Exploring the Teacher-Administrator Relationship
in Schools: A Workshop to Build and Sustain Relationships

by

Jasleen Kaur Rai

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
VANCOUVER ISLAND UNIVERSITY

We accept the Thesis as conforming to the required standard.

Dr. John Phipps, Faculty Supervisor
Faculty of Education,
Vancouver Island University

Dr. David Paterson, Dean
Faculty of Education,
Vancouver Island University

April 11, 2018
Acknowledgement

I would like to thank John Phipps, my thesis advisor, for all the help and guidance that he provided me to finish my paper. Thank you, John, for your constant support, motivation, positive feedback, and above all, cheerful attitude always. I would like to express my appreciation to Sean Toal and Sharon Wahl, who guided me as I started this research. As well, thank you to all the classmates in my university cohort who shared their experiences in more ways than I ever expected. The time support and presence of these wonderful people did not let me feel low even when I was far away from my home and family.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the support of my family and especially my new Canadian family, Kanwalpreet, Shweta, and Milan for your love, care, and presence during all the good and bad phases I had in the last year.
Abstract

This study reflects some theoretical aspects of interpersonal relationships in the sphere of education. It highlights the presence of mutual understanding and the importance of common cognitive identification of the subjects of interaction with each other in interpersonal relationships. The purpose of the study was to identify as well as describe the importance of the gaps and circumstances that may affect administrator-teacher relationships. In particular, the study aimed to highlight the idea of building and sustaining teacher-administrator relationships. The study is an effort to understand the reciprocal nature of interpersonal relationships, mutual contribution, and collaboration of those involved in relationships; sustaining and prioritizing the value of ethics of care for the relationship is at the core of this study. A workshop was constructed based on a five-step model to emphasize the importance of the teacher-administrator relationship in schools.
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgment .......................................................................................................................................................... 2

Abstract ...................................................................................................................................................................... 3

List of figures............................................................................................................................................................... 6

Chapter 1: Introduction ................................................................................................................................................ 7

  Purpose of the Study .................................................................................................................................................. 8

  Defining Administrator-Teacher Relationship ........................................................................................................ 9

  Context ..................................................................................................................................................................... 10

  Justification ............................................................................................................................................................ 10

  Brief Overview of the Study .................................................................................................................................. 12

Chapter 2: Literature Review .................................................................................................................................... 13

  Understanding Interpersonal Relationships in a Different Context ........................................................................ 14

  Reciprocal Construct of Teacher-Administrator Relationship ............................................................................... 16

  Identifying Roles and Responsibilities .................................................................................................................. 16

  The Informal Networks to Connect and Collaborate ............................................................................................ 18

Chapter 3: The Design .................................................................................................................................................. 20

  Purpose of this Study ................................................................................................................................................ 21

  Not Another Relationship to Failure ....................................................................................................................... 21

  Trust ........................................................................................................................................................................ 22

  Finding the right leadership style .......................................................................................................................... 23

  Communication is the key ...................................................................................................................................... 25

  Collaboration for celebration .................................................................................................................................. 27
Commitment with shared emotions……………………………………………………………28
Motivation and empowerment of each other……………………………………………29
The Significant Role of the Administrator………………………………………………...30

Chapter 4: Model for a Workshop……………………………………………………………32

Construction of relationship model…………………………………………………………33
Step 1: To understand the need to work on relationship in focus………………………33
Step 2: Defining the nature of relationship in focus………………………………………34
Step 3: Individual role and responsibility: Giving it a personal touch…………………..34
Step 4: Holding onto the vital tools…………………………………………………………36
Step 5: Preservation to overcome shortage and wastage…………………………………38

Designing Workshop………………………………………………………………………...38
Layout of Workshop………………………………………………………………………..39
Outcomes……………………………………………………………………………………42

Chapter 5: Discussion…………………………………………………………………………44

Summary……………………………………………………………………………………44
Limitations……………………………………………………………………………………46
Implications……………………………………………………………………………………46
Recommendations or scope for future research………………………………………………47
References……………………………………………………………………………………49-57
List of figures

Figure 3.1. Complex nature of interpersonal relations………………………………………..21
Figure 3.2. Reflections essential to sustain relations…………………………………………22
Figure 3.3. Establish trust………………………………………………………………………23
Figure 3.4. Find the right leadership style……………………………………………………25
Figure 3.5. Communication is the key…………………………………………………………26
Figure: 4.1. Roles and responsibilities…………………………………………………………36
Figure 4.2. Vital tools and resources in teacher-administrator relationship………………...37
Figure 4.3. Sample activities for the workshop………………………………………………42
Chapter One: Introduction

Relationships are always the first thing that comes to my mind whenever I think about my past, present, or future. Regarding school or higher education, it is not the academics that come first in my mind; instead I remember how effective or deeply impacting was the relationship I had with my teacher who taught me a particular course. Similar is the scenario with my professional as well as personal life. This indispensable reliance on the relationships developed throughout different stages of growth shapes the outlook of all reflective thought processes going on within my grey matter. Relationships are everywhere, and they form an important part of learning experiences and shaping our behaviour (Kleptsova & Balabanov, 2016).

Research has shown that the elements of a productive relationship between a school administrator and a teacher exist when “they recognize they cannot help all students unless they work together collaboratively, and they constantly seek tangible evidence that students have acquired intended knowledge” (DuFour, 2005, p. 2). Administrators can create such conditions where they endeavor to create a shared leadership, provide teachers and faculty members with productive and effective support and collaboration programs, and choose effective professional development opportunities. DuFour (2005) suggested that school improvements cannot rest solely on the school administrator, but through the empowerment of others. Principals have the daunting tasks of providing teachers with the tools needed for their individual and collective successes while effectively balancing decisions that can affect the productivity of the school as a whole. These tasks cannot be done alone, which mandates the examination of factors that will provide the best relationships with teachers to make this task less daunting and more achievable for educational leaders.
Interpersonally, administrators and teachers as partners have to recognize that they all have roles to play in helping students succeed in school—and that, together with students, they are the school’s learning community. Thus, trust, collaboration, empowerment, and shared responsibilities are the vital ingredients that can be used to refine and sustain relationships existing among educators and teachers.

**Purpose of the Study**

In nurturing the practice of contemplative relationships, leaders can play an essential role by never leaving this practice to the margins and somewhat simplifying the complex task of leadership. Relationships in education involve administrators and teachers, teachers and teachers, teachers and students, students and students, as well as teachers and parents. These relationships among the educators, students, and parents influence the growth and development of society, and thus are capable of enriching or diminishing the standards of a civilized community.

Among these relations, the association between a school administrator and an employed teacher that successfully promotes a collaborative, positive working environment is the most striking aspect to be explored more. It not only enhances the academic and behavioral performance of students they encounter, but also promotes the vision of the school and the district as a unit (Price, 2012). Communication, collaboration, trust, and high levels of motivation and commitment (Barth, 2016; Conner, 2015; & Gonzales, 2014) all contribute to simplifying the complexities of any relationship. I am interested in exploring various ways through which the process of building and sustaining positive caring relationships between teachers and administrators can be facilitated so that all might feel supported working with each other.
Earlier, the administrator’s role was managerial in nature and teachers were compliant towards their role; but now, collaboration (Conner, 2015) is the theme of work in a culture of learning. The quality of relationships and level of trust require a great deal of attention on the part of a leader for a strong influence, and “trust motivates people to go beyond mere compliance with authority. It motivates teachers and administrators to reach for the best in themselves, their team, and their organization” (Kouzes & Posner, 2010, p. 77). Such leadership makes others feel strong and capable not only for taking action, but also admiring the person they follow.

Therefore, the major purpose of this study is the examination of factors that will provide the best relationships between administrators and teachers to make the task of fostering learning less daunting and more achievable for educational organizations.

Defining Administrator-Teacher Relationship

The administrator-teacher relationship is the association between a school administrator and an employed teacher that successfully promotes a collaborative, positive working environment that not only enhances the academic and behavioural performance of students they encounter but also promotes the vision of the school and the district as a unit (Price, 2012).

The role a principal plays in faculty empowerment and teacher leadership is of paramount importance. It is essential that a principal creates an environment conducive to empowerment and improvement, demonstrates an idealistic example, encourages all endeavors toward empowered relationships, and appreciates all successes (Terry, 1999, para. 4). The successful schools will be the ones where leaders are best able to apply the creative energy of teachers toward constant improvement by building positive relationships.

“Leadership can be defined as an act of influence involving reciprocal relationships through which members of an organization or community construct common meanings, build
capacity and enhance their ability to achieve shared goals” (BCPVP, 2013). Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) as well as the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) describe social exchange as an open-ended stream of transactions, with both exchange partners making contributions and receiving benefits (Kamdar & Dyne, 2007), and so is the administrator-teacher relationship, which requires equal contributions of both. Reciprocity is required for building long-lasting, high-quality, balanced relationships for the communities to achieve their goals, and this reciprocal nature of relationships can also contribute in sustaining these relationships. Ongoing relationships and personality co-develop in a corresponding way because people select and evoke relationship experiences that deepen or accentuate their personality traits (Neyer & Lehnart, 2007).

**Context**

This design research is based on readings and already available literature in an international context. Although the major readings are in the North American context, the analysis, generalizations, and handouts intended related to the proposed model would specifically address the administrators and teachers in general, but the model and the workshop finally developed are flexible enough to address a particular context. The major focus will be to read about the context of school effectiveness and school climate research through the administrator-teacher relationship. The cognitive and affective understanding about the relationships is assumed to be universal in nature where teachers and administrators work to achieve a shared vision of a school.

**Justification**

A relationship is a connection between two people in which some sort of exchange takes place, and the teaching and learning process also involves the exchange of ideas and interactions

Relationships are everywhere, and the administrator-teacher relationship has always been a complicated one to develop and sustain. Principals’ interactions with their staff are found to be central variables associated with school effectiveness (Hoy & Henederson, 1983; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Rosenholtz, 1985). It is the relationship between the teachers and administrator that influences all other relationships within the educational environment, and students are directly influenced by the type of relationships that exist, and so is their learning. The purpose and nature of the teacher-administrator relationship is to foster learning in group or individuals. “Principal, teacher, and student attitudes improve with positive principal-teacher relationships” (Price. 2012, pg. 115).

“Leadership is the major determinant of levels of student achievement and success. Leaders facilitate the culture of the school community, thereby promoting community engagement” (Weber & Scott, 2013, p. 2). This makes educational leaders central to creating a conducive environment for learning at all levels and building positive relationships among all concerned in educational practices. Apart from establishing productive partnerships, effective leaders demonstrate a range of professional skills—such as the capacity to listen, to manifest emotional intelligence, to balance assertiveness and facilitation, and to deal successfully with difficult people and situations—that enable them to establish communities of practice and to build constructive professional networks. (Weber & Scott, 2013, p. 2)
All these skills lead to refining relationship practices, collaborating, and forming mutual trust amongst all the members of the community. There exist varied complexities for refining and sustaining these relationships, such as “the multiple alliances of leaders, conflicting loyalties of community members, varying levels of digital awareness among educational partners, and the need to understand and employ interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences” (Weber & Scott, 2013 p. 2). The nature of relationships is expected to be trusting, generous, helpful, and cooperative, not fearful, competitive, suspicious, and corrosive.

I believe educational organizations are still on a quest to refine relationships among the administrators and teachers. Relationships are always foundational for strong educational leadership and influence every aspect of leadership.

**Brief Overview of the Study**

The study involves the understanding of interpersonal relationships in education with a special focus on the nature of the administrator-teacher relationship. The background, current trends, and practices related to the administrator-teacher relationship will help to figure out the direct and indirect factors that impact this relationship. This will help to generalize the specific roles and responsibilities of each involved in this mutually dynamic and reciprocal relationship.

The roles and responsibilities understood can generate possible ways of personal and professional development of all those involved in an administrator-teacher relationship based on existing literature with special focus on overcoming the obstacles or the barriers faced by administrators and teachers in pursuit of building and sustain this relationship. The construction of a model of effective tools for building and sustaining the administrator-teacher relationship and a workshop for teachers and administrators in schools is based on the outcomes of generating positive, productive relationships between administrators and teachers.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

According to Barth (2016), “the nature of relationships among the adults within a school has a greater influence on the character and quality of that school and on student accomplishment than anything else” (p. 9). Relationships are everywhere; they form an important part of our learning experiences and shape our behaviour (Kleptsova & Balabanov, 2016), thus the universal nature of relationships establishes an assumption that they directly or indirectly affect the learning experiences everywhere. Communication, collaboration, trust, and high levels of motivation and commitment all contribute towards simplifying the complexities of any relationship (Barth, 2016; Conner, 2015; Gonzales, 2014). This researcher is interested in exploring various ways through which the process of building positive, caring relationships between teachers and administrators can be facilitated so that all might feel supported while working with each other towards a common goal of fostering learning among the students for holistic development. As Barth (2006) wrote, the interpersonal relationships that teachers form at a school “define all relationships within that school’s culture. Teachers and administrators demonstrate all too well a capacity to either enrich or diminish one another’s lives and thereby enrich or diminish their schools” (p. 9).

This literature review will begin by examining a) the transition from hierarchical to non-hierarchical teacher-administrator relationships, b) different perspectives on administrator-teacher relationships; c) the nature of teacher-administrator relationships, d) factors essential to building strong teacher-administrator relationships, e) the roles and responsibilities of teachers and administrators towards their relationship, and finally f) back to my major question: “What are the most concrete steps for building and sustaining connectedness among teachers and administrators in schools?”
The preliminary investigation revealed different perspectives of the relationship between teachers and administrators. Over time there has been a noticeable attempted transition from hierarchical to nonhierarchical relationships between teachers and administrators (Poole, 1995). Poole (1995) also examined a constructivist perspective of the role of teachers and administrators as constructors and re-constructors of meanings to break down the traditional hierarchical relationship between teachers and administrators, and to develop a more horizontal, collegial relationship, where both contribute as equals to the common purpose of improving instruction for students. Earlier, the administrator’s role was managerial in nature and teachers were expected to be compliant towards their role (Conner, 2015). Clear structural, cultural, symbolic, and political differences were apparent in the roles and rules laid down for the relationship between the teacher and administrator. Totally placed in vertically separate locations in the hierarchy, teachers were situated firmly in the “trenches of the operating core in the classroom, while the administrators ensconced in their offices were removed from the core technology of the school; teachers were simply expected to teach and administrators to administer” (Fishbein, 2001, p. 3).

**Understanding Interpersonal Relationships in a Different Context**

Symbolically, legendary images of principals as charismatic ship captains, tall men in the saddle, or knights in shining armor provide graphic illustrations of the masculine gendering of administration (Meier, 1995, pp. 127-128). The fact provided in early research that 80% of all elementary school principals were men and 90% of teachers were women reinforced that men used to dominate the role of administrators and women were marginal to this role (Meier, 1995). The gendering of the two occupational roles, that is, teaching as female and administrating as male, suggests why it is so difficult to reconcile the opposites in the “hermaphroditic role of the
department chair, where the two sides of teachers and administrators converge with each other” (Siskin, 1995, as cited in Fishbein, 2000, p. 4).

Psychologically, interpersonal relationships are the mutual readiness of people to communicate in a certain way, accompanied by emotions: Positive, indifferent, and negative in the context of communication and other shared activities (Obozov, 1979). Interpersonal relationships can be assessed according to the presence of personal and shared emotions as positive, negative, or indifferent. The presence of “mutual understanding as adequately and inadequately understood is characterized by common cognitive identification between subjects of communication and a tendency of resistance, cooperation or inaction” (Obozov, 1979, as cited in Kleptsova & Balabanov, 2016, p. 2148). However, the constructivist viewpoint emphasizes that meaning related to social relationships is negotiated through daily interactions between members of the organization as they engage in the interpretive process. As organizational members develop common meanings about relationships, the primary importance of relationships may form part of the deep structure of any organizational culture (Schein, 1985). Assumptions that are difficult to change because they are often not explicit, discussed, or understood, but buried at the level of unstated assumptions (Fullan, 1991) are not so difficult to overcome if the interactions are meaningful to all involved in a relationship. In order to change tacit beliefs and assumptions, organizational members must become aware that they exist and then engage in the process of meaning reconstruction. For example, within a school setting, a significant change in the rules about how teachers and administrators interact for student evaluation or overcome bullying issues may “provide a disorienting dilemma that will initiate the interpretive process that may lead to perspective transformation or meaning reconstruction” (Poole, 1995, p. 569).
Reciprocal Construct of Teacher-Administrator Relationship

“Leadership can be defined as an act of influence involving reciprocal relationships through which members of an organization or community construct common meanings, build capacity and enhance their ability to achieve shared goals” (BCPVP A, 2013, p. 33). The development of common or shared meanings in social settings such as organizations creates a foundation for co-operation or joint activities between individuals to the extent that individuals believe that they share common interpretations. Within social environments, individuals engage in reflection within two different dimensions: Self-reflection, “a complex dialectic between a reflective and articulatory self” (Perinbanayagam, 1985, p. 25) and reflection about the actions of others. “Relationship practices can be categorized into four types: Parallel play, adversarial relationships, congenial relationships and collegial relationships” (Barth, 2006, pp. 8-13). These practices are created by the environmental influences, which in return are dependent on the leadership practices. Smart leadership focused on contemplative relationships leads to better outcomes in school-home-community partnerships, empowerment, satisfaction, and team spirit above all, where everyone accomplishes work together—not alone. Teachers and administrators “demonstrate all too well a capacity to either enrich or diminish one another’s lives and thereby enrich or diminish their schools” (Barth, 2006, p. 9).

Identifying Roles and Responsibilities

Research has shown that the elements of a productive relationship between a school administrator and a teacher exist when “they recognize they cannot help all students unless they work together collaboratively, and they constantly seek tangible evidence that students have acquired intended knowledge” (DuFour, 2005, p. 2). Snowden and Gorton (2002) maintained that in complex situations, no particular style of leadership or personal qualities of the leader is
appropriate for every situation; the administrator must be flexible and possess the appropriate level of adaptability to guarantee the success of the organization. The tensions, pressures, and influences confronting schools are many, highly varied, and pervasive (Cousins & Earl, 1995). Evidence has suggested that principals are in a unique position to influence school culture (Deal & Peterson, 1990; Leithwood & Jantzi 1997). In order to develop relationships, leadership nowadays is no longer regarded as an individual attribute or an economic exchange between leaders and followers, but rather as a complex social dynamic that emerges in the social relationships between individuals (Avolio, 2007; Hallinger, 2010).

In an effort to understand social relationships, Kleptsova and Balabanov (2016) and Asendorpf and Wilpers (1998) tried to understand the basics of the formation of personal qualities. Learning about personal uniqueness is the part of studying a personality in its development, “in the dynamic of its meaningful, substantial relationships” (Kleptsova & Balabanov, 2016, p. 2147). Therefore, it seems essential to reflect upon the concept of personality development to understand each other’s behaviour and personality, as it plays a vital role in forming positive relationships.

Hallingera and Heck (2010) have found that effective school leadership comes from collaborative leadership. This type of leadership, as evidenced through their study, can have a positive impact on student achievement. Leadership styles have long been examined through the years. Administrators as organizational managers experience positive impacts on student achievement when they retain high-quality teachers (Beteille, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2009). Studies in organizational management have found that school administrators should avoid “a narrow focus on classroom instruction” (Horng et al., 2010, p. 67).
Instead of withholding thoughts and ideas and competing among educators, leaders give importance to the work of creating connections, situations, and interests, which creates a work culture in which all educators work, create, and achieve together. Such efforts enrich one another’s lives when everyone respects diversity, observes each other’s classroom, figures out a way to overcome obstacles, and shares education-related experiences with each other, “rooting for one another’s success, not failures” (Barth, 2006, pp. 8-13). It was clearly pointed out that the administrators have the responsibility of ensuring they embed the essential characteristics of an effective professional learning community in all courses of action. Teacher-administrator relationships rely on shared responsibility and mutual and reciprocal accountability (Many, 2008).

The Informal Networks to Connect and Collaborate

Blase and Kirby (1992) emphasized that there were many physical and psychological barriers that made interaction and communication—which are the prerequisites in making any relationship productive—difficult between teachers and administrators. In complex organizational environments, leaders “must possess the social and political acumen . . . necessary to nurture allies, understand due process, and build relationships” (Weber & Scott, 2013, p. 3) by not only using strong intrapersonal awareness, but through collective employment of their interpersonal as well as interpersonal intelligences. Therefore, “leaders must be excellent communicators” (Senge, 1990; Siccone, 2012, as cited in Weber & Scott, 2013, p. 3). “Their communication expertise should encompass written, verbal, interpersonal, and technology mediated exchanges, plus the ability to listen for understanding. Using these capacities, principals will garner the trust among members of the school community” (Weber & Scott, 2013, p. 3).
Thus, administrators must be active in providing experiences for all teachers to grow as leaders. In trusting relationships, important issues are openly discussed for everyday improvement. “Strong levels of trust and respectful relationships are preconditions for successful school improvement initiatives” (Kaser & Halbert, 2009, p. 43). Barth (2006) asserted that relationships among adults have a greater influence on the character and quality of an organization and student accomplishment. “At a deeper level, teachers need each other’s help in carrying out day-to-day routines of schooling” (Byrk & Schneider, 2006, p. 30). Strengthened relations improve the professional practices, and ultimately, the expected outcomes can be made simpler to achieve through trusted teamwork, which creates a healthy learning environment for the learners.

The gaps between theory and practice can be bridged when a leader supports the practice of encouraging the active participation of all. Gradually, this leads back to the major question of generating concrete steps for building and sustaining the most significant interpersonal relationships of teachers and administrators. The review of the existing literature provides a broad insight to collect relevant data to learn and build concrete ways of strengthening the process of meaningful shared interactions in the teacher-administrator relationship.
Chapter Three: The Design

In an effort to understand and improve interpersonal relationships, it is essential to develop certain interpersonal capacities that support and sustain relationships. According to the British Columbia Principals’ and Vice-Principals’ Association (BCPVPA), (2013),

Interpersonal intelligence is turned outward and is the capacity to understand other people, what motivates them, how they work, and how to work cooperatively with them. It includes the capacities to discern and respond appropriately to the moods, temperaments, motivations and desires of other people (emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals), empathy (awareness of others’ feelings and needs), and social skills (adaptness at inducing desirable responses from others). (p. 33)

A complex web of interdependent relationships—teachers and administrators, teachers and students, teachers and colleagues, teachers and parents, and teachers’ relationships with themselves—exist within schools. Among these relations, the association between a school administrator and an employed teacher that successfully promotes a collaborative, positive working environment not only enhances the academic and behavioural performance of students they encounter, but also promotes the vision of the school and the district as a unit (Price, 2012). This is the most prominent aspect to be explored in this study.

Purpose of this Study

The development of interpersonal capacities to sustain positive teacher-administrator relationships is the core of this study, which is focused on discovering ways through which the complexities of the relationships in question can be simplified. The methodology adopted relies on the examination of existing literature that created a research base to identify the needs of teachers and administrators. It involves enlisting the major factors that impact the relationship by
a) understanding the complexities and nature of the teacher-administrator relationship, b)
keeping in mind the multiple paradigms of professional ethics to determine established ethics of
relationship, and c) analyzing data to find some answers to the major research question.

Barth (2006) asserted that if the relationships between administrators and teachers
are trusting, generous, helpful, and cooperative, then the relationships between teachers and
students, between students and students, and between teachers and parents are likely to be
trusting, generous, helpful, and co-operative; on the other hand, if relationships between
administrators and teachers are fearful, competitive, suspicious, and corrosive, then these
qualities will disseminate throughout the school community (p. 9).

An effort made to study current research in context helped to collect data and consider the
steps that can be taken to reduce the gaps in teacher-administrator relationships and bring the
practices of sustaining relationships from the margins to the centre. It is now necessary to list the
factors that impact teacher-administrator relationships.

**Not Another Relationship to Failure**

The literature suggested that the relationship between teachers and administrators is
complex in nature because they are dynamic, reciprocal, and mutually oriented.

*Figure 3.1. Complex nature of interpersonal relations.*
Interpersonal relationships rely on one’s reflective and communication competencies to understand and interpret one’s own experiences as well as the experiences of others. Therefore, reflection can become the key to unlock the initial thoughts about building positive relationships among administrators and teachers.

Figure 3.2. Reflections essential to sustain relations.

Initiative and a sense of responsibility are expected from all involved in any relationship. So, in order to construct a model of effective tools for building and sustaining a positive administrator-teacher relationship, some factors were found that would become guiding sources for the construction of the model. The factors are listed below and will direct the relationship to walk away from failure, rather than towards the best interest of students.

**Trust.** “Strong levels of trust and respectful relationships are preconditions for successful school improvement initiatives” (Kaser & Halbert, 2009, p. 43). “Trust is the framework that supports all relationships. . . . Especially in the beginning, there’s absolutely no guarantee that if you trust first the other party will reciprocate” (Kouzes & Posner, 2010, p. 79). Kouzes and Posner (2010) also pointed out that the formation of strong and cohesive relationships involves trust and risk in both parts; if the trust is not reciprocated, it is unlikely one would take any risk for the other, which could close the scope of any change or innovation.
“There is a positive relationship between risk and trust. The more people trust, the more they’ll risk” (Kouzes & Posner, 2010, p. 78). Certain day-to-day activities like reflections or short meetings to ensure the trust exists within any team should become a part of its routine. Trust gives a sense of security to the teachers that the leader and the organization will protect their welfare, which can lessen the negative utilization of energy and thus promote growth and develop potential. Once established, trust can itself become a tool to sustain relationships. A positive energy can be generated in a trusting relationship that creates room to focus on tasks like student achievement and learning. Thus, “tremendous energy is released when constituents trust you” (Kouzes & Posner, 2010, p. 78).

**Finding the right leadership style.** An administrator’s leadership style can play a significant role in strengthening the relationship he or she has with teachers. Numerous leadership styles developed with time and some of the styles were noted to give importance to teacher-administrator relationships and influence in varied forms. While there is debate on which
leadership style is best suited to produce the best relationships with teachers, it is clear that each
leadership style offers a unique effect on an administrator’s relationship with his or her teachers.
Leech and Fulton (2008) suggested that embracing transformational leadership can be helpful for
any school’s success because it empowers followers and aids in renewing their commitment to
the school’s vision. According to Leithwood and Sleegers (2006), transformational leadership
consists of a collaborative and shared decision-making approach, the professionalism of the
teacher, and a clear understanding of change. Martin (2005) added that transformational leaders
concentrate on terminal values such as integrity and fairness, while Nielsen and Munir (2009)
maintained that this type of leader employs a visionary leadership style that inspires employees
to make independent decisions and develop their own work.

However, situational leadership is unlike the above leadership style. Situational
leadership is built more around the person and the situation in which he or she is presented,
according to Snowden and Gorton (2002). Another leadership style that emphasizes the leader as
first and foremost a servant fostering collaboration, trust, and the ethical use of power will
increase the productivity of the organization rather than the individual (Greenleaf, 1970); this is
servant leadership. A certain leadership style may produce a collaborative relationship with
teachers, but may also repel teachers, creating an isolation that can be counterproductive to the
mission of the school and the district (Gray, 2013). Rost (1995) defined leadership as not what
leaders do but what leaders and collaborators do together. Leadership is an influence relationship
wherein leaders and collaborators influence one another about real changes that reflect their
mutual purpose. Collaborators develop a relationship with leaders of their own choosing, not
necessarily those who have authority over them. Leaders and collaborators may change places.
The intended changes reflect the purpose or vision that leaders and collaborators have for an
organization. That purpose is usually not static, but is constantly changing as leaders and collaborators come and go, as the influence process works its effects on both leaders and collaborators, and as circumstances, environment, and wants and needs impact the relationship and the organization (Rost, 1995, p. 134).

![Diagram](image)

Figure 3.4. Find the right leadership style.

Rost (1995) saw leadership as a multidirectional influence relationship (i.e., it can act in any direction, not just from the top down) in which leaders and collaborators are the actors in the relationship: “If leadership is what the relationship is, then both collaborators and leaders are all doing leadership. There is no such thing as followership” (p. 133).

**Communication is the key.** Communication is grounded in the “interpretations resulting from the sending, emitting and receiving signs of all kinds” (Smith, 2007, p. 31).

Communication lies at the heart of our humanity and is vitally important to all of us, both inside and outside school. During every day of our lives, we communicate constantly with a variety of people in a variety of ways. At school, interaction of all kinds is often described in terms of effective communication and communicative competence, so in this way, communication has to do with our interactions with others and how it make sense of the world. It is important to
emphasize that this definition of communication extends to how people are in their dealings with others and is not restricted to the usual narrow definition that speaks only of transmitting information from one person or location to another (Smith, 2007). Although interpersonal relationships include a wide range of psychological phenomena, such as mutual influence, interpersonal attractiveness (interest, attraction), mutual perception, and understanding, the formal study of communication consists in examining its various elements and the ways in which these elements interact with one another to produce comprehension and understanding among interacting persons or machines (Smith, 2007).

![Diagram of Communication and Its Elements]

*Figure 3.5. Communication is the key.*

The concept of relationship has no univocal and definite psychological definition; this means that the ways and methods of studying of this concept have not been elaborated. With a lack of a common cognitive understanding of communication and shared activities, it is not so easy to continue to be in the same terms with those involved in the relationship for long (Kleptsova & Balabanov, 2016). “The communication expertise should encompass written,
verbal, interpersonal, and technology mediated exchanges, plus the ability to listen for understanding. Using these capacities, principals will garner the trust among members of the school community” (Weber & Scott, 2013, p. 3).

**Collaboration for celebration.** One of the most important tasks of the administrators and teachers is to “model the reflective, collaborative culture they want in the school, and then celebrate the successes of the group’s accomplishments along the way” (Erkens, 2008, pp. 43-44). The school leader who creates a collaborative work environment by supporting teachers establishes dynamic relationships with teachers, and those teachers are more prone to experience professional growth within the school rather than looking to outside sources for support (Horgn et al., 2010). The best way to ensure teacher collaboration and eliminate teacher isolation is to create professional learning communities, “the surest, fastest path to instructional improvement” (Schmoker, 2006, p. 105). Research has shown that the elements of a productive relationship between a school administrator and a teacher exist when “they recognize they cannot help all students unless they work together collaboratively, and they constantly seek tangible evidence that students have acquired intended knowledge” (DuFour, 2005, p. 2).

Administrators can create such conditions where they endeavor to create a shared leadership, provide teachers and faculty members with productive and effective support and collaboration programs, and choose effective professional development opportunities. DuFour (2005) suggested school improvements cannot rest solely on the school administrator, but through the empowerment of others. Principals have the daunting tasks of providing teachers with the tools needed for their individual and collective successes while effectively balancing decisions that can affect the productivity of the school as a whole. These tasks cannot be done alone, which mandates the examination of factors that will provide the best relationships with
teachers to make this task less daunting and more achievable for educational leaders. According to Minarik et al. (2003), providing teachers opportunities to partner with other teachers and investigating opportunities for higher degrees builds supportive relationships between school administrators and teachers. Therefore, it is important to foster a culture of collaboration, creating a community of learners in the process. Professional learning communities with collaborative efforts from a group of educators based on key principles of ensuring that all students learn, creating structures that promote a culture of collaboration, and having a focus on results (DuFour, 2005) contribute towards collaboration. Leech and Fulton (2008) maintained that in order for schools to become learning organizations, environments must be rich in experimentation and risk-taking and a vision must be shared by all members of the school community, which is led by the school principal. Further, school principals are in a position to create conditions that allot for teacher development and student learning by creating professional learning communities that distribute leadership and shared decision making (Mullen & Hutinger, 2008).

Commitment with shared emotions. Interpersonal relationships accompany people through their lives, transformed by various determiners, such as age, personal characteristics, professional preference, and sociocultural changes. Relationships are at the same time characterized as mutually oriented, “as a person is never free from his/her own system of expectations, stereotypes, orientations, attitudes, dispositions, through which people are perceived and assessed” (Kleptsova & Balabanov, 2016, p. 2148). Bobek (2002) asserted that teachers enhance their resilience in the field by creating productive relationships with those who understand teaching and its function and more importantly offer insight and share knowledge
with one another. One of the key ways to make this happen is for the administrator to be actively involved in these relationships and to allow teachers to feel empowered.

In this case, teacher-administrator relationships can be assessed according to the presence of personal and shared emotions, as well as a common purpose or goal. They need to engage others to make use of their skills, knowledge, and abilities; build and maintain relationships inside and outside the organization, and with people from diverse backgrounds; and recognize that relationships are reciprocal—invest in building and maintaining relationships. “When leaders are in tune with the emotions of others, they create resonance between leader and constituent” (Kouzes & Posner, 2010, p. 65), which shows that a leader has the ability to look out for their welfare, and building mutual trust as a leader demonstrates the leader’s own trust in them. For cultivating the skills, attitudes, and behaviours needed to develop and maintain interpersonal relationships that support innovation, the leaders must first act and contribute with commitment to the shared vision.

**Motivation and empowerment of each other.** The isolation between school administrators and teachers is a gap that has been perpetuated over time; therefore, there have been few opportunities for the two parties to collaborate and function as a unit. The traditional roles of principal and teachers have changed, so administrators must give teachers a stronger voice in the decision-making process in order to change the climate of the school (Donald et al., 2009). Administrators must be active in providing experiences for all teachers to grow as leaders. A principal plays a paramount role in faculty empowerment and teacher leadership. It is essential that a principal creates an environment conducive to empowerment and improvement, demonstrates an idealistic example, encourages all endeavors toward empowered relationships, and appreciates all successes (Terry, 1999, para. 4) that would act as a motivation source to keep
going. The successful schools will be the ones where leaders are best able to apply the creative energy of teachers toward constant improvement by building positive relationships. Monk (2007) asserted that teachers have the tendency to feel isolated and suffer because they have very little contact with the professional community as a whole.

**The Significant Role of the Administrator**

The role of an administrator is the “maintenance of a network of professional and personal relationships” (Weber & Scott, 2013, p. 15), and the principal-as-professional must adhere to professional obligations “to develop relationships and navigate multiple allegiances” (Weber & Scott, 2013, p. 15). Successful leadership requires an understanding among educators where there is less of a gap and no misperceptions. Finding out the ways and means of refining relationships is a challenge that leaders face, and there is no direct one-way solution to overcome this problem. Therefore, leaders need to work more on the initiatives taken and practices involved in forming a knowledge community where all work together, not apart. According to Weber & Scott (2013),

> Responsibility for the quality of relationships implies that school leaders cannot afford to wait for relationships to evolve. Rather, principals now are expected to forge constructive relationships intentionally with the view to creating linkages that will support teaching and learning activities. (p. 16).

Maintaining the quality of these relationships is essential for the healthy development of teachers and students alike (Wubbels, Brekelmans, Brok, & Tartwijk, 2006). We know, for example, that teacher learning thrives when principals facilitate accommodating and safe school cultures. In nurturing the practice of contemplative relationships, leaders play an essential role by never leaving this practice to the margins and somewhat simplifying the complex task of
leadership. According to Minarnk, Thornton, and Perreault (2003), administrators who foster the importance of establishing relationships within the educational community is another key ingredient to enhancing relationships with teachers. If teachers are going to be successful in the field and throughout their careers, strong professional relationships must be established and readily available for teachers. Anhorn (2008) cited several areas where the school administrator is needed for teachers, including seeking wisdom, helping with parents, conducting observation, and providing feedback on instruction.

In order for teachers and administrators to form collaborative relationships that will allow schools to meet the demands of state accountability systems and to produce productive citizens, those factors that prevent this endeavor from becoming a reality must be eliminated. Not only must these factors be eliminated, but also those factors that aid in producing relationships that allow teachers to remain in the profession and build sustaining partnerships with school administrators must be nurtured. The principal must build interpersonal relationships with teachers in order to change the climate and the culture of a school (Donald, Marnik, Mackenzie, & Ackerman, 2009). In order for school leaders to become agents of change, they must recognize what issues divide administrators and teachers and ultimately learn to value the potential impact of the relations.

Finally, this chapter provided the rationale to the model that I have constructed in order to strengthen and highlight the role that teacher administrators play in fostering learning among the students. The model selected is a step-by-step, ongoing process through which teachers and administrators can collaborate on an everyday basis in order to establish certain short-term goals not only towards their primary purpose of fostering learning among students, but also to focus on the good of each other where everyone learns and grows together every day.
Chapter Four: Model for a Workshop

The design of this study is to construct a five-step model and a workshop built on those steps to emphasize the importance of the teacher-administrator relationship. Based on what has already been stated in the previous two chapters, the model has been constructed in an effort to: a) develop interpersonal capacities that would be at the core of this study, and b) develop some possible ways to simplify the complexities of the relationship in focus. The expected outcome is to design a workshop which would help a) to share interpersonal intelligence among the participants in the relationship, b) to share ideas to collaborate, co-operate, and communicate, and c) to achieve a school vision in the best interest of students as well as all those involved in the process of fostering a culture of learning.

Rost (1995) defined leadership as not what leaders do but what leaders and collaborators do together: “Leadership is an influence relationship wherein leaders and collaborators influence one another about real changes that reflects their mutual purposes” (Rost, 1991, p. 102). Rost (1995) also stated that collaborators develop a relationship with leaders of their own choosing, not necessarily those who have authority over them. Leaders and collaborators may change places. There may be a number of leadership relationships in one organization, and the same people are not necessarily the leaders in these different relationships. The intended changes reflect the purpose or vision that leaders and collaborators have for an organization. That purpose “is usually not static but is constantly changing as leaders and collaborators come and go, as the influence process works its effects on both leaders and collaborators, and as circumstances, environment, and wants and needs impact on the relationship and the organization” (Rost, 1995, p. 134). In this way, Rost (1995) saw leadership as a multidirectional influence relationship (i.e., it can act in any direction, not just from top down) in which leaders and collaborators are the
actors in the relationship: “If leadership is what the relationship is, then both collaborators and leaders are all doing leadership. There is no such thing as followership” (p. 133). The major purpose behind designing this model would be to demonstrate how teachers and administrators together can find ways to strengthen and sustain relationships by themselves.

**Construction of Relationship Model**

This model reflects the interpersonal relationship in focus, teacher and administrator, in terms of the definition that states the following:

Interpersonal relationship is mutual readiness of people to communicate in a certain way, accompanied by emotions (positive, indifferent and negative) in the context of communication and other shared activities. In this case interpersonal relationships can be assessed according to the presence of personal and shared emotions, as positive, negative or indifferent; according to the presence of mutual understanding as adequately and inadequately understood; characterized by cognitive identification between subjects of communication, a tendency of resistance, cooperation or inaction.

(Obozov 1979, as cited in Kleptsova, & Balabanov, 2016, p. 2148).

The definition itself reflects the major themes of the model.

**Step 1: Understand the need to work on relationship in focus.** If relationship building is a process, then interactions between participants through individual contributions, meaningful communication, and shared activities towards a common goal and purpose could lead to a positive outcome. Such a system of interrelation is mediated by certain aims and organized by shared activities. Therefore, before getting into the actual process of developing positive relationship amongst the teachers and administrators, it is important that the participants share the same perspective and know why they are together and what exactly they are working on.
“Interpersonal relationships include rather a wide range of psychological phenomena, such as mutual influence, interpersonal attractiveness (interest, attraction), mutual perception and understanding” (Kleptsova, & Balabanov, 2016, p. 2149). Therefore, step one helps the participants to understand that they work on a shared activity with a common purpose of enhancing the academic and behavioural performance of students as well as achieve school vision.

**Step 2: Define the nature of relationship in focus.** Throughout the previous chapters, different parameters and factors were listed as studied by various scholars to understand and list the nature of relationship between teachers and administrators. From that list, the major factors that define the actual nature of relationship in focus are that it is universal, complex, dynamic, reciprocal, and mutually oriented. Relationships are everywhere and in every context and are inevitable in nature. Cognitive complexities and complicated systems of personal constructs make interpretation of the meanings complex for the participant to be on the same point in one picture. Interpersonal relationships are at the same time characterized as mutually oriented because

a person is never free from his/her own system of expectations, stereotypes, orientations, attitudes, dispositions, through which people are perceived and assessed. Interpersonal relationships accompany people through their lives, transformed by various determiners, such as age, personal characteristics, professional preference, sociocultural changes. (Kleptsova, & Balabanov, 2016, p. 2148)

**Step 3: Individual role and responsibility: Giving it a personal touch.** “Interpersonal relationships are valued in the group only when they are a condition or a way of achieving some socially meaningful result” (Kleptsova, & Balabanov, 2016, p. 2149). Respectful relationships
and interactions—both virtual and personal—are shown to improve student engagement. Students today are intensely social and interactive learners (Taylor & Parson, 2011). For example, students surveyed by Willms, Friesen, and Milton (2009) stated that they wanted to interact with people both within and beyond the classroom and school environment. These researchers found that students want stronger relationships with teachers, with each other, and with their communities—locally, provincially, nationally, and globally. Students want their teachers to know how they learn. Students want their teachers to establish learning environments that build interdependent relationships and promote and create a strong culture of learning. Facilitating such expanded relationships requires a shift in the teacher’s identity (Taylor & Parson, 2011). The role of teacher is no longer the “sage on the stage,” the teacher now learns alongside students, helping them actively construct their learning experiences and knowledge (Claxton, 2007), therefore it is essential that teachers have support and collaborate with the administrators in order to achieve the highest levels of student engagement. Another important aspect of this process is the development of young people’s social and emotional competencies, particularly as they confront new relationships existing in their learning environment. Teaching is not primarily “a matter of specialized technical acquisition of casual techniques, but of the mastery of those forms of knowledge, understanding, skill, communication, personality and moral character that are precisely presupposed to any and all positive human projects and enterprises” (Carr, 2005 p. 262), and so is leadership and sustaining relations in such scenarios.
**Figure: 4.1.** Roles and responsibilities.

**Step 4: Holding onto the vital tools.** To acquire the tools and vital resources, the participants understand and work within the dynamics of a group; they share information and expertise inside the organization and among other partners. They explain and clarify new and different ideas, respect and support the ideas, approaches, and contributions of others, listen to
and value diverse opinions and perspectives, accept and provide feedback and guidance in a constructive manner, and overcome barriers among people that may impede results. They anticipate sources of assistance as well as resistance.

Figure 4.2. Vital tools and resources in teacher-administrator relationship.

Kouzes and Posner stated that you have to say yes to begin things. You have to say yes to your beliefs, you have to say yes to big dreams, you have to say yes to difficult challenges, you have to say yes to collaboration, you have to say yes to trust, you have to say yes to learning, you have to say yes to setting the example, and you have to say yes to your heart (2010, p. 164).

Therefore, taking the initiative becomes a vital tool that would motivate everyone involved to contribute as well as collaborate.
Step 5: Preservation to overcome shortage and wastages. Building a relationship might seem challenging; however, sustaining and nurturing any relationship is a challenge beyond any research, but it is equally important. In schools where care is not evident, the performance/achievement of teachers is weaker; there are negative organizational relationships that contribute to a negative climate (Basson and Smith, 1991; Beck, 1992; Kahn, 1993). All the steps above are meaningless if no thought is given to sustain a relationship. The biggest problem is that people who do not receive care also restrain from giving care to others. It is an accepted view that when principals fulfil their caring role with regard to the teachers in their care, the teachers’ experience of the quality of working life will become more positive because of its motivational nature (Davis & Wilson, 2000; Kroth & Keeler, 2009). Establishing ethics of the profession could help not only to achieve the goals, but also to bring life to the relationships existing within schoolhouses. Care should be unconditional and not based on the quality of skills and knowledge that a person displays. The inclusion of emotional literacy in a training programme will implicate the implementation of strategies promoting emotional intelligence (Burman, 2009). Also mentioned by Vyver, Cornelius, Westhuizen, Philip, and Meyer (2014), it is therefore recommended that a personal development plan be established for principals that will enable them to better understand and deal with their own emotions as well as those of the teachers, enhancing their emotional literacy.

Designing the Workshop

A workshop based on the five-step relationship model for building relationships would be set in three stages. Each stage would be conducted over the duration of one week. Preparation to establish the pre-requisites, memo, purpose, setting, content, resolutions, and outcomes with an emphasis on the commitment to interpersonal relationships would set the ground for the three
stages of the workshop. Each stage would be expected to initiate and enhance active participation, understanding, involvement, and collaboration through communication and meaningful interactions between the participants. **Stage 1** would be a voluntary participation; all the listed participants would be sent a memo with detailed aims and purposes of the workshop so they could reflect upon the idea behind the workshop and participate at their own free will. **Stage 2** would involve two to three students as participants who would participate and contribute in the interactions, and these students would be selected randomly in order to avoid any bias. The participants will be allowed to contribute through any medium: Visual, auditory, or kinesthetic.

In **Stage 3**, all the members would be expected to be there to participate and share the same cognitive and affective understanding about the importance of relationship and working together.

**Layout of Workshop**

**Duration:** Twenty minutes a day at the beginning of work for three weeks continuously.

**Occurrence:** The participants gather together every day of the week for 20 minutes.

**Prerequisites:** Each participant would be expected to thoroughly go through the memo sent in advance to reflect about what the participants are getting into.

**Memo:** The memo sent to the participants would be expected to trigger them to think and reflect upon the reasons and purposes behind what and with whom they work every day. It will also give an opportunity for self-awareness and to think about those working along to achieve a common purpose with theirs. It should clearly reflect the purpose and layout of the three stages of the workshop. The memo would be sent a week in advance and in at least three different formats designed to motivate volunteer participation.

For example, the memo on building and sustaining relationships would have memos sent thrice, that is, once in three weeks: The week one memo will highlight identifying relationships
and knowing your standing. Week two will highlight the understanding of different perspectives of those involved in relationship, and finally, week three will be the generation of concrete and personal initiatives that each participant would recommend and work on to sustain the relationship.

**Venue.** Each day of the workshop should be organized at a different place to develop the ability to adjust and adapt to new settings. From playgrounds to meeting halls and from classrooms to administrators’ offices, every area within and some outside the school premises will be utilized and explored.

**Purposes**

Stage One: a) To identify and list the measures to overcome the gaps in teacher administrator relationship, b) To develop capacities and skillset to tackle the recent obstacles noted, c) To prioritize and give importance to interpersonal relationships as a means to achieve the shared vision of fostering learning amongst all, and d) To sustain the relationships and establish ethics of care.

Stage two: a) To make sure that all participants understand the meaning of interpersonal intelligence and capacities, b) To direct all participants towards self-realization of the role interpersonal relationships can play to achieve their goals and purposes; and finally, c) To bring all participants as close as possible to the same page of cognitive and affective understanding of the interpersonal relationships.

Stage three: a) To build individual capacities among the participants to clearly list and breakdown the complexities they themselves faced in the earlier two stages of the workshop, b) To enlist all the concrete and personal measure participants recommended to overcome the complexities and fill the gaps.
Setting

Round tables would be set up where each participant will have the freedom to move, pair up, and speak freely. An environment full of energy and enthusiasm celebrating the opinions and diversity of participants, allowing full contribution, open criticism, and no judgement. All the participants will be allowed to display their ideas in any form to ensure involvement and eliminate hesitations.

Content

Stage one: Identification and elimination of the gaps in teacher administration relationship would be the subject of the workshop being planned.

Stage two: Understanding of different perspectives of the participants and allowing them the right to speak and suggest concrete and achievable measures that would allow all the participants to come together and work as a whole. Digging deeper and making an effort to allow participants to get on the same cognitive as well as affective understanding of the interpersonal relationship and introduction to the necessity of sustaining the teacher-administrator relationship would be the major content of this week. Greater emphasis would be given to correlation of various subject matter and their practical implications to the real world.

Stage three: The participants should be allowed to participate in the activities through which they build and sustain their own network of relationships to achieve their shared vision of the school or organization. However, in each stage, a set of activities facilitating the participants to walk through each stage would be encompassed in the form of group games, small projects, videos, and responsibilities that would address all personality types with different attitudes. For example, while attending the workshop at different venues, all the participants will be asked to
make their own list of resources that they themselves or in collaboration with other participants can utilize to achieve their everyday goals and targets.

**Activity 1. To enhance the utilization of available resources within the school.**

- make list of resources that they themselves or in collaboration of other participants can utilize to achieve their everyday goals and targets.
- list the concrete and achievable way through which those resources can be utilized by other participants.
- what ways can be employed to make that setting more productive and utilised to its fullest.

**Activity 2. Incorporation of co-relation of studies: Utilization of multiple talents and domains.**

- enlist the subjects that are co-related to each other, for example study of soil can be a part of ecology as well as geography, gardening and science.
- plan list of activities which can be designed for set of students from two classrooms that can work together and add to community welfare or support the community.
- find out the ways to use different tools and relationships available that can be brought together and developed to achieve better co-relation of studies.
- understand the vast amount to learning that can take place by working together that would not only save resources like time and energy.

*Figure 4.3. Sample activities for the workshop.*

**Outcomes.** a) Self-awareness and empowerment of the participants, b) development of group integrity, c) eliminate teacher isolation, sense of loneliness, and emotional exhaustion, d) generate and list basic skills to build and sustain interpersonal relations, e) the participants would be expected to build and sustain their relationship on their own without ever leaving this practice
to the margins and finally, f) list clear individual resolutions to overcome the gaps in the teacher-
administrator relationship.

Hence, the workshop designed is in a general context and open to changes and
modifications to specific contexts. It is also expected to address the moods, temperaments,
motivations, and desires of all the participants.
Chapter Five: Discussion

The purpose of the study was to identify as well as describe the importance of the gaps and circumstances that may impact administrator-teacher relationships. In particular, the study aimed to highlight the idea of building and sustaining a teacher-administrator relationship. The research is entirely based on existing research, personal experiences, and literature to design a step-by-step model to construct a workshop in a general context that might contribute to simplify the complexities of the relationship in focus, that of the teacher and administrator. While understanding the reciprocal nature of interpersonal relationships, the mutual contribution and collaboration of those involved in the relationship is highly valued to sustain and prioritize the value of ethics of care in it. Chapter Five begins with a discussion, leading to a brief summary of the study, limitations, implications, and recommendations or scope for future research.

Summary

The study supports existing research regarding the importance of connecting teachers with their administrators, colleagues, and the professional community as a whole. Teachers must be allotted time to observe and especially confer with administrators and other professionals at their schools. The literature review began by examining a) the transition from a hierarchical to a non-hierarchical teacher-administrator relationship, b) different perspectives on administrator-teacher relationships, c) the nature of teacher-administrator relationships, d) factors essential to building strong teacher-administrator relationships, e) the roles and responsibilities of teachers and administrators towards their relationship, and finally, f) the major question: “What are the most concrete steps for building and sustaining connectedness among teachers and administrators in schools?” Life becomes much more pleasant and smooth when relationships are warm, when the rights and needs of everyone are attended, and local cultural norms are respected.
Research has shown that administrators play a vital role in not only enhancing the academic performance of students, but they also have the daunting task of motivating and cultivating their staff in order to make gains in student achievement.

In an effort to understand and improve interpersonal relationships, it became essential to define interpersonal intelligence, which supports and sustains relationships. The development of interpersonal capacities to sustain positive teacher-administrator relationships was at the core of this study, which is focused on discovering ways through which the complexities of the relationship in question can be simplified. The methodology adopted relied on the examination of existing literature that created a research base to identify the needs of teachers and administrators. It involves enlisting the major factors that impact the relationship by a) understanding the complexities and nature of the teacher-administrator relationship, b) keeping in mind the multiple paradigms of professional ethics to determine established ethics of relationship, and c) analyzing data to find some answers to the major research question. The methodology and design provided the rationale to the model that has been constructed in order to strengthen and highlight the role that teacher administrators play in fostering learning among the students.

The design of the study was to construct a five-step model and a workshop built on those steps to emphasize the importance of the teacher-administrator relationship. The model has been constructed in an effort to a) develop interpersonal capacities that are at the core of this study, and b) develop some possible ways to simplify the complexities of the relationship in focus. On the other hand, expected outcomes to design a workshop helped a) to share interpersonal intelligence among the participants in the relationship, b) to share ideas to collaborate, co-operate,
and communicate, and c) to achieve a school vision in the best interest of students as well as all those involved in the process of fostering and sustaining a culture of learning.

Limitations

There are six limitations of this study. First, the scarcity of time hindered the completion of actual testing of the workshop designed to build and sustain teacher-administrator relationships. Second, there is a difficulty in maintaining objectivity, as the subject’s personal opinions are likely to colour the data and planning of the workshop. Third, the design and construction of the model and workshop is general in nature. Fourth, the application and practical implications of the model as well as the workshop were not tested. Fifth, the complex nature of teacher-administrator relationships and everyday challenges in the actual school settings might obstruct the smooth application of the workshop designed. Finally, teachers are less accessible to participate in the workshops due to their major role of being available in their classrooms for their students.

Implications

The workshop designed has certain implications that can help to highlight the importance of teacher-administrator relationships:

1. The model can help to design workshops in different contexts and a variety of issues related to teacher-administrator relationships can be addressed.

2. Interpersonal relationships can become a core or centre in achieving the school vision, which otherwise are always at the margins even when those involved in relationships are fully aware about the importance as well as the role relationships play.

3. Teachers as well as administrators realize and address their roles and responsibilities towards each other.
4. High levels of trust, communication, and collaboration can be established among the participants in the workshop.

5. Diverse needs, moods, attitudes, or temperaments can be addressed when all staff members work in a setting where everyone has an equal chance to participate and contribute.

6. Administrators and teachers together can find the most suitable leadership style to help to achieve the vision of the school.

7. Ethics of professionalism and everyday goals can be generated with multiple perspectives of all staff members working to generate concrete achievable ways to foster learning in the best interest of students.

8. The gaps in teacher-administrator relationships can easily be identified and barriers eliminated.

Recommendations or Scope for Future Research

1. The reliability and validity of the workshop can be statistically tested.

2. Comparisons can be made in the leadership styles of the school administrator from different school districts.

3. Workshops can be designed in specific contexts.

4. Various other interpersonal relationships can be studied built on the framework of this study.

5. Particular factors affecting teacher-administrator relationships can be studied in detail.

6. Future study could also include the principal’s or teacher’s perspective on the factors that may impact administrator-teacher relationships. There might be major differences between an administrator’s perception, practice, and the perception of teachers.
7. Research can be conducted on the barriers in the interpersonal relationships and the ways to overcome those barriers.
References


doi:10.1080/00098650209604932


