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The Relationship of Teacher Perceptions of Principal Support Styles and Teachers' Own Attitudes about the Use of Support Styles with Children

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Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

School Psychology

Department of Psychology

THE RELATIONSHIP OF TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL SUPPORT STYLES
AND TEACHER'S OWN ATTITUDES ABOUT THE USE OF SUPPORT STYLES WITH
CHILDREN

by Michael Simcha Lax

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Psychology

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PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Dissertation Approval

This is to certify that the thesis presented to us by Michael S. Lax
on the 25th day of May, 2011, in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Psychology, has been examined and is
acceptable in both scholarship and literary quality.

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Abstract

This study assessed the role that principal modeling has on influencing teachers' classroom styles and behaviors. Teachers differ in the degree to which they employ autonomy supporting or controlling behaviors. The degree to which teachers demonstrate autonomy supportive behaviors has a direct effect on the level of autonomous motivation demonstrated by students. This is because students are more likely to develop self-determined motivation in a social environment which provides support for autonomy (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier and Ryan, 1991). Higher levels of student autonomy is associated with a lower school drop out rate (Vallerand, 1997) and higher levels of academic achievement (Vansteenkiste, Simon, Lens, Soenens & Matos, 2005). There are a number of theories as to why teachers may choose to employ a more controlling classroom style. These include the pressure of high stakes testing (Ryan and Laguardia, 1999) as well as the prevalence of more controlling methods taught in teacher training programs (Reeve, 2009). The current study explored the influence which school principals' and administrators' attitudes towards autonomy and control are adapted by classroom teachers through the process of modeling. The study also examined the role of demographic factors in influencing teachers' classroom styles.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Overview

Spearheaded by legislation at the federal and state levels, including the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandate, there has been a new emphasis on raising the bar, both with regard to the level of academic standards as well as the degree of accountability of teachers and schools. Barton (2005) draws attention to an equally important issue: the growing number of students who are failing to complete high school. Drawing on numbers compiled by several statisticians, recent graduation rates are calculated to hover about the 70% area (Barton, 2005).

As will be explored in more detail in the review of current literature, increasing the level of students' autonomous motivation has the potential to decrease the rate of student drop out directly (Vallerand, 1997), as well as to increase the level of student achievement. Increasing the level of autonomous student motivation also has the potential of decreasing factors correlated with student drop out, such as having poor grades. In turn, the level of autonomous motivation demonstrated by students is affected by the level of autonomy support provided by the classroom teachers, because students are more likely to develop self-determined motivation in a social environment which provides support for autonomy (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991)

One potential method of modifying teacher behaviors in order to increase the degree of autonomy support may be accomplished by having the building principal model these behaviors both in his/her interactions with students, as well as with the classroom teachers. The purpose of this study is to explore the role of the school leadership in modeling controlling or autonomy promoting behaviors for classroom teachers.

What is the nature of the relationship between levels of autonomous student motivation and the rate of student drop out? The U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) (2002) has characterized dropping out as the culmination of a gradual process of disengagement from school that begins in the earliest grades. There are several factors that the GAO (2002) identifies as being correlated with dropping out. These factors include low grades, absenteeism and grade retention. Vallerand (1997) found that autonomous motivation is associated with a lower dropout rate than is the more controlled motivation. Autonomous motivation can be defined as motivation that is generated from an internal source, rather than from external pressures or demands. Conversely, controlled motivation may be defined as motivation that results from external pressures and demands. Furthermore, autonomous motivation is correlated with higher levels of achievement (Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Soenens, & Matos, 2005); it was previously noted that low grades have been associated with a higher frequency of dropping out. Consequently, raising the level of the student body's autonomous motivation bears the promise of halting this process of student disengagement, raising the level of student achievement, and decreasing the rate of student attrition.

What are the characteristics of a learning environment that promotes more autonomous academic motivation? Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) may provide some of the answers to this question.

Overview of Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) views intrinsic motivation as a natural and innate desire to learn and to grow by mastering one's external and internal environments (Grolnick, Gurland, Jacob, & Decourcey, 2002). Intrinsic motivation flourishes in an environment that supports autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Autonomy refers to being self-controlled. Behaviors are self-controlled when they are engaged in spontaneously, with the goal of satisfying one's inner interests. Studies have shown that threats, (Deci & Cascio, 1972), surveillance, (Lepper & Greene, 1975) evaluations, (Harackiewicz, Manderlink, & Sansone, 1984), and deadlines (Amabile, Dejong, & Lepper, 1976) have led to a decrease in intrinsic motivation. Competency needs can be defined as "the need to experience oneself as capable of producing desired outcomes and avoiding negative outcomes" (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Relatedness has also been found to play a role in the development of intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Relatedness is defined as the need to feel securely connected to others and to experience oneself as worthy of love and respect (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Deci and Ryan (2000) characterize relatedness as providing the necessary sense of security to allow for the expression of growth needs.

Autonomy Support Behaviors in the Classroom

Reeve (2002) identifies a number of behaviors that differentiate between those teachers who support autonomy and those who are support greater control. These behaviors were in the domains of communication style and motivational style. Teachers that promoted greater autonomy were more informative than directive in their communications with students. They also viewed motivation as an internal resource, rather than being driven by external demands and circumstances.

Statement of the Problem

Having established the idea that a more autonomy-promoting style offers significant advantages over a more controlling style, including a lower dropout rate (Vallerand, 1997), a higher level of academic achievement (Vansteenskiste et al., 2005), and increased creativity (Amabile, 1979), one would expect that teachers would favor this style of teaching. However,

studies have shown that adults in general express a more positive attitude towards more controlling strategies (Barrett & Boggiano, 1988) and that teachers tend to utilize more controlling strategies (Newby, 1991).

There are a number of theorized reasons about why teachers may adopt a more controlling attitude. These include high stakes testing which places demands on both teachers and students, (Ryan & Laguardia, 1999), as well as the prevalence of more controlling methods taught in teacher training programs (Reeve, 2009). High stakes testing increases the pressure on teachers to show quick increases in demonstrable student achievement. Because teachers perceive controlling methods to be more immediately effective, they are more likely to employ these practices when under pressure to show immediate results. The methods taught in teacher training programs may be learned and replicated by teachers through the process of modeling. However, a heretofore unexplored, possible reason for teachers' preference for a given style is the role of leadership modeling, because teachers may tend to model themselves after a key leader, such as the building principal.

Possible Influence of Modeling

Bandura (1969, 1971) has demonstrated through extensive studies that learning can occur through social modeling. Weiss (1978) suggests that employees may come to internalize their manager's values through the process of modeling. Accordingly, it would be logical to conclude that teachers would be affected by the attitude expressed by school administrators towards autonomy and control. The administration's attitude may be inferred by teachers by their behavior towards students in a disciplinary context, as well as by the way they relate to teachers as supervisees.

Lefkowitz, Blake, and Mouton (1955) found that the likelihood of an observer imitating the behavior of a model increased, depending on the perceived prestige of the model. Accordingly, teacher behavior may vary, and is dependent on the perceived prestige of the supervisor or principal. Additionally, Weiss (1978) found that the likelihood of an employee internalizing a supervisor's values positively correlated with the perceived degree of unconditional, positive regard expressed by the supervisor towards the employee. Consequently, teachers may be more likely to emulate the autonomy/control values of administration members that are perceived as expressing a higher degree of unconditional regard towards them. Consequently, teachers may be more likely to imitate the behavior of a principal who behaves towards them in a manner which promotes their own autonomy and competence.

Weiss (1978) found that both the level of prestige enjoyed by the supervisor, as well as the degree of consideration afforded by the supervisor affected the likelihood of the supervisee's emulation of the supervisor's values; however, there was a difference between these factors when it came to employees with high self-esteem. Employees with low self-esteem were affected both by the degree of prestige enjoyed by their supervisor, as well as by the degree of consideration shown to them. By contrast, employees with high self-esteem were not affected by the degree of prestige enjoyed by their supervisor, although they were responsive to the degree of consideration shown to them. Accordingly, supervisees who value their supervisor's consideration may choose to emulate their supervisor in order to merit further consideration.

Consequently, it is our expectation that all teachers, regardless of their degree of self-esteem, will be affected by the level of autonomy and competency support afforded to them by their supervisor. However, employees with high self-esteem will be less likely to be affected by their supervisor's degree of prestige than will employees with lower self-esteem.

Purpose of the Study

The literature suggests a number of possible reasons why teachers may choose to employ a more controlling style, despite the advantages of a more autonomous style. Until now, the literature has not explored the possible contribution of the role model set by the school leadership, for example, the school principal. The purpose of this study is to examine the role of school leadership in setting the tone for the degree of autonomy and control throughout the school. A number of research studies, including, most recently, Reeve's (2004) have found that teachers' classroom styles are subject to modification. Specifically, they can be taught practices to promote autonomy in the classroom. This proposed study would build on Reeve's research by clarifying the role that school leadership plays in shaping teacher behaviors with regard to classroom practices that facilitate control or conversely, facilitate autonomy support. In turn, this would allow for the possibility of an additional point of intervention; specifically that modifying the school principal's behavior will have an impact on teacher behavior.

This study intends to answer the following research questions:

1. Are teachers currently utilizing more autonomy supportive behaviors versus controlling behaviors in their responses to their students?
2. Does the perceived pattern of the principal/supervisor's behaviors towards classroom teachers with regard to control and autonomy affect the level of autonomy support which teachers provide their students?
3. Does a teacher who feels supported by his or her principal or supervisor engage in more autonomy supporting behaviors toward their students?
4. Does the perceived level of prestige of the building principal or supervisor affect the likelihood of teachers modeling this behavior?

5. What other characteristics of a principal or supervisor may impact a teacher's likelihood of the teachers modeling their supervisor's autonomy supporting behaviors versus controlling behaviors?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Definition and Levels of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Vansteenkiste, Lens, and Deci (2006) define intrinsic motivation in a learning context as learning for inherent interest and enjoyment, as contrasted to extrinsic motivation, which is performed in order to obtain an outcome that is separable from the learning itself.

Extrinsic motivation can be further divided into various degrees of relative autonomy that ranges on a continuum from autonomous to controlled. Ryan and Connell (1989) identified four types of motivation that fall along the continuum of relative autonomy. From most controlled to most autonomous, these styles of regulation are external, introjected, identified, and intrinsic.

The degree of relative autonomy was found to be associated with attitudes, coping and enjoyment. The more highly those students were externally motivated, the less likely they were to show interest, value or effort in academic tasks, and the more likely they were to blame others for their failures. Introjected regulation was associated with more effort, but with poorer coping and with more anxiety. Identified regulation was associated with better coping, and with greater enjoyment of school. Finally, intrinsic motivation was identified with interest, enjoyment, and with coping more successfully with setbacks.

What are the definitions and identifying characteristics of the different types of regulation? External regulation is prompted entirely by external pressures, including rewards and punishments. A student who completes his or her class work so that he or she is able to go to recess would be an example of this form of motivation. He or she may not be at all interested in the subject matter and is propelled solely by the external contingency. Introjected regulation involves internal pressure to engage in a behavior in order to generate feelings of self-worth , or

conversely to avoid feelings of shame. In the identification stage of regulation, people recognize the underlying value of a behavior. However, they may value this behavior for utilitarian purposes rather than for valuing the behavior as a source of satisfaction or enjoyment. Deci and Ryan (2000) give an example of this stage: exercising in order to remain healthy. The exercise is serving a means to obtain the desired and valued goal of healthiness rather than as inherently valuable. The final, most internalized stage is integration, which involves not only identifying with the importance of behaviors, but also integrating these fully into one's personality.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) views intrinsic motivation as a natural and innate desire to learn and to grow by mastering one's external and internal environments (Grolnick, Gurland, Jacob, & Decourcey, 2001). Intrinsic motivation flourishes in an environment that supports autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Autonomy refers to being self-controlled. Behaviors are self-controlled when they are spontaneously engaged in with the goal of satisfying one's inner interests. Studies have shown that threats, (Deci & Cascio, 1972), surveillance, (Lepper & Greene, 1975) evaluations, (Harackiewicz, Manderlink, & Sansone, 1984), and deadlines (Amabile, Dejong, & Lepper, 1976) have led to a decrease in intrinsic motivation. Subsequent studies found that these external contingencies also lead to a decrease in the quality and depth of learning. As an example, rewards and evaluations were found to decrease creativity (Amabile, 1979), decrease complex problem solving (McGraw & McCullers, 1979) and decrease deep, conceptual processing (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987). Deci and Ryan (2000) explain that these decreases in intrinsic motivation and performance are due to the perception of increased external control and decreased autonomy associated with these external contingencies.

Competency needs can be defined as “the need to experience oneself as capable of producing desired outcomes and avoiding negative outcomes” (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Deci and Ryan (1980) associate fulfillment of this need with positive feedback. Positive feedback has been shown to increase intrinsic motivation relative to no feedback; conversely, negative feedback has been shown to decrease intrinsic motivation. However, the enhancement effect of positive feedback is limited to times when the recipient of the feedback feels responsible for the performance.

Grolnick et al. (2001) associate fulfillment of this need with a level of challenge that matched, optimally, with the student’s ability level. Danner and Lonky (1981) ranked tasks according to their cognitive complexity with the Piagetian model. Children were assessed to determine their current levels, and were then administered one of three ranked tasks. The time that the individual children spent on each task was compared. It was found that children spent the greatest amount of time and described as most interesting, the task that was just above their pretest level. Similarly, Csikszentmihalyi (1975) indicates that people are more likely to experience flow when their skills are optimally matched to the level of challenge presented by the activities. , Csikszentmihalyi (1975) defines flow as an intense experiential involvement in moment-to-moment activity, with attention being fully invested in the task, and the person performing the task operating at his highest capacity. The degree of task involvement may be engaging enough to make the doer unaware of time or personal fatigue.

Relatedness has also been found to play a role in the development of intrinsic motivation. Relatedness is defined as the need to feel securely connected to others and to experience oneself as worthy of love and respect (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Deci and Ryan (2000) characterize

relatedness as providing the necessary sense of security to allow for the expression of growth needs.

Unlike the other needs of autonomy and competence, satisfaction of relatedness needs do not have to be immediately present in the task situation; rather, they serve as a distal support for maintaining intrinsic motivation. This idea is implicit in attachment theory (Bowlby, 1979).

During infancy, intrinsically motivated behavior expresses itself as exploratory behavior. Infants that are more securely attached are more likely to engage in exploratory behavior. Similarly, in a study that involved children working on an interesting activity in the presence of an adult experimenter who ignored any attempts at interaction, the children displayed very low levels of intrinsic motivation (Anderson, Manoogian, & Reznick, 1976).

What Autonomy Support Looks Like in the Classroom

Reeve (2002) identifies a number of behaviors that differentiate between autonomy supporting and more controlling behaviors. These behaviors were identified with a personality questionnaire and also through a social psychological approach. The personality questionnaire, the Problems in School Questionnaire (Reeve, Bolt, & Cai, 1999), is designed to identify teacher dispositions towards autonomy support versus control. The social psychological approach involved manipulation of the social environment to expose teachers to conditions that present various levels of pressure towards adopting a more controlling orientation.

Autonomy supporting teachers spend more time listening, when compared with more controlling teachers. They also motivate students to achieve by sparking their interest rather than by directives and rewards/consequences. Additionally, they tend to provide more supportive feedback and less criticism than more controlling teachers. Autonomy supporting teachers provided hints when needed but avoided giving answers. They also adopt the perspective of the

student. Interestingly, the amount of control teachers exerted over the instructional materials such as notes or books was also found to differentiate more autonomy promoting from more controlling teachers, because more controlling teachers tended to reserve more control for themselves.

After an extensive review of the literature, Reeve, Jang, Carrell, Jeon, & Barch (2004) identified four behavioral dimensions that differentiate autonomy supporting from more controlling teachers. These domains were identified as their different approaches to motivational resources, use of controlling or non-controlling language, promotion of the value and importance of uninteresting activities, and acknowledging student experience of negative affect. In the area of motivational resources, controlling teachers rely on extrinsic resources such as incentives, consequences, deadlines and directives. They assign tasks and expect compliance. By contrast, autonomy-promoting teachers tend to motivate, using the student's interests, enjoyment and sense of challenge as motivators. Autonomy promoting teachers are more likely to explain the importance of activities or tasks that are uninteresting. By contrast, more controlling teachers are likely to assign the task and expect compliance, regardless of the interest the task generates. Autonomy supporting teachers are accepting of student expressions of negative affect and validate their reactions. More controlling teachers tend to attempt to counter or change the reaction.

What Factors Lead Teachers to Favor a More Directive Behavioral Style?

Having established the fact that a more autonomy-promoting style offers significant advantages over a more controlling style, including a lower drop out rate (Vallerand, 1997), a higher level of academic achievement (Vansteenskiste et al., 2005), and increased creativity (Amabile, 1979), one would expect that teachers would favor this style of teaching. However,

studies have shown that teachers express a more positive attitude towards more controlling strategies (Barrett & Boggiano, 1988) and tend to use more controlling strategies (Newby, 1991).

Ryan and Laguardia (1999), as well as Ryan and Brown (2005) identify high stakes testing as one of the possible causes of teachers adopting a more controlling attitude. High stakes testing imposes financial rewards and punishments for schools, administrators and students based on test results. In turn, pressured teachers are more likely to adopt a more controlling stance (Deci, Spiegel, Ryan, Koestner, & Kauffman, 1982) because they view these strategies as the best way to maximize achievement outcomes. Ryan and Laguardia (1999) describe this phenomenon as “pressure begets pressure.”

This phenomenon was demonstrated in a 1982 study by Deci, Speigel, Ryan, Koestner & Kauffman (1982) involving mock instructors and students. Participants were randomly assigned to either instructor or to student roles. All of the instructors were given information on a new curriculum, and on the ability to teach it to an individual student after they had mastered it. Just before the learning session began, half of the instructors were told that it was their job merely to facilitate their student’s learning. The rest of the instructors were informed that it was their job to make sure that the students actually learned the materials “up to standards”. Teaching sessions of both groups of instructors were tape recorded and rated. It was found that the instructors who were pressured to ensure that their students achieved to the desired standards were generally more controlling than the instructors who were informed that their role was merely to facilitate student learning.

A more recent 1990 study by Flink, Bogianno and Barrett yielded similar results. Teachers of fourth grade students were asked to teach a new curriculum. Half of the teachers were told that the goal of the curriculum was to raise students’ achievement performances, but

the other half were told that the purpose was to increase student learning. It was found that the teachers who were told that the purpose was to increase standards showed a greater tendency to be more controlling than the other teachers; they also produced poorer student achievement results.

Reeve (2002) as well as Reeve (2009) suggests a number of reasons why teachers may favor a more controlling approach. The prevalence and primacy of behavior modification principles in teacher training programs, and the relative absence of training in how to design instruction to best support student autonomy are two of the factors that lead teachers to prefer a more controlling style. In addition, it is easier to focus on identifiable behaviors such as time spent out of seat, number of times that a student raised his or her hand than it is on assessing and enhancing the more subtle and intangible domain of student interest. Teachers themselves are subject to controlling and pressuring conditions within their jobs. There are numerous demands on teachers, such as the accountability and performance standards imposed by high stakes testing, deadlines, and large class sizes. These demands lead teachers to focus more heavily on immediate and measurable behavior outcomes than on promoting conceptual understanding and nurturing initiative.

Teachers may also be influenced by student behaviors, because Skinner and Belmont (1993) have found that teachers tend to act in more controlling ways when students are disengaged or listless. Another explanation is that teachers and parents may believe in the maximal operant principle, which specifies that the size of reward correlates with an increasing likelihood of increasing intrinsic motivation. Rather than viewing motivation as an inner resource contained within the student that needs to be nurtured, adults may view motivation as engendered by outside rewards and consequences. A survey of parents and teachers by

Boggiano, Barret, Weiher, McClelland, and Lusk conducted in 1987 found that strategies that were more controlling were endorsed as more likely to succeed in enhancing student and performance than less controlling strategies. Some teachers may view motivation as a fixed and limited resource within students. Accordingly, when they perceive a student's motivation as low, they will attempt to remediate this deficit by imposing controlling, external motivational strategies.

Teachers are also affected by cultural norms. Teachers are viewed as superior to students due to their superior education and experience. Research shows that the partner in a more influential position is more likely to speak first and adopt a take charge attitude when interacting with a less influential person (Magee, Galinsky, & Gruenfeld, 2007). Similarly, Flink (1990) found that more controlling teachers were more likely to be rated as competent by objective raters. Reeve (2009) suggests that this is related to the perception of controlling strategies as more effective.

Teachers may also operate under the false assumption that autonomy support equates to a lack of classroom structure and a chaotic classroom environment. However, as Reeve (2009) points out, this is a fallacy. Structure consists of clearly communicating expectations as well as a means of fulfilling expectations, such as directions, objectives and feedback. The amount and clarity of information about these identified topics are what differentiate classrooms with high and low structure. What differentiates autonomy supporting from more controlling classrooms is the style in which this information is conveyed. Controlling classrooms tend to pressure students towards reaching objectives, whereas autonomy supporting classrooms nurture and support students in reaching their objectives. Furthermore, studies have shown that objective observers rate teachers who provide more autonomy support as more structured than more controlling

environments (Jang, Reeve, & Deci in press; Sierens, Goossens, Soenens, Vansteenkiste, & Dochy, 2007).

Can Teachers be Trained to be More Autonomy Supporting?

Reeve, Jang, Carrell, Jeon, & Barch (2004) reviewed a number of studies that were conducted to explore if teachers could be successfully taught to modify their teaching styles to increase the degree of autonomy support they provided. De Charms (1976) conducted a study with experienced fifth grade teachers. These teachers were provided with an intensive week-long residential workshop on how to promote origin supportive behavior. Origin and pawn theory was the predecessor to self-determination theory. This workshop was found to increase both student reports of their teacher's autonomy supporting behavior, as well as student achievement.

However, Reeve et al. (2004) identifies several limitations to this study. It would be difficult to replicate this study, because of the extensive demands on the participant's time that this workshop demanded. Furthermore, the study was conducted prior to the development of self-determination theory and practices.

In 1998, Reeve conducted a study of pre-service teachers. For a period of 45 minutes, these teachers-in-training read an instructional booklet on promotion of autonomy. Immediately after completion of the booklet as well as a month later, a written attitude survey was administered to these participants. On both administrations, it was found that teachers had altered their attitude to become more autonomy supportive.

However, Reeve et al. (2004) note that the study has two significant limitations. The sample consisted of pre-service teachers. Because these participants had not yet begun teaching, they were less likely to have formed definitive attitudes. Consequently, the study results may not

be applicable to experienced teachers, who may be less susceptible to change. Another limitation is that this study measured only teacher self-reports rather than actual classroom behaviors.

To overcome these limitations, Reeve et al. (2004) conducted a study of 20 high school teachers with an average of 14.8 years of experience. The teachers came from two Midwestern high schools. Both the schools and the teachers of the two schools shared many commonalities, and therefore the decision was made to treat them as one sample. The teachers were randomly divided into a treatment group and a delayed treatment control group. The treatment group received a one-hour workshop on how to support autonomy in the classroom, as well as a web site for independent study of autonomy supporting practices. Trained observers then entered the classrooms of both the treatment and the delayed control group. They noted the frequency of the following autonomy supporting behaviors: support of student interest, use of controlling or non-controlling language, promotion of the value and importance of uninteresting activities, and acknowledging student experience of negative affect. The observers also noted the levels of student engagement, both in terms of task involvement as well as in their attempts to influence their teacher.

It was found that teachers in the treatment group demonstrated significantly more autonomy supporting behaviors than the control group. Also, students in the treatment group demonstrated a significantly higher level of task engagement. This study appears to demonstrate conclusively that teachers can be taught to alter their teaching style in order to increase the amount of autonomy support provided. It also shows the benefits that accrue to students when teachers modify their teaching styles to increase the level of autonomy support they provide.

Reeve (2009) breaks down the process of becoming more autonomy supporting and less controlling into three parts. The first task is to become more mindful of the factors that pull the

teachers to display controlling behavior at times, as well as the effects that this behavior has on students. This will help ensure that teachers make decisions based not only on daily demands, but also with the ultimate goal of helping students achieve autonomy. The second task is to want to support student autonomy. Teachers should be informed both of the advantages that accrue to students, as well as the personal advantages it offers teachers. The benefits that this style offers students, including increased levels of achievement has been outlined previously (Vansteenkiste et al., 2005). The advantages it offers teachers include a greater sense of personal accomplishment as well as fewer experiences of feeling emotionally exhausted (Roth, Assor, Kanat, Raymond & Kaplan, 2007). The third and final step is to develop the know-how to implement autonomy supporting practices in the classroom.

Reeve (2009) lists five key practices that are helpful in transitioning to a more autonomous approach. These are nurturing inner resources, explaining rationales for tasks, use of non-controlling language, allowing for self-paced student learning, and acceptance of negative affect of students. Nurturing inner resources is more a general attitude than a specific practice, and refers to viewing students as having inner motivational resources, including psychological needs, interests and preferences of their own. The remaining practices have been previously explained.

Cultural Considerations

Deci and Ryan (2000) characterize the drive for autonomy, competence, and relatedness as universal human needs. Accordingly, it would be logical to conclude that these needs are universal and do not vary by culture. By contrast, other theorists (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) posit the idea that the need for autonomy is not an innate need, and is important only in cultures that value it or for individuals who personally espouse this value.

Lynch, La Guardia, and Ryan (2009) conducted an innovative cross-cultural study that analyzed the need for autonomy in three countries that varied in their allocentric-idiocentric dimension: China, Russia and the United States. Allocentric may be defined as being more interested in the collective good, as contrasted with a more idiocentric culture, in which individuals are more interested in their private interests. The study conceptualized autonomy as providing the bridge between ideal and actual self-concept. Rogers (1961) posited the notion that in addition to possessing a current or actual self-concept, people also have an ideal view of themselves. The gap between the actual and idealized selves has an inverse relationship with self-esteem: the larger the gap, the lower one's self-esteem is likely to be; the smaller the gap, the higher one's self-esteem is likely to be. Higgins (1989) provided evidence that when people experience a discrepancy between their actual self-concept and their ideal self-concept, they are likely to display depressed affect.

Which factors in the interpersonal environment lead to a narrowing of the gap between the actual and idealized self-concept? Rogers (1961) argues that a therapeutic relationship marked by genuineness, empathy and unconditional self-regard could facilitate a reconciliation of the discordances between the actual and idealized selves. A safe environment marked by these characteristics provides clients with the security they need in order to explore and integrate aspects of their personality that were previously treated as off limits.

Self-Determination Theory's conceptualization of the need for autonomy appears to relate most closely to this idea. Autonomy consists of one's behavior being self-controlled and of following one's own interests. Accordingly, a relationship marked by autonomy support would provide a context in which people would be more likely to pursue their ideal selves.

Consequently, the gap between the ideal and actual selves would be smaller in more autonomy supportive relationships.

The Lynch et al. (2009) study examined whether or not the hypothesized relationship between the variables would hold when self-concept was measured with the Big Five traits, and whether or not culture would moderate the relationships between self-concept discrepancies and well-being and between self-concept discrepancies and autonomy support. The Big Five traits are five personality characteristics which are believed to be stable and enduring. They are: openness to new experiences, conscientiousness or self-discipline, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism, or a tendency to experience negative emotions.

The study found that country membership did affect the strength of the associations between variables, but not the direction of the association. For all of the participants in China, Russia and the United States, a discrepancy between actual and ideal self-concept was associated with lower levels of well-being. Likewise, being with an autonomy-supporting partner was found to be associated with smaller discrepancies between the ideal and actual selves. Country membership moderated only the strength and not the direction of the relationship. Finally, autonomy support was found to be associated with greater well-being in all three countries. The relationship between autonomy support and well-being was partially mediated by a reduced discrepancy between ideal and actual selves.

The Role of Modeling

Having discussed some of the other possible factors that lead teachers to be more controlling, it is necessary to return to explore the possible role of school administration modeling in shaping teachers' classroom behaviors. Bandura (1969, 1971) has demonstrated through extensive studies that learning can occur through social modeling. Weiss (1978)

suggests that employees may come to internalize their manager's values through the process of modeling. Accordingly, it would be logical to conclude that teachers would be affected by the attitude expressed by school administrators towards autonomy and control. The administration's attitude may be inferred by teachers by their behavior towards students in a disciplinary context, and also in the way in which they relate to teachers as supervisees.

Lefkowitz, Blake and Mouton (1955) found that the likelihood of an observer imitating the behavior of a model increased, depending on the perceived prestige of the model. The context of the study was the likelihood of a passerby crossing against the traffic light when a confederate crossed against the light. The study found that observers were more likely to follow the lead of a model dressed as a high status person, i.e. with a suit and polished shoes, than to follow the lead of a person of apparently low status, i.e. with soiled trousers and scuffed shoes. The study was unable to evaluate the possible inhibitory effect of a low status model on passerby behavior because of the low incidence of traffic light running in the control sample.

Gueguen and Pichot (2001) improved on this study by conducting their experiment in an area with a generally higher incidence of traffic light running. The study employed confederates of high, intermediate, and low status. The study found that high status models correlated with an increased likelihood of passerby running traffic lights. The rate of traffic light running was significantly higher than the control population. Intermediate status models did not significantly affect passerby behavior. Low status models exercised an inhibitory effect on passerby behavior, correlating with a rate of traffic light running that was below that of the control population. Accordingly, teacher behavior may vary, depending on the perceived prestige of the supervisor or principal.

Additionally, Weiss (1978) found that the likelihood of an employee internalizing a supervisor's values positively correlated with the perceived degree of unconditional positive regard expressed by the supervisor towards the employee. Consequently, teachers may be more likely to emulate the autonomy/control values of administration members that are perceived as expressing a higher degree of unconditional regard towards these teachers. Consequently, teachers may be more likely to imitate the behavior of a principal who behaves towards them in a manner which promotes these teachers' own autonomy and competence.

A study by Pajak and Glickman (1984) demonstrates this to be true. Teachers watched videos of a feedback session between a supervising and a subordinate teacher. The video segments depicted different styles of interaction between the teachers. One video segment featured an autonomy supportive interaction, as the supervising teaching demonstrated empathy, offered choices, and was non-directive. In the other segment, a more controlling supervisor was depicted. The controlling supervisor directed behavior, did not offer choices, and was not empathic. Teachers who viewed both segments stated that they were more likely to follow the suggestions of the autonomy promoting supervisor. They also rated the controlling supervisor as less trustworthy, and less likely to inspire change.

Weiss (1978) found that although both the level of prestige enjoyed by the supervisor, as well as the degree of consideration afforded by the supervisor affected the likelihood of the supervisee's emulation of the supervisor's values, there was a difference between these factors when it came to employees with high self-esteem. Employees with low self-esteem were affected both by the degree of prestige enjoyed by their supervisor, as well as by the degree of consideration shown to them. By contrast, employees with high self-esteem were not affected by

the degree of prestige enjoyed by their supervisor, although they were responsive to the degree of consideration shown to them.

Weiss (1978) hypothesizes that the degree of prestige enjoyed by the supervisor provides information to the supervisee about the likely consequence of modeling the supervisor's behaviors. Employees with high self-esteem are more likely to access their own internal database to determine the likely consequences of actions, rather than to examine the degree of prestige enjoyed by the model. By contrast, the degree of consideration afforded to a supervisee by a supervisor is directly mediated by the supervisor. Accordingly, supervisees who value their supervisor's consideration may choose to emulate their supervisor in order to merit further consideration. Consequently, it is our expectation that all teachers, regardless of their degree of self-esteem, will be affected by the level of autonomy and competency support afforded to them by their supervisor. However, employees with high self-esteem will be less likely to be affected by their supervisor's degree of prestige than employees with lower self-esteem.

Conclusion

There have been mounting concerns about the quality of student academic achievement in the public schools, as well as by the rising number of high school dropouts. Self-Determination Theory appears to offer a glimmer of hope into this grim prognosis. When the basic needs of students for autonomy, competency and relatedness are met, students will exercise their natural desires to explore and to achieve. However, teachers are more prone to endorsing (Barrett & Boggiano, 1988) as well as to using more controlling strategies (Newby, 1991). The intent of this study is to examine the effect that role modeling by the school administration and leadership has on the likelihood of teachers adapting a more controlling or autonomy promoting

style. In turn, this would allow for an additional point of intervention; specifically, that modifying the school principal's behavior will impact on teacher behavior.

Chapter 3

Method

Overview

This study utilized the *Teachers' Classroom Style Survey* (TCSS). The TCSS was created by the responsible investigator for the purpose of this study. As detailed later in this section, the primary source of items of the TCSS was previously normed surveys. Consequently, the TCSS did not require independent validation. The purpose of the TCSS was to assess teachers' control orientations as well as their perceptions of the degree of autonomy support offered by their supervisors. The primary objective was to analyze whether or not a teacher's perception of the supervisor autonomy support predicted the teacher's control orientation.

The TCSS consists of four sections. The first section consists of demographic questions, in order to assess whether or not the gender or race of the teacher or student played a role in teachers' classroom styles. The second section, My Principal/Supervisor (MPS) assesses a teacher's perception of the degree of autonomy afforded by the teacher's supervisor or principal. A third section consists of two questions regarding a teacher's perception of the perceived prestige of the principal (PR), and one question regarding the number of years that the principal had served. The objective of this section is to determine if a teacher's evaluation of the principal's status or the length of the principal's tenure predicted whether or not he or she would model his or her autonomy/control behaviors after their principal. The fourth section, My Classroom Style (MCS), assesses teacher attitudes towards autonomy and control.

Participants

All teachers of students between kindergarten and twelfth grade in the identified school districts and schools were eligible to participate. The survey contains several questions regarding

grades and subjects taught which serve to screen out any non-teaching faculty. One public school district in New Jersey and two private schools in New York, an all-girls school and an all-boys school, granted their written agreement to participate as sources of survey participants.

The private girls school is a parochial, all-girls elementary school with over two thousand students and approximately one hundred and twenty teachers. The school is located in a low socioeconomic status neighborhood, with a median household income of \$26,648, as compared with a New York State average of \$46,766 (Private School Review, 2010).

The private boy's school has over 500 students and 22 teachers. The school is located in a high status neighborhood, with a median household income of \$88,075 (Private School Review, 2010).

The public school district is composed of non-sectarian elementary and secondary schools with 1,833 students and 112 teachers in grades kindergarten through twelfth grade (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). The student population is 93% white, as compared with the national average of 55% white. All teachers are highly qualified.

Socioeconomic status is higher than the state average, with only 11% of students qualifying for a free lunch, as compared with a state average of 28%. About 80% of teachers have a bachelor's degree, and about 20% have a master's degree. (New Jersey Department of Education, 2009)

Prior to the implementation of this study, written approval was sought and received from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM). The TCSS's cover letter ensured informed consent by informing participants of the voluntary nature of participation in this study and the general purpose of this study. They were also informed that the results of the study would be shared with participants upon request.

Design, Procedure and Methods

Obtaining measures.

The two standardized questionnaires incorporated into the TCSS, the Problems in Schools Questionnaire (PIS: Deci, Sheinman, Schwartz, & Ryan, 1981) and the Work Climate Questionnaire (WCQ: Baard, Deci, & Ryan, 2004), were downloaded from the University of Rochester's Self-Determination website, www.psych.rochester.edu/SDT. Both measures are in the public domain. Additionally, written permission was obtained from Dr. Deci to use these measures as part of this study.

Study site approvals.

The schools involved were selected as a sample of convenience, based on the author's relationship with these schools. The process of obtaining approval for administering this study varied from school to school. In one school, this involved a face-to-face meeting with the superintendent and building principals. In one study site, approval was obtained after telephone and email communication with a principal. In the third study site, approval was obtained through the agency of the school psychologist. All three study sites granted written approval to conduct this study.

Recruitment of subjects.

The TCSS was administered as a printed survey, as well as an online survey on surveymonkey.com. In the public school district, teachers were offered the choice of completing the survey online or in printed form. Due to the lack of a central email communication system in both of the private schools, the surveys were distributed only in print and not in online format. The process of disseminating the survey to faculty members was a collaborative effort between the author and school administration. Accordingly, the procedure varied from school to school.

The public school district allowed the author to email a link of the survey to all of the teachers and to place surveys in the teachers' mailboxes. Additionally, personal contacts with the faculty were allowed. This personal contact varied from school to school within the district. In the high school, the author was invited to address the entire faculty at a meeting, and to hand the surveys to faculty members. In the middle school, the author presented to some of the teachers at team meetings with the principal. The author did not have any formal personal contacts with the elementary or primary school teachers. About a month after the survey was sent out, email and print reminders were sent to teachers. The reminders contained a link to the online address for the surveys.

In the private all-girls school, the principal personally assumed the responsibility to hand out printed surveys and reminders to the classroom teachers. The individual classroom teacher respondents then mailed the surveys to the Dissertation Chair. In the private all-boys school, the school psychologist distributed and collected the printed surveys.

In order to preserve respondent anonymity, neither the print nor the online survey collected any personally identifying information, or asked the respondents in which school they worked. Consequently, it is not possible to ascertain the number of respondents from each school.

Measurement of teacher orientation toward autonomy and control.

All of the questions from The Problem in Schools Questionnaire (PIS: Deci, Sheinman, Schwartz, & Ryan, 1981) were used in the My Classroom Style (MCS) section of the TCSS. However, three of the items that appeared to be asking about a parent's response to a situation were reworded to direct the questions to a classroom teacher. Otherwise, the questions were

redacted verbatim. The purpose of the MCS is to assess teacher's orientation towards autonomy and control.

Specifically, the scale uses a teacher's responses to hypothetical situations in order to identify the teacher's classroom style on a continuum between highly autonomous and highly controlling. This scale consists of 8 hypothetical problem situations that require adult intervention to respond to a child's behavior. These items each have four possible adult solutions to the problem situation. The possible solutions ranged from highly controlling, moderately controlling, moderately autonomous and highly autonomous. The respondent was instructed to rate all of the four responses on a Likert scale, from one to seven. A *one* indicates that given the respondent's style, the response is highly inappropriate; a *four* indicates that the response is moderately appropriate, and a *seven* indicates that the response is highly appropriate. The responses to each of the eight items on each of the four subscales were averaged to yield four subscale scores, with a range between one and seven.

In order to calculate the summative PIS Score more accurately, the scores were weighted according to their relative position on the control-autonomy continuum. The formula originally used to calculate the summative PIS score weighted the Highly Controlling (HC) scores by -2, the Moderately Controlling (MC) scores by -1, the Moderately Autonomous Scores (MA) by +1 and the Highly Autonomous (HA) scores by +2. However, a 1999 study of mean interscale correlations by Reeve, Bolt, and Kai found that the MA scale showed a greater correlation with the moderately controlling scale than with the autonomy scales, as it was originally intended to function. Accordingly, the MA scale was eliminated from the PIS calculation.

The 1981 study established internal consistency by administering the questionnaire to 68 teachers who came from six schools in two school districts. Test re-test reliability was

established by re-administering the survey to 19 of the teachers, 2 months after the first administration. Internal consistency was analyzed by correlating the eight items of each subscale with each of the four subscale totals. It was found that the average correlation of items with the subscales on the autonomy-control continuum to which they belong ranged from .53 to .64. By contrast, the average correlation of the items to the total of subscales that the items do not belong in ranged from -.27 to +.37. Split half reliabilities were calculated with Cronbach's alpha for the four subscales, and were as follows: .63, .71, .63, .80. The reliability coefficient for the total scale was .70, while the reliability coefficients for the subscales ranged from .77 to .82. (Deci, Sheinman, Schwartz, & Ryan, 1981).

External construct validity was established by administering questionnaires to 610 students of 35 of the teacher respondents, assessing student perception of the classroom environment, and student self-report of intrinsic motivation and self-esteem. The intrinsic motivation and perceived competence scales were administered twice during the school year, in late October and late May. The classroom climate questionnaire was administered in February. It was found that there was a correlation of .35 between the teachers' total scores on the control/autonomy orientation questionnaire, and students' perceptions of the classroom environment. The correlation was significant at the .05 level. The teacher orientation scale was found to correlate significantly with the measures of student intrinsic motivation and student self-esteem. Apparently, teachers' support of student autonomy is correlated to higher self-esteem and greater intrinsic motivation. (Deci, Sheinman, Schwartz, & Ryan, 1981).

Measurement of teacher perception of autonomy support.

The fifteen items from The Work Climate Questionnaire (WCQ: Baard, Deci, & Ryan, 2004) were incorporated into the My Principal/Supervisor (MPS) section of the survey in order

to obtain a measure of teachers' perceptions of the degree of autonomy supportiveness of their principals or supervisors. Responses are made on a seven point Likert scale, with one being not at all and seven being very true. The original survey uses the term 'manager'. In the school system, teachers are typically supervised by the principal. In consideration that teachers in large schools may have immediate supervisors other than the principal, it was decided to use the terms 'principal/supervisor.' Otherwise, all questions were taken verbatim from the WCQ.

The WCQ was adapted from two comparable questionnaires: a patient questionnaire (Williams, Grow, Freedman, Ryan, & Deci, 1996) with a Cronbach's alpha of .92 and a college student questionnaire (Williams & Deci, 1996) with a Cronbach's alpha of .96. In a 2004 study (Baard, Deci, & Ryan), it was found that WCQ scores predicted intrinsic need satisfaction of employees. One of the tenets of SDT is that autonomy support is a necessary precedent for intrinsic need satisfaction; therefore, this suggests that WCQ scores are, in fact, measuring the perceived level of autonomy support provided by managers.

Ethical Considerations

The National Association of School Psychologist's ethical code, *Principles of Professional Ethics* (NASP, PPE 2000, IV, F) has a number of guidelines and requirements for the ethical conduct of research. Among these requirements are that the research methodology need to be grounded in sound research practices. The level of training and academic credentials should also be communicated to all study participants. School psychologists also need to follow legal procedures regarding informed consent, confidentiality and disclosure of results. This study will make provisions to protect participant confidentiality. Participant responses will be reported only as a group, and demographic information will likewise be disclosed only for the group as whole.

The APA's *Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct* (APA, 2002, 8.02) contains a number of guidelines for informed consent of research participants. Research participants need to be informed of the purpose of the research, of their right to decline, to participate or to withdraw from the study, limits of confidentiality, possible research benefits as well as side effects and risks. They must also be informed of whom to contact with any questions about the research or about the rights of participants.

This study is expected to yield important findings about the reasons why teachers may choose to employ a more controlling teaching style despite the inferior results such a methodology yields in terms of achievement and educational progress. There are no expected negative side effects of responding to this survey.

Chapter 4

Results**Descriptive Statistics****Demographic and background information.***Respondent teacher characteristics*

There were a total of 88 completed responses received. Of these, 40 (45.4%) were completed online on SurveyMonkey.com, and 48 (54.6%) were completed in print. Four of the responses were invalidated due to missing responses to some of the items on either the My Classroom Style Scale (MCS) or the My Principal/Supervisor (MPS) Scale.

Of the 84 valid responses received, there were 71 female (84.5%) and 13 male (15.5%) respondents. Of the 84 respondents, 57 (69.5%) reported being tenured, and 25 (30.5%) reported not being tenured. It should be noted that in the private religious system, there is no formal tenure system. However, after three years, there typically is a severance payment based on the amount of years served. The questionnaire did not collect any information regarding the schools in which the respondents taught; therefore, it is not possible to ascertain how many of the respondents were from the private or public schools.

Eighty-three survey respondents answered the question about their ages. The mean age was 38.63 year old. The distribution was bi-modal, with seven respondents reporting being 30 or 31 respectively. The minimum age reported was 18 and the maximum age reported was 64.

Of the 83 respondents to the amount of total years in teaching, the range was between one and 37 years, with a mode of five and a mean of 11.95 years. There were 83 valid responses as to the amount of years served in their current district or school. The range reported was between one and forty-three years, with a mean of 9.41 years, and a bimodal distribution of five and seven

years. As the amount of years taught in the district cannot possibly exceed the total amount of years taught, it is probable that one of the respondents transposed their responses to the two questions.

A majority of the teachers ($n = 47, 56\%$) reported that the highest level of education achieved was a Bachelor's degree. Six of the teachers (7.1%) reported having less than a Bachelor's degree. These teachers are likely from one of the private schools, where a teaching degree and certification is not always required. Twenty-nine of the teachers (34.5%) reported having a Master's degree, and one teacher (1.2%) reported having a doctorate. The year in which the highest degree was earned ranged from 1969 to 2011.

A majority ($n = 79, 94\%$) of teachers reported identifying themselves as Caucasian, with the remainder split between Hispanic ($n = 2, 2.4\%$), Asian/Pacific Islander ($n = 1, 1.2\%$), and Biracial ($n = 1, 1.2\%$).

Table 1

Teacher Characteristics

| Characteristic | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> |
|----------------|----------|----------|
| Gender | | |
| Female | 71 | 84.5% |
| Male | 13 | 15.5% |

Age

| | |
|------|-------|
| Min | 18 |
| Max | 64 |
| Mean | 38.63 |

Ethnicity

| | | |
|------------------------|----|------|
| Caucasian | 79 | 94% |
| Hispanic | 2 | 2.4% |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 1 | 1.2% |
| Biracial | 1 | 1.2% |

Maximum Education

| | | |
|--------------------|------|-------|
| Less than Bachelor | 6 | 7.1% |
| Bachelor | 47 | 56% |
| Master | 29 | 34.5% |
| Doctorate | 1 | 1.2% |
| Earliest Conferral | 1969 | |
| Latest Conferral | 2011 | |

Tenure

| | | |
|-----|----|-------|
| Yes | 57 | 69.5% |
| No | 25 | 30.5% |

Years Taught

| | |
|-----|----|
| Min | 1 |
| Max | 43 |

Respondents' student characteristics

An overwhelming majority of respondents ($n = 79, 94\%$) reported that the majority of their classes identified with being Caucasian, with the remainder split between Hispanic ($n=1, 1.2\%$), Native American ($n=1, 1.2\%$), and Biracial ($n=1, 1.2\%$).

The greatest number of the respondents ($n = 27, 32.1\%$) taught grades one through five. This was followed by grades six through eight ($n = 25, 29.8\%$). There were seventeen teachers (20.2%) who taught grades nine through twelve. Three of the teachers (3.6%) taught preschool, and twelve of the teachers (14.3%) taught multiple levels.

The majority of the teachers ($n = 60, 71.4\%$) reported that the majority of their class was male, twenty-five percent ($n = 21$) reported the majority was female, and two teachers (2.4%) reported there was no clear class majority.

Table 2

Student Characteristics

| Characteristic | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> |
|----------------|----------|----------|
| Gender | | |
| Mostly Female | 21 | 25% |
| Mostly Male | 60 | 71.4% |
| No Majority | 2 | 2.4% |

| Ethnicity | | |
|--------------------------|----|-------|
| Mostly Caucasian | 79 | 94% |
| Mostly Hispanic | 1 | 1.2% |
| Mostly Native American | 1 | 1.2% |
| Mostly Biracial | 1 | 1.2% |
| Grade Levels Represented | | |
| Pre K-K | 3 | 3.6% |
| 1-5 | 27 | 32.1% |
| 6-8 | 25 | 29.8% |
| 9-12 | 17 | 20.2% |
| Multiple levels | 3 | 3.6% |

Respondents' principal characteristics

Forty-six of the respondents (54.8%) reported that their principal was accorded a high degree of respect in the school; twenty-three (27.4%) reported an intermediate status, and fifteen (17.9%) reported their principal had a low status. The majority of the respondents ($n = 59$, 70.2%) predicted that their principal was likely to retain the same status; eighteen (21.4%) predicted an increased status, and four (4.8%) reported their principal was likely to decrease in status.

Table 3

Principal Characteristics

| Characteristic | <i>N</i> | % |
|--------------------|----------|-------|
| Current Status | | |
| Well Respected | 46 | 54.8% |
| Somewhat Respected | 23 | 27.4% |
| Little Respected | 15 | 17.9% |
| Expected Status | | |
| Retain Status | 59 | 70.2% |
| Gain Status | 18 | 21.4% |
| Lose Status | 4 | 4.8% |

Comparison of current PIS scale results with previously obtained results.

The original PIS scale scores ranged from a possible -18 to +18. The original 1981 sample consisted of 68 teachers of grades K-6. The gender of the participants is not given. The mean score was 6.98, with a standard deviation of 3.11. The sample score range was from -10.13- 12.13. However, the -10.13 was an outlier, and the effective range is from 2.13 -12.13. The formula used was to weight the Highly Controlling (HC) scores as -2, the Moderately Controlling (MC) scores by -1, the Moderately Autonomous Scores (MA) by +1 and the Highly Autonomous (HA) scores by +2. The 1999 study consisted of 32 teachers (27 women, 5 men) from grades K-6 and 14 teachers from (7 women, 7 men) from grades nine through twelve. The mean score was 1.89, with a range of -3.5-10.33 and a standard deviation of 3.24. Although

there are no published descriptions of PIS score ranges, Reeve, Bolt, and Kai (1999) describe the mean score as being somewhat autonomy supportive.

The current study used the revised PIS formula, following a 1999 study. The new formula eliminated the weighting of the Moderately Autonomous (MA) scale. This effectively transformed the range of possible scores from -19 to 11. The current study had a mean PIS score of 1.54, with a Standard Deviation of 2.79. The range of scores was between -5.88 and 7.38. Although there are no published descriptions for PIS ranges, when considering both the range of possible scores, it would appear that the term moderately autonomy supportive would be an appropriate descriptor. Lending credence to this description, Reeve, Bolt, and Kai (1999) described a mean PIS score of 1.89 as somewhat autonomy supportive and the current mean PIS score of 1.54 is well within one standard deviation of this score.

An analysis of the coefficient of variance was conducted in order to analyze the distribution of scores between the three studies. The original study was found to have the narrowest distribution of scores, because the coefficient of variance was 0.45. The 1999 study had a coefficient of variance of 1.71. The current study had the widest variance in scores, with a coefficient of variance of 1.81. The heterogeneous nature of the current survey population may account for the greater dispersion in scores. The current study was unique because it assessed teachers from grades K-12, private and public school teachers, teachers of single-gendered and coeducational schools, and teacher respondents in two states.

However, the results of the current study were consistent with the 1999 study because teachers were moderately autonomy supportive. The mean PIS score of both the current study and the 1999 study was greatly below that of the 1981 study. This is possibly due to the revision of the calculation of the PIS scale, as discussed previously.

Inferential Statistics

A multivariate correlation matrix analysis was conducted in order to determine which factors correlated with the My Classroom Style (MCS) Scale, which is the measure of classroom control and autonomy. It was found that the My Principal/Supervisor (MPS) Scale, which is designed to measure the teacher's perception of the degree of autonomy support provided by the supervisor, did not significantly correlate with My Classroom Style (MCS) Scale ($p = .686$, two tailed). Likewise, none of the three items of the perceived prestige of the principal (PR), was found to correlate with the MCS Scale. P values for the three items on the scale ranged from .79-.97.

The three demographic factors that were found to correlate significantly with this scale were the teacher's age ($p = .011$, $r = .279$, $n = 83$, two tailed), the numbers of years taught ($p = .049$, $r = .216$, $n = 83$, two tailed) and the teacher's gender ($p = .003$, $r = .318$, $n = 84$, two tailed).

A regression analysis was then conducted. Gender was found to be the most reliable predictor of MCS scores, accounting for 10% of the variance ($R^2 = .10$, $p = .004$). The combination of gender along with age was found to predict 16.8% of the variance ($R^2 = 16.8$, $p = .001$). Colinearity statistics for tolerance indicates that age and years taught share a high degree of colinearity. Because years taught is a function of age, as well as a better fit for the data, it was decided to identify age as the subject of the regression analysis. This implies that age was able to explain an additional 6.8% of the variance in MCS scores. None of the other variables was found to contribute meaningfully to the variance explained.

Table 4

Variance Explained and Standardized Beta Coefficients

| Variable | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Gender | .315 <i>p</i> = .003 | .301 <i>p</i> = .004 | .313 <i>p</i> = .003 | .312 <i>p</i> = .003 |
| Age | | .264 <i>p</i> = .011 | .280 <i>p</i> = .008 | .281 <i>p</i> = .008 |
| Highest Education | | | -.117 <i>p</i> = .258 | -.117 <i>p</i> = .253 |
| Principal Scale | | | | .006 <i>p</i> = .964 |
| <i>R</i> ² | .099 | .169 | .182 | .182 |

An independent samples T Test was conducted in order to compare the mean scores for males and females. Males were found to have a mean MCS score ($M = -.52$, $SD = 3.04$) lower than females ($M = 1.93$, $SD = 2.58$). The mean difference was significant, $t(82) = -3.056$, $p = .003$, $d = -.499$. This is considered to be a medium effect size (Gravetter & Wallnau, 264).

The relationship between age and MCS was explored with a comparison of scores between teacher respondents equal to or older than 38 years ($n = 39$) and those younger than 38 ($n = 44$). The group of teachers older than 38 was found to have a higher mean MCS score ($M = 2.4$, $SD = 2.47$) than the group of teachers younger than 38 ($M = .77$, $SD = 2.88$). The mean

difference was significant, $t(81) = 2.76$, $p = .007$, $d = .4753$. This approaches a medium effect size (Gravetter & Wallnau, 264).

Chapter 5

Summary, Discussion, Limitations, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This section will include the researcher's reviews of the findings of the study in relationship to the research questions presented. Included in this chapter are a summary of the analyses, discussion of the findings, limitations, conclusions drawn from the discussion, and recommendations for future research. Implications for school psychologists are also presented.

Summary

This section provides a summary of the findings reported in the analysis section in relation to the research questions.

The first question examined whether or not teachers are currently utilizing more autonomy supportive versus controlling behaviors in their responses to their students. The current study found that in aggregate, teachers tend to be more autonomy supportive than controlling. This is consistent with the findings of Reeve, Bolt, and Kai (1999), who found their sample of teachers to be moderately autonomy supportive. This would appear to contrast with studies that have shown that adults in general express a more positive attitude towards more controlling strategies (Barrett & Boggiano, 1988) and that teachers tend to utilize more controlling strategies (Newby, 1991).

However, Barrett & Boggiano's study sample consisted of college students as opposed to teachers. It may be that teachers become more autonomy supportive as a result either of their training or their classroom experience. Newby's study differs from the current study in two important ways. The study looked at actual classroom practices as opposed to teacher attitudes or endorsements of ideal teacher behavior. Furthermore, Newby's study sample consisted

exclusively of first-year teachers. Teachers in their first year of study may not yet have developed the confidence necessary to be autonomy supporting.

However, when the results were analyzed according to gender, it was found that males ($n = 13$) tend to be more controlling, with a mean PIS score of $-.52$. By contrast, females tended to be more autonomy supportive, with a mean PIS score of 1.90 . Likewise, age was determined to be a predictor of autonomy support. The group of teachers 38 years and older was found to have a higher mean PIS score ($M = 2.4, SD = 2.47$) than the group of teachers younger than 38 ($M = .77, SD = 2.88$).

The second question inquired whether or not the perceived pattern of the principal/supervisor's behaviors towards classroom teachers with regard to control and autonomy would affect the level of autonomy support which teachers in turn provide their students. The research hypothesis was that there would be a positive correlation between the perceived pattern of the principal/supervisor's behaviors towards classroom teachers with regard to control and autonomy and the level of autonomy support which teachers provide their students. However, data show that there is no correlation between these two variables.

There are at least two possible explanations for this finding. It may be that teachers are more highly influenced by their perceptions of how the administration wants them to run their classrooms than by the pattern of the behavior of the principal with regard to the degree of control or autonomy afforded to teachers. Teachers are regularly evaluated by their principals or supervisors. It is feasible that principals implicitly or explicitly state their expectations of classroom management styles and techniques in the evaluation observation or in the meeting following the written observation. Consequently, a more accurate assessment of this correlation

may possibly involve administering the PIS to the principal/supervisor as well as to the classroom teachers and to compare these scores.

An alternative hypothesis is that there may be teacher-specific characteristics which have a greater influence on teacher behaviors. Examples may include teacher's personal preferences, or the style of teaching espoused during teacher training programs.

The third research question examined whether or not a teacher who feels supported by his or her principal or supervisor will engage in more autonomy supporting behaviors toward their students. The current research indicates that there is no significant correlation between the perceived degree of principal support and the extent to which teachers engage in autonomy supporting behaviors. The hypothesis may be similar to that of the previous research question.

The fourth question asked if the perceived level of prestige of the building principal or supervisor affects the likelihood of teachers modeling this behavior. Teacher behavior was not found to correlate with principal support, regardless of the degree of perceived principal prestige.

The fifth question queried if any other characteristics of a principal or supervisor may impact a teacher's likelihood of modeling their supervisor's autonomy supporting versus controlling behaviors. Because teachers were not found to alter their classroom behaviors based on the degree of perceived principal autonomy support, this question becomes irrelevant

Discussion

A more autonomy-promoting classroom teaching style offers significant advantages over a more controlling style, including a lower dropout rate (Vallerand, 1997), a higher level of academic achievement (Vansteenskiste et al., 2005), and increased creativity (Amabile, 1979). This has the promise of helping to address the problem of the growing number of students who

are failing to complete high school. Drawing on numbers compiled by several statisticians, recent graduation rates are calculated to hover about the 70% area (Barton, 2005).

The purpose of the current study was to explore the role that principal modeling has on influencing teacher behavior. It was found that the perceived degree of principal support did not meaningfully influence teacher behavior. This finding offers some encouragement, because it indicates that teachers have autonomy to implement their own unique teaching style. Consequently, teachers working with a principal who tends to be more controlling may still opt to display a high degree of autonomy in their classrooms.

The two factors that predicted higher, reported degrees of teacher autonomy supporting behavior were being female and being older than age 38. Dr. Deci theorized that teachers tend to increase their confidence levels as they become more experienced, over time (personal communication, April 24, 2011). In turn, as teachers become more confident, they are more comfortable acting in a less controlling, more autonomy supportive manner.

Limitations

One limitation of this study is the lack of randomization of subjects. Subjects were a sample of convenience chosen from only three selected schools and school districts. These schools were chosen, based on the author's prior relationship with them, which facilitated survey approval. Two of the study sites were private, single-gender schools; one school was an all-boys school, and the other was an all-girls school. This may limit the external validity of these results.

A second limitation is that even with assurance of anonymity, teachers may have felt uncomfortable rating their supervisors or principals. This may have led to a bias towards rating the principals more favorably than the teacher's actual perception.

Another limitation is that the private school respondents had the opportunity to fill out the survey only in print and not online. This may have influenced their response style. Survey respondents responding in writing may have been concerned that their responses are potentially traceable by handwriting. Accordingly, they may have reported more positive ratings of their principal/supervisor than their actual perception.

A fourth limitation of this study is that teachers' autonomy styles and also the degrees of perceived principal support were measured by teacher report. This adds a degree of possible subjectivity, because both teachers' and principals' actual behaviors may differ from the respondents' perceptions.

A fifth limitation is that teachers were required to respond to the hypothetical teaching scenarios based on the limited information available, without any option to request further information. Some teachers expressed hesitation with forming a decision based on this limited information. By contrast, in the actual practice of teaching, teachers have access to a number of sources of potential information about a student. These include direct observation, past grades, disciplinary record, etc.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further research is needed in order to explore which factors are associated with an increased likelihood of an autonomous teaching style. Encouraging an autonomous teaching style is important, because it is associated with increased student engagement and greater academic achievement. The current study utilized a survey methodology to explore the possibility of principal modeling as an influence on teacher behavior. Future studies may wish to conduct direct interviews of classroom teachers in order to discover which factors influence teachers to choose a more or less autonomous teaching style.

Additionally, the current survey assessed the role of the principal in modeling autonomy support or controlling behaviors based on teachers' reported perceptions of how the principals treated them. Teachers may be more responsive to the principal's implicit or explicit guidance in the expected degree of control or autonomy support expected of faculty in dealing with students. Accordingly, future studies may wish to assess the correlation between teacher and principal behaviors by administering the PIS survey to the supervisor/principal as well as the classroom teacher.

Future studies may wish to study, specifically, the gender differences in attitude towards control and autonomy. Previous studies reporting differences were studying other variables, and found the differences in gender as a control measure. Potential questions to explore may include whether or not the gender differences are a reflection of basic personality differences between the sexes, or are a result of specific life experiences that may lead to a more nurturing personality, such as motherhood. Other questions to investigate may include whether or not the difference between gender attitudes vary based on whether or not females consist of a majority of the profession. In the field of teaching, women currently compose about 80 percent of all teachers (Feistritz & Haar, 2005). Consequently, new female teachers may be more likely to model themselves after more experienced female teachers, who tend to be more autonomy supportive. By contrast, in careers in which the majority of experienced practitioners are men, new female trainees may tend to model themselves after men, who tend to be less autonomy supportive.

As outlined in the literature review section of this dissertation, there are a number of reasons as to why teachers may favor a more controlling teaching style, despite the greater efficacy of an autonomy promoting style. These reasons include biases of teacher training

programs, cultural view of the role of teachers versus students, and pressure from administration. Research is needed to clarify if there is a universal trend among teachers, or whether the reasons are idiographic in nature.

Implications for School Psychology

The traditional role of the school psychologist has been to provide direct services, such as evaluating students for eligibility for special education, or counseling students. However, due in part to limited school mental health resources and personnel, there has been a focus on the indirect, school wide provision of services, such as consultation and preventative services (Caplan, 1970). The many potential advantages of an autonomy supporting style of teaching have been discussed previously. Although school psychologists do not typically supervise or evaluate teachers, they can educate teachers about the benefits of a more autonomous style of teaching.

Teachers are also likely to require guidance about the practical methods of promoting autonomy. In this way, school psychologists can potentially contribute towards a more positive and effective school climate. Lehr (2004) asserts that a positive school climate is an important characteristic of academically effectively schools. A positive school climate is also associated with higher achievement and improved behavior (Lehr, 2004).

Considering the results of our survey, school psychologists may wish particularly to target both males and younger teachers, because these groups tend to offer their students less autonomy support. Although targeting males may be problematic because it may appear as a gender based bias, younger teachers can be offered professional development on autonomy support as part of an in-service for new teachers.

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Survey Cover Letter

Dear Teachers,

I am a doctoral student in the School Psychology Program at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM). The attached survey was developed as a part of my doctoral dissertation to provide information on teachers' classroom styles and how they correspond to school principals' or supervisors' management styles. You may choose either to participate or not to participate in the survey. You may at any time stop filling out the survey.

This project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at PCOM in Philadelphia, PA. Completion of the survey will be considered an indication of your willingness to participate in the research as well as your permission to allow me to use and interpret the data you provide for purposes of dissertation research. The length of time to complete the survey is estimated to be 15 minutes. There is an enclosed stamped envelope in order for you to mail back the survey. Results will be kept **confidential** and you will not be identified in any way.

There are no foreseen benefits or risks to you from participating in this study other than your contribution to the field of School Psychology. I would be happy to send you the results of this study if you contact me at the number or email address listed below. As I know that the school year is a busy time, I appreciate your participation in this questionnaire. Please feel free to contact me or my committee chair if you have any questions. This page is yours to keep for your records.

Thank you very much for your time and effort.

Sincerely,

Michael Lax
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Appendix B: Teachers' Classroom Style Survey**Teachers' Classroom Style Survey****Part 1: Demographics**

Please respond to the following questions:

- _____1. My gender is: (M) Male (F) Female
- _____2. I am _____ years old.
- _____3. I have been teaching for _____ years.
- _____4. I have been teaching for _____ years in my current district.
- _____5. I am tenured. (Y) Yes (N) No
- _____6. The highest level of education I have achieved is:
1. Less than Bachelor's
 2. Bachelor's
 3. Master's
 4. Doctorate
- _____7. The year of the highest degree I obtained is _____.
- _____8. I primarily identify with (Please circle only one):
1. **Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin):** Persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa or the Middle East.
 2. **Asian or Pacific Islander:** Persons having origins in any of the peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for example, China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands and Samoa.
 3. **African American (not of Hispanic origin):** Person having origins in any of the black ethnic groups.
 4. **Hispanic:** Persons having origins in any of the Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish Cultures, regardless of ethnicity.
 5. **Native American or Alaskan Native:** Persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
 6. **Biracial/Multiracial**
- _____9. I teach the following grades: (If more than 1 category, please CIRCLE all that apply.)
1. Pre-K-K
 2. 1-5
 3. 6-8
 4. 9-12
- _____10. My classes' performance is measured by state assessments. (Y) Yes (N) No

Please respond to the following questions:

_____16. What do you believe is the degree of respect accorded your principal/supervisor throughout the school? (Please circle)

(H) High (L) Low (I) Intermediate

_____17. Is your principal/supervisor most likely to: (Please select the best choice from below)

1. Retain the same status
2. Increase in status
3. Decrease in status

_____18. How many years has your principal served at his current position? _____

Part 3: My Classroom Style

In the following pages, you will find a series of vignettes. Each one describes an incident and then lists four ways of responding to the situation. Please read each vignette and then consider each response in turn. Think about each response option in terms of how appropriate you consider it to be as a means of dealing with the problem described in the vignette.

You may consider the option to be "perfect," in other words, "extremely appropriate" in which case you would respond with the number 7. You might consider the response highly inappropriate, in which case you would respond with the number 1. If you find the option reasonable, you would select some number between 1 and 7. So think about each option and rate it on the scale shown below. Please rate each of the four options for each vignette. There are eight vignettes with four options for each.

There are no right or wrong ratings on these items. People's styles differ, and we are simply interested in what you consider appropriate given your own style. Some of the stories ask what you would do as a teacher. Others ask you to respond as if you were giving advice to another teacher or to a parent.

Please CIRCLE the best choice regarding each of the responses using the following scale:

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

Scenario A. Jim is an average student who has been working at grade level. During the past two weeks he has appeared listless and has not been participating during reading group. The work he does is accurate but he has not been completing assignments. A phone conversation with his mother revealed no useful information. The most appropriate thing for Jim's teacher to do is:

1. She should impress upon him the importance of finishing his assignments since he needs to learn this material for his own good.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

2. Let him know that he doesn't have to finish all of his work now and see if she can help him work out the cause of the listlessness.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

3. Make him stay after school until that day's assignments are done.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

4. Let him see how he compares with the other children in terms of his assignments and encourage him to catch up with the others.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

Scenario B. At a parent conference last night, Mr. and Mrs. Greene were told that their daughter Sarah has made more progress than expected since the time of the last conference. All agree that they hope she continues to improve so that she does not have to repeat the grade (which the Greene's have been kind of expecting since the last report card). As a result of the conference, you would advise the Greenes to:

1. Increase her allowance and promise her a ten-speed bike if she continues to improve.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

2. Tell her that she's now doing as well as many of the other children in her class.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

3. Tell her about the report, letting her know that they're aware of her increased independence in school and at home.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

4. Continue to emphasize that she has to work hard to get better grades.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

Scenario C. Donny loses his temper a lot and has a way of agitating other children. He doesn't respond well to what you tell him to do and you're concerned that he won't learn the social skills he needs. The best thing for you to do with him is:

1. Emphasize how important it is for him to "control himself" in order to succeed in school and in other situations.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

2. Put him in a special class that can provide the structure and reward contingencies which he needs.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

3. Help him see how other children behave in these various situations and praise him for doing the same.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

4. Realize that Donny is probably not getting the attention he needs and start being more responsive to him.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

Scenario D. Your student John is one of the better players on his junior soccer team which has been winning most of its games. However, you are concerned because he just told you he failed his unit spelling test and will have to retake it the day after tomorrow. You decide that the best thing to do is:

1. Ask him to talk about how he plans to handle the situation.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

2. Tell him he probably ought to decide to forego tomorrow's game so he can catch up in spelling.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

3. See if others are in the same predicament and suggest he do as much preparation as the others.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

4. Make him miss tomorrow's game to study; soccer has been interfering too much with his school work.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

Scenario E. The Rangers spelling group has been having trouble all year. How could Miss Wilson best help the Rangers?

1. Have regular spelling bees so that Rangers will be motivated to do as well as the other groups.

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|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

2. Make them drill more and give them special privileges for improvements.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

3. Have each child keep a spelling chart and emphasize how important it is to have a good chart.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

4. Help the group devise ways of learning the words together (skits, games, and so on).

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|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

Scenario F. In your class is a girl named Margy who has been the target of jokes for years. She is quiet and usually alone. In spite of the efforts of previous teachers, Margy has not been accepted by the other children. Your wisdom would guide you to:

1. Prod her into interactions and provide her with much praise for any social initiative.

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|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

2. Talk to her and emphasize that she should make friends so she'll be happier.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

3. Invite her to talk about her relations with the other kids, and encourage her to take small steps when she's ready.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

4. Encourage her to observe how other children relate and to join in with them.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

Scenario G. For the past few weeks things have been disappearing from the teacher's desk and lunch money has been taken from some of the children's desks. Today, Marvin was seen by the teacher taking a silver dollar paperweight from her desk. The teacher phoned Marvin's mother and spoke to her about this incident. Although the teacher suspects that Marvin has been responsible for the other thefts, she mentioned only that one and assured the mother that she'll keep a close eye on Marvin. As Marvin's teacher, you would advise the mother to:

1. Talk to him about the consequences of stealing and what it would mean in relation to the other kids.

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|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

2. Talk to him about it, expressing her confidence in him and attempting to understand why he did it.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

3. Give him a good scolding; stealing is something which cannot be tolerated and he has to learn that.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

4. Emphasize that it was wrong and have him apologize to the teacher and promise not to do it again.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

Scenario H. Your student has been getting average grades, and you'd like to see her improve. A useful approach might be to:

1. Encourage her to talk about her report card and what it means for her.

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|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

2. Go over the report card with her; point out where she stands in the class.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

3. Stress that she should do better; she'll never get into college with grades like these.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

4. Offer her a dollar for every A and 50 cents for every B on future report cards.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very Inappropriate | | | Moderately Appropriate | | | Very Appropriate |

Appendix C: Follow Up Participant Invitation

Subject: REMINDER – Teachers’ Classroom Style Survey

Dear Teacher,

I value your feedback!

On _____, you should have received an invitation inviting you to participate in a survey. For my doctoral dissertation, I am researching teachers’ classroom style and how it corresponds to school principals’ or supervisors’ management style. If you have not already done so, please click the link below to complete the survey,

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/> _____, or complete your printed survey.

If you have already completed the survey, thank you for your participation and please disregard this invitation.

I am a doctoral student in the School Psychology Program at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM). This project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at PCOM in Philadelphia, PA. Completion of the survey will be considered an indication of your willingness to participate in the research as well as your permission for allowing me to use and interpret the data you provide for purposes of dissertation research. You may at anytime stop filling out the survey and your information will not be recorded. The survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. The results of the survey will be kept confidential and you will not be personally identified in any way.

I would be happy to send you the results of this study if you contact me at michaellax@pcom.edu. I appreciate your participation in this survey. Please do not hesitate to call me or my dissertation committee chair if you have any further questions, comments, or concerns.

Thank you in advance for your time and effort.

Sincerely,

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