Educators' Perspectives on the Relationship Between Content and Manner of Delivering Post-Observation Feedback

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EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTENT AND MANNER OF DELIVERING POST-OBSERVATION FEEDBACK

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Abstract

This mixed-methods study explores and describes the perceptions of public school principals and teachers who participate in the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) model. The study examines different types of post-observation feedback delivery and the content of feedback provided by principals to teachers.

This study sought to explore the perceptions that teachers and principals have about certain types of post-observation feedback delivery (verbal, written, both, or other) and the content of feedback (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric) with respect to impacting instructional practices in the classroom. In the interest of improving instructional practices in classrooms, it is important to understand better the relationship between teachers' and principals' perceptions of post-conference feedback, and whether the method of delivery or content of feedback is perceived as having more of an impact on changing instruction in the classroom.

This research study shed light on four themes identified through principal interviews. The themes were as follows: Time, Selecting Content Feedback, Delivering Content Feedback, and Monitoring Instructional Changes. These themes became apparent during the study, through interviewing principals. The study found about one-half to two-thirds of teachers reported a subjective sense that how feedback was delivered influenced the likelihood of implementing instructional changes. Quantitative analysis found no

statistically significant relationship between the form of feedback delivery and the likelihood of teachers actually making instructional changes. However, the research data supported that the majority of teachers are making instructional changes following post-observation conferences. Slightly fewer than two-thirds of teachers in the study reported that the changes they made in their classrooms were the result of the content of feedback they received from their principal. Chi-square analysis revealed an overall correspondence between the area in which feedback was provided and the area in which teachers reported making the most instructional changes. The research study supported that when teachers received content feedback, irrespective of how that feedback was delivered, they were more likely to make instructional changes in their classrooms.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Jenny, and my three children Emerson, Drew, and Kate. We have experienced this journey together. Without your love and support, this project would not have been possible. May you always follow your dreams and use your gifts and talents to impact others.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

"Simply stated, the teaching quality gap explains much of the student achievement gap."

(Berry, Daughtrey, & Wieder, 2010, p. 1)

Overview of the Study

For decades, school systems and teachers have been on the educational frontlines facing public criticism for achievement failures and shortages (Christakis, 2017). Two longstanding questions have recently resurfaced, as both politicians and corporations are asking: "Are teachers really that important? Do they really matter?" Throughout the past decade, the acceleration of technology is quickly integrating every aspect of modern society, as corporations and political debates are coming together to place big bets that the answer to these central questions is "No!" (Quillen, 2012). The future of education appears to be heading towards a crossroads where these answers will have a significant impact on altering the landscape of today's classrooms and schools.

The ability of an effective teacher to provide a transformational experience for students is something that most members of society understand at a very personal level (Tucker and Stronge, 2005). In schools, today, teachers are a central figure in the lives of a student's educational career and school experiences. In 1996, Sanders and Rivers conducted a landmark study on teacher effectiveness. This team carefully examined the effects that teachers have on student achievement. The study revealed, "within grade levels, the single most dominant factor affecting student academic gain is teacher instruction" (Sanders & Rivers, 1996, p. 6). Based on the study's results, it showed that students who are placed in the classrooms of effective teachers have a significant

advantage over their peers, in less effective classrooms, in attaining higher levels of academic achievement (Sanders et al., 1996).

When students are asked about their school experiences, most can identify a teacher that made a substantial impact on their learning and development during their school career (Tucker & Stronge, 2005). Very often a student can still recall many years removed from a classroom, a teacher who left a remarkable imprint on their lives. As one former student insightfully shared about their past teachers, "they inspired us to play with ideas, think deeply about the subject matter, take on more challenging work, and even pursue careers in a particular field of study" (Tucker et al., 2005, p. 1). For a few very fortunate students, they may have had the privilege of experiencing numerous exceptional teachers throughout their school career. Those teachers were able to transform a school into an exciting, creative, and interesting place of learning each day for their students (Tucker et al., 2005).

Over the past decade, leaders in educational policy have begun to accept what others have known for many years that it is teachers "that make the greatest difference to student achievement" (Berry, Daughtrey, & Wieder, 2010, p. 1). Many research studies lend support that the educational impact of a teacher is the single biggest factor influencing student academic achievement (Berry et al., 2010). Years of research on teacher quality has shown that "effective teachers not only make students feel good about school and learning but also that their work results in increased student achievement" (Tucker & Stronge, 2005, p. 1).

The influence a classroom teacher can have on increasing student achievement is well documented, and effective teachers have the unique ability to close the achievement

gap between high-achieving and low-achieving students (Range, Young, & Hvidston, 2013). School principals also share the responsibility of student achievement. Principals work in tandem with teachers and are tasked as the instructional school leaders by providing supervision, feedback, and evaluation of teachers for determining their effectiveness and helping teachers increase their instructional ability in the classroom (Range, Anderson, Hvidston, & Mette, 2013).

As statistical methods evolved to better measure the impact of teaching and learning on student achievement, current research is more compelling and shows more than ever that teacher quality accounts for a disproportional variance in a student's academic achievement (Sanders and Horn, 1998). According to Sanders et al. (1998),

> If the purpose of educational evaluation is to improve the educational process…determining the effectiveness of individual teachers holds the most promise because, again…research show(s) teacher effectiveness to be the most important factor in the academic growth of students. (p. 250)

Discovering diverse ways to continue to support and cultivate effective teachers is the challenge that any school looking to improve faces (Tucker and Stronge, 2005). For improvement to occur in the classroom, teachers need to receive quality feedback about their instruction. Timely feedback is critical to any improvement effort in any profession, especially education. "For instance, consider the role of a track coach, fitness trainer, or weight counselor. These individuals provide guidance on how to perform better, but the evidence of their effectiveness as professionals' manifests in tangible results" (Tucker et al., 2005, p. 4). The primary purpose of the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System is to provide feedback to teachers in order to improve the practices inside the classroom.

Myung and Martinez (2013) argue that many teachers do not perceive the observation process as being formative to improving teaching and learning. Rather it is perceived by many teachers as an exercise in accountability, with the goal being to provide the administrator information in order to make future employment decisions. However, when a conversation occurs between a principal and teacher that includes targeted feedback after an observation, there exists the more significant potential for growth to take place by improving the teaching and learning. Administrative supervision and teacher evaluations are designed to improve the instructional practices within the classroom through professional development and targeted feedback.

The effect of performance feedback (PF) on teachers' implementation into classroom practices has interested researchers since 1973. However, this area has reemerged, beginning in 2000, with a series of new research studies. More recent studies have had an emphasis on trying to understand if PF has an impact on changing employee behavior (Fallon, Collier-Meek, Maggin, Sanetti, & Johnson, 2015). According to Engin (2015), student learning is situational, and this also applies to teachers. For instance, when teachers and principals enter into a post-conference session, they bring with them their agendas, experiences, and expectations. The post-observation conference is an opportunity for the "co-construction of knowledge through interaction and articulation of thought processes, through asking questions and justifying and defending positions" (Engin, 2011, p.70). The importance of post-observation feedback cannot be emphasized enough (Myung and Martinez, 2013). If teachers want to grow and improve their instructional practice, then they must be receptive to receiving feedback about their performance.

The question of how to effectively improve teaching performance has been an area of much research and politics. According to Range, Finch, Young, and Hvidston (2014), "The primary way in which principals directly impact teaching is through instructional leadership…providing resources to teachers, and observing teachers" (p.1). Kraft and Gilmour (2016) extend this idea by arguing that the quality of feedback teachers receive through the evaluation process is proportional to the amount of training administrators have received. Each day teachers make numerous complex decisions that impact the diverse students sitting in their classrooms. For teachers to continue to grow in the classroom "some sort of feedback or follow-up discussion between principals and teachers about what happened in the classroom" must occur on a regular basis (Range et al., 2014, p. 1). Principals need to continue to focus on the idea that teachers want specific help and specific suggestions to improve their practice (Range, Young & Hvidston, 2013). Without these important feedback conversations and the necessary instructional leadership, it will be a significant challenge to reach the levels of learning that diverse classrooms and students require today (Ravitch, 2015). To return to the original question at the beginning of this section, the answer is unequivocal "Yes" teachers do indeed matter, and their impact on student achievement cannot be understated.

Statement of the Problem

To continue to improve instructional practices in classrooms, it is crucial to understand better the relationship between teachers' and principals' perceptions of post-conference feedback, and whether the method of delivery or content of feedback is perceived as having more of an impact on changing instruction in the classroom. A

teachers' perception about feedback from their principal is vital because these perceptions can influence how teachers utilize observation feedback and how principals can more effectively deliver feedback that leads to improving classroom instruction (Range, Young, Hvidston, 2013). With a clearer understanding of teachers' perceptions, principals may be able to improve how they are delivering feedback or providing content feedback to teachers. Identifying what teachers perceive as favorable could lead to improvement of the instructional practices in the classroom.

Many of the existing research studies in the area of classroom instruction often focus on effective pedagogical practices that result in the most significant gains in learning. The importance of post-observation feedback cannot be emphasized strongly enough (Myung & Martinez, 2013). If teachers want to grow and improve their instructional practice, then they must be receptive to receiving feedback on their performance. However, there are questions that need more investigation. First, additional research needs to be conducted to understand if the manner in which feedback is delivered (verbal, written, both, other) in a post-observation conference brings about change in classroom instruction. If so, what type of feedback delivery (verbal, written, both, or other) do teachers and administrators perceive as having the most significant impact on changing instructional practices? Also, more research needs to be conducted to understand better whether the content of feedback provided during a post-observation conference influences instructional changes in the classroom. Finally, is there an interaction between the content of feedback and the manner of delivery with respect to impacting instructional practices?

A fundamental question of how to effectively improve teaching and learning has been an area of research that has been significantly contested. Range, Finch, Young, and Hvidston (2014) argue, "The primary way in which principals directly impact teaching is through instructional leadership…providing resources to teachers, and observing teachers" (p.1). Over the past couple of decades, the mark of success in the classroom has been highly focused around standardized test results (Berry et al., 2010). In the world of high-stakes testing, in order for a teacher's instruction to continue to improve the most common vehicle for this to occur is through classroom observations and post-conference feedback.

This mixed-methods study sought to understand the perceptions of teachers and principals around the manner and content of feedback, and understand which is perceived as being the most effective in changing classroom practices, or if there was interaction between the two types of feedback that teachers perceived to be related to changing their classroom practices. Without this knowledge, administrators could be delivering feedback or content they perceive as meaningful for teaching and learning, whereas teachers may perceive the feedback delivery or content as having little or no impact in changing their classroom practices while inhibiting their instructional growth in the classroom.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to identify, explore, and describe the perceptions and behavior of public high school teachers and principals who participate in classroom observations and conduct post-observation conferences. This study sought to explore the perceptions teachers and principals have about certain types

of post-observation feedback delivery (verbal, written, both, or other) and the content of feedback (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric) with respect to impacting instructional practices in the classroom.

According to Kingsley-Westerman, Reno and Heutt (2018), "Feedback is needed to improve performance, and many organizations mandate some feedback or appraisal process for their employees" (p. 526). Yet, there are many reasons why supervisors struggle with delivering feedback. According to Kingsley-Westerman et al (2018) the primary reason is likability. When employees expect to receive negative feedback, they will often avoid seeing their supervisors due to poor performance. Supervisors also report that they are often uncomfortable delivering negative feedback to employees and unsure how to deliver the information. Supervisors often work harder managing their employee's impressions of themselves than giving content specific feedback. Therefore, specific types of feedback delivery and content of feedback are two very important components supervisors need to use in order to help employees grow.

Throughout the past decade, Ohio has committed to making feedback an important component of educational policy advances (National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2013). In 2013, the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) allowed the state of Ohio to develop a teacher evaluation system aligned to the Ohio Standards for Educators. According to the Ohio Department of Education (2013) the system is "research-based, transparent, fair and adaptable to the specific contexts of Ohio's districts" (ODE, 2013, Preface). It is the evaluator's goal to observe classroom instruction while "documenting specific information related to teaching and learning" (OTES, 2013, p. 66). Once an observation is completed, the evaluator will analyze the evidence

collected and use the Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric to provide targeted content feedback.

While research evidence supports that targeted feedback around classroom instruction is a critical variable to help teachers grow, there is limited research around the teachers' and principals' perceptions of the types of feedback delivery or content of feedback that are most effective in helping teachers improve their practices in the classroom (Myung & Martinez, 2013). This study sought to investigate the perceptions of both teachers and principals by utilizing surveys of teachers and interviews with principals. This exploratory research study was designed as a mixed-methods study of these experiences and perceptions.

In this study, teachers and principals were asked to describe their own experiences with regards to the nature and manner of feedback they received in post-observation conferences, and how their perceptions of the feedback led to any changes in classroom instruction. The data were analyzed to provide better guidance to principals about teachers' perceptions regarding the content and manner of feedback delivery that lead to instructional changes in the classroom.

Theoretical Framework

When conducting a mixed-methods study a theoretical framework allows the researcher to better organize data in ways that make clear their relevance to the research questions of the study. Furthermore, a theoretical foundation allows the researcher to "draw attention to particular events or phenomena and sheds light on relationships that might otherwise go unnoticed" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 227).

This study conducted a two-phased mixed methods research design to collect and analyze data. Phase I of the study collected qualitative data through 6 principal interviews. Phase II collected quantitative data through an online survey of classroom teachers. In order to use both quantitative and qualitative data in a mixed-methods research study, this study implemented a sequential exploratory research model. This model helped to identify the best research approach, data collection method, and selection of subjects. According to Creswell (2009) a sequential exploratory research model involves a first phase of qualitative data collection and analysis, followed by a second phase of quantitative data collection and analysis. A sequential exploratory approach will allow quantitative data to build on the results of the first qualitative phase (Creswell, 2009). This design functions as a framework for developing ideas in the first phase, which are then put through, further research investigation to validate the results. Range, Anderson, Hvidston, and Mette (2013) argue that the most common supervision model is referred to as the clinical supervision model. This model is commonly utilized as an evaluation model in many schools today. The model contains the following essential components:

- Pre-observation conference between the teacher and the principal;
- Observation by the principal who identifies the relative strengths and weaknesses of the instruction;
- Post-observation conference between the teacher and the principal where the lesson is discussed and the principal highlights the relative strengths and weaknesses.

This model of supervision is "contingent on the principal's ability to collect data about a teacher's instruction, develop ways to improve a teacher's practice and revisit classrooms to determine if instructional improvements have occurred" (Range et al., 2013, p. 71).

Born out of educational reform and research, teacher performance evaluation systems are central to policy efforts to increase teacher effectiveness and student learning and a theoretical framework for this study. Throughout the past decade, Ohio has committed to making important educational policy advances, while increasing the standards for teaching and accountability (National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2013). In 2013, the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) allowed the state of Ohio to develop a teacher evaluation system aligned to the Ohio Standards for Educators. According to the Ohio Department of Education (2013) the system is "research-based, transparent, fair and adaptable to the specific contexts of Ohio's districts" (ODE, 2013, Preface).

OTES rates teaching performance by using ten teaching standards of performance that are described in the Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric (OTES, 2013). Teachers are placed on evaluation cycles and are required to participate in a minimum of two formal observations. According to ODE (2013) "A formal observation consists of a visitation of a class period or the viewing of a class lesson" (p. 15). Once an observation has been conducted, the principal will analyze the evidence collected by using the Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric. The Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric consists of the following ten domains and provides a descriptive narrative for each domain (ODE, 2013, p. 17-22).

- **Focus for Learning -** The teacher establishes challenging and measurable goal(s) for student learning that reflect a range of student's learner needs. The teacher can explain/ demonstrate how the goal(s) fit into the broader unit, course and school goals for content learning and skills.
- **Assessment Data -** The teacher purposefully plans assessments and differentiates assessment choices to match the full range of student needs, abilities and learning styles, incorporating a range of appropriate diagnostic, formative and summative assessments into lesson plans. Student learning needs are accurately identified through an analysis of student data; the teacher uses assessment data to identify student strengths and areas for student growth.
- **Prior Content Knowledge/Sequence/Connections -** The teacher uses the input and contributions of families, colleagues and/or other professionals in understanding each learner's prior knowledge and supporting their development. The teacher makes meaningful and relevant connections between lesson content and such things as other disciplines and real-world experiences and for students to apply learning from different content areas to solve problems. The teacher plans and sequences instruction that reflects an understanding of the prerequisite relationships among the important content, concepts, and processes in district curriculum and/or in state standards as well as multiple pathways for learning depending on student needs. The teacher accurately explains how the lesson fits within the structure of the discipline.
- **Knowledge of Students -** The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the purpose and value of learning about students' background experiences,

demonstrates familiarity with each student's background knowledge and experiences, and describes multiple procedures used to obtain this information. The teacher's analysis of student data (student development, student learning and preferred learning styles, and student backgrounds/prior experiences) accurately connects the data to specific instructional strategies and plans. The teacher plans for and can articulate specific strategies, content and delivery that will meet the needs of the individual students and groups of students.

- **Lesson Delivery –** Teacher explanations are clear, coherent, and precise. The teacher uses well-timed, individualized, developmentally appropriate strategies and language designed to actively encourage independent, critical thinking, including the appropriate use of questions and discussion techniques. The teacher accurately anticipates confusion by presenting information in multiple formats and clarifying content before students ask questions. The teacher develops high-level understanding through effective uses of varied levels of questions.
- **Differentiation –** The teacher matches strategies, materials, and/or pacing to students' individual needs, to make learning accessible and challenging for all students in the classroom. The teacher effectively uses independent, collaborative and whole class instruction to support individual learning goals and provides varied options for how students will demonstrate mastery.
- **Resources –** Instructional materials and resources are aligned to instructional purposes, are varied and appropriate to ability levels of students, and actively engage them in ownership of their learning.

- **Classroom Environment –**The teacher has positive rapport with students and demonstrates respect for and interest in individual students' experiences, thoughts and opinions. Routines are well-established and orderly and students initiate responsibility for the efficient operation of the classroom. Transitions are seamless as the teacher effectively maximizes instructional time and combines independent, collaborative, and whole-class learning and development. A classroom management system has been designed, implemented, and adjusted with student input and is appropriate for the classroom and individual student needs. Students are actively encouraged to take responsibility for their behavior. The teacher uses effective strategies to lessen disruptive behaviors and reinforce positive behaviors.
- **Assessment of Student Learning –** The teacher uses assessment data to identify students' strengths and needs, and modifies and differentiates instruction accordingly, as well as examines classroom assessment results to reveal trends and patterns in individual and group progress and to anticipate learning obstacles. When an explanation is not effectively leading students to understand the content, the teacher adjusts quickly and seamlessly within the lesson and uses an alternative way to explain the concept. By using student data from a variety of sources, the teacher appropriately adapts instructional methods and materials and paces learning activities to meet the needs of individual students as well as the whole class. The teacher provides substantive, specific, and timely feedback to students, families, and other school personnel while maintain confidentiality. The teacher provides the opportunity for students to engage in self- assessment and

show awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses. The teacher uses student assessment results to reflect on his or her own teaching and to monitor teaching strategies and behaviors in relation to student success.

- **Professional Responsibilities –** The teacher communicates effectively with students, families, and colleagues. The teacher collaborates with colleagues to improve personal and team practices by facilitating professional dialogue, peer observation and feedback, peer coaching, and other collegial learning activities. The teacher meets ethical and professional responsibilities and helps colleagues access district policies and understand their implications in the classroom. The teacher sets and regularly modifies short and long-term professional goals based on self-assessment and analysis of student learning evidence.

After a classroom observation is completed, the results of the observation are delivered to the teacher during their post-observation conference. The post-observation conference provides targeted areas of reinforcement and/or refinement feedback to teachers with the goal of changing classroom instructional practices. Aldis and Poiner (2017) argue that OTES feedback should be transformative to teachers, "We believe that the best way to do this is to transform OTES into a system with one specific purpose—to give quality feedback to teachers to help them improve their craft."

Principals and teachers work closely together to share ideas and deliver instructional feedback. The setting most commonly used by principals to deliver feedback is through post-observation feedback conferences. These are meetings that occur between a principal and teacher after a classroom observation. In Ohio, post-conference meetings are a mandatory component of the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System.

Post-conference meetings are designed for principals to share feedback (verbal, written, both or other) to teachers around what they observed in the classroom setting. Gathering more research about how post-observation conference feedback is delivered and perceived was an important research component of this study. In post-observation conferences the content of feedback and the delivery method are essential elements in understanding what was most useful to teachers and what led to changes in their classroom behaviors. Also, it was important to explore how principals viewed and selected various types of feedback, how they choose to deliver that information to teachers, and if they believed that their feedback led to instructional changes in the classroom (Range, Young, Hvidston, 2013). A driving focus throughout this framework was to understand better if the nature of content or the manner of feedback delivery was perceived by teachers to have a greater impact on changing their classroom instructional practices**.**

Research Question

The following research questions are stated to address the purpose of this study:

Teachers: Research Questions

- What are the content areas in which Hamilton County teachers report receiving feedback during post-observation evaluation conferences, viewed through the lens of the Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric?
- What are the forms of communication Hamilton County teachers report their evaluators use to provide post-observation feedback?
- What instructional changes do Hamilton County teachers report implementing following post-observation evaluation conferences?

- In the opinion of Hamilton County teachers, to what extent does the content of feedback provided during post-observation evaluation conferences influence instructional changes they subsequently implement in their classrooms.
- In the opinion of Hamilton County teachers, to what extent does the method of communicating post-observation feedback (verbal, written, both or other) during evaluation conferences influence the instructional changes they subsequently implement in their classrooms?
- In the opinion of teachers in Hamilton County, does the method of communicating post-observation feedback (verbal, written, both or other) differentially influence their perception of the content of feedback they were provided?

Administrators: Research Questions

- What factors do principals in Hamilton County school district report considering in deciding how to deliver post-observation feedback to teachers (verbal, written, both, or other)?
- What factors do principals in Hamilton County school districts report considering in deciding the content of post-observation feedback to deliver to teachers (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric)?
- To what extent do principals report they monitor instructional changes teachers implement following post-observation evaluation conferences?

Research Design

A Mixed-methods research design was used as a methodology for this research study. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) describe a mixed-methods approach to research

that involves philosophical assumptions to guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone. (p. 5)

Mixed methods research has been defined as a model of inquiry that enables a study to combine qualitative and quantitative models of research so that evidence may be mixed and knowledge is increased in a more meaningful manner than either model could achieve alone (Creswell et al, 2007). This method of inquiry was most suited for addressing the research questions of this study. According to Whitley and Kite (2013) a study that has both quantitative and qualitative methods can complement one another, "including development, initiation, corroboration, and elaboration" (p. 430). Qualitative and quantitative methodologies each have individual strengths and weaknesses. Quantitative data can allow for greater generalizability, and larger sample sizes. Whereas qualitative data allows researchers to explore concepts in greater depth but tend to have smaller sample sizes. In this research study, qualitative principal interviews alone did not provide enough information to answer the research questions of the study. Therefore, a second methodology of quantitative teacher surveys helped to enhance the primary method of research and allow the study to compare and combine data from both qualitative and quantitative data and provide greater depth of interpretation.

In order to use both quantitative and qualitative data in a mixed-methods research study, this study implemented a sequential exploratory research design. This design

helped to identify the best research approach, data collection methods and selection of subjects. According to Creswell (2009) a sequential exploratory research design involves a first phase of qualitative data collection and analysis, followed by a second phase of quantitative data collection and analysis. A sequential exploratory approach will allow quantitative data to build on the results of the first qualitative phase (Creswell, 2009). This design functioned as a source for developing ideas in the first phase that were then put through further research investigation to validate the results. This mixed methods study was designed to collect data by utilizing interviews and surveys of teachers and principals to gather their perceptions around post-conference feedback delivery and its impact on changes in classroom instruction.

Qualitative research studies are sometimes referred to as "interactive models" of design (Maxwell, 2005). Qualitative studies "consist of the components of a research study and the ways in which these components may affect and be affected by one another" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 219). A qualitatively conducted study does not assume any directionality of how different variables may impact one another. According to Whitley and Kite (2013) "qualitative research emphasizes collecting richly detailed information about people's experiences and meanings of those experiences" (p. 411). All research studies should have a clear purpose and goals for conducting research. Without clarity, it is easy for a research study to lose focus and spend time investigating ideas that won't necessarily contribute to the overall goals of the study (Maxwell, 2005). According to Marecek (1997) (as cited by Whitley and Kite, 2013) "Many of the distinctions propped up between quantitative and qualitative methods are fictions…whether they work with

numbers or words, in the laboratory – must grapple with issues of generalizability, validity, replicability, ethics, audience and theory own subjectivity or bias" (p. 35).

Whenever someone asserts to know the truth around an idea, concept, or situation, it is essential to question how they ascertained that knowledge. According to Christensen, Johnson, and Turner (2014), individuals acquire information throughout experiences in life. Outside of the scientific process, there are approximately four ways individuals acquire knowledge. First, many individuals use their intuition to develop their knowledge on a topic. This process involves gaining knowledge without applying systematic reasoning to the process of discerning. Second, individuals gain knowledge by accepting information that is stated by an authority or a highly respected source. However, the danger of over-reliance of authority is that they may not always be accurate. Preferably it is more useful to use authority in an area of research to help develop research questions. Next, individuals often rely on their ability to rationalize as a means of gathering information. Rationalism is the foundational belief that our knowledge is valid if it is acquired through a process of reasoning. However, as Christensen et al. (2014) point out, "it is not unusual for two well-meaning and honest individuals to reach different conclusions" (p. 4). The fourth approach to gaining knowledge is through empiricism. Empiricism is the process of acquiring knowledge through information that resonates with our own experiences. In science, empiricism is an essential method for collecting information, yet it needs to be structured and controlled (Whitley and Kite, 2013).

When conducting research, there are trade-offs and different techniques for designing a study. The primary methodological trade-off is related to internal forms of validity:

internal validity relates to how the whole study hangs together within the context of the study and the confidence the researcher possesses about the conclusions they are trying to draw. According to Christiansen, Johnson, and Turner (2014) "validity refers to the accuracy of the inferences, interpretations, or actions made on the basis of test scores" (p. 136). Researchers sometimes claim that a particular survey, interview, or instrument is valid; however, that is not always accurate. It is the interpretations and actions taken, based on the results, that are valid or invalid.

The overall purpose of this study was to understand if the nature of content or the manner of feedback delivery is perceived by teacher to have a greater impact on changing their classroom instructional practices. According to Maxwell (2005) sampling is essential "to establish particular comparisons to illuminate the reasons for differences between…individuals" (p. 235). For this research study, the sample size included teacher and principal participants from 6 high achieving high schools located in southwest Ohio. These 6 schools were identified as having high levels of student achievement based on annual Ohio state testing value-added scores.

This study conducted a two-phased research design to collect and analyze data using targeted qualitative interviews of school principals and an online survey of classroom teachers. In the first phase of this study, interviews of principals were conducted individually. The interview was designed as a semi-structured interview to allow the researcher to explore further other possible variables that may impact the delivery of post-conference feedback. The interviews were seeking to understand principals' perceptions around the following research questions:

- What factors do principals in Hamilton County school district report considering in deciding how to deliver post-observation feedback to teachers (verbal, written, both, or other)?
- What factors do principals in Hamilton County school districts report considering in deciding the content of post-observation feedback to deliver to teachers (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric)?
- To what extent do principals report they monitor instructional changes teachers implement following post-observation evaluation conferences?

As reported by Waite (1993) an interview is a popular method used in gathering information and data about leadership within an organization. This is a relatively easy and convenient research assessment, especially for smaller organizations. The most beneficial use of an interview is utilizing open-ended and unstructured questions. The interviews were loosely structured, and designed to pursue various lines of questioning. Once the data were collected, it was analyzed to reveal any relevant information, which may provide insight into the research questions of the study.

The second phase of this mixed methods research study was distributing an electronic teacher survey. A population of 337 certified teachers were asked to participate in the survey. The survey was created and distributed electronically through email to the same 6 public schools where principals had previously been interviewed, and permission was granted by the school district to sponsor the research. The participant survey responses were anonymous. The participants of this study were randomly selected in southwest Ohio, based on school value-added scores, and were a representative sample of the population as a whole. This methodology reduced the probability that the data would

become skewed because the research study is not trying to control the outcome of the data by selecting participants. Participants in the study statistically modeled the population. Since this research study could not control for all the variability of the participants, random selection was necessary for the methodology. This survey sought to understand teachers' perceptions around the following research questions:

- What are the content areas in which Hamilton County teachers report receiving feedback during post-observation evaluation conferences, viewed through the lens of the Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric?
- What are the forms of communication Hamilton County teachers report their evaluators use to provide post-observation feedback?
- What instructional changes do Hamilton County teachers report implementing following post-observation evaluation conferences?
- In the opinion of Hamilton County teachers, to what extent does the content of feedback provided during post-observation evaluation conferences influence instructional changes they subsequently implement in their classrooms.
- In the opinion of Hamilton County teachers, to what extent does the method of communicating post-observation feedback (verbal, written, both or other) during evaluation conferences influence the instructional changes they subsequently implement in their classrooms?
- In the opinion of teachers in Hamilton County does the method of communicating post-observation feedback (verbal, written, both or other) differentially influence their perception of the content of feedback they were provided?

- In the opinion of teachers in Hamilton County does the method of communicating post-observation feedback (verbal, written, both or other) differentially influence their perception of the content of feedback they were provided?

Within Ohio public schools all certified teachers are required to participate in some form of teacher evaluation (OTES, 2015). The teacher survey was designed to focus on the particular population that was being studied. The survey used in this research study tried to capture teachers' perceptions if certain types of feedback delivery or content lead to greater instructional changes in the classroom. Before providing the surveys to the randomly sampled participants, the survey was piloted with a small sampling of teachers so that the survey could be modified to reduce any bias or skewed findings. This piloted survey was conducted with teachers in a similar high achieving schools, but piloted data were not included in this study. None of the piloting results were included in the findings of the research study. The final survey was distributed electronically to the teacher participants. Table 1 is a question matrix used to help develop survey questions.

Table 1. Research Question Matrix Denoting Source of Data to be Collected

Teachers' Perceptions (quantitative)	Principals' Perceptions (qualitative)
What are the content areas in which Hamilton County teachers report receiving feedback during post-observation evaluation conferences?	What factors do principals in Hamilton County school district report considering in deciding how to deliver post-observation feedback to teachers (verbal, written, both, or other)?
What are the forms of communication Hamilton County teachers report their evaluator use to provide post-observation feedback?	What factors do principals in Hamilton County school districts report considering in deciding the content of post-observation feedback to deliver to teachers (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric)?
What instructional changes do Hamilton County teachers report implementing following post-observation evaluation conferences?	Do principals monitor instructional changes teachers implement following post-observation evaluation conferences?
In the opinion of Hamilton County teachers, to what extent does the content of feedback provided during post-observation evaluation conferences influence instructional changes they subsequently implement in their classrooms?	
In the opinion of Hamilton County teachers, to what extent does the method of communicating post-observation feedback (verbal, written, both or other) during evaluation conferences influence the instructional changes they subsequently implement in their classrooms?	
• In the opinion of teachers in Hamilton County does the method of communicating post-observation feedback (verbal, written, both or other) differentially influence their perception of the content of feedback they were provided?	

Definitions of Terms

Administrator/Principal – According to the Ohio Principal Evaluation System model (2015) school administrators help create a shared vision and set clear goals for their schools. School administrators support the implementation of standards-based instruction and high levels of achievement for all students. School administrators evaluate staff members in their buildings. A school administrator can hold the title of principal or assistant principal.

Teacher – According to the Ohio Department of Education (2018) the State Board of Education for Ohio develops and approves the standards and requirements for educator licensure preparation programs. To obtain a teaching license in the state of Ohio, an individual must attend an approved teacher preparation program. Ohio utilizes a tiered licensure structure, which allows teachers to move from initial licensure to more advanced licenses. To become a teacher in Ohio, prospective teachers must obtain a passing score on the Ohio Assessments for Educators (OAE) series of tests.

High Achieving Schools - These schools were identified as "high achieving" based on their 2017 State of Ohio Value Added scores. Schools that were chosen for this study received an "A" on their overall value-added score on their local report card. The State of Ohio defines value Added as a measurement of the impact that teachers have on students' academic progress rates from year to year (education.ohio.gov, 2017). Value-added is a statistical tool that measures student achievement over time for grades 4-8 in the subjects of Math, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies, and in the subjects of Algebra 1, Geometry, English 1, and English 2 for high school students.

Performance Feedback – According to Myung and Martinez (2013), instructional feedback "is information about the gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system parameter, which is used to alter the gap in some way" (p. 3). Wiggins (2012) identifies the term feedback as a process that is "often used to describe all kinds of comments made after the fact, including advice, praise, and evaluation" (p.1). Principals should focus on the idea that teachers want specific help and suggestions about their teaching (Range et al., 2013). "Therefore, feedback dispensed to teachers within the post-observation conference is critical if continued growth is expected (Range et al., 2013, p. 65). Feedback should be ongoing and accurately identify areas of future growth. Formative feedback to teachers is a conversation between the principal and teacher that identifies the relative strengths and weaknesses of the lesson (Zepeda 2013). Feedback should be related to the teacher's instruction and review all documented areas for reinforcement, refinement and any plans for professional development or improvement planning.

Post-observation conference - When conducting an observation, to assess teaching practices, principals fulfill many roles from providing support, giving advice, possessing current knowledge of instructional practices, and having the ability to assess the quality of instruction inside the classroom formally. According to Myung and Martinez (2013), the importance of post-observation feedback cannot be emphasized strongly enough. If teachers want to grow and improve their instructional practice, then they must be receptive to receiving feedback on their performance. A post-observation conference is a meeting that takes place after a teacher's observation. This is a face-to-face meeting

between the principal and the teacher. According to Range, Young, & Hvidston (2013) the purpose of the post-observation has multiple steps:

- To review and reflect upon the data that was collected during the observation;
- Link professional development opportunities with areas of instructional need or interests;
- Discuss any upcoming future observations.

Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric- The evaluation process is composed of some essential steps by school administrators: observing lessons, assessing teaching, and providing formative feedback to teachers, multiple times throughout a school year (Myung and Martinez, 2013). Principals work in tandem with teachers and perform the duty of being the instructional leader by providing evaluations of teachers for determining their effectiveness. The role of an effective principal is to increase a teacher's instructional ability in the classroom (Range, Anderson, Hvidston, & Mette, 2013). According to Range et al., (2013) "Evaluation is used to assign ratings to teachers' overall performance and issued to determine if teachers have met minimum benchmarks" (p. 66). The OTES system rates teaching performance by using ten teaching standards of performance that are described in the Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric (OTES, 2013). The Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric consists of ten domains and provides a descriptive narrative for each domain that is utilized by the evaluator (ODE, 2013).

Types of Feedback Delivery –

- Face-to-face Verbal Feedback – Feedback verbally delivered to a teacher by a principal about their performance.

- Written Feedback – Feedback delivered in writing to a teacher by a principal about their performance.
- No Feedback –No feedback is delivered by a principal to a teacher about their performance.

Assumptions

Wargo (2015) defines an assumption as a statement that is presumed to be true for the research. Throughout this mixed methods study there existed many underlying assumptions about the participants, survey methodology, and qualitative information to be collected.

An underlying assumption of the research was that observation feedback will continue to be delivered to classroom teachers and is an integral part of the evaluation process. In this study, it was assumed that teachers and administrators would willingly participate in the interview process and that they would answer interview and survey questions honestly and candidly. For participation in the research study, there was an assumption that all participants would have previously experienced or been part of classroom observations. Although the study assumed that all participants previously participated in classroom observation, the study did not assume that all participants had received post-observation conference feedback. It was also assumed that participants in this research study would have a sincere interest in participating without any other motives, such as impressing their supervisor, promotion in employment, or any other alternative motives for participating in the research study. An additional assumption was that some teachers had received post-observation feedback that led to instructional changes in the classroom. As a result, some teachers have the perception that feedback

led to increasing their student's achievement on state assessments. It is also an assumption of the research study that the questions administered to the participants were developed to be of high quality and helped to effectively collect both qualitative and quantitative data that is derived from the research questions of the study.

Limitations

According to Price and Murnan (2004), a limitation of a study is "the systematic bias that the researcher did not or could not control and which could inappropriately affect the results" (p. 66). Throughout any research study, many limitations impact the validity, reliability, and design of the study. In this research study limitations included:

- Noticeably absent from the typical leadership study is a consideration of the context in which leader behaviors are occurring as well as the extraneous variables that may be operating within that context. The typical leadership study often fails to take into account the situation, either through the lack of examining the potential moderators or by failing to measure and subsequently control for potentially biasing effects. For this study, research was conducted on a small sample size of teachers and principals. There was a total population of 337 teachers asked to participate in the survey and a total of 6 principal interviews conducted for the study. Due to the small sample size, it was difficult to generalize significant relationships from the data. In the future, larger sample sizes will be necessary to find a representative distribution of the teachers and principals that are more generalizable to the population.
- Traditionally, researchers would argue that leader behaviors impact subordinate actions or perceptions, ultimately resulting in some desired outcome. It can

become problematic when applying the same surveys across all types of subordinates because there is the underlying assumption that the impact of perceived leader behaviors operates in the same fashion across varying samples. Research studies on leadership often make the mistake of assuming that all employees require leadership and that leadership impacts every employee equally, there are still several problematic assumptions made about using subordinates as the source of information in a leadership study. First, it is assumed that the subordinate has witnessed all of the leadership behaviors they are being asked about. However, recent research suggests that some leadership activities are not likely witnessed by a subordinate (i.e., meetings with staff, cognitively-based actions, strategic planning, district leadership meetings). Even when subordinates witness some of those behaviors, it is assumed that the ratings provided are always accurate estimates of the leader's actions. Therefore, the study assumed that participants would answer survey questions honestly; however, a limitation of the study is that leadership impacts individuals differently and is often differentiated, however that was not being accounted for in this study.

- Another limitation of the study is that the sample size included teacher and principal participants from high achieving schools located in southwest Ohio. These schools were identified as having high levels of student achievement based on annual Ohio state testing value-added scores. Therefore, generalizability was a limitation of the study given the small sample size, and the population was limited to one city in the United States and one county within a state. This will also an obstacle to finding meaningful relationships or trends in the data. As a result,

there is a need for further research that includes a larger sample size that is more representative of the population of the United States and the diversity of public schools.

- The researcher also brings their own biases into a study based on their past experiences. Within all qualitative research, the researcher brings along their values and assumptions that can influence the findings of the study and their interpretation of the collected data. As stated previously, qualitative research is looking through a specific lens. Their perspectives inform the researchers' and participants' interpretations. Furthermore, it is essential to recognize that in a qualitative study the researcher formed their own interpretation of the findings, but it is not the only possible interpretation. However, the research findings will be viewed as a possible framework that will inform future research interpretations.
- Empiricism is a systematic approach that adheres to the concept that virtually all knowledge is based on experience (Whitley and Kite, 2013). Empiricism is a vital element in science, but empirical observations must be conducted under controlled conditions, and systematic strategies should be used to minimize researcher bias and to maximize objectivity. In leadership and research, it is critical to assess different ideas or potential variables empirically. By engaging in pure empiricism, this allows the leader to make choices based on a systematic, scientific process rather than their own bias, perceptions, or subjectivity. If researchers fail to use relevant comparison or control groups, they may be drawing inappropriate conclusions concerning the outcomes of the study.

Therefore, future research will need to look to empirically test the findings of this study while utilizing control measures to increase the validity of the study.

- Another limitation of the study, when utilizing a survey, did the survey measure what it was intended to measure? Is it a valid measure? Surveys can be valuable collectors of information, but additional research must focus on using an instrument that has greater validity and reliability data associated with it.
- This study focused on teachers' behaviors. The study tried to understand if teachers change their classroom instructional practices based on post-conference feedback delivery or the content they receive. However, a limitation of the study is that it was not able to eliminate if there were other variables that may have impacted the behavioral changes inside a teacher's classroom such as: compliance, growth mindset, efficacy, relationship with the organizational leader, and so on.
- Another limitation of the study was that there was limited research on this particular topic in education. A great deal of research exists on high-yielding pedagogical strategies implemented in the classroom. However, limited research exists around teachers' perceptions of different types of post-conference feedback delivery by administrators and its perceived impact. This is an area where more research must be conducted to understand better the perceptions around receiving different types of feedback.
- In this study, teachers were surveyed about their perceptions of post-observation feedback delivery. The surveys and questions, designed by the researcher, were limited in their scope. Future researchers should revise the specific methods of

gathering data to gain additional insights. An additional concern was that participants were not always familiar with the scale or items being used, and the lack of familiarity may have resulted in potential biasing effects.

- This research study was a mixed methods study and utilized both quantitative and qualitative methodology.
- This study utilized self-reporting data methods of teachers. As a result, self-reported data has limitations on the ability to independently verify the participant's answers. Research studies that use self-report surveys are relying on the honesty and transparency of the participants. The degree to which this is a problem will undoubtedly vary with the topic of the survey. For example, if participants believed that their answers may be shared with their supervisors, this could have significantly impacted their ability/desire to be candid. Another inherent problem with self-reporting data was that participants may also vary in their understanding or interpretation of particular questions. A final limitation is a tendency for participants to exaggerate in their responses. This occurs when participants identify events as being more significant than they may have been.
- Another limitation of the study is that this research was collected over a few months. A longitudinal study of post-conference feedback may yield more significant results in capturing the perceptions of teachers and principals from more diverse schools that are more representative of the population will be more reliable.
- This study interviewed principals and tried to capture their perceptions around post-conference feedback. However, a limitation of the study is that levels of

principal training for teacher evaluations were not taken into account. For this study, there 6 principals interviewed who have various years of administrative experience. However, capturing the perceptions of administrators with fewer years of experience or a more significant number of school principals could have yielded additional insights into the research.

- Other limitations of the study did not take into account the impact of gender and teacher tenure and the impact these variables may have on perceptions and delivery. According to Range, Finch, Young, and Hvidston (2014) the needs of non-tenured teachers are very different from teachers with more experience. A teacher's tenure and years of experience are two critical variables that are closely related to influencing their perceptions of observations and feedback (Range, Anderson, Hvidston, and Mette 2013). "Non-tenured teachers deemed novice teachers, present a unique challenge for principals as they apply supervision and evaluation" (Range et al., 2014, p. 67). Future research should be conducted to understand better what impact gender and tenure influence the perceptions around feedback delivery for teachers and principals.
- In all research, bias can creep into a participant's responses impacting the validity of their responses. Bias could be a powerful influence on a participant's response especially if they had past negative experiences with classroom observations by receiving negative feedback or low-performance ratings. Likewise, teachers that have consistently received positive feedback may have formed strong relationships with their principals, and received high-performance ratings from observations and may have a pre-conceived bias toward post-conference

feedback. Future research should try to control for this bias when collecting data.

- Many variables prepare principals and teachers to receive and deliver post-conference feedback. Also, the leadership theory LMX would argue that the perception of the teacher and principal can be moderated by their relationship, and within these relationships, exchanges are made between principals and teachers (Henderson, Liden, Glibkowski, and Chaudhry, 2009). This is an important concept because perceptions of effective feedback delivery could be skewed based on these relationships. Therefore, an essential question in leadership studies is to understand better, do leaders discriminate in their relationships between different members of their organization? If so, then how are some members of the organization successfully able to move into the "in-group" while others remain in the "out-group?" If it is true that leaders do discriminate among members of their organization, then this could have a tremendous impact on how some members perceive the feedback they receive. This could be a significant limitation of this research that would need additional exploration.

Limitations of this research study were categorized as potential weaknesses of the study that are primarily out of the researcher's control, given the design, research model constraints, and any other restriction on the study that cannot be reasonably dismissed as having an impact on the findings.

Delimitations

According to Price and Murnan (2004), a delimitation of a research study is the set boundaries placed around the research to provide a level of control. In this study, delimitations were set to allow the research questions to become more focused rather than

becoming too general or vague. This study was delimited to data collected from January 2019 through February 2019. The research data were collected from a population that included teacher and principal participants from 6 high achieving schools located in southwest Ohio. These schools were identified as having high student value-added scores based on annual Ohio state testing. The principals of each school had various years of experience and were active in the evaluation of their staff members. The data collection was delimited by teacher surveys and on-site interviews with school principals. In order to provide additional focus and control during the study, another delimitation of the study was to focus only on the types of feedback delivery (verbal, written, both, other) during post-observation conferences. This research study did not attempt to measure or determine what types of classroom instruction is most effective in the in improving student learning.

Summary

According to Myung and Martinez (2013), the importance of post-observation feedback cannot be emphasized strongly enough. Tang and Chow (2007) argue that effectively communicating feedback to teachers is critical for their professional learning and improving instructional practices within the classroom. Feedback is one important component for teachers to grow professionally, and teachers must receive consistent support and supervision in the form of observation and post-observation conferences, with the goal of the post-observation conference to provide constructive feedback to improve instructional practices.

According to Range, Young, and Hvidston (2013), the influence of the classroom teacher on increasing student achievement has been well documented and researched.

Research supports that effective teachers make tremendous gains in helping students close achievement gaps through developing classroom environments where all students are challenged according to their individual needs. However, the role of the principal, while working in tandem with competent teachers, is also critically important in providing the essential instructional leadership necessary to impact student learning. According to Rang et al., "Researchers have concluded principals are second only to teachers as a powerful variable impacting student achievement" (2013, p.61).

Much of the work between principals and teachers takes place during post-observation conferences where teachers receive explicit feedback about their instructional practices. According to Myung and Martinez "feedback is information about the gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system parameter, which is used to alter the gap in some way" (2013, p.3). Range, Young, and Hvidston (2013) argue that when effective teachers work together with effective principals, who provide instructional leadership through the evaluation and supervision process, this can lead to transformational changes in teaching and learning. The primary means of a principal's impact on teacher performance is through feedback about instruction.

Malcolm Gladwell (2011) presents the argument that as a society, there is more value placed on accomplishment above effort. Often, heroes become legendary for their abilities to achieve something beyond what anyone else deemed as possible. In our modern society, we idolize athletes like Michael Jordan for his ability to play basketball or artists like Pablo Picasso for his ability to paint and create beautiful art. According to Carol Dweck (2006) "believing that your qualities are carved in stone – the fixed mindset – creates an urgency to prove yourself over and over" (p. 6). Barth (2002) explains,

"Schools exist to promote learning in all of their inhabitants" (p. 9). In a school environment, everyone must embrace the idea that he or she is a learner, from a kindergarten student to a veteran teacher, and understand that learning is a lifetime commitment. Embracing the idea of ongoing learning in a school community is what sets educators apart from many other professions.

All research supports the idea that instructional feedback is a necessary ingredient for helping teachers improve their classroom performance. However, there is a lack of current research on how teachers perceive the feedback that they receive through the evaluation process. This mixed methods study sought to understand how teachers and principals perceive different types of feedback deliveries and content of feedback during a post-observation conference and what led to instructional changes.

Organization of the Dissertation Proposal

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the main components of the research study and a complete overview, which includes the purpose of the study and the problem statement. Chapter 2 consists of the review of the literature, which informs the study and provides an overview of the importance of classroom instruction and its impact on student learning, a historical perspective of teacher evaluation systems is explored, the need for instructional leadership, and the importance of various types of post-observation conference feedback. Chapter 3 describes the mixed methods methodology used in the study and articulates the design of the study. Chapter 4 reports the data collected from the principal interviews and teacher surveys. Chapter 5 is an analysis of the data collection from the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In the book, *Results Now*, Mike Schmoker captures the critical role of teachers saying, "Educators are in the life-saving business" (Schmoker, 2006, Introduction). Many of the challenges, facing schools across the nation, are not the direct result of poorer performing schools rather an achievement line that has continued to be a moving target. In today's classrooms, teachers are being asked to help the vast majority of students to reach levels of learning and skills that were once thought to be within reach of only a very few (Darling-Hammond, 1996).

After more than two decades of educational reform, the United States is still a long way from achieving its goals. According to Darling-Hammond (1996) "Instead of children coming to school ready to learn, more are living in poverty and without healthcare than a decade ago. Graduation rates and student achievement in most subjects have remained flat or have increased only slightly" (p.194). Even more concerning, researchers agree that fewer than 10 percent of high school graduates have the necessary skills to read and think critically at the levels required for today's "knowledge workers."

Reflecting on the circuitous path of public education throughout the 20th century, a quote from Charles Dicken's *A Tale of Two Cities* seems appropriate. "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times" (Dickens, 1859). Throughout the past 100 years of educational history, it has been filled with criticisms about public education, teaching, and learning. With many new change initiatives implemented throughout a century of education, some ideas gained traction, while many others fell by the wayside to be left behind as failed policies or initiatives.

Until the 1970s, there was a strong belief that schools and classroom instruction made little difference in the achievement outcomes of our nation's students. James Coleman published an influential report in 1966 entitled *Equality of Educational Opportunity*. What became known as the "Coleman Report" concluded, "that the quality of schooling a student receives accounts for only about 10 percent of the variance in student achievement" (Marzano, 2001, p.1). As a result of these findings, many schools and teachers began to share in a self-fulfilling prophecy that if a student attended the best or worst schools, it really would not matter a great deal because the school would only account for about a ten percent difference in their achievement. Essentially, a student's success or failure in school was primarily thought to be pre-determined before they set foot in a classroom. Coleman and his colleagues argued that the majority of differences, related to student achievement, "can be attributed to factors like the student's natural ability or aptitude, the socioeconomic status of the student, and student's home environment" (Marzano, 2001, p. 2). As a result, researchers began to question, what other elements have the most significant impacts on the other 90 percent of student learning?

Jencks (1972) reinforced this concept by stating "Most differences… in test scores are due to factors that schools do not control" (p. 109). Based on these findings, the future of public education did not appear very bright. If 90 percent of the factors impacting student achievement were outside of the school's control, then the next logical question became why schools should try to meet the needs of diverse students inside their buildings? Fortunately, the conclusions of researchers like Coleman and Jencks spurred others to examine if those conclusions were valid. As a result of the influx of more

current research, it supports a far different conclusion. Recent findings argue in favor of the significant impact that teachers have on student achievement. Marzano (2001) supports the shift in thinking by arguing, "individual teachers can have a powerful effect on her students even if the school doesn't" (p. 2).

Educational Policy Changes

In the mid-1980's, the level of concern for the future of our country's public schools had risen to greater heights and was fueled by a new publication entitled "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform" which described American schools as failing internationally (Bradley, L., Curtis, S., Kessinger, T. and Meyers, D. M., 2018, p. 35). In 1989, President George Bush hosted an Education Summit with governors from all fifty states to identify and strategize around the problems he believed were facing schools across the country. The purpose of this meeting was to develop a better plan of action to address those problems (Sanders & Horn, 1998). As a result of the Educational Summit, a collaborative effort between the White House, state Governors, and experts in the field of education developed six educational goals. However, once the goals were developed, the task of how to accomplish and implement the new goals was left up to the individual states to determine the best course of action.

Governors returned to their states and challenged legislators to pass new laws to incorporate the goals from the Education Summit. With so much discretion for each state on how to achieve the education goals, the outcome of new legislation varied greatly from state to state. However, some common themes began to emerge across the country that "reform legislation held in common the call for higher academic standards and greater accountability linked to assessment of educational outcomes" (Sanders & Horn,

1998, p. 1). As new legislation was ushered into law, the landscape of education was dramatically changed, and a new era of high stakes testing and accountability swept across the country and into local public school districts.

With reform on the horizon, a new interest among researchers began to emerge around the relationship between teacher quality and its impact on student achievement. This was a significant shift in thinking by researchers because up to this point there were not many quality research studies that had been conducted on teacher impact and student learning (Waite, 1993) Until the 1970s, classroom instruction and teaching had not been systematically studied, and its effect on student achievement had not been measured in detail. Effective teaching strategies have been used for over a millennium in diverse classrooms throughout the world, but only recently have researchers been examining the impact of high-quality instruction on student learning (Marzano, 2001).

The Impact of Teacher Quality and Good Instruction

Teachers are a central figure in a student's educational career and experience. If you ask students, most can identify a teacher that made a substantial impact on their learning during their school career. Very often a student can still recall many years removed from that classroom, the teacher who left a significant imprint on their lives. For some very fortunate students, they may have had the privilege of experiencing numerous exceptional teachers throughout their school careers. These teachers were able to make school an exciting, creative, and interesting place to learn each day for their students. When looking at some of the attributes that define great teaching, there are some consistent themes. Great teachers have a passion for what they teach, they have developed a broad repertoire of effective, high-yielding instructional strategies, and they

care deeply for the students they work with (Tucker & Stronge, 2005). Although very few teachers have risen to the level of celebrity status, most highly effective teachers continue to go unrecognized by society and perform the work of unsung heroes changing the lives of their students day-by-day over many decades.

According to Berry, Daughtrey, and Wieder (2010) it is clear from current research findings that the impact of a teacher is the single biggest influence on a student's academic achievement. Years of research on teacher quality have shown that "effective teachers not only make students feel good about school and learning but also that their work actually results in increased student achievement" (Tucker & Stronge, 2005, p. 1).

The Purpose and History of Teacher Evaluation Systems

As statistical tools, have evolved to measure the impact of teaching and learning on student achievement, the evidence is more compelling and shows more than ever that teacher quality accounts for a disproportional variance in a student's achievement. According to Sanders and Horn (1998), "If the purpose of educational evaluation is to improve the educational process…determining the effectiveness of individual teachers holds the most promise because, again…research show(s) teacher effectiveness to be the most important factor in the academic growth of students" (p. 250).

Almost ten years ago in 2009, teacher evaluation systems were one of the most politically charged topics around the nation (Pennington & Mead, 2016). Education reform was on the horizon, and multiple factors came into play for policymakers to try and implement new accountability measures for teachers and school districts with the designed purpose to increase student achievement. "As a result, 28 states enacted teacher evaluation laws requiring that objective measures of student achievement be included in

teacher evaluations from 2009 to 2015" (Pennington & Mead, 2016, p.6). District and state level efforts have focused their attention on re-creating teacher evaluation systems in public schools (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016). Much of the efforts to overhaul the evaluation system is driven by research which supports that teachers have a large effect on student learning and "that existing evaluation systems were perfunctory and narrowly focused on compliance" (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016, p. 712).

Education has arrived at a crossroads requiring districts to implement new measures to help determine and improve a teacher's effectiveness (Doherty and Jacobs, 2015). Currently, the majority of states require student growth and achievement measures to be calculated into a teacher's summative evaluation. Most states are still wrestling with how to implement new evaluation policies with fidelity and improve the instruction that occurs in the classroom. There have been tremendous changes occurring in teacher evaluation models and policy over the past six years (Pennington & Mead, 2016). As a result of so much change, many districts and states are struggling to define the real purpose of teacher evaluation systems. It is only when teachers and principals develop a clearer understanding of their impact on the students in their schools and classrooms can they continue to make more informed decisions around change and improvement (Sanders & Horn, 1996).

Instructional Leadership and the Clinical Supervision Model

The clinical supervision model is a standardized process of evaluation that consists of multiple parts. Once the classroom observation is completed, the teacher and principal meet to conduct a post-observation conference. Post-observation is identified as the most crucial element of the clinical supervision model. A post-observation

conference is a meeting that takes place after a teacher's observation. This is a face-to-face meeting between the principal and the teacher. According to Range et al. (2013), the purpose of the post-observation has multiple steps:

- To review and reflect upon the data that was collected during the observation;
- Link professional development opportunities with areas of instructional need and interests;
- Discuss any upcoming future observations.

Generally, a post-observation conference takes place no longer than five days after the classroom observation. During the post-observation conference, the principal will provide the teacher with targeted performance feedback related to their instruction and review all documented areas for reinforcement, refinement and any plans for professional development or improvement planning. Teachers identified that the most valuable component of the post-observation conference is when a classroom teacher receives constructive feedback that is delivered by the principal (Range, Young, and Hvidston 2013). The importance of teacher feedback seems to be a consensus across research studies. Therefore, principals should focus on delivering high-quality constructive feedback during post-observation conferences to teachers.

Also, according to Emstad (2011), "feedback dispensed by principals should be used to prioritize teachers' instructional decisions that increase performance in the classroom" (as cited in Range et al., 2013, p. 72). Crafting feedback that is targeted enough to change the practices in the classroom is challenging for principals. According to Kingsley-Westerman, Reno and Heuett (2018) when employees expect to receive

negative feedback they will often avoid their seeing their supervisors due to poor performance. However, supervisors also report that they are often uncomfortable delivering negative feedback to employees and unsure how to deliver the information. As Kingsley-Westerman et al. (2018) report "feedback is needed to improve performance, and many organizations mandate some feedback or appraisal process for their employees" (p. 526). Yet, there are many reasons why supervisors struggle delivering feedback. According to Kingsley-Westerman (2018) the primary reason is likability. Supervisors often work harder managing their employee's impressions of themselves rather than giving content specific feedback. Therefore, research is showing that the delivery of feedback and the content of feedback are two very important components supervisors need to use in order to help employees grow. Delivering high-quality feedback to teachers requires on-going professional development and a growing knowledge of instructional practices. Teacher evaluation is a sporadic event that occurs once or twice a year, and in some cases, every couple year, therefore, it does little to change teaching practices as related to improving instruction (Derrington, as cited by Range et al., 2013).

The overall purpose of supervision is to provide formative assessment with a focus on improving professional learning and classroom practice (Tang and Chow, 2007). The second aspect of supervision is to allow the supervisor to make informed decisions about personnel. Some researchers argue that supervisors need to choose an approach that takes into account and addresses the developmental needs of the teacher. For instance, it is vital that the supervisor understand the teacher's perception of the data from lesson observation and its meaning in order to cater for individual supervisees' learning

needs" (Tang et al., 2007, p.1068). Furthermore, the teacher needs to be actively involved in the post-observation conference in which the principal and teacher collaboratively analyze the data from the observation and develop their conversation around classroom practices (Tang et al., 2007). The outcome of the post-observation conference should focus on improving the quality of instruction and learning that take place in the classroom.

During a post-observation conference, the supervisor and teacher should co-create knowledge around developing a deeper understanding of how pedagogical decisions can impact the nature and quality of instruction and learning (Holland, as cited in Tang and Chow, 2007). The post-observation conference is considered a vital component of the growth and development of the teacher (Engin, 2015). The feedback that is provided during the post-observation conference allows the teacher and principal to have access to various ideas and a running commentary of the lesson.

The post-observation feedback conference can follow many different models, but this depends on the purpose of the feedback (Copland, 2011). Wiggins (2012) identifies the term feedback as a process that is "often used to describe all kinds of comments made after the fact, including advice, praise, and evaluation" (p.1). There are numerous models for post-conference feedback ranging from a directive model to an explorative self-help model (Gebhard, as cited in Copeland, 2011). When conducting an observation to assess teaching practices, principals fulfill many roles from providing support, giving advice, possessing current knowledge of instructional practices, and having the ability to assess the quality of instruction inside the classroom formally. When describing the construct of post-observation conference feedback, a professor of pre-service teachers defined the

purpose of feedback "is to get the trainees to evaluate the lesson that they've just given and develop those sorts of critical skills and improve their own performance as a result of it" (Copeland, 2011, p.16). The importance of post-observation feedback cannot be emphasized strongly enough. If teachers want to grow and improve their instructional practice, then they must be receptive to receiving feedback on their performance (Myung and Martinez, 2013). However, an essential question for administrators and teachers to consider is, what can be done so that post-conference feedback can be received as growth evoking rather than perceived as a threat to the teacher's identity?

Several other features of post-observation conference feedback leave teachers feeling threatened rather than receptive (Myung and Martinez, 2013).

- ***Unclear expectations*** – From the moment a teacher begins to plan for an observation, teaching the observed lesson, and after the lesson, a teacher is in a constant process of self-reflection. However, teachers often identify that they are unsure of what to expect from the post-observation conference. This waiting time is extremely difficult for teachers as they self-assess every aspect of the lesson. When the post-observation arrives, they often enter the conversation unsure of the outcome and often possess insecurities (Myung & Martinez, 2013).
- ***Sense of disempowerment*** – Teachers often self-disclose that the observation process feels like something that is being done to them rather than a process of professional development. Unfortunately, "until teachers experience professional support from their principals they will assume observations are being used solely to judge them" (Myung et al., 2013, p. 6).

- ***Absence of helpful information*** – Teachers often experience a familiar pattern during post-observation conferences. They routinely receive a summary of their lesson and a summative performance rating. This type of feedback is not formative and therefore does not allow targeted feedback that can be transferred to classroom practices.

The current research on post-observation feedback is limited. Despite the critical role feedback plays for improving instructional practices and student achievement, it remains of relatively low research interest. Although research interest on post-observation feedback is low, it has the potential to either elevate or damage the learning inside the classroom. Student learning is situational, and this also applies to teachers. For instance, when teachers and principals enter into a post-conference session, they bring with them their agendas and expectations (Engin, 2015). However, the post-observation conference is an opportunity for the "co-construction of knowledge through interaction and articulation of thought processes, through asking questions and justifying and defending positions" (Engin, 2011, p.70).

Performance feedback (PF) involves a meeting between the principal and the teacher who receives the PF. The data of PF should be descriptive and focus on what is going well and what is going poorly, as well as providing specific strategies for improvement as related to instructional practices in the classroom. In many research studies, it was found that PF is provided in tandem with video examples to provide additional resources for the teacher (Fallon, Collier-Meek, Magin, Sanetti, and Johnson, 2015).

Feedback should be concrete, specific, and useful and provide the teacher with actionable information (Wiggins, 2012). All types of feedback should be aligned with goals and have concrete suggestions related to the goals of a classroom teacher. Likewise, as limited feedback can hinder changes in the classroom, too much feedback can be counterproductive. Focusing on one or two targeted areas of performance can be more beneficial in helping a teacher change or develop their practice. Finally, adjusting performance in the classroom heavily depends on not only receiving quality feedback from an administrator but also having opportunities to use the feedback. For feedback to be useful it "must be consistent. Performers can only adjust their performance successfully if the information fed back to them is stable, accurate, and trustworthy" (Wiggins, 2012, p.5).

An Overview of the Value-Added Model

The research of Sanders and colleagues, formerly at the University of Tennessee's Value-Added Research and Assessment Center, has been fundamental in reinforcing the importance and impact of the individual teacher on student achievement (Tucker & Stronge, 2005). In 1984 the state of Tennessee began a significant attempt at reforming and improving their public-school systems. Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander enacted the Comprehensive Education Reform Act (CERA) in 1984 (Sanders & Horn, 1998). The purpose of this legislation was to increase education spending and develop a career ladder evaluation system for teachers. According to Sanders et al. (1998):

> The teacher evaluation system developed to assess candidates for the upper levels of the Career Ladder was performance-based and included an extensive portfolio

> in addition to three intensive days of on-site observation and dialogue with state-trained evaluators. (p. 247).

As a result of the implementation of the new career ladder system, teachers quickly rejected the idea finding it "bogus" and subjective, rather than an accurate reflection of teacher effectiveness (Sanders & Horn, 1998). In 1989, discussions between educators and legislators would begin and lead to Tennessee's second major education initiative. In 1992, the Education Improvement Act (EIA) was signed into law by Governor Ned McWherter. The new law provided additional education funding by increasing sales tax across the state of Tennessee. As a result, politicians and residents were demanding higher levels of accountability for schools "to ensure that the new monies would be spent to improve student academic achievement" (Sanders and Horn, 1998, p. 247).

Born out of the necessity for more educational accountability Sanders and colleagues developed the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS). TVAAS was often referred to as the "Sanders Model." The purpose of TVAAS was "to ascertain the effectiveness of school systems, schools, and teachers in producing academic growth in Tennessee students, thereby linking student academic outcomes to educational evaluation for the first time" (Sanders & Horn, 1998, p. 248). The passage of TVAAS required significant educational changes throughout the state. Tennessee developed a statewide testing program, which required students to be tested annually in different academic areas. As a result of a new testing program, it required "an unprecedented application of a statistical approach that enables a massive multivariate

longitudinal analysis even with fractured student records, which are always present in real-world student achievement data" (Sanders & Horn, 1998, p. 248).

Initially, according to Sanders and Horn (1998) teachers expressed concern about the use of student achievement data and if the application of statistical models were a reliable and objective measure of teacher effectiveness. In 1993, reports were generated and given to teachers, school districts, and the public on the effectiveness of every school system that teaches students in grades three through eight. With the passage of the EIA legislation in 1992, it stipulated that TVAAS data would be part of the evaluation of those teachers where value-added data were available.

According to Sanders and Horn (1998), the purpose of TVAAS is to use a "statistical method of determining the effectiveness of school systems, school, and teachers" (p. 248). TVAAS data include student scores on five tested subject areas (math, science, social studies, reading, and language arts) for grades three through eight. Also, end-of-course assessments are given for some high school courses. Tests are administered to students annually, and data is "accumulated over time and linked to that student's teacher(s), school(s), and school system(s). TVAAS utilizes the scaled scores students make over time to model their learning patterns" (Sanders & Horn, 1998, p. 249). With the extensive collection of student data, this has enabled school districts and states to determine the effectiveness of schools and teachers. Finally, to ensure greater reliability measures, EIA requires a minimum of three years of assessment data before making any decisions, and school districts, schools, and teachers cannot be assessed solely on TVAAS data (Sanders et al., 1998). Sanders and Horn (1998) explain:

> The primary purpose TVAAS serves in the EIA is to provide information for summative evaluation regarding how effective a school, system, or teacher has been in leading students to achieve normal academic gain over a three-year period. TVAAS reports, issued annually, include information on student gains for each subject and grade for the three most recent years as well as the three-year average gains. The cumulative average gain is the primary indicator by which success is measured (p. 249).

Sanders and Horn (1998) go on to argue and summarize:

> If the purpose of the educational evaluation is to improve the educational process, and if the improved academic growth of students characterizes such improvement, then the inclusion of measures of the effectiveness of schools, school systems, and teachers in facilitating such growth is essential if the purpose is to be realized. Of these three, determining the effectiveness of individual teachers holds the most promise because, again and again, findings from TVAAS research show teacher effectiveness to be the most crucial factor in the academic growth of students (p. 248).

Although TVAAS was initially developed as an accountability measure to ensure that education funding was being spent on improving student achievement. What resulted was a transformation in how to monitor teacher and school effectiveness. Today teachers receive annual teacher level reports indicating their effectiveness with students of different achievement levels, and school districts are publicly reported annually. Value-added has become an essential tool for schools and teachers as it allows them to

develop targeted plans on improving instruction and meet the needs of diverse students within their schools (Sanders & Horn, 1998).

To corroborate Sanders findings and the development of TVAAS, a research study conducted by Wright, Horn, and Sanders (1997) confirmed that the essential factor impacting student learning is a student's teacher. Sanders et al. (1997) began to bring clarity to the discussion about the impact of high-performing teachers by recognizing that within every school there is a great deal of variance in the quality of instruction that is occurring from classroom to classroom. When third-grade children were placed with high-performing teachers and experienced three high-performing teachers in a row, the students scored on average at the 96th percentile level on their state mathematics assessment by the end of fifth grade (Tucker and Stronge, 2005). However, when students with similar achievement histories beginning in third grade were placed with three low-performing teachers, the results were vastly different. These students, by the end of fifth grade, on average were achieving at the 44th percentile level on the same statewide mathematics assessment. These two groups of students demonstrated a 54-percentile difference in student achievement. As a result, researchers began to recognize that if the differences can be identified between what highly effective teachers do differently than ineffective teachers this could lead to a better understanding of not only the impact that good teaching has on student learning but better preparation and development for our teachers. Sanders found that "there has been the additive or cumulative effect of teacher effectiveness on student achievement" (Tucker & Stronge, 2005, p.1). As a result, "the immediate and clear implication of this finding is that seemingly more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of

teachers than by any single factor" (Wright et al., 1997, p.63). According to Tucker and Stronge (2005), Sanders summarized the findings

> The results of this study document that the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher. Also, the results show a wide variation in effectiveness among teachers. The immediate and clear implication of this finding is that seemingly more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor. Effective teachers appear to be effective with students of all achievement levels, regardless of the level of heterogeneity in their classrooms. (p.3).

In a second study, Wright, Horn, and Sanders (1997) studied the effects of two additional variables and their impact on student achievement: class size and classroom diversity. The researchers were interested in learning if there was a relationship between teacher effectiveness and class size or the classroom demographics. In essence, were teachers more effective with smaller classes or with specific student demographics in their classroom? Again, since the 1960s, the argument was repeatedly made that outside factors were more powerful impacting student learning than the quality of instruction in the classroom. The Wright et al. (1997) study concluded:

> The teacher effect is highly significant in every analysis and has a more significant effect size than any other factor in twenty of the thirty analyses. A notably non-significant factor was class size. The main effect for heterogeneity was statistically significant in only two of the thirty analyses, approximately the number that would be expected to occur by chance. (p.63)

Those findings were significant in eliminating arguments that some variables outside the control of the teacher were thought to have a significant impact on a student's ability to learn.

Longitudinal Impact of High-Quality Instruction

A research study conducted by Sanders and Horn (1996) asked the question, "Does the influence of a teacher's effectiveness in facilitating academic growth for his/her students continue when the students advance to future grades?" (p.253). The results of this study found that students who were paired with "ineffective teachers" would continue to experience long-term negative consequences related to their achievement and performance. The study also revealed, "it was found that ineffective teachers were ineffective with all students, regardless of the prior level of achievement" (Sanders & Horn, 1996, p. 254). This research revealed that whether a teacher is classified as effective or ineffective the residual effects of their instruction were still measurable up-to two years after they were paired with their teacher. According to Schmoker (2006) researchers have demonstrated that two teachers working in the same school and with the same socioeconomic populations can achieve drastically different results. Using two comparable classrooms, Schmoker pointed out that in one classroom student achievement was 27 percent passing state achievement tests, and in the other classroom students achieved a proficiency rate of 72 percent. Hanushek argues (as cited by Schmoker, 2006) that the quality of instruction in the classroom is so vital that if a student receives five years of instruction from an above average teacher, this could virtually eliminate any gaps in achievement on state assessments.

Effective teachers can work effectively with students at all levels of achievement. Regardless of the composition of a classroom, effective teachers can impact their student's learning, and this translates into student achievement (Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997).

The Cost of Low-Performing Teachers

The harsh reality for many students is that while high-performing teachers make a profound impact, low-performing teachers can have disastrous effects. According to Wright et al. (1997) "If the teacher is ineffective, students under that teacher's tutelage will achieve inadequate progress academically, regardless of how similar or different they are regarding their academic achievement" (p.63). Based on the research of the Dallas Public Schools' Accountability System and the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System when studying the longitudinal effects of teacher impact, "the least effective teachers have a long-term influence on student achievement that is not fully remediated for up to three years later" (Mendro, 1998, p.261). Students who have the luxury of having a high-performing teacher for one year will continue to experience the advantage of that experience for future years. If a student is placed with a low-performing teacher, "They simply will not outgrow the negative effects of lost learning opportunities for years to come" (Tucker & Stronge, 2005, p. 3). Effective teachers have 6 to 10 times as much impact on student achievement as all other factors combined (Marzano, 2003).

Schmoker (2006, Introduction) summarizes the sentiments of researchers stating, "The single greatest determinant of learning is not socioeconomic factors or funding levels. It is instruction. A bone-deep, institutional acknowledgment of this fact continues to elude us." Effective teachers can facilitate desirable academic progress for all of their

students, regardless of outside factors impacting students. The quality of teachers in classrooms matters as they pertain to student learning, but most importantly the effectiveness and impact of a teacher stays with students for many years to come (Tucker & Stronge, 2005). Berry (2010) argues that the gap between quality teaching has a direct correlation to the gap in student achievement.

Highly Effective Versus Highly Qualified

A firm consensus of what defines teacher effectiveness is often debated. An effective teacher is an individual who impacts student learning positively. They have a deep understanding of the content they teach and can easily access a wide range of pedagogical skills. Furthermore, effective teachers are individuals who strive to be life-long learners and are reflective in their practice (Hightower, Delgado, Lloyd, Wittenstein, Sellers and Swanson, 2011). If teacher effectiveness is so important, there has been a troubling trend in education that many schools, especially our communities' neediest and low achieving districts, often have the least qualified or effective teachers. "This pattern is cyclical, as the least prepared teachers – many teaching out of their content area or without teaching certification – are hired for difficult-to-fill positions" (Johnson, Kahle, & Fargo, 2006, p.1). According to Darling-Hammond (2012) "fewer than half of those entering teaching receive an education major, and the expectations for education majors and minors have increased substantially in most states and universities" (p. 5). Compulsory education requires all children to attend school and states guarantee that students will receive equal protection under the law to receive a free and appropriate education. (Darling-Hammond, 1996) As a result, all students have a fundamental right to

receive equal access to high-quality educational experiences that are fueled by caring and competent teachers.

Most individuals in public assume that teachers, similar to other professionals, are educated in very similar ways and that they acquire the same knowledge before preparing them to run their classroom. However, this is often not the case. There exists a wide discrepancy between the training experiences of pre-service teachers. "Unlike doctors, lawyers, accountants, or architects, all teachers do not have the same training" (Darling-Hammond, 1996, p.194). In recent years, university teacher preparation programs within schools of education have faced an emergence of new criticisms. A common theme among many researchers is that graduates are often poorly prepared to enter the teaching profession. Some of the foundational concerns revolve around "low admission standards, fewer high-powered professors, and a disorganized teacher education curriculum" (Hightower, Delgado, Lloyd, Wittenstein, Sellers and Swanson, 2011, p.8). Much of the criticism of preparation programs have centered around their focus on academic research rather than on classroom practice. Bachelor and master's program requirements are often driven by the licensure policies set forth by each state. Very little of the public realizes that almost one-quarter of new teachers do not have the required qualifications to perform their job successfully in the classroom.

Furthermore, more than 12 percent of new teachers are leading classrooms without any systematic formalized training. Finally, 14 percent of new teachers are beginning to lead classrooms without fully meeting the standards created by the state they work in (Darling-Hammond, 1996). When adding these percentages together, it becomes

clear that in many classrooms throughout all school districts, it is a struggle to find highly qualified educators.

In 2001, with the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the term "highly qualified" was introduced with the new legislation. The term "highly qualified" was defined to identify teachers "as those who hold at least a bachelor's degree, are fully licensed or certified by the state in the subjects they teach, and can demonstrate competence in the subjects they teach" (Tucker & Stronge, 2005, p.4). It is important to recognize that appropriate licensure or certification are significant factors that support teacher quality; however, these factors alone are not sufficient to automatically translate into teacher effectiveness.

As emphasized throughout this review of the literature, according to Krasnoff (2014) there is adequate evidence through research that "well-prepared, expert and experienced teachers are among the most important determinants of student achievement" (p. 1). Johnson, Kahle, and Fargo (2006) argue that "The most effective teachers facilitated desirable academic progress for all students, and students of the least effective teachers made unsatisfactory gains" (p.373). States are requiring more from states to license pre-service teachers. However, "most licensing exams are little more than multiple-choice tests of basic skills and general knowledge" (Darling-Hammond, 1996, p.194).

A Problem of Retention: Why are Qualified Teachers Leaving the Classroom?

In the realm of educational research, few areas have received more attention "than the failure to ensure that elementary and secondary classrooms are all staffed with

qualified teachers" (Ingersoll, 2001, p.500). The turnover of teachers has become a significant obstacle for many schools across the nation. As a result, it has developed into a driving factor behind the demand for new teachers and adequately staffing classrooms. Over the past 20 years, there have been many newly developed alternative routes to help individuals navigate into teaching. These new pathways have provided options for a wide range of candidates who may have already completed their undergraduate education. Early on these options were a good alternative for schools and districts, which allowed a larger pool of candidates to funnel into classrooms. However, over time the questions and concerns have developed around the quality, rigor, and fidelity of these alternative programs because there is little consistency among them (Darling-Hammond, 2012).

A highly qualified teacher is the foundational ingredient for a good beginning of teaching. More importantly, having classrooms staffed with highly effective teachers whose efforts translate into yielding high levels of student learning (Tucker & Stronge, 2005). Data from across the nation reveals that the demand for teachers is primarily attributed to turnover in the profession (Krasnoff, 2014). Having the ability to retain effective teachers is one of the most significant challenges facing schools today. Ingersoll (2003) reports that by the end of a teacher's first year in the classroom 14 percent choose to leave the profession, 33 percent decide to leave within their first three years, and 50 percent leave within five years of entering education. The rate of attrition equates to our students consistently facing inexperienced teachers throughout their school careers, while schools carry the burden and cost of hiring and training new staff year in and year out (Krasnoff, 2014). This translates into schools across the nation hiring more than 200,000

new teachers each year in order to start the school year, and currently, over 37 percent of the nation's teachers are over fifty and thinking about retirement (Graziano, 2005). According to Darling-Hammond (2010), the qualifications and preparations of teachers are essential. A recent study of high school students in North Carolina found "that student achievement was significantly higher if they were taught by a teacher who was certified in his or her teaching field, fully prepared upon entry, had higher scores on the teacher licensing test, graduated from a competitive college, and had taught for more than two years" (p. 17).

It is difficult at best to measure the impact that the attrition of teachers has on many other qualitative factors impacting student achievement. Not only are there the educational and financial costs but the disruption to teaming, curriculum, learning communities, and helping grow effective teachers often go uncalculated in schools. School leaders should work hard to "understand the reasons for teacher attrition, they develop policies that stem attrition through better preparation, assignment, working conditions, mentor support; all of which contributes toward the goal of ensuring qualified teachers for all students" (Darling-Hammond, 2010, as cited by Krasnoff, 2014, p.5) A popular response to the needs of school staffing has been to increase the supply of available teachers through diverse licensure and recruitment practices (Ingersoll, 2001). It is not a credible or sustainable plan to improve schools by enabling "children to take public tuition to schools with uncertified teacher" (Ravitch, 2014, p. 14).

According to Tye and O'Brien (2002), Human Capital Theory holds the hypothesis that individuals make decisions to move into and out of different professions based on how much they have invested. For instance, the level of demand during the

initial training required to enter the profession and the amount of time an individual has worked in the profession significantly impacts a person's decision. When reviewing the research on teacher attrition, it consistently supports this model and reveals that attrition occurs on both ends of the teaching spectrum. A substantial amount of those leaving teaching are beginners with fewer than three years of experience, or veterans of the classroom with over 30 years who are eligible to retire (Tye et al., 2002). There are many reasons that teachers are choosing to leave the profession, but the salary is not at the top of the list. The most common reason teachers cite leaving the profession is being dissatisfied with the level of administrative support they receive (Graziano, 2005). Many newer teachers have shared that what they were not prepared for "is how little support from parents, school administrators, and colleagues they can expect once the door is closed and the textbooks are opened" (Graziano, 2005, p. 3).

Entering a New Era of Accountability and the Evaluation Process

The Obama administration's education agenda was built around improving teacher quality through the implementation of teacher evaluation reforms, which was the center of the education initiatives (Kraft and Gilmour, 2016). "Today, 46 states have enacted new legislation aimed at strengthening and expanding teacher evaluation systems in public schools" (Steinberg & Donaldson as cited by Kraft and Gilmour, 2016, p. 712). In regards to the next generation of teacher evaluation systems, the focus is on policy goals and program designs, and performance measures. However, researchers still know very little about the ultimate outcomes of success as a result of these changes. Much of the success depends on how education agencies interpret and enact these new initiatives at a local level. "This is particularly true in the decentralized U.S. education system where

the local practice is often decoupled from central policy" (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016, p. 712).

As federal policy, has evolved in education, in 1965 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed. This legislation was developed to address the specific needs of disadvantaged children (Ravitch, 2015). The goal was to redistribute available funding and resources to the neediest schools while ensuring the rights of our most vulnerable students were protected. This legislation began to follow a cycle of renewal every seven years for reauthorization.

As policy evolved from 1965, in 2001 Congress reauthorized the ESEA act under President George H. W. Bush's administration renaming it No Child Left Behind (NCLB). With the reauthorization of this legislation, the focus shifted from "equity" of resources under ESEA, to a new focus on "prodding states and districts to raise test scores, so that no child would be left behind" (Ravitch, 2015, p.4). The new NCLB law was complicated and was over 1,000 pages in length with the term "evidence-based" used more than 100 times throughout the law. At the heart of the law, NCLB mandated that every child in the United States from grades 3-8 must be tested annually using a state achievement assessment, and by the year 2014, all students must be proficient in reading and math. If school districts were unsuccessful in reaching the goal of 100 percent proficiency, they could be subject to a series of "sanctions, ending in the school being handed over to private management or to state control or turned into a charter school or closed" (Ravitch, 2015, p.4). Although NCLB created high standards for school districts, 2014 came and went with most districts across the country unable to show 100 percent proficiency in math and reading.

Historically, the passage of NCLB's roots can be traced back to the origin of an education report that came out in 1983 titled "A Nation at Risk." This report drew conclusions that struck fear in many citizens by reporting that the current educational system of the United States was leading our nation toward doom as quickly lagging behind other industrialized countries. According to a policy expert, "The report said that our nation had lost the auto industry to Japan because of our mediocre public schools. The commission pointed to Japan's impressive scores on international tests as proof that mediocre schools were causing us to lose jobs" (Ravitch, 2015, p. 4). Although the conclusions were wrong in "A Nation at Risk," it drove a new era of educational research to "fix" our nation's schools.

Currently, a new era in education policy has been signed into law under the name Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015). ESSA provided education legislation that allows for more flexibility and removal of some federal oversight, which translates into more local and state control for school districts. However, new policy changes ushers in a new era of transformation for school districts to determine how to measure teacher effectiveness and to define its purpose (Pennington et al., 2016) so that ultimately, administrators can support and cultivate effective teachers.

Financial Resources and Instruction

Throughout the United States, school districts are committing more resources to improve classroom instruction and student learning and aligning their evaluation systems to the federal mandates. For the majority of teachers, the evaluation process is composed of some essential and familiar steps by school administrators: observing lessons,

assessing teaching, and providing formative feedback to teachers' multiple times throughout a school year (Myung and Martinez, 2013).

The emphasis schools are placing on teacher observations, and teacher feedback is a dramatic departure from less than a decade ago. Historically, there has been a hands-off approach to teacher evaluation and development. An evaluation was a subjective term often determined by the principal and teachers. In the past, only a quarter of teachers reported they ever received any evaluations that targeted specific areas for growth in the classroom, and even more disheartening is that fewer than half of the teachers disclosed that the feedback they received was not useful in helping improve their instruction (Myung & Martinez, 2013). Teachers who have been interviewed about the observation process shared that when receiving feedback from their principal they "described the evaluation experience as 'nerve-wracking' and 'terrifying,' or as an 'out-of-body experience.' When reflecting on a post-observation conference, a teacher recalled, "just nodding throughout the entire conversation" (Myung and Martinez, 2013, p.5).

Unfortunately, many of the responses by teachers in regards to the observation process, including post-observation feedback, do little to help teachers become more open to learning, reflective in their practices, and flexible in the classroom. To become better in any profession, feedback is essential, and teachers need formative feedback on their performance in order to improve their instructional practices. Many teachers identify their perception of observation feedback as negative experiences rather than growth evoking component of their development. School districts continue to dedicate enormous amounts of resources to collect data on teachers, but how to effectively utilize

this data to support the growth of teachers is still an area where much more needs to be studied and learned.

Reviewing the history of educational reforms is essential to understand the context of today's schools. John Dewey (1907) said, "What the best and wisest parents want for his own child, the community must want for all of its children; anything less is unlovely. Acted upon, it destroys our democracy." Have reforms been effective in creating better schools for our children? This is a large question with many possible answers. However, as a result of the reforms over the past fifty years, due in part to NCLB, the "standardized testing industry has assumed a position of power in American society that it had never known before" (Ravitch, 2015, p. 7). Today, the reputation of every principal and teacher hinges on the results of student test scores. Traditionally, schools have been viewed of as the heart of local communities, but the health of that heart no longer rests on the perception of families, rather it is now interlinked to state report cards tied to high stakes testing. "The scores became sacred totems of our society, the measure that defines success or failure for individuals and institutions" (Ravitch, 2015, p. 7).

Instructional Feedback: The Tool to Improving Classroom Practices

Finding ways to continue to support and cultivate effective teachers is a challenge for all schools looking to improve (Tucker and Stronge, 2005). For improvement to occur, teachers need to receive high-quality feedback about their instruction. Timely feedback is critical to any improvement effort in any profession, especially education. The purpose of teacher evaluation systems is intended to provide feedback to improve the practices inside the classroom while maintaining accountability.

Providing feedback related to an individual's performance is an essential component in training evaluators (Copland, 2011). In various professions, such as doctors, nurses, and sales, all receive critical feedback as related to their performance by more experienced evaluators. However, education feedback is prevalent and essential to the classroom teacher. Most teachers, in today's school districts, can expect to have a lesson observed and receive constructive feedback. Beginning during their teaching practicum, pre-service teachers are trained to be regularly observed and to reflect on practices as related to the feedback of their lessons. Feedback is typically delivered in one of two ways: through writing or verbally, and delivered in a post-observation conference with a supervisor (Copland, 2011). A written evaluation would be attached to the teacher's personnel file as part of a standardized evaluation process. However, the post-observation conference is primarily conducted privately behind closed doors. As a result, qualitative data about the impact of the post-observation feedback conference is scarce, which leads to an important question. When a post-observation feedback conference occurs, does it impact the instruction occurring in the classroom? If this is true, is it the nature or manner of feedback delivery or an interaction of the two that brings about behavioral changes of teaching practices?

Again, the influence of the classroom teacher on increasing student achievement has been well documented and researched (Range, Young, and Hvidston, 2013). Research supports that effective teachers make tremendous gains in helping students close achievement gaps through developing classroom environments where all students are challenged according to their individual needs. However, the role of the principal, while working in tandem with effective teachers, is also critically important in providing

the essential instructional leadership necessary to impact student learning. According to Rang et al. "Researchers have concluded principals are second only to teachers as a powerful variable impacting student achievement" (2013, p.61).

Effectively communicating feedback to teachers is critical for their professional learning and improving instructional practices within the classroom (Tang & Chow, 2007). In order for teachers to grow professionally, they must receive consistent support and supervision in the form of observations and post-observation conferences, with the goal of the post-observation conference being to provide constructive feedback and change teacher behavior in the classroom. According to Myung and Martinez "feedback is information about the gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system parameter, which is used to alter the gap in some way" (2013, p.3). The impact of classroom teachers on increasing student achievement has been well researched (Range, Young, & Hvidston, 2013). Research study findings support that effective teachers do make a significant impact by helping close the achievement gaps between high and low performing students. Effective teachers work together with effective principals who provide instructional leadership through the evaluation and supervision process to determine the effectiveness of classroom teachers and help them grow their instruction. The primary means of a principal's impact on teacher performance is through formative supervision. Formative feedback is the process of providing teachers with content feedback related to their classroom instruction and effectiveness, which are necessary for teacher growth. The term "supervisor" refers to a person who provides support for the professional education of teachers (Tang et al., 2007). Classroom teachers and evaluators

must implement a teacher evaluation process with fidelity in order for it to be a valid and reliable means of improving instructional practice (Stronge, Ward & Grant, 2011).

A Model of Supervision

The construct of supervision is essential to define because most teachers experience it on a regular basis as the evaluation of their classroom instruction (Holland & Garman, 2001). The purpose of supervision is relatively straightforward, to improve instruction in the classroom, which increases the learning and achievement of students. The research on instructional supervision is vast. However, most of the research literature is theoretical (Waite, 1993). Much of the current research that exists around supervision "has been done to date on the interactive processes of supervision, particularly the supervisory conference has relied upon a priori coding schemes and categories" (Waite, 1993, p. 676). Quality supervision should operate from a framework of best practices just like other professions such as medicine or law, where supervisory decisions are grounded in research, standards, and policies (Holland and Garman (2001). The most common supervision model is referred to as the clinical supervision model (Range et al., 2013). This model began in the 1960s and is often utilized as an evaluation model in many schools today. The model contains the following essential components:

- Pre-observation conference between the teacher and the principal;
- Observation by the principal who identifies the relative strengths and weaknesses of the instruction;
- Post-observation conference between the teacher and the principal where the lesson is discussed and the principal highlights the relative strengths and weaknesses.

This model of supervision is "contingent on the principal's ability to collect data about a teacher's instruction, develop ways to improve a teacher's practice and revisit classrooms to determine if instructional improvements have occurred" (Range et al., 2013, p. 71).

A common area of confusion involving the evaluation process is correctly understanding the differences between formative supervision and summative evaluation in education. Many researchers and educators view teacher supervision and evaluation as being interchangeable terms; however, each has a distinct process designed with different intended outcomes (Range, Young, & Hvidston, 2013). The observation process is commonly thought of as an exercise in accountability with the primary purpose being to provide the administrator feedback in order to make future employment decisions (Myung & Martinez, 2013). However, when a conversation occurs between a principal and teacher that provides targeted feedback after an observation, there exists the significant potential for growth to take place and improve teaching and learning. Administrative supervision is designed to improve the instructional practices within the classroom through professional development. Again, evaluations are often viewed as a means of making employment decisions by providing a summative rating that is assigned to a teacher, based on their performance, to determine future employment status. However, that is only one side of the purpose of the evaluation process.

In order to build, improve and develop teachers this "hinges on formative supervision, complete with many opportunities for data collection on instructional performance and coaching, rather than a traditional, summative event which seldom leads to improved teaching practices (Holland and Garman, 2001, p. 106). When engaging in

formative supervision, this should enable the principal to develop a clearer picture of what is occurring inside the classroom (Range, Young, & Hvidston, 2013).

A common argument against the effectiveness of the observation process, which often reinforces teachers feeling threatened during post-observation feedback, is that "the infrequency of classroom observations can make it difficult for teachers to feel relaxed and competent in the classroom" (Myung and Martinez, 2013, p.5). Often an observation is a specific moment in time and only able to capture a thin-slice of what a teacher does on a daily basis in their classroom. As a result, teachers commonly refer to observation as "putting on a show." Most importantly, the lack of frequent observations leads to infrequent performance feedback (Myung et al., 2013). Although most observations do not lead to adverse personnel decisions, teachers still value the feedback of their principals and most classroom teachers strive to improve their pedagogy.

Ohio Teacher Evaluation Supervision Model: Teacher Performance on the Standards

When the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) went into effect in 2011, it was the culmination of a process that began back in 2009 with House Bill 1. This bill was a key part of Ohio's efforts to win the second round of Race to the Top funding, which, among other things, required states to explain how they would improve teacher effectiveness.

Born out of educational reform and research, teacher performance evaluation systems are central to policy efforts to increase teacher effectiveness and student learning. Throughout the past decade, Ohio has committed to making important educational policy advances, while increasing the standards for teaching and

accountability (National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2013). In 2013, the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) allowed the state of Ohio to develop a teacher evaluation system aligned to the Ohio Standards for Educators. According to the Ohio Department of Education (2013) the system is "research-based, transparent, fair and adaptable to the specific contexts of Ohio's districts" (ODE, 2013, Preface).

The OTES evaluation system was built upon idea that ongoing feedback and assessment are powerful tools in helping teachers transform classroom instruction. According to the Ohio Department of Education (2013), in 2009 Ohio passed House Bill 1, which "directed the Educator Standards Board to recommend model evaluation systems for teachers…to the State Board of Education" (p. 2). As a result of this directive, the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System was created and implemented throughout the state beginning in 2013. An important component of OTES is that it created alignment with the standards for teachers under Ohio's Revised Code.

OTES (2013) requires that all public-school teachers, regardless of the stage of their career, will undergo classroom assessments on their expertise and performance. Throughout a classroom observation an OTES credentialed evaluator will collect evidence pertaining to the teaching and learning inside the classroom (ODE, 2013). It is the goal of the evaluator, "to document specific information related to teaching and learning" (OTES, 2013, p. 66). Once the observation is completed, the evaluator will analyze the evidence collected and use the Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric. The rubric identifies four levels of teacher performance for each standard.

- Accomplished
- Skilled

- Developing
- Ineffective

This is an important component of Ohio's original framework evaluation process because according to ODE (2013) "there are two key evaluation components: a rating of Teacher Performance and a rating student academic growth, each weighted at fifty percent of each evaluation" (p. 67).

Challenges Principals Face in Being Effective Evaluators

One of the most critical aspects of a principal's leadership is their ability to communicate (Yavuz, 2010). Principals spend up to 70 percent of their time crafting and relaying pieces of communication. With the development of new evaluation systems, these have expanded the roles of school principals from being managers of students and buildings to instructional leaders (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016).

When a principal can communicate feedback, it is an essential ingredient for professional learning to take place (Tang and Chow, 2006). For teachers, post-observation feedback is a necessary factor for their growth and development in the classroom. Relying on principals as a teacher's primary evaluator raises essential questions about their ability and capacity to implement useful feedback (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016). One concern is that principals often have different views on the purpose of teacher evaluation. Kraft and Gilmour (2016) concluded:

> "Some see evaluation as a mechanism for increasing teacher effort through accountability and monitoring, and for dismissing ineffective teachers. Others view evaluation as a process that can support the professional growth of teachers

by promoting self-reflection, by establishing a common language and framework for analyzing instruction, and providing individualized feedback" (p. A-1).

Providing teachers with the necessary resources to "turn to in response to feedback suggestions and setting clear expectations for the structure of both the observation and feedback conversation will help them cope with the stress inherent in any performance evaluation" (Myung & Martinez, 2013, p. 6). Therefore, a model for a successful post-observation conversation should begin with a focus on the positive aspects of the lesson (i.e., reinforcement) and provide an opportunity for the teacher to be reflective about what went well. Affirmation is critical for any meaningful conversation, and teachers should feel affirmed about what went well during their instruction and provided the space to discuss and engage in reflective practice about the positive aspects of the lesson (Myung et al., 2013).

The second part of the post-observation conference should revolve around areas of growth (refinement). Connecting teachers with resources and providing targeted growth areas, tied to their goals, allows the teacher to generate ideas about improving their instruction. Utilizing these strategies enables teachers to receive feedback that is designed as growth evoking rather than threatening (Myung & Martinez, 2013).

The effect of performance feedback (PF) on teachers' implementation into classroom practices has been an area of research interest since 1973 (Fallon, Collier-Meek, Maggin, Sanetti, and Johnson, 2015). However, this area reemerged beginning in 2000 with a series of new research studies. The more recent studies had an emphasis on trying to understand if PF has an impact on changing employee behavior. According to Copland (2011), PF feedback research tends to focus on "dyadic" feedback, meaning one-

to-one feedback between a mentor/supervisor and trainee/teacher. Some researchers have focused their studies on the delivery of PF immediately after a classroom observation, its impact on instructional practices and the various delivery methods that PF is shared. Also, administrators do not share PF in a standardized format. For instance, PF is often delivered through various formats such as, "in person, through e-mail, and via paper" (Fallon et al., 2015, p.229).

A research study by Kraft and Gilmour (2016) interviewed principals that disclosed several challenges they experienced, which limit their ability to grow teachers professionally effectively. Table 2 presents the challenges presented in the research by Kraft and Gilmour.

Table 2. Challenges Disclosed by Principals in Helping Teachers Develop.

Challenge 1: Principals' views on the purpose of evaluation differ.	The views of building principals about the purpose of teacher evaluation systems do not always align with district goals/beliefs. This leads to principals utilizing the evaluation system in different ways.
Challenge 2: The expanded role of the principal.	With the increased demands of new evaluation systems, principals expressed concerns about their capacity to adequately evaluate all teachers each year. This led some to disclose that they were "unable to provide the frequent feedback necessary for supporting teachers' professional growth because of the sheer number of teachers they were required to evaluate" (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016, p. A-3).
Challenge 3: Providing feedback outside their expertise.	Principals expressed concern that they could not provide meaningful feedback to teachers in all disciplines and levels. Lack of content expertise led many principals to focus on pedagogy rather than content.
Challenge 4: Principals had limited training	Implementation of new evaluation systems required principals to rate teachers, provide evidence, communicate the ratings, and prescribe feedback around improvement. According to Kraft and Gilmour (2016) "feedback conversations that became focused on the summative evaluation rating itself rather than areas for continued professional growth" (p. A-4).

As a result of these findings, the study confirms that the quality of feedback a teacher receives from their evaluating principal is proportional to many different variables including the amount of training and time the evaluator has received on providing actionable feedback to promote professional growth (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016).

Supervision and Evaluation

The influence a classroom teacher has on increasing student achievement is well documented, and effective teachers can close the achievement gap between high-achieving and low-achieving students (Range, Young, & Hvidston, 2013). Principals work in tandem with teachers and perform the duty of being the instructional leader by

providing supervision and evaluations of teachers for determining their effectiveness. The role of an effective principal is to increase a teacher's instructional ability in the classroom (Range, Anderson, Hvidston, & Mette, 2013). A teacher's perception about the feedback of their principal is essential to understand because their views can influence how effective principals deliver feedback and provide supervision. (Range, Young, & Hvidston, 2013).

Teachers often find that the outcome between supervision and evaluation conflict with each other, which can be confusing for classroom teachers. According to Range, Young, and Hvidston (2013) "Supervision is used to collect multiple data points concerning teachers' performance with the goal of improving instructional abilities. Evaluation is used to assign ratings to teachers' overall performance and issued to determine if teachers have met minimum benchmarks" (p. 66). Although both supervision and evaluation are designed to be different constructs often school districts treat them the same, which can lead to supervisory practices that lack the necessary differentiation to meet the needs of a teacher. In order to differentiate between supervision and evaluation, effective principals can match their supervision and evaluation practices to the ability levels of their teachers, which would include identifying teachers' strengths, weaknesses, and professional development (Range et al., 2013).

The primary way that instructional leaders impact teachers is through observations (Range, Finch, Young, and Hvidston, 2014). Haag, Kissel, Shoniker, and Stover (2011) (as cited by Range et al., 2014) argue, "Successful principals understand that a one-size-fits-all approach to supervision does not consider individual learning

styles and teachers are unique in terms of their pedagogy, experience, and content knowledge" (p. 2). As discussed earlier in this review of literature, the clinical supervision model contains three primary components a) pre-observation conference - the principal and teacher, meet to discuss the upcoming observation b) classroom observation - the principal collects data on a variety of variables c) post-observation conference - the principal provides feedback to the teacher based on the data collected during the observation (Range et al., 2014).

Planning and Structuring Effective Post-Observation Conference Feedback

Again, if the primary way that principals impact teaching is through their instructional leadership, then this typically occurs through formal and informal observations. Once an observation occurs, the next important step is for the principal to take time and provide constructive feedback to their teachers if they expect growth to occur (Range, Finch, Young, and Hvidston, 2014). This is considered the most critical step of the clinical supervision process (Range, Young, Hvidston, 2013). According to Zepeda (2007) (as cited by Range et al, 2013) the purpose of the post-observation conference has three components, "1) review and reflect upon the data collected during the extended observation, 2) link professional development opportunities to areas of teacher needs or interests, and 3) begin to discuss and preview the next extended observation" (p.64).

Principals should remember and focus on the idea that teachers want specific help and suggestions about their teaching (Range et al., 2013). "Therefore, feedback dispensed to teachers within the post-observation conference is critical if continued growth is expected (Range et al., 2013, p. 65).

According to Range, Finch, Young, and Hvidston, (2014) "The assumption that feedback is a necessary component of instructional improvement draws from research on formative assessment" (p. 3). Feedback should be ongoing and specifically identify areas of future growth. Formative feedback to teachers is a conversation between the principal and teacher that identifies the relative strengths and weaknesses of the lesson (Zepeda 2013). Furthermore, feedback that is dispensed during a post-observation conference should be focused solely on the data that was collected during the observation (Range et al., 2013). Ovando (2003) (as cited by Range et al., 2014) recommends that when principals provide feedback to their teachers that they not only acknowledge strengths of the lesson and areas of growth but also provide positive encouragement to teachers for their commitment to ongoing professional development. Also, when providing effective feedback principals have developed the skills to "ask questions which cause teachers to reflect on their own practice, with the intent of creating self-directed learners" (Range et al., 2013, p. 65).

Teachers should begin the post-observation conference by being reflective about their practice during the lesson against the evaluation criteria (Marzano, Frontier, and Livingston, 2011). The post-observation conversation should promote professional growth while helping to remediate areas of improvement and if principals have concerns about a teacher's performance they should be factual and provide a plan for remediation. Once these concerns are communicated to the teacher, there should be a direct link between the feedback to professional development opportunities for the teacher (Range et al., 2013). According to Noland and Hoover (2008) (as cited by Range et al., 2014), useful feedback to teachers should encourage teachers to become more reflective in their

practice and "brainstorm alternative instructional strategies, and emphasizes teacher strengths to reinforce teaching behaviors that positively impact student learning" (p. 3). When principals provide feedback that causes teachers to reflect on their practice that is the lynchpin for growth to take place (Range et al., 2014).

Differentiated Feedback, Supervision, and Teachers' Perceptions of Feedback

A study conducted by Range, Finch, Young, and Hvidston (2014) set out to explore teachers' perception about the formative feedback and supervision they received from their principals. The findings of the study indicated that the majority of non-tenured teachers reported that their principals formally observed their classrooms two to four times within the previous year and tenured teachers reported being observed at least one time in the last year. Teachers reported that a common observation lasted anywhere from 10 to 30 minutes, and found that teachers identified that the most common form of feedback they received was about their classroom climate or student engagement. Teachers were also surveyed about their expectations around the type of feedback they wanted to receive from their principals. Their statements were summarized into themes that teachers believed a principals' feedback should focus around a) student engagement, b) classroom management, and c) instructional strategies (Range et al., 2014).

The results of the study highlighted the dilemma that principals face when being equipped and capable of differentiating their feedback depending on the needs of the classroom teacher. According to Range, Anderson, Hvidston, and Mette (2013) "effective principals match their supervision and evaluation practices to the ability levels of teachers, which includes teachers' strengths, weaknesses, and professional development needs, termed differentiated supervision and evaluation" (p. 66). As a result, the

responsibility lies in the hands of the principal to correctly diagnose a teachers' needs and apply appropriate supervision.

The needs of non-tenured and tenured teachers are very different from teachers with more experience (Range, Finch, Young, and Hvidston, 2014). For instance, "non-tenured teachers' attitudes about a principals' observations indicate they perceive feedback on many classroom tasks as important" (Range et al., 2014, p. 13). A teacher's tenure and years of experience are two important variables that are closely related to influencing their perceptions of observations and feedback (Range, Anderson, Hvidston, and Mette 2013). "Non-tenured teachers deemed novice teachers, present a unique challenge for principals as they apply supervision and evaluation" (Range et al., 2014, p. 67). Novice teachers have fewer years of experience and need much guidance on how to overcome many non-essential, low-level instructional obstacles such as classroom management, organizing a classroom, or planning lessons. According to Zepeda (2013) "non-tenured, early career teachers are in survival mode, in which they seek affirmation from supervisors and a majority of their time is spent on managing unfamiliar situations" (p. 12). According to Range et al. (2014), their research study found that many non-tenured teachers struggle with low-level teaching behaviors like classroom management and planning, and these types of behaviors are easier to remediate through principals providing immediate feedback. Due to the greater classroom experience, "tenured teachers may not receive as much direct contact with principals and might not receive similar feedback on basic classroom structures" (Range et al., 2014, p. 14). Ultimately, Range et al. (2014) found that the results of their study highlighted that feedback should be differentiated based on the varied needs of the teacher. According to Range et al.

(2014), all teachers need feedback and support; however, principals have to be aware that the support and feedback they provide should be differentiated around the needs and experience of their teachers.

Effective principals can provide feedback and leadership to all teachers under their supervision. According to Range, Anderson, Hvidston, and Mette (2013) principals should recognize the different needs of more experienced teachers, those with more than three years' experience. "Such teachers are concerned less with low-level teaching competencies and focus more on meeting the needs of students, as well as their own professional growth" (Zepeda, 2013, p. 12). In contrast to novice teachers, experienced teachers require fewer compliance types of supervision and desire supervision that is focused primarily around building their capacity in areas of personally identified goal setting (Range et al., 2013). When principals are providing feedback to veteran teachers, it needed to be well-planned and focused (Range, Finch, Young, and Hvidston, 2014).

The results of the study indicate that often experienced (tenured) "teachers were less positive about principals' formative supervisory classroom observations and feedback" (Range, Finch, Young, & Hvidston, 2014, p. 14). Often the skill sets of experienced teachers are already well developed, resulting in teachers feeling confident in many areas. Range et al. (2014) concluded that the challenge for the principal becomes finding ways to incorporate feedback that helps experienced teachers' enthusiasm for growth to remain at higher levels. One recommendation is for principals to provide their experienced teachers with specific feedback on instructional practices and then to engage their experienced teachers with opportunities for teacher leadership initiatives (Range et al., 2014).

In a research study by Range, Anderson, Hvidston, and Mette (2013) they examined how teachers perceive their principal's supervisory practices. The study found that teachers suggested they perceived that effective principals could improve in the area of supervision by first spending time building relationships with teachers. Many variables prepare principals and teachers to receive and deliver post-conference feedback. The leadership theory LMX would argue that the relationship between teachers and principals can moderate their perceptions, and within these relationships, exchanges are being made between principals and teachers (Henderson, Liden, Glibkowski, and Chaudhry, 2009). This is an important concept because perceptions of effective feedback delivery could be skewed based on these relationships. Therefore, an essential question in leadership studies is to understand better, do leaders discriminate in their relationships between different members of their organization? If so, then how are some members of the organization successfully able to move into the "in-group" while others remain into the "out-group?" If it is true that leaders do discriminate among members of their organization, then this can have a tremendous impact on the ability of some members to grow while others do not.

Teachers reported that relationship building was essential in establishing the necessary trust between teachers and principals, which allowed teachers to become more receptive to a principal's feedback. When principals can form meaningful relationships with their teachers and treat them as professionals, this creates a climate in the school building that allows teachers to trust their principal as a supervisor of instruction (Zepeda, 2013). When principals perform an observation, they should first provide positive feedback to teachers before areas of improvement are suggested (Zepeda, 2013).

According to Range et al., (2013) "After classroom walkthroughs, teachers perceived positive feedback dispensed by principals as crucial for building morale and led to teachers' feelings of professionalism and shared leadership" (p. 74). The final theme of the study found that teachers desire routine observations that consistently occur throughout the year with multiple opportunities for feedback. In this particular study "teachers indicated…principals were in classrooms daily which provided them a clear understanding of teaching and learning issues in their schools" (Range et al., 2013, p. 73). When a final question was posed to teachers about how their principals could improve their evaluative practices, the most common response was *feedback*, and "more specifically, teachers wanted more positive feedback about teaching strategies and desired constructive feedback about areas in which they were weak" (Range et al., 2013, p. 73). Teachers identified constructive feedback around areas of improvement as an essential component of evaluation so the teacher could improve their overall performance.

Differentiated supervision that enables different feedback is an art and skill (Range, Anderson, Hvidston, and Mette, 2013). Principals need to develop the necessary diagnostic skills in order to assess the diverse developmental levels of teachers and then identify the necessary administrative support they will need. Range et al., (2013) explains, "because differentiated supervision is not a one size fits all approach, it can be time-consuming as principals collaboratively search out ways to remediate struggling teachers and enrich teachers meeting expectations" (p. 75).

Another complication in providing differentiated supervision and feedback for teachers is that evaluation procedures in school districts are often designed to treat all

teachers the same. According to Range et al. (2013), as teachers move deeper into their careers and gain more experience, their views of supervision and feedback become more unfavorable as compared to novice teachers. Range et al., (2013) argue that:

> "Principals must continue to challenge and support experienced teachers and attempt to keep their enthusiasm and desire for continuous improvement high. To do this, principals might provide frequent, public, positive feedback concerning effective teachers' performance and assist effective teachers in securing additional resources to further strengthen their instruction" (p. 75).

In a study conducted by Range, Young, and Hvidston (2013) teachers identified that all of the elements of the post-conference were important however most identified "constructive feedback delivered by the principal/supervisor as the most important element of the post-observation conference" (p. 73). Furthermore, according to Range et al., (2013) feedback to teachers should help to prioritize the classroom teacher's instructional decisions that ultimately led to increasing their performance in the classroom. Likewise, for feedback to be useful and meaningful, it requires several elements: a) consistent observation of the teacher and their instruction, b) targeted feedback based on collected observation data, and c) thoughtful discussions between the evaluator and teacher (Stapleton, Tschida, & Cuthrell, 2017).

Summary

When trying to understand student achievement, in its most basic form, "the teaching quality gap explains much of the student achievement gap" (Berry, Daughtry, & Wieder, 2010, p. 1). Throughout this Review of Literature, the important role that teachers play in the lives of students has been highlighted. However, the question of how

to effectively improve teaching performance has been an area of research that has been significantly contested. According to Range, Finch, Young, and Hvidston (2014), "The primary way in which principals directly impact teaching is through instructional leadership…providing resources to teachers, and observing teachers" (p.1). Kraft and Gilmour (2016) extend this idea by arguing that the quality of feedback teachers receive through the evaluation process is proportional to the type of training administrators have received. Each day teachers make numerous complex decisions that impact the diverse students sitting in their classrooms. Over the past couple of decades, the mark of success in the classroom has been highly focused around standardized test results (Berry et al., 2010). In the world of high-stakes testing, in order for a teacher's instruction to continue to improve it must be through the vehicle of principal observations and feedback. Range et al. (2014) argue that for growth to happen in the classroom "some sort of feedback or follow-up discussion between principals and teachers about what happened in the classroom" (p. 1) must occur on a regular basis. Principals need to continue to focus on the idea that teachers want specific help and specific suggestions to improve their practice and principals play an important role in this process (Range, Young & Hvidston, 2013). Without these critical feedback conversations and the necessary instructional leadership, it will be a significant challenge to reach the levels of learning that diverse classrooms and students require today (Ravitch, 2015).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to identify, explore, and describe the perceptions of public school principals and teachers that participate in the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) model, around different types of post-observation feedback delivery and content of feedback. Researchers need a better understanding if it is the content of feedback or the delivery of feedback during post-conference observations that lead to changes in classroom instruction.

Mixed methods research has been defined as a model of inquiry that enables a study to combine qualitative and quantitative models of research so that evidence may be mixed and knowledge is increased in a more meaningful manner than either model could achieve alone (Creswell et al, 2007). This method of inquiry was best suited for addressing the research questions of this study. This study conducted a two-phased mixed methods research design to collect and analyze data. Phase one of the study collected qualitative data through interviews of school principals. Phase two collected quantitative data through an online survey of classroom teachers. In order to use both quantitative and qualitative data in a mixed-methods research study, this study utilized a sequential exploratory research design. This design assisted in identifying the best research approach for data collection method and selection of subjects. According to Creswell (2009) a sequential exploratory research design involves a first phase of qualitative data collection and analysis, followed by a second phase of quantitative data collection and analysis. A sequential exploratory approach allowed the quantitative data of the study to build on the results of the first qualitative phase (Creswell, 2009). This design functioned

as a source for developing ideas in the first phase, which were then put through, further research investigation to validate the results.

According to Maxwell (2005) sampling is essential "to establish appropriate comparisons to illuminate the reasons for differences between…individuals" (p. 235). For this research study, the sample size included 6 high achieving, public high schools located in southwest Ohio. In the sample, 6 building principals were interviewed for the research study, and a population of all 337 certified teachers, working in these high schools, were asked to participate in the study.

These 6 schools were identified as "high achieving" based on their 2017 State of Ohio Value Added scores. Schools that were chosen for this study received an overall letter grade of an "A" on the value-added component of their State Report Card. The State of Ohio defines value-added as a measurement of the impact that teachers have on students' academic progress rates from year to year (education.ohio.gov, 2017). Value-added is a statistical tool that measures student achievement over time. This study sought to collect detailed information around the following research questions:

Research Questions (teacher survey):

- What are the content areas in which Hamilton County teachers report receiving feedback during post-observation evaluation conferences, viewed through the lens of the Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric?
- What are the forms of communication Hamilton County teachers report their evaluators use to provide post-observation feedback?
- What instructional changes do Hamilton County teachers report implementing following post-observation evaluation conferences?

- In the opinion of Hamilton County teachers, to what extent does the content of feedback provided during post-observation evaluation conferences influence instructional changes they subsequently implement in their classrooms.
- In the opinion of Hamilton County teachers, to what extent does the method of communicating post-observation feedback (verbal, written, both or other) during evaluation conferences influence the instructional changes they subsequently implement in their classrooms?
- In the opinion of teachers in Hamilton County, does the method of communicating post-observation feedback (verbal, written, both or other) differentially influence their perception of the content of feedback they were provided?

Research Questions (principal interviews):

- What factors do principals in Hamilton County school district report considering in deciding how to deliver post-observation feedback to teachers (verbal, written, both, or other)?
- What factors do principals in Hamilton County school districts report considering in deciding the content of post-observation feedback to deliver to teachers (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric)?
- To what extent do principals report they monitor instructional changes teachers implement following post-observation evaluation conferences?

Phase 1: Principal Interviews

This mixed methods study conducted a two-phased research design to collect and analyze data using semi-structured interviews of school principals. In Phase I qualitative

research was collected and data analysis was a creative process of making meaning out of principal interview responses. The principal interviews were designed as semi-structured qualitative interviews to allow the researcher to explore further other possible variables that may impact the selection of post-conference feedback and delivery. Also, a semi-structured interview format allowed the researcher to develop coding schemes that consisted of a set of categories to use in classifying participant responses and more effectively connect their responses to other perceptions that are shared by participants (Whitley and Kite, 2013). During the interviews, the researcher utilized open-ended questions to create better dialogue between the interviewer and participant. The primary focus of the interviews was to ascertain what types of feedback delivery and content of feedback did principals believe led to instructional changes in the classroom.

Data analysis first focused on extracting from these interviews if principals provided any feedback to teachers during post-observation conferences. If so, what type of post-conference feedback delivery did they use (verbal, written, both, or other)? Did the principal believe that their feedback delivery changed the instructional practices in the classroom? If so, how did they know and what systems did they use to monitor these changes? What factors did principals report considering when deciding how to deliver post-observation feedback to teachers (verbal, written, both or other)? What factors did principals report considering about the content of post-observation feedback to deliver to teachers (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric)?

The data analysis looked for any evidence of similarities, differences, or themes between principals' answers. Finally, the interview phase of the research sought to

determine if any additional conclusions could be made between these subsets and participants' answers.

As reported by Waite (1993) an interview is a popular method used in gathering information and data about leadership within an organization. In its most basic form, an interview "consists of a researcher asking questions of a research participant, who then responds" (Whitley and Kite, 2013, p. 419). According to Whitley et al. (2013, p. 419), interviews allow researchers access to various types of qualitative information.

- Detailed descriptions of experiences, places, and events
- Description of process
- Learning how events are interpreted
- Integrating multiple perspectives

Interviews are a suitable type of research tool, especially for smaller organizations. An interview should be loosely structured, and interviewers should be allowed to pursue various lines of questioning. These interviews were designed to be interactive between the researcher and participant. Flexibility and open-endedness of the interview allowed for greater adaptability on the part of the investigator to the answers provided by the participants. Also, it was important that interview questions were designed to elicit emotions and personal meaning from the participants rather than only the collection of demographic information or short answer responses. Principals revealed their own personal feelings about the evaluation process, their staff and students during these interviews.

According to Whitley and Kite (2013), the more structure an interview has, the more reliable the results. Developing sound interview questions and utilizing a semi-

structured interview approach allowed greater validity of the interviews. When conducting semi-structured interviews, "the interviewer will ask each interviewee the same core set of questions but may change their order in response to topics the interviewee brings up" (Whitley and Kite, 2013, p. 419).

Interview Participant Selection. Six high school principals from high achieving, public high schools, located in southwest Ohio participated in the study. Originally, a total of nine high schools were identified as "high achieving" based on their 2017 State of Ohio Value Added scores. High schools that were chosen for this study received an overall value-added score of an "A" on their local report card. However, three districts declined participating in the study.

In order to recruit participants for the study, superintendents were contacted electronically to gain permission to conduct the study in their organization. Superintendents were emailed a letter explaining the purpose of the study (Appendix A). Superintendents also received a Template Letter to complete on district letter head granting permission for the study to be conducted in their district (Appendix B). Once the superintendent chose to allow their district to participate in the study, they completed the Template Letter and sent it back to the research investigator. Once the Template Letter was received, granting permission for the study to be conducted, an electronic spreadsheet was developed of districts where permission had been granted or denied. Next, copies of the permission letter were retained by the lead research investigator. Of the 9 superintendents that were contacted for this research study a total of 3 chose to not have their school district participate.

When permission was granted from the district, 6 building principals were

contacted electronically to seek their participation in the study (Appendix C). The electronic communication included an explanation of the purpose of the study and Informed Consent was attached to the message (Appendix D). Once the principal agreed to participate in the study, two copies of the Informed Consent were signed at the interview. The principal investigator kept one copy and the principal was given the other for their records. Also, principals were not given copies of the interview questions in advance of the interview. However, at the time of the interview principals were provided a copy of the interview questions.

All interviews were conducted face-to-face with building principals at a location of their choosing, and each of the interviews occurred in the office of the building principal. If a participant did not wish to have their interview recorded, then notes from the interview would have been written by hand. All principals consented to having their interviews recorded. The principal's identity was not being disclosed in the study. Interview notes, including field notes and interview transcripts, are retained by the co-investigators in a secure location for three (3) years and then will be destroyed. The secure location will be away from work and stored in a locked cabinet.

Interview Data Analysis. The research study utilized content analysis methods to identify the perceptions of principals about post-conference feedback (verbal, written, both, or other) delivery and content of feedback (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric). After the interviews were conducted, each interview was transcribed by the principal investigator. The purpose of transcribing the interviews was to analyze and pull out the perceptions of the research participants. Transcribing an electronic interview into a written format was an essential contributor to adding to the dependability of the

interview process. The investigator did not attempt to code data while listening to the interview and followed the same protocols for data transcription for each interview.

Once the interview data had been transcribed the participant identifier information was removed, prior to data analysis. Recordings of interviews were destroyed as soon as they had been accurately transcribed. Transcripts of interviews and field notes were coded during analysis to conceal the identity of participants. Only the co-investigators have access to the raw data files during analysis. The final product was a written report of the findings of the study. Group and thematic data only is reported in the final paper; however, graphic narratives and quotes were anonymously incorporated to enhance interpretation of findings. The identity of the organization, participant's names and any identifying information were not associated with any part of the written or oral presentations of this research. Copies of consent forms and all data collected, including field notes and interview transcripts, are retained by the investigator in secure locations for three (3) years and then destroyed.

Once the analysis was complete, the data were organized according to subsets such as principals' perceptions; preferred manner of feedback delivery (verbal, written, both or other), preferred area of content feedback, and perceived instructional changes in the classroom. When conducting the data analysis, in order to minimize researcher bias during the analysis, the names of interview participants were de-identified before data analysis occurred. The analyzed interview data were used to provide insight into the research questions of the study.

Phase II: Teacher Survey

The second phase of this research study implemented electronic teacher surveys (Appendix H). This survey collected quantitative data by collecting information about the manner of feedback (verbal, written, both, other) and content of feedback (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric) that teachers received during post-observation conferences. The population consisted of all 337 certified high school teachers from 6 different high schools participating in the study. Participant survey responses were anonymous and voluntary. All certified teachers in these schools were invited to participate in the study by receiving an email explaining the purpose of the study with a link to take the survey using Qualtrics as the survey platform.

Teachers that consented to participate provided randomization to the research study, as they are a representative sample of the population. This methodology decreased the probability that the data would become skewed because the research study was not trying to control the outcome of the data by selecting participants. Participants in the sample statistically modeled the population. Since this research study could not control for all the variability of the participants, randomization was necessary for the methodology. Participants in the survey were provided with Informed Consent electronically, before taking the survey. If a participant chose not to agree to the Informed Consent, they were thanked for their time and the survey was terminated. Also, if participants answered that they had never received feedback during a post-observation conference, the survey thanked them for their time and was terminated.

Internet Survey Methodologies. In this mixed methods research study, an essential component of the data analysis was to collect quantitative data from the surveys.

According to Whitley and Kite (2013) distributing an Internet survey through email with a link that directs the participant to a website to take the survey is a best practice in distribution and generating participation.

There are many benefits to utilizing an electronic survey. This method of data collection allowed access to a broader sample of certified teachers quickly. Also, this allowed a much larger population to participate in the research study rather than meeting individually with participants. Finally, respondents to Internet surveys "exhibit less social desirability response bias, perhaps because they feel confident about their anonymity" (Whitley and Kite, 2013, p. 472).

A common limitation to electronic surveys is the cost. However, this electronic research survey was conducted through a free online platform called Qualtrics. This electronic platform allowed the research study the ability to receive and analyze a greater amount of data. The survey was sent electronically by the principal investigator of the study, to teachers' district email accounts. Once the survey was electronically distributed, the principal investigator sent out one reminder for participants to complete the survey.

Survey Participant Selection. This research study was conducted with 6 high achieving, public high schools located in southwest Ohio with a total population of 337 teachers. The high schools were identified as "high achieving" based on their 2017 State of Ohio Value Added scores. High schools were selected based on receiving an overall value-added grade of an "A" on their local report card by the state of Ohio in 2017. According to the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) model (2015), all certified Ohio public school teachers are required to participate in various forms of an evaluation process. The population of 337 participants for this study was chosen because they were

the entire certified teacher population of schools participating in the study and are a representative sample of the overall teaching population. These certified teachers had education credentials ranging from bachelors to doctorate degrees. A certified teacher is a school employee who holds a valid state of Ohio teaching license in the subject or field that they teach and is commonly referred to as a Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) by the state of Ohio. For this research study, only certified teachers were selected to participate. The survey was anonymous and delivered to all teachers in the school.

Survey Data Collection. Within Ohio public schools all certified teachers are required to participate in some form of teacher evaluation (OTES, 2015). The survey used in this research study tried to capture if teachers perceived that certain types of feedback delivery or content feedback led to greater instructional changes in their classroom. The survey was designed to focus on certified teachers that participate in the state OTES evaluation process. Once the data were collected it was analyzed using quantitative statistical measures.

Before providing the survey to the study participants, the survey was piloted with a school located in southwest Ohio that was not part of the population used in the study, but the school is similar in achievement to schools used for the study. The reason the survey was piloted is so the it could be modified to reduce bias or skewed findings. Therefore, all piloting of survey question data was excluded from the final data pool. The final survey was only distributed electronically to the teacher participants in the 6 participating schools.

Survey Data Analysis. Teachers participating in the research study completed the Qualtrics survey and data were analyzed based on the responses of the participants.

Survey data were analyzed individually by teacher response. However, the data were not identified or disaggregated based on individual high schools. All data were combined with the total number of schools that participated in the study to eliminate the possibility of identifying individual schools.

This survey collected quantitative data by asking questions about the about the manner of feedback (verbal, written, both, other) and content of feedback (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric) that teachers receive during post-observation conferences, and the instructional changes that occurred in classrooms. Data were organized according to subsets of teachers' perceptions if they made any instructional changes in the classroom since their last post-observation conference. These subsets allowed the researcher to organize data better and then analyze the perceptions of the participants around the various types of feedback delivery and content feedback. Next, data were analyzed to understand what content areas (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric) did a teacher's instructional changes most closely relate. In this research study, it was important to parse out if the instructional changes teachers made were related to the content of feedback, the manner of delivery, or some additional variable impacting instructional changes. Teacher survey responses were analyzed to determine if their instructional changes would have been made regardless of the feedback they received during a post-observation conference.

The study compared data that was collected in Phase 1 of the principal interviews with the data collected in Phase 2 of the teacher survey responses. In order to use both quantitative and qualitative data in a mixed-methods research study, this study implemented a sequential exploratory research design. This design assisted to identify the

best research approach, data collection method, and selection of subjects. According to Creswell (2009) a sequential exploratory research design involves a first phase of qualitative data collection and analysis, followed by a second phase of quantitative data collection and analysis. A sequential exploratory approach will allow quantitative data to build on the results of the first qualitative phase (Creswell, 2009).

Survey data were analyzed quantitatively to record the responses of teachers about which of the 10 OTES Domains did their evaluator focus on providing feedback. The research study analyzed all survey responses to see what were the most common content domains used by principals and look collectively at all participant's responses to determine if common themes about content feedback or delivery emerged. The study also analyzed interview and survey responses to see if there was a connection between the qualitative responses of principals in selecting content feedback and the experiences of the teachers in receiving feedback. Responses were analyzed to determine the extent that instructional changes by teachers were the result of the content of feedback they received from their principals.

Data were analyzed around the various types of feedback delivery (verbal, written, both, other) that teachers received during post-observation conferences. Data were organized into subsets to try and understand what was the most common form of feedback delivery that teachers received. Again, the research study analyzed all survey respondents to see what were the most common types of feedback delivery to determine if common themes about feedback delivery emerged. Also, survey responses were analyzed to understand better if teachers' perceptions about how feedback was delivered to them during a post-observation conference impacted any instructional changes in their

classroom. Finally, survey responses were analyzed to understand if there were any other factors that may have influenced instructional changes in the classroom other than the content of feedback and manner of delivery.

The survey responses were analyzed and interpreted to inform the research questions seeking to identify, explore, and describe the perceptions of public school teachers and principals who participate in classroom observations and conduct post-observation conferences about types of post-observation feedback delivery (verbal, written, both, or other) and content feedback (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric). Also, survey and interview responses were analyzed to determine if administrators and educators perceive that certain types of post-conference feedback delivery or content feedback leads to instructional changes in the classroom.

Ethical Considerations of Research

According to Whitley and Kite (2013), individuals grow up learning that certain things are real. As a result, those beliefs can affect our interpretations of data. When analyzing data, it is easy for bias to creep unnoticed into the analysis. When conducting qualitative research, it is essential to try to minimize any bias that enters into the research study. One of the most pervasive forms of bias in research is confirmation bias. According to Whitley and Kite (2013) confirmation bias occurs when a researcher forms a belief and uses respondents' information to confirm that belief. This takes place "in-the-moment" of the interview as the researcher judges and weighs responses that confirm their belief as relevant and reliable while dismissing evidence that doesn't support a belief. Confirmation bias can also extend into data analysis, with a researcher tending to remember points that support their belief and points that disprove other beliefs about the

study. Confirmation bias is deeply seated in the natural tendencies people use to understand and filter information, which often leads to focusing on one idea or belief at a time. To minimize confirmation bias, researchers must continually reevaluate impressions of respondents and challenge preexisting assumptions and hypotheses. Bias in qualitative research can be minimized if the researcher knows what to look for and how to manage it. By asking quality questions at the right time and remaining aware and focused on different types of bias this will help minimize bias in the study. In order to minimize confirmation bias in this research study, when transcribing and reviewing the interview and survey results the identity of the participants was concealed throughout the content analysis of the data.

According to Waite (1993), the more structure an interview has, the more reliable the results. Conducting a structured interview was utilized to minimize question-order bias in the study. Creating sound interview questions and utilizing a semi-structured interview approach allowed for greater validity of the interviews. When conducting semi-structured interviews, "the interviewer will ask each interviewee the same core set of questions but may change their order in response to topics the interviewee brings up" (Whitley and Kite, 2013, p. 419). To minimize halo effect bias, the investigator tried to reflect on their assumptions about each participant: Why are you asking each question? What is the assumption behind it? This was important to minimize this type of research bias so that something would not be captured in a certain light because of a single, positive attribute of the participant (Whitley et al., 2013).

Data collection was conducted under approved protocols for the treatment of human research participants, with the approval of Xavier University's Institutional

Review Board (IRB). No data were collected or analyzed until all protocols were approved. The IRB application addressed the potential risks regarding any psychological, physical, social, economic or legal harm to survey participants. All electronic and written data, including transcripts, have been securely stored using password encryption or securely locked. Consent forms of participants are stored separately. All audio, electronic, and written information was destroyed once it had been appropriately coded and transcribed. Participant names did not appear on any survey or report findings. Transcripts of interviews had all names removed in order to maintain anonymity. Permission to conduct research was obtained from district superintendents, and informed consent was obtained from each interview participant before conducting the interview. Confidentiality was maintained throughout all the findings.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

This exploratory study captured the perceptions of principals and teachers from 6 high schools, which represented 6 of the 9 high achieving school districts invited to participate in this study. Data were collected using individual principal interviews and an online teacher survey. Participants were asked to describe their own experiences regarding the nature and manner of feedback they received in post-observation conferences, and whether they perceived any relationship between that feedback and changes subsequently implemented in their classroom instruction. The demographics of respondents and analysis of data collected are presented in this chapter as follows: 1) Demographics of participants; 2) Qualitative analysis of principal interviews; 3) Quantitative analysis of teacher questionnaires.

Demographics of Participants

Six of the nine superintendents in local public school districts agreed to participate in this study, and granted permission for data to be collected in their high schools. During Phase I of data collection, principals in all 6 of the high schools agreed to be interviewed. During Phase II, survey invitations were sent to all certified teachers in the 6 high schools. The total population for the survey was 337 certified high school teachers. Out of the entire population, 148 teachers began the survey, and a sample of 98 teachers completed all survey questions for an overall response rate of 29.1%. Table 3 lists the breakdown of superintendents granting permission, principals interviewed, and teachers completing the online survey.

Table 3. Superintendents, Principals and Teachers in study

Role in Organization	Number Contacted	Number Participating	Number not participating	Percentage Participating
Superintendent	9	6	3	67%
High School Principal	6	6	0	100%
Certified High School Teacher	337	98*	239	29.1%

*148 certified high school teachers started but did not complete the entire survey (44.2%)

Participating School Profiles

As a context for interpreting participant responses, the following profiles of participating high schools was compiled based on information obtained from the organizations' official websites and individual interviews with building principals. Each participating school has been given a non-identifying code to preserve institutional confidentiality in reporting study results.

School A. School A has a student enrollment of 491 students and 46 certified teachers. The student-teacher ratio in the school is listed as 10:1. The school has an assistant principal who shares the responsibilities with the building principal for conducting teacher evaluations of certified staff members. The principal has over two decades of administrative experience as a building principal. A total of 100% of the teaching staff have completed a Bachelor's degree and 82% of the staff have obtained a Master's degree.

School B. School B has a student enrollment of 428 students and 35 certified teachers. The student-teacher ratio in the school is listed as 12:1. The school does not have an assistant principal; therefore, all teacher evaluations are conducted by the building principal. The principal has been in this current position for five years and has

an additional year of administrative experience outside of this current school district. A total of 83% of staff members have obtained at least a Master's Degree.

School C. School C has a student enrollment of 1,623 students and 100 certified teachers. The student-teacher ratio in the school is listed as 16:1. The school has three assistant principals. The assistant principals and the building principal divide up the teacher observation responsibilities between all four administrators. The principal has been in this current position for five years and has additional years of administrative experience outside of this current school district. Over 70% of the teaching staff have completed their Master's Degree.

School D. School D has a student enrollment of 635 students and 60 certified teachers. The student-teacher ratio in the school is listed as 10:1. The school has one assistant principal. The building principal and assistant principal share the responsibility of conducting teacher observations with all staff members in the building. The principal has been in this position for one year and was currently operating as an interim principal. However, the principal had many years of administrative experience in other school districts as a building principal. Over 75% of the teaching staff have completed their Master's Degree.

School E. School E has a student enrollment of 342 students and 33 certified teachers. The student-teacher ratio in the school is listed as 10:1. The school does not have an assistant principal; therefore, the building principal is responsible for conducting all teacher evaluations. The principal has been in this current position for three years and has additional administrative experience as a building principal. A total of 84% of the teaching staff have completed their Master's Degree.

School F. School F has a student enrollment of 597 students and 63 certified teachers. The student-teacher ratio in the school is listed as 9:1. The school has an assistant principal who shares the responsibilities of teacher evaluations with the building principal. The principal has been in this current position for three years and has additional administrative experience as a building principal outside of this school district. A total of 90% of the teaching staff have completed their Master's Degree.

Analysis of Principal Interviews

Principal interviews were transcribed and de-identified prior to analysis. Content analysis using both theoretical and open coding focused on identifying content areas and methods of post-evaluation feedback employed by participating principals. Participating principals reported a wide range of experiences in different school districts and number of years serving as building principals. Each principal had previously received training and met certification standards to be a credential teacher evaluator in the State of Ohio, and met requirements for on-going recalibration every two years. Yet the interviews revealed different ideas, beliefs and practices around how decisions are made by principals when choosing content, delivering feedback, monitoring instructional changes that occur, and finding the time to engage in the observation process with fidelity. Four overarching themes emerged from a systemic analysis of the qualitative interview data collected from these six principals. These themes revolved around: time, delivering content to teachers, manner of feedback delivery to teachers, and instructional changes in classrooms as a result of the feedback provided.

Time. A common theme among all principals interviewed is that building principals spend a tremendous amount of time conducting classroom observations and

post-observation conferences, which at times can make it difficult to manage other aspects of their jobs. All six principals reported that this is primarily a result of having to comply with the evaluation requirements of the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System. Two of the six principals interviewed revealed that they do not have assistant principals to help with the evaluation duties. The mean number of teachers these principals have to evaluate in a given school is 20 teachers, although, three of the principals interviewed had an observation case-load of over 30 teachers to evaluate each year.

Five of the 6 principals reported that they meet individually with each teacher in their high school, at the beginning of the year, to conduct a goal-setting meeting. P2 stated, "We have our teachers set out two SMART goals at the start of the year, centered around their instructional practices." These goals help to guide the professional relationship of the principal and teacher throughout the year and principals reported that these goals were commonly referenced during post-conference meetings. P1 reported, "I always ask them (teachers) when we have our conference, how are you progressing on your goal?" During these meetings, the principal is required to approve or modify the goal with the teacher.

Each teacher being evaluated is also responsible for having a pre-conference meeting, a classroom observation, a post-conference meeting, and a classroom walkthrough by their principal with additional feedback required to be given by the principal about their instruction. For teachers on full-cycle evaluation, this whole process repeats itself two times during the school year for each teacher.

At the end of the school year, principals are required to meet individually with each teacher to conduct a final summative review of their overall evaluation scores based

on a combined formula of student achievement data and classroom observations. All six principals confirmed they conduct each of these meetings during the evaluation process. On average, if a principal has 20 teachers on full-cycle evaluation this requires on average 200 meetings (goal-setting, pre-conference, observation, post-conference, walkthrough, and summative evaluation) during a 182-day school year. Regarding the observation process for teachers in their building, P4 stated,

> I want the observation to be meaningful to them and if it's not meaningful to them if I just come in and say sign here, you are all great. It's a waste of their time, it's a waste of my time. They might as well get something from it. I look as hard as I can to give them positive coaching feedback.

While the evaluation process was identified by building principals as "time-consuming", principals noted this does not take into account the additional evaluations principals are responsible for conducting with classified and support staff. Although these principals acknowledged that the amount of time and energy it takes to conduct observations and provide feedback is undeniable, there was also a strong sense of the value of these meetings. As P4 stated during our interview,

> "I think they (teachers) approach it with an open mind…though they know it's an exercise in maybe paper shuffling, some compliance. However, I think they all readily do come at it with integrity, wanting to learn something from it."

During our interview, P3 shared that their evaluation process is "extensive". Being visible in the classroom, outside of the observation process, is important to "develop relationships and really get a sense for the climate, and how we want to steer things and put a focus on instructional practices". P1 noted, "my goal is to provide the teacher with

feedback that they can then apply to different areas of instruction, regardless what happened on that particular day." P3 stated that between the assistant principal and the building principal they "were in a combined, about 500 classroom observations, whether that is formal or informal combined" last school year. The breakdown of the principals' estimates of time spent on teacher evaluations throughout a school year is reflected in Table 4.

Table 4. Principals' Time Spent on Teacher Evaluations

Average Number of Teachers Observed	Goal Setting Meeting	Pre-conference meeting (x2)	Classroom Observation (x 2)	Post-conference Observation (x 2)	Classroom Walkthrough (x 2)	Summative Evaluation Meeting	Total Meetings
20	20	40	40	40	40	20	200

There is no question that the principals interviewed for this research project have complex jobs, and they were identified for this study because their schools are high achieving based on the Ohio Department of Education Report Card. Yet, each of the six principals acknowledged how consuming the evaluation process is if it is done with fidelity in addition to all the tasks of leading a building. When asked how principals can manage all this in addition to their other responsibilities, P4 observed, "I have 35 teachers…it's a lot and no assistant principal and a lot of other instructional responsibilities…typing is sometimes a lag, to be honest, the written feedback comes not as timely as I would like it."

Each of the principals interviewed expressed that being in the classroom and being the "instructional leader" of the building is their most important task but the amount of paperwork, meetings, and compliance often make their position feel out-of-

balance considering all that needs to be accomplished each day. Likewise, this study conducted interviews with principals from diverse school districts that had different community and student demographics. As P3 expressed how important it is to understand the school's climate and demographics can play an important role,

> I worked in a previous district as an assistant principal, 60% of the population was on free and reduced lunch. Everything is focused on test data, we are worried about kids coming and having fights and meals, being innovative in the classroom or something is drastically different, might not be that easy to do. And, we might not have the time to do it either. I think the climate of your students plays a big role.

Each of the principals identified that although feedback and instruction are their priorities they are not always in control of their time as each day brings something unexpected that arises. P3 reflected, "Part of this is also because we are not bogged down by tons of discipline. In my previous district, I think I had like 2,000 (discipline) referrals, it just kills you." It was apparent through the interviews that each principal works within the dynamics of different school cultures, that require different initiatives and building goals. However, each principal identified the importance of being engaged with the teaching and learning in their building, but the common theme is how that is driven by the availability of time. As each principal gained more experience they identified that efficiency is a critical part of the evaluation process in order to accomplish all of the other demands expected of a building principal. Time is an important theme that stood out in the interview process because it impacts so many other areas, including how principals choose feedback content that is delivered to teachers.

Factors Considered in Choosing Content Feedback. Another common theme to emerge from principal interviews is that each principal identified differences in the quality of classroom instruction throughout their schools. Very few principals shared that this is due to a teacher having deficiencies in their classroom performance. On the contrary, P3 shared, "If you are not good, you are not going to make it here. Our kids demand a lot, teachers have to rise to that occasion, and so they've got to be internally motivated." When asked how they go about selecting the content of feedback to be delivered during post-observation conferences all six principals interviewed stated it becomes a differentiated process based on many factors. For instance, each year the participating schools hire new teachers. These teachers may have little or a lot of experience coming into their new positions, and these new employees may require a lot of coaching and support from their principals. P4 stated, "I have a lot of veteran staff members, those parts are pretty solid. We don't have a lot of new teachers who need to be developed and really focused on." P2 observe with "new teachers, I put a lot of things down."

Throughout the interviews, a wide variety of factors were identified as decision-making guidelines for principals when selecting content for providing performance feedback to teachers. These factors were differentiated among the many teachers in their buildings. Tables 5 lists common factors these principals identified they consider in choosing what content to deliver to teachers during post-observation feedback.

Table 5. Factors Principals Consider in Choosing Content for Post-Observation Feedback

Factors Considered in Choosing Content
How long has the teacher been teaching in our school?
What goals has the teacher developed to professionally focus on during the school year?
What are the instructional goals for the building?
Is there anything that the teacher wants the principal to focus on while in their classroom?
What are the characteristics of highly effective teaching?
How much teaching experience does the teacher have?
Have there been any deficiency concerns about the classroom teacher's performance?
What are the instructional goals for the district?
What content areas will provide "the biggest bang for your buck?"

These are the factors that principals identified throughout their interviews that are part of their decision-making process when trying to choose the content they will share with individual teachers. As P3 shared, "I think in our district, we have a lot of teachers who this isn't their first place…we have a lot of teachers who are really veterans in their craft." Another common factor in choosing content is the focus on relationships with teachers. Each of the principals explained that developing strong, positive relationships is key to improving the instruction across their buildings. P3 shared about factors in choosing content,

> A plethora, you know, right? A variety of things…experience level, yeah that's going to play a roll. I think relationships are at the center of all things, even though we talk about that instructional piece. If that relationship is lacking, you are not going to go anywhere with that instructional piece…you are not going to get to that place you want to go, from an instructional stand point.

Content Feedback. The content areas principals reported focusing on in providing post-observation teacher feedback was reviewed and compared to the ten OTES Domains in the Teacher Performance Rubric. Principals interviewed were able to narrow down certain content areas they tended to focus more on when delivering feedback to their teachers. Table 6 presents a breakdown of the content areas principals identified choosing most frequently.

Table 6. OTES Content Domains Principals Utilize Most Frequently

OTES Domains	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	Percent of Content Principals Focus on
Focus for Learning		X				X	33%
Assessment Data					X		17%
Prior Content Knowledge							0%
Knowledge of Students						X	17%
Lesson Delivery	X	X	X	X		X	83%
Differentiation	X		X	X			50%
Resources			X		X		33%
Classroom Environment					X		17%
Assessment of Student Learning	X	X		X		X	66%
Professional Responsibilities							0%

Lesson Delivery. During the interviews, the most common content area chosen by principals was Lesson Delivery. Five out of the six principals (83%) identified lesson delivery as a content area they frequently focus on during post-observation conferences. P4 offered the following rationale for choosing to focus on Lesson Delivery,

> I'd say I spend upwards to about 30%, just talking about the actual lesson delivery. What were the different modalities of instruction, how they connected with kids, how it met different learning purposes, how they did groups, how they did guided practice? I spend a lot of time in that arena.

P2 also commented that "lesson delivery is big!" When discussing lesson delivery, P6 shared that, "Using the resource Characteristics of Highly Effective Teaching is something that we focus on when choosing content feedback. I want to make sure that students are engaged in the lesson while it is being delivered."

Assessment of Student Learning. Assessment of Student Learning was the second most common content area chosen by principals during interviews. Four out of the six principals (66%) identified that they regularly choose this content domain to provide feedback to teachers in their schools. P2 shared,

> Assessment of Student Learning is big because we were struggling in math. We hit that hard, we brought in (name redacted) and spent a lot of time on the assessments, because we didn't think they were lined up as they should have been.

P3 discussed Assessment of Student Learning and shared, "The first objective is to talk about the type of teaching and learning, how we are seeing growth in students." P3 explained that the relationship between teaching and learning is built upon a teacher's ability to provide strong assessments. P3 explains, "I talk a lot about the role of active informative assessment" With teachers.

Differentiation. Differentiation was the third most common content area chosen by principals for feedback. Three out of the six principals (50%) identified this as a common area that they use for content feedback. P1 shared, "Usually I'll have some questions about differentiation just because it is not always evident in the lesson." When sharing about differentiation P3 shared what is commonly discussed with teachers,

> I look at active formative assessment being like, ok, my kids are maybe working, whether it is independently, small groups, whatever it might be…their knowledge of

> where their kids are currently, what they want their ultimate goals to be in terms of the unit. What they need to do in terms of incremental perspective, there is just a variety of factors.

P1 discussed that often during a classroom observation there are characteristics of the observation that cannot be observed. For instance, P1 shared that during the post-observation conference there will be questions to try and uncover anything that was missed in the classroom. P1 explains, "Usually I'll have some questions about differentiation just because it is not always evident in the, um, lesson.

Manner of Feedback Delivery. During the interviews, principals were asked to comment on the factors they consider when deciding how to deliver post-observation feedback to a teacher. Reflecting the previous theme addressing the amount of time required to perform teacher observations and post-observation meetings each year, having adequate time to complete these important tasks was a factor principals identified as influencing their decisions how to provide feedback.

Maintaining positive relationships was another important overarching theme principals identified as influencing the manner in which they provide teacher feedback. All six principals reflected on the importance of having strong, positive relationships with their staff, and how feedback delivery can be as much an art as a science for principals, because maintaining these relationships and helping teachers grow in their craft is a balancing act. As P3 stated, "I think relationships are at the center of all things, even though we talk about the instructional piece." P1 commented, "Building some of those bridges or connections, with our teachers, is important in helping them feel that we are invested…ultimately this lends itself to a culture that is built around thriving or

constantly wanting to improve your craft." Five out of the six principals reported the delivery of feedback is just as important, in their minds, as the content they share with teachers. P3 stated about delivering feedback, "I think that it is a tightrope."

Compliance with established parameters was another factor mentioned by all principals as influencing their decisions about feedback delivery. Table 7 lists other factors reported by one or more principal as influencing decisions about how to provide teacher feedback.

Table 7. Factors Principals Reported Influencing Decisions about Feedback Delivery

Factors Identified When Choosing Feedback Delivery
How strong of a relationship does the principal have with the teacher?
Does the principal have any performance concerns with the teacher?
What compliance issues are mandated for feedback delivery by the State of Ohio?
Have teachers developed a strong level of trust in the building principal?
Being able to realistically manage all the evaluations and spend time enough time writing feedback.
Is this teacher open to receiving constructive feedback?
Do personnel decisions need to made for a reduction in teaching?
How long has the principal been working in that school?
What is the preferred preference for feedback delivery by the principal?
What phase of their career is the teacher currently operating in (i.e. veteran, newly hired, etc.)?

These are the factors that principals identified throughout their interviews that are part of their decision-making process when trying to choose how to deliver feedback to

individual teachers. Principals acknowledged that feedback delivery is often differentiated between staff members based on many of the factors listed in table 5.

Principals reported a great deal of thought goes into their decision regarding the manner in which feedback will be delivered to teachers by principals. P4 shared that it has taken time to develop an approach to feedback delivery. "I'm getting better, say now that I know the staff for 3 or 4 years because now I can go in with a little bit of a lens…your first year you are just feeling this out (P4)." P2 shared that there are pitfalls they experienced as a principal regarding written feedback to teachers.

> There are times when I know they are good teachers and you just have to tell them that you are going to be fine. They get all nervous when it gets written down…Oh, that's in my evaluation, and sometimes it does more damage putting it in there. I know that sounds crazy but, not a lot of them but there's a few that it would do more damage.

Each principal interviewed was asked to identify the different manners of feedback delivery they use and their preferred form of feedback delivery. Results are reported in Table 8.

Table 8. Methods of Feedback Utilized and Preferred by Principals Interviewed

Principals	Verbal	Written	Both	Other	Preferred Form of Communication
P1			X		Verbal
P2			X		Verbal
P3			X		Written
P4			X		Verbal
P5			X		Verbal
P6			X		Verbal

The most preferred form of communication identified by 5 out of 6 principals was verbal. However, 6 out of the 6 principals also identified that they deliver some form of written feedback to teachers. When discussing feedback delivery P2 cautioned that written feedback can have adverse consequences between the principal and the teacher relationship, rather than helping the teacher improve in their instruction. P2 shared,

> One particular teacher, it would do major damage to the relationship or to his ego, if it went in writing. So, we have a lot of conversations. With new teachers, I put (write) a lot of things down, like hey look, this is the way you are supposed to be, but these are the things you need to do…so I look at each teacher, who can handle what and what is the best way for them.

Principals reported spending countless hours outside of classroom observation and post-conference meetings generating quality feedback for teachers. Due to the number of evaluation meetings required of the building principals, some reported this can become an overwhelming task. P4 confessed,

> I'll be honest, most of mine come through verbal. Some of it, I hate to say, is a result of the structure. I have 35 teachers…but it's a lot and not having an assistant principal and a lot of other instructional responsibilities. Typing is sometimes a lag, to be honest, the written feedback comes not as timely as I would like it. However, the verbal feedback at the post-conference comes pretty quickly. I make sure we sit down a day or two after the lesson, I don't wait for that. But sometimes the written part lags…That is something I need to work on.

Principals reported verbal feedback can be very specific and targeted and allows principals the opportunity to develop more of a coaching model with teachers. When discussing helping teachers grow and delivering quality feedback P1 stated, "the goal is for them to be better at their craft." P4 believes that part of helping teachers improve their instruction is acting as more of an instructional coach. P4 explained,

> If I come in and say, hey you just need to do so and so, it's harsh. I think asking the whys, why do you do that and why do you do that and have the lightbulb come on for them in that coaching model, will have a greater chance of having them change versus a director, top-down kind of way. So, to me, it's not so much the domains, to implement change, it's how you coach the feedback that will get them to implement the changes that you would like to see.

Overall, 5 out of the 6 principals reported that their preferred style of feedback delivery is verbal, however, all 6 identified that they deliver some form of written feedback. Given these principals preferred delivering verbal feedback, they were asked why they also deliver written feedback to teachers. All principals reported that written feedback was a requirement implemented by the State of Ohio. According to P1, "We

are required to have a meeting, we are required to have the written feedback," indicated, "I have to do a written feedback form, but I like to talk about it. So, teachers understand where I am coming from and they have an opportunity to respond to the suggestions that I make." P3 was the only principal interviewed who preferred providing written feedback over verbal feedback; all other principals reported that verbal feedback was their preferred method of delivery. P3 reported they (principal and assistant principal) spend a lot of time in classrooms and try to capture (in writing) what they observe occurring between the teacher, students, and instructional strategies, noting a lot of classroom feedback delivery occurs when informally visiting classrooms. This allows the principal to capture "positive affirmations" between students and teachers as they interact. These moments are documented in writing and delivered to the teachers so they can read. For instance, P3 shares an example, "when I am in their (classroom), and you are crouching down to be eye-level with every single group…it shows your investment in students." P3 also discussed how extensive written feedback can become,

> I would say we are pretty extensive with it…I take detailed, scripting notes when we are in there, documenting every single thing we can…I want them to feel like, wow, they are taking it seriously, they are invested. Wow, like they are taking down all those types of things, like even documenting the environment space, stuff on the walls, how the classroom is laid out, the configuration of the desks…What they are saying, what kids are saying and documenting our feedback that comes with all those standards. You could say it serves as a guide for our conversation.

While, all principals acknowledged written feedback delivery is a mandatory part of the post-observation process, a wide diversity was reported among the principals regarding how they are utilize the written feedback. For most principals, written feedback is provided as a matter of compliance, but all six principals agreed that written feedback delivery becomes essential when a teacher is exhibiting instructional deficiencies and not meeting the instructional standards set forth by the principal. P1 shared that "evaluation should not be a gotcha! I'm not coming in and trying to catch you off your game, but to provide feedback so you can be better…That's my job." P3 explains,

> I am looking at growing positivity…that being said, when I am really thinking about let's say a faculty member, who has what we are considering to be deficiencies in whatever domain, sometimes I think if it is not in writing, it is not going to be taken seriously.

Principals identified that they sometimes feel the time constraints of running a building and meeting the important requirements of delivering feedback to teachers about their instruction. Being the instructional leader is important for these principals, but partnering with teachers, building stronger relationships are as important as the delivery of feedback they provide. P2 shared, "The one skill I think I have is that I read people pretty well and I can understand the best way to reach them. I've never had one (teacher) that was so bad or defiant that I had to put everything down on paper and document. I just haven't had that yet." P3 reinforces this stating, "I think relationships are at the center of all things, even though we talk about the instructional piece."

Monitoring Instructional Change. A final theme that emerged from the principal interviews relates to whether principals are aware if teachers are implementing the changes they have suggested during a post-observation conference? As P1 stated, "I tell this to teachers that I evaluate, and it doesn't matter what school I have been in, the goal is for them to be better at their craft," through the evaluation process. Each of the principals interviewed reported different strategies for monitoring the instructional changes in the classroom. P1 stated, "We talk about that (instructional changes) in maybe the follow-up lesson or they may choose the next lesson they want me to observe based on things that maybe weren't as strong."

The consensus among the principals who were interviewed is that being inside the classrooms is critical to monitoring change. P2 noted that much of the monitoring occurs through classroom walkthroughs, which are unannounced. "It's typically walkthroughs, you know the evaluations they are scheduled, they are going to do some things that they may not normally do…You can check for the focus of learning." P6 reported there are many different processes in place in their school to monitor the instructional changes that are occurring. For instance, P6 commented, "Walkthroughs and the use of Instructional Coaches are important. We also have followed up conversations and department meetings to discuss instructional changes." Being visible in classrooms and throughout the school building is an important component for observing what is occurring in the classrooms and this was acknowledged by each principal.

Principals also acknowledge that monitoring the instructional changes is a difficult process and holding teachers accountable to these changes can be challenging. P4 observed, "I get some verbal commitments to maybe change some things, but not as

strong as those who are in the more formal process." As mentioned previously, principals reported that being inside the classroom is the only way that they can guarantee that instructional changes based on feedback are occurring. P3 stated, "It becomes very customary for people to get into each other's classroom, breaking down those silos and barriers…the teachers feel comfortable with us inside the classroom." Documenting the feedback suggestions can be challenging for principals since they are observing so many teachers. P4 reported,

> Walkthroughs sometimes show it, if I made a particular comment on what they did…it would be more recalling, say we talked about that and then you did a nice job with it this time. Or, I noticed this is something that you tweaked, is this a result of…we don't really have a lot of debriefing on our walkthrough. Sometimes I am able to pick those out.

Although all six principals agree that seeing evidence of instructional changes occurs primarily through visiting classrooms, 4 out of the 6 principals reported that there is very little time for any follow-up conversations about these changes and that professionalism comes into play for teachers and principals. P3 reported that most of this monitoring occurs through written feedback to reinforce what is observed in the classroom. "We will do a quick pop-in, maybe for a few minutes, 10 minutes, and then we are leaving 30-second feedback, something that can be digested in 30 seconds."

Overall, monitoring feedback does not appear to be as systematic as the observation process, based on the principals' responses. Primarily, this is due to the fact that it is not a systematic component of the observation process. Rather, it is up to principals to deem what is best for monitoring the implementation of classroom

instruction. Principals work hard to develop systems throughout their schools that will reinforce a sense of accountability. P6 observed, "We have department meetings and discuss instructional practices in the classroom. Also, we instituted a Pineapple chart where teachers can go and observe each other's classrooms." Implementing instructional changes is a lynchpin of the feedback process, and principals often have more faith than evidence that these changes are occurring across the building. As P3 stated, "For me, I then have to know the skill level of my teachers…there are just a variety of factors" and perhaps the greatest challenge to the process is trusting that real instructional change is occurring in the classroom.

Analysis of Survey Data

Response Rate to Teacher Survey. Phase II of this study collected data using an online teacher survey (Appendix H). The online survey consisted of 12 types of various survey questions (Likert-scale, yes/no, selection). The survey collected quantitative data by soliciting information about the manner of feedback (verbal, written, both, or other) and the content of feedback (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric) teachers received during post-observation conferences.

A total of 337 survey invitations were sent via email to teaching staff in 6 participating high schools located southwest Ohio. One additional email reminder was sent to teachers, which resulted in a total of 148 teachers starting the survey, and a total of 50 of those teachers completing only portions of the survey. There was an overall response of 98 completed surveys representing 29.1% of the sample. The breakdown of teacher survey response rates is presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Teacher Participation and Completion

Participants	*Sample*	*Respondents*	*Percent*
Teachers (screened/qualifying)	337	148	43.9%
Completed surveys		98	29.1%
Partially completed surveys		50	14.8%

Prior to completing the survey, respondents were presented with the study's Informed Consent document, stating the purpose of the study. If the participant selected the option, "No, I do not agree", the survey automatically terminated and the participant could not proceed any further. Of the 148 teachers who clicked on the link to access the Informed Consent document, 146 (98.6%) selected "Yes, I agree". The breakdown of this question is presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Informed Consent Pre-Survey Question

Informed Consent Question	*Respondents (n = 148)*	*Percent*
"Yes, I agree"	146	98.6%
"No, I do not agree"	2	1.3%

A second pre-survey question was designed to screen for participants who had never received any post-observation feedback as part of an administrative evaluation. The question asked, "Have you ever received post-observation feedback as part of an administrative evaluation of your classroom teaching?" If participants selected the answer choice "No" they could not continue any further in the survey. Five participants selected the answer choice "No", representing 3.5% of teachers who answered this question. One hundred and forty-one teachers, representing 96.6% of teachers who answered the

question, select the answer choice "Yes". These survey participants were then provided access to begin answering the survey questions. The breakdown of this question is presented in Table 11.

Table 11. Breakdown of Responses to Pre-Survey Question

Survey Question: "Have You Ever Received Post-Conference Feedback?"		
Response	*Respondents (n = 141)*	*Percent*
"Yes"	141	96.6%
"No"	5	3.5%

Data Analysis Procedures. The survey collected quantitative data about the manner of feedback delivery and content of performance feedback (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric) that teachers received during post-observation conferences. Survey responses were designed for Likert-style, multiple choice and yes/no questions that were collected to characterize any instructional changes teachers made in their classrooms since their last post-observation conference. These ordinal responses allowed the perceptions of participants to be organized and focused around the various types of feedback content and method of.

Survey data were analyzed by one of the co-investigators (Dr. Latta) using Excel and SPSSx. Descriptive statistics were computed separately for each survey question, as well as cross-tabs analyses pertaining to the research questions. Descriptive statistics will be presented first in the analysis below, followed by the cross-tabs analysis.

Descriptive Statistics. Descriptive data analysis focused on identifying the content areas (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric) in which teachers made

instructional changes following their most recent post-observation performance conference.

Survey question 1 asked participants, "Thinking about the most recent post-observation feedback you received, since receiving this feedback, have you made any instructional changes in your classroom?" Of the129 participants that answered the question, 51.1% (*n* = 66) answered "Yes" acknowledging that they have made instructional changes in their classrooms since receiving feedback during a post-observation conference, while 48.4% (*n* = 63) responded "No", indicating they had not made any instructional changes in their classrooms since receiving feedback during a post-observation conference (see Table 12).

Table 12. Breakdown of Responses to Survey Question One

Survey Question: "Thinking about the most recent post-observation feedback you received, since receiving this feedback, have you made any instructional changes in your classroom?"

Response	*Number of Respondents (n = 129)*	*Percent*
"Yes"	66	51.1%
"No"	63	48.4%

When reviewing the data set, for the respondents who answered question one as "No", some additional survey answers from participants seemed to contradict their original response of answering "No" to this question. In fact, the respondents indicated that they had made instructional changes based on their responses to other survey questions. For instance, question six asked the participants to identify what specific content feedback (10 OTES Domains) their evaluator focused on when providing

feedback. Each participant who answered "No" to question one was able to provide specific examples of content feedback that was provided to them by their evaluator during their post-observation conference. Question seven in the survey asked participants to rate to what extent were their instructional changes the result of the feedback they were provided during their post-observation conference from their principal. While analyzing the data, it was discovered that 23 survey participants had originally answered question one stating "No" as their answer, but answered question seven by stating that their instructional changes were to some extent the result of the feedback they were provided during their post-observation conference by their principal.

As a result of this analysis, another data column was added as a variable column to the data set. This column was used to change answers from "No" to "Yes" depending on how the participant answered the next several questions in their survey. If they did indicate that they had made some instructional changes based on the feedback they received from their principal during a post-observation conference, then their answer to question one was changed from "No" to "Yes".

It is important to note, that during this analysis of question one it was discovered that 50 participants did not complete all the questions in the survey so it was difficult to determine if their answer to question one was accurate. With the incomplete surveys removed from the data set, in regards to question one, this reduced the total number of completed surveys to 98 used for this question. Factoring in the removal of incomplete surveys for this question and adding the new variable that was constructed for question one the data set changed significantly. Of the 98 total survey responses, 80 teachers' answers were now "Yes" for this question acknowledging that they had made

instructional changes in their classrooms since receiving feedback during a post-observation conference. This represented 81.6% of the teachers answering this survey question and having completed the entire survey. However, 18 teachers answered "No" they had not made any instructional changes in their classrooms since receiving feedback during a post-observation conference. This represented 18.4% of the teachers answering this survey question and having completed the entire survey. This data is presented below in Table 13.

Table 13. Revised Data for Survey Question One

Survey Question: "Thinking about the most recent post-observation feedback you received, since receiving this feedback, have you made any instructional changes in your classroom?"		
Response	*Respondents (n = 98)*	*Percent*
"Yes"	80	81.6%
"No"	18	18.4%

By removing incomplete surveys from the data set and adding the additional variable column, this significantly changed the overall data originally submitted by survey respondents. Now 81.6% of teachers completing the survey were counted as having made instructional changes based on their principal's feedback instead of what was originally reported as 51.1%. Also, only 18.4% of teachers completing the survey were counted as not making instructional changes based on their principal's feedback instead of what was originally reported as 48.4%. These revised totals were used to calculate responses to subsequent questions about content and methods of feedback delivery below.

Survey question 2 asked participants, "Thinking about the instructional changes you made since your most recent post-observation feedback, in what areas (Teacher Evaluation Performance Rubric) do these changes relate?" Survey participants were able to check as many of the 10 Performance Rubric areas that applied to the instructional changes they made since their most recent post-observation conference. The breakdown of these responses among the 10 Performance Rubric areas are presented in Table 21.

Keeping in mind respondents were able to select more than one area of focus, the breakdown of responses among the 80 survey participants who reported making some type of change following post-conference feedback was as follows: Assessment Data, 22 (27.5%); Knowledge of Students, 7 (8.7%); Knowledge of Students, 20 (25%); Lesson Delivery, 34 (42.5%); Differentiation, 44 (55%); Resources, 19 (23.7%); Classroom Environment, 27 (33.7%); Assessment of Student Learning, 26 (32.5%); and Professional Responsibilities,14 (17.5%) (see Table 14).

Table 14. Breakdown of Responses to Survey Question Two

Survey Question: "Thinking about the instructional changes you made, since your most recent post-observation feedback, in what areas do these changes relate?		
10 Performance Rubric Areas	*Respondents (n = 80)*	*Percent*
Focus for Learning	13	16.2%
Assessment Data	22	27.5%
Prior Content Knowledge	7	8.7%
Knowledge of Students	20	25%
Lesson Delivery	34	42.5%
Differentiation	44	55%
Resources	19	23.7%
Classroom Environment	27	33.7%
Assessment of Student Learning	26	32.5%
Professional Responsibilities	14	17.5%

Of the 10 Performance Areas, Differentiation was the most frequently selected at 55% of respondents who reported making instructional changes. Lesson Delivery was the second most frequently selected domain at 42.5%, followed by Classroom Environment at 33.7%.

Overall, 43.7% of respondents who reported making instructional changes did so in one or more of these three Focus Areas (Differentiation, Lesson Delivery, and Classroom Environment). Prior Content Knowledge was the least frequently selected Domain at 8.7% (n = 7); Focus for Learning was the second least frequently selected Domain at 16.2% (n = 13); with Professional Responsibilities being the third least

frequently selected Domain at 17.5% (*n* = 14). Overall, 14.1% of the participating survey respondents identified these three Domain areas (Prior Content Knowledge, Focus for Learning, and Professional Responsibilities) as making the least frequent instructional changes out of the total 10 Domains.

Survey question 3 asked participants, "In thinking about the instructional changes you made, following your most recent post-observation feedback, how likely would you have been to make those changes regardless of the feedback you received?" Survey participants were able to select one of five possible choices. A total of 111 survey participants answered this question and 47 teachers (42.3%) selected that they were "Extremely Likely" to make instructional changes regardless of the feedback they received from their principal during a post-observation conference. Two teachers (1.8%) selected that they were "Extremely Unlikely" to make instructional changes without the feedback they received from their principal during a post-observation conference. Thirty-eight teachers (34.2%) reported that they would have been "Slightly Likely" to make changes in their instruction without the feedback of their principal. Seventeen teachers (15.3%) reported that they were "Neither Likely" or "Unlikely" to have made changes in their instruction without the feedback of their principal. Seven teachers (6.3%) reported that they were "Slightly Unlikely" to have made changes in their instruction regardless of the feedback they received from their principal. Table 15 presents the data analysis for responses to survey question three.

Table 15. Breakdown of Responses to Survey Question Three

Survey Question: "In thinking about the instructional changes you made, following your most recent post-observation feedback, how likely would you have been to make those changes regardless of the feedback you received?"

Selection Choices	*Respondents (n = 111)*	*Percent*
Extremely Likely	47	42.3%
Slightly Likely	38	34.2%
Neither Likely or Unlikely	17	15.3%
Slightly Unlikely	7	6.3%
Extremely Unlikely	2	1.8%

Survey question 4 asked participants, "Thinking about the most recent post-observation feedback you received, which of the 10 OTES Domains used in teacher evaluations did your evaluator focus on providing you feedback?" Survey participants were able to check as many of the 10 Performance Rubric areas that applied to the instructional content areas, which were a focus of feedback from their principal during their most recent post-observation conference.

Out of the 102 survey participants that answered this question, 28 (27.4%) of the participants selected that the primary feedback they received from their principal focused on the content area of Focus for Learning. The breakdown of these responses among the 10 Performance Rubric areas are presented in Table 16.

Keeping in mind respondents were able to select more than one area of focus, the breakdown of responses among the 102 survey participants who reported which Domain did their principal focus on providing them feedback was as follows: Assessment Data,

25 (24.5%); Prior Content Knowledge, 21 (20.6%); Knowledge of Students, 29 (28.4%); Lesson Delivery, 51 (50%); Differentiation, 41(40.1%); Resources, 25 (24.5%); Classroom Environment, 35 (34.3%); Assessment of Student Learning, 40 (39.2%); and Professional Responsibilities, 16 (15.7%) (see Table 16).

Table 16. Breakdown of Responses to Survey Question Four

Survey Question: "Thinking about the most recent post-observation feedback you received, which of the 10 OTES domains used in teacher evaluations did your evaluator focus on providing you feedback?"		
10 Performance Rubric Areas	*Respondents (n = 102)*	*Percent*
Focus for Learning	28	27.4%
Assessment Data	25	24.5%
Prior Content Knowledge	21	20.6%
Knowledge of Students	29	28.4%
Lesson Delivery	51	50%
Differentiation	41	40.1%
Resources	25	24.5%
Classroom Environment	35	34.3%
Assessment of Student Learning	40	39.2%
Professional Responsibilities	16	15.7%

Survey question 5 asked participants, "To what extent were the instructional changes you made, since your most recent post-observation feedback, related to the content of the feedback (10 OTES Domains) you were provided?" Survey participants were able to select one of five possible choices. A total of 99 survey participants

answered this question, and forty teachers (40.4%) answered that their instructional changes were "Somewhat" related to the content feedback they were provided by their principal. Twenty-four (24.2%) teachers answered that their instructional changes were influenced "A Fair Amount" by the content feedback they received from their principal. Eighteen (18.1%) survey participants reported that their instructional changes were influenced "Very Little" from the content feedback they received from their principal. Thirteen survey participants (13.1%) reported that their instructional changes had no influence "None" by the feedback they received from their building principal. Five survey participants (5.0%) reported that their instructional changes had a "Great Deal" of influence by the feedback they received from their building principal. Table 17 presents the data analysis for responses to survey question five.

Table 17. Breakdown of Responses to Survey Question Five

Survey Question: "To what extent were the instructional changes you made, since your most recent post-observation feedback, related to the content of the feedback (10 OTES Domains) you were provided?"

Selection Choices	*Respondents (n = 99)*	*Percent*
None	13	13.1%
Very Little	18	18.1%
Somewhat	40	40.4%
A Fair Amount	23	23.2%
A Great Deal	5	5.0%

Of the 99 teachers that answered this question, 68.6% (n = 68) indicated that the content of feedback they received from their principal had a "Somewhat" to "A Great Deal" of influence on the instructional changes they made in the classroom. Thirty-one

teachers (31.3%) said that the post-conference feedback they received had "Very Little" to "No" influence on the instructional changes they made in the classroom. When only including those teachers that selected the choice of "None" regarding the amount of influence the post-conference feedback had on making instructional changes, this reduces the percentage to 13.1% (n = 13) of teachers selecting this choice.

Survey question 6 asked participants, "Thinking about your most recent post-observation feedback, what form of communication did your evaluator use to deliver their feedback to you?" There were 99 participants that answered this survey question. The participants were able to choose one of four possible choices. The answer choices were as follows: "Verbal", "Written", "Both" and "Other".

The breakdown of teacher responses for how feedback content was delivered is as follows: "Verbally", 16 (16.1%); "Written", 7 (7%); "Both", 76 (76.7%); and "Other", 0 (0%). None of the teachers surveyed reported any "other" type of feedback delivery. Table 18 presents the data analysis for responses to survey question six.

Table 18. Breakdown of Responses to Survey Question Six

Survey Question: "Thinking about your most recent post-observation feedback, what form of communication did your evaluator use to deliver their feedback to you?"

Selection Choices	*Respondents (n = 99)*	*Percent*
Verbal	16	16.1%
Written	7	7%
Both	76	76.7%
Other	0	0%

When teacher survey responses are compared to principal interviews, 100% of principals reported that they provide some form of written feedback to teachers during post-observation conferences. Also, 83% of principals reported that they prefer to provide verbal feedback over any other form of feedback delivery to teachers.

Survey question 7 asked participants, "What impact did the method of communication used by your evaluator, to deliver post-observation feedback, have on the instructional changes you subsequently implemented in your classroom?" There were 99 responses to this survey question. The participants were able to choose one of five possible choices. The answer choices were as follows: "None", "Very Little", "Some", "A Fair Amount", and "A Great Deal".

The breakdown of survey feedback about the impact feedback delivery had on instructional changes is reported as follows: "None", 17 (17.1%); "Very Little", 20 (20.2%); "Some" 33 (33.3%); "A Fair Amount", 19 (19.1); and "Great Deal", 10 (10.1%). Table 19 presents the data analysis for responses to survey question seven.

Table 19. Breakdown of Responses to Survey Question Seven

Survey Question: "What impact did the method of communication used by your evaluator, to deliver post-observation feedback, have on the instructional changes you subsequently implemented in your classroom?"

Selection Choices	*Respondents (n = 99)*	*Percent*
None	17	17.1%
Very Little	20	20.2%
Some	33	33.3%
A Fair Amount	19	19.1%
A Great Deal	10	10.1%

Of the 99 teachers that answered this question, 62.5% (*n* = 62) indicated that the form of feedback delivery they received from their principal had "Some" to "A Great Deal" of influence on the instructional changes they made in the classroom. Only 37.3% (*n* = 37) of the respondents said that the delivery method of their post-conference feedback had "Very Little" to "No" influence on the instructional changes they made in the classroom. However, when only including those teachers that selected the choice of "None", regarding the amount of influence the post-conference feedback had on making instructional changes, this reduces the percentage to 17.1% (*n* = 17) of teachers selecting this choice.

Survey question 8 asked participants, "If the post-observation feedback you received focused on different content areas (10 OTES domains) do you think you would have made the same instructional changes in your classroom?" Of the 99 teachers in the study who answered this question, the breakdown of survey responses was as follows: 69 (69.7%) answered "Yes" that they believe they would have made the same instructional changes in their classroom even if they have received different feedback; 30 (30.1%) answered "No" that they believe they would not have made the same instructional changes in their classroom if they had received different feedback. The data for responses to survey question eight are presented in Table 20.

Table 20. Breakdown of Responses to Survey Question Eight

Survey Question: "If the post-observation feedback you received focused on different content areas (10 OTES domains) do you think you would have made the same instructional changes in your classroom?"		
Selection Choices	*Respondents (n = 99)*	*Percent*
"Yes"	69	69.7%
"No"	30	30.1%

Survey question 9 asked participants, "If the post-observation feedback had been provided to you in a different manner (verbal, written, both, other) do you think you would have made the same instructional changes in your classroom?" Of the 99 teachers in the study who answered this question, the breakdown of survey responses was as follows: 66 (66.6%) answered "Yes" that they believe they would have made the same instructional changes in their classroom even if the feedback they received had been delivered in a different manner; 33 (33.3%) answered "No" they believe they would not have made the same instructional changes in their classroom if the feedback they received had been delivered in a different manner. The data for responses to survey question 9 are presented in Table 21.

Table 21. Breakdown of Responses to Survey Question Nine

Survey Question: "If the post-observation feedback had been provided to you in a different manner (verbal, written, both, other) do you think you would have made the same instructional changes in your classroom?"		
Selection Choices	*Respondents (n = 99)*	*Percent*
"Yes"	66	66.6%
"No"	33	33.3%

Survey question 10 asked participants, "In thinking about the most recent post-observation feedback you received, were there any other things, besides what your evaluator said and how they said it, that influenced the instructional changes you made in your classroom?" Of the 98 teachers in the study who answered this question, the breakdown of survey responses was as follows: 60 (61.2%) answered "Yes" that they believe there were other factors that influenced their instructional changes outside of the content feedback and manner of delivery from their principal; 38 (38.4%) answered "No" that they believe there were no other factors that influenced their instructional changes beyond the content feedback and manner of delivery from their principal. The data for responses to survey question 10 are presented in Table 22.

Table 22. Breakdown of Responses to Survey Question Ten

Survey Question: "In thinking about the most recent post-observation feedback you received, were there any other things, besides what your evaluator said and how they said it, that influenced the instructional changes you made in your classroom?"		
Selection Choices	*Respondents (n = 98)*	*Percent*
"Yes"	60	61.2%
"No"	38	38.4%

Crosstabs Analysis One. Crosstabs was used to examine simultaneously teacher responses to the two questions: "In what Teacher Evaluation Performance content areas did you make instructional changes?" and "What form of communication were used to communicate your most recent performance feedback?" Pearson's Chi-Square was used to determine whether the crosstabs pattern that emerged was significant. The p-value (Chi

Square = 17.92 (d.f.27) p < 1.0 n.s.) did not rise to the level of significance because more responses were needed. Table 23 presents results of the Chi-square analysis.

Table 23. Chi Square Test Crosstabs Analysis One

Pearson Chi-Square	17.92
Degrees of Freedom	27
p-value	0.91 n.s.

Crosstabs data are presented in Table 24. Although the p-value indicated the pattern of responses in the data was not significant, these patterns will be described for descriptive purposes. None of the teachers surveyed reported making any instructional changes in the content areas of Assessment Data, Prior Content knowledge/sequence/connections, or Knowledge of Students when they did not receive written feedback in those areas.

Teachers reported that when they received "Both" verbal and written forms of feedback in these three content areas, they made instructional changes in the following areas: Assessment Data (n = 16); Prior Content knowledge/sequence/connections (n = 4); and Knowledge of Students (n = 15). Similarly, no teachers reported making changes in the areas of Resources and Classroom Environment when they did not receive any "Written" feedback from their principal. The Crosstabs data reflected non-significant evidence that when teachers did not receive written feedback in a content area they made little to no changes to those areas of their instruction. Despite the appearance of a pattern in these data, the results of the statistical analysis indicate the likelihood of making changes being influenced by the form in which feedback was provided was no different than chance.

The greatest amount of instructional change occurred in the content area of Differentiation. There were 36 teachers who reported making instructional changes related to this area when they received "Both" forms of feedback. However, when teachers did not receive any "Verbal" feedback related to Differentiation no teachers made instructional changes in that content area, and only 3 teachers reported that they made instructional changes in this area when they received only "Written" feedback. However, the numbers of teachers receiving feedback in only one format were two small to determine the statistical significance of these results. Thus, the appearance of a pattern could have occurred merely by chance.

As stated above, the content areas of Classroom Environment and Resources showed a non-significant pattern of responses indicating teachers did not make instructional changes if they did not receive written feedback in these content areas, although when receiving both forms of feedback some teachers reported making instructional changes in the following areas: Resources (n = 14); and Classroom Environment (n = 19). However, the non-significant result of Chi square analysis clarifies that this appearance of a pattern could have occurred merely by chance, and does not indicate teachers were any less likely to make instructional changes after receiving feedback in one format compared to those who received feedback in both formats.

Twenty-six teachers reported making instructional changes after receiving feedback on Lesson Delivery. Twenty-four of those teachers received their feedback in both formats, while 2 made the changes after receiving the feedback in written format.

The crosstabs data from this study reflect a pattern of more teachers making changes in a given OTES content area receiving that feedback in both forms of feedback

from their principal. This pattern of responses suggested that regardless of the format principals employ, teachers tended to make changes to the in all OTES content areas in which they received feedback. When reviewing the Crosstabs totals, at total of 102 teachers reported making changes after receiving feedback in a given OTES content area; 79 of those teachers did so after receiving "Both" types of feedback delivery, while 7 teachers reported making similar changes after only receiving feedback in "Written" format, and 16 teachers reported making instructional changes when receiving feedback only in a "Verbal" format. Across the board, teachers made changes in the areas on which they receive feedback, regardless of the form in which that feedback was provided.

Because the Chi-square analysis was not significant, these results support the conclusion that teachers were no more likely to make instructional changes if they received feedback in both written and verbal formats than if they received feedback in only one format of the other. The low numbers of teachers participating in this study who received feedback only in written (7) or verbal (16) format was too small to make the comparative analysis valid. Therefore, while results show teachers tended to make instructional changes after receiving feedback in any format, no conclusions can be drawn about whether teachers who receive feedback in both formats are any more likely to make instructional changes than those who receive feedback in only one format. The number of participants in these latter two categories was simply too small to drawn statistically valid conclusions from this analysis. The pattern of responses observed in all three comparison groups could have occurred merely by chance. Therefore, we must reject the hypothesis that the format in which principals provide feedback has any effect on whether teachers make instructional changes. According to this analysis, providing

feedback in only verbal or written format is just as effective in motivating teachers to implement instructional changes as providing feedback in both formats.

Table 24. Relationship Between Post-Conference Feedback Delivery Methods Cross Tabulation

What forms of Communication were used to communicate your most recent performance feedback?						
		Verbal	Written	Both	Other	Total
What Teacher Evaluation Performance Content areas did you make instructional changes?	Focus for Learning	2	1	8	0	11
	Assessment Data	3	0	16	0	19
	Prior Content Knowledge	2	0	4	0	6
	Knowledge of Students	3	0	15	0	18
	Lesson Delivery	5	2	24	0	31
	Differentiation	0	3	36	0	39
	Resources	2	0	14	0	16
	Classroom Environment	5	0	19	0	24
	Assessment of Student Learning	3	2	19	0	24
	Professional Responsibilities	0	1	9	0	10
	Total	16	7	76	0	99

Chi Square = 17.92 (d.f.27) $p < 1.0$ n.s.

Crosstabs Analysis Two. Crosstabs was also used to examine teacher responses simultaneously to two additional questions, "What was the focus of the most recent instructional changes you made since your most recent post-observation feedback?" and "What was the focus of the most recent post-observation feedback you received from the 10-OTES content areas?" Chi-Square was used to determine whether the crosstabs pattern that emerged was significant. The p-value did rise to the level of significance (Chi Square = 118.12 (d.f.81) $p < .001$). Table 25 reports the Chi-square data.

Table 25. Chi Square Test Crosstabs Analysis Two

Pearson Chi-Square	118.12
Degrees of Freedom	81
p-value	0.001

The Crosstabs data is presented in Table 26. The Crosstabs revealed that when teachers received feedback in a specific content area, they were more likely to make instructional changes in that content area. For instance, the largest area of instructional change was reported in Differentiation. Twenty-nine teachers reported making instructional changes in the OTES content area of Differentiation, after receiving feedback about their performance relating to that criteria, more than any other OTES area of change. In comparison, when teachers received feedback in other content areas, they reported making fewer changes relating to Differentiation, e.g. only 4 teachers reported making instructional changes in the content area of Differentiation after receiving feedback related to the OTES content area Resources. (See Table 23).

Another content area where teachers reported making a lot of instructional change was Lesson Delivery. There were 24 teachers who reported they made instructional changes related to Lesson Delivery after receiving feedback specific to that OTES content area. However, only 3 teachers reported making changes in Lesson Delivery when the feedback was focused on Professional Responsibilities. The Crosstabs pattern reveals an overall correspondence between the area in which feedback was provided and the area in which respondents reported making the most instructional changes. For instance, Assessment Data (n = 14); Lesson Delivery (n = 24); Differentiation (n = 29); Classroom Environment (n = 15); and Assessment of Student learning (n = 17). These

were reported by teachers as the top five content areas where they made instructional changes, and in each of these areas of change, teachers reported that they received specific feedback from their principal related to the content area.

Table 26. Relationship Between Post-Conference Feedback Delivery Methods Cross Tabulation

Focus of your most recent feedback you received – 10 OTES Content Areas												
Focus of most recent instructional changes you made since your most recent post-observation feedback?		Focus for Learning	Assessment Data	Prior Content Knowledge	Knowledge of Students	Lesson Delivery	Differentiation	Resources	Classroom Environment	Assessment of Student Learning	Professional Responsibilities	Total
	Focus for Learning	7	3	3	3	8	4	4	4	5	2	11
	Assessment Data	7	14	7	7	11	12	6	6	13	5	20
	Prior Content Knowledge	2	2	3	1	2	2	1	1	3	0	6
	Knowledge of Students	8	5	5	9	8	5	8	9	7	5	18
	Lesson Delivery	8	6	6	9	24	13	11	8	10	3	32
	Differentiation	12	12	10	12	18	29	10	10	19	8	40
	Resources	3	4	2	6	8	4	11	5	5	2	16
	Classroom Environment	11	5	8	7	14	5	7	15	8	5	24
	Assessment of Student Learning	8	8	7	9	13	12	7	8	17	3	24
	Professional Responsibilities	3	3	2	3	4	3	2	5	4	5	10
	Total	28	25	21	29	51	41	25	35	40	16	101

Chi Square = 118.12 (d.f.81) $p < .001$

Crosstabs Analysis Three. Crosstabs was used to examine simultaneously teachers' responses to two questions, "What content areas was the focus of feedback during your most recent post-observation conference?" and, "What form of communication was used to deliver your most recent performance feedback?" Crosstabs data determined if a pattern emerged that was significant. The p-value was significant at the $p < .10$ level, although results may not be accurate because of the projected cell values were so small. The p-value was reported at 0.09 (Chi Square = 37.07 (d.f.21) $p < .009$). Results of the Chi-square analysis are presented in table 27.

Table 27. Chi Square Test Crosstabs Analysis Three

Pearson Chi-Square	37.07
Degrees of Freedom	27
p-value	0.09

The data for Crosstabs data are presented in Table 28. The teacher surveys revealed that of the 10 OTES content areas, there were 6 content areas in which no teachers reported receiving only "Written" feedback: Focus of Learning, Assessment Data, Prior Content knowledge/sequence/connections, Resources, Assessment of Student Learning and Professional Responsibilities. Similarly, there was one area in which teachers reported after receiving only verbal feedback: Knowledge of students. Teachers reported that almost all feedback, about a specific content area, was received in "Both" forms of delivery. The four content areas where feedback was most frequently reported were: Lesson Delivery ($n = 43$); Assessment of Student Learning; ($n = 35$); Differentiation ($n = 31$); and Classroom Environment ($n = 31$). Teachers reported that the 4 content areas in which they received the least amount of feedback were: Professional Responsibilities ($n = 15$); Prior Content Knowledge ($n = 22$); Assessment

Data (n = 22) and Resources (n = 23). Overall, the Crosstabs analysis revealed a pattern of responses that suggests the majority of principals communicated their feedback most often in "Both" verbal and written formats, across all OTES content areas. But these data must be interpreted with caution because the number of study participants who received feedback in only verbal or written format was too small to adequately populate all cells in the Chi square analysis.

Table 28. Relationship Between Post-Conference Feedback Delivery Methods Cross Tabulation

What forms of Communication were used to communicate your most recent performance feedback?						
		Verbal	Written	Both	Other	Total
What content areas were the focus of feedback during the most recent post-observation conference?	Focus for Learning	2	0	26	0	28
	Assessment Data	2	0	22	0	24
	Prior Content Knowledge	1	0	22	0	24
	Knowledge of Students	0	1	28	0	29
	Lesson Delivery	5	2	43	0	50
	Differentiation	4	5	31	0	40
	Resources	2	0	23	0	25
	Classroom Environment	4	5	31	0	40
	Assessment of Student Learning	5	0	35	0	40
	Professional Responsibilities	1	0	15	0	16
	Total	16	7	76	0	99

Chi Square = 37.07 (d.f.21) $p < .009$

Comparative Analysis of Teachers' and Principals' Responses. Overall, teachers reported that the top three areas in which they made instructional changes were as follows: Differentiation, (n = 19) 23.7%; Classroom Environment, (n = 26) 32.5%; and Focus for Learning, (n = 13) 16.2%. In comparison, principals when interviewed

reported most often preferring to provide feedback in two of the same three domains: Lesson Delivery, (*n* = 5) 83%; Differentiation, (*n* = 3) 50%; and Classroom Environment; (*n* = 1) 16%. Table 29 presents the most common content areas teachers identified receiving feedback on from principals, and which content areas principals identified as selecting most often to deliver feedback.

Table 29. Teachers Top Areas of Instructional Change from Principal Feedback

Instructional Changes	*Teachers*	*Principals*
Differentiation	55%	50%
Lesson Delivery	42.5%	83%
Classroom Environment	33.7%	16%

The least selected Domain areas selected by teachers taking the survey were Prior Content Knowledge; (*n* = 7) 8.7%, Focus for Learning; (*n* = 14) 17.5% and Professional Responsibilities. Principals also reported on these Domains as follows: Prior Content Knowledge, (*n* = 0) 0%; Professional Responsibilities, (*n* = 0) 0; and Focus for Learning, 2 (33%) when selecting content feedback to teachers.

Teachers and Principals Responses. Teachers reported that the top three areas of instructional feedback that their principal focused on during post-observation conferences was as follows: Lesson Delivery, *(n* = 51) 16.4%; Differentiation, (*n* = 41) 13.1%; and Assessment of Student Learning (*n* = 40) 12.8%. When interviewed, principals reported the same OTES domains were the areas in which they most often preferred to provide teacher: Lesson Delivery, (*n* = 5) 83%; Differentiation, (*n* = 3) 50%; and Assessment of Student Learning, (*n* = 4) 66%. Table 30 reports the most commonly selected content areas by teachers in comparison with the principals' reporting of

preferred content areas to provide feedback on to teachers. These data suggest teachers are not receiving as much feedback as expected in the areas in which principals' report preferring to provide feedback. The basis for this discrepancy may warrant further investigation.

Table 30. Top Areas of Instructional Feedback to Teachers Reported by Principals vs. Teachers

Principals	*Teachers*	*Principals*
Differentiation	13.1%	50%
Lesson Delivery	16.4%	83%
Assessment of Student Learning	12.8%	66%

Summary

This exploratory study captured the perceptions of principals and teachers in six school districts located in southwestern Ohio. Data were collected using individual principal interviews and an online teacher survey. Participants were asked to describe their own experiences regarding the nature and manner of feedback they received in post-observation conferences, and whether they perceived any relationship between that feedback and changes subsequently implemented in classroom instruction.

An examination of principals' interview responses revealed four themes that appeared: time, choosing content feedback, manner of content delivery, and monitoring instructional changes. These themes were found throughout all principal interviews. Principals expressed that time is a large factor in being able to engage in the evaluation process with fidelity and manage all other aspects of running a high achieving school.

Principals shared that choosing content, when providing feedback to teachers, is often a differentiated process depending on many different factors (experience, concerns, goals, etc.). Principals revealed that certain mandates require that all feedback is delivered in some form of writing to a teacher, however, 83% of principals reported that they preferred feedback being delivered verbally. Principals expressed that the post-observation teacher conversation was an important component of the evaluation process. They expressed that monitoring instructional changes, based on post-observation feedback, can be challenging and each building principal discussed various systems they have designed to try and effectively monitor these changes. When asked how they go about selecting the content of feedback to be delivered during post-observation conferences all six principals interviewed stated it becomes a differentiated process based on many factors.

Descriptive statistics were generated for each question on the teacher survey. The descriptive statistics included percentages and analysis of survey responses by teachers. The conceptual framework of this mixed-methods study was to provide quantitative data that would provide information related to teachers' perceptions and experiences during post-observation conferences with their building principal. These data were reported and compared to interview responses of principals. An original population of 347 teachers were invited to participate in the online survey. However, 148 teachers began the survey and a sample of 98 teachers completed all 12 of the survey questions. Survey data were analyzed and reported in comparison to the information obtained from principal interviews.

Teachers identified that the content of feedback provided by their principal had a favorable impact on the instructional changes they made in their classroom. The majority of teachers reported that instructional changes followed their post-observation conference with their principal. In addition, teachers reported that the method of delivery did not have significant bearing on the changes that occurred in their classroom. The Chi square analysis of the crosstabs data also found there to be a significant relationship between the content of principal feedback and the areas in which instructional changes were made, at least when feedback was provided in both written and verbal format. Results were inconclusive with respect to changes made following feedback provided in only verbal or written format, as too few study participants reported receiving feedback in only one modality. Additionally, Chi square analysis of the content and form in which teachers reported receiving feedback was found to be consistent with principals' reporting they favor providing instructional feedback in both verbal and written formats across all OTES content areas. The number of teachers who reported receiving feedback in only one format was too small to draw valid conclusions regarding the effectiveness of principals using these methods independently.

CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATION AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the perceptions and behavior of public high school teachers and principals who participate in classroom observations and post-observation conferences. This study sought to explore the perceptions teachers and principals have about certain types of post-observation feedback delivery (verbal, written, both, or other) and the content of feedback (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric) with respect to impacting instructional practices in the classroom. This chapter will interpret the data collected, analyzed and presented in this study as they relate to each of these research questions, the implications of these finds for classroom teachers/principals, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future study.

Interpretations of Study Findings

Teachers:

Research Question 1. What are the content areas in which Hamilton County teachers report receiving feedback during post-observation evaluation conferences, viewed through the lens of the Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric?

When looking at the combined interview and survey data, there were some clear content areas that teachers reported receiving feedback from their principal.

Teachers reported that the top three most common areas of feedback they received were as follows: Lesson Delivery, (n = 51) 50%; Differentiation (n = 41) 40.1%; and Assessment of Student Learning (n = 40) 39.2%. In comparison, when principals were interviewed they reported that the three most common areas of feedback they selected

were the following: Lesson Delivery, (n = 5) 83%; Differentiation, (n = 3) 50%; and Assessment of Student Learning, (n = 4) 66%. Chi-square analysis confirmed that the three content areas where feedback was most frequently reported were: Lesson Delivery (n = 43); Assessment of Student Learning; (n = 35); and Differentiation (n = 31). This is important because the study found there to be a significant relationship between the content of principal feedback and the areas in which instructional changes were made.

Based on the data from this study, evidence suggests that between teachers and principals there is clear alignment regarding the most common areas in which content areas teachers report receiving feedback and what content areas principals identify in selecting feedback to deliver. This suggests that principals can clearly articulate what content areas they would like teachers to focus on when they are providing them feedback.

Conclusion: The findings of the survey and the principal interviews supported that teachers and principals both identified the same top three content areas that were most commonly discussed during post-observation conferences. These three content areas were found to be most frequently used for feedback purposes.

Research Question 2. What are the forms of communication Hamilton County teachers report their evaluators use to provide post-observation feedback? When considering the manner of feedback delivery during a post-observation conference, teachers reported that the most common form of feedback they received was a combination of both written and verbal delivery by building principals.

Principals were asked about their preferred manner of feedback delivery 83% (n = 5) responded that verbal feedback was their most preferred method of delivery. Due to

the formal process of the OTES Teacher Evaluation model, delivering feedback in writing is a mandatory requirement that principals must follow in each district. Therefore, 100% of principals reported that feedback was delivered in both written and verbal format when meeting with teachers. Some principals shared that the "paperwork" is often daunting and will sometimes be delivered after the post-observation conference. As P6 shared, during the principal interview, "Although I prefer delivering feedback verbally, I do think it is also important that teachers receive something in writing. It helps them take the process more seriously."

Based on the data from this study, evidence suggests that principals who were interviewed for this study reported using both written and verbal feedback as their delivery method of communication during a post-observation conference. However, this created a discrepancy between what was reported by principals and teacher. Only 76.7% (n = 76) teachers reported to receiving both verbal and written feedback during their post-observation conference meetings with principals. Whereas 16.1% (n = 16) of teachers reported receiving only verbal feedback, and 7% (n = 7) of teachers indicated that they had only received feedback through writing, and 0% (n = 0) did not report any other form of communication. While there is a discrepancy between the quantitative survey results and the qualitative results of the principal interviews, the latter is not a representative sample. Thus, results of the qualitative analysis are not statistically meaningful and cannot be extrapolated to the entire population of principals in participating schools.

The Chi square analysis of the crosstabs data found a significant relationship between the content area in which teachers made instructional changes after receiving feedback. This was true regardless of how feedback was provided. The crosstabs data

suggested that teachers reported making the most instructional changes in the OTES content area in which they received feedback from their principal. This pattern of responses indicated that in all areas, regardless of how feedback was provided, the most change occurred in the content areas principals focused their feedback.

The majority of teachers (n = 76) in the study reported receiving feedback in "Both" forms, while only 7 teachers reported receiving feedback exclusively in a "Written" format, and 16 teachers reported receiving feedback solely in a "Verbal" format. All teachers, regardless of the format in which they received feedback reported making instructional changes most often in the areas in which their principals provided feedback. Thus, while the content of feedback was found to be predictive of what instructional changes teachers made, this effect was evident regardless of the form of feedback delivery. However, due to the low number of teachers who reported receiving feedback in only written or verbal format, these findings should be interpreted with caution until confirmed with a larger sample.

Conclusion: The data collected found that while the vast majority of principals prefer to provide feedback in verbal format, both principals and teachers report that in practice feedback is almost always delivered in both verbal and written format, as a matter of compliance with OTES guidelines. In addition, there is some evidence to suggest the principals' preference for verbal feedback may reflect the amount of time required to provide written feedback. All principals interviewed in the non-representative sample reported that they deliver feedback in both written and verbal formats during post-observation conferences out of compliance with the guidelines of OTES. However, it was confirmed through

teacher surveys that feedback was not always delivered in both formats. A more representative estimate of the frequency of providing feedback in both formats was derived from the survey in which 23.1% of teachers who responded indicated that their feedback was delivered to them either verbally or in writing but not in both formats

Research Question 3. What instructional changes do Hamilton County Teachers report implementing, following post-observation evaluation conferences? Based on the data from this study, evidence indicates that 81.6% (*n* = 80) of teachers who answered the survey question confirmed that they did make instructional changes after having a post-observation evaluation conference. This data strongly supports that teachers are making instructional changes in their classroom after meeting with their principal.

Of the 10 OTES Content Areas, Differentiation was the most frequently identified by 55% (*n* = 44) of respondents who reported making instructional changes. Lesson Delivery was the second most frequently selected domain at 42.5% (*n* = 34), followed by Classroom Environment at 33.7% (*n* = 27). Based on the data, both Differentiation and Lesson Delivery were identified as being two of the three most common content areas that teachers received feedback on from their principals. However, it was surprising to see teachers identify Classroom Environment as being the third highest content area to make instructional changes. When compared to the responses of principals, only 17% (*n* = 1) of principals identified this content area as an area selected for feedback to teachers. These data indicate teachers are making a disproportionate number of changes related to the classroom environment relative to the emphasis placed on the OTES content area in their principals' feedback. The data also suggests, that 32.5% (*n* = 26) reported making

instructional changes in the content area of Assessment of Student Learning. This aligns with the responses of principals, who identified this as one of their top three content areas selected for feedback.

Overall, 46.4% of respondents who reported making instructional changes did so in one or more of these three OTES Areas (Differentiation, Lesson Delivery, and Classroom Environment). Prior Content Knowledge was the least frequently selected Domain at 8.7% (n = 7); Focus for Learning was the second least frequently selected Domain at 16.2% (n = 13); with Professional Responsibilities being the third least frequently selected Domain at 17.5% (n =14). Overall, 15% of the participating survey respondents identified these three Domain areas (Prior Content Knowledge, Focus for Learning, and Professional Responsibilities) as making them the least frequent areas for making instructional changes out of the total 10 Domains.

Chi-Square analysis was used to determine whether the crosstabs pattern that emerged was significant when trying to understand what instructional changes teachers made in comparison to the post-conference content feedback they received. The Crosstabs data revealed that when teachers received feedback in a specific content area, they were more likely to make instructional changes in that content area. For instance, the largest area of instructional change was reported in Differentiation. Twenty-nine teachers reported making instructional changes in the OTES content area of Differentiation, after receiving specific feedback about their performance relating to that criteria. When teachers reported receiving feedback in other OTES Content Areas only 4 teachers made instructional changes in Differentiation. The data presents, in relation to

the research question, that the instructional changes teachers make are closely tied to the content feedback they receive from their principal.

Conclusion: Based on the data from this study, evidence suggests that teachers responded (81.6%) that they did make instructional changes in their classrooms after having a post-observation conference. Differentiation, Lesson Delivery, and Classroom Environment were identified as content areas that teachers indicated making the most changes. The purpose of this research question was to understand if teachers are making changes based on post-conference feedback. The Crosstabs pattern reveals an overall correspondence between the area in which feedback was provided and the area in which respondents reported making the most instructional changes.

Research Question 4. In the opinion of Hamilton County Teachers, to what extent does the content of feedback provided during post-observation evaluation conferences influence instructional changes they subsequently implemented in their classrooms?

The survey data demonstrated that many teachers do implement changes in their classroom based on the type of content feedback they receive from their principals. The Chi square analysis of the crosstabs data presented that a significant relationship exists between the type of content feedback that teachers receive and the instructional changes they made in the classroom. Non-parametric Chi square analysis of survey data did not show a weak but significant pattern of correspondence between the content area of feedback and the areas of instruction targeted for change. For instance, 68.6% (n = 68) of teachers surveyed fell somewhere between "Somewhat" and "A Fair Amount" regarding the impact the content of feedback delivery had on their instructional changes. The data

also presented that 42.3% (*n* = 42) of teachers reported that it was "Extremely Likely" that they would have made the instructional changes in their classroom regardless of the content they had received.

Conclusion: The pattern of responses indicated that in all areas, the most change occurred when feedback was provided around specific content areas for teachers. Teachers (68.6%) (n = 68) reported that the content feedback they received from their principal was an important component in making instructional changes, but the data also revealed that 42.3% (n = 47) of teachers reported that it was "Extremely Likely" that they would have made the instructional changes in their classroom regardless of the content they had received. This does raise an additional question, asking how would 42.3% of teachers know what instructional changes to make if they had not received specific content feedback about their instruction? The Crosstabs pattern did reveal an overall correspondence between the area in which feedback was provided and the area in which respondents reported making the most instructional changes. Teachers reported that the top five content areas where they made instructional changes, and in each of these areas they reported that they received specific feedback from their principal related to the content area.

Research Question 5. In the opinion of Hamilton County Teachers, to what extent does the method of communicating post-observation feedback (verbal, written, both or other) during evaluation conferences influence the instructional changes they subsequently implement in their classrooms?

Overall, slightly more than half of teachers 62.5% (*n* = 62) surveyed, indicated that how feedback was delivered from their principal influenced the instructional changes they made in their classrooms. However, 37.3% (*n* = 37) of the teachers surveyed reported that how feedback was delivered to them had "Very Little" to "No" influence on the instructional changes they made in the classroom. These data suggest that subjectively a little less than two-thirds of teachers perceive the format of feedback as having a significant impact on whether they implement instructional changes based on principal feedback.

Overall, 76.7% (*n* = 76) of teachers reported that the feedback delivery they received from their principal was "Both" verbal and written. Of the 76.7% of teachers receiving this manner of feedback delivery, 62.5% (*n* = 62) reported that this manner of feedback delivery had some impact on making instructional changes in their classrooms. In comparison, 16.1% (*n* = 16) teachers reported that the manner of feedback was delivered verbally to them by their principal. As a result, 50% (*n* = 8) of those teachers reported that this had "None" to "Very Little" impact on the instructional changes they made in the classroom, and the other 50% (*n* = 8) reported that this method of feedback delivery had "Some" to "A Fair Amount" of impact in the instructional changes they made. Finally, 7% (*n* = 7) of teachers reported only receiving written feedback from their principal. As a result, 57% (*n* = 4) of those teachers reported making "None" or "Very Little" instructional changes based on the how the feedback was delivered, and 28.4% (*n* = 2) of the group reported, "A Fair Amount" or "A Great Deal" of instructional changes based on the written feedback they received.

It appears, based on the data, that slightly more than half of teachers who reported receiving feedback from their principals indicated that the format of that feedback had any impact on the instructional changes they subsequently implemented.

Conclusion: The survey data suggest one-half to two-thirds of teachers have a subjective sense that the form of feedback makes a difference in whether they implement changes in their instruction related to that feedback. However, the vast majority of teachers, 76.7% (n = 76), report receiving feedback in both written and verbal format. It appears, from the data, that how feedback is delivered to teachers has an impact on the instructional changes they implement in their classrooms. Principals reported that they are required to provide "Both" written and verbal feedback to teachers. Thus, the vast majority of teachers who responded to this survey research reported receiving feedback in both formats (76.7%, n = 76). This research data suggests that the manner of feedback as at best has a moderate subjective impact on teachers' likelihood of making instructional changes, but no significant relationship was found to objectively support that conclusions.

Research Question 6: In the opinion of teachers in Hamilton County, does the method of communicating post-observation feedback (verbal, written, both or other) differentially influence their perception of the content of feedback they were provided?

Teacher survey data indicated that two-thirds of the teachers surveyed believed that had the content feedback been delivered differently by their principal they would have still implemented the same instructional changes they originally made. When reviewing the data, it is important to note that of those 66.6% of teachers reporting that

they would have made the same instructional decisions, 33.3% (*n* = 33) of that data set reported that the manner of feedback delivery provided by their principal had "None" or "Very Little" impact on the instructional changes they made in their classrooms. When removing those teachers, who responded that the manner of feedback delivery had very little impact on their instructional decisions, this leaves one-third (33.3%) of the teachers answering "Yes" they would have made the same changes and 33.3% (*n* = 33) stating "No" they believe they would not have made the same instructional decisions if the feedback delivery method would have been different.

> *Conclusion: Based on the data collected for this research question, it revealed that if how content feedback was delivered to teachers was different it would impact the instructional decisions of some teachers. The data set revealed that the teachers' responses were divided into thirds. One-third saying that "Yes" they believe that they would have made the same instructional decisions regardless of how the content feedback was delivered to them. The second third responded "No" they believe that they would have made different instructional decisions if their content feedback was delivered differently. Finally, the last third shared in other survey questions that the manner of their principal's feedback delivery had very little if any impact on the instructional changes they made in their classrooms. Based on this data for the research question, it suggests that the manner of feedback delivery does not have as much impact on changing instructional decisions as to the content of feedback given to teachers.*

Principals

Research Question 7: What factors do principals in Hamilton County school districts report considering in deciding how to deliver post-observation feedback to teachers (verbal, written, both, or other)? During the principal interviews, principals were asked to comment on the factors they consider when deciding how to deliver post-observation feedback to a teacher.

Over the course of the interviews it was apparent that how feedback is delivered to teachers involves a lot of decision making but is rooted in relationships between principals and teachers. Due to compliance issues, all principals reported that they are required to provide "Both" verbal and written feedback delivery to teachers. However, through this research study, only 76.7% (n = 76) of teachers reported receiving "Both" types of communication (verbal and written) during their post-observation conference.

Maintaining positive relationships with teachers was an important overarching theme principals identified as influencing how they delivered teacher feedback. All six principals reflected on the importance of having strong, positive relationships with their staff. Principals believed that how feedback is delivered to a staff member can not only impact the relationship but how the teacher interprets content feedback that they are trying to deliver. The quantitative data does not necessarily support this finding. As a result of surveying teachers, 66.6% (n = 66) of teachers reported that the manner of feedback delivery had little or no impact on their instructional decisions. This suggests that principals may spend a disproportionate amount of time concerned with how the feedback will be received if not delivered correctly. Teacher survey data seems to suggest that how feedback was delivered to them did not have a large impact.

Reviewing the qualitative data for the study, some decision-making questions emerged about the process principals utilize when trying to decide how to deliver feedback to teachers (see Table 31).

Table 31. Factors Principals Reported Influencing Decisions about Feedback Delivery

Factors Identified When Choosing Feedback Delivery
What type of relationship does the principal have with this teacher?
Does the principal have any performance concerns with the teacher?
What compliance issues are mandated for feedback delivery by the State of Ohio?
Have teachers developed a strong level of trust in the building principal?
Is this teacher open to receiving constructive feedback?
Do personnel decisions need to made for a reduction in teaching?
How long has the principal been working in the school?
What is the preferred preference for feedback delivery by the principal?
What phase of their career is the teacher currently operating in (i.e. veteran, newly hired, etc.)?

Principals acknowledged that feedback delivery is often differentiated between staff members based on many of the factors listed in Table 38. Principals reported a great deal of thought goes into their decisions regarding how feedback will be delivered to teachers, as this impacts the "climate" of the post-observation conference.

Principals identified that they often feel the time constraints, an additional theme expressed by principals, of balancing the demands of effectively running a building while meeting the important requirements of delivering feedback to teachers about their instruction. Principals expressed that they spend countless hours meeting with teachers

and delivering feedback each year. As P6 shared about their evaluation caseload, "I have 45+ teachers to evaluate each year so feedback needs to be delivered in precise terms and targeted to help teachers grow". Overall, the manner of feedback delivery most preferred by 83% (n = 5) of principals is "Verbal" feedback. Principals reported that written feedback not only takes more time to craft but can be misinterpreted by teachers when it is delivered. Principals surveyed in these schools believed that the purpose of post-conference meetings is to help teachers grow and having meaningful verbal conversations about classroom instruction was the most important method in achieving this goal.

Conclusion: Principals spend countless hours crafting feedback and delivering feedback to teachers. The teacher/principal relationship was identified as being the most important component that needed to be preserved by principals when considering feedback delivery. Principals take into account many factors, based on what they know about the teacher (years of experience, previous evaluations, relationship with the staff member) when deciding how to deliver feedback. Principals viewed their role as providing more of a "coaching model" to teachers and trying to verbally guide the conversation by asking questions that promote conversation between the principal and the teacher. Time was a prominent theme principals discussed as related to the evaluation process. Written feedback was described as more time-consuming than verbal feedback and could be misinterpreted by teachers if delivered in isolation. Principals were clear that they overwhelmingly preferred delivering feedback verbally to teachers and believed that it had a greater impact on the instructional changes teachers would make in the classroom.

Research Question 8: What factors do principals in Hamilton County school districts report considering in deciding the content of post-observation feedback to deliver to teachers (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric)?

Principals were asked, during interviews, to comment on the factors they considered when selecting content feedback for a post-observation conference with a teacher. During qualitative interviews, all six principals stated that selecting content is a differentiated process based on many factors regarding the teacher. Again, a subset of themes was discovered that were similar in driving the decision-making process when selecting the manner of delivery.

These factors became apparent as decision-making guidelines used by principals in crafting/selecting their content feedback for teachers.

Table 32. Factors Principals Consider in Choosing Content for Post-Observation Feedback

How long has the teacher been teaching in our school?
What goals has the teacher developed professionally to focus on during the school year?
What are the instructional goals for the building?
Is there anything that the teacher wants the principal to focus on while in their classroom?
What are the characteristics of highly effective teaching?
How much teaching experience does the teacher have?
Have there been any deficiency concerns about the classroom teacher's performance?
What are the instructional goals for the district?
What content areas will provide "the biggest bang for your buck?"

Table 32 identifies some common questions, identified by principals, they consider when selecting what content to deliver to teachers during post-observation feedback.

These guiding questions were taken into account by principals along with other influencing factors such as years of experience, past observation performance, and personal goals when selecting what content to select for a post-observation conference.

Each of the schools that participated in this research study acknowledged that overall they have a veteran teaching staff in their buildings with many years of experience. Many of the principals believed that this was a sign of a healthy school culture because teachers were choosing to stay in their schools for their careers without leaving to look for employment at other schools. As a result, principals reported that this helped them in selecting feedback because they reported that it takes time to get to know the relative strengths and areas of improvement for individual teachers. This was identified as an important influence when selecting feedback for their teachers. Principals believed that once they had spent substantial time in a teacher's classroom, spending time with a teacher, and had multiple opportunities to observe their classroom instruction then a level of professional trust was developed. This enabled the teacher and the principal to enter into more of a "coaching" model and align feedback and professional development opportunities that were better connected to the needs of the individual teacher.

Time:

An overarching theme among all principals interviewed is that building principals spend a tremendous amount of time conducting classroom observations and post-observation conferences, which can make it difficult to manage all other aspects of their

jobs. All six principals reported this is primarily the result of having to comply with the evaluation requirements implemented in the Ohio Evaluation System for teachers. Principals, who participated in this research project, have complex, demanding jobs and they were identified for this study because their schools are high achieving based on the Ohio Department of Education Report Card. Yet, each of the six principals acknowledged how consuming the evaluation process is when done with fidelity in addition to all the demanding tasks of leading a building. Principals reported that although selecting content feedback to teachers is important, but their time would be better spent working with either new teachers or struggling teachers that needed additional coaching due to concerns with their classroom instruction. Therefore, principals shared that if there are no concerns with a teacher then selecting feedback can often feel disjointed and a matter of compliance for completing the evaluation process. The phrase "Going through the motions" was used by two principals when describing this process.

Each of the principals interviewed identified that visiting classrooms and being the "instructional leader" of the building were their most important tasks, but the amount of paperwork, meetings, and compliance often make their position feel out-of-balance considering everything that needs to be accomplished each day when leading a school. Principals have demanding jobs and they often find that it is difficult to provide the amount of feedback necessary to help every teacher grow. Therefore, these principals recognized that when selecting content feedback, it often needs to be tied to the goals of the building so that it can become more universal for teachers rather than individualized. Each principal acknowledged that they have 2-3 content areas that they routinely focus

on with their teachers during post-observations. These are content areas that are directly tied to the focus of the building or what principals believe can have the greatest return of investment on students. Overall, principals agreed that selecting content feedback is a complex, and sometimes subjective process, this often depends on the relationships, experience, or focus of the building.

Conclusion: Until recently, teachers were deemed qualified and were compensated, solely according to academic credentials and years of experience. However, with new teacher evaluation legislation this has changed. Principals are well aware of this and they work hard to create schools where excellent teachers are hired and developed. Principals acknowledged that time was a major limiting factor in what they were able to accomplish in their buildings. Due to the number of requirements that OTES places on building principals, this becomes a significant factor when selecting feedback for teachers. Principals shared that they have to be efficient. Many principals noted that if they could choose, they would spend more of their time selecting feedback to deliver to either new teachers or teachers they have instructional concerns about. Also, when selecting feedback, principals recognize that there are many additional factors, outside of classroom instruction, that often impacts what content they select. Again, years of experience and past observation performance come into play when selecting content.

Research Question 9: To what extent do principals report they monitor instructional changes teachers implement following post-observation evaluation conferences?

The ultimate goal of principal feedback is to help teachers to continue to grow and implement new changes in their classroom instruction. P1 stated, "I tell this to teachers that I evaluate, and it doesn't matter what school I have been in, the goal is for them to be better at their craft," through the evaluation process. Principals spend countless hours meeting with teachers, crafting feedback content, and delivering feedback to teachers. However, principals reported that monitoring the instructional changes that teachers implement, following a post-observation conference, can be challenging.

Each principal interviewed shared that they have developed different strategies for monitoring the instructional changes in the classroom. Although this is difficult, the consensus from the principals in the study was that being inside classrooms on a regular basis is critical to monitoring change. This process occurs through classroom walkthroughs and formal evaluations. As P3 acknowledged, that this also depends on the needs of the students in the school. If a school is not dealing with high rates of student discipline issues, then principals are more available to be instructional leaders and spend more time inside classrooms monitoring change.

Over 76.6% (n = 76) of teachers reported that they had made instructional changes based on the feedback they received. Principals reported that they have to trust that these changes are being implemented with fidelity because monitoring all of the changes that teachers do daily is impossible. Yet, 24.4% (*n* = 24) of teachers reported that they did not make any instructional changes in their classrooms following the feedback they received from their principal. This should be a concern to principals. If the goal of the evaluation process is to help teachers to continue to grow and implement new changes then this is an area that was found to be inconsistent. Yet, having a

consistent process for monitoring if teachers are making the instructional changes they have been asked to do seems to be very limited.

Principals reported that because evaluations are announced and planned this does not give an authentic representation of what occurs on a day-to-day basis in the teacher's classroom. As a result, unannounced walkthroughs or visiting classrooms each day provide a more authentic snapshot of what occurs on a day-to-day basis. However, when principals were asked about follow up conversations in regards to monitoring instructional changes, the responses seem to indicate that this is occurring very infrequently and principals did not have a systematic answer on how to address this. The lack of consistent monitoring of instructional changes can lead to a breakdown of the evaluation process and real instructional change occurring in a school.

> *Conclusion: 66.6% (n = 4) of the principals reported that there is very little time for any follow-up conversations about instructional changes and that professionalism and efficacy come into play between teachers and principals. P3 reported that most of the monitoring occurs through written feedback to reinforce what is observed in the classroom. "We will do a quick pop-in, maybe for a few minutes, 10 minutes, and then we are leaving 30-second feedback, something that can be digested in 30 seconds." Overall, monitoring instructional change is not as systematic as the observation process. This is due, in part, to the fact that it is not a component of the observation process and it is the responsibility of schools to establish their own systems for monitoring instruction.*

Implications

In the mid-1980s, the level of concern for the future of our country's public schools had risen to new heights. Lawmakers and policy experts began working together with the goal of improving the teaching and learning that occurs in schools across the country through the development of high stakes testing and rigorous teacher evaluation systems. This research study set out to identify, explore, and describe the perceptions and behaviors of public high school teachers and principals who participate in classroom observations and conduct post-observation conferences. The study sought to explore the perceptions teachers and principals have about certain types of post-observation feedback delivery (verbal, written, both, or other) and the content of feedback (Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric) with respect to impacting instructional practices in the classroom. Throughout the collection of data, four overarching themes emerged: time, selecting content feedback, delivering content feedback, and monitoring instructional changes in the classroom. This resulted in nine conclusions drawn from the research questions that guided this study.

In 2009, teacher evaluation systems were one of the most politically charged topics in the nation (Pennington & Mead, 2016). Education reform was on the horizon, and multiple factors came into play for policymakers to try and implement new accountability measures for teachers and school districts with the designed purpose to increase student achievement. These new policies were focused on improving classroom instructions and student achievement. Much of the efforts to overhaul the evaluation system are driven by research which supports that teachers have a large effect on student learning and "that existing evaluation systems were perfunctory and narrowly focused on

compliance" (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016, p. 712).

The contribution this study provides to this body of work is that it gives insight into the perceived experiences that teachers and principals experience in high achieving high schools when delivering or receiving post-observation feedback. Although this study is relatively small, it does provide insight into the amount of time, energy and effort teachers and principals spend on providing feedback that results in different practices, opinions, beliefs, delivery, and feedback. The study also reports on significant and non-significant data that pertain to the research questions of the study.

Traditionally, classrooms have been insulated environments from external observations or interference. Principals were charged with the task of managing and running a building, while teachers were hired with the responsibility of teaching students. Today's schools vaguely resemble the schools and classrooms of the past. Both principals and teachers are being asked to do more each year with the diverse needs of students and limited funding while continuing to increase their achievement levels year in and out. What also complicates this process is that all schools are held to the same performance standards regardless of their community or student demographics.

This research study shed light on four themes identified through the principal interviews. The themes were as follows: Time, Selecting Content Feedback, Delivering Content Feedback, and Monitoring Instructional Changes. These themes became apparent during the study, through interviewing principals. Teachers and principals both agreed on what were the most common forms of content feedback that was selected and delivered to teachers. The study also found about one-half to two-thirds of faculty reported a subjective sense that how feedback was provided influenced the likelihood of

implementing instructional changes. However, quantitative analysis found no statistically significant relationship between the form of feedback and the likelihood of teachers actually making instructional changes. However, the data supported that the majority of teachers are making instructional changes following post-observation conferences. When surveyed, 81.6% (n = 80) of teachers responded that following a post-observation conference they did make some instructional changes in their classrooms and 66.6% (n = 66) of these instructional changes were aligned with the content of feedback teachers received. Slightly fewer than two-thirds of teachers reported (62.5%) that the changes they made in their classrooms were the result of the content of feedback they received from their principal.

Finally, principals shared that time is a big factor they face each day in completing all of the demanding requirements of their jobs. Monitoring ongoing changes in the classroom is an area that is not formalized by the evaluation process. Principals identified that they need to continue to develop systems to monitor the instructional changes that are taking place in the classrooms throughout their schools.

Limitations of the Study

According to Price and Murnan (2004), a limitation of a study is "the systematic bias that the researcher did not or could not control and which could inappropriately affect the results" (p. 66). The study had the following limitations:

This study was conducted on a small sample size of teachers and principals. There was a total population of 337 teachers asked to participate in the survey and a total of six principal interviews conducted for the study. The number of principals was too small to be representative of the target population. In both instances, the small sample

size 1) made it difficult for analyses to gain statistical significance, and 2) limits the generalizability of findings. A larger sample size is necessary to find a representative distribution of the teachers and principals that is more generalizable to the population.

Survey research can be problematic when applying the same instrument across all types of teachers because there is the underlying assumption that the impact of perceived leader (i.e. principal) behaviors operate in the same fashion across varying samples. According to Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), research studies on leadership often make the mistake of assuming that all employees require leadership and that leadership impacts every employee equally, there are still several other assumptions made about using teachers as the source of information in a leadership study. First, it is assumed that the teacher witnessed all of the leadership behaviors they are being asked about. However, recent research suggests that some leadership activities are not likely witnessed by a subordinate (i.e., meetings with staff, cognitively-based actions, strategic planning, district leadership meetings). Even when teachers witness some of those behaviors, it is assumed that the ratings provided are always accurate estimates of the leader's actions. Therefore, the study assumes that participants would answer survey questions honestly; however, a limitation of the study is that leadership impacts individuals differently and is often differentiated, yet that is not being accounted for in this study.

The sample size included teacher and principal participants from high achieving schools located in southwest Ohio. These schools were identified as having high levels of student achievement based on annual Ohio state testing value-added scores. Therefore, generalizability is a limitation of the study given the small sample size, and the population is limited to one city in the United States and one county within a state. As a

result, there would need to be further research that includes a larger sample size that is representative of the population of the United States and the diversity of public schools.

The researcher also brings his or her own biases into a study based on their past experiences. Within all qualitative research, the researcher brings along their values and assumptions that can influence the findings of the study and their interpretation of the collected data. As stated previously, qualitative research is looking through a specific lens. Their perspectives inform the researchers' and participants' interpretations. Furthermore, it is essential to recognize that in a qualitative study the researcher will form their interpretation of the findings, but it is not the only possible interpretation. However, the research findings will be viewed as a possible framework that may inform future research interpretations.

Empiricism is a systematic approach that adheres to the concept that virtually all knowledge is based on experience (Whitley and Kite, 2013). Empiricism is a vital element in science, but empirical observations must be conducted under controlled conditions, and systematic strategies should be used to minimize researcher bias and to maximize objectivity. In leadership and research, it is critical to assess different ideas or potential variables empirically. By engaging in pure empiricism, this allows the leader to make choices based on a systematic, scientific process rather than their own bias, perceptions, or subjectivity. If researchers fail to use relevant comparison or control groups, they may be drawing inappropriate conclusions concerning the outcomes of the study. Therefore, future research must look to empirically test the findings of this study while utilizing control measures to increase the validity of the study.

When utilizing a survey, is the survey measuring what it was designed to

measure? Is it a valid measurement? Surveys can be valuable collectors of information, but additional research must focus on using an instrument that has greater validity and reliability data associated with it.

The study is trying to understand if teachers change their classroom instructional practices based on post-conference feedback delivery or content. However, a limitation of the study is that it could not eliminate if other variables impact the behavioral changes exhibited or reported inside a teacher's classroom.

There is limited research on this particular topic in education. A great deal of research exists on high-yielding pedagogical strategies implemented in the classroom. However, limited research exists around teachers' perceptions of different types of post-conference feedback delivery by administrators and its perceived impact. This is an area where more research should be conducted to understand better the perceptions around receiving different types of feedback.

Teachers were surveyed about their perceptions of post-observation feedback delivery. The surveys and questions, designed by the researcher, were limited in their scope. Future researchers should revise the specific methods of gathering data to gain additional insights. An additional concern is that participants were not always familiar with the scale or items being used, and the lack of familiarity may result in potential biasing effects.

This study utilized self-reporting data methods of teachers. As a result, self-reported data has limitations on the ability to independently verify the participant's answers. Research studies that use self-report questionnaires are relying on the honesty and transparency of the participants. The degree to which this is a problem will

undoubtedly vary with the topic of the questionnaire. For example, if participants believe that their answers may be shared with their supervisors, it could significantly impact their ability/desire to be candid. Another inherent problem with self-reporting data is that participants may also vary in their understanding or interpretation of particular questions. A final limitation is a tendency for participants to exaggerate in their responses. This occurs when participants identify events as being more significant than they may have been.

Another limitation of the study is that this research was collected in only a few months. A longitudinal study of post-conference feedback may yield more significant results in capturing the perceptions of teachers and principals from more diverse schools that are representative of the population would be more reliable.

This study interviewed principals to try to capture their perceptions around post-conference feedback. However, a limitation of the study is that levels of principal training for teacher evaluations were not taken into account. For this study, there were multiple principals interviewed who have various years of administrative experience. Capturing the perceptions of administrators with fewer years of experience or a more significant number of school principals could yield additional insights into the research.

This study did not take into account if gender and/or teacher tenure influences a teacher's or principals' perception of feedback delivery. The needs of non-tenured teachers are very different from teachers with more experience (Range, Finch, Young, and Hvidston, 2014). A teacher's tenure and years of experience are two critical variables that are closely related to influencing their perceptions of observations and feedback (Range, Anderson, Hvidston, and Mette 2013). "Non-tenured teachers deemed novice

teachers, present a unique challenge for principals as they apply supervision and evaluation" (Range et al., 2014, p. 67). Future research should be conducted to understand better if gender and tenure are variables that impact the perceptions around feedback delivery for teachers and principals.

In all research, bias can creep into a participant's responses impacting the validity of their responses. Bias could be a powerful influence on a participant's response especially if they had past negative experiences with classroom observations by receiving negative feedback or low-performance ratings. Likewise, teachers that have consistently received positive feedback, formed strong relationships with their principals, and received high-performance ratings from observations may have a pre-conceived bias toward post-conference feedback. Future research should try to control for this bias when collecting data.

Many variables prepare principals and teachers to receive and deliver post-conference feedback. This is an important concept because perceptions of effective feedback delivery could be skewed based on these relationships. Therefore, an essential question in LMX leadership studies is to understand better, do leaders discriminate in their relationships between different members of their organization? If so, then how are some members of the organization successfully able to move into the "in-group" while others remain in the "out-group?" If it is true that leaders do discriminate among members of their organization, then this could have a tremendous impact on how some members perceive the feedback they receive. This could be a limitation of this research that would need additional exploration.

Limitations of this research study are categorized as potential weaknesses of the

study that is primarily out of the researcher's control, given the design, research model constraints, and any other restriction on the study that cannot be reasonably dismissed as having an impact on the findings.

Recommendations for Future Study

The themes and the research data drawn from this study provide a foundation for future studies to be conducted. As discussed, there are limitations to the size and scope of this mixed-methods research study. However, research is clear that good feedback is important for helping teachers grow. Additional research should be conducted with larger sample sizes of teachers and principals from diverse school settings such as urban and rural school districts. These findings will provide greater reliability for the research data. Also, future research should look closely at connecting teacher response data to their schools and then analyzing the overall data around that particular school. This would allow greater data analysis in understanding if other potential variables are influencing the instructional decisions teachers are making that may be influenced by the leader of the organization. Accounting for the school environment was something that this study did not attempt to measure, but the culture of the individual school could have a significant impact on the perceptions of the teachers working there. Additional research should study the impact of school climate on teachers' perceptions. For instance, what impact do the variables of race, socioeconomic status, and school discipline play in influencing teachers and principals decisions and perceptions around feedback. Studying these constructs could shed more research on how to improve feedback and instruction in some of the most vulnerable school settings. Future research should look closely at the role that gender plays in perceiving feedback and delivering feedback. In this particular

study, gender was not a construct that was studied. However, understanding if gender influences how feedback is perceived by teachers or delivered by principals would be important to understand. This would allow researchers more information and guidance for both teachers and principals around the construct of feedback based on gender. Another recommendation for future study is to examine how years of teaching experience could differentially influence a teacher's perception of feedback. In this study, principals discussed that years of experience influenced their decisions around selecting content and delivery of feedback. However, research questions were not developed to understand if teachers perceived feedback differently based on their years of teaching experience such as tenured teachers and new teachers to the profession. Studying this construct closer could be important for future research and allow greater understanding if experienced teachers versus newer teachers perceive feedback differently. Also, the study should expand and examine principals and their years of administrative experience and training. This study did not try to draw any conclusions based on the years of experience a principal had. The principals interviewed for this study, ranged in their administrative experience from 1 to 20 years. Organizing data and developing research questions around the principal's years of experience may help to understand how principals differentiate their feedback selection and delivery of content and what impact experience may have on this process. This study examined the perceptions of high school principals and teachers. However, it is recommended that more research be conducted on the perceptions of elementary teachers and principals who participate in post-observation conferences and the impact on their instruction.

Significance of the Study

Teachers identified that the most valuable component of the post-observation conference is when a classroom teacher receives constructive feedback that is delivered by the principal (Range, Young, and Hvidston 2013). The importance of teacher feedback seems to be a consensus across research studies. The significance of this study is that it provides insight into the perceptions of both teachers and principals around post-observation feedback. The study recognizes that feedback occurs between principals and teachers in many different facets. This study examined the perceptions of teachers, while trying to determine if it is the content of feedback or the delivery of feedback that has the greatest impact leading to instructional changes in the classroom. This research study also examined the process of how principals go about selecting the content of feedback and the manner of delivery they institute. For continuous growth to occur, teachers need ongoing feedback about their instruction and offered new innovate ideas on how to continue to improve so that teaching and learning can continue to improve inside the classroom.

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Appendix A

RECRUITMENT LETTER FOR ORGANIZATION

Dear [superintendent],

I am currently recruiting school organizations to participate in a study of teachers' and principals' perceptions of various types of post-conference feedback delivery and content of feedback. This mixed methods study will involve confidential interviews with high school principals employed by the [Redacted] School District as well as an anonymous electronic survey distributed to all certified high school teachers who are evaluated under the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES). This school was identified for the study because they earned an overall grade of an "A" on the 2017 state report card in the measure of value added. This study is being conducted by myself, in collaboration with, and under the supervision of my doctoral dissertation advisor, Dr. Shirley Curtis, Teaching Professor in the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University, and Dr. Gail F. Latta, Associate Professor and Director of the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University.

The purpose of this study is to capture the perceptions teachers and principals have concerning different types of feedback delivery and the content of feedback they receive during a post-observation conference. There are no right or wrong answers, and we are only interested in capturing the range of perceptions regarding these types of feedback deliveries and content of feedback. If permitted to participate, each administrator will be invited, individually, to participate in an interview that would last approximately thirty minutes. Additionally, certified teaching staff will be provided with an opportunity to participate in a short online survey. Participation will be entirely

voluntary and whether an employee chooses to participate will only be known to the co-investigators.

Your institution's identity and the identity and of all participants in this study will be treated with strict confidentiality. All conversations and data collected, including field notes and recordings, will be limited to the scope of this study. With your consent, interviews will be recorded to ensure accuracy in capturing a participant's insights and reflections. The following procedures will be used to keep your personal information confidential in this study:

- Anonymity of study participants will be maintained at all times during data collection, analysis and reporting of results.
- Neither a participant's decision to participate nor anything you they say will be shared with their employer or anyone other than the co-investigators.

The results of this research will be reported in the form of a doctoral dissertation to be read by committee members and may form the basis for publication or presentation in scholarly manuscripts reporting anonymous findings

Attached to this message, is a template of a form letter granting permission. If you are willing to allow this study to occur in your district, please do the following:

- Fill out and sign the attached template letter, which gives permission to conduct the study.
- Please place the letter on your district's letter head.
- Make a copy for your records.
- Please email a copy of the letter to davisd3@xavier.edu or mail a copy to Damon Davis 7441 Shewango Way, Cincinnati, Ohio 45243.

Thank you in advance for considering this invitation to permit this study to be conducted in your organization voluntarily. If you have questions about what participation will

involve, please contact me by email at davisd3@xavier.edu or my co-investigators, Dr. Shirley Curtis at 513-745-3592 or curtis@xavier.edu, or Dr. Gail F. Latta at (513) 745-2986 or lattag@xavier.edu.

Sincerely,
Damon C. Davis

Appendix B

TEMPLATE LETTER OF PERMISSION BY SUPERINTENDENTS

As the superintendent of [**Name of School District**], I am granting permission for Damon Davis to conduct a research project, under the supervision of Dr. Shirley Curtis, Teaching Professor in the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University, and Dr. Gail F. Latta, Associate Professor and Director of the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University, within our school district.

The purpose of this voluntary study is to capture principals' and teachers' perceptions concerning various types of post-conference feedback delivery and content of feedback. This study will involve confidential interviews with high school principals employed by the school district as well as an anonymous electronic survey distributed to all certified high school teachers in our district who are evaluated under the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES). I have been informed that all participant responses will remain confidential and the identity of the participants and names of school districts will not be revealed in the research findings. Only the co-investigators will have access to the research data. All transcripts of interviews will be kept confidential and stored in a locked cabinet for up to three (3) years and then destroyed. Any participation in the research study is strictly voluntary.

Sincerely,

(**Name of Superintendent**)

Appendix C

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT FOR PRINCIPAL INTERVIEWS

Hello, my name is Damon Davis. I am inviting you to voluntarily participate in a research project being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Shirley Curtis, Teaching Professor in the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University, and Dr. Gail F. Latta, Associate Professor and Director of the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University. The purpose of this study is to capture principals' and teachers' perceptions concerning various types of post-conference feedback delivery and content of feedback. You are being invited to participate in this study because you are an administrator in the [name redacted] School District. District permission has already been obtained from your district's superintendent to solicit your participation in this study, but your decision whether or not to participate will be entirely confidential and voluntary. Participation in this research includes a thirty-minute interview discussing your perceptions of various types of post-conference feedback delivery and the Teacher Performance Evaluation Rubric used to provide observation feedback to teachers. There are no right or wrong answers, and we are only interested in capturing the range of perceptions regarding these types of feedback deliveries and content of feedback.

If you would like to participate in this study, please respond to this message no later than (date), 2019. Also, please print off the attached Informed Consent document to read and sign. I will collect the document at the time of our interview. If you have any questions at any time during the study, you may contact any of the co-investigators: Damon C. Davis at davisd3@xavier.edu, Dr. Shirley Curtis at curtis@xavier.edu or (513) 745-3592, or Dr. Gail F. Latta at (513) 745-2986 or lattag@xavier.edu.

Appendix D

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW

Dear participant,

My name is Damon Davis, and I am inviting you to voluntarily participate in a research project being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Shirley Curtis, Teaching Professor of the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University and Dr. Gail F. Latta, Associate Professor and Director of the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University. Please read this document outlining your rights as a research participant before consenting to participate. You are being invited to participate in this survey because you are an employee with the [name redacted] School District. District permission has been obtained to solicit your participation in this study, but your decision whether or not to participate will be entirely confidential.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to capture the perceptions individuals have concerning the different types of feedback delivery and content of feedback during a post-observation conference. There are no right or wrong answers, and we are only interested in capturing the range of perceptions regarding different types of feedback delivery.

Procedures: As an administrator in the school district, your direct participation in this study will consist of being interviewed using questions I formulated. As a participant, you will be asked to identify the type of training you have received as a teacher evaluator and discuss the various types of feedback delivery you use during post-observation conferences. Finally, you will be asked to identify and discuss your perceptions of how teachers utilize different types of feedback delivery. The interview will last approximately thirty minutes. With your permission, these interviews will be audiotaped to ensure accuracy in capturing responses. As a participant, you will not be required to answer any questions you do not wish to respond to, and you may pass on questions you prefer not to answer. You may withdraw from participation at any time during the interview. No explanation is required to end the interview, and a terminated interview will result in all information you provided being destroyed and omitted from the final analysis.

Inclusion Criteria: You are being invited to participate in this study because as an administrator in your organization affords you a perspective relevant to the topic of the study.

Anonymity: All conversations and data collected, including field notes and recordings, will be limited to the scope of this study. With your consent, interviews will be recorded to ensure accuracy in capturing your insights and reflections. The following procedures will be used to keep your personal information confidential in this study:

- Anonymity of study participants will be maintained at all times during data collection, analysis and reporting of results.
- Neither your decision to participate nor anything you say will be shared with your employer or anyone other than the co-investigators.
- Taped recordings of interviews will be destroyed as soon as they have been accurately transcribed.
- Transcripts of interviews and field notes will be coded during analysis to conceal the identity of participants. Each participant will receive a school code for further data analysis.
- Only the co-investigators will have access to the raw data files during analysis.
- The final product will be a written report of the findings of the study.
- Group and thematic data only will be reported in the final paper; however, graphic narratives and quotes may be anonymously incorporated to enhance interpretation of findings.
- The identity of your organization, your name and any identifying information will not be associated with any part of the written or oral presentations of this research.
- Copies of consent forms and all data collected, including field notes and interview transcripts, will be retained by the co-investigators in secure locations for three (3) years and then destroyed. All data collected will be stored in a secure location away from work in a locked cabinet. Only the co-investigators will have access to the collected data.
- Consent forms will be stored separately from recordings and transcripts to ensure anonymity.
- The results of this research will be reported in the form of a doctoral dissertation to be read by committee members and may form the basis for publication or presentation in scholarly manuscripts reporting anonymous findings.

Risks/Benefits:

There are no direct benefits or known risks in participating in this study. However, you may find the opportunity to discuss your perceptions of post-conference feedback delivery to be enjoyable and personally satisfying. Additionally, you will be offered the opportunity to obtain a copy of the final research report when it comes available.

Participant Rights:

- Your own and your district's participation in this study are all voluntary. Refusal to participate in this study will not affect you or the district.
- No one in your district will know of your decision to participate or decline to participate in this study.
- You and the district have the right to change your mind and leave the study at any time without giving any reason and without penalty.
- You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep. Questions about the Study: If you have any questions at any time during the study, you may contact the co-investigators: Damon Davis at davisd3@xavier.edu or Dr. Shirley Curtis at curtis@xavier.edu or (513) 745-3592, or Dr. Gail F. Latta at glatta@xavier.edu or (513) 745-2986. Questions about your rights as a research subject should be directed to Xavier University's Institutional Review Board at (513) 745-2870 or irb@xavier.edu.

I have been given sufficient information about this research study and have had an opportunity to have any questions clarified by the researcher. I understand that by signing this document, I am indicating my informed consent to participate.

Please initial one of the following:

_____ I consent to the audio recording of my interview.

_____ I do not consent to the audio recording of my interview.

_____

Participant's Name

_____

Signature

_____

Date

Appendix E

Recruitment script FOR SURVEY respondents
EMAIL NOTIFICATION to be sent from Damon C. Davis to participants with a link to survey.

Greeting [name redacted] Schools Employee,

My name is Damon Davis, and I am an administrator with Reading Community Schools. I have received permission from your district superintendent to conduct a study related to leadership. This research is being conducted in collaboration with Dr. Shirley Curtis, Teaching Professor in the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University and Dr. Gail F. Latta, Associate Professor and Director of the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University.

With this email, I am inviting you to voluntarily participate in an anonymous survey exploring the perceptions of particular types of post-conference feedback delivery and the content of feedback. Your input will be combined with others into an aggregated report as part of my dissertation.

All [name redacted] School certified staff members are welcome to submit responses to this survey and your participation is entirely voluntary. All responses will be anonymous, and no one at [name redacted] Schools will know whether you decide to participate nor your responses to the survey.

Please click on the link below to read more about this research study and your rights as a participant. After reading the detailed Informed Consent, you will be given an opportunity to either accept the invitation to participate and proceed to the survey or to opt out.

If you have questions about any components of this study, please feel free to contact me at davisd3@xavier.edu.

Sincerely,

Damon C. Davis

Place a link to the survey here:

Appendix F

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR SURVEY

Dear Participant,

My name is Damon Davis, and I am inviting you to voluntarily participate in a research project being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Shirley Curtis, Teaching Professor of the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University, and Dr. Gail F. Latta, Associate Professor and Director of the Leadership Studies Doctoral Program at Xavier University. Please read this document outlining your rights as a research participant before consenting to participate. You are being invited to participate in this survey because you are an employee with the [name redacted] School District. District permission has been obtained to solicit your participation in this study, but your decision whether or not to participate will be entirely confidential.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to capture the perceptions individuals have concerning the different types of feedback delivery and content of feedback they receive during a post-observation conference. There are no right or wrong answers, and we are only interested in capturing the range of perceptions regarding different types of feedback delivery.

Procedures: As an employee in the school district, your direct participation in this study will consist of responding to an electronic survey using questions I formulated. As a participant, you will be asked to identify the name of your most recent evaluator, discuss various types of post-conference feedback delivery you received and your perceptions. The survey will last approximately ten minutes. You may withdraw from participation at any time during the survey. No explanation is required to end the survey, and a terminated survey will result in all information you provided being destroyed and omitted from the final analysis.

Inclusion Criteria: You are being invited to participate in this study because as an employee in your organization affords you a perspective relevant to the topic of the study. All certified teachers in your organization are eligible to participate in the study if they are interested.

Anonymity: All results and data collected will be limited to the scope of this study. The survey responses you submit will be entirely anonymous. Neither the researchers nor your employer will know of your decision to participate in this survey. If you do choose to respond to the survey, your identity will not be known to the researchers nor will you be asked for personal identifying information that could be used to link your responses to you. The data collected will be accessible only to the co-investigators for purposes of analysis and will be reported in a way that maintains the confidentiality of all individual and institutional participants.

The following procedures will be used to keep your personal information confidential in this study:

- The survey will not ask about your identity.
- Responses to the survey will be entirely anonymous.
- Participants will enter a school code for further research analysis.
- The data collected will not permit researchers to link responses to individual respondents.
- Neither your decision to participate nor any data collected will be known to the researchers or anyone at your place of employment.
- Only the co-investigators will have access to the raw data files during analysis.
- The final product will be a written report of the findings of the study.
- Group and thematic data only will be reported in the final paper; however, portions of the data you submit may be quoted anonymously to enhance the interpretation of findings.
- The identity of your organization and any participants invited to participate in this study will never be publicly revealed by the researchers in either formal or informal discussions or presentations of this research.
- Copies of consent forms and all data collected will be retained by the co-investigators in secure locations for three (3) years and then destroyed.
- The results of this research will be reported in the form of a doctoral dissertation to be read by committee members and may form the basis for publication or presentation in scholarly manuscripts reporting anonymous findings.

Risks/Benefits:

There are no direct benefits or known risks in participating in this study. However, you may find the opportunity to discuss your perceptions of post-conference feedback delivery to be enjoyable and personally satisfying. Additionally, you will be offered the opportunity to obtain a copy of the final research report when it comes available.

Participant Rights:

- Your own and your district's participation in this study are all voluntary. Refusal to participate in this study will not affect you or the district.
- No one in your district will know of your decision to participate or decline to participate in this study.
- You and the district have the right to change your mind and leave the

study at any time without giving any reason and without penalty.

You can either print or save this document if you would like a copy for your records. Questions about the Study: If you have any questions at any time during the study, you may contact the co-investigators: Damon Davis at davisd3@xavier.edu, Dr. Shirley Curtis at curtis@xavier.edu, or Dr. Gail F. Latta at (513) 745-2986 or lattag@xavier.edu. Questions about your rights as a research subject should be directed to Xavier University's Institutional Review Board at (513) 745-2870 or irb@xavier.edu.

_____ I have been given sufficient information about this research study and have had an opportunity to have any questions clarified by the researcher. I understand that by completing this survey, I am indicating my informed consent to participate.

Appendix G

Principal Interview Questions

A. Based on the list of 10 OTES domains for teacher evaluations (below), what percentage of the post-observation feedback that you provide teachers is devoted to each? (*Post-observation feedback is what occurs between a principal and teacher following a classroom observation*.)
    a. Focus for Learning
    b. Assessment Data
    c. Prior Content Knowledge/Sequence/Connections
    d. Knowledge of Students
    e. Lesson Delivery
    f. Differentiation
    g. Resources
    h. Classroom Environment
    i. Assessment of Student Learning
    j. Professional Responsibilities
B. What opportunities do you have to observe and document the extent to which teachers make instructional changes in their classrooms based on the post-observation feedback you provided?
C. What factors do you consider in deciding what content area(s) to focus on in providing post-observation feedback to a teacher?
D. Based on your classroom observations, what impact do you perceive that the content areas (10 OTES domains) in which you provided post-observation

feedback have on how teachers are implementing changes in their classroom instruction? What evidence do you have to support this perception?

E. Which of the following forms of communication do you use to provide feedback during post-observation conferences with teachers?

    a. Verbal
    b. Written
    c. Both
    d. Other _____

F. What type of feedback delivery do you use most often? Is this your most preferred form of communication?

G. Of the forms of communication, that you use to provide post-observation feedback what is your least preferred?

H. Are your preferred forms of communication the ones you use most frequently?

I. How do you determine what form of communication you will use to provide post-observation feedback to teachers?

Appendix H

Teacher Survey Questions

A. Have you ever received post-observation feedback as part of an administrative evaluation of your classroom teaching?

Yes
No

If no, thank you for your willingness to participate in the study (survey terminated).

B. Thinking about your most recent post-observation evaluation feedback, since receiving this feedback, have you made any instructional changes in your classroom?

YES
NO

C. Thinking about the instructional changes you have made, since your most recent post-observation feedback, to what areas (Teacher Evaluation Performance Rubric) do these changes relate? (Check all that apply).

a. Focus for Learning

b. Assessment Data

c. Prior content knowledge/sequence/connections

d. Knowledge of Students

e. Lesson Delivery

f. Differentiation

g. Resources

h. Classroom Environment

i. Assessment of Student Learning

j. Professional Responsibilities

D. In thinking about the instructional changes, you made in your classroom, following your most recent post-observation evaluation, how likely are you to have made those changes regardless of the feedback you received?

Not likely		Somewhat likely		Very likely
1	2	3	4	5

E. Thinking about your most recent post-observation feedback, which of the 10 OTES domains used in teacher evaluations, did your evaluator focus on providing feedback? (Check all that apply.)

k. Focus for Learning

l. Assessment Data

m. Prior content knowledge/sequence/connections

n. Knowledge of Students

o. Lesson Delivery

p. Differentiation

q. Resources

r. Classroom Environment

s. Assessment of Student Learning

t. Professional Responsibilities

F. To what extent were the instructional changes you have made since your most recent post-observation feedback related to the content of the feedback (10 OTES Domains) you were provided?

None	Very little	Some	A fair amount	A great deal
1	2	3	4	5

G. Thinking about your most recent post-observation conference, what form of communication did your evaluator use to deliver the feedback?

a. Verbal
b. Written
c. Both
d. Other _____

H. What, if any, impact did the method of communication used to deliver post-observation feedback have on the instructional changes you subsequently implemented in your classroom?

None	Very little	Some	A fair amount	A great deal
1	2	3	4	5

H. If the post-observation feedback you received focused on different content areas (10 OTES domains) do you think you would have made the same instructional changes in your classroom?

YES
NO

J. Had the post-observation feedback been provided to you in a different manner (verbal, written, both, other) do you think you would have made the same instructional changes in your classroom?

YES
NO

K. In thinking about your most recent post-observation evaluation, were there other things besides the content and the form of communication that influenced the instructional changes you made to your classroom?

YES
NO