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Educators' Perceptions of the Implementation of the Team Model of Transformational Leadership

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Lucas Andrew Gomez

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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2022

Abstract

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Leadership

by

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MSEd, Walden University, 2014

BA, University of Texas-Pan American, 2007

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

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Abstract

The problem of this project study was that middle school teachers in a public school district in southwestern United States did not understand the principals' expectations for implementing the team model and its effect on their relationship with administrators the team model regarding the relationship between administrators and teachers. The purpose of this basic qualitative project study was to investigate the perceptions of school principals and middle school teachers regarding the team model and the principals' expectations for classroom instruction. The conceptual framework for this project was the team model of transformational leadership. The research site was a public school district located in the southwestern United States. Purposeful sampling was used to select 10 teachers and 3 administrators. Data collected using semistructured, Zoom interviews were thematically analyzed, resulting in the following emergent themes: (a) contrasting teacher and administrator perceptions; (b) importance of roles: trust, communication, and understanding for the proper implementation of the team model; (c) lack of communication, empathy, and unity as hindrances to the implementation of the team model; and (d) administrative and staff support and improved disciplinary procedures as benefits of the team model. Teachers and principals indicated that the team model is an effective tool for implementing the processes and disciplinary procedures needed at a campus. The key recommendation was a 3-day professional development (PD) seminar developed for principals and teachers to learn how to improve their relations. The findings of this project study may lead to positive social change by supporting improved relationships between administrators and teachers, increasing teacher self-efficacy, and establishing more effective classroom instruction.

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Dedication

This work has been accomplished with the help of family, friends, and of course Jesus Christ. I would like to thank Jesus Christ for his hand on my future, his comfort in times of need, and his ever-present guidance on my life. I would like to thank my father for being my best friend and giving me either security or a kickstart depending on the situation. I would like to thank my mom for her belief in me from a young age. Everything that I have achieved is because of your efforts. I would like to thank Rosy Rodriguez for her instilling in me the belief that education would give me the life that I always wanted. I would like to thank my constant companion, my sister, and my biggest source of encouragement, Gabrielle Ocumarez. I would like to thank Belinda Ramirez for encouraging me to purse higher goals at a time when I didn't think I could. I dedicate this accomplishment to my daughter Madison Rose Gomez.

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Table of Contents

iii

List of Tables

List of Figures

Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The local problem was teachers did not understand the expectations of the principal, assistant principal, and instructional coach for implementing the team model, which affects the relationship between administrators and teachers. According to a district administrator, state achievement scores at the school have been below the state average for the past 5 consecutive academic years. The middle school principal stated that the school district mandated the implementation of a revised team model to improve state scores. However, the district administrator reported that middle school teachers were unclear of administrators' expectations concerning implementing the team model, which was affecting the relationship between administrators and teachers at the school.

According to Torres (2016), the foundational trust set forth by a principal's communication and campus process is integral to campus betterment. The traits that an administrator displays to the campus are impactful on many levels. Educator success and productivity have shown to be amplified when progressive principal actions are present (Mammen & Pushpanadham, 2018). The quality of staff output can be increased by positive principal actions, including leadership behaviors and teacher's outlook concerning organizational trust (Kars & Inandi, 2018). Principals provide an example of characteristics that motivate teachers to perform at a higher level. Campus administrators are foundational leaders for all campus behaviors (Vashdi et al., 2018).

The team model has impacted campus level administrators in the middle school model (Berkovich, 2018) and is a feature of transformational leadership (Plichta, 2018) used by school principals to communicate expectations for classroom instruction. The team model is used to assist teachers in the areas of academic improvement and training. When optimally utilized, the team model improves the school organizational culture in order to adapt to change and advance the level of teaching present (Lee & Li, 2015). However, in the arena of K–12 education, middle school teachers and their administrators lack available resources concerning the team model of transformational leadership. The problem was that middle school teachers' perceptions had not been examined regarding the team model.

Rationale

The problem of this basic qualitative project study was that middle school teachers had not understood the principals' expectations for implementing the team model. A teacher at the project site expressed their frustration to me with being held accountable for implementing a district mandate without direct assistance from campus administrators. Teachers at the project site also discussed a longing for increased communication between themselves and campus and district administrators. Moreover, a particular teacher expressed their respect and admiration for the administrators at their campus yet noted a desire for a fruitful dialogue concerning how the team model should look at their grade level. A teacher in a grade team stated that implementing the revised team model has led to numerous disagreements between teachers at team meetings.

The purpose of this basic qualitative research project study was to investigate the perceptions of school principals and middle school teachers regarding the team model related to the school principals' expectations for teachers' classroom instruction. Understanding the bond between teachers' perceptions, school leadership, and campus climate can improve the educational accomplishment at the campus level. Teachers' perceptions of school leadership affect their professional output, associations between staff, and teacher retention (Simon & Johnson, 2015).

Definition of Terms

Interdisciplinary teaming: An interdisciplinary team is a configuration used to separate the campus into smaller, more manageable groups for the implementation of the campus vision and goals, such as improving academic success, strengthening teacher student bonds, and enhancing staff collaboration (Schaefer et al., 2016).

Teaming: A colloquial term in education which refers to interdisciplinary teaming, grade-level teams, and team teacher teams (Ellerbrock et al., 2018).

Middle school teams: Middle school students in Grades 6 – 8 who are between 10 and 14 years of age. The teams usually refer to the grade level (Hitt & Tucker, 2016).

Team model: This model includes smaller grade teams of students and teachers that can be further broken down to multiple teams per grade level. The grade team teachers share the same students (Mertens et al., 2016).

Transformational leadership model: A model developed to help leaders promote constructive transformation and improve personal and campus endeavors (Stubblefield, 2019).

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it contributes to the body of research examining the use of the teacher leadership framework to understand the team model, including its role in increasing expectations. These findings contribute to the field of education and advance the knowledge of all middle school educators and administrators who utilize the team model. The interviewees improved the level of implementation of interdisciplinary teaming, and the administrators communicated the instructions for implementation of the team model. As a result, the students who attend the project site middle school may receive enhanced instruction from teachers who better understand the expectations of the team model.

The findings of this study could benefit all middle school teachers by informing them of the specific aspects of the team model of transformational leadership employed by school principals. The results of this study could also benefit the teachers who serve at the project site school by informing them of how the teacher leadership model is being used within the team model at their school. The results provided valuable information to help school principals improve student achievement, resulting in positive social change. The findings could also benefit middle school principals by informing them of specific aspects of transformational leadership used by principals in middle schools who employ the team model. The findings of this study could encourage further research on the team model, which has limitless benefits. Policymakers could use data from this study to further refine the team model at the project site school and school district. Benoliel and Somech (2015) noted that the team has the charge of setting key

policies and ensuring that the implementation of these policies is fair for teachers, administrators, and students.

Research Questions

The following two research questions guided this study:

RQ1: What are middle school teachers' perceptions regarding the principals' use of the team model of transformational leadership to communicate expectations for classroom instruction?

RQ2: What are middle school principals' perceptions regarding implementing the team model of transformational leadership to help teachers understand expectations for classroom instruction?

Review of the Literature

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was the team model of transformational leadership. I used this framework to understand the perception of school principals and middle school teachers regarding the transformational leadership of principals employing the team model. According to Bass (1985), the transformational leadership model provides a process for leaders to use who want to encourage staff members to behave in a manner that would help the organization reach goals and produce efficient results. Research concerning the transformational leadership model is useful as a roadmap for successful administrative and staff production (Farahnak et al., 2019).

This conceptual framework can be used to help administrators and educators identify behaviors and accomplish their goals through enhanced communication. Using

the transformational leadership theory, administrators can communicate organizational values in a manner that connects with teachers and creates buy-in. Yahaya and Ebrahim (2016) noted that transformational leaders find common goals within an organization to inspire staff and enhance inventiveness when troubleshooting. Transformational leadership is "a framework for changing and transforming employees by increasing their motivation, building commitment, and empowering them to achieve organizational goals" (Waruwu et al., 2020, p. 11). In addition, the transformational leadership framework helps employees direct their focus to the campus vision for the good of the whole (Waruwu et al., 2020).

The four components of the transformational leadership model are idealized influence leaders, inspirational motivation leaders, intellectual stimulation leaders, and individualized consideration leaders (Bass, 1985). Teachers may identify and describe their administrator's leadership style. The transformational leader framework serves as a baseline to guide educators' understanding of their administrators. The transformational leader amends the cultural mindset to achieve reliable structural goals to increase targeted productivity (Windlinger et al., 2020). The transformational leader impacts the workplace by bringing attention to the staff's strengths and weaknesses and creating an environment where the good of the whole is prioritized above the self (Hoffman et al., 2011). Bass (1985) studied and incorporated conceptions of the transformational leader for implementation at the organizational level and among the staff psyche (Brown et al., 2019). The transformational leadership framework aided in studying the perceptions of educators and administrators.

Transformational Leadership Components

        The four dimensions of the transformational leadership framework helped me to understand administrators at the stated campus further. The level of organizational staff output and propensity to work within the team correspond with the qualities of the transformational leader (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Staff is more inclined to put personal aspirations and tenets aside for the common good under the leadership of the effective transformational leader (Finkelstein et al., 1996; Howell & Shamir, 2005; Kark & Shamir, 2013).

Idealized Influence

        The first component of the transformational leadership model is idealized influence. The leader is one that replicates suitable behavior and displays ethical values which garners respect from staff (Lee & Lee, 2015). Idealized influence leaders are often humble and value the needs of others before their own, and it is this sense of self-sacrifice that motivates others to follow the administrator's example (Waruwu et al., 2020). According to Windlinger et al. (2020), the idealized influence leader serves as a workplace paradigm for honesty, ingenuity, determination, and valor. In turn, the leader may receive the respect of followers. The idealized influence element of the transformational leadership model pertains to outgoing and dynamic leaders who motivate through enthusiasm. The idealized influence leaders act in a manner that gives them the role of an example, which is to be revered and emulated (Bass, 1985).

Inspirational Motivation

The leader creates an environment in which the staff are positive and optimistic about the organizational goal (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). The inspiration motivational leader heartily conveys directives in a well-defined manner that is complimentary to the organization (Windlinger et al., 2020). Inspirational leaders gain trust and allegiance through hard work and following through with promises (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). The inspirational motivation leader encourages collegiality and a sense of shared purpose, which results in increased productivity. The inspirational leader encourages staff by providing value to tasks and challenging individuals to perform to their highest capabilities (Bass, 1985).

Intellectual Stimulation

The third component of the transformational leadership model is intellectual stimulation. The intellectual leader is one who inspires staff to be inventive and view each problem as an opportunity to be creative (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). The intellectually stimulating leader inspires staff to examine motivations and norms to broaden their viewpoint towards organizational obstructions (Windlinger et al., 2020).

Individualized Consideration

The final component of transformational leadership is individualized consideration. Individualized consideration refers to a method that administrators employ that supports team collaboration, customized consideration, and assistance (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). The necessities and assets of staff are properly addressed through the relationships that are built by the individualized consideration leader

(Windlinger et al., 2020). The individualized consideration leader maintains a high level of esteem for each staff member and mentors them toward a communal goal (McCarley et al., 2016). The bond built by the individualized consideration leader gives them leverage to support staff for improved output (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). The individualized consideration leader analyzes and uses specific characteristics of their followers to provide a good fit for both parties. The individualized consideration leader acts as a mentor by listening to each staff members' individual concerns and addressing them in a supportive manner (Bass, 1985). The individualized consideration leader creates an understanding organizational culture by listening and giving inspiration.

Transformational Leader's Relationship With Staff

The transformational leader has a dynamic relationship with their staff through use of a variety of methods. Transformational leaders create an environment that focuses on the entire organization rather than the individual to achieve a common vision (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). Transformational leaders develop deep bonds with and engage employees through motivation to initiate creativity and execute at a high-performance level (McCarley et al., 2016). According to Yahaya and Ebrahim (2016), transformational leaders instill a common vision throughout a group to reach an efficient and effective level of function. The transformational leader focuses on the organization and follower commitment through positive elements.

The transformational leader focuses on the higher achievement of the organization through the empowerment of their followers. Transformational leadership improves organizational success through the leaders' capability to challenge and support

individuals to realize their talent (Martin, 2016). Kovach and Middletown (2019) noted that transformational leaders use their beliefs, principles, and behaviors to motivate staff. The transformational leader achieves success through personal sacrifice and displaying positive attention towards followers.

The followers of the transformational leader may accomplish achievements through being intrinsically motivated. Martin (2016) noted that transformational leaders systematically develop employees into leaders through an environment where individuals are appreciated. The transformational leader is, in turn, highly regarded for their ability to develop leaders (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). Transformational leaders display authentic regard for staff (Thomas et al., 2020). In this model, staff members have the liberty to make autonomous decisions (Martin, 2016). Through independence, empowerment, and inspiration, the follower of the transformational leader has many incentives to achieve success. Principals who subscribe to the tenets of transformational leadership effectively communicate common objectives, perceived educational implementations, and have campuses with solid organizational health and dialogue (Windlinger et al., 2020).

Review of the Broader Problem

The focus of this research was on the influence the transformational leadership model has on the entire field of education, emphasizing the campus level. Transformational leadership has been extensively researched and has been implemented across various organizations. In addition, I researched the emergence of the team model at the campus level and within academic literature. While conducting the literature

review, I examined the influence team model on the field of education and its effect on campuses.

To locate peer-reviewed articles and journals for this review, I searched the following databases and educational-specific search engines: Education Source, ERIC, SAGE Journals, and Google Scholar. The following keyword search terms were used: *leadership, transformational leadership, transformational leadership model, leadership in education, teacher perceptions, administrative perceptions, team model, team model, relationship teacher administration, the role of administrators, role of teachers, team model in middle school,* and *interdisciplinary team.*

Transformational Leadership in Education

Transformational leadership is one of the most important improvement methods in the field of education. Research surrounding transformational leadership supports positive outcomes in the areas of enhanced administerial (Hater & Bass, 1988; Waldman et al., 1987), staff (Zohar, 2002), and group (Bass et al., 2003; Howell & Avolio, 1993) output. The transformational leadership theory is often used by academic administrators because of its ability for application in the current educational climate (Berkovich & Eyal, 2017). Arokiasamy (2017) maintained that supportive principals who apply transformational leadership traits encourage staff members to demonstrate excellence, quality, and high performance. Administrators who use transformational leadership traits inspire teachers to support students academically (Adams et al., 2017).

Various scholars have been conducted using the transformational leadership model that have come to similar results. Their findings revealed that effective

administrators utilized transformational leadership skills with fidelity. These administrators improved student achievement through first developing an understanding of the school's goals and vision and then providing appropriate instruction and assistance.

Several studies noted the positive connection between the transformational leadership model with campus climate and improved organizational perception. Transformational leadership provides a foundation for successful organizational commitment (Berkovich & Eyal, 2017). These studies note that campuses may develop a positive school climate through the elements of the transformational leadership model.

Transformational Leadership and Job Performance

Several studies noted the improved organizational performance which may result from the implementation of the transformational leadership model. Ribeiro et al. (2018) reported, "transformational leadership on employees' individual performance through the mediating role of affective commitment" (p. 3). They observed that commitment is "a crucial factor between transformational leadership and individual performance" (p. 3). Luyten and Bazo (2019) found "a positive correlation between transformational leadership and student achievement" (p. 10).

Team Model

The team model is the dominant method for grouping students at middle schools around the nation for several reasons. First, interdisciplinary teams are the standard in the current American educational setting (Algozzine et al., 2012). The team model is essential for the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education

Improvement Act of 2004, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and Response to Intervention (Markle et al., 2014). In order to effectively implement interventions, the team model helps facilitate best educational practices, teamwork, goal-oriented actions (Erickson et al., 2015). Thus, the team model provides many benefits for campuses that implement the program effectively. In addition, many benefits are inherent in the team model. For example, the team model provides a system where team members can align their vision, define roles, increase administrative support, and empower staff. The team model enables teachers to take an active role in the organization and expedite improvement (Erickson et al., 2015). The benefits of correct implementation of the team model reach past individuals and affect entire communities and educational systems.

To investigate how administrators and teachers utilize the aspects of transformational leadership within the team model, the transformational leadership framework was chosen to be the foundation of this basic qualitative research design. The transformational leadership framework defined essential characteristics of leaders which are present in the transformational leadership model. Burns (1978) noted that transformational leaders encourage staff to reach beyond expected norms and to strive for higher organizational goals. Moreover, Balwant (2016) noted teachers who employ transformational leadership skills trade individual interests to achieve overall organizational success. According to Hitt and Tucker (2016), leaders using the transformational approach increase teamwork and ongoing analysis, and constantly seek organizational improvement for the collective good.

The team model is a basic structure of the middle school. The middle school model included interdisciplinary teaming, block classes, and advisory periods (Schaefer et al., 2016). The arrangement of the team model is intricate and includes many facets. Interdisciplinary teams share students and collaborate for the educational betterment of their collective group (Woods, 2017). The team model has evolved into an intricate balance of organization, student grouping, and content instruction. One of the hallmarks of the middle school concept is the positive influence at the campus level. There are various advantages that bilingual students have who attend a campus that implements the team model. The team model allows students to have a rich and fruitful dialogue with common teachers. The benefits of the team model extend to students of all backgrounds and with various needs.

Implementation of the Team Model

This model has many essential elements and can be advantageous on many levels. Childress (2019) stated that the team model gives educators the opportunity to work together to refine classroom procedures. The team model builds a strong community between teachers and students which is integral in helping students in the transition to middle school from elementary school (Echols, 2015). The advantages of the correct implementation of the team model are numerous for educators, students, and administrators.

For the team model to be implemented correctly, there are specific requirements concerning structure. First, the team model requires time for teachers' professional development, their students, and overall school. The team model requires teachers to

plan authentic lessons for their students (Hurd & Weilbacher, 2018). Second, the size of the group is another important aspect of the team model. The team model is achieved if the requirements of sufficient organizational time and adequate classroom size have been met.

In addition, there are requirements concerning staff participation which must be met for the team model to be implemented correctly. The team model requires commitment, open-mindedness, and common regard for one another (Pharo et al., 2014). The inclusion of key stakeholders support effective leadership (Smith & McKeen, 2003). The team model will not be successful at a campus if sufficient follow-up is not given to procedures by administrators.

There are many dimensions of the team model that require attention ranging from meeting logistics to concepts such as shared vision, team roles, and leadership. According to Erickson et al. (2015), the team model must include specific and detailed records and processes for keeping records to maintain focus and reliability. Attention and importance to the implementation of the interdisciplinary team is a trademark of a successful middle school (Gale & Bishop, 2014). Plichta (2018) noted that interdisciplinary teaming has certain built-in structures suited to enhancing education: teacher empowerment, shared educator meeting time, stakeholder involvement which leads to a positive work culture, job fulfillment, and greater academic achievement. To function correctly the team model must be facilitated and supported by campus administration. Interdisciplinary teams with a common goal and vision set by administration are more likely to achieve favorable outcomes (Erickson et al., 2015).

Influence of the Team Model

The team model solidifies bonds between educators through shared learning and implementation (Woods, 2017). Educators who are members of successful teams are more apt to take leadership responsibilities to enhance learning and improve the campus (Erickson et al., 2015). According to Corey and Babo (2016), students and teachers report greater feelings of belonging and shared decision making which improves connections. Through the team model, teachers and administrators can improve climate by promoting shared goals, values, and beliefs (Erickson et al., 2015). When the team model is successfully implemented at a campus, the administration, educators, students, and the entire community may benefit. Woods (2017) noted that interdisciplinary teaming was utilized in 90% of highly successful schools which were studied. The team model provides a wide array of benefits to the individual and the campus when successfully applied.

Implications

This study may positively influence social change through the validating of positive qualities in educators and leadership as prescribed by the transformational leadership model. Through the employment of transformational leadership, educators and administrators recognize the importance of variation (Martin, 2016). A focus on transformational leadership at the campus level may improve perceptions regarding the principals' use of the team transformational leadership model to communicate expectations for classroom instruction. The focus on transformational leadership may influence a positive, systematic shift for relations between administrators and educators at

the stated middle school and unite the campus under a common goal. Arokiasamy (2017)

described transformational leadership as leadership in which administration will steer and

inspire fellow educators to undertake the school's shared vision. The emphasis on

transformational leadership may also impact student achievement by strengthening the

team model by transformational leadership. Therefore, the design of the transformational

leadership model supports teachers and administrators when utilized effectively. The

implication is that a positive educational environment will emerge for teachers,

administrators, and students when the transformational leadership model is implemented.

Summary

In Section 1, I summarized the local problem that middle school teachers do not

understand the principals' expectations for implementing the team model, which affects

the relationship between administrators and teachers. Additionally, in Section 1, I

summarized the purpose, which was to investigate school principals' and middle school

teachers' perceptions of the team model related to the school principals' expectations for

teachers' classroom instruction. The research questions addressed administrators' and

teachers' perceptions of implementing the team model of transformational leadership to

help teachers understand expectations for classroom instruction. The literature review

investigated the components of the transformational leadership framework, the

transformational leader's relationship with staff, and the team model.

In Section 2, I explore middle school teachers' perceptions regarding the

principals' use of the team transformational leadership model to communicate

expectations for classroom instruction. In addition, I explore principals' perceptions

regarding implementing the team model of transformational leadership to help teachers understand expectations for classroom instruction. Findings from this basic qualitative research design may help school principals and teachers regarding the aspects of the team model of transformational leadership of school principals. Finally, in Section 2, I provide the methodology, the research design and approach, along with the data analysis and results. In Section 3, I present the project for this study, the professional development plan which was written and developed for the participants in the study along with administrators who were participating in the development of the team model. In Section 4, I present my reflections of the development of my role as a researcher along with my personal and professional thoughts about the implementation of this project study into practice.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

In this basic qualitative study, I attempted to determine teachers' perceptions regarding the principals' use of the team model of the transformational leadership framework to communicate expectations for classroom instruction and the principals' perceptions regarding the implementation of the team model to help teachers understand expectations for classroom instruction. Teachers' perceptions of school leadership and their implementation of the team model are not well enough understood to leverage as a tool for school improvement. Data were gathered from a public middle school in the southwestern United States in which administrators and teachers are utilizing the team model. I obtained a more profound understanding of the perceptions of administrators and teachers at a middle school in the southwest who are implementing the team model.

Traditionally, qualitative methods are used when research is required concerning multiple views of similar occurrences (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) noted that the basic qualitative design is founded on the notion that researchers gather data as they participate in and draw meaning from an occurrence. My decision to use the qualitative methodology in this study was interconnected to the use of the transformational leadership framework. In this qualitative study, I examined perceptions of teachers and administrators through the lens of the transformational leadership framework that entailed the following: (a) leadership styles and approaches, (b) middle school teachers' perceptions regarding the principals' use of the team model of transformational leadership to communicate expectations for classroom instruction, and

(c) principals' perceptions regarding the implementation of the team model of transformational leadership to help teachers understand expectations for classroom instruction.

The qualitative methodology focuses on local problems and can be used to study organizational connections and why individuals behave in a certain manner (Real et al., 2009). The qualitative method emphasizes the perspective of the individual and their distinctiveness. Howitt (2016) noted that deep dialogues and preselected assemblies support the importance of personal viewpoint.

A quantitative design would not have allowed for data to be collected in an open manner in which the interviewees were allowed to expound on their insights. Qualitative research is ideal for obtaining rights to access cultural perceptions and researching the problem in its real-life, cultural context (Schein, 2004). Qualitative research looks beyond the participants' inherent values to assess how these values are used in the participants' day-to-day lives and within particular situations (Tracy, 2019).

I considered grounded theory as a research design but decided not to use it. The grounded theory design gives the researcher the capability to create a theoretical account of the happening while concurrently grounding the interpretation in pragmatic observations or information (Wiesche et al., 2017). A grounded theory was not used because it is often selected to research technical transformations and conduct studies in developing research fields (Wiesche et al., 2017).

Participants

Criteria and Justification

The process of selecting participants is a critical element of qualitative research. Participants for research must be nominated decisively in congruence with recognized standards to warrant validity (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). The researcher must guarantee the well-being of all those involved in the research (Alase, 2017). In this section, I provide the techniques used for identifying, selecting, and safeguarding participants in this study.

Sampling is a critical and complex part of any research study. Purposeful sampling in qualitative research denotes the decided choices that the researcher makes to select those who are selected as participants and at which levels, sites, or events (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Purposeful sampling involves using information-rich cases where a researcher can obtain critical data better to understand the issue (Patton, 2002). Two principles underlying qualitative sampling are appropriateness and representativeness (Luciani et al., 2019). The method of sampling should be "aligned with the conceptual framework and research questions" (Palinkas et al., 2015, p. 12). Qualitative researchers intentionally seek those individuals or sites that can best speak to the research problem being investigated. Purposeful sampling involves choosing data abundant and significant situations (Patton, 2015). When purposefully sampling, the researcher should aspire to achieve proper representation or equivalence (Luciani et al., 2019). When utilized to the meta-level of qualitative data assessment, purposeful

sampling has been used to explain restrictions of time, reserves, access to material, and
knowledge (Benoot et al., 2016).

I selected 13 participants who had implemented the team model on campus at the
project site. One school principal, one assistant principal, one instructional coach, and 10
teachers (i.e., two Grade 6 teachers, one Grade 7 teacher, five Grade 8 teachers, and two
related-arts teachers) were interviewed. These participants were purposefully selected as
to have a representative of each grade level as well as electives and roles within the
department, with the selection including teachers, team leads, and administrators at
various levels. The sample size is a vital aspect when choosing members for research
(Creswell & Poth, 2016). van Rijnsoever (2017) stated that the common qualitative
research design might attain capacity with 10 to 25 participants.

Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants

Upon receiving formal approval from the Walden University Institutional Review
Board (IRB) and from the school district's superintendent, I was allowed access to
administrators and teachers at the campus level. Moreover, I communicated with the
participants through an email request for volunteers to participate in the study.
Furthermore, I sought particular participant representation from certain groups to have an
appropriate sample. All participant identities remained completely private and protected
over the course of the study.

Researcher-Participant Interaction

I sought the support of members from both district and campus administrations to
access the participants and data. Establishing relationships with the participants helped to

garner open and honest responses in the interviews. A sizeable amount of time should be reserved with participants and researchers throughout the collection process for an appropriate qualitative study (Creswell & Poth, 2016). To provide a safe research environment, I presented myself in a manner that fostered trust and was free of judgment or condemnation. If the faculty members had believed that I was coming to their school to judge their performance, their enthusiasm and willingness to participate would have been diminished. Therefore, I developed working relationships with the participants to learn about their individual experiences and gather their stories.

A goal of this study was to conduct research and collect data in an ethical manner that protected the research participants. Luciani et al. (2019) noted that the attainment of informed consent involves the notifying of the participants of the reason, possible dangers, and voluntary type of the study. I developed consent forms for both school administrators and teachers and presented them to participants for their review and signature to ensure that they participated in the research willingly and with full knowledge of the research goals and possible risks. Each research participant knew that the information they shared would remain confidential and that every effort would be made to protect them from potential harm that could result from their participation. To safeguard the identity of participants, I used a numeric coding system and assigned each of them pseudonyms that were used when reporting the research results and data analysis. The use of pseudonyms, such as T1, T2, and T3 or A1, A2, and A3, guaranteed the confidentiality of each participant.

Each interview began with an introduction of my research to include the purpose and significance of this project study. Additionally, I asked each participant to read the interview transcripts and ask any questions before each interview. Each participant could withdraw from the study.

Data Collection

The data collection process commenced after I received Walden University IRB approval (IRB Approval No. 09-22-20-0478514), created the interview protocol, obtained permission from the local school district, received consent from the participants, and scheduled Zoom meetings for the interviews. I interviewed 10 teachers, one campus instructional coach, one assistant principal, and one principal. The interview protocol was emailed to the participants before their scheduled interviews. All participants participated in Zoom interviews except for three who did not have a computer at their disposal, so the interviews were conducted by phone. The telephone interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed.

The participants were teachers at the selected campus or in a specific administrative role (i.e., academic coach, assistant principal, or principal). Before the interview process, the campus principal was contacted and asked to refer individual teachers who had an active role in implementing interdisciplinary teaming. The principal permitted me to solicit teachers and other staff members on campus to be interviewed via email. The participants were allowed to fully express themselves during the interview questioning sessions.

The participants each individually agreed to be recorded via the Zoom meeting platform. The interviews were later transcribed and entered into a Microsoft Word document. Face-to-face interviews could not be conducted due to the pandemic; however, the Zoom interface allowed the participants to be interviewed virtually from their preferred environment.

The standardized, open-ended interview is a staple of qualitative research. Tracy (2019) noted that an effective qualitative interview begins with "nondirective, open-ended questions to prompt the respondent in a nonthreatening manner to give them the power to respond freely" (p. 8). All established interview questions were reviewed and revised as my doctoral committee members evaluated my work. I designed the interview questions in an open-ended manner to elicit genuine responses from all participants. Alase (2017) advised that open-ended questions are to be used without reference to research in the field.

The research questions and interview protocol used in this study had not been previously published. I created each of these documents to achieve the goals outlined for the study. Following each interview, I created transcripts from the audio recordings and field notes taken during the interview. A research journal was also used to summarize all discussions and reflections.

Data were gathered through personal interviews, unobtrusive measures, and documents. Unobtrusive measures are openly accessible data, such as campus student achievement data, instructional programs, and support system design. These data sources were attainable on the state, district, and schools' public websites.

Each participant was allowed to review all interview questions before the interview. Then, each participant was emailed the questions to familiarize themselves with the line of questioning and build a level of comfort for the interview. After all, interviews were completed, I began the transcription process.

The interviews were conducted via Zoom and were held at times and dates agreed with each participant. I made two recordings (i.e., one via Zoom and one via an audio recorder). No interviews took place during the participants' working hours. The interview protocol, all voice recordings of interviews, recordings of the Zoom interviews, and transcribed interviews were stored on my password-protected, personal computer during the interview process.

I downloaded the MAXQDA application to use during the coding process. The application was also stored on my password-protected, personal computer. MAXQDA helped me review all transcripts, organize my codes list, highlight text for coding, and manage all codes in a central database. While reviewing transcripts, I noted important answers to interview questions that had common elements among respondents. These answers were used to make codes and eventually themes. Each participant signed the informed consent form before data were collected. Each interview was about 1 hour. The interview protocol and the recordings of the 13 participants were used for gathering the data (van Rijnsoever, 2017).

Role of the Researcher

Moser and Korstjens (2018) noted that researchers should avoid "conducting research at their place of employment due to the possibility of researcher bias" (p. 2). It

was crucial for me, as a researcher, to establish credibility with each of the individuals

participating in the research. Additionally, as a former district employee, I had an

existing professional relationship with the district administration, campus leadership,

and many teaching faculty who facilitated entry into these arenas for interviews. I had

worked in the district for 4 years as a teacher before I took the role of administrator at

another school district. In total, I taught for 10 years at the middle school level where I

have achieved various accolades including teacher of the year. Throughout my career I

have served as a teacher, team liaison, and team lead at who separate campuses. I have

been employed as an assistant principal for 3 years at a neighboring school district. As

an administrator at another school district, I do not believe that my time spent as a

teacher at the district mentioned above in any way affected the validity of the findings. I

did not supervise any of the participants and had professional relationships with all

participants.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for this basic qualitative research design consisted of a review

of the transcripts, the use of the open coding process, and a thematic analysis of the data.

While collecting data I reviewed all interview questions and answers methodically to

determine the how the responses would be used to provide understanding to the local

problem and provided insight into the interviewee's perspectives. During the data

collection period, the researcher reads the transcripts multiple times to become familiar

with them, isolates important phrases, devises implications, and creates themes to

provide a thorough explanation of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2016). After meticulously

analyzing the transcripts, phrases emerged and were used to understand the local problem further.

The significant phrases which were found during the transcript review were then used to create codes through an open coding process. Through the use of the open coding process, I created codes from the transcripts. Saldana (2016) noted, "a code is a word or phrase describing some segment of your data" (p. 1). I asked analytic questions of the data, and categorized segments of data (Maher et al., 2018). Coding was most appropriate for analysis of this data. The coding method involved organizing strands with a brief name and employing these codes (Maher et al., 2018).

Initially, the creation of several codes including lack of support, lack of communication, perceptions, and trust were developed. In qualitative research, data collection and analysis occur simultaneously. Data collection and analysis have a continuous interchange guiding data collection towards emergent analytic matters (Maher et al., 2018). Following each interview, an open coding technique was used to highlight sections of text and label them.

To create the codes, I inspected the literature review for concepts that support the research problem both during and after the collection process. I established codes reflected in the literature and studied the codes for their purpose in the context of the proposed study. Analysis of the data resulted in common themes and keywords. Codes included goals, unclear expectations, perception, communication, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, lack of time, understanding, support, communication, sharing ideas, trust, the importance of roles, and student behavior.

Codes were then organized and used to create themes which would give deeper understanding into the research questions through a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis places emphasis on the identification and explanation of stated and understated concepts within the data (Tracy, 2019). Using thematic analysis, I was able to provide a meaningful inquiry to the data which had been provided. The developed codes were analyzed and grouped according to relation to the research questions. These codes were then used to create themes which would further describe the perspectives which staff members had concerning the implementation of the team model. The thematic analysis process includes coding, cataloguing, recording patterns and the citation of important associations (Braun & Clarke, 2006) in an effort to develop a systematic trail of evidence (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994). I crafted the themes by interweaving the codes and responses in a systematic fashion. Themes may be crafted using multiple participant responses to strengthen the qualitative account through levels of complexity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The themes were then used to summarize the data obtained and in conjunction with the literature review provide valuable results regarding teams at the middle school level. All codes, themes and categories were analyzed for bias.

Once all codes, categories, and themes were created, they were then placed in two tables. I searched for commonalities and differences in the responses which would allow me further to classify and analyze administrator and teacher perceptions. This form of evaluation highlighted the contrast between educator and administrator responses, and was useful for strengthening Theme #1, different perceptions between

teachers and administrators of the expectations of the team model. Finally, reflection was utilized to frame the results and correlate the data to the research questions and local problem. Reflection is an integral piece of the analytical process and through reflection the researcher asks, "What lessons were learned?" (Bogdan et al., 2016, para 2). Through reflection I validated the responses and developed suppositions, such as the decision to utilize staff development.

Many aspects were included to ensure an adequate level of quality was provided during the research. Member checks and peer reviews were used to assure the accurateness and integrity of the data obtained. Creswell and Poth (2016) noted the significance of the use of peer reviews and member checks to corroborate the collection of data and analytical methods used during qualitative research. Member checking increased validity because the participants reviewed and confirmed their responses. Member checks have been identified as a method of correcting bias which may have been imposed by the researcher as well as a reliable technique of ensuring the certainty in participant responses (Birt et al., 2016). Following the themes and codes, the participants were given transcripts of their interviews as well as a list of all themes and codes which would be used. All participants agreed with the finished result as well as the verbatim transcribed responses. Member checking is a verification consultation in which participants are invited to review the correctness of responses by reading the interview transcripts and codes and requesting feedback concerning the accuracy of the comments and outcomes (Smith & McGannon, 2018). The feedback was used to ensure validity of the raw participant data, whose identities remained private, as well further

appropriate avenues for analyzing data. Stakeholder feedback has been noted as a useful

tool for informing processes, analyses, or as supplementary material to guide research

(Madill & Sullivan, 2017). The responses elicited from the member checks further

confirmed the legitimacy of codes used and were utilized to refine the themes which

were developed.

I used the procedure of peer reviews and research process by colleagues who

were familiar with the phenomenon. During a Zoom conference, colleagues were briefed

concerning basic information regarding this study. The knowledge of the colleagues was

used to help determine the validity of the raw participant data, whose identities remained

private, as well further appropriate avenues for analyzing data. Peer review is intended

to encourage neutrality and promote credibility through the appraisal of work by experts

who are not associated with the organization being studied (Smith, 2006). All colleagues

present during the discussion agreed that the procedures used in the study were reliable

and trustworthy.

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

After compiling and analyzing all interview responses, I used codes and

categories to identify themes. The created codes, categories, and themes were all coupled

to the original research questions, which helped frame the study. Table 1 contains the

codes linked to the first research question. Table 1 also contains the categories and

themes which were created based on the codes. Ultimately, Table 1 includes the views of

the teachers concerning the implementation of the team model. Table 2 contains the

codes, categories, and themes revealing the administrators' perspective concerning the

challenges of implementation of the team model. Teachers were designated T1… T10.

Administrators were assigned A1, A2, and A3. The instructional coach was considered an

administrator due the administerial duties that include the support with curriculum and

assistance with the implementation of the team model.

Table 1

Codes and Theme Categories to RQ1

Codes	Categories	Themes	RQ
Goals Need for clarification Unclear expectations Lack of expectations Expectations of academics Perceptions	Teachers' perceptions	Different perceptions between teachers and administrators of the expectations of the team model	What are middle school teachers' perceptions regarding the principals' use of the team model of transformational leadership to communicate expectations for classroom instruction?
Professionalism Trust Productivity Presenting unified front Use of technology Structure Communication-necessary improvisation	Items teachers need to ensure a successful team	Structures and individual traits which should be possessed to ensure proper implementation of the team model	
Professional Vision Teacher trust for administrators Understanding Administrative support Open communication	Items an administrator should possess	Structures and individual traits which should be possessed to ensure proper implementation of the team model	
Individualized consideration Intellectual stimulation Inspirational motivation Idealized influence	Administrator qualities	Structures and individual traits which should be possessed to ensure proper implementation of the team model	

Codes	Categories	Themes	RQ
Teams not working together Feelings of judgement Feelings of solitude Lack of unity	Issues within interdisciplinary teaming concerning the team	Items which are impeding the proper implementation of the team model	What are middle school teachers' perceptions regarding the principals' use of the team model of transformational leadership to communicate expectations for classroom instruction?
Lack of time Lack of understanding Lack of consideration Lack of support Cross teaming issues Frustration with administration Lack of communication	Issues within interdisciplinary teaming concerning administration	Items which are impeding the proper implementation of the team model	
Sharing ideas Professional growth Team support Synchronicity with team members Camaraderie in the group Trust among teachers Individuality	Teacher/administrator benefits of the team model	Benefits of the team model	

Table 2

Codes and Theme Categories to RQ2

Codes	Categories	Themes	RQ 2
Goals Need for clarification Unclear expectations Lack of Expectations Expectations of academics Perceptions	Teachers' perceptions	Different perceptions between teachers and administrators of the expectations of the team model	What are middle school principals' perceptions regarding the implementation of the team model of transformational leadership to help teachers understand expectations for classroom behavior?
Professionalism Trust Productivity Presenting unified front Use of technology Structure Communication-necessary	Items teachers need to ensure a successful team	Structures and individual traits which should be possessed to ensure proper implementation of the team model	
Professional vision Teacher trust for administrators Understanding Open communication	Items an administrator should possess	Structures and individual traits which should be possessed to ensure proper implementation of the team model	
Individualized consideration Intellectual stimulation Inspirational motivation Idealized influence	Administrator qualities	Structures and individual traits which should be possessed to ensure proper implementation of the team model	
Lack of unity	Issues within the teaming concept concerning the team	Items which are impeding the proper implementation of the team model	What are middle school principals' perceptions regarding the implementation of the team model of transformational leadership to help teachers understand expectations for classroom behavior?
Lack of time, understanding, consideration, and communication	Issues within the teaming concept concerning administration	Items which are impeding the proper implementation of the team model	
Sharing ideas Professional growth Team support Synchronicity with team members Trust among teachers Individuality	Teacher/Administrator benefits of the team model	Benefits of the team model	

RQ1: What are middle school teachers' perceptions regarding the principals' use of the team model of transformational leadership to communicate expectations for classroom instruction?

Table 3

Teacher Perceptions Concerning RQ 1

	Agreed	Differed	In Conflict
To resolve disciplinary issues	T1, T8, T10	T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T9	
To be courteous and cordial with colleagues	T2, T4, T5	T1, T3, T6, T7	T8, T9, T10
To implement a system to improve state test scores	T3, T4, T5, T7	T2, T6, T9	T1, T8, T10
Establish protocols and routines for the benefit of the team	T4, T5, T9	T1, T2, T3, T6, T7, T8, T10	
To create a cohesive team to share academic resources	T3, T4, T5	T1, T2, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10	
To create a system where a team leader is the conduit to administration	T6, T9	T1, T3, T7, T8, T10	T2, T4, T5
To take care of issues which the administration does not have time for	T8, T9, T10	T1, T3, T6, T7	T2, T4, T5

To be courteous and cordial with colleagues, teachers T8, T9, T10 reported differences in their perceptions of the goal of the teaming model as used on campus. Additionally, T2, T4, and T5 did not agree on the utilization of the team leader to take

care of administrative issues. The majority of the participants differed on how to resolve

disciplinary issues and the establishment protocols and routines for the benefit of the

team.

RQ2: What are middle school principals' perceptions regarding implementing the team

model of transformational leadership to help teachers understand expectations for

classroom instruction?

Table 4

Administrator Perceptions Concerning RQ 2

	Agreed	Differed
To create a system to implement district expectations and minor discipline issues by their own methods.	A1	A3, A2
To create a fair and consistent system which can be implemented campus wide.	A2	A3, A1
To create a system where teachers can frequently collaborate constructively and share ideas	A3	A1, A2

No discrepant cases were found when participants discussed RQ2. Administrators'

perceptions differed regarding the implementation of the transformational leadership

team model to support teachers and their expectations for classroom instruction.

Theme 1: Contrasting Teacher and Administrator Perceptions

The first theme was contrasting teacher and administrator perceptions concerning

the expectations of the team model. Theme 1 details inconsistencies between

administrators' and teachers' perceptions of the team model, differences between

teachers concerning their own roles for implementation, differences between teachers

concerning administrative expectations, and differences between administrators

concerning the expectations for the implementation of the team model. Theme 1 details

the inconsistencies between administrators A1, A2 and A3, and teachers T1…T10 of the

team model, differences between teachers concerning their own roles for implementation,

differences between teachers concerning administrative expectations, and differences

between administrators concerning the expectations for the implementation of the team

model. Along with the differences of opinion came frustration from teachers and an

overall sense of confusion.

Eight of the 13 participants noted that there were instances where the teachers and

the administrators were not in sync concerning the implementation of the team model.

T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, A1, and A3 all noted that there were instances where the teachers

and administrators were not in sync concerning the implementation of the team model.

T5 reported that sufficient expectations were not present at the campus and many

teachers and students had not had a true team meeting. T5 additionally stated,

> I feel there is no pride in the school, there no community. I feel the students are not
>
> building the community with each other because they are not having those team
>
> meetings and that the community does not come together.

T2 stated that her team was usually left out of the loop and were the last to find

things out so instead she turned to her team members instead of administration. The

frequent incongruency concerning expectations was hindering the teachers' ability to implement the team model with fidelity.

When teachers were asked what their expectations were for their team, their answers varied greatly with little consistency. T2 stated, "First and foremost the teachers are supposed to always make sure we are kind and courteous to one another because we are working as a team." T4 stated that the expectation was that everybody is on the same page and implements the team model fluently to maintain consistency for the students' sake. T6 noted that their expectation for the team model was to build a structure where teachers collaborate effectively concerning academics. T9 stated that his expectation for the team modes was to have the goal in mind of getting the student prepared for the academic rigors of the next grade level. T10 noted that the expectation for the team model on her team was to have a structure which would provide stability for students which would in turn decrease disciplinary incidents. T2, T6, T7, and T8 noted that administrators' expectations of the team model included giving the teachers added responsibility. However, their reactions to the expectations varied from understanding to cynical. T2 stated that his understanding of the administrator's expectation of the team model was to be productive and keep the students interests in mind while helping them grow in whatever they need. T4 understood that the administrators' expectation of the team model was to create critical thinkers and have teachers solve problems with their teams. T7 believed that administrators' expectation of the team model was to give students as many chances as possible before involving administration. T6 took an antagonistic approach and stated that the administrators' expectation of the team model

was to delegate all important information to team leaders in the quickest manner possible without a plan for success. T6 stated,

It's just here this what you need to do, and this is the expectation. It's not kind of that support from the top down, it's just it kind of feels at times that we are given what to do and now we got to do it.

T6 also noted that administrators did not take teachers well-being into consideration and went on assigning out new tasks. T8 shared the sentiment with less hostility but noted that the administrator's expectation of the team model was to assist the administration in handling discipline issues. The teachers are not able to execute a team-wide or campus-wide consistent plan for the implementation of the team model when many of them have different beliefs concerning the expectations which were set forth by administration. T3 stated, "Ultimately administrative support is nonexistent, which in some ways doesn't bother me. I don't even know if I've ever experienced support in that regard." T3 also noted that the problems arose beyond differences to a point where they were completely unaware of expectations.

Conversely, administrators had a noted difference of opinion concerning expectations of the team model. A2 stated that expectations for the team model are different for administrators than for other staff members due to different roles. She went on to note that administrators must think globally and are less concerned with the individual goals of the team. A2's expectation for the team model would be to have a system which would be implemented with fidelity across the campus that is fair and consistent for students and staff. A1 stated that his expectation for the teaming would be

to have a model where teachers have the ability to create a structure for the implementation of district and campus expectations as well as to handle minor student behavior concerns. The lack of unanimity concerning expectations for the implementation of the team model between participants is apparent at nearly every level of application. The teachers had different expectations for themselves and their fellow teachers, the teachers had different expectations for their administrators, and the administrators had different expectations for the campus.

Theme 2: Importance of Roles: Trust, Communication, and Understanding for the Proper Implementation of the Team model

All participants noted several key structures and traits needed to implement *teaming*. The theme which emerged was structures and individual traits which should be possessed to ensure proper implementation of the team model. The developed codes were: importance of roles, need for constant communication, importance of trust, and understanding.

The most important trait which arose in all respondents was the importance of roles. Teachers and administrators alike expressed the importance of roles within the team model and why they were so crucial. T1 stated, "I have to constantly understand the team that I'm a part of as well as my administrators and then then filter it and understand what they want for me. It's a really big dynamic and you have to be a team player." This teacher stated that the success of the entire team and its members hinged on the individual efforts that teachers placed toward completing their role. T7 stated "For a team to work towards a common goal each member must work together and decide on their

roles based on their individual talents." T9 stated, "Each person is going to have a different skill set and one person may be really great with ideas, but they don't necessarily know technology and how to implement it well. This is where the team concept can help."

T4, T6, and T8 stated that their roles were specific to their job to come together and assist any individual member to complete all roles. T2 stated,

> A team must be supportive of one another and anything that we mutually decide on even if it's not the best situation or maybe it's not something that all of us are a fan of we are going to implement it because we know that it's what is best or more efficient for everyone across the board.

The teachers presented a very clear vision of the importance of roles within the teaming structure including each member fulfilling their duties, equality during distribution, and team unity. T4 stated, "Maybe there is a teacher that organized funds, maybe there is also a teacher that has a different role, but we all need to work together in order to make the grade function smoothly." T4 also stated, "Especially in the case of discipline, if there is one teacher who is not following the agree procedures that's not going to work and that's not teaming." In order for teachers to feel comfortable in their roles within the teaming structure the administration needed to set up structures that ensured each of these individual components was established.

T2 stated that communication was essential in order to provide support to team members on various levels. Respondents stressed the importance of communication to disseminate knowledge and important information to team members to ensure fidelity. A

cornerstone of the team model is the efficient distribution of information to key

stakeholders in a timely manner. T5 noted, "Communication is a key component in the

discipline process at the team level." The importance of communication is a vital element

in the team model to provide assistance to team members, spread essential knowledge to

staff, and maintain an effective disciplinary system. Without a systematic method of

communication, the interactions will be sporadic and lack efficiency and uniformity.

The importance of trust within the team model is an aspect which can't be

understated, it is the cornerstone element through which communication is had and plans

are implemented. Both teachers and administrators noted the importance of trust between

staff members. A3 believed that the first step towards the successful implementation of

the team model is that the team must learn to trust each other to face challenges and grow

together. A campus utilizing the team model must secure trust from staff as well as

administration to create buy-in. T4 noted that as the team builds trust, the team members

begin to work well together and ultimately have high-quality output. The presence of

trust within the team model enhances collaboration and further encourages members to

provide input freely. T8 stated:

> You know, you need people that you can rely on, and I think that when teaming
>
> you just become like a family and you're just so close and you know you help
>
> each other out and so forth. So, I think even as an educator and as a teacher it kind
>
> of lets you know that you're going to work, and you don't have to worry because
>
> you have four other people there who are going to help you with whatever you
>
> may not understand that day.

The cooperation aspect of the team model is essential both between teachers and among administration; however, without trust, team members isolate themselves. Lastly, the most cited trait teachers believed an administrator should possess to ensure the proper implementation of the team model was understanding. T9 stated:

I think I would like to see compassion and understanding. Some understanding that we don't start the team meeting at exactly at you know 2:00 o'clock because there is an incident right before the bell like give us understanding and have some compassion. If we try something that they want us to try, and we give it an honest go to have some compassion to understand that we really did try. To have compassion for the mountains of things that we have to do daily if we're not you know checking each box, but we knocked out the other 18. Some compassion and understanding that we know that we are trying, and I think that understanding and empathy and compassion as long as your staff sees that your procedures for your team model is going to be the easiest thing that administrator can ask them to do.

T7 wanted an administrator who shows understanding when the teacher is venting about a teaming concern. They would like their administrators to let the staff members know that they are available for support. T6 stated:

I believe administration kind of needs to step off their high horse, and go back, and I mean it's easier said than done, but really put yourself again at where you were at awhile back you know being back in that teacher role. I think as an administrator there's more to come with being at the top because now, you're talking to everybody else that's at the top and the district and everything else so

there's a lot more for your role but because of that you forget that the 50 or 60

teachers on your campus can't just simply be told here, do it.

The responses to interview questions concerning Theme #2 divulged the

structures and behaviors which educators placed significance on concerning the

implementation of the team model. T1, T7, and T9 agreed that each member of a team

should have a crucial team role that is bestowed upon that teacher based on their

strengths. T4, T2, 76, and T8 all believe that the strength of the team model lies in the

unity of the members and a like-minded approach to completed specifying teaming tasks.

In addition, responses included endorsements of communication, trust between teachers

and administrators, and administrator understanding as required elements for the

implementation of the team model.

Theme 3: Lack of Communication, Empathy, and Unity as Hindrances to the Implementation of the Teaming Process

All participants noted certain elements present at the campus which were

hindering the proper implementation of the teaming process. Therefore, Theme #3 was

created based on teachers' perceptions concerning the items impeding the proper

implementation of the teaming process. As a result, the developed codes were lack of

time, communication, empathy/understanding, and lack of unity. These codes included

the teachers' perceptions of what should be resolved to execute the team model properly.

The first codes concerning items impeding the implementation of the team model

were lack of time and communication. They were cited by nine of the 10 teachers and

two of the three administrators as major items impeding the proper implementation of the

team model. Team meeting time was reduced to provide opportunities for team communication which led to feelings of frustration amongst team members. T2 stated,

> So not only not being able to meet with each other and not being able to hear what every other group or team grade level is a hindrance. We don't know necessarily was always going on in their grade levels and since it affects us because we teach all three grade levels often that's where the confusion comes from.

T2 further noted that the lack of team meeting opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic frustrated and isolated teachers. Without scheduled time, the implementation of the team model could not be consistently implemented. T4 stated,

> Right now that's the biggest barrier is that that there's no time to meet. There needs to be time also for planning and it's like they're trying to synchronize the remote the remote learning and then also synchronize their students that are here, so it makes it to where there's hardly any time to meet at as a time unfortunately.

T4 additionally stated that a lack of team time and communication has led to confusion amongst team members, including disorder in schedules. The scheduling of students is a crucial piece of the team model as students are required to be in specific teams for the model to be carried out effectively. T5 indicated that the lack of time and communication had forced teachers to gather on weekends, after school, and in their own time, which caused many teachers to feel unsupported by the administration. T5 stated,

> I think is time is one of the biggest things this year like having planning time with my team. I'm struggling I'm planning on the weekends. I'm planning on this like

what can you help me with? Give me some time to plan and just hear some of my

struggles and provide support.

Usually, students of concern would meet with their teachers during the team

meeting to discuss the situation and possible solutions. However, the lack of team time

and communication caused the teacher/student relationship within that team to suffer,

according to T7.

An overall lack of empathy and understanding from the administration concerning

the team model was also cited as a significant hindrance. T6 felt that the administrators

did not keep their teams in mind when created initiatives and did not understand the

needs of their groups. T6 stated,

I kind of feel that administrators expect this kind of ideal picture of what's

expected. So, then they tell our team leader our team leader then tells the rest of

us. It's just here, this is what you need to do, and this is the expectation you kind

of meet that expectation.

T3 believed that the administration was in a different world and did not

understand his team's concerns. The absence of understanding was a significant

hindrance to implementing the team model as it led to discord between teachers and

administration. T4 indicated that they felt that the administration did not understand the

pressure that they felt as teachers and did not sympathize if they could complete any of

their assigned team roles. However, T6 stated, "Administrators are very supportive I don't

think they necessarily think of things right off the bat or know everything that is going on

but when presented or if ever presented with situations they are very supportive."

Overall, teachers felt neglected or disrespected if there was not a genuine effort on the part of the administration to understand the concerns of the staff.

The final hindrance to the team model noted was a lack of unity, whether between team members or between teachers and administration. The lack of agreement present at the campus was hindering collaboration, which was destroying the common goal of mastery on the end-of-year assessments according to T3. T6 indicated that a lack of unity among team members led to unnecessary competition and favoritism by the administration, which further divided team members. A2 noted that disunity within a group leads to disagreements that hinder the team model's overall performance and effectiveness. A1 emphasized the role of the team model within the campus and the importance of unity when stating that when a lack of agreement is present in a team, there was a sense of divisiveness that may interfere with team roles and the hierarchy of the campus setup. T2, T3, T4, T7, A1, A2, and A3 agreed that unity is essential in the team model.

Theme 4: Administrative Support, Staff Support, and Improved Disciplinary Procedures as Benefits of the Team model

The fourth theme of this project study is the respondents' perceptions of the benefits of the team model. The codes associated with this theme are added support from administrators, a sense of support from team members, and improved structure for handling discipline issues. These codes give insight into the many ways in which the staff members at the noted campus are utilizing the team model. The merits of this model are numerous and have shown to be worthy of use at this campus.

A benefit that was cited frequently among staff members due to the team model was added support from administrators. T5 stated,

> I think for admin I think one of the best ways they support us is by making sure everybody is held accountable. They are that level of support that if we've tried everything that we can in the team concept, and I've tried here here's my problem and then they can take it from the next level and not just be like OK well here try it again but also by making sure that they're visible as well in those team meetings. By them being there it's a way of holding everybody accountable.

T9 noted the team model could provide a structure through which administration can support the needs of the grade team to provide quality instruction without interruptions. The added forms which the team model can provide can be beneficial if implemented with consistency and fidelity. According to A1, "One of my goals for the team model as an administrator was to provide a support system through which teachers feel that they have people who can assist them with their problems." Administrators provided solutions to issues within the team model.

An additional benefit of the teaming concept, which numerous participants cited, was a sense of support amongst their team members. T3 stated, "I would say that my fellow 8th grade teachers are extremely more supportive and understanding me because obviously they are dealing with the same issues." T7 stated, "The team concept definitely has helped me since day one of my teaching you know and it's a community definitely community of togetherness and is and you know we're all, all of us working toward the common goal."

T9 stated,

> Your teammates are who you go to if you need anything from lesson plans to unit
> overviews and just maybe talking about something that worked well in one class
> and didn't work well sharing are positives and are negatives right are glows in our
> glows. We just kind of trying to learn from each other's mistakes.

T8 stated,

> As far as teaming concept within teachers that has also helped us too not just with
> students but with the teachers because you know having conversations with each
> other. I have often reached out and said, "like how can you help me or how can I
> help you too you know are there any tweaks that I might even get in my lesson
> that you don't belong in history but you know they might help the student out."
> So, you know it's not just for students but it's all the team concept also helps with
> in teachers to you know help support each other

T10 stated,

> When you're teaming and you're able to talk about that and a lot of times if you
> can say to the kids hey you know I talked to this certain teacher you know your
> football coach or your basketball coach and they told me you just have to build
> that rapport with them in some way and then sometimes if they can't find a
> connection with you but you can reach out to another teacher and forge that
> connection, sometimes that helps.

T4 noted that the team model creates a system for keeping students accountable and
reaching out to parents. Administrators also agreed teams are instruments to assess

discipline issues at the campus level. A2 noted that the team model empowers the teacher to handle discipline issues at the team level.

Theme 4 outlines teacher's perceptions of the team model and the benefits that it can add to various entities on campus. The educators noted advantages such as administrative support, encouragement and resources from fellow team members, and a structured and consistent method for the management discipline issues. T5 noted the importance of administrative support within the team model concerning accountability issues. T7 stated that the teaming concept helps to build a community among team members. T4 noted that disciplinary issues can be dealt with in a systematic manner within the team model. The advantages to the team model which were noted by educators within the fourth theme were consistent throughout the interview process and profile the benefits of a correctly implemented team model.

Discrepant Cases

Discrepant cases were not found. Discrepant cases are "defined any pieces of data that do not support the inclination of collected data" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, para 1). For example, all teachers varied in their experiences based on the different teams they were placed on, and they all shared similar perceptions concerning implementing the team model.

Summary

The project study addressed the problem that teachers do not understand the principals' expectations for implementing the team model, which affects the relationship between administrators and teachers. The purpose of the study was to investigate school

principals' and middle school teachers' perceptions of the team model related to the school principals' expectations for teachers' classroom instruction. The research questions were:

RQ1: What are middle school teachers' perceptions regarding the principals' use of the team model of transformational leadership to communicate expectations for classroom instruction?

RQ2: What are middle school principals' perceptions regarding implementing the team model of transformational leadership to help teachers understand expectations for classroom instruction?

The interview questions utilized during this study were created to align with the research questions. There were 10 teachers, one campus instructional coach, one assistant principal, and one principal from the same campus and utilized the team model daily. The teachers' and administrators' interview transcripts that revealed 46 codes divided into eight categories and four themes. The themes were as follows: (a) contrasting teacher and administrator perceptions; (b) importance of roles: trust, communication, and understanding for the proper implementation of the team model; (c) lack of communication, empathy, and unity as hindrances to the implementation of the team model; and (d) administrative support, staff support, and improved disciplinary procedures as benefits of the team model.

Overall, the interviews provided valuable insight into the perceptions of the teachers. When posed questions regarding RQ1, teachers revealed aspects of the team model which they approved and disapproved. The teachers noted the benefits of the team

model, such as support and procedural assistance and their willingness to work within the structure. The responses stated a general belief that the team model would assist the campus and each individual. In summary, the respondents noted that the team model could lead to a myriad of advantages when executed correctly. However, teachers also noted the many impeding elements that were hindering the team model's proper implementation, such as a lack of communication, empathy, and unity. The teachers were also very vocal in noting the individual administrative traits and structures, which they believed would help further implement the team model at the campus. The interviews revealed several fundamental misunderstandings which teachers had concerning the characteristics of the transformational leader, specifically regarding administrative understanding and support. According to literature, when administrators utilize the components of the transformational leadership model staff members note feelings of support and well-being toward work centered tasks. Farahnak et al. (2019) found that behaviors associated with transformational leadership helped improve employees' attitudes towards positive change in the organization.

The interviews also provided valuable insights into the perceptions of the administrators. When posed questions regarding RQ2, administrators upheld faith in the team model as a tool to enhance learning and inspire staff members to work as a productive unit. Administration noted the ability that the team model has for building a positive culture as well as increasing productivity.

The administration also acknowledged that a lack of opportunities for communication was a significant barrier to implementing the team model and effective

leadership. Administrators noted that the lack of communication was leading to a disconnect between staff and administration as well as a lack of understanding concerning how to properly implement the team model. The transformation leadership model requires a systematic method of communication on various fronts to ensure the campus plan is implemented with fidelity. Waruwu et al. (2020) noted that transformational leaders set guidelines for the system in which staff interacts and encourages employees to strengthen bonds that improve the group dynamic toward achieving goals.

RQ1

As previously noted, RQ1 pertained to teachers' perceptions of expectations concerning the team model. During the interviews, teachers shared perceptions, had differing perceptions, and in some cases conflicting perceptions concerning the implementation of the team model. This section outlined the perspectives of the teachers in conjunction with relevant literature and the framework.

Differing and Competing Perspectives of Teachers

The findings revealed several differing understandings between teachers concerning the expectations of the team model, specifically regarding administrative understanding and support. In some cases, the views were contrasting as some teachers felt supported by administration and others felt disregarded by administrators. When there is an inconsistent message and level of support among team members and administrators, as there is in this case, the ability to reach goals was hindered. Cook and Faulkner (2010) noted that a major hinderance to effectiveness within the

interdisciplinary team model is the lack of a clearly defined goal which all members understand. The literature concerning contrasting perceptions of campus goals is clear and aligned with the interview transcripts. The results of the study and relevant research support the notion that contrasting perspectives on campus can be remedied through the actions of the effective transformational leader. In addition, the correct implementation of the team model has proven to strengthen bonds between staff and administration that improve efficiency. The team model provides opportunities for more effective teacher partnerships, which promote productivity and reduce fatigue (Erickson et al., 2015). Hence, based on the findings and research, the lack of clear expectations and goals regarding the implementation of the team model create an ineffective execution of the model as well as feelings of uncertainty in staff members. However, the application of transformational leadership traits addresses both needs.

Agreeing Perspectives

Throughout the course of the study many teachers agreed on various methods of implementation of the team model. These likeminded viewpoints were summarized in this section. The interviews revealed teachers' placed importance of communication for the proper execution of the team model. The literature concerning the implementation of the team model supports this notion. An interdisciplinary team requires educators to cultivate cooperation, collaborative proficiencies, and a constructive mindset (Al Salami et al., 2017). The interdisciplinary team model is a crucial component in delivering educators the opportunity to communicate effectively with other team members for enhanced delivery of instruction and improvement of the campus culture (Cook et al.,

2016). The literature concerning teaming endorses frequent opportunities for targeted

collaboration. This recommendation coincides with the frequent pleas from teachers

during the interviews concerning more common planning time.

Respondents concur that the team model must be implemented with a level of

trust and understanding among members and with administration. The research

concerning trust in the team model supports the notion that trust, and understanding are

essential pieces of successful execution. The transformational leadership model fosters a

strong sense of trust with team members. The results of the study and literature suggest

that trust and understanding, which are elements of the transformational leader. The

literature and findings both propose that successful teaming is possible when each

member of the team has an expressed role and carries out their position with a sense of

pride.

When posed questions regarding RQ1, the teachers noted the benefits of the team

model, such as support and procedural assistance, administrative support, and their

willingness to work within the structure. The responses stated a general belief that the

team model would assist the campus and everyone. Administrative and staff support are

products of an efficiently executed team model. Participants expressed the support that

was afforded to the staff during the application of the team model during the interviews.

The procedures present in the team model create an environment and structure

which is helpful for addressing disciplinary concerns at the campus level. The team

model provides time for educators to collaborate concerning disciplinary issues.

Concurring viewpoints of teachers and team model literature are effective tools for

implementing the processes and disciplinary procedures needed at a campus. The team model is essential for creating a cohesive disciplinary plan which can adapt to change through frequent teacher collaboration.

RQ2

Three administrators' responses were included in this section, the principal, assistant principal and instructional coach. The administrators' responses to the questions associated with research question ranged from agreeing, to differed, and finally conflicting. These responses are reflected in the following summary.

Agreeing Perspectives

Administrators agreed that the team model is an effective tool for reaching campus and district expectations. According to the literature concerning staff/administrative support the team model of transformational leadership provides the leaders with many tools for supporting staff members. Murari and Mukherjee (2021) stated that the authentic transformational leader can enhance the overall organization through team building, enhanced collaboration, empowerment, skillful coaching, flexibility, strategic planning, innovative thinking, interdependence, and partnership through awareness. In addition, in the cases when the team model was implemented correctly through administrative support the view of the administrator was also enhanced. Haverback and Mee (2013) noted that when managers fully supported educators with a strong vision of the model the campus climate was positively improved. According to the responses provided and the literature concerning the team model, administrators give support in many forms and through multiple methods through the correct execution of the

team model. In addition, the tenets of the transformational leader coincide that administrative support is essential for the betterment of the campus.

Differing and Conflicting Perspectives

Administrator responses regarding the expectation and implementation of the team model did vary. Administrators noted both different and opposing views for the desired goals of the team model. The lack of a clear vision set forth by administrators which is comprehended by the staff completely impeded on all efforts to implement a successful team model. Proper implementation of the team model of transformational leadership requires that the leader aligns organizational perspectives and unifies the staff. The lack of uniformity of goals concerning the implementation of the team model present among staff is diametrically opposed to Burns (1978) view of transformational leadership. The transformational leader combines the individual staff member's goal with the organizational goal so that the higher purpose can be achieved through the efforts of many (Burns, 1978).

The outcomes of the second research question are based on the responses from administrators including the principal, assistant principal, and instructional coach. All administrators agreed that the team model is a valuable method for achieving campus and district expectations. These responses are in line with literature concerning team model framework. Cook and Faulkner (2010) noted that the benefits of the team model include an inclusive culture, shared leadership, and collaborative teaming. The lack of a clear vision and well-defined systemic procedures are not traits of the effective transformational leader. The transformational leader delivers all expectations in a clear,

relevant manner (Shofiyuddin et al., 2021). The transformational leadership framework indicates that leaders help staff meet organizational goals through like-minded approach and a common goal. The transformational leadership model unites leaders and employees to share organizational goals and transform the attitudes of dee (Jensen et al., 2019).

Project Deliverable

The project created is based upon the aforementioned outcomes. The project addressed the lack of uniformity among teachers and administration concerning the implementation of team model, miscommunication amongst staff, and sentiments of mistrust among team members. This professional development seminar concepts include curriculum concerning the team model and proper communication within the team model, a continuing and comprehensive plan for the effective implementation of the team model, opportunities for cooperation between educators and administrators, and team-building strategies. The project deliverable is outlined in Section 3.

Section 3: The Project

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of school principals and middle school teachers regarding the team model related to the school principals' expectations for teachers' classroom instruction. The project is a 3-day professional development for administrators and educators on the team model. I prepared the professional development sessions according to the concerns communicated during the administrator and educator interviews. These sessions will highlight the team model of transformational leadership and how administrators and educators can adequately implement the system at their campus.

Professional Development

The purpose of the training sessions is to provide information regarding the team model, expectations, and practical strategies for both administrators and educators for the proper implementation of the model. The project includes a presentation, lessons, interactive elements, several assessments for understanding, and an opportunity for educators and administrators to create a tentative plan to implement the team model. The sessions entail the importance of reflection of educators and administrators, with the transformational leadership model being the basis for all collaborative sessions. The professional development sessions are:

- Modules defining the team model, expectations of the team model, and foreseeable obstacles.
- Team building activities as well as opportunities for collaboration and educator and administrator reflection are provided.

- Construction of an implementation plan for the team model both grade- and campus-wide to ensure the principles of transformational leadership.

- The formation of a malleable timeline to deliver a specific method for team model implementation for campus approval.

Rationale

The problem of this basic qualitative study was that middle school teachers did not understand the principals' expectations for implementing the team model, which was affecting the relationship between administrators and teachers. After I conducted one-on-one interviews with educators and administrators. Findings were used to identify specific training needs. Also, the findings indicated different perceptions between teachers and administrators regarding the team model expectations and items that are impeding the proper implementation of the model. The findings also suggested that a lack of communication between teachers and administration was a catalyst for the misunderstandings present in implementing the team model. Study participants viewed their administrators at the campus lack knowledge of the team model. Most of the teachers felt that there should be more communication among teachers as well as with administrators.

As I analyzed the data, it became evident that a professional development seminar was needed based on the findings of this project study. Through professional development, seminar participants would understand the team model, enhance the necessary communication skills, and form a common perception of the team model for campus-wide implementation. The project site campus had several professional

development days designated for items that campus administrators deem worthy of addressing. The professional development seminar will serve as professional development hours that both educators and administrators must complete annually. The school district where the campus is located has approved the use of the professional development curricula and resources needed.

The professional development seminar allowed me to address the issues noted in the interview data. Sensitive items revealed during data collection, such as overall lack of understanding and feelings of a lack of empathy, communication, and unity, that hindered implementation of the team model. The structure also assisted in clarifying the roles and expectations associated with the team model. Through professional development, educators and administrators communicated in a structured manner to build trust, understanding, and a deeper comprehension of the team model.

Subsequently, educators and administrators will implement the team model at their campus through increased understanding, collaboration, and systematized planning. In addition, the project study provides needed educational material concerning educators' perceptions of the team model. Relatively little research has focused on middle school teachers' perceptions regarding the team model used by school principals (Gale & Bishop, 2014; Plichta, 2018). The project syllabus, including resources and the PowerPoint used, is in Appendix A.

Review of the Literature

During the data collection process, it became evident that educators and administrators would benefit from a directed professional development session that

stressed improving communication between educators and administrators and clarified the opposing perceptions of the team model of transformational leadership. In this subsection, I discuss current literature that supported the use of the transformational leadership theory as an appropriate method to provide professional development. Many database searches were conducted to locate literature concerning the team model of transformational leadership and the design thinking model. I searched the following databases to find literature: Education Source, ERIC, SAGE Journals, ProQuest Central, and Google Scholar. The search keyword search terms used were *professional development, team model, transformational leadership, trust, understanding,* and *interdisciplinary team.*

The findings of the current study exposed a lack of knowledge concerning the expectations surrounding the implementation of the team model. The lack of understanding created a rift between educators and administrators that further eroded communication between the two parties. A need was revealed for a multifaceted professional development program to address all concerns while creating a united community focused on a common goal. To create a practical professional development seminar with the specific target of improving educator and administrator perceptions, I applied the design thinking model with components of the transformational leadership model and the team model.

Design Thinking Model

       I used the design thinking model as a framework to create the aforementioned professional development. The design thinking model was created to inspire creativity and collaboration (Pratomo & Wardini, 2021). The model employs a collection of individuals from varied backgrounds to collaborate and provide answers to problems. The five stages of the design thinking model where used (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Design Thinking: A Nonlinear Process
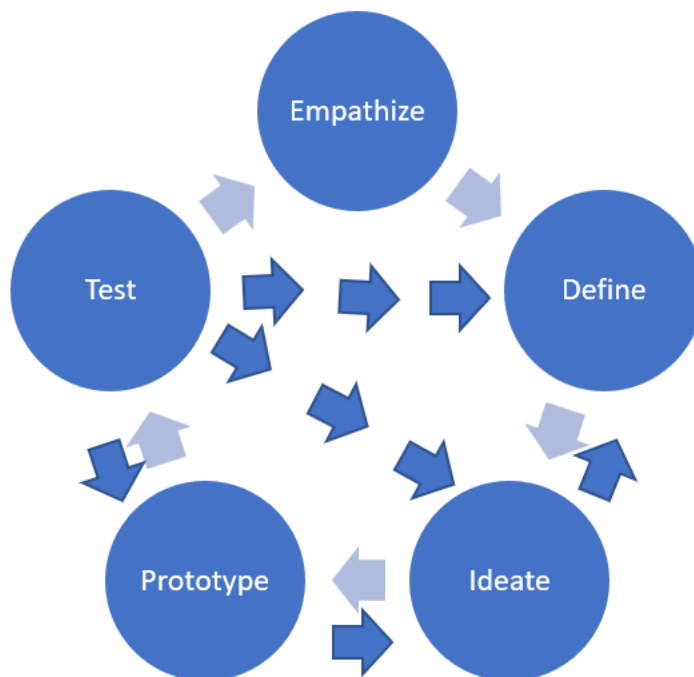
The five stages of the design think model are defined as:

Stage 1: Empathize – Understand your participants' needs and how they view the use of the team model at the campus level.

Stage 2: Define – Define your participants' needs as well as problems determined and your professional development objectives.

Stage 3: Ideate – Explore and develop possible solutions, summaries, and situations associated with the team model.

Stage 4: Prototype – Develop an example of a solution that will be created by determining the best resolution among the solution suggestions to resolve the problem.

Stage 5: Test – Use rubrics to evaluate your content and check for multiple means of presentation, engagement, and opportunities for expression. Check your participants' understanding, motivations, and attitudes (Ballenger & Sinclair, 2020, p. 2).

I used the design thinking model to create an entirely holistic professional development. The model was used to empower educators and administrators through inclusion, support, and collaboration. Professional development should be customized to achieve academic success through the empowerment of the teacher in a helpful manner (McLennan et al., 2017).

Effectiveness of the Transformational Leadership Model

According to interview data, the transformational leadership model was used to develop certain elements of the team model that needed to be addressed. Burns's (1978)

view of transformational leadership is unique due to the theory's focus on long-range goals, its emphasis on staff members' development, and subsequent transformation of staff into leaders. The first area deemed a hindrance to the team model via educator communication was an overall lack of understanding and empathy.

The transformational leadership model is used to efficiently transfer desirable qualities from administrators to teachers and staff (Andriani et al., 2018). The transformational leader models specific focused behaviors that staff are likely to mimic in their work role and workplace outlook (Groves, 2020). In addition, the transformational leadership model is a framework that promotes morally superior leaders who value and understand their employees (Andriani et al., 2018).

In the professional development session, I used the transformational leadership model to address the lack of communication that various campus individuals noted. Efficient teamwork at the campus level can result in teacher empowerment and increased trust with administrators (French & Lebeaux, 2016). Many individuals at the campus believed that the interaction level and quality between educators and administrators needed to be improved. The transformational leadership model helps leaders effectively communicate with employees for the betterment of the campus. Schools that have used the transformational leadership model emphasize the central role that communication and collaboration play in the implementation of the model (Metz et al., 2019).

Lastly, I used the transformational leadership model in the professional development session to address the lack of unity on campus between educators and administrators. Leaders must understand the balanced culture of learning through

encouragement and teamwork to create true organizational transformation. Several

participants noted unity on the campus hindrance the implementation of the team model

and overall teacher morale. In addition, the transformational leader unifies the

organization through a multitude of reliable resources (Jensen et al., 2019).

Team Model to Enhance Communication

The team model is utilized at this campus and, despite the confusion over its

implementation, the model has been shown by many to be advantageous when

implemented correctly. I used the team model in the professional development session to

address the lack of communication that various individuals on campus noted. The team

model provides administrators and team leaders with the structure to enhance

communication between themselves. In addition, these systems support and improve

educators' perceptions and involvement (Li et al., 2021). Boyer and Bishop (2004) found

that students who participated in the team model welcomed differences while

commending distinctiveness and viewed their team as an academic family. King-Sears et

al. (2015) noted that the three main features of a supportive school culture are (a) an

inclusive climate, (b) communal management, and (c) collaborative teaming. The team

model has also been proven to be effective when there is campus wide buy in. Cook and

Faulkner (2010) noted that there must be a multilevel commitment for success by both

teachers and administrators to effectively plan within the team model. A community to

maximize the efficiency of each participant is built.

Student academic and staff performance is enhanced through the positive culture

which the team model provides. Teachers who correctly implement the team model note

positive and fruitful interactions with team members and an increase in resources

(Childress, 2019). Woods et al. (2020) found that significant gains in academic

performance in standardized tests was a result of the use of the team model.

Professional Development

Professional development will be applied to disseminate information from the

study and provide a process for campus improvement. Simonsen et al. (2017) noted that

aimed professional development enhances the regularity and worth of the recipient's use

of acquired abilities. Mayes and Gethers (2018) noted that administrators often suffer

from a curtailed understanding of the components of transformational leadership. To

improve leadership, specific intermediation should take place. Alverson et al. (2019)

found that principals and teachers desire effective and consistent professional

development to properly implement the collaboration found in the team model.

In addition, the professional development seminar will give the participants the

training necessary for the correct implementation of the team model. According to

interview data, the professional development seminar will also aid in the development of

items that were deemed lacking or absent. Effective professional development is a

significant contributor to increased level of staff collaboration, increased use of academic

skills, use of applicable procedures for cooperation, and increased student achievement

(Miller et al., 2016). Noonan (2018) found that when correctly executed a professional

development seminar can strengthen the bonds of teachers in similar situations that lead

discussion of practice. The level of instruction will also be improved by delivering an

effective and targeted professional development seminar. Professional development can

improve the level of instruction by helping teachers develop their expanding role in an understanding, positive manner (McLennan et al., 2017). Kiemer et al. (2018) reported students are the main beneficiary when teachers collaborate successfully concerning instructional methods. The training sessions will also ensure that the information presented is successfully comprehended and executed. A successful professional development program gauges the subsequent level of skill implementation (Miller et al., 2016).

Project Description

The professional development seminar will occur at the campus of study. The session will be a 3-day seminar and will have morning and afternoon sessions. The campus and district administrators have given their consent for this session and a follow session to discuss implementation. This training will yield the following: curriculum concerning the team model and proper communication within the team model, a continuing and comprehensive plan for the effective implementation of the team model, opportunities for cooperation between educators and administrators, and team-building strategies. In addition, the project includes a slide presentation that will be utilized during the three sessions.

Resources, Existing Supports, Barriers, and Solutions

The stated campus and district have a myriad of resources that will be used to implement the professional development. The campus has employed the use of the team model for many years. The educators and the administrators at the campus know which elements of the team model are successful and need adjustment. In addition, several

grade teams have further modified the team model to suit the requirements of their section, serving as an asset during the implementation of the seminars. Attendees will use their district given laptops, handouts, books, web-based, and paper text programs.

The most apparent barrier to this professional development will be obtaining complete buy-in from all the participants. As noted by both educators and administrators, there is a lack of unity concerning the team model. Teachers are not likeminded with each other or with administrators. Therefore, unifying the entire campus is necessary to provide clear direction, and the willingness to participate among teachers and administrators. This acceptance from the staff will require team building, chances to air grievances, opportunities for collaboration, a collective plan for implementation, development, and contemplation.

Proposal for Implementation

The project will consist of 3-day sessions and a midyear follow-up seminar. First, the preliminary outline presentation will be given to the administrators to review the materials that will be delivered. Next, the presentation will be provided in its entirety to each educator and administrator in a 3-day seminar at the noted campus. During the midyear follow-up seminar, the team leaders and administrators will meet to discuss which elements of the team model have been implemented successfully, which need to be amended, and the perceptions of the newly implemented team model. During the follow-up meeting, the administrators and team leaders will modify the plan and update their implementation timeline. In addition, educators and administrators will submit an initial plan for implementing the newly designed team model and a timeline for execution.

Finally, administrators and educators will review each other's projects and provide valuable feedback to modify their plans further. The administrators and educators will then continue the discourse during weekly team meetings to further refine the program and keep lines of communication open. These meetings will provide support for educators and help improve the administration's perception and the overall implementation of the team model.

Roles and Responsibilities of Participants

My role in this project is to collect data, obtain relevant literature, and create a professional development seminar for educators and administrators. The presentations for the training sessions will be conducted during an initial meeting and a midyear follow-up. At the campus level, the administrators and educators will contribute to collaboration involving implementing the team model, assist with plan development, input feedback, and assist with team model implementation. I will strive to create an accepting environment during the seminar to have each participant understand the team model and contribute their responses.

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Project Evaluation Plan

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There will be several evaluation methods in place to assess the value of professional development. I will assess the project (Appendix C). In addition, teachers and administrators will be asked to comment on any resources. During the midyear presentation, the team model implementation plans will be reviewed by the team leaders and administrators. The participants will review data and determine what changes should be made and celebrate successes that occurred.

Project Implications

The findings of this project can help administrators and teachers to collaborate, clarify expectations of the team model, and create a sound plan for implementation of the team model. The findings may be used to improve relations between the staff at the campus and their administration. Administrators and teachers can use the findings to increase communication between administrators and teachers. Administrators may benefit from the findings through the receipt of tools and strategies to enhance leadership and to improve implementation of the team model. Administrators may benefit from the findings through the receipt of tools and strategies to enhance leadership for effective teaming. Teachers may benefit from the shared collaboration and empowerment allotted during the project.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

I developed the project, a professional development seminar, to concentrate on the skilled development of middle school teachers and administrators. The professional development session helps bridge the gap between the perceptions of administrators and educators of the team model of transformational leadership through the delivery of pertinent data, collaboration, and research-based strategies. The diverse and often incongruent perceptions concerning implementing the team model of transformational leadership noted in Section 2 provided a suitable opportunity for a professional development seminar. I selected the professional development session as the preferred mode to circulate pertinent information from the study and provide a conduit between administrators and teachers to clarify perceptions concerning the team model.

As the study proceeded, a need was indicated for a professional development seminar that applied to both teachers and administrators who needed their misunderstandings associated with the team model of the transformational leadership clarified in an engaging and meaningful manner. The literature related to professional development led me to use the design thinking model to help create the project. In addition, the design thinking model supports researchers when developing explanations to their problems (Yalçın & Erden, 2021). In Section 3, I outlined the use of the design thinking model and its various strengths in professional development.

The professional development session created for this study is a direct retort to the issues reported by both administrators and educators at the project site campus for an

enhanced implementation plan of the team model of transformational leadership. I used

the design thinking model in the professional development session to address the local

problem: (a) empathize and understand, (b) define the needs of the participants, (c)

brainstorm, (d) develop a prototype, and (e) use rubrics to test the solution (Ballenger &

Sinclair, 2020). The professional development addresses the lack of communication that

both parties noted during the study. The importance of communication between educators

on campus and between educators and administration is paramount for the ensured

success of the effective implementation of the team model. A cornerstone of the team

model is the prompt and efficient distribution of information to critical stakeholders

(Woods et al., 2020).

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

The local problem was middle school teachers did not understand the principals'

expectations for implementing the team model, which affected the relationship between

administrators and teachers. In this project study, I examined the perception of the

administrators and educators of the implementation of the team model. A literature

review was conducted during the project study, and in services were created to provide

additional information. The problem may have been resolved by hiring outside

consultants to advise on the issue; however, several consultants may be needed to do so.

An initial presenter would be required to address the issue of misunderstandings and the

lack of communication on campus. Another consultant may be needed to address the

issue of the implementation of the team model. This approach may not be feasible

because funds may not be available to hire several consultants. Furthermore, there may

not be time available to commit several days to address this one local problem. If funding and time are not available, the implementation process could be impaired.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

The completion of this study included the identification of a local problem, the completion of prospectus, and literature review, the data collection procedures, and finally data analysis. Finding scholarly studies and literature on the local problem proved to be challenging. The lack of information on the team model led me to expand the scope with which I viewed the situation. The search for literature on the topic strengthen me as a scholar practitioner to gain comfort with the verbiage of scholarly articles. Completing this project study also helped me gain expertise in qualitative research, creating an interview protocol, data analysis, and the review of current academic literature. Through completing this project study, I have expanded my knowledge of one of the essential models in education: the transformational leadership model. I plan to further use this framework both as a researcher and as a practitioner in my role as an administrator at a K–12 school. Additionally, use of this model in the study has allowed me to see firsthand the many applications that this framework has in education.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

Findings added to the existing literature about the team model of the transformational leadership model. However, my greater goal was that this study be used by middle school administrators and teachers who are trying to unlock the potential of the team model and its improvement at their local campus level. Currently, the team model is employed in countless educational organizations, yet it is rarely understood and

implemented with fidelity (Childress, 2019). This study and other academic works must focus on the practical issues of today's school system, including the team model. The findings of this project study extend beyond academic circles to promote collaboration between administrators and educators at the middle school level to further assist these parties in adequately implementing the team model.

By completing this study, I have gained knowledge and understanding of the dynamics between administrators and educators concerning school-wide processes such as the team model. The relationship can vary between being fruitful and antagonistic. In addition, moreover the findings can be used by the school district as well as other school districts and entities regarding the nuances of implementing the team model with campus-wide staff endorsement.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Key findings were used to create a professional development session. The attendees will be educators and administrators. This study yielded relevant data concerning educators' perceptions of the implementation of the team model of transformational leadership.

Structural Social Change

The 3-day professional seminars have potential to support, at the organizational level, leaders and educators. With use of this project, the campus may be able to refine its application methods for the team model for educators and administrators. An improvement of the implementation of the team model would empower educators at the campus level to create a stronger team. An enhanced level of communication between

educators and administrators will be encouraged during the collaboration embedded in the professional development seminar. This collaboration may further improve the quality and quantity of interactions between educators and administrators and address the community's social needs at the campus. The district may decide to host the professional development seminar created for the project study at all campuses within the district, further assisting educators in implementing the team model with fidelity.

Future research is warranted in this area to explore different methods for the implementation of the team model. Doing so would give practical and research-driven resources to administrators and teachers at the campus level concerning implementing the team model. Future research may also provide further insight into the unique administrative and teacher leadership dynamic at the campus level concerning the implementation of the team model.

Theoretical Implications

This study was based on the team model as it relates to the transformational leadership model. The elements that transformational leader possess are being inspirational, trusted, intellectually creative and questioning, collaborative, and considerate, all of which are necessary to implement an effective team model. In addition, the proper implementation of the team model requires teachers to assume a leadership role and replicate the qualities of the transformational leader. However, the need for enhanced implementation of the team model is mounting. Therefore, I recommend that districts employ research-based methods to improve the quality of the team model used at their campuses. In addition, subjects, such as communication, application, and

collaboration within the team model, should be researched to provide information and data in a field with few resources.

Conclusion

The team model cannot be implemented effectively without educator collaboration, a systematic plan for implementation, administrative guidance, and additional staff training dedicated to preserving and improving staff training plans. Scholarly literature is needed to validate systematic professional development where administrators empower educators through collaboration and the execution of organizational endeavors (Henriksen et al., 2020). The interviews in this study revealed that the educators' perceptions of the team model were a product of a lack of collaboration between educators on the same grade team and with administrators, unclear definition of roles, and a lack of understanding of the team model. The inadequate training regarding the team model and perceived lack of communication were at the core of their frustrations. Through the professional development offered, continued administrative support, and a follow-up professional development session, the educators at the project site campus will be empowered to implement the team model of transformational leadership better.

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Appendix A: The Project

Purpose: The team model of transformational leadership for educators & leaders is intended to be a professional development seminar aimed at providing support for educators and administrators to better implement the team model through the sharing of knowledge, consideration toward concerns, collaboration, creation of implementation plan, and refinement. Educators and administrators will have the opportunity to air any grievances which they may have with the current version of the team model, learn the nuances of the team model, explore samples including campuses that have correctly implemented the team model, collaborate in fruitful discourse concerning the improvement of the state of the team model at the stated campus, and refine any created action plan to suit the needs of students, teachers, administrators, and district expectations.

Structure: The professional development seminar will follow the elements of the design thinking model: emphasize and understand, define, ideate, prototype, and test. The professional development will have AM and PM sessions with campus-specific activities, district guidelines, and applicable rubrics to guide the meetings.

Agenda: During the session, the participants will be welcomed with a structured plan and grouped by grade teams to collaborate after the information is presented.

Slides for Day 1 – Day 3 Sessions

The Team Model of Transformational Leadership – Day 1

Design Thinking Model for Educators and Administrators
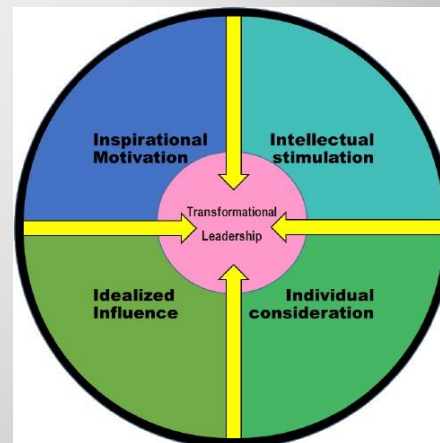
By Lucas Gomez

Research Questions

• What are middle school teachers' perceptions regarding the principals' use of the team model of transformational leadership to communicate expectations for classroom instruction?

• What are middle school principals' perceptions regarding the implementation of the team model of transformational leadership to help teachers understand expectations for classroom instruction?

• How can this information guide us to a better level of implementation of the Team Model?

Design Thinking Model
Mode of Delivery

Emphasize	Define	Ideate	Prototype	Test
What are participants needs concerning the Team Model? How do participants view the level of implementation of the Team Model?	What is the ideal definition of the Team Model according to participants? What is the ideal definition of the Team Model according to district guidelines and research?	What are possible solutions that would improve the level of implementation of the Team Model at the stated campus?	Participants will develop an example of a solution which will be created by collaborating to determine the best resolution among the solutions suggested.	The prototype will be tested against district guidelines and current research of the Team Model. Administrators will provide constructive feedback on the prototype.

Transformational Leadership

- The Team Model is built into Transformational Leadership.
- Transformational Leadership gives administrators and campus leaders the tools to implement necessary practices by leading by example, encouraging growth, coaching and empowerment, and inspiration (Brown et al., 2019).

The Team Model of Transformational Leadership – Day 2

Design Thinking Model for Educators and Administrators

By Lucas Gomez

How Does the Correct Implementation of the Team Model Benefit an Educational Organization?

- Teachers can be empowered through team participation to voice opinions and take an active role in educational improvement efforts (Erickson et al., 2015).

- Current research posits that teaming has a positive influence on school reform, the fostering of an adolescent-centered community, student perceptions, pre-service training, and distributive leadership (Corey & Babo, 2016).

- The interdisciplinary team is the signature component of high performing (middle) schools, literally the heart of the school (Jackson, 2016).

Professional Development Collaboration Opportunities

- Educators and Administrator will participate in small groups to voice concerns regarding the implementation of the team model. Small groups will then state their findings to the larger group.

- Participants will ideate possible solutions that would improve the level of implementation of the Team Model within their individual teams.

- The grade team will unite to create a working prototype using given template.

- Grade teams will refine the prototype using research rubrics and feedback from administrators.

The Team Model of Transformational Leadership – Day 3

Design Thinking Model for Educators and Administrators

By Lucas Gomez

Benefits of Communication in the Team Model

- Teachers can be empowered through team participation to voice opinions and take an active role in educational improvement efforts (Erickson et al., 2015).

- Some of the benefits include more effective communication and collaboration, which results in increased efficiency and decreased fatigue Erickson et al. (2015).

- Principal communication, support of teachers, and decision-making are behaviors that shape school culture along with such factors as trust, organizational effectiveness, collegiality, and self-image (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

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Agenda for Professional Development Day 1

8:00 – 8:30 Welcome Greeting (Breakfast Snacks)

8:30 – 9:00 Presenter Introduction

9:00 – 9:30 Teambuilding/Icebreaker exercise

9:30 – 10:00 Grade Team Breakout Session- Teachers will have the opportunity to

discuss how duties and leadership are exhibited at the campus

10:00 – 11:00 Slideshow Presentation

11:00 – 12:00 Grade Team Breakout Session – Emphasize Opportunity 1 -Teachers will

discuss the importance of transformational leadership at the campus. Teachers will also

discuss which type of transformational leader is present at the campus.

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 1:15 AM Review

1:15 – 2:00 Grade Team Breakout Session 2 - Emphasize Opportunity pt. 2 –

Presentation of findings and whole-group discussion.

2:00 – 2:30 Ideate Opportunity – Individual teams, will compare and contrast their ideal

transformational leader type with other grade teams through a gallery walk.

2:30 – 3:00 Administrators will discuss how they utilize the transformational leader

categories into their administerial duties how they can be exhibited in the grade teams.

3:00 – 3:15 Recap and closing

Agenda for Professional Development Day 2

8:00 – 8:30 Welcome Greeting (Breakfast Snacks)

8:30 – 9:00 Presenter Introduction / Day 1 Recap

9:00 – 9:30 Grade Team Breakout Session- Small group discussions

9:30 – 11:00 Slideshow Presentation – Day 2

11:00 – 12:00 Emphasize Opportunity – Educators and Administrators break into small

groups to discuss the implementation of team model

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 1:15 AM Review

1:15 – 2:00 Emphasize Opportunity pt. 2 – Discussion of findings and whole group

conversation.

2:00 – 3:00 Ideate Opportunity – Individual teams will present their understanding of the

team model as well as how the team model is currently being utilized at the campus

through a gallery walk

3:00 – 3:15 Presenter Recap and Closing of AM Session

Agenda for Professional Development Day 3

8:00 – 8:30 Welcome greeting (breakfast snacks)

8:30 – 9:30 Presenter introduction / Day 1 & 2 Recap / Review of gallery walk posters

9:30 – 10:30 Slideshow Presentation Day 3

10:30 – 11:00 Emphasize Opportunity – Small group discussions

11:00 – 11:30 Team Model – Small group discussions

11:30 – 12:00 Ideate Opportunity – In individual teams the participants will create

possible solutions that would improve the specific problems of the team model noted in

the AM session.

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 1:15 AM Review

1:15 – 2:00 Ideate Opportunity pt. 2 – Individual teams will compare and contrast their

solutions with other grade teams through a gallery walk.

2:00 – 2:30 Ideate Opportunity pt. 3 – The entire group will discuss the best solutions for

each grade team.

2:30 – 3:30 – Prototype Opportunity – Individual groups will create a working prototype

using a given template to address all noted needs and use designed solutions.

3:30 – 4:00 – Test Opportunity – Participants will present their prototype and receive

individual feedback from the presenter and administrators in small settings.

4:00 – 4:30 – Creation of implementation timeline.

4:30 – 4:45 – Closing/Completion of Assessment

Appendix B: Program Assessment

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
The campus' administrators and vision for success support "teaming"				
The administrative team employs the efficient traits of the transformational leader.				
The campus team leaders employ effective team model strategies.				
Teachers at the campus level correctly implement the team model as it has been presented.				
Overall, campus structures are in place to facilitate the communication necessary for implementing the team model.				
You were satisfied with the professional development this campus has employed to improve the implementation of the team model.				
You will employ strategies of the team model within your grade team level meetings and throughout the year.				

Please note any resources or extra supports needed teaming

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_____

_____

Appendix C: Professional Development Assessment

In which ways has the team model of transformational leadership been made more understandable as a result of this professional development?	
How do you specifically plan to implement the tenets of the team model of transformational leadership within your educator team/administrative team?	
What are your interdisciplinary teaming expectations of your administrator following the training sessions?	
What are your interdisciplinary teaming expectations of yourself following the training sessions?	
What is your schedule for improving communication to enhance the team model?	

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

The following questions were asked during the semistructured interview.

1. Tell me about your expectations for the implementation of the team model.

2. Tell me how the implementation of the team model affects the relationship between you and teachers.

3. Tell me about the barriers to the implementation of the team model.

4. Please tell me how you plan to implement the team model.

5. Let me know how you support teachers regarding the implementation of the team model.