high school principals and the behaviors they use to build and sustain trust. Finally, the gap that currently exists in research on this topic is explored. The researcher developed a synthesis matrix of scholarly literature research (Appendix A) to guide and support the development of this literature review.

The State of Trust in the 21st Century

Over the past 2 decades, international surveys relative to trust in countries across the globe have shown a relationship between strong economic conditions and higher trust levels or weak economic conditions and lower trust levels. The year 2020 was an exception. The 20th annual Edelman survey of 34,000 respondents in 28 countries reported that in spite of a robust economy, trust levels have deteriorated in government, business, nongovernmental organizations, and the media (Edelman, 2020). This communications firm points to people's fears about the future and their role in it as a cause for this paradoxical situation. Driving this distrust, according to Edelman, is a growing sense of inequity and unfairness, prioritizing the interests of the few over the good of the whole. According to Edelman (2020), "People today grant their trust on two distinct attributes: competence (delivering on promises) and ethical behavior (doing the

right thing and working to improve society). Government and media are perceived as both incompetent and unethical" (para. 8).

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates how crucial trust can be in an emergency situation. COVID-19 is spread from person to person, and reducing contact with others will slow the spread of this lethal disease. For that reason, governors, mayors, and leaders of all types of organizations have ordered people and employees to stay at home and avoid congregating in the workplace, grocery stores, and other businesses. Staying at home and avoiding close contact with others is called social distancing.

The Importance of Trust

Covey (2006) asserted that trust is the one thing that can change everything. If trust is removed, it can destroy a government, a successful business, a thriving economy, a leader, or a close relationship. If cultivated, it can create incomparable success and prosperity in every facet of life. Horsager (2012) agreed that trust can bring dramatic results to business and leaders. White et al. (2016) contended that today's problems require a new vision for the future and leaders who can gain the trust of their people in order to deliver that vision. In educational institutions, higher levels of trust among principals and teachers contribute to greater financial stability, reduced problems with behavior management, improved parent and community support, increased teacher and staff retention, and increased student achievement (Travis, 2019). Covey (2006) concluded that

> the first job of a leader is to inspire trust. The ability to do so, in fact, is a prime differentiator between a manager and a leader. To inspire trust is to create the

foundation upon which all truly successful enterprises—and relationships—stand. (p. 286)

Trust Defined

In 1960, Douglas McGregor advanced the novel Theory Y in his seminal work, *The Human Side of Enterprise*, which suggested that employees are worthy of trust and with management support could be motivated to do their best work (McGregor, 2006). In his book *The Professional Manager*, McGregor (1967) defined trust as "the knowledge that the other person will not take unfair advantage of one, either deliberately or accidentally, consciously or unconsciously" (p. 39.). Openly and honestly expressing one's point of view, especially in times of conflict, can be quite risky, for both leader and followers. For that reason, trust has been described as "a fragile quality on which a single action can have profoundly destructive consequences, trust is built very slowly and in small increments, is established more by deeds than by words, and is sustained by openness in interpersonal relations" (Schmuck & Runkel, 1985, p. 98).

A review of the literature shows many different definitions of trust. However, there are threads of meaning that run through all of them. Covey (2006) stated, "Simply put, trust means *confidence.* The opposite of trust—distrust—is suspicion" (p. 4). Covey asserted that to have trust, one must have confidence in a person's integrity and abilities. Covey said that trusting relationships feel different. Communication is easier and work gets accomplished more quickly and efficiently. There is joy in the relationship. On the other hand, low-trust relationships feel depressing. Communication is halting and cautious. Work takes longer to accomplish, and the relationship is tedious and draining rather than joyful.

Readiness to be vulnerable and positive expectation are additional threads running (Colquitt, Scott, & LePine , 2007; Fulmer & Gelfand, 2012). According to Mayer, Davis, and Shoorman (1995), trust is defined as "the willingness to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control the other party" (p. 712). The definition proposed by Weisman (2010) of The Values Institute (TVI), whose model forms the basis of this research, was used for this study:

> An individual's willingness, given their culture and communication behaviors in relationships and transactions, to be appropriately vulnerable based on the belief that another individual, group or organization is competent, open and honest, concerned, reliable and identified with their common values and goals. (p. 1)

Trust and Leadership

Leading people to excellence and personal fulfillment is essential to achieve an organizational vision. In order to accomplish this, leaders must have the trust of their followers.

According to McKee, Boyatzis, and Johnston (2008),

> If we are to find our way to a better world, a more stable environment, and societies in which all people have access to life's gifts, we need people who can see beyond today, spark hope instead of despair, and draw others into an intentional journey of transformation. (p. ix)

The volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world of the 21st century has made trust in leadership all the more difficult and all the more crucial (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014). Turning again to the COVID-19 crisis presents a vivid

example of a VUCA situation that has impacted virtually every organization in the United States and other countries across the globe. Volatility is seen in the unpredictable and unstable circumstances of a given situation. Swift changes in the health of people and in the ability of hospitals to cope with an explosive, hazardous, and escalating situation has forced leaders to move swiftly to find solutions and persuade followers to accept their direction. Uncertainty has been reflected in the unpredictable nature of this virus. Will the tests that are needed be available? Will there be a vaccine in time to save lives? Will the equipment and facilities be sufficient for the flood of sick patients? Complexity is characterized by many interconnected parts and variables and the overwhelming nature of the problem (Bennet & Lemoine, 2014;). In the COVID-19 crisis, the complexity of keeping people safe was defined by ordering businesses to shut down, depriving people of needed income in order to stay alive, complicating development of new tests and drug therapies, and finding solutions to a quickly deteriorating economy. Ambiguity arises when causes are unclear, and no precedents exist. It escalates when decisions must be made without having all the information and when finding the right kind of information is extremely difficult (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014;). Ambiguity and confusion arise from not knowing what may have caused a person to become deathly ill, not knowing what will happen without the money to pay your bills, and not knowing whether it is safe to go to the grocery store to get food. During this pandemic, huge challenges confront leaders who struggle to find viable solutions and gain the trust of followers. If the leaders are to be able to influence the behavior of followers, they must trust that their leaders are competent, honest, and more concerned about the common good of the people than their own self-interest (Patterson,

Grenny, Maxfield, McMillan, & Switzler, 2013). Without trust, the leaders, the country, the organizations, and the people will face catastrophe. Trust is indispensable to leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

In this chapter, the literature on organizational leadership is reviewed in the first section. In the next section, the foundational literature on trust theory is reviewed. Following these two sections, the proposed theoretical framework—Weisman's (2010) five C's of trust—is described. The chapter concludes with a description of the role of the secondary principal, which is the population that was investigated in this study.

Theoretical Foundations

The leaders of all types of organizations from every field are searching for people who know how to lead change and influence people in a positive direction. Leaders understand that the only constant in the days ahead is that change will continue to escalate, and the world will need strong leaders who can keep a firm footing in the midst of volatility, uncertainty, and chaos. In his book *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, fifth edition, Northouse (2010) pointed out that leadership is a highly valued commodity. Researchers worldwide are studying the commodity of leadership, looking for the best theories, solutions, strategies, and behaviors that can guide organizations in this chaotic world. Northouse offered this definition of leadership: "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3). Leadership involves influencing people to change their behavior to achieve important results. Without influence, leadership is impotent (Northouse, 2010; Patterson et al., 2013). In the next section of Chapter II, organizational leadership foundational theories

are explored in the five practices of exemplary leadership, authentic leadership, servant leadership, and transformational leadership.

Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership

In the sixth edition of *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, Kouzes and Posner (2017) continued to advocate for five practices of leadership that lead to extraordinary results: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart.

Model the way. Modeling the way is turning one's values into actions. Leaders must be clear in their own mind about the values they hold most dear and then communicate those values both by words and actions. If a value is violated, the leader must take action to demonstrate its importance; otherwise, its significance will be lost as a guiding light to decision-making. If words and actions do not match, trust will deteriorate (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Inspire a shared vision. Leaders envision the future by imagining an exciting and magnetic time for their organization. Looking outward for new and innovative products, processes, and ideas helps to creatively design a vision internally. The vision has to be meaningful to the constituents. It must appeal to shared aspirations and designed for the common good if it is to be seen as worthy of time and effort (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Challenge the process. Leaders who embrace the status quo will never attain greatness for themselves or their organization. Only those who embrace adversity and search for the opportunities it affords to innovate and improve will find personal and professional excellence. Creating a climate that is safe for risk taking and

experimentation is crucial to success. Inviting people to challenge the system with new ideas and finding flaws in existing operations will yield positive results in the long run (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Enable others to act. Achieving great results is not a one-person operation. It takes a high-performing team to collaborate and make things happen. Building trust, facilitating teamwork, and having team and individual accountability are essential to successful projects. Leaders must focus on serving the needs of the group rather than the reverse. Building the competence, self-determination, and confidence of team members helps them to perform at their best (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Encourage the heart. People want to know that they are valued and appreciated by their leaders. They need to feel that the leader believes in them and trusts them to achieve the goals of the project. Recognizing accomplishments and showing appreciation for individual excellence helps to establish an encouraging environment. Celebrations and rituals, when done in an authentic way and from the heart, are a way of injecting fun and spirit into the workplace (Blanchard & Barrett, 2010; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; White et al., 2016). They build collective identity and see people through the difficult times.

Authentic Leadership

In his book *True North: Discover Your Authentic Leadership,* George (2007) defined the authentic leader as one who "brings people together around a shared purpose and empowers them to step up and lead authentically in order to create value for all stakeholders" (p. xxxi). Authentic leaders generate trust by fostering sincere connections with others. They are more focused on serving others rather than their own self-aggrandizement. George described the five dimensions of authentic leadership:

"pursuing purpose with passion, practicing solid values, leading with heart, establishing connected relationships, demonstrating self-discipline" (p. 205).

Authentic leaders stay true to who they are and what they believe while motivating the individuals they work with toward a common goal (Bishop, 2013). This leadership style thrives with positive organizational behavior and positive organizational context. Authentic leaders develop human resource strengths and psychological capacities to improve performance (Novicevic, Davis, Dorn, Buckley, & Brown, 2005). Although authentic leaders do not necessarily have similar traits, they do share a commitment to ethical behavior. The positive psychological capacities and ethical climate encourages positive self-development in others through a greater self-awareness, a moral perspective, and a balanced processing of information (Walumbwa, Avoloio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). The trust that emanates from their morality and integrity tends to promote positive performance in their group (Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, & Avey, 2008). Authentic leaders are guided by their own moral standards versus outside influences, which is reflected in their decision-making (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). In summary, authentic leaders are passionate about their pursuit of purpose, represent their beliefs and values every day, lead with love, prioritize meaningful relationships, and consistently practice self-discipline (George, 2003; Hopkins & O'Neil, 2015). This authenticity is reflected in employee behavior and positively motivates an organization.

Servant Leadership

Robert K. Greenleaf was the primary influencer on the development of the servant leadership theory in 1970 (Northouse, 2010). In his book *The Servant as Leader*,

Greenleaf (1991) described this style of leadership as "the servant leader is servant first. . . . It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p. 7). For Greenleaf, "Servant leadership means serving others and placing the good of others and the organization above the leader's self-interest" (Banks & Ledbetter, 2004, p. 108).

Sendjaya and Pekerti (2010) believed that servant leadership comes from one's own beliefs, rather than personal leadership style, to serve people in need, regardless of personal costs. The servant leadership theory focuses on serving the needs of the followers with attention to personal development and self-determination. Servant leaders often place priority on the employees' interests rather the organization's. However, servant leaders who focus on their people increase the propensity for organizational success (Ebener & O'Connell, 2010).

Servant leaders who focus on employees' needs help to develop trust among their people (Woo, 2018). Therefore, servant leadership and trust are interconnected. Joseph and Winston (2005) considered service to be a precursor to organizational and leader trust. In summary, servant leadership focuses on serving employees first. The goodwill among employees that this creates leads to a greater level of trust and positive organizational outcomes.

Transformational Leadership

By definition, transformational leaders are those who are able to lead their organizations through transformational change—the kind of change that can lead to extraordinary, superior, or breakthrough results (Anderson & Ackerman Anderson, 2010; Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders have the courage and vision to know

when a radical shift of strategy, structure, systems, or processes is needed for the organization to survive and thrive (Anderson & Ackerman Anderson, 2010). These leaders pay close attention to the culture, behavior, and mindset that is necessary to engage their people successfully. The transformational leader possesses conscious awareness, being alert, clear minded, observant, and reflective. This is the foundation for achieving the breakthrough results of organizational transformation.

Balch and Brower (2005) emphasized the decision-making processes that transformational leaders use in their organizations. These leaders think and act in ways that prioritize the common good as the leadership imperative. Transformational school leaders focus on what is in the best interest of students, staff, parents, taxpayers, and other key stakeholders (Anderson & Ackerman Anderson, 2010).

Transformational leaders encourage, empower, inspire, and motivate their followers (Bass, 1990, 1995; Nwagbo, 2019). Their leadership focuses on the ability of a leader to influence and inspire others to take on shared values (McCarthy, 2018; Northouse, 2010). People feel empowered to act in organizations that are led by transformational leaders (Northouse, 2010). Employees believe they are trusted because of a shared sense of purpose with their leader, which allows them to reach greater heights in the organization (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Larick and White (2012) identified 10 leadership traits of a transformational leader on their Transformational Leadership Skills Inventory (TLSi). They found that visionary leadership; communication; problem solving and decision-making; character and integrity; collaboration and sustained innovation; and managing change, diversity, team development, and political intelligence were all behaviors that transformational

leaders modeled. The ability to use these skills to move and shape organizations under this model is multiplex.

In summary, transformational leaders are conscious change leaders who have the vision and courage to engage and empower their people in organizational change that will bring about breakthrough results for the common good.

Theoretical Foundations of Trust

Presented in this section are four models of trust that are foundational to the proposed theoretical framework of the model that was investigated in this study: Mayer et al.'s (1995) integrative model of organizational trust, Covey's (2006) five waves of trust, Tschannen-Moran's (2014) five facets of trust, and Blanchard, Olmstead, and Lawrence's (2013) ABCD model of trust.

Integrative Model of Organizational Trust

In 1995, trust was not a well-researched topic in management studies, which prompted Mayer et al. to turn to studies in other diverse fields for information on this topic. In addition to management, they searched philosophy, psychology, and economics. Mayer et al. (1995) thought that the insights they gained were valuable, but the researchers were talking past each other, and therefore, they developed a model to integrate the findings of multiple models into a single cross-discipline model, which they called the integrative model of organizational trust. Schoorman, Mayer, and David's (2007) current research posited that trust was dispositional or trait-like. Early theorists have proposed a dispositional aspect of trust as an individual's general willingness to trust (Rotter, 1978). This propensity to trust was considered a personality trait for which some individuals are more likely to trust than others (Mayer et al., 1995). Mayer et al.

(1995) also included ability as an antecedent of trust in their model. The integrative model of organizational trust centers on the interpersonal trust between a trustor and a trustee and focuses on three elements: ability, benevolence, and integrity (Burke et al., 2007; Fulmer & Gelfand, 2012; Legood, 2013; Schoorman et al., 2007).

Ability. The element of ability has received the most attention by scholars studying trustworthiness (Blanchard et al., 2013; Colquitt et al., 2007; Legood, 2013). It comprises skills, competencies, and characteristics that tend to produce results (Mayer et al., 1995). Mayer et al. (1995) added ability to trustworthiness, though it departed from the more popular view of affection as important in building trust (Schoorman et al., 2007). Ability can be the reason for different levels of trust shown to the same person under different conditions. For example, while a fireman may be trusted to extinguish a blaze, the same trust may not be extended when the fireman is required to cook a meal for the firefighters on the team, an area in which the fireman may lack competence, training, and experience.

Benevolence. The element of benevolence is defined as "the extent to which a party is believed to want to do good for the trusting party, aside from an egocentric profit motive" (Schoorman et al., 2007, p. 345). It focuses on the trustor's belief that the trustee would act with the trustor's interest at heart without personal incentive (Mayer et al., 1995). The already established relationship is the sole motive to act on behalf of the trustor. Livnat (2004) suggested that benevolence is comprised of emotional, performative, and cognitive elements. The emotional elements relate to care and concern for the trustee; the performative element is action the trustee takes to ease the suffering

and pain of trustors and to support their welfare; and the cognitive element includes the rational aspects of the trustee's positive actions.

Integrity. The element of integrity derives from the trustee following a set of ethical and moral principles that are consistent with those of the trustor (Mayer et al., 1995). Congruence of values is critical to integrity. A trustee who follows a different set of values may not be perceived as having integrity if the values are not clear and accepted by the trustor, which makes this a very subjective perception. A combination of other factors also affects the perception of a trustee's integrity—fairness, justice, consistency, and keeping one's word have been used to denote integrity as well as consistency of words and actions (Mayer et al., 1995).

Covey's Five Waves of Trust

In 2006, Stephen M. R. Covey developed a model called the five waves of trust, which is a ripple effect metaphor to show that trust comes from the inside out. The five waves demonstrate the interdependence of trust and depict the five contexts in which trust is established: self-trust, relationship trust, organizational trust, market trust, and societal trust.

Self-trust. This first wave relates to people's ability to set and achieve goals, to match their words and actions, and to become a trustworthy person (Covey, 2006). This wave involves establishing oneself as a person of high character and high competence, which results in credibility, judgment, and influence. This is an essential component of inspiring trust in others (Covey, 2006; Tschannen-Moran, 2014; White et al., 2016). The key principle of self-trust is credibility (Covey, 2006). Covey (2006) posited that there are four cores of credibility: integrity, intent, capabilities, and results. Integrity is having

the courage to synchronize one's actions with one's values and beliefs. Intent has to do with the leader's motives, which must be straightforward and mutually beneficial for the people. Capabilities are the talents, attitudes, skills, and knowledge that are used to produce results. Unless the leader is qualified in all of these areas, the people will not trust. The fourth core is results, which is the leader's track record for getting things done. When the leader is able to deliver the results promised, trust and credibility go way up (Covey, 2006).

Relationship trust. This second wave of trust is all about building and increasing trust accounts with others through 13 behaviors (Covey, 2006). These behaviors include talking straight, demonstrating respect, creating transparency, righting wrongs, showing loyalty, delivering results, getting better, confronting reality, clarifying expectations, practicing accountability, listening first, keeping commitments, and extending trust. The key principle of building relationship trust is consistency in one's actions (Covey, 2006).

Organizational trust. The third wave deals with creating systems, structures, and symbols that contribute to trust in an organization. They help to diminish or obviate seven of most destructive trust breakers: (a) redundancy in layers of management, (b) bureaucracy in excessive and cumbersome rules and regulations, (c) office politics and infighting, (d) disengagement—also known as quit and stay, (e) employee turnover, (f) churn—the turnover of stakeholders other than employees, and (g) fraud—dishonesty, sabotage, deception, and disruption. When trust is restored, it yields dividends in increased value to employees and other stakeholders, accelerated growth in performance, enhanced innovation, improved collaboration, strengthened partnering, improved execution, and heightened loyalty.

Market trust. The fourth wave is about brand or reputation. Brand is important to all organizations, including governments, school districts, charities, hospitals, cities, and states (Covey, 2006; Smithson, 2015; Weisman, 2016). It is a well-known fact to realtors that families decide where to buy a home based on the reputation of the school district. Cities have reputations that are reflected in the best places to live or visit. This translates into tax dollars and tourist dollars, businesses attracted, and home values. Every individual has a brand also. One's reputation translates into job promotions, selection for assignments, requests to be part of a social circle, and appointments to volunteer leadership roles (Covey, 2006; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Building one's brand requires integrity, good intent, capabilities, and good results.

Societal trust. Covey's (2006) fifth wave involves the principal of contribution. Contribution creates value rather than destroying it (Covey, 2006). It is about giving back rather than taking out. It is about being a responsible global citizen. It requires aligning the structures and systems of the organization or the team in a way that promotes citizenship within the organization and the world. It involves integrity and intent as well as capability and results. It requires value congruence, positive reputation, consistency, and justice to denote integrity (Butler, 1991; Colquitt et al., 2007; Mayer et al., 1995).

Five Facets of Trust

In her book *Trust Matters: Leadership for Successful Schools*, Tschannen-Moran (2014) laid out a model called five facets of trust: benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence. Her model was developed to provide guidance on ensuring trustworthy leadership for schools. She defines each of the facets shown in Table 1.

Tschannen-Moran (2014) contended that all of these facets are significant but their relative weight hinges on the nature of the interdependence and vulnerability in the relationship. It is possible to observe untrustworthy behavior in a close associate and still trust that person if the individual has not engaged in untrustworthy behavior within the relationship (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). When roles change, the trust level often needs to be reassessed. For example, two teachers who have taught together for many years and had a very trusting friendship may see a change in the trust levels if one of them gets promoted and is now the supervisor.

Table 1

Five Facets of Trust

Trust facet	Definition
Benevolence	Caring, extending goodwill, demonstrating positive intentions, supporting teachers, expressing appreciation for faculty and staff efforts, being fair, guarding confidential information
Honesty	Showing integrity, telling the truth, keeping promises, honoring agreements, being authentic, accepting responsibility, avoiding manipulation, being real, being true to oneself
Openness	Maintaining open communication, sharing important information, delegating, sharing decision-making, sharing power
Reliability	Being consistent, being dependable, showing commitment, expressing dedication, exercising diligence
Competence	Buffering teachers from outside disruptions, handling difficult situations, setting standards, pressing for results, working hard, setting an example, solving problems, resolving conflict, being flexible

Note. From *Trust Matters: Leadership for Successful Schools* (2nd ed.), by M. Tschannen-Moran, 2014, p. 39, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

As relationships mature, the various aspects of trust become more refined and discriminating. There is greater differentiation within and between the five aspects of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Because principals have greater power, they also have

greater responsibility for developing and sustaining a culture of trust. They need to be highly visible to demonstrate these aspects, so their constituents can observe firsthand their benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

ABCD Trust Model

Covey (2006) argued that people have to trust the leader's ability—their competence to make the right decisions—before they will get on board. But Blanchard et al. (2013) said that competence is necessary but not enough. The leader must be believable. Credibility and integrity are an essential part of the trust definition. The leaders' connection to their people—to their cares and interests—goes a long way toward building trust. Relationships marked by approachability, affability, compassion, and concern are a pivotal part of trust (White et al., 2016). And finally, dependability—matching deeds with words, following through on promises, and being reliable—is a critical part of the trust model.

The ABCD trust model, developed by Blanchard et al. (2013), was created with the idea that trust is built with four elements: ability, believability, connection, and dependability. The model is used by leaders who wish to build trust within their organization and, most importantly, with those they work with. Leaders can build trust by practicing both awareness and action in the following four areas: able, believable, connected, and dependable (Blanchard et al., 2013).

Able. When leaders are competent and skilled in the work they do, their followers are more likely to believe in them as a leader (Blanchard et al, 2013). A leader must demonstrate actions their followers believe to be important. Ability is being

competent in problem solving, having relevant experience in the field, being the best in the field, and getting the necessary results for the organization. Consistency is critical. Stakeholders are more likely to trust a leader whom they believe is able to comprehend the full scope of the problem and execute the tasks necessary to solve it.

Believable. To be believable, leaders must be truthful and demonstrate integrity in their actions and statements (Blanchard et al., 2013). Fairness and honesty are other necessary traits of a believable leader under the ABCD trust model. According to Covey (2006), believability is the same as credibility. The leaders' reputation is dependent on their believability and credibility (White et al., 2016). Leaders must be consistent in words and actions, in the good times and bad, to ensure they remain believable.

Connected. A connected leader behaves in ways that unite one to the other. Connectedness is based on relationships and interpersonal confidence (McAllister, 1995). Followers want to be able to see their leader as someone they relate to, identify with, and therefore can trust. Connected leaders are constantly building trust because they care about their people (Blanchard et al., 2013). They encourage sharing personal stories with one another, highlight and acknowledge the work of those in the organization, and build harmony among the members of their team.

Dependable. A dependable leader is reliable and follows through on commitments. Blanchard et al. (2013) described additional characteristics of a dependable leader as one who is responsive, timely, organized, accountable, and consistent in actions. When followers are witness to this, they can depend on the person who leads them. B. Brown (2017) cautioned to not overpromise because doing so can hinder a leader's follow through, especially when circumstances are out of the leader's

control. Harvey and Drolet (2006) found that people who are trusted are consistent in words and actions.

Theoretical Framework

Weisman (2016) pointed out that leaders who want to build trust with their staff must realize that it does not happen overnight. They must be willing to devote the time that is needed to establish trusting relationships because trust is crucial to the success of the organization.

In 2009, Michael Weisman, an advertising and marketing executive, reacted personally to the national crisis spawned by the financial and moral breakdown of Wall Street. Weisman (2016) was deeply concerned that corporations had become too focused on their bottom line and had lost track of the people on their staff and in their clientele. He responded to this situation by establishing TVI to address the decline in corporate ethics. This institute, which was located in Orange County, California, was designed to be a strategic think tank charged with the mission of promoting a values-driven corporate culture. Engaging in values research, Weisman led TVI in developing a model called the pyramid of trust. The pyramid of trust has five elements: competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection—the five C's. The goal is to reach the top of the mountain where genuine, sustainable trust resides. Smith-Ough (2019) drew a comparison between Weisman's (2016) hierarchy of trust and Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Smith-Ough (2019) pointed out that Maslow posited human motivations begin with base requirement that must be met before one looks for higher experiences leading to self-actualization. Weisman (2016) suggested that the trust pyramid works similarly, beginning with the base levels of trust—competence and consistency—and moving up to

concern, candor, and finally connection. When a person reaches the highest level of trust, a thriving relationship will exist.

Five Elements of the Trust Pyramid

As shown in Figure 1, the trust pyramid is made up of five elements, or the "five C's" (Weisman, 2016, p. 138) of trust: competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection. Competence and consistency make up the base of the pyramid and are referred to by Weisman (2016) as rational factors. The middle section, the "Emotional factors" (Weisman, 2016, p. 64) are concern and candor. At the top of the trust pyramid is connection, referred by Weisman as the "Self-Actualization factor" (p. 64). This study looked at these five C's and modified Wiseman's use of these elements for relevance of high school principals building trust among their staff.

Competence

In this study, competence is defined as the ability to perform a task or fulfill a role as expected (Covey, 2009; Farnsworth, 2015; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Weisman (2016) considered competence to be one of the two basic foundations of the trust pyramid. Although the trust pyramid was originally developed for business leaders, it can be generalized to be appropriate for a leader in any sector. A competent leader has the capacity to take care of the job and to ensure it is done within expectations (Covey, 2006; Farnsworth, 2015; Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman, 2016). Follow through and proficiency build trust among followers because people are unwilling to invest time, effort, and resources unless their leaders are competent enough to prove they have the right direction (Horsager, 2012; Mayer et al., 1995). If leaders are competent, followers will want to emulate their behaviors (Wodarczyk, 2019).

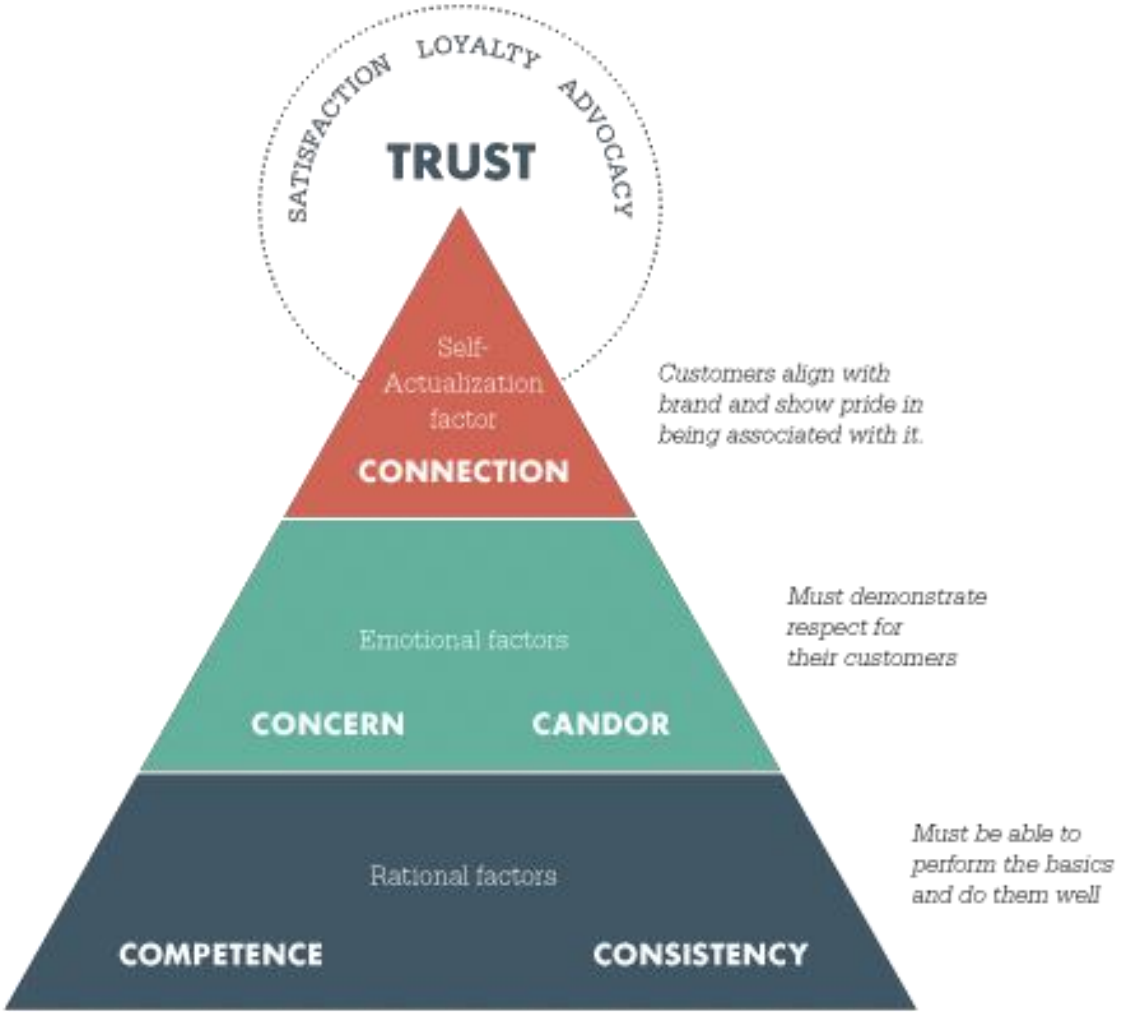

Figure 1. Pyramid of trust. From *Choosing Higher Ground: Working and Living in a Values Economy*, by M. Weisman, 2016, p. 64, Santa Ana, CA: Nortia Press.

The capability or competence of the leader is the most scrutinized component of trustworthiness (Blanchard et al., 2013; Colquitt et al., 2007; Legood, 2013). Competence relates to abilities such as depth of knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and style. Competence inspires confidence in the leader to get the job done—to produce the results that the organization needs to move forward. Covey's (2006) trust model pointed to the importance of results in building trust and without results, trust is diminished, regardless of the integrity and intent of the leader. Today's organizations demand results. As one

manager suggested, “Results are vital to establishing trust, and we have to hit our numbers every month” (Covey, p. 30). It is critical to produce some sort of evidence that goals are being met.

Northouse (2010) posited that all members of the team need sufficient information, education, and training to become or remain competent team members. As a member of the team, the leader must also be a continual learner. Team members need technical competence to accomplish their goals, and they need to be personally competent in interpersonal and teamwork skills as well. They need the ability to do the job, and they need “openness, supportiveness, action orientation, and a positive personal style” (La Fasto & Larson, 2001, as cited in Northouse, 2010, p. 254) to be successful.

Brandon and Seldman (2004) asserted that organizations need leaders with competence, integrity, and political astuteness. Brandon and Seldman said that competence refers to a person’s task-level abilities. Task-level competence involves knowledge and depth of understanding. It also includes bringing value added in the form of new ideas, valid concerns, and important issues to the team. Brandon and Seldman contended that competence is demonstrated through accurate predictions and valuable ideas during discussions.

While organizations appoint leaders who have the formal authority to control and decide, Evans (2009) asserted that leaders can only lead groups effectively if they are given permission by the people through their willing choice. Kouzes and Posner (2003) suggested that if leaders hope to recruit the support of others in a cause, people need to believe that the leader is capable and effective. They stated, “If we doubt the leader’s abilities, we are unlikely to enlist in the crusade” (Kouzes & Posner, 2003, p. 19).

Leaders need to demonstrate their expertise to followers. They need to be able to probe problems and differences of opinion. Leaders need to be able to inspire and empower their stakeholders and model and persuade their followers (Evans, 2009; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Patterson et al., 2013).

Courage and accountability are intertwined in competence. Leaders must be accountable for results and, at the same time, have the courage to take responsibility for failure as well as achievement. Competent leaders who own their story, who understand the emotions they are feeling, and who take responsibility for their role in creating a problem are more likely to control the ending to their story (B. Brown, 2017). Leaders must demonstrate the courage to lead if they expect followers to have the courage to climb aboard and make themselves vulnerable to what happens next. It takes courage for a leader to confront others about their deficiencies and to stand in the moment and deal with their reaction, which may not be pleasant (Lencioni, 2012). To hold people accountable for their actions not only requires courage but it also inspires trust because it shows that the leader cares enough to expect competence from them and their counterparts to achieve commonly held goals.

Consistency

Consistency is the confidence that a person's pattern of behavior is reliable, dependable, and steadfast (Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman, 2016). A consistent leader understands that trust is an ongoing process and recognizes that stability and reliability are necessary to maintain a strong organizational structure (Weisman, 2016). Followers must believe that they can rely on their leader's integrity if they are to award trust.

Integrity is built on a foundation of consistency in words and actions (Mayer et al.,1995; White et al., 2016). Wodarczyk (2019) noted that consistent communication in both words and actions is necessary for leaders to be trusted. The leaders' consistency ensures that they are predictable, so people know what to expect every time (Nwagbo, 2019; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Craig (2018) agreed that a leader's trustworthiness is reinforced with consistent communication. Aligning communication with actions establishes a culture that can support the organization's mission.

In the school setting, teachers trust leaders who demonstrate leadership practices that combine competency, consistency, and reliability (Handford & Leithwood, 2013). Smith-Ough (2019) found that principals foster trust with staff by remaining consistent with their beliefs and practices. According to Bryk and Schneider (2003), teachers depend on their leader's consistent behavior to build their confidence and trust. Trustworthy leaders demonstrate consistent actions with staff, so staff get to know and learn the pattern of behavior they can rely on (Macmillan, Meyer, & Northfield, 2004). When staff can routinely rely on their leader's consistent actions, confidence is built and maintained (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Blanchard et al. (2013) stated, "The extent to which there's an inconsistency between our actions and our behaviors is the degree to which other people will or won't trust us" (p. 85).

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 are able to show their vulnerability, support, motivate, and care for each other (Anderson &

Ackerman Anderson, 2010; Covey, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2003; Livnat, 2004; Weisman, 2016). Weisman (2016) described concern as an emotional element that includes honesty and authenticity. When trustworthy leaders show concern by using values of sincerity and authenticity to conduct business, they inspire others to follow their lead (White et al., 2016).

When leaders show concern, they foster a safe and collaborative environment where all staff feel motivated, cared for, accepted, safe, and supported (Anderson & Ackerman Anderson, 2010; Covey, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Livnat, 2004; Weisman, 2016). The personal interest that leaders show allows staff to feel appreciated and enhances their desire to contribute to an organization's effectiveness (Covey, 2006; Gordon & Gilley, 2012; Horsager, 2012).

A principal who listens, acknowledges another's vulnerability, and shows compassion for employees creates trust and credibility with them (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Horsager (2012) suggested that there are four key ways in which leaders can show they care. He called them the LAWS of compassion: listen, appreciate, wake up, and serve others. Horsager said that trust is increased exponentially for the best listeners. Listening requires leaders to narrow their focus to the person speaking, avoid distractions, and rule out interruptions. Practicing patience, showing empathy, and being fully attuned to the speaker are necessary for good listening (Kouzes & Posner, 2006). Appreciating can be as simple as noticing people doing good work and thanking them for it. Public acknowledgement helps employees feel more appreciated. The number one reason for leaving one's job is not feeling appreciated, according to Horsager (2012).

Leaders need to wake up to opportunities and be fully present for others' thoughts and feelings. This is an important way to demonstrate care and compassion.

School leaders show concern for staff and their community by example (Pease, 2019). Principals must be a positive role model for those around them (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Smith-Ough (2019) noted that when staff feel they are supported and cared for, they work harder and are better able to accept feedback as part of a positive process. Creating and maintaining a culture of concern among personnel increases employee performance, reduces staff turnover, and builds loyalty among staff (Horsager, 2012).

Candor

Candor involves communicating information in a precise manner and being truthful even if one does not want to provide such information (Gordon & Gilley, 2012; O'Toole & Bennis, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman, 2016). When leaders show candor, they build trust among their staff by being authentic, honest, and transparent (Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman, 2016).

Trustworthy leaders are not afraid to be candid and model straightforward dialogue even when there is a risk of being unpopular (Blanchard et al., 2013; Covey, 2006; Horsager, 2012; Kouzes & Posner, 2012; Weisman, 2016). Avoiding challenging issues and engaging in dishonesty damages trust and minimizes progress in the organization (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Hurley (2011) noted that open and honest communication is critical for building as well as repairing trust in any organization. Nwagbo (2019) asserted that a leader's integrity and consistency are connected with candor. According to Covey (2006), "While straight talk is vital to

establishing trust, in most situations, it needs to be tempered by skill, tact, and good judgement" (p. 144). While candor is critical to building and maintaining trust in an organization (Horsager, 2012), leaders who lack verbal discipline can harm trust when unfiltered honesty is used to damage another person's self-esteem or crush feelings (Brandon & Seldman, 2004).

In a school setting, the trusted principal will be candid about goals and directions and refrain from hidden agendas. Brandon and Seldman (2004) said that the savvy leader will openly communicate progress reports, goal setting, financials, job rotations, and so forth. Conversely, when a principal is open to receiving feedback and encourages transparency in return, the principal builds trust by encouraging candid communication among staff (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Connection

Connection is a shared link or bond in which there is a sense of emotional engagement and interrelatedness (Sloan & Oliver, 2013; Stovall & Baker, 2010; White et al., 2016). According to Weisman's (2016) trust model, connection is realized when rational (competence and consistency) and emotional (concern and candor) factors are built upon one another. When these domains are aligned, the relationship is shifted, and it becomes one of value (Weisman, 2016). Weisman suggested that this shift in relationship is based on self-actualization, and the relationship between a leader and the followers becomes one built on trust.

People need genuine connection (B. Brown, 2017). When authentic relationships are developed between a leader and their followers, a deep connection is created (Blanchard et al., 2013; B. Brown, 2017; Weisman, 2016). Conversation is the key to

connection—asking the right questions helps the leader to learn about people and find common ground, which helps to establish a sound connection (Horsager, 2012). Talking more deeply about the commonalities helps to expand the connection. Having a deeper understanding of the people helps to see their needs, desires, and challenges. Knowing these aspects of people helps the leader to better meet their needs, solve their problems, and engage them in the work of the organization.

A connected leader utilizes every interaction to foster relationships and build trust (Covey, 2006; Horsager, 2012). This connection validates the feelings of people within an organization, and work production and creativity tend to increase (Escalante, 2019; White et al., 2016). Giles (2016) realized that a sense of connection impacts not only the work productions but also the employee's emotional health. This emotional attachment increases the effects of trust and commitment that people have within an organization (Randall, Gravier, & Prybutok, 2011).

In summary, Weisman (2016) theorized that the elements of competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection are necessary for trusting relationships. These elements are not only needed to build trust but also necessary to maintain and enhance trust. Without connection, trust will become broken (Weisman, 2016). Leaders who are committed to trust will have a culture of shared visions, role modeling, respect, and integrity (Sendjaya & Pekerti, 2010). The remainder of this chapter focuses on K-12 leadership and trust, trust and schools, history of principals in K-12 leadership, the role of a high school principal, and the principal and trust.

K-12 Leadership and Trust

Spillane (2004) noted that the research shift over the last decades examined the effects of principal leadership in developing conditions for instructional improvement. Today's school administrators need to be skilled and knowledgeable. Principals must be ready to lead complex and diverse schools (Goldring & Schuermann, 2009). Trust building is one of the most important skills principals must develop in order to take their people with them in the direction of transformational change. They must create and foster conditions in their schools that allow trust to grow (Smith-Ough, 2019). Tschannen-Moran (2014) believed that with the absence of trust, schools will not be successful in school-improvement efforts. Conversely, when trust is built by a school principal, the school staff will support reform efforts and be open to new ways of learning (Howe, 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2014).

Trust and Schools

There was a time in the last century when school leaders were highly respected and trusted by their communities and their staff. The fact that trust has been eroded in the school setting is part of a larger pattern of distrust among organizations of all types (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Economic, political, and social forces have played a role in this as well as the 24-hour news appetite for scandals and negative stories. Leaders of all types of organizations are under immense scrutiny and cynicism.

School leaders are dealing with economic and social pressures, and higher expectations and diminishing resources have presented conflict situations among parents and teachers. Demands for higher test scores, better prepared workforce, and fewer dropouts have placed a strain on the resources that are available. Health and social

issues, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the drive for racial justice, have brought added pressure to bear on school leaders. Communities and politicians have shown increasing impatience for schools to produce results on complex issues. This has led to trust being damaged in the nation's schools and in the school leaders. According to Tschannen-Moran (2014), "Trustworthy school leaders must learn to create conditions in which trust can flourish within their school as well as between their school and community" (p. 12). Without trust, schools are likely to be unsuccessful in attempting to resolve the myriad complex problems confronting them.

History of Principals in K-12 Leadership

The role of the principal dates back to the 1800s when schools became increasingly larger. Schools began as a single classroom building with one teacher supervising students. As more students went to school, this changed to a collection of teachers being managed by one administrator (Rousmaniere, 2007). Rousmaniere (2007) noted that centuries ago schools were funded by Colonial and Early Republic societies, but they had no common characteristics or practices. State school systems eventually formalized the role of a school principal (Rousmaniere, 2007).

The late 1800s and early 1900s brought the elementary school principal, but it was not until later that high schools were created (Kafka, 2009). Kafka (2009) shared that principal duties began with a focus on managerial responsibilities for stakeholder groups. During the 1930s, a checklist for principal qualifications was developed, with teaching experience being the primary characteristic (Rousmaniere, 2007). Certification in administrative responsibilities became required in the 1950s. The 1960s and 1970s brought a change in responsibilities as more duties became required of a school principal.

They began to oversee other programs and were expected to interact with the community (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Hallinger, 1992; Kafka, 2009; Marshall, 2018). Beck and Murphy (1993) explained that in the 1980s, principals were considered instructional leaders expected to solve problems, build relationships, and manage the site's resources.

Role of a High School Principal

Today's school principals are responsible for much more than they were decades ago (Pease, 2019). Tschannen-Moran (2014) described that a primary function of being a school principal was to protect teaching and learning at the schools. Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) explained the role of principals as leaders who model, coach, manage, and educate in various ways for all people they are accountable to.

The role of the high school principal is complex and is not built on any single factor (Wood, 2014). Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) found that high school principals needed to be skillful individuals with knowledge of curriculum and instruction, emotional intelligence, and gifted at both decision-making and problem-solving. Additional skills of a high school principal include building relationships, being visible and available, and being accountable for all matters on a large school site (Pease, 2019). High school principals who see the importance of building trust in order to deliver the vision for their school must show competence, consistency, concern, and candor to be connected to staff and students and influence the direction of their pursuits (Weisman, 2017).

The Principal and Trust

Both transformational and instructional leadership styles are being practiced by school principals to inspire staff and the school community and to foster a positive school

community (Aydin, Sarier, & Uysal, 2013; Gray & Lewis, 2013). Bryk and Schneider (2003) described effective school principals as leaders who understand their school's culture and take that understanding to build on staff satisfaction and student success. White et al. (2016) further explained this as setting a tone of competence and character to be transformative.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) explained that when principals build trust, they prioritize others and remain true to their word. Furthermore, Howe (2016) expanded on this by sharing that when teachers trust in their principals, an environment is created that allows for vulnerability and risk taking that improves student outcomes. When there is trust among staff, a positive climate is fostered. Additionally, Tschannen-Moran (2014) explained that when teachers and principals trust one another, they can work together to overcome challenges and improve student outcomes. School staff can reach their full potential with a leader who establishes trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Tschannen-Moran and Garies (2015) said that school leaders who build trust among teachers create the conditions that are needed to increase effort and achievement. Trust has shown to have one of the highest levels of predictability on student achievement (Tschannen-Moran & Garies, 2015). Tschannen-Moran and Garies went on to explain that when principals are trustworthy, they influence how staff relate to each other, the students, and the community, which all relate to student achievement. High school principals must cultivate trust among staff because of their influence on students as well as increase efficacy in their leaders (Pease, 2019). Tschannen-Moran (2014) discussed the role principals have in establishing trust for school success:

> Principals and other school leaders need to earn the trust of the stakeholders in their school community if they are to be successful. They need to understand how trust is built and how it is lost. Getting smarter about trust will help school leaders foster more successful schools. (p. 8)

To build trust with their teachers, principals must focus on the quality and quantity of their interactions and relationships. They must make it possible for teachers to access knowledge and information. Principals must help them to understand their expectations and obligations, and they must build their commitment to collaborate for a common cause (Fullan, 2014b). Tschannen-Moran (2014) suggested that school leaders can promote trust by being sensitive to employee needs and interests. For example, the principal who shows appreciation for hard work and expresses gratitude in small, personal ways builds trust Tschannen-Moran expanded on this by asserting that benevolence cannot be sporadic; it must be consistent. Reliability is an important trust-building strategy for principals. Teachers must be able to count on their principal. Trust is built when teachers have a sense of confidence that the principal will consistently do what is good for all. The principal who demonstrates integrity, is honest, keeps promises, and avoids manipulation, will earn the trust of the teachers. Competence is also important for trust because the principal is asking the teachers to get on board with the direction being set (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). These are some of the strategies a high school principal must demonstrate to earn the trust of the teachers.

Teachers who trust their principals will find innovative ways to promote learning and prepare students for the future (Howe, 2016). Principals who take time to build trust

with their teachers through creating and fostering trusting relationships will create an environment for students to succeed (Bryk & Schneider, 2003).

Summary

Education has evolved over the last 2 centuries and has been under immense scrutiny for the role it plays in the national economy and security of the United States. Decades of reform movements have created many demands on the schools without providing the needed resources. Through it all, there is a recognition that successful schools are closely tied to effective principals. However, principals alone cannot make the extraordinary changes that will transform American schools. They must work through the teachers, and this can only be accomplished if the teachers trust their leader.

Trust has been the subject of many books and articles. It has been studied in many types of organizations. However, there is a gap in the literature as it relates to studying the Weisman (2010) model and how high school principals may use competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection to build trust with their teachers. The question of how principals build trust with their teachers using the Weisman model was the subject of this study.

This review of the literature, supported by the literature synthesis matrix (Appendix A), explored four models as foundational to this study: five leadership practices, authentic leadership, servant leadership, and transformational leadership. Four trust models were also presented: Mayer et al.'s (1995) integrative model of organizational trust, Covey's (2006) five waves of trust, Tschannen-Moran's (2014) five facets of trust, and Blanchard et al.'s (2013) ABCD trust model. The theoretical framework for the study, Weisman's (2016) trust pyramid, was described followed by an

exploration of K-12 leadership and trust, trust and schools, history of principals in K-12 leadership, the role of the high school principal, and the principal and trust.

Chapter III presents the methodology used to gather and analyze data for the study. Chapter IV presents the findings, and Chapter V presents the major findings, conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

> Neither organizational learning nor professional community can endure without trust—between teachers and administrators, among teachers, and between teachers and parents. (Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011, p. 53)

Chapter III provides a detailed description of the methodology used in this study. It restates the purpose and research questions presented in Chapter I and identifies the population, target population, and sample. Chapter III also defines and presents rationale for selecting the mixed methods case study approach as well as reviewing instrument development and the steps taken to ensure validity and reliability. Data collection and analysis are clarified, and limitations are considered along with strategies used to mitigate the limitations.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to identify and describe how elementary principals establish trust with staff using the five domains of trust: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency (Weisman, 2010). In addition, the purpose of this study was to determine elementary principals' perceived degree of importance of the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency for building trust.

Research Questions

1. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of connection?
2. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of concern?
3. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of candor?

4. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of competence?
5. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of consistency?
6. How do high school principals perceive the degree of importance for the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection for building trust?

Research Design

When a research design is selected for a study, the researcher needs to consider the research approach and methods that are most likely to produce the intended results that are being sought (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A mixed methods sequential explanatory case study was found to be the most appropriate for this study because it offered the opportunity to combine the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a greater understanding of the research problem. Roberts (2010) offered that utilizing the mixed methods methodology increased the validity of a study.

Mixed Methods Research Design

This mixed methods case study began with collecting qualitative data through interviews with 12 high school principals and was followed by quantitative data collection using an electronic survey instrument. By using two different research designs, Creswell (2003) contended that the results produced are more thorough and offered better overall understanding.

Figure 2 displays the mixed methods design used for this study. The qualitative research served as the explanatory step, with face to face interviews conducted with 12 high school principals. The quantitative research served as the confirmatory step by including an online survey for each participant. Together, these created the Mixed Methods design for this study.

Figure 2. Mixed methods design.

Fifteen peer researchers conducted a study across an interdisciplinary set of organizations including K-12 schools, school superintendents and school board members, nonprofit organizations, and military organizations. Ten peer researchers (six principals and four superintendents) utilized similar methodology, a sequential explanatory mixed methods, to confirm the qualitative data and deepen the quantitative data gathered. Within the K-12 school group, a team of six peer researchers identified and described how principals across each segment in education (elementary, middle, and high school) established trust with their school staff. The six K-12 peer researchers utilized identical interview and survey questions when interviewing principals. This mixed methods research design was selected for the varied data it would produce. Combining qualitative and quantitative data will add to the limited literature found when researching how high school principals build trust among their staff.

Qualitative Research Design

A qualitative research study involves face-to-face interactions and observations in the participants' natural environment to better understand their lived experience as opposed to a quantitative research study, which explores relationships and causes of effects, events, outcomes, and phenomena by following steps and procedures to gather data with numerical significance (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). A case study is an

exploration that examines a variety of data points that are collected by various procedures over a long period of time (Patton, 2015). A mixed methods case study combines all of these findings and offers "greater breadth and depth" (Roberts, 2010, p. 145).

A participant in a qualitative study provides depth of findings through rich descriptions of perspectives and actions in a natural setting (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The research for this study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, and all data collection was completed virtually using Zoom. This limited the ability of the researcher to collect observational data. However, the researcher looked for facial expressions and gestures during the interview process. Observations were recorded by the researcher as field notes, which are "text recorded by the researcher during an observation in a qualitative study" (Creswell, 2008, p. 224).

While some limitations existed with having to complete the principal interviews virtually, such as not being able to personally connect in the same room, there were some positive outcomes. One outcome that was realized was the level of candor that the principals showed with conducting the interviews via Zoom. Not being in the same physical space seemed to create an atmosphere of safety and freedom, which allowed some of the interviewees to be open with their responses. Also, scheduling for both the researcher and interviewee was much easier with not having to make an in-person appointment.

In this study, qualitative research was conducted with 12 high school principals in Southern California through virtual Zoom interviews. Data collection was initially started by asking 10 semistructured interview questions (Appendix B) focusing on each of the five C's—competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection. The

participants' open-ended responses were coded, and themes were analyzed. As participants responded to questions, the researcher was able to better understand what was occurring during the interview process. Following the interviews, data analysis was used to formulate meaningful interpretations.

Quantitative Research Design

With quantitative research, data are gathered with numerical, measurable outcomes that contribute to a deductive approach for making meaning (Patten, 2012). This study utilized SurveyMonkey, an online survey program, which allowed the researcher to survey the 12 high school principals used in this research study. The team of researchers developed a 6-point Likert scale aligned to statements for each of the six domains in The Values Institute (TVI) trust model (Appendix C). A survey was conducted via electronic survey tool SurveyMonkey (https://www.surveymonkey.com; Appendix D). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), scales are used to measure beliefs and opinions of respondents. Patten (2012) described quantitative research as a method that can be used to provide objective, anonymous data that can be easily gathered. Generalizations can then be generated from survey results that utilized instrument-based research (Bazeley, 2004; Creswell, 2014; Sale, Lohfield, & Brazil, 2002). To encourage participation, the participating principals were told that their results were to be confidential and used solely for the purposes of the study, with no evaluative component to be shared.

Population

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) defined population in research as "a group of elements that conform to specific criteria" (p. 129) that is used to generalize results from

data collected. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) described population as a collection of individuals or objects with common characteristics or traits. The population for this study was high school principals in California. High school principals were the focus of this research study because, as site leaders on large campuses, building and establishing trust is vital. This study examined how these principals had built trust with their school staff using Weisman's (2016) model of trust. According to the California Department of Education (2018), there are 1,311 high schools in the state as of the 2017-2018 school year.

Sampling Frame

The sampling frame is defined as an "actual list of sampling units from which the sample is selected" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 129). For this study, the population was narrowed down from the approximate 1,311 high school principals in California to a sample frame of 76 in Orange County and 27 in San Diego County. Time and logistics were the determining factors in narrowing the population to a smaller, more manageable area from which to draw the sample. The Southern California contiguous counties of Orange and San Diego increased the feasibility for conducting interviews and yet maintained the potential for finding exemplars who met the criteria for the study sample.

Sample

A study sample is the group of participants selected from the sample frame from which data are collected (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). There are two types of sampling: probability and nonprobability. Probability sampling is generally used in quantitative research, which helps to make it generalizable. Nonprobability sampling is

generally used in qualitative research. It is a smaller, purposively drawn sample. Nonprobability sampling was more suited to the purpose and research questions of this study. It allowed the researcher to select those participants who met the specified criteria for participation in the study. Convenience sampling is a type of nonprobability sampling that allows the researcher to select from a pool of participants within reach for interviewing. When time, money, and logistics are a consideration for completing the research, convenience sampling is more helpful.

For this study, the thematic team with the approval of the dissertation chair, established the sample size as 12. Therefore, the sample for this study was 12 high school principals selected from Orange and San Diego counties in Southern California (Figure 3). Study participants were selected based on meeting five of the seven following criteria:

1. Principal was employed at a school within San Diego or Orange counties with a minimum of 60 staff members.
2. Principal had a minimum of 3 years of experience at his or her current site.
3. Principal had a minimum of 5 years in the profession.
4. Principal had a membership in professional associations in his or her field.
5. Principal showed evidence of leading a successful organization.
6. Principal had 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 consent form.

For Criteria 5, feedback from district-level administrators was sought to identify principals who led a successful organization. District-level administrators were provided the selection criteria, and if a principal recommendation was made, this criteria was met.

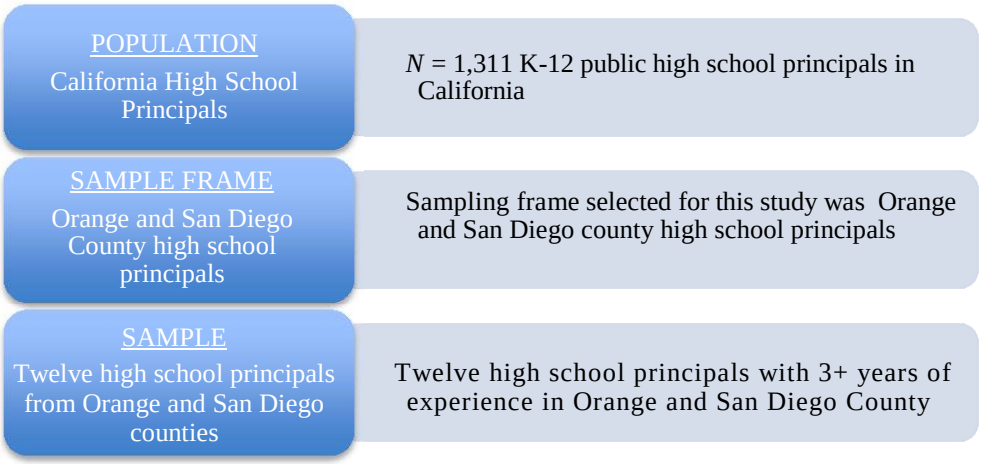

Figure 3. Population, sample frame, and sample.

Instrumentation

A mixed methods instrumentation was used for this study. Fifteen peer researchers created both qualitative and quantitative research instruments. Four different research teams utilized differing methodologies for their data collection. The 15 trust thematic researchers worked together under the guidance of study advisors to develop qualitative interview questions in the five domains of TVI framework—competence, consideration, concern, candor, and connection. The final collaborative product was approved for use with all teams, modified according to the specific roles of their interviewees.

The mixed methods team of six principal researchers conducted field tests to evaluate the effectiveness of the interview questions and prompts. The team then collaborated with faculty experts to review the field-test feedback and make adjustments as indicated from the field-test interviewees and expert observers. After the interview protocol (Appendix E) was finalized for the study, the same mixed methods team of six

researchers worked together with the study advisor expert to develop a survey instrument (Appendix D) for the quantitative data collection.

Qualitative Instrumentation

This study was conducted using virtual interviews with open-ended questions. All of the interviews began with an overview of the study provided to the participant, then followed with sharing the Research Participant's Bill of Rights (Appendix F) with the participant. The participant's electronic signature was collected on the informed consent forms prior to proceeding with each interview.

The interview questions were developed after conducting a literature review among the larger group of 15 peer researchers. A literature review matrix was created using the research collected (Appendix A) by each research group. The larger thematic group consisted of four groups studying trust with a targeted population of board members, faculty, nonprofits, and military. Each of the four thematic groups were assigned a specific domain from TVI trust model for which each team developed two semistructured interview questions that the group evaluated. The researchers, together with faculty, reviewed and discussed each question developed by the teams. The team's interview questions were combined, and the six peer researchers analyzed each question for congruence, taking into consideration the framework definitions. The semistructured interview questions were finalized and used in the field tests. The researcher used semistructured questions to support greater discussion during the interview process (Leech, 2002).

Quantitative Instrumentation

A quantitative research instrument provides a researcher an opportunity to utilize language and emphasize a participant's work for a survey (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). SurveyMonkey, an online survey tool, was used for this study. A 6-point Likert scale was developed by the research team to use in the research, similar to the TVI instrument already created. When developing the survey questions, the researchers started with reviewing the five domains along with their corresponding definitions and referencing existing literature. The team then compared the statements of the five domains to those in the already existing TVI survey to ensure that the research survey captured the similar intent of the TVI instrument. Once calibrated, the survey instrument was transferred onto the SurveyMonkey program and then field tested.

Two instruments were used to collect data in this study: a 10-question interview instrument, with probing questions, to promote depth of response, and a five-question survey instrument prepared on SurveyMonkey. As explained in the preface to this study, the interview questions were originally prepared in a collaboration of 15 researchers who participated in a thematic study across an interdisciplinary set of organizations, including business, K-12 schools, superintendents and board members, principals, nonprofit organizations, and military organizations.

The large group of thematic researchers worked in smaller teams of two to six researchers, using different methodologies. Two teams, with a total of five members, pursued a phenomenological study with executive leaders from business, nonprofit, and religious organizations. Two teams, with a total of 10 members, studied public school principals and superintendents. This researcher was part of a six-member team of peer

researchers who used a mixed methods case study to identify and describe how K-12 principals established trust with their staff using the five domains of competence, consistency, concern, candor, and connection (Weisman, 2010). Each of the six researchers in the principal trust team utilized the same interview questions as the larger thematic team and adapted the original TVI survey questions to fit the target population (Weisman, 2010).

Validity

Validity can cover many areas. Validity can be defined as "the degree to which your instrument truly measures what it purports to measure" (Roberts, 2010, p. 151). More specifically, validity refers to how accurately a study answers the research questions and the conclusions realized when the research is finished. Validity also speaks to the strength of the research instrument. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) cautioned about threats to validity when quantitative results are not explained thoroughly using data and also not using qualitative data in conjunction with quantitative results.

Content Validity

Content validity reduces the likelihood of misinterpretations and ensures the reader is able to make conclusions based on data collected (Patton, 2015). Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008) further explained that content validity evaluates how well an instrument can measure the variable being studied. To ensure content validity, the following steps were taken:

1. The researcher conducted field tests with volunteer subjects who had worked for 3 years at their current site and met the criteria for sample selection. Additionally, the researcher had a volunteer observer who was considered a qualitative expert. An

audio recording was also obtained of the mock interview. The audio recording and the observer's notes were reviewed for feedback in relation to delivery, pacing, body language, and other interview techniques. Feedback from the participant on clarity and content were considered during the revision process to ensure content validity. Data from the interviews conducted in the field test were not used in the final study's findings.

2. Through a collaborative process, the team of peer researchers developed and refined the interview questions with faculty. This process assisted in the instruments, which measured the variables related to the research questions.
3. The researcher developed a literature synthesis matrix (Appendix A) and used the literature review found in Chapter II to support the validity for both the interview questions and the quantitative survey.

Criterion Validity

Criterion validity evaluates scores from an instrument and whether they are able to predict outcomes (Creswell, 2005). Criterion validity is often used to correlate other measures of similar construct. The research team addressed criterion validity by conducting field tests to validate responses from the quantitative research (survey). Feedback was gathered and shared among the group and then shared with faculty. Modifications to the instrument were developed as needed.

Reliability

Reliability in qualitative studies refers to the consistent use of research procedures and the study's results. Patten (2012) described a test's reliability as yielding consistent results. When a study is reliable, the results remain constant and consistent when

replicated. The researcher utilized strategies that increased reliability, beginning with collaboratively designing the research instrument. The research team, working together with faculty, developed the interview and survey questions. Both instruments were then field tested by six peer researchers, and later as a research team, adjustments were made as needed. Afterwards, each team member interviewed 12 principals and each interviewee was given the survey, for a total of 72 interviews and 72 surveys. The interview and survey practices and methods remained consistent among all previous team members to maintain consistency of the research and validity of the results. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this researcher needed to conduct virtual interviews, which was different than her colleagues. This researcher did not feel the change in methods effected the validity of the results.

Interrater Reliability

Interrater reliability is a way of assessing consistent procedures with data collection and data analysis between different researchers. This allows researchers to compare themes in data results and check for potential discrepancies (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For this study, the researchers used common purpose statements, research questions, theoretical framework, variable definitions, and instrumentation. To add to research reliability, 10% of the data's coding for themes elicited from the interviews was analyzed by a peer researcher. A standard of 80% agreement was set. These results were compared to the study results to support the accuracy of the data collection and analysis.

Data Collection

Data collection for mixed methods studies includes both quantitative and qualitative data that addresses the research question and hypotheses (Creswell, 2006). The data collection for this study incorporated two different methods. The first was an electronic survey that provided the quantitative data. Survey information was protected under a password-protected login. The second was virtual interviews for qualitative data collection. Privacy of research participants was ensured throughout the duration of the study.

The research commenced only after the National Institutes of Health (NIH) certification course was completed (Appendix G) and approval was granted by the Brandman University Institutional Review Board (BUIRB). Before the survey began, all participants were asked to read the informed consent form (Appendix H). Participants were required to approve the informed consent and purpose in order for the survey to open on SurveyMonkey and prior to beginning the interview.

Quantitative Data Collection

The Principal Trust Survey was the tool used for quantitative data collection in this research study. This instrument was a peer-designed and expert-reviewed tool, which was created based on TVI survey questions (Weisman, 2010). The survey utilized a Likert scale for participant responses using the online program SurveyMonkey. The SurveyMonkey program allowed the researcher to utilize a password-protected login, which stored all respondent data. Each survey began with each participant being asked to read the informed consent form (Appendix H). Participants were then required to indicate acknowledgement of their informed consent and purpose prior to beginning the

survey. The purpose of the study was shared before moving on to the questions. The confidentiality clauses were made available in an e-mail that accompanied the SurveyMonkey link sent to each participant.

Qualitative Data Collection

Qualitative data were collected through individual virtual interviews with 12 high school principals. The research tool used was a peer-designed, semistructured interview protocol. This was needed to ensure consistent documentation of participant responses and organization of the researcher (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The 12 interviews were conducted with high school principals in both San Diego and Orange counties. Before the interviews were conducted, interviewees were provided an informed consent form and Bill of Rights to review and sign (Appendices B, F, and H). After this was finished, the interviewee was asked a series of open-ended questions. During each interview, the session was audio recorded using an electronic device for later transcription. In addition, the researcher took notes about each interviewee's body language during the interview as well as any pertinent information related to the given responses. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), the added steps of note-taking and audio recording for transcription are important steps for ensuring accuracy of the data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is an ongoing process in research (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010). Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) shared that "mixed methods research consists of analyzing the quantitative data using quantitative methods and the qualitative data using qualitative methods" (p. 128). This research study gathered both quantitative and

qualitative data. The data were used for triangulation, which resulted in stronger study findings.

For this mixed methods study, the research findings were first separately analyzed, qualitative and quantitative, and then the data findings were combined for overall data analysis. The quantitative data were collected using an electronic survey. The qualitative data were gathered with individual in-person interviews. When the analysis was completed, the themes generated supported the research findings presented in Chapter IV.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data were critical for finding patterns and themes of all participant responses for this study. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) stated, "Qualitative analysis is a relatively systematic process of coding, categorizing, and interpreting data to provide explanation of a single phenomenon of interest" (p. 367). During the data collection process, McMillan and Schumacher's (2010) process for data analysis was used: fieldwork/recording, data, coding and categorizing, and patterns.

The interviews conducted provided the fieldwork opportunity for recording and data collection. The data were then coded using the NVivo coding software. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) defined coding as the process of grouping evidence and labeling ideas to look at the information from a broader perspective. The codes were then compared to the theoretical framework of the study for relevance to the study's original purpose. The frequency of a particular code highlighted its importance. The codes were then synthesized into themes. The resulting themes were then analyzed to see which of them related to the trust strategies that high school principals use with their staff.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data were obtained through the use of an electronic survey via online SurveyMonkey. The survey was provided to 12 high school principals in San Diego and Orange counties. Descriptive analysis of the statistical central tendencies was used to answer Research Question 6. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) stated, "The use of descriptive statistics is the most fundamental way to summarize data, and it is indispensable in interpreting the results of quantitative research" (p. 149). Descriptive statistics allowed the researcher to summarize the data collected. This information was then used to establish research findings, conclusions, and recommendations that added to the research about how high school principals build trust with their staff using the five domains of consistency, competence, concern, candor, and connection.

Limitations

Limitations are characteristics of a study that the researcher cannot control. These could influence the researcher's ability to generalize the study's findings (Roberts, 2010). The validity of this study was ensured by utilizing a near identical research approach that was replicated by 15 different researchers with various populations and samples. Each of the researchers utilized the same methodology and instrumentation but with different organizations.

Time and Distance

Time was a limiting factor in this study, especially when collecting qualitative data from high school principals. School principals have limited availability with little extra time in their day. Regardless, 12 respondents made the commitment to participate in this research study. Creswell (2014) described the interview process of qualitative

research as an extended opportunity to obtain relevant information from participants. The hour-long, virtual interviews conducted offered limited opportunity for participants to provide in-depth information during the interview time and/or later while taking the survey.

The larger thematic study took place in various cities in California with the smaller principal trust team members representing primarily Southern California and also the northern California area of Sacramento. This researcher limited the study's population to Southern California, specifically Orange and San Diego counties, to focus on a relevant yet smaller sample size that related to the study. The findings were generalized to high school principals in California. Although the sample size was appropriate for the mixed methods design, it also limited the ability to generalize the study's findings with the small sample size used.

Researcher as Instrument of Study

In a qualitative study, the researcher is often the research instrument. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) explained that qualitative researchers gather and interpret by reviewing multiple methods of data collection. Precautions were taken to reduce researcher bias through subjectivity, including being mindful of personal assumptions. It is important for the researcher to be true to a variety of perspectives as they emerge (Patton, 2015). Having been a previous K-12 principal, the researcher brought a unique perspective to the interviews and shared information from the research in a meaningful way to the unique and diverse crowd. Bias was not a concern.

Sample Size

A limitation of this study was the sample size. Twelve high school principals provided information to answer the research questions used for this study. Although the sample size was appropriate for the mixed methods design, it limited the ability to generalize the study's findings with the small sample size used.

Summary

Chapter III presented the methodology that was used to conduct this study. It reviewed the purpose statement and research questions, the definition and rationale for a mixed methods case study, the population, the target population and sample, the instrumentation, the validation and reliability as well as the field test. This chapter also reviewed the process used for data collection and data analysis. The limitations of the study were also set forth.

Chapter IV presents and discusses the research findings and offers vignettes to elucidate the strategies high school principals use to build trust with their teachers. Chapter V provides a summary of the major findings and the conclusions to be drawn from them. Chapter V also offers implications for action and recommendations for further research and the researcher's reflection on the learning experience gained from conducting this research.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Overview

This mixed methods study identified and described how high school principals establish trust with their staff using Weisman's (2010) five domains of trust—connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency. In addition, this study also asked principals to measure the degree of importance high school principals assigned to the five domains for building trust. The chapter includes a review of the purpose statement and research questions. It then summarizes the population and sample that were used in the study. The data collected from the twelve high school principal interviews and the survey are then shared in narrative format as well as tables and figures that summarize findings. Direct quotes from the interviews are also included. Chapter IV concludes with a summary of key findings from the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to identify and describe how elementary principals establish trust with staff using the five domains of trust: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency (Weisman, 2010). In addition, the purpose of this study was to determine elementary principals' perceived degree of importance of the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency for building trust.

Research Questions

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

2. How do high school principals establish trust with teachers through the domain of concern?
3. How do high school principals establish trust with teachers through the domain of candor?
4. How do high school principals establish trust with teachers through the domain of competence?
5. How do high school principals establish trust with teachers through the domain of consistency?
6. How do high school principals perceive the degree of importance for the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection for building trust?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

Fifteen researchers conducted a thematic study on this topic across an interdisciplinary set of organizations including K-12 schools, principals, superintendents and board members, nonprofit organizations, and military organizations. Ten of the researchers (six studying principals and four studying superintendents) used the same methodology, a mixed methods research design with quantitative data from an online survey and qualitative data from personal interviews. Within K-12 education, a group of six peer researchers identified and described how principals across each segment of the school system (elementary, middle school, and high school) established trust with their staff. Each of the six researchers utilized the same interview protocol and survey questions to gather data from a total of 72 principals in order to ensure consistency "across different researchers and different projects" (Creswell, 2014, p. 201).

This study used a mixed methods research design to identify and describe how high school principals establish trust with their staff using Weisman's (2010) five domains of trust. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology allowed the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the topic (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). In-depth interviews with 12 high school principals provided the qualitative data. Because COVID 19 restricted face-to-face access, all interviews were conducted using zoom and audio-recorded with the principals' consent. Ten semistructured open-ended interview questions were developed in collaboration with the trust thematic team under the guidance of four faculty members. The questions centered on Weisman's (2010) five domains of trust: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency. Two interview questions and at least one probing question were developed for each variable in the purpose statement to promote depth of response from participants. To ensure reliability, the researcher followed the interview protocol (Appendix E) for all 12 participants. The interview transcription data were organized into categories and coded for themes.

For the quantitative portion of this study, peer researchers developed a survey titled, Survey of Principal Behaviors that Develop Trust with Staff (Appendix D), which was modeled after The Values Institute Trust Pulse Survey (Weisman, 2010). Study participants were asked to complete an online survey via SurveyMonkey prior to their interview in order to gain a deeper understanding on the degree of importance they attribute to Weisman's (2010) five domains of trust. All qualitative and quantitative data were stored in a secure place during and after the investigation. Upon completion of both

quantitative and qualitative measures, the data were analyzed, interpreted and summarized in tables and discussed in narrative (Patton, 2015).

Interrater Reliability

To provide greater assurance of reliable results, the researcher utilized the assistance of a thematic team member with experience in qualitative studies to review the researcher's coding and to ensure that a clear link existed between the data, codes, and research questions. A standard of 80% agreement or higher was established (Patton, 2015). In this study, the peer researcher reached the standard of an 80% agreement with the researcher on data interpretation.

Population

The population of a study is a group of individuals with the same characteristics (Creswell, p. 644). The population for this study was high school principals. According to the California Department of Education (2018), there were approximately 1,300 high school principals in California. It was not feasible to use such a large population for the study because of time, availability, financial, and geographical constraints; therefore, a target population was identified to increase feasibility for conducting the study, saving expenses and time. The target population was narrowed for this study to full-time public high school principals in Orange County and San Diego County.

Sample

A study sample is defined as a "group of individuals from whom data are collected" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 129). For this study, a combination of purposive sampling and convenience sampling was used to select participants for this study. From the target population, 12 high school principals in Orange and San Diego

counties were selected for the study. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), the sample must be representative of the population. Each of the 12 high school principals met at least five of the seven following criteria:

- Principal was employed at a school within San Diego or Orange Counties with a minimum of 60 staff members.
- Principal had a minimum of 3 years of experience at his or her current site.
- Principal had a minimum of 5 years in the profession.
- Principal had a membership in professional associations in his or her field.
- Principal showed evidence of leading a successful organization.
- Principal had articles, paper, or materials written, published, or presented at conferences or association meetings
- Principal was willing to be a participant and agreed to the informed consent form.

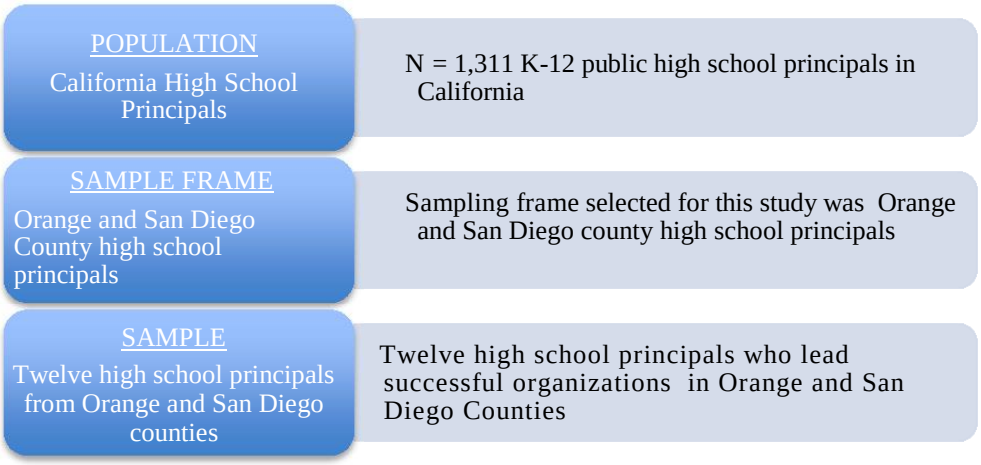

Figure 4. Population, target population, and sample visual representation.

The researcher contacted 12 high school principals via email who met these criteria to determine their interest in participating in this study. The informed consent

and Participant Bill of Rights forms (Appendices F and H) were sent to those who indicated a willingness to participate as well as a link for SurveyMonkey, a Zoom invitation, and the interview questions. The survey results were kept confidential and saved using password-protected software. Zoom interviews were scheduled with these 12 participants based on their availability. Interviews were audio recorded and also kept confidential and stored using a password-protected software application.

Demographic Data

Twelve high school principals in Orange County and San Diego County were selected to participate in this study. For confidentiality purposes, data were reported without reference to any individual or district by name. Participants were assigned a number, 1 to 12, to report how they met the selection criteria. All participants met at least five of the eligibility requirements, as described in Table 2. Five of the participants were female and seven were male. Eight were Caucasian and four were Latino, as shown in Table 3.

Qualitative Data

The 12 recorded interviews were transcribed through a digital transcription service application. The transcripts were first reviewed manually to get an overall impression of the data and the emerging themes. They were then uploaded into NVivo, a qualitative coding software. This software facilitates the researcher's ability to analyze large amounts of data in order to identify and code emergent themes and patterns (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In this study, common themes were coded based on the Weisman model (2010) five domains of trust: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency. After identifying the codes, the frequency count of each

code was tallied in NVivo and provided a sense of the strength of the codes. In order for a theme to be included in the study, a minimum frequency count of three was needed. Therefore, themes with less than three frequency counts were excluded from the study.

Table 2

Study Criteria According to Participants 1–12

Selection criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
minimum of 60 staff members	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
minimum of 3 years of experience at his or her current site	X	X		X	X	X	X		X			X
minimum of 5 years in the profession	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
membership in professional associations in his or her field	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
evidence of leading a successful organization	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
published articles, paper, or materials written, or presented at conferences or association meetings	X	X			X	X	X	X				
willing to participate and agreed to the informed consent	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 3

Participant 1–12 Demographics

Ethnicity and gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Caucasian		X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X
Latino	X			X	X		X					
Male			X	X				X	X	X	X	X
Female	X	X			X	X	X					

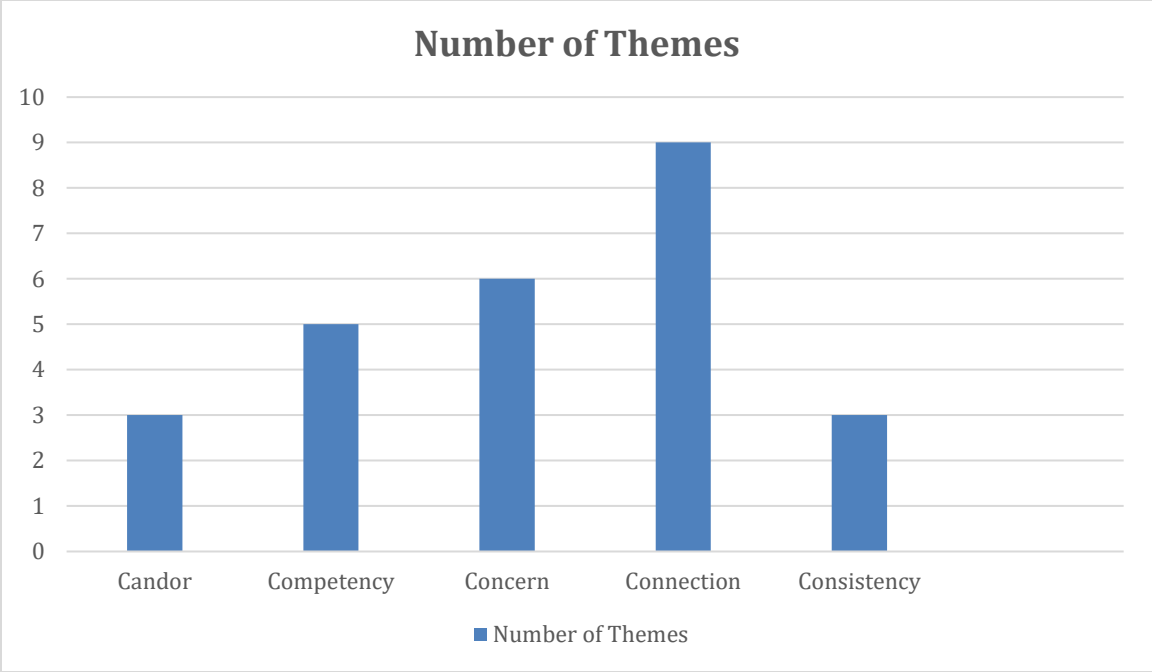

Figure 5. Number of themes in each domain.

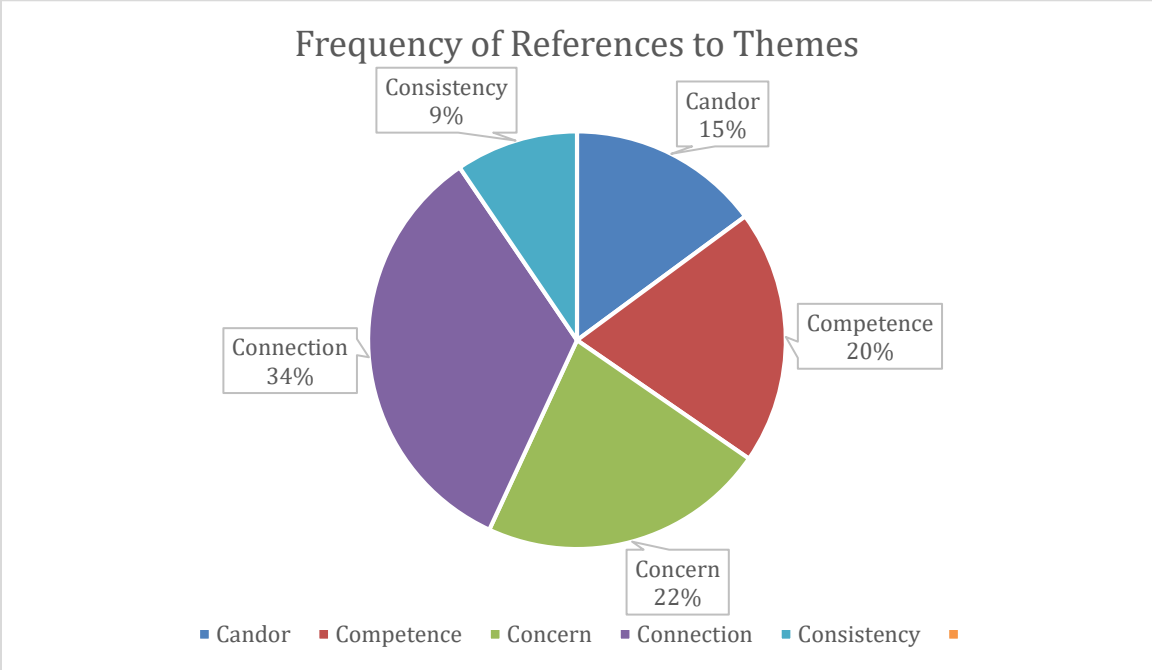

Figure 6. Percentage of frequency of references to themes.

The interviews produced 274 responses to the research questions. The largest share of responses came from the domain of connection, which had 92 responses or 34%.

Next was the domain of concern, with 61 responses or 22%, followed closely by competence with 54 responses or 20%. Candor had 41 responses or 15% and consistency had the lowest response with 26 or 9%.

Data Analysis for Research Questions 1–5

The next section provides a detailed analysis of the qualitative interview data arranged according to each research question, which focused on a specific domain of trust: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency.

Data Results and Key Findings for Research Question 1: Connection

The first research question asked, "How do high school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of connection." The theoretical definition of connection is a shared link or bond in which there is a sense of emotional engagement and interrelatedness (Sloan & Oliver, 2013; Stovall & Baker, 2010; White et al., 2016). After conducting the 12 virtual interviews, the major findings concluded that the domain of connection, when looked at on its own, was a trait used repeatedly with all high school principal to establish and build trust with their staff. Figure 7 and Table 4 represent the Connection themes and frequencies that resulted from an analysis of the 12 principal interview transcripts using NVivo software.

When the researcher asked each high school principal how they developed positive relationships and rapport with staff, nine themes emerged: being accessible, being responsive to others, being visible, being vulnerable, celebrate success, developing rapport, encourage discourse, prioritize interpersonal relationships, and team building (cohesion). Table 5 highlights the themes as they relate to the study's first research

question and also includes the frequency of references to each theme from an NVivo analysis of the interview transcripts.

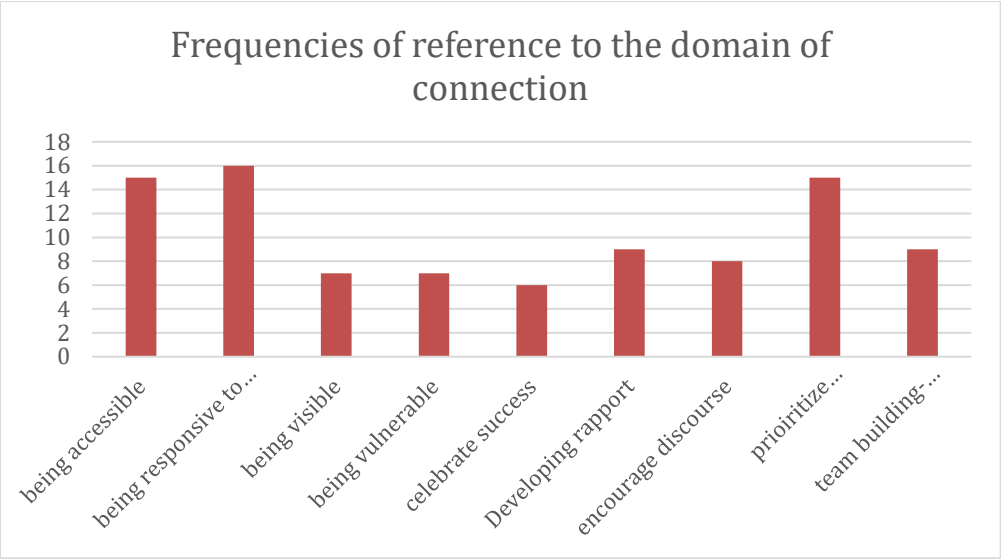

Figure 7. Frequencies of reference to the domain of connection.

Table 4

Themes and Patterns Resulting From an Analysis of the Interviews Related to Research Question 1: Domain of Connection

Theme/pattern	Number of respondents	% based on *N*	Frequency of reference
Being accessible	9	75.0%	15
Being responsive to others	8	66.6%	16
Prioritize interpersonal relationships	7	58.3%	15
Being visible	5	41.6%	7
Being vulnerable	5	41.6%	7
Developing rapport	5	41.6%	7
Team building (cohesion)	5	41.6%	9
Celebrate success	4	33.3%	6
Encourage discourse	4	33.3%	6

Note. The *N* for interview participants = 12.

Being accessible. A high school principal's ability to be accessible was the most frequent of the nine themes that emerged from the 12 interviews conducted for the domain of connection. Nine of the 12 principals referenced to this theme 15 times when speaking about how they build trust with their school staff. An overwhelming majority of the nine principals mentioned having an "open door policy" so staff have always access to the principal. One principal said,

> Even the little things like unlocking the door, opening it up, and having the door open so anyone can just walk in and have a conversation is important to me. I just stop everything and have conversations if people want to have them. It shows teachers that they feel valued when they want to express their voice and have a conversation with me.

Being responsive to others. This theme, being responsive to others, was the second highest theme realized during the interviews. Eight of 12 respondents referenced this theme 16 times through the course of the high school principal interviews. Being responsive to school staff, as well as other stakeholder groups, was a priority for many of the school leaders interviewed. When sharing about their school safety plan, one interviewee shared, "We went through it piece by piece and changed things and added things and did things together as a group." This was an example of this principal's responsiveness to his staff. When another principal shared how she was responsive to her staff, she said,

> The collaboration time is huge, and the investment, it's enormous amount of time and intellectual capital, not only financial capital, but also that time and attention

and supporting that work is critical. I do it with classified staff as well. I don't limit. I encourage professional development and job shadow days.

Being visible. The third theme, being visible, was one that was discussed frequently. Five of the 12 high school principals referenced this seven times in the course of their interviews. Each had examples of the importance for them to be seen on campus throughout the school day. One principal said,

> One part is just being visible, being visible outside on campus especially during before school, after school, during lunchtime, so that anybody can come up and just talk. If you've got an issue, you can catch me. I keep my door open in my office as often as I possibly can. I try to get into classrooms to do walk-throughs, not to evaluate, but to say, "Hey, I care about what work you're doing and I'm interested in what you have students learning."

Principal 5 shared that she purposefully avoids her office:

> I try not to have to be in my office too much. As a matter of fact, I'm only in there if I'm meeting with somebody. Most of the time, I'm walking around and I always have my cell phone with me.

Being Vulnerable. The fourth theme in this domain was being vulnerable. Five of the 12 interviewees referenced the importance of vulnerability seven times. For Principal 12, showing vulnerability helped when dealing with a very difficult situation on his campus that effected everyone in his school community. When he needed to address his staff he said,

> I had to present to the staff and I just spoke from the heart. It was a really difficult time; nobody ever wants to be on the national news in that light. I told

them, “I’m sorry; I apologize.” I took complete ownership of the situation. When you’re at the top, you just have to share that with the staff. I told them, “These are our own kids sharing this with us. These are our own parents telling us that we have a lot of room for growth. I have a lot of personal work to do for my own growth.” I was honest with them and said, “This is where I’m at; I’m no better than anybody else.” I needed them to know we all have been going through it together.

Celebrate success. The fifth theme in this first domain of connection was celebrating success. Four of the 12 principals referenced this six times in their interviews. This group of principals wanted to make sure that their staff successes were acknowledged. Principal 9 said, “Helping everybody get through this crazy time, relying on each other, and watching how our teams rallied to support everybody was just phenomenal. I am incredibly proud of how we worked through the last 2 years.”

Developing rapport. The sixth theme, developing rapport, was a part of five of the 12 interviewees’ responses. This was referenced nine times from the five principals. These principals prioritized developing rapport on their campuses with their school staff. Principal 10 noticed the change in staff when rapport is developed. He shared,

> I can see the change in the happiness and the trust being built when you get to know the individuals and you’re having conversations with them as a person and their well-being, and then talking about work with that as, as well, versus just talking about work and expecting to do it because it’s their job.

Principal 12 further shared,

> I've been relatively successful at developing relationships and trust amongst the people I work with. That's kind of my strong suit and that's how I lead. So I lead through relationship types of activities, as well as gaining trust. Because you can't have a positive relationship to move forward unless you haven't really developed rapport with your colleagues and peers.

Encouraging discourse. Encouraging discourse is the seventh theme that came out of interviews for the first domain, connection. Four of the 12 high school principal interviewees shared responses where they encouraged discourse among their staff. Of the four principals, this theme was referenced eight times in the answers that they shared. This showed that encouraging discourse is an important part of the job. For Principal 2 this was critical. She shared,

> You really need to be grateful for critical friends. People who reach out to you with their own thoughts and opinions. I really appreciate critical friends because they help us grow and be better. I hope there's a sense out there that not only that you're communicated with, but I also welcome questions, a concern, a comment. I just want to know what's going on, what people are thinking about. That's what I hope I model and help my assistant principals model.

Prioritize interpersonal relationships. The eighth theme, prioritizing interpersonal relationships, was found in seven of the 12 interviewee responses. Of the seven, this theme was referenced 15 times. This is a theme that was prioritized by more than half of the high school principals interviewed. To be a high school principal, you must ensure that relationships are at the forefront of the work that is done each day. One principal shared, "So just getting to know staff members as people, feeling like they are

more than just a number or teacher on campus, but as a member of the family, and knowing their well-being has been helpful." He went on to share the importance of these relationships especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Another leader, Principal 1, shared,

> It's important to establish and develop interpersonal connection with your various staff members. I know an employee who just recently had knee surgery last week. I gave her a call, "Hey, how's it going? Just checking in on you." Just doing that interpersonal check in, to build a connection to show the people that they are your family here at school, that you care, makes all the difference.

Team building (cohesion). The final theme for this domain is team building. This was evidenced in five of the 12 interviewee responses on nine occasions. Team building on a high school campus is especially important with the large amount of staff working on site. Principal 1 ensured team building on her campus. She shared that she and her staff

> will do collaborative events and get a little bit competitive sometimes. We'll get together, not this year, but in previous years, for Thanksgiving, during lunchtime. We'll host a Thanksgiving lunch. For Halloween, we have department competitions where we dress up as departments. And once again, it's a lunchtime activity and we do mini skits and pumpkin carvings. We go a little crazy with Halloween here, and again, we get together prior to winter break for the holiday season at that point. St. Patrick's, we have an end of the year party that I host at my house; everybody's invited. And then we used to have a winter potluck at my house that we have since moved to renting a tiki boat at Newport Beach, so that

we get together and collaborate and share and have a good ol' time. So I'm going to call that our team building.

Data Results and Key Findings for Research Question 2: Concern

The second research question asked, "How do high school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of concern?" The theoretical definition of 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 are able to show their vulnerability, support, and motivate and care for each other (D. Anderson & Ackerman Anderson, 2010; Covey, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Livnat, 2004; Weisman, 2016). The next sections discuss the themes that arose after asking the high school principals how they establish trust through the domain of concern.

The domain of concern yielded six themes related to Research Question 2: acknowledging feelings and emotions, being thoughtful, developing relationships, encourage self-care, listening to others, and taking time to listen. Figure 8 shows the frequencies that emerged, and Table 5 highlights the number of respondents and the frequency of each theme as it relates to its degree of importance.

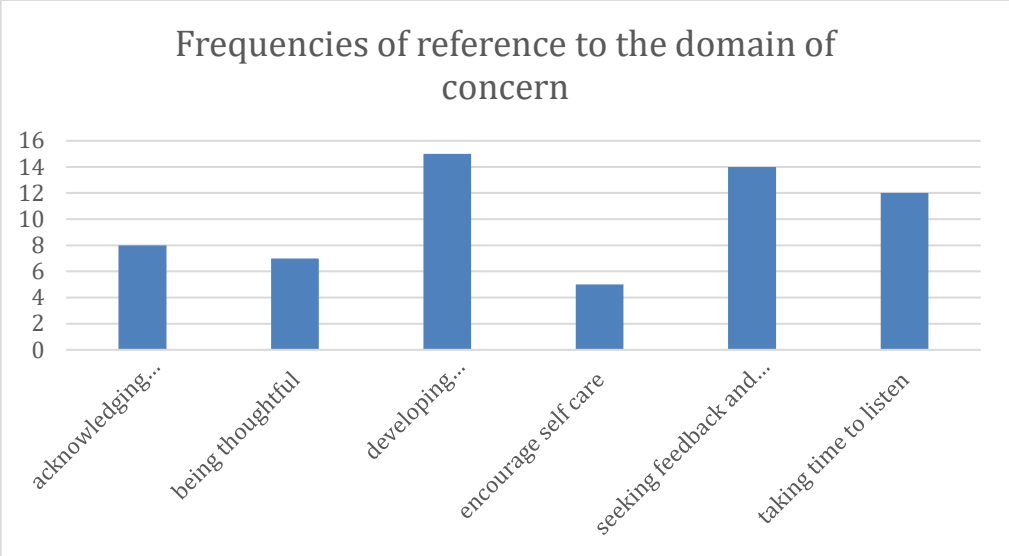

Figure 8. Frequencies of reference to the domain of concern.

Table 5

Themes and Patterns Resulting From an Analysis of the Interviews Related to Research Question 2: Domain of Concern

Theme/pattern	Number of respondents	% based on *N*	Frequency of reference
Developing relationships	8	66.6%	15
Taking time to listen	7	58.3%	12
Seeking feedback and input	5	41.6%	14
Acknowledging feelings and emotions	5	41.6%	8
Being thoughtful	5	41.6%	7
Encourage self-care	3	25.0%	5

Note. The *N* for interview participants = 12.

Developing relationships. For the second domain of concern, the 12 principals were asked to share how they care about their staff and their well-being. Eight of the 12 interviewees described how they prioritized developing relationships with their staff members. One principal gave an example of developing relationships:

> The way I do this is I get out and start to talk to people. That's the key piece. You have to develop the personal relationship before you can drive your organization forward. They need to trust you. They trust you by knowing that you care about them and that you're authentic and real, and that if they ask you what you're thinking, you're basically going to tell them.

Principal 12 went on to share that he had a teacher who had been teaching for 30 something years. This teacher told him "Never have I ever been at a school site where the administration was more visible than this one. Ever. It's amazing how you have gotten to know us."

Many of the high school principals stated that they had to make sure to make developing relationships a priority. With the large amount of staff on a high school campus it can be a challenge, but they recognize the importance of taking time for relationships. Principal 1 said,

> For me, whether it's a teacher, whether it's an instructional assistant, whether it's one of my custodial crew, or kitchen person, I'm going to be giving them a call and checking in on them and making sure that they're okay, because that's important.

Taking time to listen. High school principals knew that taking time to listen to their staff was an important aspect of their job. Seven of the 12 interviewees confirmed this to be a priority for them and something that each one made sure to practice daily. This theme was referenced 12 times during those interviews. One principal shared how he did this by ensuring he looked at his staff members beyond their classrooms:

> I try to get to know them as a person, not necessarily just thinking of them in a work situation. I try as much as possible, and it's hard with COVID going on, to have conversations that are not work related. I want to get to know who they are, what they value, what's important to them beyond just what they do in the classroom. It's important.

Many principals said they try to get to know their staff on a personal level by listening to them any time they are able. Principal 12 shared,

> I always ask them, "How's your family? How are your kids? What are they up to?" I actually take a genuine interest in the people that I work with so that I have an understanding of where they're coming from. The teachers have been honest with me and have shared things like, "My father is really sick," "My husband has cancer," "My kids are dealing with this." Something else I've always done when I walk in to a school for the first time is to find out what works there, what are they already doing? I won't come in and change things. I want to build on what is already happening. I like to come in and build upon the successes. Every campus is successful in different ways. My job is to find out what those successes are.

Another principal shared,

> I read people pretty well, because I am out and around and so in reading people, I might get to ask, "What's going on, are you okay? Is everything okay with you? Because something seems off." I think they're appreciative of being noticed that maybe something's off or what not. Then, there's a sharing of information. We

can talk about how we can work towards what they need to do to take care of themselves.

Principal 12 evidenced this theme:

> I'm a person of my word. I apologize when I owe apologies. I apologize 1,000 times a day for things I had nothing to do with, but I'm listening to people and I'm hearing the difficulties, the anxiety, or the stress that comes with whatever those decisions were, regardless of what stakeholder group, whether it's a student, a parent, a faculty or staff member.

She prided herself in taking the time to listen and realized it was a never-ending job.

Seeking input and feedback. Principals were very open when sharing that they had to seek input and feedback to be a strong leader of a high school campus. They cannot be expected to know or do it all. They had to rely on their staff for knowledge and information about topics of concern. This third theme came from five of the 12 interviewees. It was referenced 14 times among this group. In a very practical and relevant example, one principal shared his conversation with students related to dress code:

> I went out to ASB class and had a conversation with the students about dress code, how it makes them feel, and how they feel it's being enforced on campus. Getting their voices was important. When I push something forward and have a conversation with the staff about a decision being made that effects the shared values among staff, I try and make sure I've heard different viewpoints. I want input from different people, different groups that will be affected, even students. I

> don't want to make decisions alone, in a vacuum. I want to make decisions that incorporate all views, all perspectives.

Another principal had been a principal at the site previously; she left and then returned a few years later. She shared,

> When I first came back, I met with every single employee and just listened to them, whatever they felt they wanted to share. I introduced myself to folks who didn't know me. I reconnected with folks who did know me. It made all the difference in making my transition back a positive one.

Lastly, Principal 12 discussed a community member she routinely meets with. This was reflecting on their last visit:

> I'm surprised you keep meeting with me. I told him, "You know what? You are a critical friend to me. If you're thinking it, there's got to be more to this than just you. And you care deep enough to make an appointment with me. Why would I not meet with you?" He then said, "Well, I just didn't think you liked me." I said, "Oh, well, it's not about liking or not liking you. You have students at West Hills. I want to hear what you have to say, because folks like you make me better. You make our school better."

Acknowledging feelings and emotions. This theme emerged from five of the 12 principal interviews conducted. It was brought up eight times during those interviews. This group of principals made sure to acknowledge the feelings and emotions of their staff. They did this in various ways. One principal stated, "They trust you by knowing that you care about them and that you're authentic and real, and that if they ask you what you're thinking, you're basically going to tell them."

> We had a parent of one of my teachers passed away and then her child got in a car accident. I happened to know the boy because he went here. I made sure to call this parent right away. I said, "Hey, you take the time. What can we take off your plate? How can we help you? How can my secretaries get your stuff down?" Letting them know that school will be taken care of, regardless of their position. We have a team here.
>
> Another principal recounted what she did with her team:
>
> "Hey, Danielle, just reaching out, checking in to see how things are going. I know distance learning has been pretty challenging for everyone. Please let me know if and when you need any kind of support; you know I'm here for you." So, it's kind of like a, "Rah, rah, you're doing a great job, but at the same time, I also recognize you're human and that you're not only balancing work, but you're balancing your family and other obligations outside of work. I'm here for you."

Being thoughtful. The sixth theme was realized after conducting the 12 interviews with high school principals. Being thoughtful was referenced seven times through the course of the interviews. A thoughtful principal is able to build and maintain trust with staff. An example from one principal was,

> It's phone calls when somebody is sick and it is hard, because you got a lot of employees. I've got two on my mind right now that I haven't called in a while; I have to call them today. I know, I must reach out. I've already checked in with them a few times. They're hard phone calls. Someone could have cancer. They may have lost a loved one. They're not fun, but they're important and essential. The people really, really cherish that.

This same principal went on to say,

> We just lost an employee and although the employee's wife was not one of my employees, she was a former employee that I worked with for years. Reaching out to her and touching base has been tough, but those are long lasting relationships. I may work with her again someday. I consider her and her family friends.

Ensuring their families were prioritized and cared for was someone that was commonly shared. Principal 1 shared,

> Being conscientious, being thoughtful and being thorough, as we've moved through various challenges, is key. Unless it's CPR, there's no reason to take care of things right now in the moment, sometimes things need time to develop and you need to make sure that you're thorough in your thinking.

Encourage self-care. The final theme in this second domain of concern was encouraging self-care. This was an especially important theme given the world pandemic. This was brought up by three of the 12 principals on five occasions. One principal was very clear about his view on this:

> My philosophy is family first. Your family always comes first. You need to make sure that you take care of your home before you can take care of somebody else's children. If you're going to be able to take care of somebody else's children on this campus, you need to make sure that your house is in order. If somebody is sick in your home, you are sick, a parent is sick, even if your dog is sick, those are traumatic things. Those come first. That's the philosophy that we have here.

Principal 3 echoed a very similar statement: “We have to support each other first as a staff so we can support our students.” This was also something Principal 9 supported, “I’m respectful of their time. I want them to take care of themselves.” Each principal recognized that in order for staff to be able to do what is expected of them at work, the administrator must ensure the staff are practicing self-care.

Data Results and Key Findings for Research Question 3: Candor

The third research question, “How do high school principals establish trust with staff through the domain of candor?” The interview findings concluded that the domain of candor, when isolated, was a characteristic that many high school principals used to establish trust with their staff. More than 58% of the respondents selected each of the themes, and three themes were mentioned with seven or more respondents. Figure 9 and Table 6 represent the themes and frequencies that emerged from the analysis of the interview transcripts using NVivo.

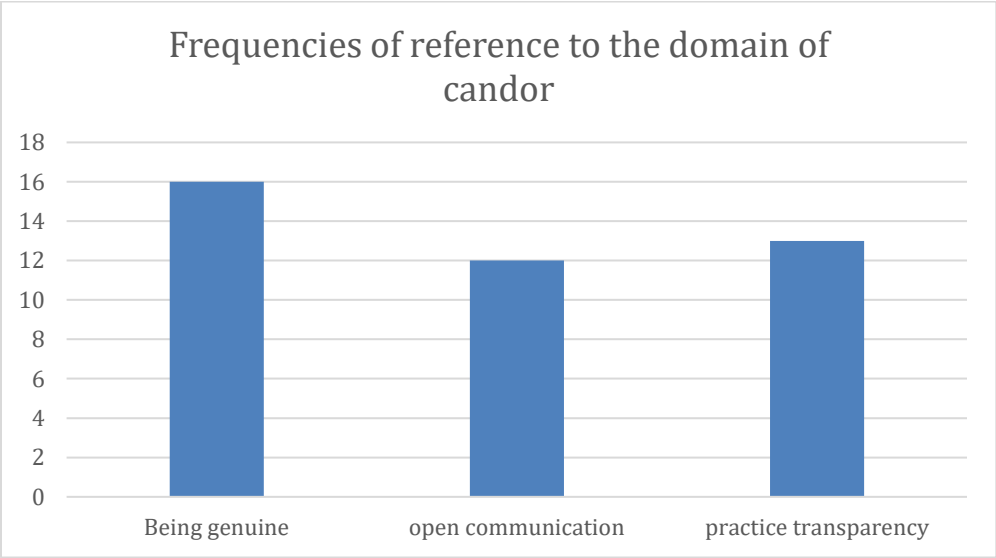

Figure 9. Frequencies of reference to the domain of candor.

Table 6

Themes and Patterns Resulting From an Analysis of the Interviews Related to Research Question 3: Domain of Candor

Theme/ pattern	Number of respondents	% Based on *N*	Frequency of reference
Being genuine	7	58.3%	16
Practice transparency	7	58.3%	13
Open communication	6	50.0%	13

Note. The *N* for interview participants = 12.

The theoretical definition of candor is the measure of how the public perceives the genuineness, authenticity, and transparency of a brand (Weisman, 2016). This study used the operational definition of candor that 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). The domain of candor for Research Question 4 yielded three reoccurring themes: being genuine, open communication, and practice transparency. More than 58% respondents selected each of the themes. Table 6 highlights the emerging themes on how high school principals establish trust with their staff through the domain of candor.

Being genuine. More than half of high school principals interviewed agreed that being genuine was important when building trust among their staff. Seven of the 12 interviewees discussed how they practiced being a genuine leader with school staff. This was referenced 16 times throughout the interviews. One principal's response referenced an example where he made a bad choice at the start of the school year:

> When they talk about the guest speaker we brought in, we talked about how we weren't going to do it again. And we understood and just admitted like, "Hey, that was a bad choice. We shouldn't have had a guest speaker." And so being

> open, that gives them the ability to not feel like they're going to get handed off for giving negative feedback or positive feedback, but we'd be open to it and show them that you can be critical of what we're doing and it doesn't make you an enemy.

Principal 11 said,

> I think people know what they're getting when they come to me. I'm usually the first one here, last to leave, they know that. They know that I'll have their back. They know because they see it. I don't know of any other way to do it. I mean, I can sit here and talk a big game, but my actions are going to speak for me and I've had opportunities to let my actions do the talking.

Another principal said, "A key piece for me is to be transparent, to be authentic. If you ask anybody I've worked with, 'If you want to know what he's thinking, just ask him.' It won't be sugar coated."

Practice transparency. The principals interviewed for this study spoke about the need to practice transparency as a high school leader. This occurred in seven of the 12 interviews conducted. This theme was referenced 16 times. The high school principals had many instances where transparency was practiced with their school staff. They used this as a way to share information, show support among staff, and demonstrate trust with their teams.

One principal said,

> Being as honest and transparent with staff as possible about your feelings, about what's going on, and about your goals and the future and who you are as a person is something I've found that's helped build relationships with staff.

Another principal reported,

> I'm very transparent with who I am. If I would tell them anything, they need to know about me, any questions they have and I'm not trying to hide anything that's going wrong. So having those open conversations and explaining every decision and having a reason for every decision is something that I value and is very important to me. If I'm making a decision, that's making you upset, I want to be able to communicate to you to the point where you at least understand why I'm making a decision, even if you don't agree with it.

Open communication. The final theme that was found in this domain is open communication. This was shared by half of the 12 interviewees. It was determined that this occurred 11 times with six of the interviewees. These principals were determined to practice open communication with their staff. They each welcomed dialogue and prioritized making sure to illicit information in multiple ways. One principal said, "It's not just top-down decision making made from closed doors, in a room, in an office on the campus. They're made with the voice of the staff, with shared views, and shared values."

Another principal discussed similar communication with staff:

> We're not trying to make it look like we know what we're doing or lie to them about what's going on. It's what we know, we tell them and what we don't know, we don't know, and we're going to try to figure it out together as a team we changed it so we are accessible. It's there, it's open, other than like right now when I'm on a Zoom or on important confidential call, my door is always open so people come in to have conversations with me. Gave cell phone number out to the entire staff on the first day we started. Take any time they text me in the

> middle of the night, take it seriously important because even if it's not an important thing to me, to them it is. If they're going to reach out in a conversation with us, we need to take it as seriously as we possibly can.
>
> Finally, Principal 12 shared,
>
> I did an inventory and I didn't sit down with each individual. You can't do that when you have 115 people, so I did it with groups of people. Leadership team, a couple departments I might have worked with, I did some group activities during a staff meeting, but I really wanted to get an understanding where they're at. My door is always open and people are always welcome in. I'm in a little tiny office, they pass by all the time. So making sure that they know that is important. Drop in, if you have a question, come see me. If you email me, I will walk out to talk to you to respond."

All of the principals did anything they could to show that communication was primary priority for them on campus.

Data Results and Key Findings for Research Question 4: Competence

The fourth research question asked, "How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of competence?" Competence is the ability to perform a task or fulfill a role as expected (Covey, 2006; Farnsworth, 2015; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). School leader competence is evidenced in many ways, every day. It is shown in the daily interactions with staff, students, parents, and the community. They must be aware of all of the stakeholder groups'—students, staff, parents, and community members—concerns, priorities, and wants. Leaders demonstrate their competence by consistently getting results (Blanchard et al., 2013).

The domain of competence for Research Question 4 yielded four themes: empowering others to lead, modeling a skillset, being consistent and confident, and implementation of new ideas. More than 40% of the respondents selected each of the themes, and two themes were mentioned with minimal respondents. Figure 10 and Table 7 represent the themes and frequencies that emerged from an NVivo analysis of the interview transcripts from 12 high school principals for the domain of competence.

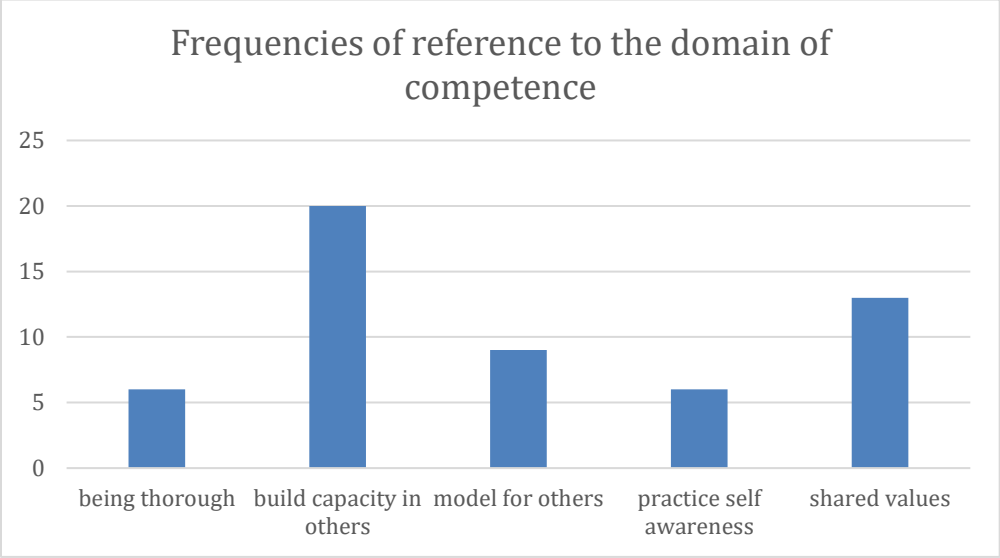

Figure 10. Frequencies of reference for the domain of competence.

Table 7

Themes and Patterns Resulting From an Analysis of the Interviews Related to Research Question 4: Domain of Competence

Theme/ pattern	Number of respondents	% Based on *N*	Frequency of reference
Building capacity in others	11	91.6%	20
Shared values	8	66.6%	13
Model for others	7	58.3%	9
Being thorough	5	41.6%	6
Practice self-awareness	4	33.3%	6

Note. The *N* for interview participants = 12.

Building capacity in others. This was the largest theme among the five derived from the principal interviews for this domain. Eleven of the 12 interviewees referenced building capacity in the people that they work with 20 times in their responses. They have all realized that an important part of leadership is to build the skills in the people they work with. One principal said,

> My job is to identify strengths. I put people in positions where they can be successful. I can then be a buffer and knock down barriers as they come up. For me, it's all about providing opportunities for staff to take on more, if they want them.

Principal 12 shared how he builds the leadership skills of the teachers he works with:

> Again, it's about shared leadership and building capacity among others. I try to have a variety of opportunities to lead on the campus. I look for nontraditional ways to bring leaderships in, to bring leaders on to a leadership team. I create the opportunities for those that are wanting it.

Principal 12 supported professional development opportunities for her teachers:

> I offer, and constantly remind faculty and staff, to not be shy, invest in yourself first in order to have best practice and research-based practices to benefit students. After you attend the professional development training, invite me or another administrator, invite us, to see that practice in action, and give us feedback, tell us how it went. We all want to learn and we want to do it together.

Shared values. The second theme that came from the domain of competence was shared values. This came up with eight of the 12 interviewees. Of the eight interviews,

this theme was referenced 13 times. For high school principals building and maintaining shared values was important. When Principal 12 first arrived on his campus 8 years ago, he brought his own ideas as he had always done when he had taken on a new leadership role:

> This time, I tried to really find out about what this staff values. What do they find to be the most important aspects of their campus? What are they proud of? I developed the shared vision and mission and then put it into a working document. I rewrote it, reviewed it, made sure that it was done in an accordion effect, then I pushed it out. Usually, I have a team of people work on the documents. They bring them back, take them back to departments, have people put in information, share it again, take them to PTSA, take them to the foundation, but definitely get them to teachers and classified and add them. Everyone needs to be a part of the process, so that they can buy in. I feel like everybody was collectively part of building that shared vision on this campus.

Another principal shared,

> I've structured our environment to be collaborative. Basically we do instructional 'all staff meetings.' I don't do business meetings. All my staff meetings are instructionally based. I'm bringing them together to go over our mission, our vision, and then act on our Triton Point of Focus, so that we can make sure that we meet our student learning objectives. That's the formula.

For Principal 1, Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) drives her school site's values: "We're a PBIS school. So that's very much central to a value

system that's important here, everything we do for our high school. It's integrity." Principal 5 maintained a student-centered approach to her site's value system:

> So pretty much in everything we do, we always have a student voice attached to it. At the beginning of the year, we always have a student panel throughout our small school meetings. After that, we always have somewhere being either something a student wrote, or have a couple of students present, or share something that was written in an English class by a student. We try and make it so that it's not necessarily what I'm saying, or what the adults are saying. It's more about what the students are saying, because I think they are our customer.

This is similar to Principal 7 who shared,

> Frequently, I have staff email me an article, something that has to do or is in relation to part of the vision that we have on campus, which is to ensure that every student feels safe and learn at a rigorous level.

Model for others. The theme of being a model for others came up for more than half of the interviewees. Seven of the 12 high school principals referenced this on nine occasions during their interviews. It came up in a variety of the answers for the 10 interview questions. With high school sites being so large and having so many people on staff, the principals frequently used modeling to demonstrate what they want to see in those that they work with. For Principal 3, this begins with a smile:

> It's got to start with me. Got to make sure I'm practicing smiling more, simple things like that. Don't walk too fast, don't look too intense, always stop and take time to say hello to people. Always be picking up trash, all the things that you ask of others, you're modeling. And even when no one's looking at you, you're

just doing it because you believe in it. And it's not just a show. You really got to believe in it. But I think what's important thing for me is being that positive role model for the school.

Another principal offers learning opportunities for aspiring leaders:

I try to build the leadership of other people. I host my own administrators academy on Tuesday for 1 hour so teachers can stop by and they can learn because I think, if they understood why I make decisions or why administration does what it does, they'll buy in more to the leadership practices. We role play scenarios and talk through tough situations that come up. I don't tell them what to do; we all provide feedback to one another.

Principal 6 purposefully modeled the kindness she wanted to see:

If someone's rude in a staff meeting, that's on them. You won't get that same response from me. I'll go overboard to be polite to them, to share the contrast. I hope that I model being kind, listening, and valuing others' opinions because that is genuinely how I feel. Every time I've stepped into a new role, my learning curve is huge. I've appreciated all of the support and feedback I received. I want to pay that forward and be someone that other people feel like they can go to. I'm patient and fair and trustworthy in that way as well.

Being thorough. This is the fourth theme that came up from the domain of competence. Five of the 12 high school principals interviewed referenced this theme six times in the course of their interviews. Each of them made a point to provide details of how they consciously tried to think of all perspectives before making decisions while also incorporating feedback from stakeholders.

When Principal 12 needed to tackle dress code on his campus, being thorough was a top priority. He shared,

> We surveyed the whole staff about their views on dress code. We're surveying the students on the topic and we're going to come back to have a conversation with the staff after that. I went out to our ASB class and had a conversation with the students their about dress code, how it makes them feel, and how they feel it's being enforced on campus. It's important to get voices from all different groups so that when you do push something forward, have a conversation with the staff about a decision being made it includes shared values with the staff and shared views and input. I make sure decisions are not being made in a vacuum solely by me. They are being made as a school and as a team, for the community.

When Principal 12 dealt with a highly political issue that occurred on his campus, he had to be thorough in the steps he took to move forward and learn with his team. He brought together groups with varying viewpoints:

> I had individuals on my campus that had felt like there had been racial incidents that had happened over the years; nothing was ever addressed, and they wanted to be proactive this time. This was a great time for me to reach out and say, "Hey, I'm going to pull you in because you've always been wanting to lead." Now, I'm bringing our leadership teams together, old and new, to get through this. I built a coalition amongst my entire staff. It really helped us open our eyes and see and hear all perspectives.

When Principal 7 wanted feedback on his leadership, he asked for it:

> I push out a survey to staff and it asks that they fill it out anonymously. Questions are not just about protocols; they are also about things going on in the school. A lot of it is also about me as a leader and they gave me feedback as far as my accessibility, my communication styles.

Practice self-awareness. The fifth and final theme that came out of the interviews for the domain of competence was practicing self-awareness. This was found in four of the 12 principal interviews on six occasions. The high school principals try to ensure that they maintain self-awareness, especially when working with so many different groups on campus. For Principal 10, he believed it's a part of who he is: "As a leader, it has to come from your internal drive and who you are as a person. And for me, the things that drive me, just as a person, are trust, transparency, and collaboration with people."

Principal 2 shared,

> Building trust starts with that self-awareness as a principal leader that you recognize and acknowledge and understand human behavior, history matters, listening carefully matters, growing and changing with what's presented to you, and being smart helps, and seeking help helps a lot.

Authenticity is something Principal 8 practices:

> The things I try to do are to be responsive. When someone needs me to reach out I'll do it. And I hope it comes off okay. It might be a little awkward for me at times because I'm doing something out of my comfort zone. But again, if it's informal and someone just walks into my office it's very easy for me to sit down with someone who says, "Hey, do you have a minute?" Since they're coming to

me, I want to be available. I need to always be open to change, always be open to new ideas and insights, and never feel like I've got this figured out because every day brings new challenges.

Data Results and Key Findings for Research Question 5: Consistency

The final research question asked, "How do high school principals establish trust through the domain of consistency?" The theoretical definition of consistency is the confidence that a person's pattern of behavior is reliable, dependable, and steadfast (Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Weisman, 2016). Consistency is measured by the daily endeavors and ongoing process (Weisman, 2016). Trust in schools is built from day-to-day social exchanges (Byrk & Schneider, 2003). Consistency between words and actions affirms a principal's personal integrity (Byrk & Schneider, 2003). Figure 11 and Table 8 present the themes emerging from the compiled data of 12 participant interview responses to Research Question 5.

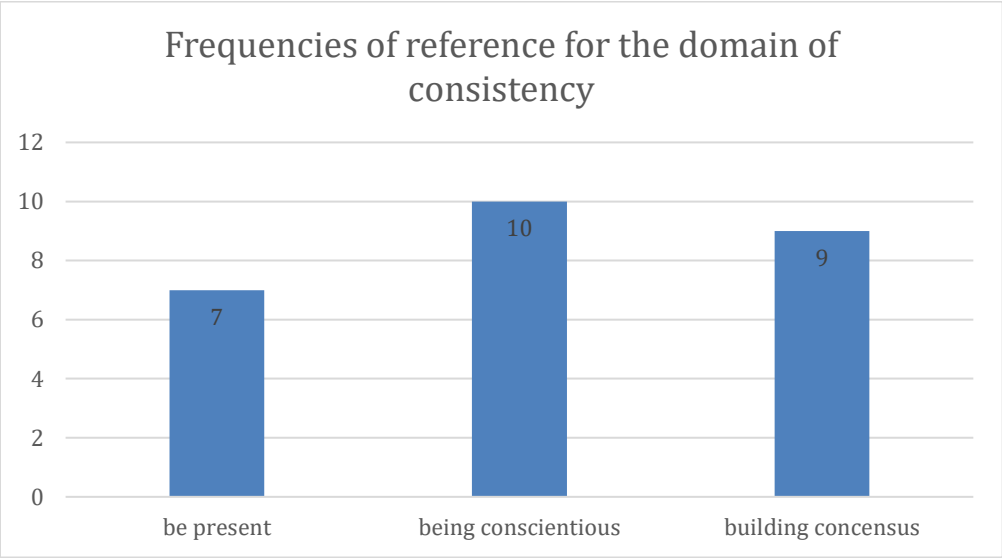

Figure 11. Frequencies of reference for the domain of consistency.

Table 8

Themes and Patterns Resulting From an Analysis of the Interviews Related to Research Question 5: Domain of Consistency

Theme/ pattern	Number of respondents	% based on *N*	Frequency of reference
Being conscientious	8	66.6%	10
Building consensus	7	58.3%	9
Be present	4	33.3%	7

Note. The *N* for interview participants = 12.

Each of the three themes derived from Research Question 5 had a response rate above 30%. Two of the themes had a higher than 55% response rate while the latter two themes had moderate responses. Themes from Research Question 5 include being conscientious, building consensus, and be present. Table 8 reflects the themes and their frequencies derived from interviews with 12 high school principals in San Diego and Orange counties along with the frequencies from an NVivo analysis of interview transcripts.

Being conscientious. This is the first of three themes that emerged from the 12 interviews conducted with high school principals. Eight of the12 interviews resulted in responses that referenced being conscientious 10 times in eight responses. Principal 10 was conscientious when having to reopen his school site after closing due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

> We opened up and we had kids back on campus pretty quickly in September. We started planning in early August, so we had a little less than a month before school was to start. We had to go through COVID protocols, reopening plans, and have numerous discussions, and they were a very, very unhappy staff after. We'd have open Zoom meetings where we would pick apart and go through the whole entire

> plan, line by line. I rewrote it in understandable language and compared the two, like Cliff Notes and a Shakespeare play. This revision, making it meaningful for our team, made a huge difference.

Principal 5 shared that she always follows through: "I think the most important thing is that, if you say something, you have to do it, and you have to see it to the end. Because if you don't, I think that's when people stop trusting you." Being conscientious is how she maintained trust with her team. Principal 6 demonstrated being conscientious by keeping to her word:

> If I say I care about their opinion, then I sure better include their opinion in big decisions. So this is something I have to actively practice because I want things done quickly. And I have to step back to make sure that my practices are inclusive and that I have the necessary voices in the room so it's the same.

Principal 8 shared the following about being conscientious about communication with his team:

> I respond to every single email, every single phone call, at least with an acknowledgement that "I got this and I'll follow up with you," but I try really hard just to listen to what people say and then to talk with them about whatever it is. Regardless of whether I'm in agreement or disagreement, just to let them know "I've heard you, this is what I think, and this is why I think it," so hopefully it comes across as sincere. I try every day to ensure all of my efforts at communication are working.

Building consensus. The second of three themes from this domain was building consensus. This was referenced by seven of the 12 principals nine times in the course of their interviews. Principal 10 referenced how he builds consensus with his staff:

> If you want something to be sustainable and something to be long lasting, getting participation and buy-in from the whole staff or at least a large group of staff, makes something sustainable and consistent versus just something that changes every time a new admin changes.

Another example of this came from Principal 11: "Nothing is done in isolation; everything is shared decision making. This is how we come up with new ideas or have new opportunities on our campus."

Principal 12 shared,

> People realize that very quickly that there's room to be experimental; there's room to challenge. So, if you don't agree with maybe the direction or the vision that we have created as an organization, and we do that collaboratively, you have the freedom to tell me you don't like that. It's no judgment. I invite people to bring that on. If I'm going to do something on campus, I talk to probably 20 people, 30 people just before I even present it. "Hey, I'm thinking about" then some people go, "That's the dumbest idea I heard. Have you heard that 10 times? That's probably a dumb idea, just move on, let it go." But you hear some people go, "Oh, that's interesting." But that thinking out loud every day is how I do it. I'll roll through some of my, I most high powered, probably most accomplished teacher's rooms. "Yeah. I'm thinking of … what do you think? I don't need an answer today, just let me know what you think." Then going out and accordion

everything we do. So, okay. Well we're going to do something like that. Be honest and authentic.

Principal 12 gathered consensus on new topics and ideas in staff meetings:

If you have an item on the agenda that you want to speak to and you are teaching seven periods, let us know, and we'll have a substitute come and cover your class so you can pop in on this meeting just for this item, and say what you'd like to say and represent your perspective and be heard and have some closure on it, at least for that meeting, and then return to class.

Being present. The third theme from the fifth domain of consistency is being present. This was found in four of the 12 principal responses. It was referenced seven times by the interviewees. When leading a large high school campus, a principal must be present all the time. Everyone counts on their leader. Principal 11 knew his staff counted on him:

It's about being in classrooms, making an effort to get to know people and making their needs a priority. When we can put out fires for people who in their worlds, "It's an emergency," if we make it our emergency or at least sense of importance to follow through and take care of things quickly, people know that they can take you at your word and that they can trust that they can come to you and you're going to take care of things. I know that I just try to show up every day. I try to have the same demeanor, the same level of respect in speaking with people. I think people know what they're getting when they come to me. I'm usually the first one here, last to leave, they know that. They know that I'll have their back,

Principal 2 demonstrated being present by always being available:

> I'm present on campus. I'm frequently the last person to leave campus and the first one to get here. I am accessible. I am dependable. I do not have mood swings. I don't have good days and bad. When I come to work, I'm prepared to be here for others. My mindset is very focused on the students, faculty, and staff of the school community. If I can't give 100%, then I will call in and use a personal day.

Similarly, Principal 12 showed this by ensuring he is available to his staff:

> I'm out and about, so people don't have to come and seek me out. I stop by, and I don't just stop by their classrooms when they're teaching, because I know that can be stressful for people. I also go into their classrooms when they're on prep periods or at lunch. For me, it really comes down to being present, making sure people know that you care about them holistically, looking for ways to support and for everybody to be in a state of improvement. That's a key piece that quite often means we're pushing people to be better at their craft. I need to be building and fostering relationships during the day to be able to support my teachers.

Quantitative Data

Data Analysis for Research Question 6

The sixth research question asked, "How do elementary principals perceive the degree of importance of the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency for building trust?" Data for Research Question 6 were collected using SurveyMonkey, an electronic survey software, from 12 high school principals within San Diego County and Orange County in Southern California. The electronic survey was

delivered via email to all 12 participants. The email presented the purpose of the study and included a SurveyMonkey link to the Principal Behaviors That Develop Trust with Staff survey. The informed consent protocol and the Participant's Bill of Rights were both included. The participants were not able to proceed to complete the survey until they read and agreed to both forms.

Each of the five variables—consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection—began with a major topical question followed by six behavioral questions, which produced a survey of 30 questions. Each survey was taken by 11 of the 12 participating principals, resulting in 330 responses to identify the top elements for each of the five sections (Appendix D). The five major topical questions were as follows:

1. Consistency: How well is the organization's ability to perform consistently and dependably over the long term?
2. Competence: How effective is the organization in its ability to accomplish what it's designed to do?
3. Candor: How transparent is the organization communicating or making information available to employees?
4. Concern: How much does the organization show empathy or care for its employees?
5. Connection: How do your values or goals align with the organization, the people, and their behavior behind?

Table 9 summarizes and compares the results of principal responses on all five domains. The two highest ranking domains on the principal survey were candor with a mean of 5.48 and competence with a mean of 5.45. Four of the five domains were supported 100% in the *somewhat agree*, *agree*, and *strongly agree* responses. Strongest ratings

went to candor and competence, which principals rated as *agree* to *strongly agree* 93.8% of the time and 95.4% of the time respectively. The domain of concern was the only domain that drew three responses of *disagree* and *disagree somewhat*. However, 95.4% of the responses were in the *agree* to *strongly agree* range.

The results were compiled and analyzed. The survey results for Research Question 6 were categorized into Weisman's five domains of trust under each of the five topical questions. The following tables summarizes the data results by variable.

Quantitative Results for Q1 Consistency: How Well is the Organization's Ability to Perform Consistently and Dependably Over the Long Term?

Consistency encompassed the elements of consistent behavior in roles and responsibilities, operating the school efficiently, creating an environment for staff to achieve their goals, letting staff know expectations, keeping commitments, and holding self and staff accountable. The survey results are shown in Table 10.

Table 9

Degree of Importance by the Number and Percentage of Responses, Plus Total Mean

Domains	Total # of responses	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Disagree somewhat		Agree somewhat		Agree		Strongly agree		Total Mean
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Candor	66	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	6.0	26	39.3	36	54.5	5.48
Competence	66	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	4.5	30	45.4	33	50.0	5.45
Connection	66	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	10.6	26	39.3	33	50.0	5.39
Consistency	66	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	10.6	29	43.9	30	45.4	5.34
Concern	66	0	0.0	1	01.5	2	03.0	4	06.0	26	39.4	33	50.0	5.33

Table 10

Survey Results for Q2 Consistency

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Agree somewhat	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Weighted average
I behave in a manner consistent with my role and responsibilities.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	54.55% (6)	45.45% (5)	11	5.45
Overall, the school operates efficiently	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.18% (2)	54.55% (6)	27.27% (3)	11	5.09
I create an environment where staff have the opportunity to accomplish their goals and responsibilities	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09% (1)	45.45% (5)	45.45% (5)	11	5.36
I let staff know what is expected from them	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.18% (2)	45.45% (5)	36.36% (4)	11	5.18
I make commitments to staff I can keep.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09% (1)	27.27% (3)	63.64% (7)	11	5.55
I hold myself and staff accountable for actions.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09% (1)	36.36% (4)	54.55% (6)	11	5.45

The participants rated six behaviors in the domain of consistency according to their perceived degree of importance for developing trust with staff. While all elements in this variable reached the weighted average of 5.0, only one reached above 5.5: making commitments to staff that they can keep. Nearly 64% of participants (even) *strongly agreed* and over 27% (three) *agreed* that making commitments to staff that they can keep was an important part of building trust; one participant (9.09%) agreed somewhat. Two of the behaviors, "I behave in a manner consistent with my roles and responsibilities" and "I hold myself and staff accountable for action," were ranked second with a weighted average of 5.45. For the behavior, behaving in a manner consistent with my roles and responsibilities, six (54.55%) respondents indicated *strongly agree,* five (45.45%) respondents indicated *agree*. Additionally, the behavior, "I hold myself and staff accountable for action," had six (54.55%) respondents indicate *strongly agree*, four (36.36%) respondents indicate *agree*, and one (9.09%) respondent indicate *agree somewhat*. The two lowest scores went to letting staff know what is expected of them with 18.18%, rating this variable only as *somewhat agree*, and a weighted average of 5.18; and efficient operation of the school also with 18.18%, rating it as *somewhat agree*, and the lowest weighted average in this variable of 5.09. All six behaviors were rated either *agree* or *strongly agree* by 80% or more of respondents. Figure 12 presents the behaviors related to the domain of consistency and the mean for each behavior.

Figure 12. Themes related to the domain of consistency.

Quantitative Results for Q2 Competence: How Effective is the Organization in its Ability to Accomplish What It's Designed to Do?

In this variable, the survey focused on the quality of services provided to stakeholders, the ability to achieve the vision of the school, the capabilities of the staff, and opportunities to grow and develop as professionals. It also sought feedback on collaborative decision making and strategic actions that may have helped to achieve competence.

Participants ranked each question from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. The researcher used the weighted average to discuss the degree of perceived importance for each of the six behaviors related to competence. One hundred percent of the respondents *agreed* to *strongly agreed* that collaborative decision making with staff was a strategy they used in developing competence with their staff, with a weighted average of 5.82.

Nearly 82% (nine respondents) *strongly agreed* and over 18% (two) *agreed* that promoting collaborative decision making was very important. This was the highest ranked strategy in developing competence.

While all six of the strategies were ranked at 5 or above in weighted average, promoting the capability of staff members and creating opportunities for them to learn and grow, both were ranked above 5.5 in weighted average. Promoting the capability of staff, with a weighted mean of 5.64%, drew 100% agreement with 63.64% (seven) strongly agreeing and 36.36% agreeing on its importance. Creating opportunities for staff to learn and grow, with a weighted mean of 5.55%, also reached 100% agreement with 54.45% (six) strongly agreeing and 45.45% (five) agreeing.

All respondents registered agreement on all six strategies; however, two of them showed responses from one or two individuals that were at the *somewhat agree* level, focusing staff on the quality of services the district provides to students, staff, families and community, with the lowest weighted mean of 5.0, had 81.82% *agree* to *strongly agree*, and two participants (18.18%) *agreeing somewhat*. Overseeing the strategic actions for staff, with a weighted mean of 5.27, was next to lowest and had 90.91% *agree* to *strongly agree*. Of the participants, 100% *agree* to *strongly agree* that working with the staff to achieve the school vision was important, with a 5.4 weighted average. Figure 13 displays the behaviors related to the domain of competence according to their weighted average.

Table 11

Survey Results for Competence

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Agree somewhat	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Weighted average
I focus the work of staff on the quality of services the district provides to students, other staff, families and community	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.8% (2)	62.64% (7)	18.8% (2)	11	5.00
I work with the staff to achieve the school's vision	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	54.55% (6)	45.45% (5)	11	5.40
I promote the capability of my staff members	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	36.36% (4)	63.64% (7)	11	5.64
I create opportunities for staff to learn and grow	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	45.45% (5)	54.55% (6)	11	5.55
I promote collaborative decision making with staff	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.18% (2)	81.82% (9)	11	5.82
I oversee the strategic actions of staff at my site	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09%	54.55% (6)	36.36% (4)	11	5.27

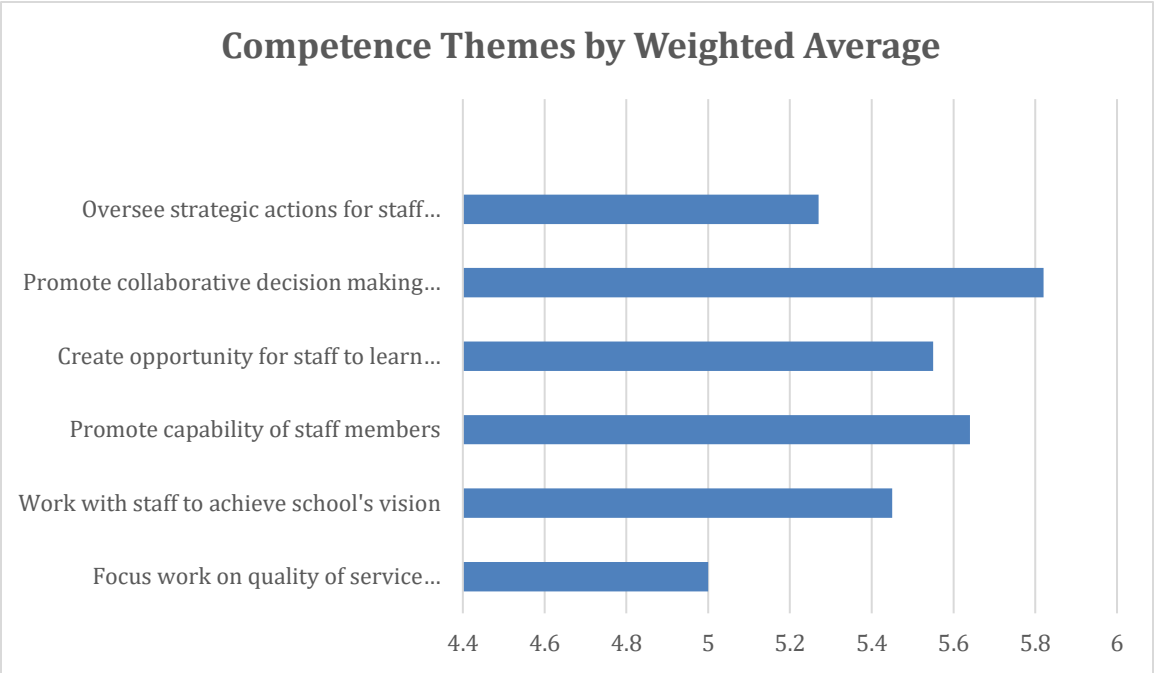

Figure 13. Themes related to competence.

Quantitative Results for Q3 Candor: How Transparent is the Organization Communicating or Making Information Available to Employees?

Participants ranked each question from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. The researcher used the weighted average to discuss the degree of perceived importance for each of the six behaviors related to candor. Transparency in communication was the central focus of this set of questions. Open communication, sharing when things are going wrong, discussions about the school's direction and vision, safe environment for voicing differences of opinion, authentic and straightforward communication, and confronting issues directly are elements that received survey results for candor principal feedback (Table 12).

Table 12

Survey Results for Candor

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Agree somewhat	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Weighted average
I engage in open communication with all staff.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	36.36% (4)	63.64% (7)	11	5.64
I share openly with staff when things are going wrong.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09% (1)	54.55% (6)	36.36% (4)	11	5.27
I engage staff in discussions about the direction and vision for our school	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	45.45% (5)	54.55% (6)	11	5.55
I create a safe environment where staff feel free to voice differences of opinion.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	36.36% (4)	63.64% (7)	11	5.64
I am open, authentic, and straightforward with all staff.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.18% (2)	81.82% (9)	11	5.82
I take issues head on, even the “undiscussables.”	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.27% (3)	45.45% (5)	27.27% (3)	11	5.00

Being open, authentic, and straightforward with all staff gathered the highest response from principals with 81.82% (nine participants) strongly agreeing and 18.18% (two) agreeing on its value and awarding it the highest weighted mean of 5.82. Three other elements broke the 5.5 weighted mean: engaging in open communication with all staff earned a weighted average of 5.64, creating a safe environment for expressing differences of opinion also received a 5.64 weighted average, and discussing the direction and vision of the school was close behind with a weighted average of 5.55. No disagreement was registered on any of these elements, and four behaviors received 100% agreement to strong agreement.

Engaging in open communication with all staff received a strong agreement from 63.64% (seven) and 36.36% (four) agreement. Creating a safe environment for expressing differences of opinion also reached strong agreement from seven participants (63.64%) and agreement from four participants (36.36%).

The highest rated theme in this domain was related to being open, authentic, and straightforward with all staff, which received a score of 5.82, and 100% of respondents *agree* to *strongly agree*. Two themes received the next highest score of 5.64—engaging in open communication with staff and creating a safe environment where staff feel free to voice difference of opinion; 100% of respondents *agree* to *strongly agree*. Engaging staff in discussions about the direction and vision of the school received strong agreement from six participants (54.55%) and agreement from five (45.45%) with a weighted mean of 5.55. Sharing openly with staff when things are going wrong had a weighted average of 5.27, with one participant (9.09%) rating it as *somewhat agree*, and 54.55 (six) rating it as *agree*, and 36.36% (four) rating it as strongly agree. The lowest rated behavior was "I

take issues head on, even the undiscussables." This behavior received a weighted average of 5.0, and three participants (27.27%) *somewhat agree*; 45.45% (five) *agree*; and 27.27% (three) *strongly agree*. Figure 14 displays all six behaviors according to their weighted averages.

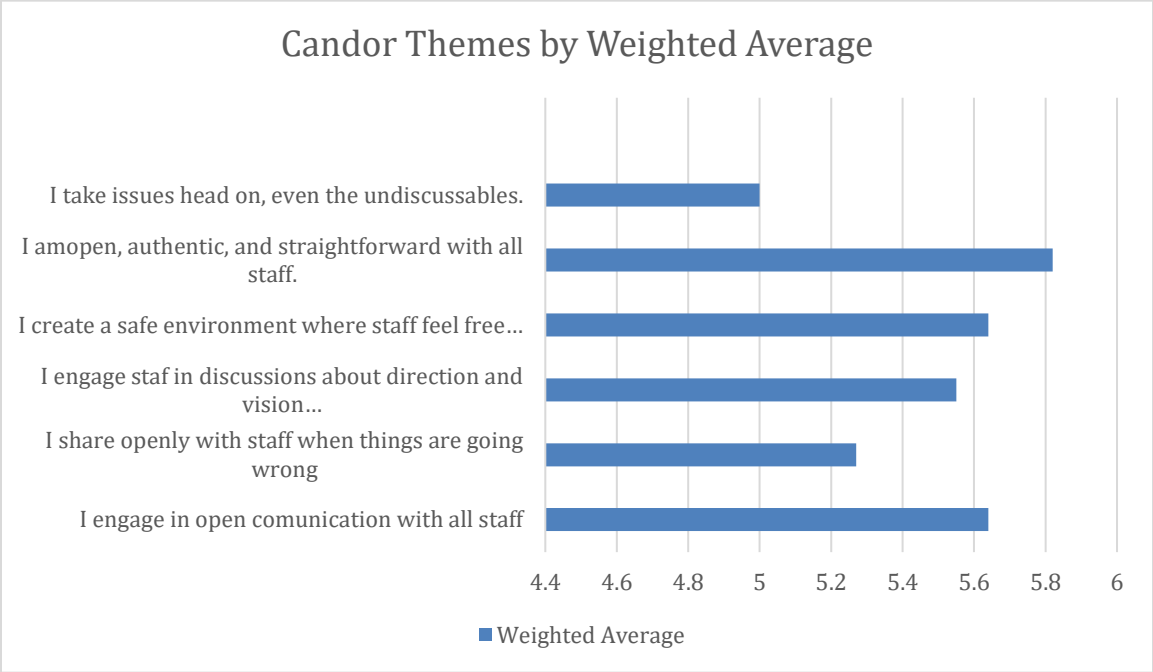

Figure 14. Themes related to candor.

Quantitative Results for Q4 Concern: How Much Does the Organization Show Empathy or Care for Its Employees?

Survey results for this variable covered such elements as meeting personally with staff members to build understanding, demonstrated work and life balance, listening skills, treating staff with respect, patience, and showing concern for the staff (see Table 13).

Table 13

Survey Results for Concern

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Agree somewhat	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Weighted average
I take time to meet personally with each staff member to understand their concerns.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09% (1)	63.64% (7)	27.27% (3)	11	5.18
I demonstrate appropriate work and life balance.	0.00%	9.09% (1)	18.18% (2)	18.18% (2)	45.45% (5)	9.09% (1)	11	4.27
I am a good listener.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	45.45% (5)	54.55% (6)	11	5.55
I always treat staff positively and with respect.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.27% (3)	72.73% (8)	11	5.73
I am patient with the questions and issues of interest to staff.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	45.45% (5)	54.55% (6)	11	5.55
I demonstrate respect and concern for each staff member.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.09% (1)	9.09% (1)	81.82% (9)	11	5.73

Two elements were ranked highest at a 5.73 weighted average: treating staff positively and with respect drew 100% *agree* to *strongly agree* and demonstrating respect and concern for each staff member drew 90.91% *agree* to *strongly agree*, with 9.09% at *somewhat agree*. Two other elements were ranked above 5.5: being a good listener and patience with the questions and issues of interest to staff. Being a good listener had 54.55% (six participants) strongly agree and 45.45% (five) agree. Patience with questions and issues of interest to staff also had 54.55% (six participants) *strongly agree* and 45.45% (five) *agree*. Demonstrating appropriate work life balance was the lowest ranked element in this section, with a weighted average of 4.27 and 9.09% (one) *disagreeing*, 18.18% (two) *disagreeing somewhat*, 18.18% (two) *agreeing somewhat*, 45.45% (five) *agreeing*, and 9.09% (one) *strongly agreeing* that this is a strategy they use to build trust through showing concern.

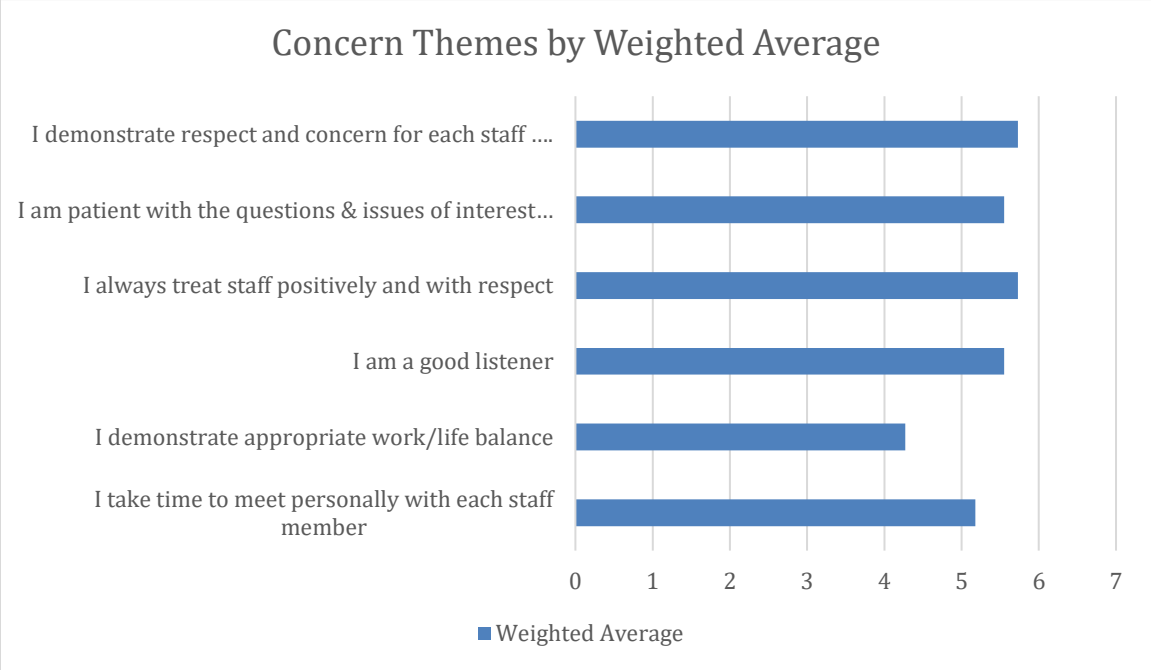

Figure 15. Themes related to concern.

Q5 Connection: How do Your Values or Goals Align With the Organization, the People and Their Behavior Behind It?

This section focused on the variable of connection, aligning personal and organizational values and goals. with staff and behavior. Being receptive to staff ideas, honest and frank in communications, displaying behavior aligned with values, giving voice to vision, recognizing staff and school successes, listening carefully to understand issues are key elements (Table 14).

Highest among the elements in this section were displaying behavior aligned with values and beliefs of the school vision and giving voice to the site vision and values, each with a weighted average of 5.73. Displaying behavior aligned with school values and beliefs received strong agreement from 72.73% (eight) participants and agreement from 27.27% (three). Giving voice to the site vision and values received the same level of support with 72.73% (eight) strongly agreeing and 27.27% (three) agreeing. No other elements surpassed the 5.5 level. Listening carefully to understand and clarify issues had a weighted average of 5.45, with 54.55% (six) agreeing and 45.45% (five) strongly agreeing. Accepting ideas and opinions of all staff had a weighted average of 5.36 with 18.8% (two) agreeing somewhat with this behavior, 27.21 % (three) agreeing, and 54.55% (six) strongly agreeing. Being truthful and frank in communications with staff had a weighted average of 5.27, with 18.18% (two) agreeing somewhat, 27.21 (three) agreeing, and 54.55 (six) strongly agreeing on the importance of this behavior in building trust through connection.

Table 14

Survey Results for Connection

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Agree somewhat	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Weighted average
I am accepting and receptive to the ideas and opinions of all staff.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.18% (2)	27.27% (3)	54.55% (6)	11	5.36
I am truthful and frank in all interpersonal communications with staff.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.18% (2)	36.36% (4)	72.73% (8)	11	5.73
I display behavior that is aligned with the values and beliefs of our school site vision.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.27% (3)	72.73% (8)	11	5.73
I give voice to the site vision and shared values.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.27% (3)	72.73% (8)	11	5.73
I actively engage staff in recognition and celebrations of site successes.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.27% (3)	63.64% (7)	9.09% (1)	11	4.82
I listen carefully to understand and clarify issues.	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	54.55% (6)	45.45% (5)	11	5.45

Only one behavior did not rise to the level of a 5.0 weighted average, actively engaging staff in recognition and celebrations of site success, although none of the respondents disagreed with this element. With a weighted average of 4.82, 27.27% (three) *agreed somewhat*, 63.64% (seven) *agreed*, and 9.09% (one) *strongly agreed*. Figure 16 displays the connection behaviors graphically according to their weighted averages.

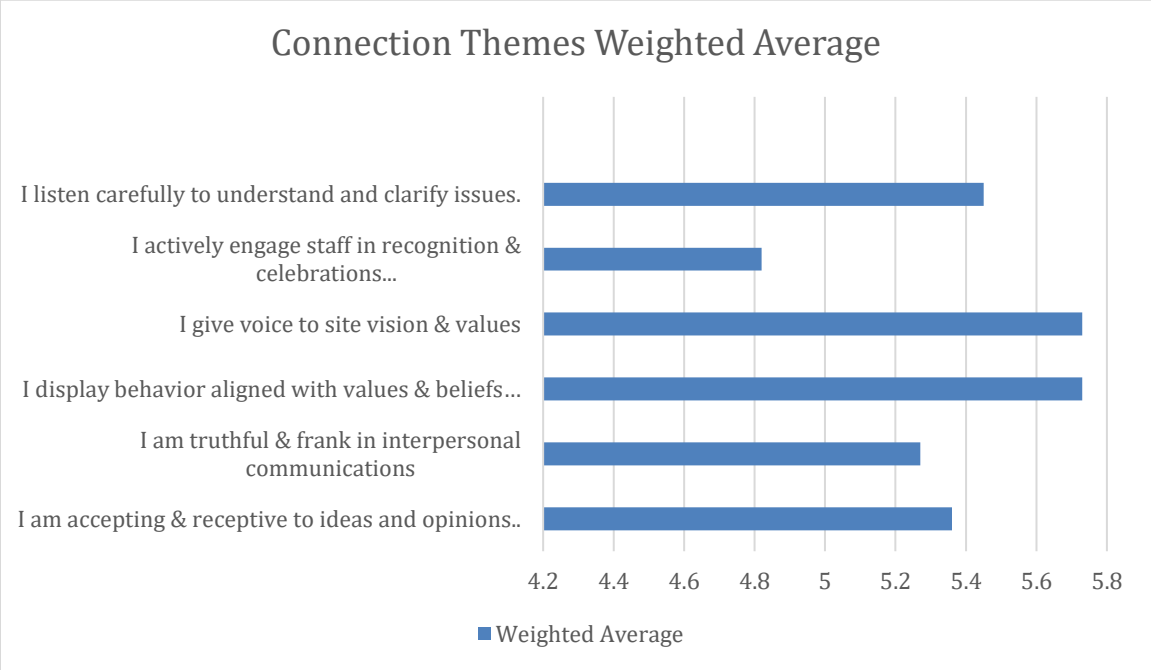

Figure 16. Themes related to connection.

Key Findings

Key Qualitative Findings

Twelve high school principals were interviewed with an interview protocol consisting of 10 questions, two questions per trust domain, with an additional probe for each domain. The 12 interviews produced 274 responses to the research questions. The largest share of responses came from the domain of connection, which had 92 responses or 34%. Next was the domain of concern, with 61 responses or 22%, followed closely by

competence with 54 responses or 20%. Candor had 41 responses or 15%, and consistency had the lowest response with 26 or 9%. Table 15 identifies the top 12 rated themes in all domains, using 58% of respondents and a frequency of at least nine as the criteria for selection.

Table 15

Key Qualitative Findings

Domain/ Themes	# of respondents	% of *N*	Frequency
Connection			
Being accessible	9	75.0	15
Being responsive to others	8	66.6	16
Prioritizing interpersonal relationships	7	58.3	15
Concern			
Developing relationships	8	66.6	15
Taking time to listen	7	58.3	12
Candor			
Being genuine	7	58.3	16
Practice transparency	7	58.3	13
Competence			
Building capacity	11	91.6	20
Shared values	8	66.6	13
Model for others	7	58.3	9
Consistency			
Being conscientious	8	66.6	10
Building consensus	7	58.3	9

Note. *N* = 12 high school principals.

The sixth research question asked, "How do elementary principals perceive the degree of importance for the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency for building trust?" Data for Research Question 6 were attained through an electronic survey software, SurveyMonkey, from 11 of the 12 high school principals. The top rated elements of each variable from the survey are shown in Table 16, using the criteria of 5.55 minimum weighted average and 90% *agree* to *strongly agree.*

Table 16

Survey Results of Top-Rated Elements in Each Variable

Variable	Element	Weighted average	% agree to strongly agree
Consistency	Make only commitments you can keep	5.55	90.91%
Competency	Collaborate decision making	5.83	100.00%
	Promote capability of staff	5.64	100.00%
	Create opportunities for staff to learn and grow	5.55	100.00%
Candor	Open, authentic, straightforward communication	5.83	100.00%
	Create safe environment to voice differences	5.64	100.00%
	Engage in discussion of vision and direction	5.55	100.00%
	Open communication	5.64	100.00%
Concern	Treat staff with positivity and respect	5.73	100.00%
	Demonstrate respect and concern for staff	5.73	90.91%
	Good listener	5.55	100.00%
	Patient with questions and issues	5.55	100.00%
Connection	Behavior aligned with values, beliefs of school	5.73	100.00%
	Give voice to site vision/values	5.73	100.00%

The top-rated elements were collaborative decision making in competency and open, authentic, straightforward communication in candor, both with a weighted mean of 5.83 and 100% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with its importance. Candor and concern had the greatest number of highly rated elements.

Candor had four highly rated elements: open, authentic, straightforward communication (mean of 5.83), create safe environment to voice differences (mean of

5.64), open communication (mean of 5.64), and engage in discussion of vision and direction (mean of 5.55). *Agree* to *strongly agree* were the ratings of 100% of respondents in judging the importance of these elements in building trust.

Concern also had four of the most highly rated elements: treat staff with positivity and respect (mean of 5.73), demonstrate respect and concern for staff (mean of 5.73), good listener (mean of 5.55), and patient with questions and issues (mean of 5.55). All respondents agreed to strongly agreed on their importance.

In the domain of competency, three elements were among the highest rated: collaborative decision making had a weighted mean of 5.83, promoting the capability of staff had a weighted mean of 5.64, and creating opportunities for staff to learn and grow had a weighted mean of 5.55. All of these elements had 100% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing on their importance in building trust.

Connection had two of the most highly rated elements, each with a weighted mean of 5.73: behavior aligned with values and beliefs of the school and giving voice to site vision and values. Consistency had only one of the most highly rated elements: make only commitments you can keep, with a mean of 5.55. All participants agreed or strongly agreed on the importance of these elements in connection and consistency.

Summary

This mixed methods study identified and described the strategies that high school principals use to establish trust with their staff using Weisman's (2010) five domains of trust: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency. The research also showed the importance of each domain in the principal's view.

Qualitative Summary

Twelve high school principals were interviewed with an interview protocol consisting of 10 questions. The protocol was comprised of two questions per trust domain, with an additional probe for each domain and general probes that could be used as needed. The 12 interviews produced 274 responses to the research questions. The research demonstrated the importance that high school principals assigned to the five domains of trust.

Table 17

Key Qualitative Findings

Domain/ Theme	# of Respondents	% of *N*	Frequency
Connection	92	34.0%	92
Being accessible	9	75.0%	15
Being responsive to others	8	66.6%	16
Prioritizing interpersonal relationships	7	58.3%	15
Concern	61	22.0%	61
Developing relationships	8	66.6%	15
Taking time to listen	7	58.3%	12
Candor	41	15.0%	41
Being genuine	7	58.3%	16
Practice transparency	7	58.3%	13
Competence	54	20.0%	54
Building capacity	11	91.6%	20
Shared values	8	66.6%	13
Model for others	7	58.3%	9
Consistency	26	9.0%	26
Being conscientious	8	66.6%	10
Building consensus	7	58.3%	9

Note. *N* = 12 high school principals

The largest share of responses came from the domain of connection, which had 92 responses or 34% of the total themes. Next was the domain of concern, with 61 responses or 22% of the responses, followed closely by competence with 54 responses or

20%. Candor had 41 responses or 15% and consistency had the lowest response with 26 or 9%.

The domain of connection had nine themes. The theme of being accessible was the top-rated theme with 75% of the interview participants and a frequency of 15. The domain of concern had six themes. The top-rated theme for concern was developing relationships with support from eight participants, which was 66% of the *N*, and a frequency count of 15. The domain of candor had three themes. The top-rated theme for candor was being genuine, which garnered the support of eight participants, which was 58.3% of the *N* and had a frequency count of 16. For the domain of competence, which had five themes, 11 of the 12 participants showed support of this theme, which was 91.6% of the mean and had a frequency count of 20. The top-rated theme for consistency, which had three themes, was being conscientious with support from eight of the respondents, which represented 66.6% of the participants and had a frequency of 10.

Six top themes were established using the criteria of a minimum of eight respondents, 66.6% of *N*, and 10 frequencies. The top theme across the board was building capacity (competence). It had the highest support of 11 participants, 91.6% of *N* and a frequency of 20. Second to building capacity was being accessible (connection) with nine respondents, 75% of *N*, and a frequency of 15. Being responsive to others (connection) was supported by eight participants, with 66.6% of *N*, and 16 frequencies. Developing relationships (concern) was supported by eight participants, 66.6% of *N*, and had a frequency of 15. Shared values was supported by eight participants, 66.6% of *N*, and a frequency of 13. Being conscientious was supported by eight participants, 66.6% of *N*, and 10 frequencies.

Key Quantitative Findings

The sixth research question asked, "How do elementary principals perceive the degree of importance for the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency for building trust?" Data for Research Question 6 were attained through an electronic survey software, SurveyMonkey, from 11 of the 12 high school principals.

The survey results for Research Question 6 were categorized into the five domains of trust: consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection. Candor was the domain that had the highest rating from the greatest number of participants with a score of 7.2. The highest rating for concern and competence was 6.6; the highest rating for connection was 6.2.

The top-rated elements were collaborative decision making in competency and open, authentic, straightforward communication in candor, both with a weighted mean of 5.83 and 100% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with its importance. Candor and concern had the greatest number of highly rated elements.

Candor had four highly rated elements: open, authentic, straightforward communication (mean of 5.83), create safe environment to voice differences (mean of 5.64), open communication (mean of 5.64), and engage in discussion of vision and direction (mean of 5.55). *Agree* to *strongly agree* were the ratings of 100% of respondents in judging the importance of these elements in building trust.

Concern also had four of the most highly rated elements: treat staff with positivity and respect (mean of 5.73), demonstrate respect and concern for staff (mean of 5.73), good listener (mean of 5.55), and patient with questions and issues both (mean of 5.55). All respondents agreed to strongly agreed on their importance.

Table 18 identifies the top 12 rated themes in all domains, using 58% of respondents and a frequency of at least nine as the criteria for selection using the criteria of 5.55 minimum weighted average and 90% *agree* to *strongly agree*.

Table 18

Survey Results of Top-Rated Elements in Each Variable

Variable	Element	Weighted average	% Agree to strongly agree
Consistency	Make only commitments you can keep	5.55	90.91%
Competency	Collaborative decision making	5.83	100.00%
	Promote capability of staff	5.64	100.00%
	Create opportunities for staff to learn and grow	5.55	100.00%
Candor	Open, authentic, straightforward communication	5.83	100.00%
	Create safe environment to voice differences	5.64	100.00%
	Engage in discussion of vision and direction	5.55	100.00%
	Open communication	5.64	100.00%
Concern	Treat staff with positivity and respect	5.73	100.00%
	Demonstrate respect and concern for staff	5.73	90.91%
	Good listener	5.55	100.00%
	Patient with questions and issues	5.55	100.00%
Connection	Behavior aligned with values, beliefs of school	5.73	100.00%
	Give voice to site vision/values	5.73	100.00%

In the domain of competency, three elements were among the highest rated: collaborative decision making had a weighted mean of 5.83, promoting the capability of

staff had a weighted mean of 5.64, and creating opportunities for staff to learn and grow had a weighted mean of 5.55. All these elements had 100% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing on their importance in building trust.

Connection had two of the most highly rated elements, each with a weighted mean of 5.73: behavior aligned with values and beliefs of the school and giving voice to site vision and values. Consistency had only one of the most highly rated elements: make only commitments you can keep, with a mean of 5.55. All participants agreed or strongly agreed on the importance of these elements in connection and consistency.

This chapter reported the findings and analyses of the research aimed at identifying and describing how high school principals establish trust with their staff using Weisman's (2010) five domains of trust. The qualitative and quantitative data supported Weisman's theory that the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency facilitated the principals' efforts to build trust with their staff. Further, the research revealed the principals' perceived degree of importance of each domain in helping to develop trust with staff. Chapter IV reported the comprehensive findings using both qualitative and quantitative data results. Chapter V presents a summary of major findings, conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

Chapter V begins with an overview of the research study, starting with the purpose statement, research questions, methodology, population, and sample. Chapter V then describes the major findings, unexpected findings, conclusions from the findings, implications for action, and recommendations for further research. Chapter V closes with concluding remarks and reflections.

Purpose Statement

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

Research Questions

1. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of connection?
2. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of concern?
3. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of candor?
4. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of competence?
5. How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of consistency?
6. How do high school principals perceive the degree of importance for the five domains of consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection for building trust?

Methodology

The methodology used for this study was mixed methods. The qualitative portion of the study was conducted via Zoom (virtual) interviews with 12 high school principals in Orange and San Diego counties. The interviews were conducted using a series of questions from an interview protocol (Appendix B) developed by the peer researchers. Additionally, the same 12 high school principals were asked to provide feedback through an online survey via SurveyMonkey (Appendix X) to obtain a deeper understanding of how high school principals perceived the degree of importance for Weisman's (2010) five domains of trust. Fifteen researchers conducted this study across an interdisciplinary set of organizations including K-12 schools. A group of six peer researchers identified and described how principals across each segment in education (elementary, middle school, and high school) establish trust with their staff. Each of the six researchers utilized the same interview and survey questions that were shared with the principals.

Demographic Data

Twelve high school principals were selected to participate in this study. All of the principals were selected for this study after having met the criteria outlined by the researcher's thematic team. Five high school principals were from Orange County schools, two were from Capistrano Unified School District, two were from Irvine Unified School District, and one was from Newport-Mesa Unified School District. Seven high school principals were from San Diego County schools, two principals were from Sweetwater Union High School District, two were from Grossmont Union High School District, one was from Poway Unified School District, one was from Vista Unified School District, and one was from Escondido

Union High School District. Four of the participants were female and eight were male.

To answer Research Question 3, virtual interviews were conducted with 12 high school principals. For this study, the researcher asked participants open-ended, guided interview questions about the behaviors they use to establish trust with staff through the domain of candor. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, then coded and analyzed for major themes and patterns.

Major Findings

This study produced 21 major findings—15 that came from an analysis of the qualitative and six that came from quantitative data. The findings are presented in the next sections and organized by each of the six research questions. The first five research questions were designed to gather qualitative data on each of the five domains of trust: connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency. To be considered a major finding for this chapter, the theme met the following criteria:

- The theme was referenced by a minimum of three people.
- The theme had a frequency count of five or above.
- The theme was a part of the top three revealed in each domain.

Research Question 6 was designed to gather quantitative data on the principals' perceived degree of importance of each of the five domains for building trust. This study reveals six major findings after a comprehensive analysis of the quantitative results from the survey. The following are the major findings by research question.

Research Question 1: Connection

How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of connection?

Major Finding 1. Being accessible is the most referenced theme for the domain of connection. It was referred to by nine of the 12 principals interviewed with a frequency of 15. High school principals collectively shared that they utilized varying ways to make themselves accessible to their staff members. Examples of this were having an "open door policy," welcoming impromptu meetings, hosting both Zoom and in-person meetings, being available throughout the school day on the campus, and being accessible via personal cell phone 24/7. Principals shared that while being accessible is always a priority with their large staff size, it was even more important over the last 2 years due to the pandemic. They needed to make sure that they were available to their staff members with such a continually changing world. These leaders connected with their staff by making themselves accessible and to show that they were available to support their teachers whenever they were needed. The principals communicated to their staff the purpose of classroom visits, formal and informal. They were mindful to make sure that impromptu visits were to check in and not be evaluative.

Major Finding 2. Being responsive is the second most referenced theme in this domain. It was referred to by eight of the 12 principals interviewed with a frequency of 16. The high school principals who provided responses under this theme were leaders who wanted their staff to feel a connection to them and the school site. They welcomed feedback, listened to others, offered rationale when providing information, encouraged prioritizing of personal needs, offered opportunities for collaboration, practiced shared decision making, took on difficult parents, and proactively checked in with staff. Many shared the importance of being responsive to staff over the last 2 years due to the

uncertainties the pandemic created. These responsive leaders connected with their staff to build trust.

Major Finding 3. Being visible is the third most referenced theme in this domain. It was referred to by five of the 12 principals interviewed with a frequency of seven. High school principals shared that being visible on campus during the day was an important aspect of their job. For many, this was beyond school hours. This was being the first to arrive and one of the last to leave. This was walking on campus rather than driving their golf carts so staff and students can talk to them. For many, visibility is being outside on the school grounds as well as in classrooms. For these leaders, visibility meant connectedness. When these principals were visible on campus they were able to connect with their staff often informally, which helped lessen the need for formal meetings.

Research Question 2: Concern

How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of concern?

Major Finding 4. Developing relationships is the most referenced theme in the domain of concern. It was referred to by eight of the 12 principals with a frequency count of 15. The leaders prioritized developing relationships with their staff members on their campuses. Some of the examples shared were getting to know staff members on a personal level, valuing their input, making time to talk with people, being approachable and accessible, doing intentional outreach with staff members, being open to new ideas, showing that they trust their staff members, and being supportive. Many of the principals interviewed showed concern in both public and private ways. Sometimes it was done in large group settings and other times it was done on a one-on-one basis. When principals

show concern for their staff by developing and cultivating relationships, they are building trust.

Major Finding 5. Taking time to listen is the second most referenced theme in the domain of concern. It was referred to by seven of the 12 principals with a frequency count of 12. When the principals shared examples of showing concern, many principals said they try to get to know their staff on a personal level, not just professionally. They also take time to listen by allowing every voice to share, seeking feedback from leadership teams, having incidental conversations, finding strengths in others, apologizing when they are wrong, and offering one-on-one check ins when requested. The leaders realized that listening was more powerful than talking and created multiple opportunities to listen to the people they worked with. These opportunities helped the principals show concern for their staff.

Major Finding 6. Seeking feedback and input is the third most referenced theme in the domain of concern. It was referred to by five of the 12 principals with a frequency count of 14. Principals were very open when sharing that they needed to listen to others to be a leader of a high school campus. They had to rely on their staff for knowledge and feedback. All utilized various leadership teams on their campuses to focus on particular areas of need. Many use anonymous surveys in an attempt to gather feedback. They each use multiple modes of communication, not relying solely on email. They prioritize face-to-face communication. These principals show concern by inviting input and feedback from their staff. By openly seeking feedback and input, they are building trust with their teams.

Research Question 3: Candor

How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of candor?

Major Finding 7. Practicing transparency is the second referenced theme in the domain of candor. It was referred to by seven of the 12 principals with a frequency count of 13. The high school principals had many instances where transparency was practiced with their school staff. They used this as a way to share information, show support among staff, and demonstrate trust with their teams. COVID-19 was referenced by many of the leaders when discussing why transparency was important. The pandemic created uncertainty and fear for many of their staff members over the last 2 years. Practicing transparency with school staff was a priority for the principals during this time. They made sure to have varying outlets for information sharing and used all the resources that were available to them when messaging to their staff.

In other areas, principals also practiced transparency by being honest, having open conversations, writing newsletters, utilizing a shared vision, and finding answers when needed. These high school principals were forthright with staff and tackled situations head on with honesty. Transparency was an important element of candor in building trust with their staff.

Major Finding 8. Open communication is the third referenced theme in the domain of candor. It was referred to by six of the 12 principals with a frequency count of 13. These principals were determined to practice open communication with their staff, even with ever changing ways of communicating because of the pandemic. They each welcomed honest dialogue and prioritized information gathering in multiple ways. They utilized an open-door policy, created and sent out inventories and surveys, wrote weekly

newsletters, shared communication with staff before sharing with the community, hosted optional weekly meetings, were open if they did not know the answer, and adhered to deadlines. These principals viewed open communication as an important element of candor, which built trust with their staff.

Research Question 4: Competence

How do principals establish trust with staff through the domain of competence?

Major Finding 9. Building capacity in others is the most referenced theme in the domain of competence. It was referred to by 11 of the 12 principals with a frequency count of 20. This was the most referenced theme with 92% of principal responses referencing this. They have all realized that an important part of leadership is to build the skills in the people they work with. The principals said they both sought out staff members for leadership opportunities as well as welcomed those staff members that sought out opportunities on their own. Utilizing leadership teams was the most frequently mentioned example of this theme. Others created opportunities outside of leadership teams for staff to grow professionally, support professional development interests of their teachers, and one led their own site administrative academy to focus on developing their own future administrators. Building the capacity of others was one way that the principals who participated in this study use competence to build trust with their staff.

Major Finding 10. Shared values is the second referenced theme in the domain of competence. It was referred to by 11 of the 12 principals with a frequency count of 20. For these high school principals, building and maintaining shared values was important. When messaging, in meetings, or when bringing on a new initiative, these principals used

their site's shared values to dialogue together. Always at the center of decision making are the students and what is best for them. Leadership teams, Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) teams, and Professional Learning Community (PLC) teams all contributed to the site's shared values and decision making. When these principals utilized shared values as a way of showing competence as a leader, they expressed that it helped them to build trust with staff.

Major Finding 11. Modeling for others is the third most referenced theme in the domain of competence. It was referred to by seven of the 12 principals with a frequency count of nine. With high school sites being so large and having so many people on staff, the principals frequently used modeling to demonstrate what they want to see in those who they work with. It came up in a variety of the answers for the 10 interview questions. These principals built trust with their staff by being purposeful with their actions, not just their words. They realized as the site leader, everything starts with them. They felt they must model leadership. It can look like getting to the site early, picking up trash, smiling, communicating in a timely manner, being kind, being responsive, and giving trust. When these principals modeled trust, they believed it showed competence, which helped them to build trust.

Research Question 5: Consistency

How principals establish trust with staff through the domain of consistency?

Major Finding 12. Being conscientious is the most referenced theme in the domain of consistency. It was referred to by eight of the 12 principals with a frequency count of 10. The high school principals that were conscientious showed this in various ways. Some examples are utilizing multiple ways to share information with staff,

utilizing transparency, purposefully communicating with staff, ensuring accessibility to leadership, practicing transparency, following through on their word, ensuring staff have a voice, and responding to staff in a comprehensive and timely manner. When staff are consistently practicing being conscientious leaders, they build trust with their staff.

Major Finding 13. Building consensus is the second most referenced theme in the domain of consistency. It was referred to by seven of the 12 principals with a frequency count of nine. High school principals demonstrated this theme to ensure that they have buy-in from staff to get consistent application of new policies and procedures. They utilized shared decision making; they invited creative thinking and problem solving. To get consensus, they sought feedback from staff, ensured staff members have a voice, and created opportunities for communication and collaboration. When these leaders built consensus with their staff, they were practicing consistency to build trust with their staff.

Major Finding 14. Consistently being present is the third referenced theme in the domain of consistency. It was referred to by four of the 12 principals with a frequency count of seven. When leading a large high school campus, these principals felt they must be present all the time. For these leaders being present meant being visible, being available, putting out fires, supporting their teachers when difficult situations arise, being supportive, and being dependable. They practiced using consensus building strategies with their staff regarding important decisions in a consistent fashion. These principals felt that consistently being present on campus and available to staff helped to build trust. They prioritized being physically on campus and visible for their staff members to help bring a sense of calmness and feelings of safety.

Research Question 6

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

These findings were derived from quantitative data that were collected from 12 participants. The electronic survey was delivered via email to all 12 participants. The email presented the purpose of the study and included a SurveyMonkey link. The survey results for Research Question 6 were divided in to five domains of trust: consistency, competence, candor, concern, and connection. A total of 12 surveys were emailed to high school principals within Orange and San Diego counties. Eleven of the 12 participants in this study completed the survey.

Participants were asked to measure and rate each domain behavior from 1 to 6 with 6 being the *strongly agree* and 1 being *strongly disagree*. The number of participants, percentages of responses, and means were calculated to establish the overall results of the survey by each of the five domains of trust and related behaviors. The results were compiled and analyzed.

Major Finding 15. The top-rated element in competency is collaborative decision making and open, authentic, straightforward communication in candor, both with a weighted mean of 5.83 and 100% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with their importance. This shows that the principals placed very high importance in collaborative communication. I believe that the COVID-19 pandemic influenced this. During this time, there was a tremendous effort to have frequent communication with staff as well as to gain feedback from staff to ensure collaboration. This helped to build and maintain trust with staff.

Major Finding 16. I make commitments to staff that I can keep is the highest ranking behavior relating to an organization's ability to perform consistently and dependably over the long term (consistency). It ranked as the most important with a mean of 5.55. All respondents (100%) indicated *agree* or *strongly agree*. This is not a surprising finding because it shows the importance that principals placed on following through on the commitments they made. Consistently following through on commitments helps to establish and build trust with staff.

Major Finding 17. I promote collaborative decision making with staff is the behavior relating to an organization's ability to accomplish what it is designed to do (competency). It ranked as the most important with a mean of 5.83. All respondents (100%) indicated *agree* or *strongly agree*. All principal shared answers relating to collaborative decision making as a way of seeking feedback and making policies at their schools. They prioritized working with their teams and wanting to ensure all voices were heard. The collaborative decision-making process was a way for principals to build and maintain trust with their staff.

Major Finding 18. I am open, authentic, and straightforward with all staff is the behavior relating to an organization's ability to be transparent in communicating or making information available to employees (candor). It ranked as the most important with a mean of 5.82. All respondents (100%) indicated *agree* or *strongly agree*. Principles prioritized authentic and honest communication with their staff. The principal's candid communication was especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic. Transparent communication was something every principal discussed, and they included the importance of ensuring this behavior was consistently happening with

all of the changes that occurred over the last 2 years. The practice of using candor helped to build and maintain trust with staff.

Major Finding 19. I demonstrate respect and concern for each staff member is the behavior relating to an organization's ability to demonstrate empathy or care for its employees (concern). It ranked as the most important with a mean of 5.73. Ten of the 11 respondents (91%) indicated *agree* or *strongly agree*. This finding is no surprise during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. A tremendous amount of effort was placed on showing concern for staff over the last 2 years. While this was most likely a priority for principals before COVID-19, it became something every leader had to focus on. Ensuring concern helped to build and maintain trust with staff.

Major Finding 20. I display behavior that is aligned with the values and beliefs of our school site's vision is the behavior relating to aligning values or goals with the organization, the people, and their behavior (connection). It ranked as the most important with a mean of 5.73. All respondents (100%) indicated *agree* or *strongly agree*. While many of the previous domains became priority for the principals during the pandemic, these administrators never lost sight of their school's values and beliefs, even with what was going on. COVID-19 may have changed many priorities, but these leaders still needed to ensure that learning was going on while also being connected with their staff. This connection helped to build and maintain trust with staff.

Major Finding 21. The mixed methods study provided evidence from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective that high school principals considered all five domains as very important to building trust with their staff members. Qualitative results from Research Questions 1 through 5 produced 274 responses that supported all five trust

domains. Additionally, there was strong agreement for all five domains in the quantitative survey results for Research Question 6.

Unexpected Findings

There were two unexpected findings from the research. The first was the difference in the principals' responses to the domain of consistency in their interviews versus their surveys. After conducting the 12 interviews, it was surprising to learn that only 9%, 26 responses, referenced the domain of consistency. This was the lowest of the five domains. The quantitative portion of the study revealed differing data. At least 88% of all respondents agreed or strongly agreed to all six questions regarding consistency. This difference in the data points is interesting because the quantitative survey results show that consistency is an important aspect of building trust for principals, yet this was not reflected in the qualitative section of the study, which was derived from one-on-one interviews. They ranked the importance of behaviors that related to consistency much higher than the responses they shared in their interviews. The difference in responses between the qualitative and quantitative data is considered an anomaly.

With COVID-19, the priority has been showing care and concern with staff. The principal interviews provided an opportunity for the leaders to share their stories that related to the research questions asked. What was first and foremost in their minds was showing that they take care of their staff and work collaboratively with them. When they took the survey, the answers were such that there was no room for commentary, and they simply selected their feeling on the subject. This resulted in data that appeared contrary to what the interviews showed. I find this contradiction to be due to COVID-19 and that

the leaders really are consistent principals who show this in their practices each day. COVID-19 has changed priorities.

The second unexpected finding was from the domain of concern. The qualitative interviews produced 274 responses to the research questions. The second largest share of responses came from the domain of concern, which had 61 responses or 22%. The quantitative data resulted in a surprising finding from a survey question relating to concern, which resulted in the lowest response of the principal survey. The responses were for I demonstrate appropriate work and life balance. Three respondents disagreed or somewhat disagreed to this response. This was interesting because when the principals were sharing examples of how they practice showing concern with staff, they had many examples and were proud of this work. When it comes time to them taking care of themselves, the results were very different.

Conclusions

This study's findings resulted in six conclusions related to how high school principals use the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency for establishing trust with staff.

Conclusion 1: Trust is Not Hierarchical

Based on the findings of this study and the literature supporting it, principals who want to build trust with their staff must use all five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency, but they do not need to use them in the hierarchical design of The Values Institute pyramid (Weisman, 2016). This model purported that trust is built when connection is realized after first fully establishing the rational factors—competence and consistency and emotional factors—concern and candor

(Weisman, 2016). When reviewing this study's results, it is evident that connection can exist on its own and often before the other domains are fully developed. In the qualitative study, connection had the highest percentage of responses with strong levels of agreement. On the quantitative portion of the study, it was third in importance, behind candor and competency.

Relationships are continually growing and developing in a school culture (Smith-Ough, 2019). Pease (2019) supported this idea by determining that everyday interactions between a leader and those they work with help to develop trust. The trust strategies are used situationally depending on relationships, the school culture, and daily interactions, rather than hierarchically or sequentially. Each of Weisman's (2016) five domains—connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency—should be considered based on the needs of the individuals and the goals of the leader.

Conclusion 2: Competence

Based on the findings of this study and the literature supporting it, principals who want to build trust with their staff must demonstrate a high level of competence in their responsibilities. Tschannen-Moran (2014) believed that a principal's ability to perform tasks as expected established competence. Over the last few decades researchers have moved away from principals being the manager of their campus concerned about operational matters. Today's principals are instructional leaders who focus on priority areas like student outcomes, achievement data, employee accountability, and creating safe learning environments for all. They build trust with their words and actions (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). The principal interviews included examples of competence, such as building the capacity of others, establishing shared values, and modeling for their school

teams. Macmillan et al. (2004) found that because competence is not always observable, a principal must remember the importance of demonstrating it continually to build and maintain trust.

Conclusion 3: Consistency

Based on the findings of this study and the literature supporting it, principals who want to build trust with their staff must be consistent in word and deed. Bryk and Schneider (2003) found that a principal's comments and actions can build or destroy trust in schools. These everyday interactions must be unfailingly reliable. A leader must use consistent behaviors and practices with those that they serve to achieve a level of trust that will see them through conflict and difficult times. Pease (2019) concluded that principals must model consistent behavior that supports a school's vision and mission to build and sustain trust. The principals that participated in this study demonstrated consistency with intentionality in both their behavior and actions. This study was during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the principals were strategic with the tasks that needed to be done and communication that was needed and ever flowing. Consistency became a necessity with the uncertainty that everyone was experiencing, especially on school campuses. When the leader is reliable, staff members tend to trust that they will follow through when they give their word (White et al., 2016).

Conclusion 4: Concern

Based on the findings of this study and the literature supporting it, principals who want to build trust with their staff must show concern for staff members as well as the campus as a whole. Principals in this study showed concern for the whole staff via in person and virtual meetings as well as site-wide communication like newsletters and

emails. It was also done in one-on-one situations like incidental check ins on campus, impromptu classroom visits, telephone calls, text messages, emails and even home visits. Concern was another area that was especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic over the last 2 years. Principals were overly communicative with business information. Many created phone trees made up of the administrative team for frequent check ins with staff so they could show concern for their well-being. When a leader shows concern, they foster a collaborative and safe environment where they, along with their members, are able to show vulnerability, support, motivate, and care for each other (S. M. R. Covey, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Weisman, 2016). Escalante (2019) confirmed that principals who are committed to their staff members show interest in both their professional and personal lives.

Conclusion 5: Candor

Based on the findings of this study and the literature supporting it, principals who want to build trust with their staff use candor by communicating with honesty and truthfulness. Principals show integrity when staff members hear their leader being truthful, thus creating greater levels of trust (White et al., 2016). When staff feel that their leader has their best interests in mind, they give trust (Escalante, 2019). The principals in this study showed candor in various ways. One principal was candid when talking about their district's recent initiative and recognized that it was contrary to the teacher's contract. Another was proud of providing rationale when sharing the latest COVID-19 update. A third demonstrated this by building the capacity of others by conducting their own leadership academy to develop leaders on their campus. Smith-

Ough (2019) shared that sincerity, authenticity, and honesty are leadership characteristics of candor.

Conclusion 6: Connection

Based on the findings of this study and the literature supporting it, principals who want to build trust with their staff must build and support connection with their staff. Principals who prioritize connection cultivate this in various ways. They prioritize interpersonal opportunities for communication (Smith-Ough, 2019). Trust is created within an organization when personal connections are made (White et al., 2016). The participants in this study cultivated connection with their staff by being accessible, responsive, and visible. They ensured staff had access to them 24/7 as well as created multiple opportunities for sharing information with their staff. They honored the "24-hour rule" when responding to staff emails and communications. If they did not have an answer, they found it. They were visibly present on campus. They were first to arrive and last to leave. They wanted to be present; they wanted to connect. Escalante (2019) found that staff want to be heard, and they want to have the opportunity to provide input that is considered when decisions are being made. According to Pease (2019), "Connection is the measure of how well principals identify with the relationships they value most" (p. 14).

Conclusion 7: Conscientious Behavior

Based on the findings of this study and the literature supporting it, principals who want to build trust with their staff do so by demonstrating conscientious behavior. Many of the principals shared examples of how they are mindful to practice behaviors that shows that they are conscientious. They are careful to follow through on their words.

They respond to communication in a thorough and timely manner. They validate others. They practice open communication. When principals practice conscientious behavior, they build trust with their staff.

Implications for Actions

Achieving and sustaining trust is fundamental to desired progress and healthy climate for any organization, but particularly high schools, which are so dependent on staff for the academic performance and emotional health of thousands of students. Smith-Ough (2019) stated that "developing and maintaining trust within a school environment is key to impacting student learning and to the overall success of the school" (p.). This study provided insights on how principals use the five domains of connection, concern, candor, competence, and consistency to build the trust that is needed for a high-performing and emotionally healthy school culture. The following implications for actions grew from the findings of this study.

Implication for Action 1

Universities, county offices, and school districts who provide courses for the Personal Assistance Services Counsel (PASC) or the clear Administrative Services Credential should incorporate the findings of this research on the five domains of trust into their programs for aspiring principals. To become a principal in California, an individual is required to take coursework for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential. These courses are focused heavily on improving student achievement, professional development of teachers, instructional competence, teacher evaluation, school finance, and data analysis. Based on the input from principals in this study, it is

essential that school leaders have the skills to build trust with their staff. More emphasis needs to be placed on trust-building strategies in the credential coursework.

Implication for Action 2

Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), American Association of School Administrators (AASA), National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP), and other professional associations should provide a workshop series on the trust-building strategies identified in this study. School principals are embroiled in conflict now more than ever. COVID-19 health restrictions have placed the principal in the middle of warring factions of parents and teachers and often students relative to wearing masks, getting vaccinations, and events with large numbers of attendees. Other conflicts are generated by the fact that school finances have until, very recently, declined in resources while there has been an increase in staff and student needs. (Districts are finding themselves with a plethora of one-time money due to COVID-19, but this will not last and there are disputes about how the money should be spent.) Grievances and labor negotiations have posed additional conflicts with unions for school principals; this was going on prior to the pandemic and during the last 2 years, though priorities have shifted. Trust has become even more important in this volatile, chaotic time of high-stakes conflict. Professional associations like ACSA should assist their members with workshops that would help them work with their people in a trusting situation while focusing on building and preserving trust.

Implication for Action 3

Using the findings from this study, a self-assessment instrument should be developed for principals and aspiring principals to help them determine their level of proficiency in using strategies in the five domains. As leaders attempt to develop their trust-building knowledge and skill, it would be helpful to have a tool that could assist their own reflection. Instruments that would help them assess their skills in building trust would help to identify areas that need attention and areas of strength.

Implication for Action 4

Based on the findings from this study, school districts should provide opportunities for principals to work in small groups with a coach to help them examine their strengths and needs and then receive coaching to expand their trust strategies that were revealed in this study. Working with peers in small groups can help to analyze their problems and expand their repertoires of trust-building strategies.

Implication for Action 5

Based on the results of this study, school districts should encourage and support principals in fostering the skills of their leadership teams. They should assist in providing input on new ideas and help to influence acceptance by staff. Teachers trust their peers more than administrators. All of the principals in this study utilized leadership teams. Supporting principals to develop and foster the leadership skills of the team members will provide multiple benefits. It will build the individual skills of the teacher participants as well as support the administrator by having knowledgeable teachers on the school's leadership team. In turn, the teachers will be able to support their peers with

helping to build trust among the staff at large and provide good insights to the principal at the same time.

Recommendations for Further Research

Recommendation 1

This study was limited to two counties in Southern California. It is recommended that a study on a broader geographical area, other states or regions, be conducted using the same instruments.

Recommendation 2

This study was conducted using high school principals. Other thematic members studied elementary principals and superintendents. It is recommended that this study be replicated using city managers, police chiefs, business leaders, and health care administrators.

Recommendation 3

This study used high school principals. It is recommended that this study be replicated using high school teachers, classified staff, and union officials to compare their responses to the strategies that are helpful in building trust.

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

> The social bond that connects us as people is based on *trustability*.
>
> —Paul Taylor, 2018

This chapter closes with my concluding remarks and reflections on the research process. My research of a mixed methods study of how high school principals build trust with staff using Weisman's (2016) five domains of trust model provided a reminder to me of what true leaders need to do in order to build and maintain trust. A high school

principal has an incredibly important role to play for a large number of people. While they cannot be expected to know it all, they are expected to be the person who everyone can count and rely on. Their staff need to trust in them. They look to them for communication, stability, expertise, and comfort. An effective high school principal must demonstrate competence, consistency, candor, concern, and connection to be a transformational leader. As I think about this study, I realize that the findings can be generalized and carried over to other settings besides high school campuses. All leaders need to build trust. Demonstrating competence, consistency, candor, concern, connection is important for leaders of every organization. It is important to realize there is no hierarchical order of importance; one does not need to come before the other.

Escalante (2019) found that the foundation for relationships is the reciprocal human interaction that takes place between two people. While we live in a world that promotes email, text messaging, and a variety of online platforms, there is no replacement for in-person interactions. There is an absolute need for technology, but there will always remain a place for human connection. This was exemplified over the last 2 years during the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders needed to change the way they communicated and were forced to prioritize what was important and promote and practice interpersonal connections using technology. All of the principals in this study used in-person interactions to cultivate and build their relationships to build trust.

Personally, I realized the domains that were researched are ones I need to remember and practice in my leadership role. It is important to take time to build connections with my people, to learn what excites them, what they fear, what they are hoping for and what they are worrying about, and what is happening in their personal life

that supersedes what may be happening on the job. I need to examine the strategies I use to ensure candor in my communications with them. How do I show them I have the competency to lead them forward in the new strategic initiatives we must embark upon? Am I showing the concern for their well-being that they need from me? Am I consistent in word and deed so they know they can rely on me to be transparent and reliable in my communication with them? I have taken these reflections to heart in this research study.

Building trust depends on Weisman's (2016) five domains, but it does not end there. Continually prioritizing the interpersonal connections is imperative. All leaders must build and cultivate trust, regardless of their discipline. This is essential for the success of the organization, its people, and its leaders.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Synthesis Matrix

Synthesis Matrix for Key Variables

Researchers	21st Century	Trust leadership	Competence	Consistency	Concern	Candor and honesty	Connection	Principal as leader	Effective teams	Culture	Relationships	Leadership strategies	School reform	Trust	Transformational Leadership
Altman (2010)	X				X										
Anderson (2015)						X								X	
Anderson & Ackerman (2001)				X		X				X	X	X			X
Bass (1990)		X	X					X			X			X	X
Battle (2007)	X					X									
Bennis (2013)													X	X	
Bird, Wang, Watson, & Murray (2012)		X	X	X	X	X	X				X			X	
Blanchard, Olmstead, & Lawrence (2013)											X		X	X	
Brewster & Railsback (2003)					X	X	X				X	X		X	
Brown, Brene (2017)		X					X				X		X	X	
Bryk & Schnieder (2002)			X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X
Covey (2006)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							X	X
Crowley (2011)	X	X	X		X						X	X		X	X
Farnsworth (2015)		X									X			X	
Flores & Soloman (1998)	X		X	X				X	X			X		X	X
Fullan (2010)	X		X					X	X	X		X	X		X
Fullan (2014)		X	X	X	X		X							X	
George (2015)		X					X		X	X	X			X	
Gruenert & Whitaker (2015)		X	X												
Handford & Leithwood (2013)											X				
Horsager (2012)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X			X
Kouzes & Posner (2010)								X				X			X
Krasnoff (2015)										X	X	X	X	X	
Kratzer (1997)	X	X						X				X			X
Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, &Wahlsrtom (2004)		X				X			X						
Lencioni (2002)								X		X		X			
Louis & Wahlstrom (2011)	X								X				X		
Mandelbaum & Friedman (2011)	X		X								X	X			X
Marshall (2018)											X	X		X	
Mayer, Davis, Schoorman (1995)		X									X			X	
Mino (2014)		X	X			X									
Ospina, Kersh, & Wart (2012)		X				X								X	

Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, & Switzler (2012)		X			X									X	
Peck (2015)	X	X												X	
Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, Camerer (1998)	X		X	X	X	X	X								X
Schwahn & Spady (2002)	X								X						
Schwartz (2002)		X		X											
Thornton & Cherrington (2014)										X	X			X	
Tonissen (2015)		X						X						X	
Tschannen-Moran (2014)		X	X	X	X	X		X			X		X	X	X
Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2000)		X	X	X	X	X					X			X	
Weisman & Jusino (2016)	X	X									X	X		X	
White, Harvey, Fox (2016)		X	X	X	X	X				X	X			X	
Zak (2017)															

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent, Survey Prompts, and Survey Instrument

Survey of Principal Behaviors that Develop Trust with Staff- DC

Survey of Principal Behaviors that Develop Trust with Staff

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.

* 1. INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMATION ABOUT: Developing Principal Trust with Staff

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Danielle Clark

THE FOLLOWING WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE ELECTRONIC SURVEY:
You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Iyuanna Pease, 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 in or I may 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 Danielle Clark at dclark2@mail.brandman.edu or by phone at (619)347-3801; or Dr. Doug DeVore, Advisor, at ddevore@brandman.edu.

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 statements for you to build and maintain trust with your school site staff.

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Disagree Somewhat

4 = Agree Somewhat

5 = Agree

6 = Strongly Agree

* 4. **Candor -** How transparent is the organization communicating or making information available to employees.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I engage in open communication with all staff.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I share openly with staff when things are going wrong.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I engage staff in discussions about the direction and vision for our school.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I create a safe environment where staff feel free to voice differences of opinion.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am open, authentic and straightforward with all staff.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I take issues head on, even the "undiscussables."	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 5. **Concern -** How much does the organization show empathy or care for its employees.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I take time to meet personally with each staff member to understand their concerns.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I demonstrate appropriate work and life balance	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am a good listener.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I always treat staff positively and with respect.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am patient with the questions and issues of interest to staff.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I demonstrate respect and concern for each staff member.	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 6. **Connection -** How do your values or goals align with the organization, the people and their behavior behind it.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am accepting and receptive to the ideas and opinions of all staff.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am truthful, and frank in all interpersonal communications with staff.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I display behavior that is aligned with the values and beliefs of our school site vision.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I give voice to the site vision and shared values.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I actively engage staff in recognition and celebrations of site successes.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I listen carefully to understand and clarify issues.	○	○	○	○	○	○

APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol

"My name is Danielle Clark, and I'm a Special Education Administrator in Orange County. 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 try to guarantee, as much as possible, that my interviews with all participating principals will be conducted 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 of 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 particular 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 staff?

2. In what ways have you developed shared values with staff?

Prompt: How do you see the establishment of shared values as contributing to trust with staff?

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 staff and their well being.

4. What are some of the ways you create a collaborative work environment for your staff?
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 staff in the school?

5. Can you provide an example of a challenging situation when your leadership was dependable and steadfast and developed trust with and between staff ?

Prompt: How do you ensure that your message to 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.

Probe: Can you describe a time when you perceive your communication with staff 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 staff. 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.

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 to invite participation in decision-making with your staff ?

Probe: Can you describe a time when you perceive your staff's participation in decision-making 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 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:

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?"

APPENDIX D

NIH Completion

Certificate of Completion

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

Date of completion: 05/22/2017.

Certification Number: 2396079.

APPENDIX E

BUIRB Approval

From: Institutional Review Board <my@brandman.edu>
Date: December 18, 2020 at 6:54:57 AM PST
To: dclark2@mail.brandman.edu
Cc: ddevore@brandman.edu, buirb@brandman.edu, vsmithsa@brandman.edu
Subject: BUIRB Application Approved As Submitted: Danielle Clark
Reply-To: webmaster@brandman.edu

Dear Danielle Clark,

Congratulations, your IRB application to conduct research has been approved by the Brandman University Institutional Review Board. This approval grants permission for you to proceed with data collection for your research. Please keep this email for your records, as it will need to be included in your research appendix.

If any issues should arise that are pertinent to your IRB approval, please contact the IRB immediately at BUIRB@brandman.edu. If you need to modify your BUIRB application for any reason, please fill out the "Application Modification Form" before proceeding with your research. The Modification form can be found at the following link: https://irb.brandman.edu/Applications/Modification.pdf.

Best wishes for a successful completion of your study.

Thank you,
Doug DeVore, Ed.D.
Professor