

University of Alberta

Making Meaning of ‘Trust’ in the Organizational Setting of a School

by

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my family.
To my husband, Glenn and to my daughter, Maile.

ABSTRACT

Recognizing that teachers are both leaders in their classrooms and colleagues in the school setting, this study focuses on the interplay of trust in the interpersonal professional relationships of teachers with their principals from the perspective of teachers. The rationale for the examination of trust is based on the assumption that trust is a key element in all human relationships and is often taken for granted because it is usually not thought about until trust fails to exist.

The literature review revealed what is already known about trust, helped identify issues that merited exploration including the importance of trust, provided a solid theoretical foundation that informed the study's methodology, and enabled me to rationalize my phenomenological approach research design. In order to come to a deeper understanding of a teacher's experience of trust and what happens when the everyday flow of lived experience takes on a particular significance it was necessary for me to access teachers' subjective realities. Using an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis approach (IPA) based on the work of Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009), interviews were conducted using stratified purposeful sampling with 16 Alberta teachers, with varying experience levels and diverse career backgrounds. The data was organized as clusters or patterns that emerged through my interpretation of the participants' experiences. By interrogating the meaning of the various clusters, subordinate themes were determined which expressed the essence of these clusters which then were compared and contrasted and encapsulated in superordinate themes.

In previous research, trust has traditionally been considered as a monolithic variable characterized by experiences through relationships within a school (Bryk & Schneider, 2002, 2003; Kochanek, 2005). However, this study reveals that trust is best understood in a combination of two ways. First, trust is a process of holding certain perceptions and anticipation of the reliability of the other party, and secondly, trust is a product of accumulated opportunities for interaction between teachers and the principal. The findings of this study supported the viewpoint that trust in the principal was influenced by specific behaviours of the principal.

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Chapter 1:

Introduction to the Study

“You can trust me!”

At any age, this simple phrase is uttered or silently implied in our conversations or actions. Children learn to trust initially through their relationship with their primary caregivers, most often their parents. They lift their arms to be picked up and snuggle in when being held. What changes occur when babies cease to happily accept being held and hugged by strangers and begin instead, as older infants, to “make strange” or “play shy”? What does the world look like for a child who participates in life with trust as compared to a child who tends to experience the world with distrust? I contend that as adults we can identify people that we trust, others that we trust conditionally, and still others that we don’t trust at all. There may be different trust levels between each individual or group that shift depending on past experience and the nature of the relationship.

As a beginning teacher I intuitively recognized the importance of trust and some of the essential conditions that fostered and helped me maintain trusting relationships. My interest in trust in schools was sustained through my experiences and observations as a school administrator. I realized that my own understandings about trust and my abilities to build trust among colleagues were superficial at best because I had failed to delve into the meaning of trust and to investigate teachers’ lived reality. I was not alone. In speaking with other school system administrators I found that they too were in the same situation. I began to believe that many people feel they know what trust is. That it

is, for the most part, so ingrained in relationships that people fail to consider it until trust is threatened or questioned. People continue to make decisions about whether to trust and whom to trust throughout their lives. Yet there is difficulty in describing the experience of trust in a particular situation. Intuitively, people might know what trust is even though they don't have the words to express that understanding. There are differences of intensity, conditions, duration, and risk in trusting relationships. For example, one trusts one's spouse differently than they trust the plumber, differently than they trust one's children, differently than they trust the bus driver to be on time, differently than they trust one's employer to act fairly, and differently than they trust a bank teller to calculate and credit interest properly. On the one hand trust may simply mean that a person has confidence in another. But on the other hand, trust may mean that a person has faith that another will be honest rather than treacherous. Can an individual easily convey what it is really like to trust someone? Is trust a quality of the external world, an aspect of the inner life of the person; or is it an expression of the lived relations between the interiority and the exteriority of the person; or can it incorporate both? What follows is an investigation into these questions with a focus on how such an important basis for successful human interaction and collaborative work can be so difficult to express.

Situating the Research

As new forms of governance and accountability in education have emerged, and in the entire public sector, there is a greater emphasis on collaboration, flexibility, and

adaptability driven by changing demands and societal pressures (Burger et al., 2001; Burger, Bolender, Keates, & Townsend, 2000; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Hargreaves et al., 2009; Lambert, 2002; Leithwood & Prestine, 2002; Sleeter & Stillman, 2007). This changing landscape has implications for Alberta's public school teachers and administrators. For example, at present Alberta educators are faced with: a complete review of the *School Act*, the development of a Leadership Framework and competencies for administrators similar to the Teaching Quality Standard; a review of the Teaching Quality Standard, the introduction of Learning and Cognitive Coaches in schools, the emphasis on schools of choice, significantly reduced funding for the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement projects, the continued devolution of financial and managerial control to the school principal, the emergence and application of new technologies including personally owned devices in the classroom, and the decline in government funding. In addition, there have been numerous calls for education reform that challenge principals to become more effective leaders. A potential source of reform currently awaiting final approval and release is the *Inspiring Education* (Alberta Education, 2010) initiative for educational transformation which aims to bring public consultation and stakeholders' input to bear on the creation of a system that is more responsive to 21st century needs and makes the education system competitive worldwide (Alberta Education, 2010). Among the significant changes outlined in *Inspiring Action* (Alberta Education, 2009) is a call to develop performance standards for all educational professionals including teachers, principals, and superintendents. Teachers and administrators already work in what Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) term "systems of

surveillance” (p. 40) characterized by an expectation that they constantly collect and reflect on data to create and communicate results on standardized measures. My experiences as an administrator and as an executive staff officer with the Alberta Teachers’ Association, together with my review of the professional and academic literature leads me to believe that in order to succeed, these new forms of governance and accountability require an atmosphere of trust. Why? Because relationships within organizations involve interdependence and a certain amount of uncertainty.

Psychologists suggest that children learn to trust through bonding with their parents and this bonding process begins *in utero* as the unborn child identifies with the voice and unique sounds and smells of its mother (Spiecker, 1990). After birth, the bond may build and thereby trust is strengthened. Conversely, a weak bond may erode through neglect and trust is subsequently weakened. Other psychologists argue that babies start life with perfect trust that is subjected to tests and damage as the child grows older (Robbins, 1998). Understanding whether trust in young infants is nature or nurture is a starting point. In addition, also understanding whether or not these early forms of trust differ from the ways adults experience trust is important.

As an adult I take my vehicle to the mechanic because I lack the requisite skills to assess, diagnose, and then fix a mechanical problem. I must decide whether I have confidence in that mechanic’s ability to service my vehicle. I am persuaded by his or her journeyman certificate that the mechanic is technically competent and professionally reliable but that does not necessarily mean that I *trust* the mechanic. If the outcome of

our interactions is positive, trust may develop. But, the trust that I build with the mechanic is different from the trust that I have with my spouse or with my child.

Similarly, a parent may feel confident that a teacher can teach mathematics competently but that does not always mean that the parent will therefore completely entrust his or her child to this teacher. A competent math teacher may not necessarily be concerned with the totality of the child's best interests. So, is confidence in another synonymous with trust in the other? Indeed individuals may feel confident about a stranger's abilities without ever communicating that confidence to the stranger.

A few people I am likely to trust with almost anything, many others with almost nothing. As I read more about trust I began to question if there were people, other than children, naïve enough to display and live total trust of anyone or anything in any context. Alternatively, is there what might be termed generalized, conditional trust of people we encounter: a provisional level of trust that remains intact until experience arises that trust has been misplaced. I began to question if trust and confidence could be used interchangeably as I deliberated over these dynamics. Given my experiences as an educator, wife, mother, student, professional, and citizen I began to think that trust then may be dependent on context. What follows is the product of deep and sustained thinking about the complexity of the notion of trust.

Assumptions and Beliefs

Trust is increasingly recognized as vital to the success of an organization. I have come to believe that trust does not occur in isolated instances or events but is a

continuum reflective of the contexts of human interaction. Clarity of expectations and cooperation among stakeholders is fundamental to the establishment and management of effective and productive schools (Burger et al., 2001; Goldring & Rallis, 1993; Hargreaves et al., 2009; Wong & Nicotera, 2007). So, how can an individual cooperate with someone he or she does not trust? Would that cooperation, then, be conditional upon trust—which I believe is a key element to positive relationships and the product of careful cultivation. Nevertheless, the viability of trust is often assumed *a priori*, suffers from neglect, and is only valued when it is suddenly absent. Baier (1986) asserts that air escapes notice until it is scarce or polluted. Solomon and Flores (2001) draw a similar parallel to trust:

Many people are blind to trust, not so much to its benefits as to its nature and the practices that make it possible. Indeed these practices tend to be invisible, and trust seems to most people, most of the time so transparent, so simple, so natural, so unproblematic—except for those special, awful occasions and situations when we are betrayed—that there is nothing much to notice, much less to understand.
(p. 53)

My experience is borne out by the literature review. It is clear that failed trust relationships remove themselves from the abstract and take on a concrete reality that begs to be deconstructed and understood. Durkheim (1956) identified trust between individuals and groups as the basis for social order, the mortar of solidarity and integration. Lewicki, McAllister, and Bies (1998) posited that either trust or distrust will emerge within given relationship conditions, contexts, points in time, and levels of

interdependencies. Either trust or distrust is possible, even within the same relationship, since different encounters accrue to create the tapestry of the relationship, a tapestry that continues to be woven as the relationship evolves. Trust is referenced as growing or being broken but the word trust can be misleading because as a noun it is a thing; maybe it should be thought of as an activity, a decision, or as a transitive verb—“to trust”—because to trust (or not) is an active choice.

Research Question and Methodology

Phenomenological studies investigate human behaviour through inquiry into the manner in which that person structures the world and that person’s place in it. Phenomenological inquiry then, based on the work of Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009), describes a phenomenon and its underlying concepts as the participants themselves conceive them: how the talk occurring in everyday life situations encompasses the constructed nature of their social reality and the foundations of social order and how these concepts change, depending upon the moment in time. Phenomenology takes the intuitive experience of a phenomenon present in conscious experience as a starting point and tries to extract from it the essential features of the experience, the *essence* of that experience, and attempts to answer “Is this what the experience is really like?”

Many conceptual discrepancies arise from cultural and philosophical differences about the notion of trust. Central to my doctoral study were interviews which explored the question “how is trust experienced in professional contexts between principals and teachers from the perspective of teachers?” The nature and scope of the interview

questions expanded as the research advanced, recognizing that multiple realities exist.

Sixteen teachers with varying experience levels and diverse career backgrounds were the focus of the research.

Significance

I believe that building trusting relationships takes time, energy, and a conscious effort. These trusting relationships do not automatically spring into being; they must be developed and nurtured throughout the relationship. Further, I believe that understanding trust in schools is vital given the role which schools play in society and in the development of children. The rationale for the examination of trust is based on my assumption that trust is a key element in relationships that is often taken for granted until it fails. I concur with Jones and George's (1998) contention that the attitudes people form toward each other in an organizational context are likely to rely upon judgments regarding trustworthiness based in part on perceptions of shared values, the values being general standards or principles that are considered intrinsically desirable ends such as loyalty, helpfulness, and fairness, among others. My assumption has grown out of my experiences as an administrator and educator in Alberta. Further, my experiences prompt me to believe that higher expectations create the demand for higher levels of trustworthiness on the part of all citizens and organizational participants. Within a school there is a unique dynamic at play. Not only do teachers have to work in an environment where they are the authoritative voice in their classroom, they also have to function within a school setting with their teacher colleagues that assumes collegiality and with a

principal who is both a teacher and a *boss*. What I wonder about as an educator and researcher is, what is it really like to navigate in this world as a teacher with their principal.

The literature on trust spans decades that point to the importance of trust. However, the literature exhibits a pervasive assumption that trust is understood by everyone. As Harvey and Drolet (1994) state, “Trust is much like love—we know it when we see it, but we are not sure what creates it. Trust is not an act or set of acts, but the result of other actions or variables” (p. 18). The purpose of this study is to examine and describe the interplay of trust in the interpersonal professional relationships of teachers with their principals. This study does not test a theory, but rather explores the phenomenon of trust within the professional context of a school, in order to better inform our educational practices as leaders. This doctoral study, I propose, will contribute to the growing body of research that explores the phenomenon of trust by focusing on teachers’ experiences of trust by contributing to both the practical and theoretical knowledge about the phenomenon of trust within the current Alberta educational context by attending to the experiences, narratives, and perceptions of practicing school teachers. The study will help us recognize how the behaviour and communication techniques of principals, might, in the given context, generate, build, and maintain teacher trust.

I believe investigating the facets and dynamics of trust within the context of schools is important. I contend that people, including me, think they know what trust is from individual experience, but don’t know much about how to foster and improve trust at the group or school system level.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into six chapters with accompanying appendices and references. Chapter 1 introduces the trust phenomenon under investigation and outlines the purpose, significance, and justification for the study. In addition, Chapter 1 articulates the research “grand tour” question, provides a definition and a methodology overview, and outlines the study’s assumptions and limitations.

Chapter 2 presents a review of relevant literature organized around three major themes: Trust Discourse, Collegiality-Collaboration, and Accountability and how they are connected to the study of trust. Literature that adopts a variety of theoretical perspectives is presented.

Chapter 3 outlines the rationale supporting the study’s methodology. It begins with a justification for the paradigm used in this study followed by a description of the methodology. The role of the researcher with respect to building trust and rapport and addressing the impact of power on trust within research relationships and ethical issues is addressed. This chapter also includes an explanation of participant selection and sample size. The strategies to be employed in data collection, management and analysis, delimitations, and limitations are also introduced.

Chapters 4 and 5 address the research findings. Chapter 4 shares the demographic information about the participants and their teaching experience. Chapter 5 focuses on the participants’ lived experiences of trust with their respective principals. The data is presented in themes based on the participants’ descriptions of the phenomenon. The findings are summarized and discussed in relation to relevant literature.

Chapter 6 provides an overview of the purpose and significance of the study, the main research question, and the methodology. A brief synthesis of the foundational trust research conducted in schools and the major findings of the inquiry are discussed. This includes the implications of the findings, a reflection on the phenomenon of trust, and its meaning for the teacher-principal relationship. Finally, the chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2:

Review of the Literature

This chapter serves firstly to focus the study and secondly to identify issues that merit exploration. The literature identified will become more directly germane as it is revisited in subsequent chapters as part of the analysis of the data collected.

According to Patton (1990) a literature review that occurs simultaneously with fieldwork allows for creative interplay among the processes of data collection, literature review, and researcher reflection. Conversely, I can understand the thinking of researchers like Glesne and Peshkin (1992) who posited that:

Some qualitative researchers argue against reviewing the literature until after data collection has begun, for fear that the research will be unduly influenced by the conceptual frameworks, research designs, techniques, and theories of others.

(p. 17)

As a researcher, I believe that the reason for conducting the literature review is to enable me to discover what is already known, provide a solid theoretical foundation that helps to inform me about methodologies, and enable me to rationalize why a given approach is optimal for my study. Therefore, although the literature forms an important basis for this study, I was also aware that a qualitative study's literature review is an ongoing process that could not be completed before data collection and analysis. Indeed, I chose to adopt Glaser's (1978) philosophy where I read for ideas throughout the whole research process and also took Glesne and Peshkin's (1992) view that emerging data often suggest the need to review previously unexamined literature.

When I decided to study the meaning of trust as my research project 5 years ago, what I found was that the notion of trust was complex and that trust in some form is part of virtually every relationship. My initial review of the literature was undertaken during the preparation of the research proposal. It helped to inform my choice of research paradigm. During this initial review, I looked to the various disciplines to ascertain how trust was understood, understanding that the review of the literature is an ongoing evolution where, as the researcher, I continued to delve into the literature in order to drive my analysis of the data and writing of the final dissertation. Further references to literature helped to support my findings and interpretations.

Ever-increasing importance is being placed on trust in relationships in the workplace, both in and outside education (Barth, 2006; Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Cosner, 2010; Currall & Inkpen, 2006; Forsyth, Barnes, & Adams, 2006; Fullan, 2003; Gimbel, 2003; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Hardin, 2006; Hoy et al., 2006; Jones & George, 1998; Seashore Louis, Dretzke, & Wahlstrom, 2010; Solomon & Flores, 2001). In the context of schools, trust has been examined intensively in the past decade because it has been seen as the *lubricant* in efficient operations (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1997) and is “fundamental to functioning in our complex and interdependent society” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 3). Given the primacy of trust as a foundation for organizational improvement, it is important that principals understand how it may shape the degree of collaboration in their schools (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). In addition, the potential for catalyzing school improvement by promoting trusting relationships is reinforced by research that indicates that how much teachers trust their principal is wholly dependent

on the behaviours of the principal (Gimbel, 2003). So, perhaps the link between principal behaviour and teacher perception is important in understanding the common bond between the teachers' level of trust of the principal.

Given this I have divided the literature into two major strands: Trust Discourse and Collaboration, Collegiality and Community. In addition to my professional experiences, it is the research within each of these strands that has helped me to develop my research question and proposed method, and identify the significance and rationale of this study.

Exploring Trust

Education attracts those seeking to broaden their perspectives and world-view through formal study and contribution to academic and professional discourses. Schreiber and Moring (2001) define discourse as a set of processes that construct the topic, define and produce the objects of our knowledge, and govern how the topic will be discussed and reasoned about. Discourse is fundamental to social identity, social relationships, and knowledge and beliefs (Schreiber & Moring, 2001). Similarly, Bloland (1995) speaks of the "indeterminacy of language, the primacy of the discourse" (p. 526) in the study of prevailing discourses in education. Arvast (2006) contends that, when we fashion truth, "those discourses or paradigms which guide the way we see the world in turn determine the very fabrics we have to make truth" (p. 2). Arvast reinforced Bloland's (1995) claim when he asserted that truth is neither stable nor eternal, but is

provisional and socially constructed. McNay (1994) went further and argued that all knowledge is the product of a specific power regime and that:

there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. It is in the discourse that power and knowledge are joined together. (p. 108)

There is power¹, then, in the discourse, in the deconstruction and understanding of constructed truths, in the knowledge that is advanced, and in the beliefs that are articulated. Respected well-known philosophers, writers, educators, and people in positions of power were guided by the pen because words have power to persuade and influence.

Disciplines and Trust

The examination of the notion of trust compels interdisciplinary research that draws from sociology, psychology, political science, philosophy, economics, and organizational science, in addition to education. As a result there are conceptual discrepancies that arise from cultural and philosophical differences about the notion of trust because there is a lack of consensus around a definition of trust. This has led to the situation where researchers in these various disciplines alternately support and detract

¹ Power: capacity or ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others or the course of events; that accrues to those who engage with the discourse to effect change, power to shape social identity, power to define the 'truth' that is adopted (OED).

from each other's findings; perhaps because "the practical significance of trust lies in the social action that it underwrites" (Lewis & Weigert, 1985, p. 971).

Management theorist Hosmer (1995) observed that, there appears to be wide-spread agreement on the importance of trust in human conduct, but unfortunately there also appears to be an equally widespread lack of agreement on a suitable definition of the construct. (p. 380)

Several scholars, through their empirical studies, have emphasized that social trust between teachers and administrators is derived from a variety of sources including fairness, a clear vision forming the basis of shared values, patterns of communication, openness, and consistency of behaviour in living out the school ideals (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Bryk & Schneider, 1996; Cho & Ringquist, 2011; Cosner, 2010; Day, 2009; Evans, 1996; Farrell, 2009; Hardin, 2006; Moye, Henkin, & Egley, 2005; Smylie & Hart, 1999; Wahlstrom, Seashore Louis, Leithwood & Anerson, 2010; Walker, Kutsyuruba, & Noonan, 2011). Rotter (1982) began exploring interpersonal trust in the 1970s and contended that

Common sense tells us that interpersonal trust is an important variable affecting human relationships at all levels: relationships between governments, between minorities and majorities, buyers and sellers, patients and therapists, parents and children and so on. As distrust increases, the social fabric disintegrates.

Unwarranted distrust can result in serious negative consequences. (p. 287)

Increasingly, trust is being recognized as a vital element to the success of a well-functioning organization.

The philosophy of trust.

Philosophers Baier (1986) and Hosmer (1995) both held that trust involves ethically and morally justifiable behaviour. Jones, Hardin, and Becker (1996) considered trust as an affective attitude of optimism, while Hardin (1992) focused on commitment as a precondition of trust. These authors concurred that trusting and the virtue of being trustworthy are indicators of good character and personal judgment. Trust and trustworthiness can then be found on both sides of a relationship as bidirectional complements. For some philosophers, an ongoing commitment from another person is not sufficient for trustworthiness. In their view, the motivation underlying the commitment is a more important consideration than its existence or duration.

Philosophers Dasgupta (1988), Hardin (2002), and O'Neill (2002) assumed that trust can be engendered by norms or social constraints, where constraints form the primary motivation towards trust and perpetuate a commitment grounded in a social contract.

Flores and Solomon (1998) tied trust to a person's past behaviour, individual motivations, and personal probity. Their assumption was that character develops over time and does not change quickly. They argued that a person's observable behaviour is an indication of their character which could be strong or weak, good or bad. To be an effective leader, followers must have trust in the leader's character and vision. Research shows that one of the ways to build trust is to display a good sense of character composed of beliefs, values, skills, and traits (Cho & Ringquist, 2011; Coleman, 1990; Coles, 2000; Currall & Epstein, 2003; Currall & Inkpen, 2006; Deal & Peterson, 1999; Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Farrell, 2009; Flores & Solomon, 1998; Sergiovanni, 1992, 2005).

The psychology of trust.

According to Rotter (1967, 1970), moral ethics and religion have failed to explain the phenomenon of trust. Instead, developmental and social psychologists looked to how socially acceptable traits developed and persisted. Becker (1996), Bryk and Schneider (2003), Cho and Ringquist (2011), Currall and Inkpen (2006), Pettit (1995), Rotter (1970), and Yin, Lee, and Jin (2011) define trust as the extent to which people are willing to be interdependent and vulnerable. Minimally, trust involves the risk that the trusted party may fail to uphold their fiduciary commitments. Fiduciary² comes from the Latin *fidere*, “to trust.” Rotter (1970) discussed the importance of trust, maintaining that

The entire fabric of our day-to-day living, of our social order, rests on trust—buying gasoline, paying taxes, going to the dentist, flying to a convention—almost all of our decisions involve trusting someone else . . . If trust weakens, the social order collapses. (p. 443)

A person’s decision to trust is based on accepting the risk and consequences of betrayal from the other and a conviction that the trusted person possesses a specific, desired competency.

Trust has been described as possessing other facets as well. Deutsch (1958) hypothesized that the level of psychological simultaneity, the mutual awareness of what another is doing as one deliberates an action, is an important determinant of trust. Deutsch went on to say that trust can emerge where psychological simultaneity is detected, even

² Fiduciary: Of a person - In trust of a person or thing; holding something in trust; Of the nature of, proceeding from, or implying trust or reliance; Of or pertaining to a person that is trusted; confidential (OED)

without an existing socialized basis for trust. Pettit (1995) also spoke of this interactive reliance which “involves giving discretion to another to affect one’s interests. This move is inherently subject to the risk that the other will abuse the power of discretion” (p. 207). Pettit further advanced that the mechanisms of loyalty, virtue, and prudence are necessary in a trusting relationship and explained that the three traits support and strengthen one another so that trust builds on trust.

Bryk and Schneider (2002) also defined trust as “a calculation whereby an individual decides whether or not to engage in an action with another individual that incorporates some degree of risk” (p. 14). The four factors that play into that “calculation” bear great similarity to the characteristics Hoy and Tschannen-Moran reference (2003): competence, integrity, and personal regard (caring) are identical and the fourth, respect, might be considered as an element of benevolence. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2003) posited that a certain amount of trust is afforded a person in a position of power such as a school administrator; they refer to this as positional trust, where people trust that the person will do their job. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2003) cautioned that despite the positional trust, relational trust may be withheld until the person’s words and actions prove that they can be trusted.

Economics and trust.

By contrast, in economic terms, trust is viewed as a rational measuring of costs and benefits (Coleman, 1990; Williamson, 1993). It was not until recently that business and management literature began to discuss the saliency of trust in organizational ethics

with regard to management-employee and agency relationships. Reina and Reina (2006) explored the concepts of trust and betrayal extensively in the context of the workplace and found that business is “conducted through relationships, and trust is the foundation of effective relationships” (p. 5). Trust is viewed as essential for collaboration and a unified sense of direction and improvement within the organization. Without trust, according to Reina and Reina, change is difficult or impossible and employees do not develop a sense of motivation about what they do.

Reina and Reina’s (2006) model of trust describes three components of what they call transactional trust: a) contractual, b) communication, and c) competence.

Contractual trust is described as the trust of character. It implies that “there is a mutual understanding that the people in the relationship will do what they say they will do” (Reina & Reina, 2006, p. 16). Communication trust is described as the trust of disclosure determined by the individual’s “willingness to share information, tell the truth, admit mistakes, maintain confidentiality, give and receive constructive feedback, and speak with good purpose” (Reina & Reina, 2006, p. 34). Finally, competence trust is described as the trust of capability and involves acknowledgement of “people’s skills and abilities, allowing people to make decisions, involving others and seeking their input, and helping people learn skills” (Reina & Reina, 2006, p. 58). The three facets are considered to be interdependent with transactional trust, as a whole, being destroyed with betrayal.

Social scientists have begun to describe situations of trust as a subclass of those involving risk; these are situations in which the risks one takes depends on the performance of another actor (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Currall & Inkpen, 2006;

Edmondson, 2004; Farrell, 2009; Forsyth et al., 2006; Hoy, Tarter, & Hoy, 2006; McAllister, 1995; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998; Seashore Louis, 2007; Tierney, 2006; Tschannen-Moran, 2004; Walker et al., 2011; Williamson, 1993; Yin et al., 2011). Given this point of departure, trust is warranted when the expected gain from placing oneself at risk to another is positive. The decision to accept such a risk is taken to imply trust. Trust may then be expressed in terms of a continuum from one end for complete distrust, through confidence, to unity for complete trust at the other end.

The intensification of global economic competition and commensurate ability to compete has implications for the way production and workers are organized. Brown and Lauder (1992) claimed that “it is those industrial societies which remain locked into Fordist principles of bureaucratic organization which will find it increasingly difficult to create high trust relations and a skilled labour force” (p. 6). Brown and Lauder discussed patterns of work and education and the implications of a Fordist system of low-skill, low-trust relationships compared to a post-Fordist system of adaptable workers and flatter hierarchies with high trust and high discretion in the workers. The ability to restructure to create high trust relations and a skilled labour force is a key factor in the capacity to survive economically.

Hardin (1996, 2002) equated trust with the notion of encapsulated interest; meaning that people trust other people whenever they assume that the risk of relying on other people to act a certain way is low—because it is in the self-interest of these people to act that way—and so they rely on them. He advanced that there are two important elements in the notion of encapsulated interest: commonality of interests and (the

potential for) a continuing relationship. Extending this line of thought further, Hardin (2002) contended that trustworthiness is the likelihood that the other will be motivated to follow common interests. Hardin (2002) assumed that this motivation may result from internal inducements (character, habit), external inducements (various societal and institutional devices), or a combination of both. Hardin (2002) claimed that learning to trust depends on the success of trusting, which will turn on the trustworthiness of those trusted. It follows then that enhancing trustworthiness through increased levels of trust in turn induces more productive cooperation. In this sense, trust can be enhanced by introducing devices, a contract for example

If I trust you to act on my behalf, I set myself up for the possibility of disappointment, even severe loss. To avoid that possibility, I might try to find institutional backing to get you to do what I trust you to do. (Hardin, 1996, p. 31)

The rationale behind the contract or institutional enforcement of trustworthiness is to protect a relationship against the worst of all risks it might encounter, thereby enabling the parties to cooperate on less risky matters. Hardin (2002) argued that once these are secured, there is less reason to be defensive so productive investments and beneficial exchanges can be undertaken.

From the world of commerce, Williamson (1993) put forward three types of trust: a) calculative trust where risk and trust are used interchangeably; b) personal trust, which should be limited to only very special personal and not commercial relations; and c) institutional trust being the social and organizational context within which contracts are embedded. Similarly, Bryk and Schneider (2002) and Bottery (2003) discussed three

levels of trust: a) intrapersonal, b) interpersonal, and c) organizational. No contract can possibly specify every contingency that may arise between the parties so a certain amount of trust or goodwill needs to be present to prevent the parties from taking advantage. In addition, Williamson (1993) extended his position to state that the level of trust present in a business relationship or organization was, in part, defined as competent calculativeness in which the affected parties: (1) are aware of the range of possible outcomes and their associated probabilities, (2) take cost-effective actions to mitigate hazards and enhance benefits, (3) proceed with the transaction only if expected net gains can be projected, and (4) if X can complete the transaction with any of several Ys, the transaction is assigned to that Y for which the largest net gain can be projected. Williamson also deduced that competent calculativeness could not be separated from institutional trust because there would always be a degree of calculativeness factored into any relational activity.

Organizational trust.

Currall and Epstein (2003) emphasized the centrality and fragility of trust in an organization: “If properly developed, trust can propel [organizations] to greatness. Improperly used, it can plant the seeds of collapse” (p. 203). Organizational theorists view trust as a collective conclusion that groups interact honestly, act in good faith, and forego opportunism (Bradach & Eccles, 1989; Cummings & Bromily, 1996; Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Jones & George, 1998; Rousseau et al., 1998; Schoorman, Mayer, & Davis, 2007). Other researchers (O’Brien, 2001; Reina & Reina, 2006) maintained that organizational trust increases creativity and critical thinking at the employee level. Reina

and Reina (2006) also suggested that employee performance tended to surpass the expectations of management and that workers felt greater freedom to express their ideas when leaders created trusting environments in their organizations. Shockley-Zalabak, Ellis, and Winograd (2000) found that organizations with higher levels of organizational trust were more successful and innovative than institutions with lower levels of trust. They suggested that product and service quality were significantly related to levels of organizational trust. Schoorman et al. (2007) found that these results remained unchanged in their research from 1995 and then again in 2007. The results of these studies confirmed the importance of fostering and nurturing relationships in the development of trust in a work environment where one's perception of the other's character, competence, and judgment, in addition to the dynamics of interpersonal influence and mutual expectations, were viewed as the foundation for building trust.

Bourdieu (1986) developed his concept of social capital during the 1970s and 1980s as one of three forms of capital (economic, cultural, and social) present in the structure and dynamics of societies. For him, social capital represented an "aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network" (p. 248). He stressed that access to social capital occurred via the development of durable relationships and networks of connections especially those among prestigious groups with considerable stocks of economic and cultural capital. Coleman (1988) building on the work of Bourdieu, described trust as a form of social capital by recognizing that trust, reciprocity, and norms of action underpin social networking and increase productivity. Coleman advanced that social capital depended on two elements: trustworthiness of the

social environment, which means that obligations will be repaid and the actual extent of obligations held. This reciprocity is illustrated in the following example:

If A does something for B and trusts B to reciprocate in the future, this establishes an expectation in A and an obligation on the part of B. This obligation can be conceived as a credit slip held by A for performance by B. If A holds a large number of these credit slips, for a number of persons with whom A has relations, then the analogy to financial capital is direct. These credit slips constitute a large body of credit that A can call in if necessary—unless, of course, the placement of trust has been unwise, and these are bad debts that will not be repaid. (Coleman, 1988, p. 102)

Coleman (1990) highlighted the difference between social capital and human capital. The first, he argued, was relational, embedded in social structure, and had public good characteristics: “Unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structure of relations between persons and among persons” (p. 302). The structure of relations could help establish obligations between social actors, create a social environment of trust, open channels for information, and set norms and impose sanctions on forms of social behaviours (Coleman, 1988, pp. 102–104). Both Bourdieu and Coleman focused on individuals and their roles and relationships with other individuals within a network as their primary unit of analysis of social capital.

In contrast to the view that social capital exists as an external factor, some sociologists and some political scientists believe that social capital arises from the positive interactions that occur between individuals in a network. Putnam (1993) and

Fukuyama (1995, 2001) are two of these researchers who have played a leading role in adding currency to the concept of social capital. Putnam (1993) began his work on social capital studying institutional performance in Italy where he explored the differences between regional administration in the north and south of the country. Putnam (1993) used the concept of social capital to explain the differences in civic engagement he discovered where he defined it as “features of social organizations, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (p. 167). Further to these arguments, Putnam (2000) suggested that there are three dimensions along which social capital can be measured (vertical versus horizontal hierarchy): (a) the extent to which networks involve relationships among actors similarly located in the hierarchy (horizontal) as opposed to relationships between actors located at different levels; (b) strong versus weak ties, where stronger ties create greater solidarity and sometimes an exclusionary relationship within the network, and weak ties, which bring with them the opportunity to access a more heterogeneous group; and (c) bridging versus bonding, where bridging spans a gap between two groups and bonding brings members of a group together.

Similarly, Fukuyama (1995) analyzed the link between trust, social capital and national economic success. He defined social capital as “the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organizations” (p. 10). Fukuyama (2001) further expanded the definition of social capital “as the existence of a certain set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permit cooperation among them” (p. 16). These researchers (Coleman, 1988; Fukuyama, 1995, 2001;

Putnam, 1993, 2000) contended that a system of mutual trust is an important form of social capital on which future obligations and expectations may be based. From this foundation the social capital construct has evolved and having achieved considerable salience, it has been regarded as a constructive element in the creation and maintenance of economic prosperity (Fukuyama, 1995; Grootaert & Bastelaer, 2002; Putnam, 1993; 2000).

Tyler and Kramer (1996) established a relationship between trust and the degree of formalization of rules in an organization. In the absence of trust, “people . . . increasingly insist on costly sanctioning mechanisms to defend their interests” (Tyler & Kramer, p. 4). In this light, creating rules therefore may serve as a substitute for trust. In their research, Sitkin and Sitkin (1996) focused on the effect of introducing rules on members of the organization and found that the imposition of rules resulted in hurt feelings and a loss of the sense of professionalism. Distrust emerged as workers began to perceive the tension and contradictions between their level of professionalism and control systems.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) advanced that the organizational structure serves an important purpose in the development of trust, especially in the early stages of a relationship, where “at the beginning of a relationship, trust will rely on deterrents or institutional structures” (p. 570). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) further found that in structures that are hierarchical in nature that without trust, individuals resort to control mechanisms such as rules to protect themselves. These scholars argued that this led to a structure that is typically dysfunctional and counterproductive.

Trust then, is a two-way process which can allow an individual the ability to calculate whether others can be trusted and the degree of trust that others may have for the person who is to trust. People tend to attribute the motivations for the behaviour of members outside the group to underlying group attitudes or values and for members inside the group to situational factors that might have influenced the behaviour. This circumstance can lead to destructive group biases because out-of-group members may be viewed with suspicion or distrust, but also because insiders can be afforded too much trust due to *group think*. That is to say that no one challenges *a priori* assumptions or conventional wisdom.

Education and trust.

In Fukuyama's (1995) book, *Trust*, he discusses evidence of trust and the problems of trust experienced at that time in our history, but he does not clearly define what trust is; he assumes that we know tacitly or by implication what he means. Likewise, Kouzes and Posner (2002, 2003) describe the centrality of trust for leaders and outline how it can be created by new leaders, but they do not define trust except by inference, even though they state that it is an essential part of a leader's credibility. Hosmer (1995) observed the difficulty of defining trust: "there appears to be widespread agreement on the importance of trust in human conduct, but unfortunately there also appears to be an equally widespread lack of agreement on a suitable definition of the construct" (p. 380). Bennis (1994) notes the trust factor as a pivotal factor in a leader's success.

Trust is a key element of a learning community's soul. Trust contributes to the learning community where people feel free to express ideas, take action and evaluate outcomes in an atmosphere where there is no retaliation or ill feelings by the principal. (p. 58)

Tschannen-Moran (2004) echoes Bennis (1994) in identifying "trustworthy leadership as the heart of productive schools" (p. 18) and suggests that well-intentioned reform will fail if the principal fails to earn the trust of their faculty. Dirks and Ferrin (2001) found that "higher levels of trust are expected to result in more positive attitudes, higher levels of cooperation and other forms of workplace behaviour, and superior levels of performance" (p. 451). From the forgoing, it is tempting to conclude that trust provides the conditions under which cooperation, higher performance, and more positive attitudes and perceptions are likely to occur.

At first, in the 1980s, Hoy and Koppersmith's (1984) contributions to the study of trust in schools focused on school climate. Then, increasingly his work included analysis of the social dynamics, professional interactions, and organizational structures in schools. As early as 1984, Hoy and Koppersmith (1984) wrote,

the principal is the single most important individual in setting the tone of relationships in an elementary school. If the principal's behaviour produces a climate of trust with teachers, it seems likely that this climate will permeate relationships among colleagues. Trust produces trust. (p. 83)

In 1988 Tschannen-Moran wrote her dissertation on trust in urban elementary schools with W. K. Hoy as her dissertation committee chairperson (advisor). It is not

surprising, therefore, that they came to similar conclusions and use, on several occasions, similar definitions of trust. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998) developed a *Trust Scale* to measure the level of trust in schools and examined the interrelationships of faculty trust in students, teachers, principals, and parents. The researchers concluded that “aspects of climate and authenticity are related differentially to faculty trust. Trust in the principal is determined primarily by the behaviour of the principal” while trust among teachers is “determined by the behaviour of teachers in relation to one another” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998, p. 348).

Then Tschannen-Moran (2001) defined trust as “one party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is (a) benevolent, (b) reliable, (c) competent, (d) honest, and (e) open” (p. 224) and that trust was related to collaboration. Tschannen-Moran (2001) also conducted a study in which she examined relationships between the level of collaboration in a school and the level of trust. Her results indicate a significant link between teachers’ collaboration with the principal and their trust in the principal, collaboration with colleagues and trust in colleagues, and collaboration with parents and trust in parents. In *Trust Matters: Leadership for Successful Schools*, Tschannen-Moran (2004) expanded her earlier study but her definition of trust and its five facets remained substantially unchanged. At this time she gave greater acknowledgement to the various kinds of trust, discussing generalized trust, differentiated trust, blind trust, provisional trust, initial trust, authentic trust, and optimal trust. Tschannen-Moran (2004) also concluded that, “teachers’ trust in each other is

facilitated by principals who promote a school culture of cooperation and caring, not competition and favoritism” (p. 133).

Perhaps the largest and best-known study of trust in schools is Bryk and Schneider’s (2003) 10-year study of more than 400 Chicago elementary schools and their analysis of the relationships between trust and student achievement. Bryk and Schneider (2003) were able to establish a connection that “trust fosters a set of organizational conditions, some structural and others social-psychological, that make it more conducive for individuals to initiate and sustain the kinds of activities necessary to affect productivity improvements” (p. 40). Bryk and Schneider (2003) posited a kind of “relational trust” whereby the social exchanges of the school are organized around a distinct set of role relationships to which are attached expectations and obligations. When the expectations and obligations are met, then relational trust is built. According to Bryk and Schneider (2002), the cognitive features of the calculation take into consideration four features: (a) competence, (b) integrity, (c) personal regard for others, and (d) respect. Unlike the studies of Tschannen- Moran, Hoy, and others, *Trust in Schools* was a longitudinal study (of elementary schools) where the definition and use of trust combined the interpersonal dimension of trust as an interaction between people or groups with the social dimension of trust as an organizational behaviour. Bryk and Schneider’s (2002), work indicates that while trust alone does not guarantee success, schools with little or no trust have almost no chance of improving.

Moreover, Galford and Drapeau (2002) outlined the basics of trusted leadership. Trusted leaders: a) are multi-faceted and must be familiar with a multidimensional

approach to trust development; b) build upon the totality of multiple daily and even fragile interactions, and every personal exchange or meeting has the potential to build or destroy trust, even casual conversations; c) present constant opportunities for renewal and advancement in organizational gatherings and meetings that provide avenues to develop and cultivate trust; d) expend great effort building and cultivating trust over time by storing trust in “trust banks” to alleviate times of distrust; e) demonstrate skills in building and maintaining trust; and f) are fluent in both conveying a message of trust and possessing the ability to follow through in the delivery.

Tierney (2006) in his research of faculty and organizational trust on postsecondary campuses defined trust as “a dynamic process in which two or more parties are involved in a series of interactions that may require a degree of risk or faith on the part of one or both parties” (p. 57). He did not provide a list of the qualities that exist in trust relationships. Rather he provided various characteristics of establishing or discouraging trust that need to be examined when studying trust in organizations. The characteristics are the nature of communication, the structural and power relationships, consistency of behaviour within roles, antecedents of current trust conditions, and finally, the integrity that individuals demonstrate. For Tierney, there were four distinct cultures or groups of which professors were a part of and each group provides a different cultural context for trust. Trust in his framework can be a shared experience, a learned experience, or a conditional experience, but each experience of trust has its unique characteristics. Trust, as a shared experience,

1. offers a common interpretation of events,

2. fosters shared interests in the organization,
3. allows for the communication of facts about the organization's culture,
4. arises from reciprocity and mutuality,
5. cannot be said to be rational. (p. 64)

As a learned experience, trust is

1. influenced by a person's background and life experiences,
2. affected by the organizational culture relative to the person's background,
3. guided by the culture's mechanisms for inducting the person. (p. 68)

And finally, as a conditional experience, trust

1. is influenced by assumptions about one's obligations to the organization,
2. occurs over time,
3. is affected by the competence of the trustee. (p. 70)

More recently, research conducted over a 3-year period by Seashore Louis(2007) identified institutional trust as another important indicator of trust and a predictor of student achievement. In fact, Seashore Louis (2007) concluded that leader trust "cannot be easily separated from expanded teacher empowerment and influence. Teachers are not passive actors in the school but co-constructors of trust. As active professionals, teachers, who feel left out of important decisions, will react by withdrawing trust" (p. 18). Moreover, leaders take important steps toward the development of trust when they engage in actions that reduce teachers' perceptions of vulnerability, by consistently enforcing expectations such that teachers clearly understand why they receive rewards or sanctions, by maintaining confidentiality, and by treating all teachers fairly. She reported

that low levels of trust in school administrators “were associated with lower cohesion within the building, both among teachers and between the teachers and the principal” (p. 24). Seashore Louis (2007) suggests that trust is manifest in Western society in two common forms: relational and institutional trust which influence each other over time.

- Institutional trust (also referred to as social contract trust), is the expectation of appropriate behaviour in organized settings based on the norms of that institution. Parents, for example, generally trust that schools will do their utmost to try and educate and protect their child during school hours.
- Relational trust (also referred to as situated trust) is the inevitable result of repeated interactions with others in modern organizations. While personal relationships may be limited, individuals interact repeatedly with the same individuals, which leads to expectations specific to that individual or group. (p. 3)

Seashore Louis (2007) concurs with the behaviours advanced by Bryk and Schneider (2002), Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999), and Mishra (1996) that leaders and followers identify as central to a trusting relationship. Among these are integrity (or honesty and openness), concern (also called benevolence or personal regard for others), competence, and reliability (or consistency) (Seashore Louis, 2007, p. 4). Seashore Louis (2007) further suggests that while there is consensus that trust is critical in determining the effects of leadership on followers, little is known about how this effect occurs. Seashore Louis’ (2007) study findings suggest:

that teachers’ trust in administrators is based on behaviour, and that teachers do not clearly discriminate between interpersonal behaviours (caring, concern,

respectfulness) and administrative competence and reliability in initiating and orchestrating a complex change . . . paying attention to daily relationships with teachers inspires confidence in administrators as people, which in turn provides a foundation for trust in institutional leadership for change. (p. 17)

It is widely assumed that principals have both direct and indirect effects on teaching and student achievement, particularly with their structuring of teachers' working conditions (Wahlstrom et al., 2011). One of the most frequently explored ways in which leaders can influence an organization's effectiveness is through creating a positive organizational environment (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). Seashore Louis (2007) and Seashore Louis et al. (2010) suggest that future research can examine trust as an interpretive agent between the transactional (relationship-focused) and transformational (change and value-focused) aspects of leadership.

Even though trust has been written about extensively in the past 50 years (more extensively commencing in the 1980s), there is no commonly accepted definition. However, there are some common denominators of the construct that have emerged from the work of the researchers above who contributed significantly by defining the qualities of a culture or an individual. Forsyth (2008), in her review of trust research from the Rutgers School trust studies, the Ohio State School trust studies, the University of Chicago School trust studies, and the Oklahoma State School trust studies, acknowledged that it was "overwhelming but, at the same time it is an embarrassment of empirical riches. It reflects a scientific pursuit by multiple clusters of scholars to define, explore and establish a line of inquiry during a period of more than twenty years" (p. 20). This

reinforces that trust has been difficult to define because it is a complex concept. Table 2.1 presents a snapshot view of some of the definitions or conceptualizations of trust forwarded by trust researchers and authors.

Table 2.1

Definitions or conceptualizations of trust forwarded by prominent trust researchers and authors

Researcher(s)	Definition and Citation
Deutsch (1958)	“An individual may be said to have trust in the occurrence of an event if he expects its occurrence and his expectation leads to behaviour which he perceives to have greater negative motivational consequences if the expectation is not confirmed than positive motivational consequences if it is confirmed” (p. 266).
Rotter (1967)	“An expectancy held by an individual or a group that the word, promise, verbal or written statement of another individual or group can be relied upon” (p. 651).
Zand (1972)	“Actions that (a) increase one’s vulnerability(b) to another whose behaviour is not under one’s control (c) in a situation in which the penalty (disutility) one suffers if the other abuses that vulnerability is greater than the benefit (utility) one gains if the other does not abuse that vulnerability” (p. 230).
Frost, Stimpson, and Maughan (1978)	“An expectancy held by an individual that the behaviour (verbal or nonverbal) of another individual or a group of individuals would be altruistic and personally beneficial” (p. 103).
Gabarro (1978)	“a level of openness that exists between two people, the degree to which one person feels assured that another will not take malicious actions against him or her, and the extent to which one person can predictably expect the other’s good faith behaviour” (p. 295).
Luhmann (1979)	“Confidence in one’s expectations” (p. 4).
Hoy and Kupersmith (1984)	“A generalized expectancy held by the workgroup that the word, promise, and written or oral statement of another individual, group, or organization can be relied upon” (p. 82).
Lewis and Weigert (1985)	“A cognitive ‘leap’ beyond the expectations that reason and experience alone would warrant, an emotional bond among all those who participate in the relationship, and the undertaking of a risky course of action on the confident expectation that all persons involved in the action will act competently and dutifully” (pp. 970–971).
Zucker (1986)	“A set of background expectations (the common understandings that are taken for granted) and constitutive expectations (the rules defining the context or situation) shared by all involved in an exchange” (p. 54).

Researcher(s)	Definition and Citation
Dasgupta (1988)	“Trust brings a necessary element of reliability and stability to people who live and work together . . . It is the centerpiece to all transactions” (p. 49).
Gambetta (1988)	“Trust (or, symmetrically, distrust) is a particular level of the subjective probability with which an agent assesses that another agent or group of agents will perform a particular action, both before he can monitor such an action (or independently of his capacity ever to be able to monitor it) and in a context in which it affects his own action” (p. 217).
Coleman (1990)	“An incorporation of risk into the decision of whether or not to engage in[an]action based on estimates of the likely future behaviour of others. A rational actor will place trust if the ratio of p (the probability that the trustee is trustworthy) to $1-p$ is greater than the ratio of potential loss if the trustee is untrustworthy to potential gain if the trustee is trustworthy” (p. 91).
Baier (1986)	“Trust . . . is reliance on another’s good will . . . Where one depends on another’s good will one is necessarily vulnerable to the limits of that good will. One leaves others an opportunity to harm one when one trusts, and also shows one’s confidence that they will not take it. Trust then . . . is accepted vulnerability to another’s possible but not expected ill will (or lack of good will) toward one” (pp. 234–235), and; “Trust . . . is letting other persons (natural or artificial, such as firms, nations, etc.) take care of something the trust or cares about, where such “caring for” involves some exercise of discretionary powers” (p. 240).
Hoy, Tarter and Bliss (1989)	concluded that supportive principal approaches are associated with leader trustworthiness-specifically, where the principal uses constructive criticism and is “genuinely concerned about the professional and personal welfare of teachers” (p. 296).
Fukuyama (1995)	“The expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest, and cooperative behaviour, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of the community” (p. 26).
McAllister (1995)	“The extent to which a person is confident in and willing to act on the basis of the words, actions, and decisions of another” (p. 25).
Hosmer (1995)	“The expectation by one person, group, or firm of ethically justifiable behaviour—that is, morally correct decisions and actions based upon principles of analysis—on the part of the other person, group, or firm in a joint endeavor or economic exchange” (p. 399).
Cummings and Bromiley (1996)	“An individual’s belief or a common belief among a group of individuals that another individual or group (a) makes good faith efforts to behave in accordance with any commitments both explicit and implicit, (b) is honest in whatever negotiations preceded such commitments, and (c) does not take excessive advantage of another even when the opportunity is available” (p. 303).
Jones (1996)	“To trust someone is to have an attitude of optimism about her goodwill and to have the confident expectation that, when the need arises, the one trusted will be directly

Researcher(s)	Definition and Citation
	and favorably moved by the thought that you are counting on her” (pp. 5–6).
Mishra (1996)	“One party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the belief that the latter party is(a) competent, (b) reliable,(c) open, and(d) concerned” (p. 265).
Hwang and Burgers (1997)	Trust is a condition needed for cooperation, but it is not sufficient in and of itself. Trust functions as a moderator.
Shaw (1997)	“The belief that those on whom we depend will meet our expectations ” (p. 21).
Lewicki , McAllister and Bies (1998)	“Confident positive expectations regarding trustee’s behaviour, set within particular contextual parameters and constraints” (p. 441).
Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer (1998)	“Trust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another” (p. 395).
Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998)	“Trust is one party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open. A general confidence and overall optimism in occurring events; . . . believing in others in the absence of compelling reasons to disbelieve; a group’s generalized expectancy that the words, actions, and promises of another individual, group, or organization can be relied on” (p. 342).
Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000)	Trust is one party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party has the “trust facets of benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness . . . and these facets of trust form a coherent construct of trust” (p. 556).
Goddard, Hoy, and Tschannen-Moran (2001)	“is multifaceted and has different bases and phases depending on the context” (p. 3).
Solomon and Flores (2001)	“Trust is cultivated through speech, conversation, commitments, and action. Trust is never something ‘already at hand,’ it is always a matter of human effort. It can and often must be conscientiously created, not simply taken for granted” (p. 87).
Bryk and Schneider (2003)	“A calculation whereby an individual decides whether or not to engage in an action with another individual that incorporates some degree of risk with four specific considerations: respect, personal regard, competence in core role responsibilities, and personal integrity” (p. 41).
Edmondson (2004)	“leadership behaviours to facilitate psychological safety: leader accessibility, inviting input and feedback, and modeling openness and fallibility” (p. 247)
Hoy and Tarter (2004)	“A generalized expectancy held by teachers that the word, action, and written or oral statement of others can be relied upon” (p. 295).
Tschannen-Moran	“One party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence

Researcher(s)	Definition and Citation
(2004)	that the latter party is (a)benevolent, (b)reliable,(c)competent, (d) honest, and(e)open” (p. 224).
Clark and Payne (2006)	“the facets of fairness, openness, ability, and integrity are salient with respect to leader trust” (p. 1165).
Currall and Inkpen (2006)	“trust is the decision to rely on another party (person, group, or organization) under a condition of risk. Reliance is action through which one party permits its fate to be determined by another. Reliance is based on positive expectations of or confidence in, the trustworthiness of another party. Risk is the potential that the trusting party will experience negative outcomes, that is, ‘injury or loss’ if the other party proves untrustworthy. Thus, risk creates the opportunity for trust” (p. 236).
Forsyth, Barnes, and Adams (2006)	“Trust is one party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent; reliable; competent; honest; and open” (p. 130)
Hardin (2006)	“Belief that the other person or group has the right intentions toward us and the competence to do what they are being trusted to do” (p. 17).
Hoy, Tarter, and Hoy (2006)	“The group’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open” (p. 9).
Reina and Reina (2006)	“transactional trust has three elements: contractual, communication, and competence” (p. 16).
Tierney (2006)	“A dynamic process in which two or more parties are involved in a series of interactions that may require a degree of risk or faith on the part of one or both parties” (p. 57).
Schoorman, Mayer, and Davis (2007)	“Trust is the “willingness to take risk,” and the level of trust is an indication of the amount of risk that one is willing to take. Three factors of ability, benevolence, and integrity can contribute to trust in a group or organization” (p. 345).
Seashore Louis (2007)	“Trust is defined as confidence in or reliance on the integrity, veracity, justice, friendship, or other sound principle, of another person or group” (p. 2).
Day (2009)	“the eight facets of trust are based on the confidence in (a) benevolence, (b) reliability, (c) competence, (d) honesty, (e) openness, (f) wisdom, (g) educational ideals, and (h) care” (pp. 725–726).
Farrell (2009)	“Trust is relational and involves considered expectations about the interests of others to behave in a trustworthy manner. Trust is not diffuse - it is likely to be limited to a particular matter (or matters);” (pp. 128–129).
Cosner (2010)	“The development of trust by principals through five broad and mutually reinforcing leadership actions: a) increasing time for teacher interaction, b) enhancing and expanding teacher interaction patterns, c) improving the nature and quality of school wide teacher interactions, d) strengthening work groups and work

Researcher(s)	Definition and Citation
	tasks for collaboration and trust, and e) developing a culture of collaboration” (p. 131).
Ghamrawi (2011)	“Trust is self-efficacy, collaboration, commitment, collective vision, and building a strong sense of belonging to the organization” (p. 337).
Van Maele and Van Houtte (2011; 2012)	“as a willingness to be vulnerable on the basis of the confidence that they are benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open” (p. 440), and “as confidence that expectations will be met” (p. 880).
Walker, Kutsyuruba, and Noonan (2011)	“the extent to which one engages in a reciprocal relationship such that there is willingness to be vulnerable to and assume risk with the confidence that the other party will possess some semblance of benevolence, competence, honesty, openness, reliability, respect, care, wisdom, and educational ideals” (p. 472).
Yin, Lee and Jin (2011)	“trust is a person’s confidence in his or her expectation that the other party will fulfill his or her obligations in a reasonably predictable way and a person’s willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the latter is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest and open” (p. 37).
Cho and Perry (2012)	“elements including competence, consistency, fairness, integrity, loyalty, openness, receptivity, benevolence, and value congruence; synthesized into three, ability, benevolence, and integrity” (p. 385).

These academic endeavors, from researchers worldwide, continue to lay the foundation for the examination of trust in institutional and organization settings. Yet, when people are asked for a definition of trust, they give examples of what they understand trust to be and how to create it, but often have difficulty specifying precisely what they mean. In the literature, even without a common definition, certain concepts or qualities of trust are repeated. In addition, there are several common attributes regarding trust in the literature. Table 2.2 summarizes some of these.

Table 2.2

Attributes of Trust in the Literature

Researcher(s)	Available	Benevolent, Caring	Competent, Accountable	Consistent	Honesty, Integrity	Interdependent	Open, Share, Transparent	Reliable, Expectations	Reciprocity	Vulnerable, Risk
Baier (1986)		X	X							
Bryk & Schneider (2003)		X	X		X		X	X		X
Cho & Perry (2012)	X	X	X		X		X	X		
Clark & Payne (2006)			X		X		X	X		
Coleman (1990)										X
Cosner (2010)		X					X			
Cummings & Bromiley (1996)		X			X			X		
Currall & Inkpen (2006)			X		X			X		X
Dasgupta (1988)								X		
Day (2009)		X	X		X		X	X		
Deutsch (1958)		X	X		X			X	X	X
Edmondson (2004)		X			X		X			
Farrell (2009)		X								
Forsyth, Barnes & Adams (2006)		X	X		X		X	X		
Frost, Stimpson, & Maughan (1978)		X				X		X		X
Fukuyama (1995)		X		X	X	X				

Researcher(s)	Available	Benevolent, Caring	Competent, Accountable	Consistent	Honesty, Integrity	Interdependent	Open, Share, Transparent	Reliable, Expectations	Reciprocity	Vulnerable, Risk
Camerer (1998)										
Schoorman, Mayer,& Davis (2007)		X			X			X		X
Seashore Louis (2007)		X			X			X		
Shaw (1997)								X		
Solomon & Flores (2001)		X			X		X	X		
Tierney (2006)				X	X					
Tschannen-Moran (2004)		X	X		X		X	X		X
Tschannen-Moran &Hoy (1998, 2000)		X	X		X		X	X		
Van Maele & Van Houtte, (2011, 2012)	X	X	X		X		X	X		X
Walker, Kutsyuruba,& Noonan (2011)		X	X		X		X	X		X
Yin, Lee,& Jin (2011)		X	X		X		X	X		X
Zand (1972)										X
Zucker (1986)			X				X	X		

Based on existing definitions of trust, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (2000) is the one that appears to be the most often adopted by recent researchers as a definition applicable to schools and the elements are consistent with the aspects of trust examined throughout the literature. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) offer the following: "trust is

one party's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is (a) benevolent, (b) reliable, (c) competent, (d) honest, and (e) open" (p. 7).

The characteristics that make an individual trustworthy are explained below.

Benevolence: The belief that one's well-being and interests will be taken into consideration and protected by another party/individual;

Reliability: The predictability and consistency of one's behaviour;

Competence: Dependence of one party on another to have the skills necessary to fulfill an expectation;

Honesty: An individual's character, integrity, and sense of genuineness;

Openness: The ability to share information without hiding or concealing relevant details.

To these five facets, Day (2009) added: a) Wisdom: The extent to which the leader makes timely decisions which are in the interests of the students, the school and its staff; b) Educational ideals: The extent to which hope and optimism are nurtured, realized and renewed by the leader, and; c) Care: The extent to which the leader is seen to care for the personal as well as the academic selves of others (p. 276). Given Day's explanation of his facets wisdom could be incorporated under competence and educational ideals (hope) and care could be nested under benevolence.

Scholars have long recognized that people's pre-existing beliefs shape their perceptions and interpretations of reality. In a similar way, initial trust guides people's selective perceptions and interpretations of information. Researchers investigating trust acknowledge it to be the prerequisite for collaborative working relationships, even if the

stated goal is limited to improved student achievement.³ Despite academic, interdisciplinary rigor (or perhaps owing to it) the word trust continues to act as signifier to an ever-widening set of signified meanings. For my study, trust is defined as the voluntary willingness to be vulnerable to colleagues (fellow teachers and administration) with the expectation that by doing so positive outcomes for students and staff will occur.

Collaboration, collegiality, and community.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) consider trust to be “the lubrication that makes it possible for organizations to work” (p. 43). McIntyre (2011) advanced that trust is an essential foundation for bonding people together in relationships that allow them to work together for the same shared purpose. In other words, trust is a necessary condition for successful collaboration among school members. McIntyre (2011) cautions that:

Too often it is much more convenient and less draining to work alone than it is to navigate the sea of arrangements inherent in working together. For that reason, it is incumbent upon leadership to facilitate a supportive environment, including time, structure, participation opportunity, and monitoring of the process and outcomes that ensure effective teacher collaboration. (p. 65)

If this occurs this increases teachers’ sense of affiliation with each other, with the school, and their sense of mutual support. In order for the staff to collaborate Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) also indicate that “supportive leadership, mutual respect steeped in

³ For example, Bryk & Driscoll (1988); Bryk & Schneider (1996, 2002); Evans (1996); Friend & Cook (2003); Gabarro (1978); Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2003); Rotter (1970); Smylie & Hart (1999); and Solomon & Flores (2001).

strong professional knowledge, and a climate that invited risk taking and innovation” (p. 50) is necessary.

In the past few decades, collaboration has been a term often used in organizational and educational literature, especially in conjunction with the topics of organizational improvement and school reform. There are some definitions of collaboration in the literature, for example Tschannen-Moran’s (1998) in her study of urban elementary schools where she defines collaboration as the extent to which teachers perceived that they were not only involved in but also exercised influence over school-level and classroom-level decisions. Tschannen-Moran (2001) also conducted a study in which she examined relationships between the level of collaboration in a school and the level of trust. The results indicated a significant link between teachers’ collaboration with the principal and their trust in the principal, collaboration with colleagues and trust in colleagues, and collaboration with parents and trust in parents. If collaboration is an “important mechanism” for finding solutions to problems, trust will be necessary for schools “to reap the benefits of greater collaboration” (Tschannen-Moran, 2001, p. 327).

Hord (2008, 2009) also defined collaboration as the interaction between and among faculty in which information is shared about school operational matters, including the instructional program, school restructuring, and school reform. Collaboration reflects the notion of the school as a community, where schools are characterized as holding common values and expectations that shape members’ interactions (Ghamrawi, 2011; Wahlstrom & Seashore Louis, 2010). Leonard and Leonard (2001) and Marzano (2003) stated that collaboration is a key element in collegiality, where collegiality involves teacher

interactions that are collaborative, and that collegiality generally refers to relations among teachers that are supportive of professional efforts and based on shared norms of professional behaviour. Barth (1990) cautioned that in schools, collaboration may appear as congeniality and not collegiality.

Barth (1990) described congeniality as “people getting along with one another. Friendly, cordial associations” (p. 30). In congenial environments, individuals maintain superficial harmony by refraining from articulating organizational goals, by avoiding systematic review of practices, and by avoiding topics or situations that might create conflict. Schools may pursue congenial staff relations at the expense of examining diverse points of view as demonstrated in a study by Timperley and Robinson (1998). In their case study they examined the collegial problem-solving process at a high school and they found that the staff’s desire to maintain a cohesive school culture led to little overt dissent or debate about issues. The staff readily endorsed proposed solutions, even though they were not committed to their implementation. Congenial relations were valued more than the quality of problem solving. Given this insight, Griffin (1995) concluded that a pervasive culture of congeniality may mitigate against building relationships in which dissident views are recognized as contributing to effective learning and problem solving; where the congeniality amongst members of a school staff was representative of “prevailing forms of politesse” (p. 29). All of these trends include collaboration as a central theme where collaboration, the ability to communicate effectively with one another and trust have become and will continue to be significant factors in school dynamics.

Collegiality progresses to relationships of community when several additional characteristics are present. The literature on community in education draws from a history of literature on community in society and community in organizations (Cho & Ringquist, 2011; Clark & Payne, 2006; Coleman, 1990; Currall & Inkpen, 2006; Hord 2008, 2009; Hoy & Smith, 2007; Kotter, 2002; Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Little, 2006; MacMillan, 2006; Perkins, 2003; Putnam, 1995; Rosengren & Lefton, 1970; Schoorman et al., 2007; Senge, 1990). There are quite a number of names in the educational literature for this kind of relationship—community of learners, professional learning community, caring community, communities of practice, professional community, to name a few—and there is also considerable definition in the literature. In the context of schools, collaborative and collegial strategies are built with strong professional communities in which there is joint deliberation and decision making. Such professional communities broaden and enhance trust that teachers and principals will act in the best interests of each other (Elmore, Peterson, & McCarthey, 1996; Goldring & Rallis, 1993; Seashore Louis, Kruse, & Marks, 1996).

In a study that examined the potential for the school improvement plan to influence the development of community, Scribner, Cockrell, Cockrell, and Valentine (1999) found that interconnectedness and interdependence with peers were essential components of collaboration. Within society as well, indications of the value that people place on relating to others are evident in the widespread interest in interpersonal communication, intercultural sensitivity, and the awareness of gender issues and relationship building (Bush & Folger, 1994). Therefore, when relationships are built and

trust increases, the culture of group, organization, or community becomes healthier, more open, and more resilient.

Four attributes of community are most frequently repeated. Members of a community (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Forsyth, 2008; Forsyth et al., 2006; French, 2003; Goddard et al., 2000; Goddard & Skrla, 2006; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Hord 2008, 2009; Leithwood et al., 2004; Little, 2006; Marzano, 2003; McIntyre, 2011; Schoorman et al., 2007; Seashore Louis, 2007; Seashore Louis et al., 1996; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Sergiovanni, 2005; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; Timperley & Robinson, 1998; Tschannen-Moran, 2011; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2006; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011, 2012; Wahlstrom & Seashore Louis, 2008; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Walker et al., 2011):

1. share common values, norms, and purposes for their work and these values are reflected in their day-to-day actions;
2. share their practice with each other, through mutual observation and professional dialogue (both formal and informal);
3. support their colleagues in relationships that lean heavily toward the familial (*gemeinschaft*) and not the bureaucratic (*gesellschaft*);
4. learn together and apply what they learn to their work

According to Hord (2009), six dimensions of professional learning communities exist.

They are:

1. Shared beliefs, values, and a vision of what the school should be;
2. Shared and supportive leadership where power, authority, and decision making are distributed across the community;

3. Supportive structural conditions, such as time, place, and resources;
4. Supportive relational conditions that include respect and caring among the community, with trust as an imperative;
5. Collective learning, intentionally determined, to address student needs and the increased effectiveness of the professionals; and,
6. Peers sharing their practice to gain feedback, and thus individual and organizational improvement. (p. 42)

From her research, Hord (2008) concludes that trust is a significant contributor to developing learning communities, and leadership must develop this. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) assert that collaborative learning communities demonstrate a strong influence on student success and teacher retention because teachers in these kinds of environments are committed to, among other things, “valuing each other as people in relationships of care, respect, and challenge” (p. 9). As part of a learning community, when teachers become involved in decision making, they tend to begin to be aware of the larger organizational picture, develop an enlarged sense of their professional role, and become effective as a result (Hord, 2008).

Of note, the word community derives from the Latin word “communis” meaning common sharing. Sergiovanni (1994) argued that schools must play a vital role in community building by providing care, developing relationships, creating a common purpose, and fostering a sense of attachment or interconnectedness amongst people. Collaboration, with its emphasis on common goals, relationships, and mutual

interdependence (Cook & Friend, 1991; Welch & Sheridan, 1995), is a way to build community as well as being a way of life within a community.

As Christensen, Eldredge, Ibom, Johnston, and Thomas (1996) concluded after 5 years of collaborative involvement in a professional learning school, it was through learning to trust each other that they were willing to take risks with their own beliefs and dialogue became possible. Trust, then, in this example, is related to the interdependent nature of collaborative relationships where interrelatedness requires that individuals recognize and value the other person as well as the skills and expertise that the other individual brings to the collaboration. Spillane and Seashore Louis (2002), building on the work of Bryk, Camburn, and Louis (1999), found that of all the facilitating factors for a professional community, social trust was, by far, the strongest, and that trust and respect acted as a foundation on which collaboration, reflective dialogue, and de-privatization of practice could occur. Further, Sergiovanni (2005) stated that:

Leaders should be trustworthy, and this worthiness is an important virtue.

Without trust leaders lose credibility. . . . The building of trust is an organizational quality. Once trust exists in a school, it becomes a norm that sets the standard for how teachers, for example, should behave toward each other, toward their students, trust works to liberate people to be their best, to give others their best, and to take risks. All of these are behaviours that help schools become better places for students. (p. 90)

Trust predicates successful collaborative work.

Trust, according to numerous authors (Cho & Ringquist, 2011; Clark & Payne, 2006; Coleman, 1990; Currall & Inkpen, 2006; Hord 2008, 2009; Hoy & Smith, 2007; Kotter, 2002; Leithwood et al., 2004; Little, 2006; MacMillan, 2006; Perkins, 2003; Putnam, 1995; Rosengren & Lefton, 1970; Schoorman et al., 2007; Seashore Louis, 2007; Seashore Louis et al., 1996; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Senge, 1990; Sergiovanni, 2005; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; Smith, 1998; Timperley & Robinson, 1998; Tschannen-Moran, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2006; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011, 2012; Wahlstrom & Seashore Louis, 2008; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Walker et al., 2011) is an essential component of the collaborative process. A climate of trust and openness is required to build and sustain collaboration and a learning community but trust also may be an outcome of the process. Professional community is too frequently considered an administratively initiated program to encourage teachers to analyze student achievement data and turn it into increased test scores. Seashore Louis et al. (2010) found in their analysis that the reality is more complex. “Not only do teachers need to work together around instruction and student learning, but administrators need to be part of that process” (p. 331). The quality of relationships in schools and other organizations can be characterized as a progression from individualism, as the weakest form of interpersonal professional relationship, through collaboration to collegiality to community, the strongest form (Sergiovanni, 2005). School leaders should understand the factors that influence the development of trust such as personal disposition, shared values and attitudes, organizational stage, institutional support, and assumptions (Tschannen-Moran,

2011). This is why an understanding of trust is important in the organizational setting of a school, especially if collaboration, collegiality, and community are to be fostered.

Significance of the Literature

Whether because of its non-scientific provenance or its widespread appeal within the social sciences, the term trust has taken on an array of diverse meanings, even within disciplines. The foregoing synthesis of literature on trust has revealed a wide scope of definitions as well as a number of common aspects or facets of trust. In some, from a philosophical perspective, trust has to do with ethically and morally justifiable behaviour. In psychological terms, trust deals with the willingness of people to make themselves vulnerable to another. However trust, in economic terms, is viewed based on cost and benefits, with trust being a commodity. Trust is warranted when the expected gain from placing oneself at risk to another is positive. The organizational perspective forwards a number of approaches to defining trust. Trust is seen as an essential variable in collaborative or cooperative relationships from the micro, meso, and macro levels. Definitions of trust include words such as openness, predictability, good faith, competence, honesty, and obligations and expectations as part of the cultural norms. So, an organizational definition of trust would be a collective judgment that another group will not act opportunistically, is honest in negotiations, and makes a good faith effort to behave in accordance with commitments. There is disagreement about trust and distrust being on a continuum versus trust and distrust existing as two separate dimensions or thresholds. In an educational context, trust is seen as being relational, involving respect,

benevolence, competence, and integrity. Specific to the education literature, building trust is understood as a key factor in the process of developing collaborative relationships. Lacking the understanding of how to build trust among staff can lead to difficulty when attempting to explore collaborative relationships within the school culture.

In the literature reviewed, one of the necessary elements of trust identified is interdependence, where both parties have to rely on each other. In this reliance there is vulnerability, and with this vulnerability there is risk. Risk creates an opportunity for trust which leads to more risk taking in a relationship or within an organization. The degree of interdependence is also a factor in the level of vulnerability that is assumed by the parties. Where there is no interdependence, there is no need for trust. Sebring and Bryk (2000) examined the role of social relationships in schools and their impact on student achievement and concluded that schools with a high degree of *relational trust*, as they call it, are far more likely to make the kinds of changes that help raise student achievement than those where relations are poor. Trust, then, is the connective tissue (Bryk & Schneider, 2003) that holds teachers together for the kind of community necessary for enhancing student learning.

Schools, with the move to increased accountability, are focused on promoting high levels of learning for all children. With the increased pressure to produce results, coupled with the Alberta Commission on Learning's recommendation that all Alberta schools implement Professional Learning Communities, and given the Alberta government's accountability pillar (Alberta Education, 2003), it is even more crucial that

school staffs work together because increasingly, teachers are finding themselves operating in an environment of heightened public scrutiny.

Educational reforms, as articulated in policy and school literature, seem to suggest that change can happen in compliance with prescribed directives. These measurements and accountability (concepts adopted from the economic and management sectors), translate to “bottom-line” analyses based on test results and the ranking and sorting of schools. Although few people would challenge the idea that the *state* has a significant interest in a well-educated population, controversy persists over how that is best achieved. These policies and directives assume that there is a school environment or culture where trust is present such that these prescribed changes can indeed happen. Effective leaders recognize that trust is indispensable for the well-being of their organizations, the people who work for them, and the people who are served by them. Although we know that this is true, leaders need to understand how an individual experiences trust in other people, groups, or organizations and how trust evolves between people, groups, or organizations.

The literature also points to how a school develops its own personality and *way of doing things* over time. Schein (1992) argued that “culture is an abstraction, yet the forces that are created in social and organizational situations that derive from culture are powerful” (p. 3). Without understanding such forces, he contends, we become victims to these forces; so “once we learn to see the world through cultural lenses, all kinds of things begin to make sense that initially were mysterious, frustrating, or seemingly stupid” (p. 7). My review of the literature persuades me that the structure and process of

education are important characteristics in the maintenance of an educational organization, but that the relational culture of the organization heavily influences achieving the desired results in education.

The foundational trust theory literature of Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001, 2003, 2011) and Bryk and Schneider (2002) points to the importance of trust as an essential variable amongst staff members in schools. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000, 2001) led studies that relate to trust in schools and they have been instrumental in demonstrating, over multiple studies, that trust facilitates collaboration and improves student achievement and effective school leadership. Siegall and Worth (2001) reported that teachers produce better outcomes when there is greater trust in the school's administration. Hargreaves (2003) proposed that the establishment of strong networks and collaborative relations is easier in a school rich in social capital as this relates to trust. Coleman (1988) observed that "a group within which there is extensive trust is able to accomplish much more than a comparable group without trustworthiness and trust" (p. 101). Trust is an essential aspect of being human that shapes the way a person experiences the world. Every relationship involves its presence or its absence.

Finally, the literature has demonstrated that, in general terms, trust relationships involve risk, reliability, vulnerability, and expectation (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2003). If there is nothing at stake, or if one party does not require anything of the other, trust is not an issue. Bryk and Schneider (2002) indicated that while trust alone does not guarantee success, schools with little or no trust have almost no chance of improving. Findings suggest that when there was a greater perceived level of trust in a school,

teachers had a greater sense of efficacy—the belief in their ability to affect actions leading to success. Trust tended to be pervasive: when teachers trusted their principal, they also were more likely to trust staff, parents, and students. As with the connection between increased educator trust and student achievement, the relationship between trust and collaboration is not one of simple cause and effect. Instead, it would appear that trust and collaboration are mutually reinforcing: the more parties work together, the greater opportunity they have to get to know one another and build trust. Building trust between educators, whether teacher to teacher or teacher to administrator is rarely a simple matter.

Towards a Definition of Trust

The root of trust examined.

The word trust is derived from Old Norse, *treysta*, which means trust or firmness; Old English *trēowe* which means faithful; Old Germanic *trōysta* which means to make firm, strong, or safe, to give firmness or security to; and these in turn come from an Indo-European base word, *drew*, which means tree (The Oxford Dictionary of English [OED], 2009).

The OED defines trust as “confidence in or reliance on some quality or attribute of a person or thing; fidelity, reliability, loyalty, etc.; the quality of being trustworthy.”

The OED also advances that trust means

As a noun:

a) firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability or strength of someone or something.

- b) acceptance of the truth of a statement without evidence or investigation.
- c) the state of being responsible for someone or something.
- d) an arrangement whereby a person (a trustee) is made the nominal owner of property to be held or used for the benefit of one or more others.
- e) the condition of having confidence reposed in one, or of being entrusted with something; especially in the phrases in trust, to one's trust, under trust like a body of trustees, or an organization or company managed by trustees.

As a verb:

- a) have trust in.
- b) (trust with) have the confidence to allow (someone) to have, use, or look after.
- c) (trust to) commit (someone or something) to the safekeeping of.
- d) (trust to) place reliance on (luck, fate).
- e) have confidence; hope

It is compelling that the origin of the word trust is the same as the origin of the word true (OED, 2009). The word true “is derived from Middle English trewe, from Old English trēowe faithful or loyal; similar to Old High German gitriuwī faithful, Old Irish derb sure, Dutch trouw, German treu, Old Norse tryggr, Gothic triggws and Sanskrit dāruṇa hard, (dāru wood)” (OED, 2009); all from the same Indo European base, drew, and conveys the same basic sense, firm as a tree; something that is well anchored and will not topple—even when tested. The range of meanings for true (OED, 2009) include:

- faithful; loyal, constant, reliable; certain,
- in accordance with fact; that agrees with reality; not false
- exact; accurate, right, correct
- rightful; lawful, legitimate
- real; genuine; authentic
- honest, virtuous

The truth of something is often uncertain, and must be discovered or demonstrated inexorably, proven beyond a doubt. The word prove is derived from the Latin word *probāre*, which means to test, and *probus* which means probe. The range of meanings for the word probe (OED, 2009) includes:

- to test by experiment, a standard, comparison, analysis; to determine quality
- to establish the truth or genuineness of, as by evidence or argument
- to establish the validity or authenticity of (a will, etc.)
- to show (oneself) to be capable, dependable, trustworthy; to give demonstration of by action
- to test or verify the correctness of a calculation (math)
- to be found or shown by experience or trial

Also to be considered is the word *probity* which is derived from the same Latin root as the word probe, meaning uprightness in one's dealings, complete honesty.

These definitions of trust imply a standard or expectation derived by an individual's judgment, where judgment is an interactive process between the person

doing the judging and whatever is being judged. The fact that trust is a judgment may explain why the concept of trust is intuitively easy to understand but the underpinning logic is complex and difficult to pin down. In addition, there appears to be a strong link between the concept of trust and the concept of truth and verification but these dictionary definitions still ask us to consider what it means to trust someone.

Individuals do not enter a working relationship as a blank slate. They carry with them a complex set of norms and expectations that guide their judgment about appropriate behaviour, where they should place their confidence, and what they should suspect. Trust is a concept that is complex and difficult to define, yet it appears to be a critical element that bonds individual and collective relationships together.

Rubric of trust.

Lewicki et al. (1998) and Wicks, Berman, and Jones (1999) challenged the view that trust and distrust can be placed along a continuum. Rather, the authors contend they can both exist within multifaceted relations. The authors see relationships composed of facets where trust is partitioned based on the task at hand and propose that this is the rule rather than the exception; “As trust relationships evolve from orientation through exploration and testing to stabilization, trust evolves from impressionistic and highly undifferentiated to more finely grained and differentiated along specific bases” (Lewicki et al., 1998, p. 443). Mature relationships tend to be characterized by greater specification where there is a shift from the question of “How much do I trust,” to “In what areas and in what ways do I trust?” Lewicki et al. referred to this phenomenon as a

compartmentalized, segmented relationship which in their findings is the norm rather than the exception in professional and personal lives. They offered a more nuanced approach that sees relationships not as unidimensional and uniplex, but as complex, multidimensional constructs.

Lewicki et al. (1998) posited that within the building blocks of a relationship, in a given context, at a given point in time, around a given interdependency, trust or distrust can develop. This development occurs because within the same relationship, different encounters accrue to create the texture and essence of the tapestry—a tapestry that continues to be woven as the relationship evolves. Lewicki et al. demonstrated this tapestry through the following example:

I may get to know a professional colleague in my academic department fairly well. Over time, I may learn that this colleague is excellent as a theoretician, adequate but not exceptional as a methodologist, highly limited in skills as a classroom teacher, completely at odds with me in his political beliefs, outstanding as a golfer, tediously boring in committee meetings but periodically quite insightful, and terrible at keeping appointments on time. My disposition toward my colleague will be a function of all of these different encounters with him, and I may have to learn to live with all of them if he becomes my department chair. With an appreciation of the richness of our relationship and the varied facets of my colleague's "presentations of self," I can come to understand and appreciate those domains where it is appropriate for me to trust him (and in what respects) and those domains where trusting him is inappropriate. (p. 442).

Furthermore, Lewicki et al. (1998) adapted Luhmann's formulation of trust-distrust and depicted it in table format to demonstrate that trust and distrust exist as two separate dimensions and not as part of a continuum. The authors suggested that for each dimension, specific facets sustain trust or distrust and that as "specific facets in the relationship change (through dialogue, interaction, joint decision making, common experience, and so on), these changes will end to move the operational level of trust or distrust upward or downward" (p. 445).

Under conditions of low trust/low distrust, an individual has no reason to be guarded. Under conditions of high trust/low distrust, an individual has no reason to suspect the other. Under low trust/high distrust, an individual has ample reason to be wary and watchful. Under conditions of high trust/high distrust, an individual has reasons to be confident in the other in some facets but also suspicious in other facets. Lewicki et al. (1998) believed that high trust/high distrust is the quadrant that is most prevalent for contemporary complex working relationships. The authors also qualified their assertions, stating that at their inception interpersonal relationships may be characterized in terms of any of the four quadrants. Due to the multifaceted nature of relationships, from the micro to meso levels, distrust and trust are elements that are embedded in all our social relations.

Lewicki et al.'s matrix (1998) furnishes a useful analytical lens through which to consider the complexity and dynamism of trust operating within organizations and personal relationships. Consider that a Rubik's cube has multiple routes to its ultimate solution. Similarly, one can understand that relationships exhibit continually evolving

nuances and shifts that demand immediate information gathering, analysis, decision, and action. What starts as proxy trust, framed in rules or law prescribed by an acknowledged leader, develops and grows through repeated interactions to achieve mutual benefit. Both parties sacrifice personal interest to sustain trust. There may be different trust levels between each individual or group and these trust levels shift depending on past experience and the nature of their collaboration.

Summary

The literature reviewed points to the importance of trust, but fails to delve into the phenomenon of trust as experienced and understood by individuals within an educational organization. This literature review is a springboard for my thinking and by conducting the synthesis has permitted me to formulate clearer directions for my dissertation research. Understanding the facets and dynamics of trust among organizational levels in schools is important because there is a tendency to assume knowledge of what trust is from individual experience; however, knowledge of how to improve trust at the group or system level is limited. As a former Alberta school-based administrator and now an executive staff officer for the Alberta Teachers' Association I continue to encounter administrators and teachers who talk about not being trusted by their superior but have difficulty in articulating what this mistrust looks like, what it sounds like.

Like Lewicki et al. (1998), I believe that trust is not a discrete entity that is present or not somewhere on the trust-distrust continuum, but rather that trust and sometimes distrust grows as the relationship grows, as boundaries and norms shift from

being determined by law or policy to being determined by common agreement on norms, work roles, and the nature of work. As the tapestry is woven, the threads of trust are strengthened or weakened and coloured by the situations encountered.

So why study trust? Trust influences the effectiveness of schools by enhancing the teamwork of staff, facilitating the efficiency of operations, and promoting a culture in which students can succeed (Cho & Ringquist, 2011). Researchers (Barnett & McCormick, 2004; Barth, 1990; Cho & Ringquist, 2011; Clark & Payne, 2006; Cosner, 2010; Currall & Inkpen, 2006; Day, 2009; Forsyth, 2008; Hardin, 2006; Hoy & Smith, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2004; McIntyre, 2011; Meyer et al., 2011; Seashore Louis, 2007; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Tschannen-Moran, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2006; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Walker et al., 2011) looking at trust in schools considered the ways in which trust is necessary for principals and teachers to feel confident enough in each other to collaborate and share decision-making responsibilities, as well as resources. The word trust continues to act as signifier to an ever-widening set of signified meanings.

In general terms, trust is commonly described as a general confidence and overall optimism in occurring events; it is belief in others in the absence of compelling reasons for disbelief (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Reviewing the roots of the word trust has led me to believe that as people's understanding of truth is made more detailed, defined, and certain by critically testing, so too is the judgment that something (or someone) can be trusted. Does this mean that trust cannot exist without testing? No, but it does mean that without adequate probing the judgment to trust may not be justified. For my

purposes in this research, with respect to trust being more narrowly defined and pertinent to the interactions between teachers and their respective principal in the organizational setting of a school, trust is the willingness to be vulnerable to colleagues (fellow teachers and administration) with the expectation that by doing so positive outcomes for students and staff will occur.

Based on the literature reviewed and OED definitions, this study commenced with the notion that in choosing to trust another, a person first undertakes a risk assessment (Figure 2.1). They undertake a risk assessment of themselves asking if what they feel is important and valuable is safe with the other person. Then the same assessment is completed on the other. These questions are answered based on the knowledge of at least two variables: a) positional trust: perceived competence of the other together with consistency of their words and actions; and b) relational trust: perceived character of the other based on interpersonal relationships and care for the other. Figure 2.1 is my conceptual diagram of this supposition.

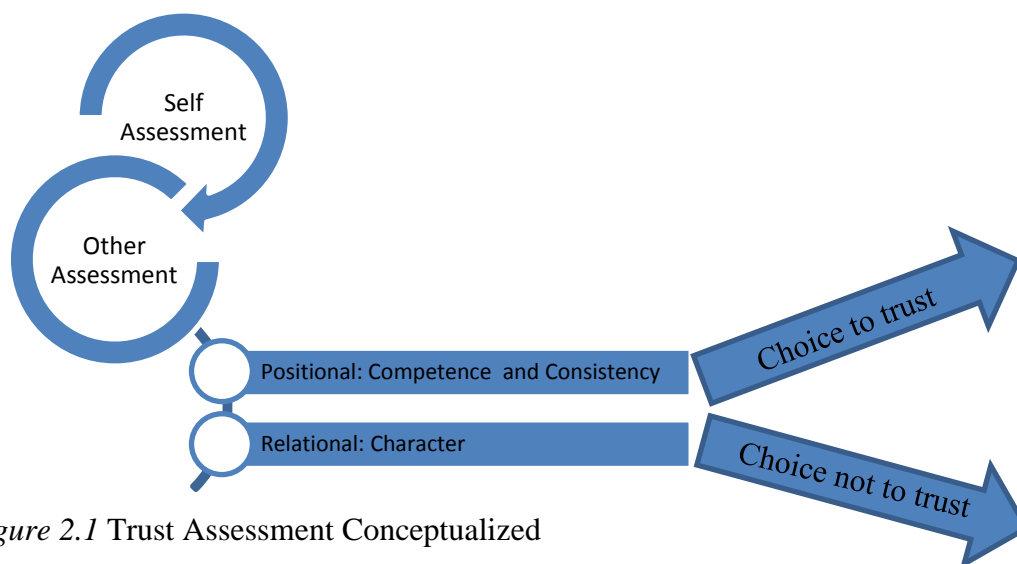


Figure 2.1 Trust Assessment Conceptualized

The notion of a risk assessment, asking if what a person feels is important and valuable is safe with the other person, was corroborated when I interviewed the participants.

However, what were aggrandized were the ideas of positional and relational trust.

Whether stated explicitly or implicitly, a common aspect of most definitions of trust is vulnerability. This willingness to risk is the degree of confidence one has in a situation of vulnerability; without vulnerability there is no need for trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1999). By seeking the voices of practicing Alberta teachers, I aimed to be open to new ways of seeing and understanding the meaning of trust between teachers and principals from the perspective of teachers. The research design and methodology used to explore this are described in the following chapter.

Chapter 3:

Methodology and Research Design

This chapter outlines the ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions underpinning this study and explores my role as the researcher taking into account trustworthiness and power dynamics. In addition, choice of method is outlined and includes descriptions of participant selection and sample size, data sources, and collection and explication of the data. Finally, measures to be taken to enhance the degree of trustworthiness within the naturalistic inquiry are described in relation to sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, transparency and coherence, impact and importance, and ethical considerations and are included at the end of the chapter along with limitations.

Research Paradigm

Logic suggests that the best method of inquiry for any research project is chosen only after one has decided on the kind of information required to address the research question. The purpose of this research was to investigate the lived experiences of teachers in their professional relationship with their principal; more specifically “how is trust between teachers and principals experienced in professional contexts from the perspective of the teacher?” Guba and Lincoln (1982, 1985) concurred that the style of research one chooses should be a matter of informed judgement rather than orthodoxy. This idea was best illustrated by Guba and Lincoln (1985) who stated that, “the choice between paradigms in any inquiry ought to be made on the basis of the best fit between

the assumptions and postures of a paradigm and the phenomenon being studied” (p. 56). Therefore, in order to come to a deeper understanding of a teacher’s lived experience it was necessary for me to enter into his/her world of subjective reality. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) refer to this as a situated activity that locates the observer in the world, “where qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 3). Since I knew my study would focus on the qualitative descriptions of events in their lives, I knew my approach must be in the realm of qualitative approaches.

Drawing from Davidson (2000) and Smith et al. (2009), I realized an approach using some aspects of phenomenology would be the best means to conduct this study. Phenomenologists believe that the researcher cannot be detached from his or her own presuppositions and that the researcher should not pretend otherwise (Hammersley, 2000). In this regard, Mouton and Marais (1990, p. 12) stated that individual researchers “hold explicit beliefs.” The intention of this research, at the outset (preliminary focus), was to gather data regarding the perspectives of teachers as research participants about the phenomenon of trust in the organizational context of a school—specifically between themselves and their principals—understanding that qualitative research is a diverse field with many methods and approaches. For this study I chose to use Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to provide the basic framework methodology as I collected and then analyzed the data emerging from face-to-face interviews about how trust is experienced from the perspective of teachers between principals and teachers in professional contexts.

Phenomenological Perspective

The word phenomenon comes from the Greek *phaenesthai*, to flare up, to show itself, to appear (OED, 2009). Constructed from *phaino*, phenomenon means to bring to light, to place in brightness, to show itself in itself, the totality of what lies before us in the light of day. In his theory of critical knowledge, Habermas (1968) argued that people perceive and understand the world through three different knowledge domains. Park (1993) has defined these forms as instrumental or traditional scientific knowledge, interactive knowledge, and critical knowledge. Each of these domains possesses inherently different methodological modes of inquiry. Within the technical learning domain, research frameworks focus on control and continue to be the dominant paradigms in the medical, clinical, and epidemiological fields. Interactive knowledge is characterized by “communicative action” such as dialogue and information sharing that seeks to understand meaning and the meaning of experiences, and has become increasingly more prevalent, for example, in the education and health professions. The critical learning (or emancipatory) domain depends on critical reflection of the research’s influence upon society of socioeconomic and political forces. This paradigm has been cited in many health disciplines including health promotion studies, population health, and public health.

Bryant (2002) argued that *experts* or professionals usually create instrumental knowledge. It is perceived to be, like its creators, objective and systematically developed through usually quantitative research methods. She stated that interactive or lay knowledge develops from lived experience and is exchanged among people in their daily

lives, and that interpretive inquiry and hermeneutic frameworks explore this dimension. Smith et al. (2009) have advanced that Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is interested in “what happens when the everyday flow of lived experience takes on a particular significance for people” (p. 1). Smith et al. (2009) offer that IPA studies make detailed comments about individual situations which do not lend themselves to direct generalization. I believe then that IPA looks through the lens within which people create their knowledge, where their experience is in constant revision and negotiation with their beliefs and subjective experience.

Situating interpretive phenomenological analysis.

Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is an approach to qualitative, experiential research that originated in the United Kingdom in the mid-1990s. In situating the development of IPA, Smith et al. (2009) reviewed the theoretical ideas of, who they believe are, the four founding philosophers of phenomenology: Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. There were certain take away theoretical ideas from the four founding philosophers of phenomenology which Smith et al. (2009) believed would be most relevant to IPA researchers: Husserl’s work demonstrated the importance and relevance of the experience and its perception and Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre each made evident the importance of seeing the person as a member “in a world of objects and relationships” (p. 21).

Smith et al. (2009) posit that Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis aims to offer insights into how a given person in a given context makes sense of a given phenomenon. Usually these phenomena relate to experiences of some personal significance such as a major life event or the development of an important relationship. The aim then, in IPA, is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. IPA then leads into analyses of conditions of the possibility of intentionality recognizing that much of our intentional mental activity is not conscious at all, but may become conscious in the process as we assess the relevance of the context of experience and come to realize how we feel or think about something. To do this we classify, describe, interpret, and analyze structures of experiences in ways that answer to our own experience.

In addition, Smith et al. (2009) looked to the philosophical underpinnings of hermeneutics, which is the theory of interpretation and idiography. This is concerned with the particular in the sense of detail, depth of analysis, and understanding from the perspective of people in a given context.

Hermeneutics.

Hermeneutics is the study of the theory and practice of interpretation which encompass all forms of communication: written, verbal, and nonverbal. Hermeneutics is concerned with how one interprets the lived experience or the meaning of that experience. This approach proposes that every form of human awareness is interpretive therefore understanding, meaning making, and interpretation are intertwined and always

evolving. Hermeneutic writing then is to evoke a response from the reader meaning that the vivid experiential description is so real that it creates the experience of nearness or presence which prompts our thoughtful reflection such as wondering, questioning, or understanding.

The interpretative analyst seeks meaning in the interpretation of what is presented while being cognizant that one may not truly *know* one's own preconceptions until the analysis is underway. The pre-conceptions held will be compared, contrasted, and modified as the *sense making process* is underway with the aim being not to relive the past but to learn from it in light of the present (Smith et al., 2009). This acknowledges that the process of analysis is iterative in that the analyst moves back and forth in working with and thinking about the data rather than completing steps in a sequential manner. To write in a heuristic sense is to stir the reader to a sense of wonder or questioning or a sense of understanding through the written text that has vivid concrete descriptions of a life experience as it is experienced rather than as it is conceptualized, stirring thoughtful reflection that gives the opportunity of gaining insight into certain aspects of the human condition that continue to resonate and enrich our understanding of everyday life experience.

Idiography.

The third influence on IPA is idiography. Idiography looks to understand how a phenomenon has been understood from the perspective of a particular people in a specific context. The analytic process begins with an examination of each participant's

experience and then moves to an examination of similarities and differences across each account, looking for patterns of meanings for participants reflecting on a specific phenomenon.

Synthesis

Interpretative Phenomenology aims to generate a better understanding of the nature and qualities of phenomena as they present themselves (Willig, 2008) and the way the world is experienced by its members (Holliday, 2007). IPA is concerned with “detailed examination of human lived experience” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 32) allowing that experience, as far as possible, to be expressed in its own terms. The process becomes an experience of importance as the person reflects on the significance of what has happened and engages in personal cognitive reflection about the meaning which they assign to the experience as they process their response. IPA also draws on the hermeneutic tradition that all description of phenomena involves some form of interpretation and that this process of interpretation begins at the outset as the researcher makes sense of the participant who, in turn, makes sense of the phenomenon under study. As Smith et al. say, “the participant’s meaning-making is first order, while the researcher’s sense-making is second order” (2009, p. 36). The interpretive work draws out or discloses the meaning of the experience as the researcher tries to appreciate and understand the participant’s lived experience while questioning and analyzing the experience’s essence. Thus, according to Smith et al. (2009) IPA requires

A combination of phenomenological and hermeneutic insights. It is phenomenological in attempting to get as close as possible to the personal experience of the participant, but recognizes that this inevitably becomes an interpretive endeavor for both the participant and researcher. Without the phenomenology, there would be nothing to interpret; without the hermeneutics, the phenomenon would not be seen. (p. 37)

As an Interpretative Phenomenological researcher, I am concerned with investigating how a particular trust phenomenon appears to a participant. In so doing, I conduct an analysis of the participants' interpretation of their experience.

Epistemologically, the researcher and participant interact in the research process. As such, I must acknowledge that relationship and the reciprocity between the researcher and the participant. Such dynamics make both this type of research and its validity very complex. Given the nature of this type of inquiry, interpretive phenomenological research is often personal and intimate. Therefore, the establishment of a positive rapport and empathy between researcher and participant is critical to accessing the deep information necessary to see the essence of the phenomenon, particularly when investigating issues wherein the participant has a strong personal stake. Based on my years as an administrator, I believe gaining access to another's understanding is a complex endeavour, one built on rapport and trust. In order to achieve a deep understanding, the researcher and the participant must become comfortable with the other.

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research the researcher is the key instrument—taking an inductive stance and being responsive and sensitive to the context or, indeed, occasionally being completely immersed within the context (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 2009). In a like vein, Guba and Lincoln (1994) argued that the constructivist researcher is a “passionate participant” (p. 115) that orchestrates the inquiry process and ensures multi-voice reconstruction of meaning. Central to the constructivist paradigm is the understanding that research is ultimately impacted by, and is a product of, the researcher’s values and assumptions. As an Interpretative Phenomenological researcher, I am concerned with the lived experiences of those engaged in a particular phenomenon. My aim is to describe, as accurately as possible, the phenomenon, refraining from any pre-given framework but remaining true to the experience as presented. This is particularly important in the proposed study because I was the instrument for data collection, analysis, and synthesis. In order to accomplish this artfulness, trust is essential in all stages of the research process. The concept of trust goes well beyond ethics in research which is the degree to which the research conforms to standards of professional, legal, ethical, and social accountability. I am highly cognizant that, as the researcher, I inherently assume a position of authority within an asymmetric relationship; therefore, I have an ethical responsibility to protect the participants from harm.

Trust Between Researcher and Researched

As an Interpretative Phenomenological researcher, I must acknowledge my personal values and assumptions, assume a reflective and reflexive stance, and then bracket these assumptions as I conduct interviews. Smith et al. (2009) address this issue by emphasizing that “the importance of the positive process of engaging with the participant more than the process of bracketing prior concerns, in the sense that skillful attention to the former inevitably facilitates the latter” (p. 35). Therefore fostering a relationship indicative of genuine respect for the participants, ensuring minimal risk exposure, and upholding ethical procedures is essential. The bracketing is of particular importance during the analysis and interpretive stages of IPA research.

Trustworthiness.

Solomon and Flores (2001) speak of authentic trust necessary to cultivate relationships as an “ongoing commitment and conscientious integrity” (p. 15). In order for the interpretive phenomenological researcher to probe past the superficial and delve into participants’ lived realities, the researcher must rely upon participants being open and honest which requires a level of trust. As B. Jackson (cited in Magolda, 2000) stated

Rapport is critical to doing fieldwork, but it’s the only aspect of the entire enterprise I find so mysterious that I can only talk around it, not about it directly.

And I don’t know of anyone who can tell you how to make rapport happen.

Anyone who has done any fieldwork, anyone who has any common sense can tell you things certain to kill it. (p. 139)

Moreover, Magolda (2000) explained that

nearly every 'how to' qualitative inquiry book devotes a portion of the text to the topic of fieldwork relations in general and trust/rapport in particular . . . Most advice is sound; it usually leads to meaningful field relations, good data, and useful findings. (p. 140)

Magolda also described four relational stages through which the researcher and participant proceed. Uncertainty characterizes the apprehension stage. The beginnings of cooperation and disclosure are hallmarks of the exploration stage. Deeper cooperation is present in the cooperation stage, while full participation by both parties culminates in the participation stage. Magolda's states do not differ significantly from those I had to navigate with teachers owing to the constant changes inherent in the educational setting. As an administrator, I had to navigate the waters of change with colleagues who were in different types of watercraft with varying levels of swimming ability and comfort. Sometimes the waters were smooth, others rough with rapids, while, at other times, we were able to relax in an eddy. Likewise, as the researcher, I needed to perceive and respect these stages.

Magolda (2000) cautioned that the conventional wisdom about trust and rapport does not always suggest that trust is linear, that it is reciprocal and altruistic in building rapport, that it is maintained through self-disclosure and candidness, and that rapport is a way to minimize harm. In his own research, he found that trusting relationships are sometimes serendipitous and that developmental stages of trust are not always found on a linear path but rather on a chaotic one. He claimed that web-like interactions between the

researcher and participants make rapport problematic. As such, researchers cannot plan interaction in advance based on quasi-procedural rules that might inadvertently jeopardize rapport/trust and, with it, the ability to collect rich data. Reciprocity, Magolda found, was not

portrayed as warm and fuzzy exchanges between the researcher and respondents that evoke a sense of oneness. . . rather it emerged from avoiding doing negative things to the other. From our mutual protection of our self-interests, trust did eventually emerge. (p. 142)

Trust, he argued, does not occur in a vacuum; context and history matter and the researcher must be cognizant of these factors.

In essence, the development of the relationship and rapport between the researcher and participant is paramount to the success of data acquisition. This finding further supports the notion that interpretive phenomenology, as a methodology, relies upon establishing the conditions necessary for the actors to share with the researcher their first-person points of view along with relevant conditions of experience in an environment conducive to this sharing.

Bradbury and Lichtenstein (2000) argued that true interaction or real meaning emerges in the space between the self and other that evolves according to the interaction between the two. The assumption is that the researcher and the phenomenon impact one another in a reciprocal effect. Knowing occurs simultaneously creating a need to attend to the multiple meanings and perceptions that continuously emerge throughout the research process in order to ensure that the open relationship continues. Given this, I

would argue that the value of the relationship and interdependencies between the researcher and participant are congruent. Trust-building is a two-way process characterized by both the ability to calculate whether others can be trusted and the degree of trust that others have for the person trusting.

Power.

This notion of trust persuades me that, as an Interpretative Phenomenological researcher, I must have an understanding of the power structures and ethical considerations inherent in the relationship between the researched and researcher. The question can be stated thus: how does the researcher, perceived to be in a power position, engender trust in the research participants and ensure that their shared stories are treated in an ethical manner? Townley (1993) posited that given the essentially indeterminate nature of the relationship of the researcher and participant, the problem then becomes how the exchange is organized. Since research can be of such a personal nature, and the researcher is not in a reciprocal position of sharing personal information, the power imbalance between researcher and participant becomes an intricate dance between the two people. Richardson (1999) also recognized the problematic nature of hierarchical relationships and the distribution of power in qualitative research when the researcher has a position of status either directly within the participant's immediate organization or parent organization as I do in my executive staff officer role with the Alberta Teachers' Association. Consequently, I must take a reflective approach that accounts for the social

and hierarchical relationship between me as the researcher and my participants as well as the constructed nature of the research interview.

This power differential between the researcher and participant, as Magolda (2000) noted, is more pronounced during the writing phase. He further advanced that power parity is not a prerequisite for rapport and trust, but that power disparity could be a serious impediment. To resolve this dilemma and mitigate the effects of the power imbalance, I allowed the respondents to read their respective stories for accuracy and negotiated the inclusion of different aspects in the final text. This process of checking for understanding moves the researcher from a position of perceived power to the position of learner and increases the validity and reliability of the research. The process also further reinforces the trust relationship established in the data collection phase. This cycling fosters the development of cooperative inquiry where researcher and participants are peers in a co-inquiry partnership rather than in a hierarchy or insider-outsider dynamic wherein the outsider is attempting to gain an understanding of the discourse of knowledge. Pettit (1995) called this relationship interactive, trusting reliance where there is a belief that you make yourself vulnerable to the other person and the other will not abuse the power ceded to him.

There is always the chance in fieldwork that the researcher will be placed in a position where sensitive information of a personal, professional, or political nature is disclosed off the record because a trusting rapport has been established. Roberts and McGinty (1995) faced a dilemma of double confidentiality in their research study. As a researcher Roberts found that two participants had each disclosed concerns about the

other. She believed it required a different response from what she would have given as a school administrator:

How should I behave when two people having a conflict each confide in me? Past experiences as a college dean of students urged me to mediate, but as a researcher, I have to ask myself, “What would happen if I get involved? Would my interest be seen as an intrusion? What would happen if I let both people know that the other had confided in me? Would either one consider my action a breach of confidence?”. (p. 117)

As the researcher, Roberts did not want to be perceived as taking sides or mediating a conversation between the participants although both participants had unwittingly afforded me the power to do so. Collaboration and trust were sought and gained, and still Roberts and McGinty (1995) found that being researchers in the field was more complicated than just sorting out the roles of participation and observation as was presented in texts. “An important lesson” Roberts and McGinty shared, “was the realization that our social and political lives were entwined with every research decision and action” (p. 119). Given my role within the Alberta Teachers’ Association, I could find myself juggling two worlds in the educational setting: that of a member of the teaching profession with all the *Professional Code of Conduct* implications associated with that membership and that of a researcher with its inherent obligations. A teacher who has chosen to do academic research does not negate legislated obligations to the teaching profession which may conflict with academic freedom. I understand that the relationship between researcher and participant is collaborative only in the generic sense of the term and are not equitable.

Participants enter the relationship as unequal partners. I, therefore, argue that in IPA studies the teacher-researcher may be placed in a position where information is shared and, owing to this disclosure, a power imbalance may occur. In instances where information of a sensitive nature was shared during data collection, it was incumbent upon me to stop and direct the participant to discuss their professional or personal concern with an appropriate executive staff officer in the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Methods

Research methods can be classified in various ways. However, one of the most common distinctions is between qualitative and quantitative research methods. All research, whether quantitative or qualitative, is based on underlying assumptions about what constitutes valid research and appropriate research methods. The research methods, then, are the methods of philosophy, where philosophical assumptions are those which relate to the underlying epistemology guiding the research.

As this research explored teachers' experiences on trust, an interpretivist approach was deemed most appropriate. The philosophical bases of interpretive research are hermeneutics and phenomenology. Given this, I believed that what is known and believed to be true about the world is socially constructed; that meaning is filtered by the participants (Scott & Usher, 1996). The strength of an interpretivist orientation, as Scott and Usher (1996) posit, is that knowledge is concerned with meaning and illumination rather than prediction, control, and generalization. Just as there are various philosophical perspectives which can inform qualitative research, so too there are various qualitative

research methods. Qualitative data sources include observation and participant observation (fieldwork), interviews and questionnaires, documents and texts, and the researcher's impressions and reactions (Myers, 2009). So, a research method is a strategy of inquiry which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to research design and data collection. When considering the research method, validity and reliability in qualitative research must also be considered.

Research design.

The term "design" is used to refer to the researcher's general procedural plan (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The intent of my research was to investigate how trust is understood by teachers in their interactions and relationship with their principal(s) within an organizational setting of a school. My interest in the phenomenon of trust necessitated a research approach that allowed me to spend time one-on-one with participants with a view to understanding their lived reality of trust. I therefore employed a qualitative approach using interviews since qualitative paradigms afford the researcher opportunities to develop an idiographic understanding of participants and what it means to them, within their social reality, to live with a particular condition or be in a particular situation (Bryman, 1988). Specifically, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was employed as the qualitative approach. I conducted my study in the province of Alberta using stratified purposeful sampling where purposeful samples are stratified or nested by selecting particular units or cases that vary according to a key dimension (Briggs & Coleman, 2007; Mertens, 2005; Morose 2001). My research was stratified by practice

size (small, medium, and large), practice setting (urban, suburban, and rural), and gender (male and female). The choice to use stratified purposive sampling was to control participation for geography (north/south), gender, and demographics. The research interviews took place during July and August 2011. The research was conducted under stringent ethical codes mandated by the University of Alberta and in compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP Act) and the Alberta Teachers' Association's *Code of Professional Conduct*.

Sample size and participant selection.

Morse (2000, 2001) states that research sample sizes should depend on five criteria: a) scope of the study, b) nature of the topic, c) quality of the data, d) study design, and e) use of shadowed data (when participants speak of others' experience as well as their own). The aim in qualitative sampling is to understand the phenomenon of interest, therefore ideas or experiences are sampled rather than people. Due to the nature of an IPA study and its reliance upon interviews, a purposeful sample size can range from 1 to 20 participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Richards & Morse, 2006; van Manen, 1997c, 2001, 2009). Smith et al. (2009) concur but suggest that a sample size of between 3 and 6 participants would be reasonable for a novice IPA researcher to avoid being overwhelmed by large volumes of data. A sample of 3 to 6 generates enough data, they say, "for the development of meaningful points of similarity and difference between participants" (p. 51). However, they further caution that "it is more problematic to try to meet IPA's commitments with a sample which is too large, than with one that is too

small” (p. 51). Smith et al. (2009) further expound on PhD studies where, in their experience they consider a PhD to consist of three self-contained but related studies, these being: “the first study is a single case study, the second to offer a detailed examination of three cases, and the third to examine a larger sample of eight participants from a different location or between four and ten interviews rather than participants” (p. 52). Why this recommendation? Successful analysis requires time and reflection and inexperienced IPA researchers may struggle to process a larger data set. As Sandelowski (1995) points out,

determining adequate sample size in qualitative research is ultimately a matter of judgment and experience and researchers need to evaluate the quality of the information collected in light of the uses to which it will be put, the research method, sampling and analytical strategy employed. (p. 181)

Yardley (2011) refers to “theoretical” sampling of small numbers of people chosen for their special attributes (p. 218). On this basis the sample size was determined.

Once I had ethics approval, I approached teachers through the University of Alberta Department of Education Policy Studies who were enrolled in five different summer session courses with five different instructors. Teachers were also approached who were enrolled in summer sessions offered by the Alberta Teachers’ Association and the College of Alberta School Superintendents. When I met with the teachers, I took some time to introduce myself and explain my research interests and design. I advised teachers that I would be asking for volunteers to be “key informants” in the study. Participants were termed “key informants” owing to their specialized knowledge and

experience of trust in Alberta's schools among teachers and principals. I outlined clearly what I would require in terms of their participation. I also provided the potential participants with a Letter of Introduction (Appendix A) detailing the nature of the study; an assurance of confidentiality; notification of their right to withdraw at any time up to the point of data analysis; the choice to have interviews audiotaped or not; the opportunity to review interview transcripts; their right to request that any information, in any format, be eliminated from the project data; and details on how to access to the final summary report of the findings. The letter also included my contact information.

I considered several criteria in participant selection to ensure diversity in my sample. These criteria included years of teaching, experience, gender, school location, and school size. In the end, 16 Alberta teachers were the actual study participants (see Chapter 5 for demographics and participant information). Written permission was obtained in a Consent Form (Appendix B) from each participant prior to the commencement of the study. Participants were also provided a copy of the Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix D) that the transcriber was also required to sign.

Data sources and collection.

Kvale (1996) remarks with regard to data capturing during the qualitative interview that it "is literally an inter view, an interchange of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest," where the researcher attempts to "understand the world from the subject's point of view, to unfold meaning of peoples' experiences" (pp. 1–2) and allowing the essence to emerge (Cameron, Schaffer, &

Hyeon, 2001). In my research, teachers' perspectives were collected through individual interviews in addition to notes recorded in my researcher's journal.

Individual interviewing.

The goal of the interviews was to try and understand, as far as possible, the participants' individual perceptions of the phenomenon of trust. As Hasselgren and Beach (1997) have it, the purpose of the interview is not to understand the phenomenon itself, or to test participant understanding against the interviewer's beliefs (Bowden, 2005), but to immerse oneself in the individual understanding, the "life world" (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000) of the participant. Everything else flows from that immersion.

A common approach adopted by the IPA researcher is to collect data from semi-structured interviews using a prompt sheet which outlines a few main themes for discussion with the participants. This interview schedule is merely the basis for a conversation with a purpose. It is not intended to be prescriptive and certainly not limiting in the sense of overriding the expressed interests of the participants. It is important that the interviewee take the lead during the conversation as the interview permits the participants to tell their own stories in their own ways. Prior to the interviews, I developed an interview guide (see Appendix E for the semi-structured guide used) together with possible prompts to elicit additional information of an experiential nature.

Teachers were invited to participate in a (minimum) 1-hour interview. Potential dates and locations for the interviews were determined in consultation with each of the

participants either in person, by phone, or by email. At the onset of each interview, the purpose and scope of the study was described and I reviewed ethical considerations and the provisions employed to ensure confidentiality. The participant then signed the consent form. Prior to the interview commencing, participants were asked to consent to the use of two audio-recorders to record the questions and responses. The one recording was to be given to the transcriber, while the other was to be kept by myself as an aid to my reflection, transcription verification, and data analysis.

Face-to-face individual interviews, lasting from 45 minutes to 2 hours, were semi-structured and thus provided a snapshot of the participant's effort to make sense of their trust experiences. Interviews had a conversational tone that allowed for exploration and inquiry into their lived experiences. The duration of interviews and the number of questions varied from one participant to the other. Patton (1990) stated that good interviewers enjoy what they do. Patton further explained that "this means taking an interest in what people have to say. You must yourself believe that the thoughts and experiences of the people being interviewed are worth knowing" (p. 37). With this mindset and approach I adopted the role of interested learner and as such presented myself to participants as a peer who was anxious to learn from them with no intent to evaluate their experiences or opinions. Although I presented as a learner, my organization for the interviews and the guide that I used as a template reflected Lofland and Lofland's (1995) caution "that you do need to appear competent" (p. 40).

The establishment of rapport and credibility was paramount in the initial contacts and meetings with the participants. In addition, as per the literature review, relationship

building was essential to the participants' willingness to be open with their stories of their experiences. This openness is important since within a trusting relationship dialectic engagement will push pre-determined and fixed responses to greater reflective and reflexive dialogue that questions, interrogates, and challenges salient understandings (Shields, 2005). In my interactions with participants, both before and during the interviews, I followed some of the behavioural suggestions offered by experienced researchers such as Morgan (1998) and Stainback and Stainback (1988). For example, I built support with participants by talking informally with them before and after the interviews. Following Krueger's (1998) suggestion, I used "purposeful small talk" (p. 20) which avoided the focused issue and instead concentrated on common human experiences such as the weather, children, summer holidays, and sports. I searched for points of commonality in our experiences in order to establish relationships by building on common ground between us. In response to my expectation that there might be some apprehension on the part of the participants, I worked to put them at ease and establish rapport in the short time available. In addition, all but two interviews took place in an environment away from the school so that a deep dialogue could ensue, free of time constraints and possible interruptions. In settings external to the school, I was able to see the full tapestry of the participants' lived experience. The two interviews that did take place in schools occurred in July when, in one instance, no students were present and, in the other, summer session students had been dismissed for the day.

Potential problems for qualitative researcher interviews include the challenge of remembering to return to something that the participant has said and not be as Smith et al.

(2009) say, have “feelings of being overly intrusive, and feelings of being over excited about the issue and accidentally leading the participant” (p. 67), but rather be present to what the participant is saying. At the outset of each interview (and following the participants’ consent to audio recording), I took the opportunity to share with all participants that I would be jotting down on paper interesting items or topics they had mentioned to which I would like to return for clarification or more information rather than interrupt them during their telling of their experiences. Smith et al. (2009) talk about finding a “research persona” (p. 67) where the researcher puts aside normal conversation conventions so that he or she may become highly engaged listeners who do not share their own experiences, act as a counsellor, or pass judgement. The interviewer avoids directing the interview in any way except as an ongoing conversation about the participant’s experiences with the phenomenon under study. The intent of the interview is to move from the general to the specific with the aim to understand the participant’s perspectives. As well, in interviewing the participants, I attempted to have them speak about an experience as if it were happening, to situate themselves in the experience, rather than relating the experience in a post-reflective state. My goal as an IPA researcher in Findlay’s (2009) words was to adopt a phenomenological attitude, where I was “open to the other and attempt[ed] to see the world freshly, in a different way... with disciplined naïveté, bridled dwelling, disinterested attentiveness, with the process of retaining an empathetic wonderment in the face of the world ” (Finlay, 2009, p. 12).

Each interview was assigned a code, for example “Participant 1 July 2011.” I recorded each interview on a separate audio cassette and labelled each with the assigned

interview code. As soon as possible after each interview, I listened to the recording and made notes. I transcribed key words, phrases, and statements in order to allow the voices of research participants to speak. The words of caution (Easton, McComish, & Greenberg, 2000) that equipment failure and environmental conditions might seriously threaten the research was borne in mind and as such the interviews were also recorded digitally. Easton, McComish, and Greenberg advise that the researcher must at all times ensure that recording equipment functions well and that spare batteries, tapes, and supplies are available. That such technical concerns did come into play in two interviews is reflected in my field notes. I ensured as far as possible that the interview setting was free from background noise and potential interruptions. All but two interviews were conducted in separate, closed rooms. One interview was conducted in an outside café and the other in a reception area of a hotel at the request of the participants.

After the interviews, the recordings were transcribed with meticulous accuracy as per IPA methods (Smith et al., 2009, p. 74). As is typical of natural conversation among people, sentences began and then were interrupted by new sentences, structure was imperfect, and grammar was sometimes non-existent. Therefore, full transcription was time-consuming often including, for example, indications of pauses, mishearings, and apparent mistakes where these are in any way remarkable. Furthermore, when I reviewed the transcripts, I went over all of them once again with the audio recordings, filling in the blanks when the transcriber could not understand what was said or capturing words or phrases that the transcriber had missed. The transcripts were also sent to the participants to check for accuracy which also provided the opportunity to clarify unintelligible or

wrongly transcribed phrases. In a number of instances the participants made corrections, spelling of names or adding clarification on examples and in two instances the participants asked that specific examples not be cited for analysis. All corrections and requests for deletion were honored.

Seeking such clarification was important since, as was demonstrated by Wolcott (1995), language can transform the meaning, depth, and clarity of the participant's spoken word. Participant checking ensures that the researcher avoids potential deception or betrayal to the greatest extent possible—although recognizing that individual perceptions ultimately will determine the possibility or extent of any perceived betrayal and that these perceptions may differ for the researcher and participant. This was mitigated because each interview was transcribed by a hired individual. Not only is the data the product of the strong connections between the researcher and participants, but the sharing also increases the validity and reliability of the research and further reinforces the trust relationship established in the data collection phase.

The transcripts were also validated in conjunction with the original recordings and interview themes were identified which may or may not match those on my prompt sheet (Smith et al., 2009). Participant verification in the final stage was not part of Smith et al.'s (2009) IPA process. Even Giorgi (2008) argued that such member checking is both misplaced and not trustworthy, as participants in their natural attitude cannot confirm the meaning of their experiences; nor do they have the relevant phenomenological skills or disciplinary attitude necessary to adequately judge the analysis. Thus, as the researcher, I

shifted back and forth, focusing on personal assumptions and then returned to look at participants' experiences in a fresh way.

Researcher's journal and field notes.

In addition to the interviews, I kept a researcher's journal of my reflective and reflexive thoughts. This journal began even as I conceptualized this study, prior to joining the doctoral journey. This aspect of journaling is important because qualitative researchers locate themselves in the natural world of the participants because "I do not merely impose interpretation on the text after I have created it; the choices I make regarding what to write about, and how to write it, are themselves interpretation" (Kouritzin, 2002, p. 127).

The human mind tends to forget quickly, therefore, researchers' field notes are crucial in qualitative research to retain data gathered (Lofland & Lofland, 1999). It is imperative, therefore, that the researcher be disciplined to record in their journal, subsequent to each interview, as comprehensively as possible, but without judgmental evaluation, for example: "What happened and what was involved? Who was involved? Where did the activities occur? Why did an incident take place and how did it actually happen?" Furthermore, Lofland and Lofland (1999) emphasize that field notes "should be written no later than the morning after" (p. 5). My field notes were written immediately following each interview and I was cognizant to build in time in my interview schedule for this to occur. My observations about the interview itself, including what and how things were said, how participants reacted to the interview,

observations about my role, and any additional information that would help to establish a context for interpreting and making sense out of the interview, were also documented.

As a researcher using IPA, I understand the need to bracket my knowledge, make explicit my assumptions, and put my literature review and personal beliefs aside to ensure the data collection does not become about supporting something that I have previously read or come to believe. In the course of gathering data, ideas about possible analysis also occurred. I recorded my thoughts, feelings, impressions, speculations, reactions, and biases in my field notes. At this juncture, it is important to note that field notes are already “a step toward data analysis” (Morgan, 1997, p. 58). Morgan (1997) further remarks that because field notes involve interpretation, they are, properly speaking, “part of the analysis rather than the data collection” (p. 58). These ideas constituted the beginning of my analysis.

Giorgi (1994) and Finlay (2009) offer that the researcher refrains from positing altogether, rather the researcher looks at the data with the attitude of relative openness. As the researcher, I needed to be critically aware of my own subjectivity and pre-existing beliefs and be conscious of how these might impact on the research process and findings. The process of separating out what belongs to the researcher rather than the researched, and being open to the other, was a regular topic of conversation with my advisor. In those meetings we considered new perspectives, challenged biases, deconstructed motivations, and discussed data analysis (Guba, 1981). My supervisor checked that annotations had some validity in relation to the transcripts being examined and the approach being employed. She also offered additional notes on what she thought was

interesting or important in the transcripts. These meetings provided an opportunity for me to present working hypotheses for reaction and to discuss the evolving design of the study. My doctoral supervisory committee members also afforded me the opportunity to share emerging interpretations. I have maintained thorough field notes that record each research design decision and its supporting rationale. All collected data are kept in well-organized, secure, retrievable formats.

Capturing and keeping track of analytical insights in my field notes was a means to bracket them in order to avoid my initial interpretations distorting additional data collection (Patton, 1990). My field notes, conversations, interviews, audio recordings, and personal reflective comments proved useful as representations of this world that later helped to assist me in making sense of, interpreting, and understanding the phenomenon of trust as it was shared by the participants.

Explication of the data.

The heading “Data Analysis” is deliberately avoided here owing to Hycner’s (1999) caution that the term “analysis” has dangerous connotations for phenomenology. The “term [analysis] usually means a ‘breaking into parts’ and therefore often means a loss of the whole phenomenon . . . [whereas “explication” implies an] . . . investigation of the constituents of a phenomenon while keeping the context of the whole” (p. 161). While understanding that there is no single way to achieve the analysis of qualitative data (Lofland & Lofland, 1995; Patton, 1990), and understanding that I needed to find my own process, I also realized that, as a novice researcher, following in the footsteps of

seasoned, respected qualitative researchers would be wise. I proceeded with the task of data explication based Smith et al.'s recommendations (2009). Presented below is a description of the steps that I undertook in order to make sense of the data and to present the findings in a way that looks at addressing the meaning of trust that the participants experienced.

My understanding is that interpretive phenomenology is a process of reading, reflection, writing, and rewriting to transform the lived experience into a textual expression of the phenomenon. Therefore, following the final interviews I spent some time in "reflection" as described by Wellington (2000) before returning to all of the audio recordings, transcripts, and my journal and field notes, to immerse myself in the voices of the participants and to engage in analysis related to the specific research question. This immersion in the data required reading the transcripts and listening to the audio recordings several times. In so doing, I followed the recommendations of Holloway (1997) and Hycner (1999) to become familiar with the participants' words in order to develop a holistic sense, the "gestalt" of their experience. Understanding that interpretive phenomenological analysis revolves around the close reading and re-reading of the text (Smith, Jarman, & Osborne, 1999; Smith et al., 2009) this process took place over several months and enabled me to develop an overall sense of the data content and potential meanings. During this time I made notes of all thoughts, observations, and reflections that occurred during reading the transcripts or listening to the recordings.

These notes included some recurring phrases and my questions and descriptions of, or comments on, participants' language. This level of analysis, according to Smith et

al. (2009) “is the most detailed and time consuming” (p. 83). At this stage, the notes are used to document points observed while engaging with the text. Smith et al. (2009) discuss interpretative noting as a means to aid the researcher in understanding how and why the participant expresses concerns. Smith et al. (2009) use three ways to conduct exploratory commenting (pp. 84–89) which are not meant to be prescriptive or exhaustive but are instead presented as analytic tools used together on the transcript:

- a) Descriptive Comments focused on describing the content of what the participant had said, the subject of the talk within the transcript.
- b) Linguistic Comments focused upon exploring the specific use of language by the participant. This may include pronoun use, pauses, laughter, functional aspects of language, repetition, tone, degree of fluency (articulate or hesitant), use of metaphor, and other literary devices.
- c) Conceptual Comments focused on engaging at a more interrogative and conceptual level. This will involve a shift in the focus towards the participant’s overarching understanding of the matters that they are discussing. This will include the researcher’s own pre-understandings and the researcher’s newly emerging understandings of the participant’s world.

Following Smith et al.’s (2009) guidelines, each participant’s transcript had expanded left and right margins where I recorded these initial notes while reading the text. The right margin focused on a) and b), while the left margin included c) and themes that emerged. The first stage of analysis was concerned with “taking things at face value, about

highlighting the objects which structure the participant's thoughts and experiences”

(Smith et al., 2009, p. 84).

Ashworth (1996) suggests that at least three areas of presupposition need to be set aside: 1) scientific theories, knowledge, and explanation; 2) truth or falsity of claims being made by the participant; and 3) personal views and experiences of the researcher which could cloud descriptions of the phenomenon itself. Gadamer (1996) opined that

This openness always includes our situating the other meaning in relation to the whole of our own meanings or ourselves in relation to it . . . This kind of sensitivity involves neither “neutrality” with respect to content nor the extinction of one's self, but the foregrounding and appropriation of one's own fore-meanings and prejudices. The important thing is to be aware of one's own bias, so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one's own fore-meanings. (pp. 268–269)

This setting aside is carried out throughout the research process, not just in the interview and the beginning stages of analysis. I was cognizant, during attempts to suspend presuppositions and judgements, of the need to focus on what is actually presented in the transcript data. It was at these times that I would rely upon my journal to make notations so that I consciously engaged in bracketing wherein I suspended critical judgement to avoid bringing my own assumptions and experience (Spinelli, 2005) to bear on the data. As IPA acknowledges a role for interpretation, the concept of bracketing is somewhat controversial and, in any event, gives way to a more interpretative process as analysis proceeds. This emphasis on interpretation is one reason why the IPA researcher usually

keeps a reflective journal that records details of the nature and origin of any emergent interpretations.

It is at this stage that I moved on to re-read the text and identify themes that best captured the essential qualities of each interview. Willig (2008) suggests that it is usually at this stage that psychological concepts and terms enter IPA analysis. The researcher usually identifies themes from within each section of the transcript, while looking for possible or likely connections between themes. Yardley (2011) acknowledges that “although it is certainly feasible to train two people to code a text the same way, this does not exclude the element of subjectivity in the interpretation of the data, it simply becomes an interpretation agreed to by two people” (p. 218). Yardley (2011) cautions that the use of inter-rater reliability as a check on the objectivity of a coding scheme is meaningless.

The next stage involved establishing an overall structure to the analysis by gathering the identified themes into clusters of concepts that share meanings while maintaining the integrity of what the participant said (Smith & Eatough, 2007). Smith (2009) outlines specific ways of identifying patterns and connections between emergent themes, specifically, a) abstraction, where the researcher puts like with like and develops a name for the cluster; b) subsumption, where a series of related themes are brought together and then becomes a superordinate theme; c) polarization, looking for oppositional relationships between emergent themes focusing on differences rather than similarities; d) contextualization, looking at narrative moments or key life events and organizing the emergent themes in terms of the temporal moments; e) numeration, taking into account the frequency with which a theme is supported; and f) function, looking at

positive and negative presentation and language used (Smith et al., 2009). The aim, at this stage, was to arrive at a group of themes and to identify superordinate categories that suggested a relationship between them. As a result, I compared and contrasted the subordinate themes and clusters that emerged from each of the 16 interviews and defined superordinate themes that encapsulated the core experiences shared among the participants.

Coffey and Atkinson (1996) and King (1994) remark that many qualitative analyses can be supported by a number of personal computer software packages available since the 1980s. However, “there is no one software package that will do the analysis in itself” (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 169). Moreover, understanding the meaning of phenomena “cannot be computerized because it is not an algorithmic process” (Kelle, 1995, p. 3). I did use Wordle⁴ to look for reoccurring words used by participants during interviews to assist in my identification of possible themes.

In the fourth stage, participant excerpts and themes were used to develop an exhaustive description of the participants’ experience of the phenomenon. This description is often referred to as *situated structural description* (SSD). As there were 16 participants in my study, additional SSDs were created for each participant and compared in order to identify shared themes and to synthesize a general structural description as the goal of phenomenology is to describe the essence of a phenomenon. I understand that the more material researchers have, the more rigorous they must be in the subsequent

⁴ Wordle is an internet program that allows the user to generate “word clouds” from text, where the clouds give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text. <http://www.wordle.net/>

selection process. The mere frequency of a theme does not necessarily mean it should be selected as superordinate to, or more important than other themes. The richness of the selected text and how the theme might inform other parts of an individual's account must also be considered.

Throughout the study I kept a research record of my data collection and analysis procedures. This record consisted of all interview transcripts, demographic information sheets, journal notes, transcript line-by-line analysis copies, preliminary and cluster themes, participant excerpts, correspondence with participants, and other documents or materials used within my study. Lastly, as I wrote my research report, consideration was given to the audience as well as my own presence within the text. I used the first person rather than the more formal third person.

In summary, IPA is characterized by a set of common processes in an iterative and inductive cycle where the researcher proceeds through several stages (Smith et al., 2009, p. 79):

- Stage 1: line-by-line analysis (first encounter with the text: descriptive and linguistic)
- Stage 2: preliminary themes identified (both convergence and divergence)
- Stage 3: grouping themes together as clusters (relationships between themes)
- Stage 4: situated structural description (full narrative interpretation, theme by theme)
- Stage 5: reflection on perceptions, conceptions and processes

Although IPA is research into participants' lived experience and the meanings they assign to it, the final report is the account of how the researcher thinks the participant is thinking. "A good IPA study will always have a considerable number of verbatim extracts from the participants' material to support the argument being made, thus giving the participants a voice in the project and allowing the reader to check the interpretations being made" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 180). The findings are structured to stay as close as possible to the participants' own articulation of their meaning of trust while also offering an interpretation of their experiences that may enable the reader to reflect on the meaning and significance of those articulations in the light of their own teaching praxis. I discuss my findings in the context of overarching, linked themes that convey the heart of the meanings expressed by the participants.

Quality of Inquiry

The validity of research correlates to the degree to which it is accepted as sound, legitimate, and authoritative by people with an interest in research findings. However, there is not one established set of criteria for evaluating the validity of qualitative research. Richards and Morse (2007) posit that any study is only as good as the researcher. This axiom is especially *apropos* in qualitative research because the researcher is the instrument. Within qualitative inquiry, the researcher aims to develop understanding of relationships, patterns, and nuances in the phenomena under study, ergo interpretivist researchers acknowledge and accept that no two researchers will produce the same interpretations or theory (Creswell, 2008; Guba, 1981; Mertens, 2005). This

view is premised on a world characterized by multiple realities, recognizing that each researcher has his or her own perspectives about the phenomenon being studied.

Evaluating the validity of research involves making a judgment about how well the research has been conducted and whether the findings can be regarded as trustworthy and useful. However, it is not easy to identify criteria that can be applied to all qualitative studies as there are numerous approaches to qualitative research, each based on different assumptions and employing different procedures.

Yardley (2011) argues that because qualitative research comes from a different paradigm its principles must be understood on an independent basis than those arising from quantitative research. She offers that there are three criteria, in particular, that are often mistakenly applied to qualitative research: objectivity, reliability, and (statistical) generalizability. For example, instead of statistical generalization, qualitative researchers generally aim for theoretical generalization, providing insights that may be useful in other contexts that had similarities. Yardley (2011) argues that there would be little point in conducting research if every situation was totally unique and the findings in one study had no relevance to any other situation. Howitt (2010) points out that a qualitative study that fulfills the criteria used to evaluate quantitative research such as reliability, validity, and replicability may exclude aspects of central importance to qualitative research. Qualitative researchers base their studies on different assumptions about truth and reality than do quantitative researchers and therefore have different measures of validity and reliability (Hollway, 2007; Merriam, 2009; Taylor & Bodgan, 1998; Yardley, 2011).

My study draws upon Yardley's (2011) four core principles for evaluating the validity of qualitative research: sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, coherence and transparency, and impact and importance. Yardley emphasized that although it is important that value is demonstrated, validity criteria should be seen as highlighting quality issues rather than providing a rigid checklist that restricts the freedom and flexibility of researchers. Such criteria acknowledge the different conceptual framework underlying most qualitative research and the variety of ontological and epistemological viewpoints and methodologies. The way in which a particular investigation will fulfill these criteria will vary widely, depending upon the approach employed (Secker et al., 1995; Yardley, 2011); "the micro-analysis of a segment of dialogue demands entirely different forms of methodological rigour from those required to explore individual differences in the meaning attached to an experience of an illness" (Yardley, 2011, p. 244). Yardley (2011) asserts that all interpretations contain an implicit claim of authority therefore it makes no sense to engage in a process of analysis and then deny that it has any validity.

Sensitivity to context.

The first principle Yardley (2011) proposed is sensitivity to context. The researcher may show sensitivity to the context through an awareness of the existing literature, either substantively related to the topic of investigation or theoretically related to the underpinnings of the research method itself. Having an understanding created by previous investigators who have employed similar methods or have analyzed similar

topics and an awareness of the relevant literature is essential. It is desirable to have a fairly extensive grounding in the philosophy of the approach adopted since “awareness of the different perspectives and complex arguments that can be brought to bear on the subject provides the researcher with the scholastic tools to develop a more profound and far-reaching analysis” (Yardley, 2000, p. 220). The literature review conducted before, during, and after data collection helped to frame my research question and methodology, situate my findings, and ground my thinking. While theory influenced my interpretation, the analysis had to be sensitive to the data itself and this discussion included a review of additional literature which was not referenced in the introduction to the study (Smith et al., 2009). Similarly, understanding that the aim in IPA is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it led into my analysis which was characterized by a set of common processes in an iterative and inductive cycle where I proceeded through several stages in working with the data.

Researchers can also show sensitivity to context through an appreciation of the interactional nature of data collection within the interview situation and through the data analysis and interpretation process. An IPA analysis is only as good as the data it is derived from and “obtaining good data requires close awareness of the interview process, showing empathy, putting the participant at ease, recognizing interactional difficulties, and negotiating the intricate power-play where research expert may meet experiential expert” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 180). Sensitivity to context continues through the analysis process. Making sense of how the participant is making sense of their experience

requires the researcher to be immersed in the data with disciplined attention to the participant's account and what can be gleaned from it. Some refer to this as credibility or the establishment of confidence in the truth of the findings. This is contingent on how research is conducted and the steps taken to ensure interpretations are grounded in data (Guba, 1981). Merriam (2009) posited that the degree to which qualitative research findings match reality should be seen "in terms of interpreting the investigator's experience, rather than in terms of reality itself (which can never be grasped)" (p. 167). This is based on the assumption that reality is multidimensional and ever-changing; it is not a fixed, objective phenomenon waiting to be discovered, observed, and measured. My job as the researcher became one of representing those multiple realities revealed by the participants as adequately as possible.

Sandelowski (1995) suggested that qualitative study is credible when it presents such accurate descriptions or interpretation of human experience that people who also share that experience would immediately recognize the descriptions. Therefore, sensitivity to context or credibility is of primary concern in qualitative research and should be assessed based on the researcher's ability to carefully construct and represent perspectives rather than to report on reality or truth per se (Merriam, 2009). Good IPA, according to Smith et al. (2009) is "written carefully, making claims appropriate to the sample which has been analyzed and interpretations are presented as possible readings and more general claims are offered cautiously" (p. 181). As such an IPA study will always have a considerable number of verbatim extracts, giving the participants a voice in the research, and allowing the reader to check the interpretation being made.

For my study I secured informed consent from participants (see Appendix B). The accuracy and completeness of the data was maximized by audio recording and transcribing interviews. Participants were invited to check their transcript for accuracy which gave participants the authority to correct their data and veto examples they felt should not be included in the analysis.

Commitment and rigour.

Yardley's (2011) second broad principle opinioned was commitment and rigour. According to Yardley (2011) commitment encompasses prolonged engagement with the topic, not necessarily as a researcher but also in the capacity of someone who has experienced the phenomenon under investigation. It also consists of the development of competence and skill in the interview process and immersion in the relevant data. Rigor refers to the resulting completeness of the data collection, the quality of the interview, and completeness of the analysis undertaken. This depends on the adequacy of the sample, not in terms of size but in terms of its ability to supply all the information needed for a comprehensive analysis (Yardley, 2011).

Conducting a good interview is a demonstration of rigour as well as commitment described above. A balance between closeness and separateness needs to be achieved, along with consistency in probing and picking up on important cues from the participant to dig deeper. My training and experience as a staff officer of the Alberta Teachers' Association in Member Services in conducting discipline investigations through extensive interviews helped to ensure that the participants in my research study were

comfortable. This training and experience also enhanced my ability to attend closely to what the participants were saying and to procure participant cues to probe and dig deeper.

Yardley (2011) advanced that the completeness of the interpretation should ideally address all of the variation and complexity observed, and may need to be undertaken at several levels of analysis. For example in phenomenological analysis commitment and rigour might be demonstrated by the effective use of prolonged contemplative and emphatic exploration of the topic together with sophisticated theorizing, in order to transcend superficial, “commonsense” understandings. (p. 245)

The analysis must be conducted thoroughly and systematically and be sufficiently interpretive, moving beyond a simple description of what is there to an interpretation of what it means. Recognizing the subjectivity inherent in such research, I engaged in an extensive reflective process throughout the study and, in the interests of establishing rigour and credibility, my reflective and reflexive notes were first recorded in my field journal. Appreciating that in IPA each theme “would be supported from quotes from a number of participants and that, in the overall narrative, participants’ accounts will be drawn on pretty even-handedly” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 182) I was cognizant of the number of excerpts used as examples from the various participants.

Yardley (2011) also suggests triangulation of data analysis in order to achieve a rounded, multilayered understanding of the research topic. Triangulation is a powerful strategy for enhancing the quality of the research. It is based on the idea of convergence of multiple perspectives for mutual confirmation of data to ensure that all aspects of a

phenomenon have been investigated. This is done to cross-check data and interpretation. This peer examination is a technique where the researcher discusses the research process and findings with impartial *colleagues* who have experience with qualitative methods. Insights are discussed and problems presented as a form of debriefing. Guba and Lincoln (1985) suggested that this was one way of keeping the researcher honest, and the searching questions may contribute to deeper reflexive analysis by the researcher.

Transparency and coherence.

Yardley's (2011) third broad principle was transparency and coherence.

Transparency refers to how clearly the stages of the research process are disclosed. This includes not only the concrete aspects of the investigation, carefully describing how participants were selected, how the interview was conducted, what steps were used in the analysis, but to openly reflect on such factors that may have affected the product of the research investigation. This might include a discussion of the experiences or motivations which led the researcher to undertake the study or a consideration of the outside pressures or constraints that may influence the research participants. This is known as reflexivity (Yardley, 2011) which refers to the influence of the researcher's own background, perceptions, and interests. Yardley (2011) noted that the researcher's background dictates the framework from which he or she will organize, study, and analyze the findings. This background is made up of all the resources available to make sense out of the experience and is often reflected in multiple roles the researcher plays while engaged in the research. One of the ways that researchers can describe and interpret their own

behaviour and experiences within the research context is to make use of a field journal, which I did. One type of information in my field journal is analogous to that found in a personal diary and reflected my thoughts, feelings, ideas and hypotheses generated by contact with the participants. It also contains questions, problems, and frustrations concerning the overall research process. In writing this it enabled me to become more aware of biases and preconceived assumptions; once aware I could alter the way that I approached the participant interviews and my analysis process. My reasons for conducting this research are outlined above. In addition an overview of the pressures and constraints facing teachers currently in Alberta were discussed in the literature review.

Huberman (1994) argued that the conventions of qualitative research should “require clear, explicit reporting of data and procedures” (p. 439). Patton (1990) also advanced the notion that qualitative researchers have an obligation to describe and document their analytical procedures as fully and truthfully as possible (p. 372). In this regard, and throughout my research, I was conscious of the need to collect my data and follow through with my analysis in a careful and systematic manner that could be audited as a research record (Creswell, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Yardley, 2011). The description of my research process as presented in this chapter aligns with Miles and Huberman’s (1994) and Yardley’s (2011) recommendation that a transparency of method is the best way for qualitative researchers to address issues of reliability and validity.

Coherence, Yardley (2011) suggests, can refer to the degree of fit between the research which has been done and the underlying theoretical assumptions of the approach being implemented. When reading the IPA study, Smith et al. (2009) suggest that it

would be expected that the research report be consistent with the underlying principles of IPA rather than it seem to be adhering more closely to the expectations of a different qualitative approach (p. 182). Coherence can also look at the final write-up: does it represent a coherent argument? Do the themes hang together logically? Are ambiguities or contradictions dealt with clearly? To this end it was particularly important as a novice IPA researcher that I followed the guidelines presented by Smith et al. (2009).

Impact and importance.

Yardley's (2011) final broad principle is impact and importance. Qualitative research is based on the assumption that human behaviour is not static and aims to describe and explain the perceptions and interpretations participants have of their experiences in the world. To assess qualitative research, instead of using reliability, Guba and Lincoln (1985) suggest the terms "dependability" and "consistency" (p. 299). Bogdan and Biklen (2007) use the terms "accuracy" and "comprehensiveness" (p. 36). Merriam (2009) submitted that "rather than demanding that outsiders get the same results, one wishes outsiders to concur that, given the data collected, the results make sense—they are consistent and dependable" (p. 221). The test of the real validity lies in whether the research tells the reader something that is interesting, important, or useful (Yardley, 2011).

Yardley (2000) cautions that "it is not sufficient to develop a sensitive, thorough and plausible analysis, if the ideas propounded by the researcher have no influence on the beliefs or actions of anyone else" (p. 223). The naturalistic understanding of qualitative

research is concerned with offering perspectives rather than “truth” and therefore focuses on the specific rather than the general. Eisner (1991) argued that people learn to cope in the world through applying or transferring understandings gleaned from a particular event to subsequent situations. Guba and Lincoln (1985) called it transferability and noted that it is more the responsibility of the person wanting to transfer the findings to another situation or population than that of the researcher of the original study. They argued that as long as the original researcher presents sufficient descriptive data to allow comparison, he or she has addressed the problem of applicability.

Ethical considerations.

Albertans are bound by the access to information and privacy provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Privacy Act* (FOIP) and the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA). It is not, therefore, unreasonable for this societal expectation to impact academic research and as such my research proposal was submitted for ethical review.

Katz (2006) observed that the researcher, “often has broad discretionary responsibility in how to deal with what she has been entrusted with. This discretionary responsibility can be abused if the one trusted takes on responsibility for more than that with which she has been entrusted” (p. 79). Eisenhart (2001) cautioned that as a researcher I must be clear about my own agenda and commitments and that I have to listen, deliberate, negotiate, and compromise around the knowledge and beliefs of the participants. The ethical standards set by the University of Alberta were followed, providing for informed consent and protection of participants from harm. The nature of

the research was thoroughly explained to participants at the onset of the study and at the first interview, including details regarding (a) the purpose of this study; (b) how/why the participant was selected; (c) how research would be conducted; (d) anticipated time commitments; (e) potential risks/benefits to the participant, including how privacy and confidentiality would be protected; and (f) how/where findings would be disseminated. This information was also provided in the form of a letter and accompanying consent form (see Appendix B). Information pertaining to the participants' right to opt out of the study up to the point of data analysis or to exercise of power of veto over any data which they supplied was also explained in the letter and at each interview. Only data from those participants who supplied written consent were used within this study. Lastly, participants were provided with a copy of their transcripts and given the opportunity to check the document for accuracy and then to exercise their veto rights if so desired. Changes or corrections, as requested by participants, were made accordingly.

Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained at all times. Participants were assigned pseudonyms. Neither school nor school board names appear in any printed material. No one withdrew from the study and all participants were extremely cooperative.

The ethics approval process and Letter of Consent provided a framework within which participants could respond comfortably, accurately, and honestly to my questions. It was important for me to demonstrate explicitly that my goal as a researcher was neither moral judgment nor immediate reform but understanding (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). I achieved this goal by describing my role in the introduction prior to participants'

interview. Therefore, although I was empathetic in my stance, I remained neutral or nonjudgmental about what participants said during the interview (Patton, 1990). As a result, participants appeared to share their personal experiences openly and willingly. I am confident that developing a positive relationship, along with ethical considerations and guarantees of anonymity, allowed me greater access to personal stories and information-rich data.

There is always the chance in fieldwork that the researcher will be placed in a position where sensitive information of a personal, professional, or political nature is disclosed off the record because of the nature of the rapport that has been established. This was also dealt with in the ethics review. In addition, as a teacher first I must ensure that I follow the *Code of Professional Conduct* of the Alberta Teachers' Association. It is legally binding on members and cannot be set aside, even with the consent of research participants.

Limitations

Pragmatic and methodological choices in any research will produce some limitations. This study also had some limitations. Wherever possible, I endeavoured to mitigate the limitations' effects. Efforts to ensure credibility and validity are addressed in the section titled "Quality of Inquiry: Validity and Reliability." The limitations of this study were:

1. This study relied on voluntary participant recollections. Since the primary source of data was individual interviews, the data may be limited by the extent of the

participants' willingness to share and dialogue openly about their experiences. In some instances, the participants offered socially- or politically-acceptable responses. In one case, the participant lacked the knowledge or experiences to respond adequately to the questions posed by the researcher. In a similar vein, participants may have tried to present themselves in a favourable light through their interview responses or in their selection of specific events recalled. Subsequently, paradigmatic and methodological choices in the research design inevitably produce limitations.

2. The amount of time required to complete this research may have resulted in a particular type of person volunteering for the study. The participants' personality traits, openness to reflection, and value of collaborative dialogue may indirectly or directly influence findings.
3. While interviewing I remained cognizant of Yin's (1994) emphasis on the importance of the researcher's skills and attributes. He claimed that a researcher must possess the ability to question, listen, adapt, possess a firm grasp of the issues, and eschew personal bias before gathering the data. Patton (1990) referred to the researcher as the instrument. "The credibility of qualitative methods, therefore, hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence, and rigor of the person doing fieldwork—as well as things going on in a person's life that might prove a distraction" (p. 14). Although this emphasis on the researcher as instrument can be seen as a limitation, I contend that a strength I brought to the study was my

experience as an executive staff officer with the Alberta Teachers' Association which aligns point-for-point with Yin's desirable attributes.

4. Smith et al. (2009) advise that a novice researcher should concentrate his or her IPA study on a small number of participants (between 4 and 10) (p. 52) to avoid being overwhelmed by the volumes of data which qualitative studies of this nature generate. My study of 16 participants generated a substantial amount of data so frequent conversations with my supervisor and colleagues were important as I moved through the analysis and theme development stages. Other than this no formal examination of the analysis of the data was conducted. Nor was the process of data reduction and reconstruction examined independently. While detailed notes were kept regarding the methods used around the interviews and a log book/diary was also kept, no specific application of an audit process, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) was conducted.
5. The second major theoretical underpinning of IPA is the theory of interpretation where interpretation is about the researcher's perspective and insights that flow after a systematic and detailed analysis of the data as the researcher tries to appreciate and understand the participant's experience while questioning and analyzing the experience's essence. Circumstances around the timing of the interviews did not allow for conducting member checks or following an audit trail. Had member checks been carried out it would have been possible to ascertain that the researcher's interpretations of what the participants said matched their own interpretations.

6. The teachers selected for this study discussed their relationships with their respective principals. Having been a principal I possess personal biases and assumptions derived from that experience. Despite being able to recognize and understand relevant symbols, rules, and meanings, I have been socialized to ignore other meanings represented by the work and role of the principal at school. My inability to see what I no longer notice or question may inadvertently influence my interpretations.
7. As the Associate Coordinator, Member Services, Administrator Assistance of the Alberta Teachers' Association I am keenly interested in learning about the relationship between a principal and his/her teaching staff. As such, I needed to regularly examine my own taken-for-granted assumptions and biases. Although difficult to do, I situated my study in my own reflections based on past professional and personal experiences that may potentially influence my findings.
8. The fact that I am the Associate Coordinator Member Services, Administrator Assistance of the Alberta Teachers' Association could have influenced the study. However, I endeavoured to manage this possibility by presenting myself to participants as a doctoral student who was curious and wanted to learn from the participants.

Summary

This chapter presented the methodology of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis that shaped and guided this inquiry. I outlined my role as a researcher and my

understanding of the trust and power dynamics of that role. Next, I introduced the research design which included criteria for sample selection and size, data sources and collection methods, and explication of the data. Finally, I detailed those measures I employed to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings and to meet ethical standards. The next chapter provides the background and contextual information about the 16 research participants before presenting the study's findings regarding trust as a lived experience between teachers and principals.

Chapter 4:

Situating the Participants

The chapter encompasses general information about each participant. It provides background information and situates the participants within the research study. This information was gathered from the participant demographic questionnaire (Appendix C) and from the interview transcripts. To protect the identity of the participants, pseudonyms are used. Similarly, location names have been changed.

Demographics of the Sample

Within any research inquiry participants have diverse opinions, so qualitative samples must be large enough to ensure that important perceptions are uncovered. However, qualitative study samples are generally much smaller than those of quantitative studies because qualitative research concerns itself with meaning rather than making generalised hypothesis statements. More data in the form of more participants does not necessarily lead to or correlate to more information in qualitative research.

Participants were selected to include Alberta teachers from schools with diverse grades and configurations or divisions; Division I being Kindergarten to Grade 3, Division II being Grades 4 to 6, Division III being Grades 7 to 9, and Division IV encompassing Grades 10 to 12. Of the 16 participants, two were from the Division I–II levels, five were from a combination of Divisions I, II, and III, one was from a Division III–IV configuration, one from a Division II–III–IV configuration; and seven from

Division IV schools (see Table 4.1). Choosing participants from different divisions and geographical locations was purposeful to provide a cross section to the sample.

Table 4.1

Grade configuration of participants' schools

	Elementary	Combined	JR-SR High	K-12	High School
Grade	K-6 = 1	K-8 = 2	8-12 = 1	4-12 = 1	9/10-12 =
Configuration	2-6 = 1	K-9 = 3			7

Geography was a second selection criterion. I sought out teachers from the North, Central, and Southern regions of Alberta. The final research group lived and worked in:

- North captured from north of Edmonton;
- South captured from greater Calgary south;
- Central Alberta captured the remaining area between the northern and southern demarcation.

As well, participants were asked to self-select on the demographic questionnaire (Appendix C) whether they taught in urban, rural, or suburban communities. Given the diverse interview dialogue that ensued as they ascertained where they believed they situated themselves along that continuum, and being cognizant of the dependability of the research, I differentiated between rural, urban, and suburban using the Statistics Canada⁵ (2011) population center qualifiers. All areas outside population centres as described below are defined as rural. A population centre is described as

⁵ Statistics Canada introduced new terminology (2011 05 05) that it uses with respect to geographic areas that have in the past been referred to as “urban areas.” The term “population centre” has replaced “urban area.” <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/110203/dq110203b-eng.htm>

- an area with a population of at least 1,000 and a density of 400 or more people per square kilometre. Further, population centres are divided into three groups based on the size of their population to reflect the existence of an urban-rural continuum:
 - a) small population centres (SPC), with a population of between 1,000 and 29,999;
 - b) medium population centres (MPC), with a population of between 30,000 and 99,999;
 - c) large population centres (LPC), consisting of a population of 100,000 and over

As a result of this differentiation made by Statistics Canada, the participants were categorized based on whether they taught in a small, medium, or large population centre. None of the participants taught in a rural center based on the Statistics Canada definition. Population numbers were based on the most recent census information available⁶. Table 4.2 shows the participant distribution based on population centre and location in the province. There are no large population centres north of Edmonton based on the Statistics Canada delimitation which accounts for the zero in the North section of the participant distribution chart under LPC.

Table 4.2

Participant distribution: population centre and location

Distribution	North			Central			South		
	SPC	MPC	LPC	SPC	MPC	LPC	SPC	MPC	LPC
	2	4	0	1	1	3	1	2	2

⁶Based on http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_communities_in_Alberta

Participants.

Recruitment is a perennial challenge of research and maintaining a gender balance through the recruitment process compounds that challenge. It was not the purpose of this study to investigate the phenomenon of trust in schools through the eyes of a specific gender. Nevertheless, I endeavoured to balance the number of male and female participants and eventually welcomed eight female and eight male teachers representing varying degrees of teaching experience ranging from 6 to 31 years. The interviews were scheduled to be the same length for each participant however I speculated that those teachers whose teaching experience had been longer and varied would have had more of an opportunity to be reflective and analytical which was reflected in their interviews and interview length. What follows is a brief description of the study's participants. In addition to this information, Table 4.3 provides an overview of participant experience and principal relationship. Table 4.4 provides a female to male comparison by total years taught, and Table 4.5 shows participants by years taught in ascending order.

Betty.

Betty has taught in Alberta for 6 years at three different schools. In that time she has had four different principals. She has worked with her current principal for 3 years. She has taught students in Divisions I, II, III, and IV. Betty describes herself as being student centered, wanting to do anything that is best for kids. Betty believes that everyone has a part to play in the school and if you want to keep people really involved, then you must value their opinion and treat them like they are valued. She is a very

supportive colleague and endeavours to become friends with other teachers. Outside of work she maintains contact with her colleagues.

Dana.

Dana has taught for 20 years in Alberta, with the last 5 at her current school. She has worked with her current principal for 3 years and has worked with a total of eight principals in her teaching career. Dana has taught in Divisions I, II, III, and IV in six different schools. Dana describes herself as a flexible teacher as is evidenced by the different grade levels and the variety of courses that she has taught. She identifies as a team player to whom people come for advice.

Laura.

Laura came to teaching late in life. She has taught for 14 years in Alberta, the last 2½ at her current school with the same principal. Over the course of her teaching career, she has taught Divisions I and II, has worked with 10 principals, and taught in eight different schools. Laura describes herself as a dynamic, collaborative, forward thinking, proactive educator who is well respected by her colleagues. She calls a spade a spade. Laura believes that if teachers are leaders in education, then as teachers they are moral and ethical leadership models for one another, for students, for parents, and for the community.

Lena.

Lena has taught for 27 years in Alberta, all at the same Division IV school. She has worked with her current principal for 3 years. In total, Lena has worked with eight principals. She describes herself as a master teacher who enjoys a reputation as a respected, informal leader in the school owing to her long tenure and willingness to advocate for what she believes is in the best interests of students. Her students come first. Looking over her career, Lena doesn't want to be anywhere but in front of kids because she loves being a teacher, she loves being around the kids.

Nancy.

Nancy has taught in Alberta for 14 years. She has taught predominantly at the Division II level. Although Nancy has only been at her current school for 2 years, she has worked with her current principal for 4 years. In total, Nancy has worked with five different principals and at three different schools. Nancy describes herself as a compassionate, energetic, humorous, and organized teacher whom other teachers approach for advice.

Ramona.

Ramona has taught for 11 years in Alberta in five different schools, with the last year at her current school with her current principal. Her entire career has been in Division IV and she has worked with eight principals. Ramona describes herself as very organized, someone who makes plans and sticks to plans as much as possible. As a

colleague, she believes in developing and nurturing relationships on staff, working collaboratively as a team to foster camaraderie among teachers. Advice given to her early in her career continues to influence how she structures her day. The advice was to spend time in the staff room with colleagues and not work through lunches and breaks, but to use that time to re-energize and re-connect with staff. She describes it as brain refreshing, just like going outside for some fresh air. As a staff member, she believes it is important to develop relationships but also to nurture those relationships by paying kind attention to colleagues' key life events. Ramona believes in keeping the conversation going.

Rose.

Rose has taught for 30 years in Alberta, with the last 21 years at her current school. Rose has taught predominantly at the Division I and II levels. She has worked with her current principal for 1 year, but has worked with eight different principals in three schools over the course of her teaching career. She worked with one former principal for 16 years. Rose describes herself as a solid teacher, still vibrant and enthused about teaching. Rose makes sure that each year she provides children with the best possible opportunities for them to learn and grow. As a colleague, she believes in collaboration and cooperation. She likes to have a teaching partner or multiple partners in planning and sharing different ideas. In addition, Rose has worked with student teachers over the course of her career. She loves the opportunity to be able to share her

expertise, time, and knowledge and, in turn, appreciates and enjoys what student teachers bring to the table, especially technological expertise.

Tara.

Tara has been teaching for 31 years and although she is trained as a Division IV teacher, she has experience in all four divisions. For the last 29 years she has been teaching Division III and IV students at her current school. Tara enjoyed a long working relationship with one former principal, 22 years, until he retired. After that, it became a “revolving door” of principals. She has worked with a total of 10 principals in her career, but only 1 year with her current principal. As a teacher, Tara believes it is her responsibility and role to work with students: to motivate them in their learning, to encourage them, to help them see value in the lesson, and to make learning meaningful so that they’re engaged. Tara describes herself as approachable and respected. Teachers and administrators alike seek her out to discuss concerns and seek advice because they know she will keep their confidences. Her colleagues trust that Tara will be honest, open, and a fair listener. They trust she will give them her best possible opinion and that she will actively listen to their concerns. Tara questions often and doesn’t take everything at face value. She believes her role is to help lead people to a better understanding of themselves and their needs. Tara believes this state of affairs has come about because she has been consistent in her interactions with many of her colleagues with whom she has worked collaboratively for a number of years. As a result, Tara has earned their respect and that trust.

Clark.

Clark has taught in Alberta for 15 years in two different schools within the same school division. He has taught Division III and IV students. He has been at his current school with his current principal for 10 years but has worked with a total of four principals in his career. Clark reported that his students usually say that he is fair, consistent, maintains high expectations, but is a hard marker. He never gives up on a student that is attending and trying. He will do whatever it takes to hook them into the learning. He believes having an unconventional and dramatic teaching style helps with those students. As a teacher and colleague, Clark acknowledges that he is a stickler for the rules. He is the one that the staff teases because he takes copious meeting notes and asks questions. Nevertheless, Clark believes his colleagues see him as reliable and effective. He always gets picked early for group work. In addition, colleagues feel safe sharing and venting to him because he keeps confidences. He is a level-headed and pragmatic person, which he believes is valued on his staff. Clark would rather be proactive as opposed to reactive and this pragmatic attitude about himself is evident in his professional and personal life.

Daryl.

Daryl has been teaching for 13 years, the past 7 at his current school. He has worked with the current principal for 3 years, and, in total, has worked with four principals. Daryl feels passionate about the profession. He believes that it is important that teachers are forward thinking and doing things that are advancing the profession.

Daryl describes himself as a teacher that cares about everything concerning education; he studies it, reads about it, and talks about it because he cares about kids and wants the best for people with whom he works. Daryl cares to the point that ambivalence or a lack of motivation and commitment to the common good make him angry. Daryl tries to model caring, participation, and positive change. Daryl also believes in being mobile as a teacher so that he can continue to grow as a professional.

David.

David has taught Division III and IV students for 8 years at the same school, and worked with two different principals, the current one for 4½ years. As a teacher he follows the curriculum and does what it takes to ensure student success. David acknowledges that sometimes achieving success means doing things differently through a hands-on, experiential approach with his students. As a colleague, David describes himself as someone that both experienced and new teachers and administrators approach to discuss or vet ideas. In addition, he is often mentoring the new teachers on staff, whether asked to or not, because he remembers what it was like his first year and the experience of having that one teacher who mentored him. Consequently, he enjoys being there for the new teachers, as well as the experienced ones, as much as he can.

Dominic.

Dominic has been teaching in Alberta for 16 years with the same school district. He has taught in two schools and worked with four principals. He has been in his current

school for 2 years working with the same principal. Dominic has taught Division III and IV students and describes himself as a teacher that runs a tight ship with high but reachable expectations. Students have told him that they know where the line is from the first day: he simply tells them what his expectations are and then moves forward. The students don't go over that line. Given his effective classroom management strategies, Dominic has been an informal mentor to a number of newer teachers.

Everitt.

Everitt has been teaching for 7 years for two different school divisions all at the Division IV level in two different schools. He has worked in his current school for 4 years and with the same principal for that time. He has worked with two principals, one at each of the two schools where he was employed. Everitt believes in bringing a lot of personal experience into his teaching and in having a constant flow of the new and novel to keep his students interested. He is of the opinion that teenagers are intrigued by novelty and that tends to grab their attention more so than a stand-and-deliver teaching style. Everitt describes his teaching style as crazy and off the wall. As a colleague, he prefers taking on mentorship roles or being a problem solver acknowledging that teaching is a very stressful profession. For new staff, Everitt is one of the first to offer resources or assistance or to welcome newcomers. He tries to be as helpful, courteous, and as giving as possible because in the absence of that support from other staff, the job is a lot harder.

Harvey.

Harvey has taught for 29 years in the same school. He has, however, worked with 12 different principals in that time. His current principal has been at the school for 3 years. Harvey describes his school as a training ground for principals as they progress in their administrative career. Harvey has taught in Divisions I, II, and III and has had a broad range of experiences. He describes himself as an experienced, competent teacher whom students are comfortable approaching both in and out of school, including the Division III students, which he values a great deal. In addition, his fellow educators appreciate Harvey's depth of knowledge and regularly confer with him. In fact, teachers from across his school division exhibit confidence in his judgment and personal discretion.

Rob.

Rob has been teaching for 31 years, 15 at his current school and 27 years with his present school division. He has been working with his current principal for 2 years. Rob has worked with 20 principals over the course of his teaching career which includes Divisions I, II, and III experience. Rob describes himself as a perfectionist despite all his teaching experience. He dislikes the idea of just walking into a classroom and flying by the seat of his pants, even if it means going to the school later in the evening to make sure that he has things photocopied and things are ready to roll for the morning. He does that for his own peace of mind. Otherwise, he feels that he would have cheated himself and his students if the class had to resort to busy work to occupy the day. Over the years,

Rob has deviated from just teaching content to actually caring about the kids and establishing relationships with them, believing that such care and concern is something that comes with maturing as a teacher. Rob has found that if your students are happy, then you're likely happy as the teacher. Rob describes himself as trustworthy, honest, and forthright, having tried to offer unbiased opinions to the many teachers, support staff, and administrators who have confided in him over the years.

Tom.

Tom has taught for 11 years with the same school division at three different schools in Divisions II, III, and IV. He has worked with three different principals over the course of his teaching career. Tom has been at his current school for 4 years and has worked with the present principal for 2 years. Tom believes in making learning an enjoyable experience without losing focus on the curriculum or outcomes. He prefers to balance learning objectives with fun in a way that is more hands on and project-based. As a colleague, he acknowledges he has a hard time saying "no" to requests from a staff member he likes and respects. However, he cautions, he does not readily open up to colleagues owing to some negative experiences that he has had as a teacher.

Tables 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 were developed primarily as a visual check to ascertain if there was balance in participant selection based on the established criteria and to assist in data explication. The tables reflect participant data based on:

- gender
- total teaching experience

- number of schools taught in
- division level reflecting:
 - Division I = Grades K–3
 - Division II = Grades 4–6
 - Division III = Grades 7–9
 - Division IV = Grades 10–12
- number of principals worked with over the course of the teacher’s teaching career
- years at current school and with current principal

Table 4.3 provides an overview of participant experience: total years’ experience, number of schools, number of principals worked with, and their current principal relationship.

There appeared to be a clean break between the delineation of 5 and 7 years taught in their current schools and as such this is reflected in Tables 4.4 and 4.5 where the participants are divided by their primary teaching assignment based on Division level I, II, III, or IV and teaching experience.

Table 4.3

Participant experience and principal relationship overview

Participant Pseudonym	Interview Order	Gender	Total years taught	Number of schools taught in	Principals worked with in course of their career	Years at current school	Years with current principal
Betty	16	Female	6	3	4	3	3
Dana	6	Female	20	6	8	5	3
Laura	1	Female	14	8	10	2.5	2.5

Participant Pseudonym	Interview Order	Gender	Total years taught	Number of schools taught in	Principals worked with in course of their career	Years at current school	Years with current principal
Lena	4	Female	27	1	8	27	3
Nancy	8	Female	14	3	5	2	4
Ramona	2	Female	11	5	8	1	1
Rose	5	Female	30	3	8	21	1
Tara	11	Female	31	5	10	29	1
Clark	15	Male	15	2	4	10	10
Daryl	3	Male	13	4	7	7	3
David	14	Male	8	1	2	8	4.5
Dominic	9	Male	16	2	4	2	2
Everitt	13	Male	7	2	2	3	3
Harvey	10	Male	29	1	12	29	3
Rob	7	Male	31	7	20	15	2
Tom	12	Male	11	3	3	4	2

Table 4.4

Female/Male by total years' experience

Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Total years taught	Years at current school	Years with current principal	Years taught in current school		Division Predominantly taught	
					1-5	7+	I/II	III/IV
Betty	Female	6	3	3	✓		✓	
Ramona	Female	11	1	1	✓			✓
Laura	Female	14	2.5	2.5	✓		✓	
Nancy	Female	14	2	4	✓		✓	
Dana	Female	20	5	3	✓		✓	
Lena	Female	27	27	3		✓		✓
Rose	Female	30	21	1		✓	✓	
Tara	Female	31	29	1		✓		✓
Everitt	Male	7	3	3	✓			✓

Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Total years taught	Years at current school	Years with current principal	Years taught in current school		Division Predominantly taught	
					1–5	7+	I/II	III/IV
David	Male	8	8	4.5		✓		✓
Tom	Male	11	4	2	✓		✓	
Daryl	Male	13	7	3		✓		✓
Clark	Male	15	10	10		✓		✓
Dominic	Male	16	2	2	✓			✓
Harvey	Male	29	29	3		✓	✓	
Rob	Male	31	15	2		✓	✓	

Table 4.5

Participants by years' experience in ascending order

Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Total years taught	Years at current school	Years with current principal	Years taught in current school		Division predominantly taught	
					1–5	7 +	I / II	III / IV
Betty	Female	6	3	3	✓		✓	
Everitt	Male	7	3	3	✓			✓
David	Male	8	8	4.5		✓		✓
Ramona	Female	11	1	1	✓			✓
Tom	Male	11	4	2	✓		✓	
Daryl	Male	13	7	3		✓		✓
Laura	Female	14	2.5	2.5	✓		✓	
Nancy	Female	14	2	4	✓		✓	
Clark	Male	15	10	10		✓		✓
Dominic	Male	16	2	2	✓			✓
Dana	Female	20	5	3	✓		✓	
Lena	Female	27	27	3		✓		✓
Harvey	Male	29	29	3		✓	✓	
Rose	Female	30	21	1		✓	✓	
Rob	Male	31	15	2		✓	✓	
Tara	Female	31	29	1		✓		✓

Summary

In addition to establishing the participant demographics and describing the distribution of participants across grades, divisions, geography, and population density this chapter also provided background and contextual information about each participant. What follows discusses the lived trust experience of these participants through the lens of the research literature with a view towards establishing the essence of trust.

Chapter 5:

Research Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents a gestalt that illustrates the subordinate and superordinate themes developed from a “close, line by line analysis of the experiential claims, concerns, and understandings of each participant” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 79). Following is a narrative on the subordinate themes nested under the superordinate themes supported with interview excerpts working through my interpretation of the participants’ experiences. The experiences described here are ones which took on a particular significance for them regarding the phenomenon of trust with their principal in their respective schools. As Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis looks at addressing the meaning things have in our experience through a study of the structures of conscious experience as experienced from the first-person point of view this is how the excerpts are presented. Finlay (2009) posits that

the meaning of phenomenological description as a method lies in interpretation and this interpretation is not an additional procedure, it constitutes an inevitable and basic structure of our *being-in-the world*. We experience a thing as something that has already been interpreted. (p. 11)

This analysis, then, is an iterative process in that it represents my account of what the participants were thinking about their experiences of trust, recognizing that analysis is open to change and is only “‘fixed’ through the act of writing it up” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 81).

In engaging with the transcript and oral interviews, I followed Smith et al.'s (2009) suggestions in conducting IPA research. I, therefore, looked at the participants' language, thought about the context of their lived worlds, and identified more abstract concepts to help me make sense of the patterns of meaning in their accounts. The analysis was focused on Smith's analytic tools (2009) and processes on exploratory commenting in transcripts, specifically, descriptive comments focused on describing the content of what the participant has said, the subject of the talk within the transcript, linguistic comments focused on exploring the participant's specific use of language, and conceptual comments focused on engaging at a more interrogative and conceptual level. By interrogating the meaning of the various clusters, subordinate themes were determined, "which express[es] the essence of these clusters" (Hycner, 1999, p. 153). Often there was overlap in the subordinate themes, which can be expected considering the nature of the study of human phenomena. According to Smith et al. (2009) themes contain "enough particularity to be grounded and enough abstraction to be conceptual" (p. 92) and reflect not only the participant's original words and thoughts but also the analyst's interpretation. The themes, therefore, captured and reflected my understanding of the participants' communications.

In the initial stages of analysis what seemed quite poignant was the frequency (numeration) with which a theme was supported—supported by males versus females and support by a specific division. At first, this evidence may appear to be quantitative, however it should be thought of in terms of patterning within and between participants. Upon further analysis, distilling the volume of detail from the transcripts and initial notes

to map the inter-relationships, connections, and patterns from the 16 transcripts produced a master list of 14 subordinate themes (see Table 5.1) clustered around six superordinate themes (see Table 5.2). According to Sadala and Adorno (2001, p. 289) it is at this point that the researcher “transforms participants’ everyday expressions into expressions appropriate to the scientific discourse supporting the research.”

As I worked through the process of reading and re-reading the data and my notes again and again, I was repeatedly struck by the way the study participants articulated their thoughts and ideas and how they framed their own experiences. I am mindful of Guba and Lincoln’s (1985) assertion that “all human constructions are problematic. We cannot expect them to be ultimately true or to remain constant for a long period of time” (p. 70). Consequently, I am cognizant that I can never be completely certain that I have captured the meaning of experience as lived and felt by the participants because I am aware that the meanings as expressed are only true at the point of sharing and may not be true at a later time. Table 5.1 outlines how the subordinate themes were generated based upon the compilation of key words and phrases used by participants that clustered into the subordinate themes and helps to demonstrate my thinking process when clustering these words and phrases in the subordinate themes. This process is a critical phase of explicating the data in that those statements that are seen to illuminate the researched phenomenon are extracted or isolated (Creswell, 2007; Holloway, 1997; Hycner, 1999; King, 1994; Moustakas, 1994).

Table 5.1

Frequency with which a subordinate theme was supported

Subordinate Theme	Gender Ratio M:F	Division response by participant interview	
		I / II	III / IV
Sharing of Information/Transparency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schedule changes ▪ Budget ▪ School decisions that affect staff are shared /discussed openly ▪ Seeks advice and shares information ▪ Transparent ▪ No hidden agendas 	6:8	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 16	2, 3, 4, 11, 13, 14, 15
Honesty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talks openly and is receptive with staff ▪ Same message privately as publically ▪ Truthful 	8:8	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 16	2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15
Consistent/Reliant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow through ▪ Same with everyone ▪ Integrity ▪ No power plays ▪ Clear expectations – sets the bar ▪ Accountable for self ▪ Consistently follows the rules 	8:8	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 16	2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15
Interpersonal relationship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing and nurturing relationships; feel valued ▪ Talking to your staff (outside of the principal's office) ▪ Getting to know your staff ▪ Becoming 'friends' ▪ Connections with everyone not just one's liked ▪ Work as a team ▪ Sense of community, belonging ▪ Collective identity 	8:8	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 16	2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15
Prior working relationship with principal	4:1	7, 8, 12	3, 14
Leads by example	8:8	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 16	2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15

Subordinate Theme	Gender Ratio M:F	Division response by participant interview	
		I / II	III / IV
Visible presence in the school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Out of their office ▪ Being 'seen' ▪ Has pulse of the school ▪ Extra-curricular student activities ▪ Staff and students know the principal 	8:8	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 16	2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15
Time to develop relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows the professional and personal side of staff ▪ Spends time with staff during the school day and outside of the regular school day 	6:7	5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 16	2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 14, 15
Shows appreciation to staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cards, notes ▪ Hard work/effort is recognized ▪ Celebrate successes 	4:3	1, 5, 10, 12	3, 11, 14
Treats as professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Autonomy ▪ Believes in you ▪ Has professional conversations with staff 	8:8	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 16	2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15
Open Door policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accessible ▪ Really listens, eye contact ▪ Sincere ▪ Even-keeled ▪ Input is valued ▪ Humble ▪ Vulnerable 	8:8	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 16	2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15
Safe place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Able to take risks ▪ Able to try different things ▪ Has my back ▪ Private information shared is kept confidential 	8:6	1, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12	2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15
Culture of Fear <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retaliation ▪ Punishment ▪ Stabbing in the back 	7:3	6, 7, 10, 12	2, 3, 4, 9, 14, 15

Subordinate Theme	Gender Ratio M:F	Division response by participant interview	
		I / II	III / IV
Formation of Camps		1, 5, 6, 10, 12	4, 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Battles; Armed camps; War ▪ Us versus Administration ▪ Clandestine ▪ Underground information highway ▪ Rules with iron fist ▪ Governs from the castle ▪ Shell shocked ▪ Circle the wagons ▪ Go toe-to-toe ▪ Toxic 	3:4		

It was not the purpose of this study to investigate the phenomenon of trust in schools through the eyes of a specific gender. However, of note in Table 5.1 are the consistencies between males and females when talking about the importance or relevance of the principal sharing information and being transparent, demonstrating honesty and integrity, being consistent, developing interpersonal relationships, being visible in the school, leading by example, and treating teachers as professionals. Of particular interest was the prior working relationship subordinate theme where four males indicated that they had experienced a prior working relationship with their principal either from a former school or from committee work. I had assumed that this would have been prevalent at the Division III/IV level with males or at the Division I/II level with females.

Further, the subordinate themes of *Formation of Camps* and *Culture of Fear* could have been clustered together and were placed together later in a superordinate theme, but were separated because of the interesting data generated. The formation of camps was referenced predominantly in Divisions I and II, five respondents to two, which I found interesting as I would have assumed that the camps would be formed at the

Division III/IV levels owing to the structural separation of subject matter and departments. I wonder if the Division I and II teachers mentioned camps because they do not have the *natural* grouping found at the Division IV level. They have to make an effort to find others of like mind, whereas in Division IV the group is already in place. It was also interesting that more males than females referenced a culture of fear. Although it represented 7 of the 16 respondents, *Shows appreciation to staff* had a higher, but not significant, importance for Division I/II teachers (four respondents) than Division III/IV teachers (three respondents). There was no significant difference between males and females in this subordinate theme. However, all 16 respondents indicated that they wanted to feel *valued* by their principal. Table 5.2 shows how the superordinate themes were generated based upon the compilation of key words and phrases used by participants that clustered into the subordinate themes (Table 5.1).

Table 5.2

Master list of superordinate and subordinate themes

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes
Trust is experienced as open and honest communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No hidden agendas ▪ Transparent (schedule/ budget) ▪ Truthful ▪ Seeks advice and shares information ▪ School decisions that affect staff are shared/discussed openly ▪ Same message privately- publically
Trust is experienced as having confidence in or reliance on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consistent: same with everyone ▪ Consistently follows the rules ▪ No power plays ▪ Integrity ▪ Follows through ▪ Leads by example ▪ Clear expectations – sets the bar ▪ Accountability / Standard

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes
Trust is experienced as feeling safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open door policy ▪ Really listens: eye contact/body language ▪ Sincere ▪ Even-keeled ▪ Input is valued ▪ Vulnerable: does not have all the answers ▪ Humble ▪ Able to take risks ▪ Has my back ▪ Private information shared is kept confidential <p>Formation of Camps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Battles; Armed camps; War; Shell Shock; Clandestine; Circle the wagons ▪ Us versus Administration ▪ Toxic ▪ Underground information highway ▪ Rules with iron fist ▪ Governs from the castle ▪ Go toe-to-toe <p>Culture of fear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ principal not retaliate/punish ▪ stabbing in the back
Trust is experienced as efficacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Autonomy ▪ Believes in you ▪ Engages in professional conversations
Trust is experienced as feeling appreciated (individual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shows appreciation to staff ▪ Celebrate successes ▪ Hard work/effort is recognized
Trust is experienced as a sense of community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talking to the staff (outside of the principal's office) ▪ Knowing the staff professionally and personally ▪ Developing and nurturing relationships ▪ Becoming 'friends' ▪ Connection with everyone not just one's liked ▪ Prior working relationship ▪ Spends time with staff during the school day and outside of the regular school day ▪ Work as a team ▪ Sense of community; collective identity, belonging ▪ Out of their office; being seen around the school ▪ Has the pulse of the school ▪ Staff and students know the principal ▪ Extra-curricular activities

Subsequently, each hard copy transcript was again re-read and a different colour *post-it* flag used to code for each superordinate theme. For each superordinate theme a new Word file, named with the theme title, was opened and identified extracts complete with pseudonym and transcript page reference(s). The superordinate themes are then illustrated with particular examples taken from individuals. As a result, transcript excerpts with a detailed analytic interpretation of the text constitute a large portion of this chapter.

Superordinate Themes

Phenomenological research investigates and legitimizes the inner and outer worlds of human experience. A phenomenologist “considers the person to be already existing with his/her world” (Osborne, 1990, p. 80); therefore, the person experiencing the phenomenon is most consciously connected to the experience and is best suited to describe and define the meaning of the experience. According to Smith et al. (2009)

IPA is avowedly interpretive, and the interpretation may well move away from the original text of the participant. What is important is that the interpretation was inspired by, and arose from, attending to the participant’s words, rather than being imported from outside. (p. 90)

The aim of the researcher is to describe as accurately as possible the phenomenon, refraining from any *a priori* framework, but remaining true to the facts.

Based on the superordinate themes, what follows is my attempt to capture something of the participants’ experiences about the phenomenon of trust that has taken

on a particular significance for them which represents the *P* in IPA research. Presenting the participants' excerpts makes my evidentiary base transparent. This transparency enables the reader to check the evidence against my claims and to agree or disagree with those claims. Often an extended quote from one participant, short excerpts from others, and a cross reference to the theme table indicating the presence of the theme in the remaining cases is the pattern provided for each superordinate theme below. My analytical comments on the material and reference to existing literature form the *I* in IPA research. This interweaving of participant excerpts and analytical commentary form the beating heart of IPA research.

Trust is experienced as open and honest communication.

You know, if you were Saran Wrap, I could see clearer. It's stuff like that, the game playing that gets really tiring, the lack of transparency. The lack of transparency starts at the top. (Laura, July 28, 2011)

Relationships among people inevitably lead to exchanges in which honesty becomes a focus. Rotter (1967, p. 651) defined trust as "the expectancy that the word, promise, verbal or written statements of another individual or group can be relied upon." Honesty is seen as a fundamental facet of trust that takes a person's character and integrity into account (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Congruence between a person's statements and deeds characterizes integrity and honesty (Tschannen-Moran, 2001). People that demonstrate high levels of honesty encourage others around them to trust them, thereby increasing the stability of the relationship, even during stressful events

(Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Cummings & Bromiley, 1996; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1999). Many of the participants shared that as relationships mature, individuals are open, honest, and forthcoming if trust-building has occurred.

People who do not trust easily will look for hidden agendas (Tschannen-Moran, 2011). They are wary of people until they see them in action for a while. In 1919, H. L. Mencken wrote, “No man ever quite believes in any other man. One may believe in an idea absolutely, but not in a man” (Ehrlich & DeBruhl, 1996, p. 702). The participants shared that when the principal says “trust me on this” and he or she has the reputation of being open and forthright in the sharing of information in their communication, teachers will give the principal the benefit of the doubt on the strength of the principal’s consistent record for not having hidden agendas and being forthright in their communication with staff. A reputation for being open and honest is particularly important in those times where principals have to withhold information from staff and defend a decision, often an unpopular one, by saying “I’m not at liberty to go into the details.” When this happens, participants suggested that some staff may interpret this as a cover-up. However, principals who have established a reputation of being honest can rely upon staff to more likely to give them the benefit of the doubt. This was demonstrated in Rob’s example when speaking of his principal:

She was somebody who had the trust of the staff because she always went out of her way to put the facts on the table. And, because she had a reputation of that, when she was laying out the facts it wasn’t a case of you saying, “OK. Ya, those are those facts, but what are the key ones she’s holding back?” She’s someone

that I trusted because I've never come across a situation where she said something that was incorrect. (August 9, 2011)

I believe that when teachers choose to give principals the benefit of the doubt, it is not in response to a principal's plea to "trust me on this." Rather, teachers offer forbearance because they have watched the principal in action and know that the principal has a consistent record for truth-telling or being honest, as shared by the participants. People don't fully trust when they believe that they are being given selective or partial truth. The principal, as the leader of the school, sets the standard for this behaviour. The principal is the individual responsible for establishing and modeling trusting relationships within the school's hierarchical structure (Tschannen-Moran, 2004; Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 1998). Further, the participants shared that they would accept that there might be a reason that the details could not be shared at that time if the principal was seen to be an individual who was open and honest with them.

Kouzes and Posner (2003) suggest that trusted leaders are open and that openness is the extent to which all relevant information is shared—good and bad. This was communicated by Ramona when she shared:

I don't like the politically correct, right conversations 'cause you can see right through that. I don't need to know the full story because I know as a teacher it's not my position to know the full story, and I understand that there's stuff that administrators deal with that I don't need to deal with as a teacher. I get that, but at the same time, though, there's a little bit of professional respect that goes along with it, that I can handle some of the truth. (July 28, 2011)

Teachers will watch to see if the principal communicates honestly and openly in a consistent manner.

By watching a person in action, especially looking to see if he or she is truthful consistently and openly, even when the truth does not bathe that individual in a good light, people come to trust. David recounted that his principal shared his own professional growth plan with the staff, specifically how he wanted to grow as an administrator by asking “How can I get better?” David, believing that his principal valued open and honest communication, offered the following feedback to the principal when asked how staff morale could be improved. David said “it’s as simple as going to the staff room in the mornings. Go and talk with the staff as they come in in the morning” (August 11, 2011). David reported that the principal started going to the staff room that day. The reaction of the staff was “Uh, why are you here? You’re not supposed to be here. Go back to your cave.” David recounted:

to the credit of the principal he resisted that and stayed in the mornings—he would come in and he would say ‘good morning’ to everybody and people would say ‘good morning’ to him and people started, in the morning, started to have that positive element first thing in the morning. (August 11, 2011)

David reported that he saw a rise in staff morale toward the end of the year just because of the principal coming to staff room in the mornings. “People saw him as a person, as a colleague, as someone other than just the principal. People began to talk to him, not at him. They began to see him as a person, not as a suit” (August 11, 2011). Almost any organization would operate more effectively with completely open and forthright

employees, but is absolute frankness is too much to hope for? Candor depends upon trust, and in hierarchical organizations trust “has strict natural limits” (Tom, August 11, 2011).

Lena described a one-on-one meeting with her principal who was new to the school that year. They talked about a staffing issue in her department where a staff member was being laid off due to dropping enrollment. “He said to me, ‘Do you think I made a mistake by laying that person off?’ And I was taken aback by it.” (August 2, 2011). Lena shared that she was placed in a position where she was asked her opinion because of her demonstrated concern for the school and her department and she believed because of the relationship that she had consciously nurtured with her principal. The principal was asking to be informed by creating an environment where transparency and honesty were valued and thereby created an environment in which truth telling was encouraged. Seashore Louis (2007) argued that administrators must be ruthless in scrutinizing how their own behaviour and context are interpreted by others. “Getting information about how one is being perceived requires developing strategies for getting honest assessments” (p. 19). To build this trust, a leader must be willing to listen and hear another’s opinion; to flatten the hierarchical structure.

Unfortunately, sometimes the fear of being truthful to the boss generalizes in such a way that people are hesitant to be truthful to anyone in administration, as was seen initially in Lena’s school when the principal first arrived and staff avoided having one-on-one conversations with him. Once the staff saw that the principal acted with integrity with all staff members, his office “had a revolving door. He was so busy with people in

there that it felt like you had to book an appointment to have a conversation with him!” (August 2, 2011). The examples cited demonstrate a willingness of staff to be vulnerable because they had come to trust that their respective principals were genuinely seeking staff’s feedback. Sometimes, however, a breakdown in communication occurs and staff is unsure as to when their input is being asked for in a collaborative or consultative manner. This was not the case with Clark when he shared that his principal was very honest and clear in her communication with staff:

She was very much, “I want your input.” And so you could give her your input, but she was very clear at the end of the day that, ultimately, sometimes, the decision would be hers. She would take into consideration what everybody had to say, and she’d sort of meld that together, but she would make the decision and she would tell us that upfront before the conversation even started. We knew if it was consultation or collaboration. (August 11, 2011)

People develop trust through interaction and conversation in relationships with each other (Tschannen-Moran, 2011). I believe that trust isn’t something that we have; it is something that we do, something that we make. Trust is an option. It is a choice. We make decisions, or a series of decisions, to trust. We come to have expectations of others and we respond to the fulfillment or frustration of those expectations. Participants shared that to make informed decisions open and honest communication needs to ensue.

Dominic recounted an incident during a staff meeting as educational goals were being set for the following year. One teacher expressed a concern over an education goal under discussion. Dominic clarified that the teacher “wasn’t mad or anything, but clearly

emotional about it” and, instead of feeling attacked, the principal let the teacher speak and “after that got clarification from all of the staff to clear things up and check his understanding” (August 11, 2011). As a result of the principal’s conscious choice to do nothing but listen and then take ownership for his actions by saying “You’re right. It’s an area I need to work on” the staff rallied behind the principal and

by the time we were done that specific goal everyone was on board to work on it, work on it together. It was first expressed as maybe this is an administration fault that’s taken place, but in the end, just the way he dealt with it, everyone got on board and said “No. No. Student truancy is ours to deal with as a whole staff.”

Dominic also shared that this same principal who had arrived at the school when Dominic did focused on ensuring that staff had the opportunity to speak in staff meetings.

He calls this his little round table discussions and it’s not about an educational goal we have. It’s about the atmosphere of the school or the staff asking what are our concerns at this point? So it opens things up. And then if your administrator is that way, you have hope. (August 11, 2011)

Boonstra and Bennebroek Gravenhorst (2010) suggest that people who are not accustomed to experiencing open, honest communication may not know how to process such openness. If it is not something that staff has been accustomed to, they may be waiting for the hidden message or agenda to be revealed.

People need to feel informed, and, in the absence of information, they may begin to speculate. Even worse, participants shared, were the possible many ways to be untruthful, some being *inter alia*: telling a half-truth, taking undue credit, using spin to

distort the facts, word-smithing, blaming others to avoid the finger of blame being pointed back at yourself, and using vague language (Galford & Drapeau, 2002). “If there is a relationship of trust, with rumors and speculation at least you can go in [to the principal’s office] and have the conversation to clarify. With half-truths this is harder to do ‘cause you are dealing with spin” (Betty, August 12, 2011). What is important is that trusted principals avoid these behaviours and, instead, are open and honest. Open communication, as in the examples from Dominic and Betty, lessens the likelihood of people feeling *left in the dark*, or of dealing with spin, especially if the person feels that the information withheld may have a significant impact on their work life. Farrell (2009) suggested that if people are mutually dependent, they are more likely to form relationships and to continue in them. Inequalities in dependence create power imbalances that can lead to conflict.

Cho and Perry (2012) suggest that sociologists would agree that power is a fundamental property of social structures. Boonstra and Bennebroek Gravenhorst (2010) see power as a dynamical social process affecting opinions, emotions, and behaviour of interest groups in which inequalities are involved with respect to the realization of wishes and interests (p. 99). Farrell (2009) asserted that in a given relationship, A’s power over B is a function of the value of B’s dependence on A for valued outcome. The greater B’s dependence on A, the greater A’s power over B. Given this power at the macro level is systemic or positional and at the micro level is inherently relational. Boonstra and Bennebroek Gravenhorst (2010) describe positional power that predominantly refers to the existing organizational hierarchy that renders management the ability to control the

behaviour of others and to change the organizational structure and processes. The use of power is observable and direct. The power embedded in formal organizational structures and processes is directed at domination. Actions taken to challenge this domination or to question the proposals of management to change the organization are seen as resistance.

In this view, resistance to change is illegitimate behaviour and an attack on organizational interests. In this system Boonstra and Bennebroek Gravenhorst (2010) describe information power which allows an individual to influence others by providing information, withholding it, distorting it, or redirecting the flow of information towards selected recipients. Participants shared that in their schools, owners of knowledge may share knowledge selectively and the degree of an individuals' reliance on another for this knowledge can determine the distribution of power in relationships. Principals fulfill a special role in these unconscious power processes because they have the opportunity, more than others, to give meaning to events and in doing so contribute to the development of norms and values in the organization.

Everitt contrasts two principals' different delivery methods of teaching assignments. His first principal would speak with the curriculum leaders in the school but not individual staff members. Staff members received their teaching assignment 20 minutes before the end of the last school day, placed in their mailbox during a staff meeting. In this school, Everitt shared that

There was an indifference to it in the process and a feeling of . . . I don't want to say hopelessness 'cause that's a bit too emotionally strong for it, but a recognition that you can't change how that system works, and so there's no point in exerting a

lot of effort or feeling to how the process is going. So, you're resigned to it.

(August 11, 2011)

Everitt recounted that if a teacher was ever called to a meeting with the principal "it was a rectangular table and an administrator on one side, teacher on the other side. It was an adversarial kind of positioning" (August 11, 2011). Conversely, Everitt shared that "it's a more comfortable situation now in this school that I'm in. There is a lot of support and collaboration and advance notice" (August 11, 2011). In his current school, the principal would have 15–20 minute conversations with each staff member in May to talk about his/her current teaching assignment, what the enrollment numbers were for the fall, and then together they would draft a sample teaching assignment.

Here it's a round table. We're sitting side by side; we're looking at the piece of paper and I have to believe that that's intentional, and that there's some kind of recognition of the fact that we are working together on this as opposed to its you—I don't want to say you versus me, but it really felt like you versus me. My final schedule I find out with 3 weeks to go in the school year and I have some time to sit down with another teacher to collaborate and start planning out what we were going to do for the next year. (Everitt, August 11, 2011)

In order to cultivate trust in a school, openness and honesty are fundamental. When people withhold information from each other, distrust and suspicion are spawned (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1999, 2000). "People who are guarded in the information they share provoke suspicion; others wonder what is being hidden and why" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 558). When principals contribute to their school's open climate

by making information readily available, distrust is diluted and trust is encouraged, thus building acceptance and comfort. Participants shared that they believe that trusting climates are first established by leader example.

Leaders have to demonstrate an openness to influence and genuinely consider alternative viewpoints. People will accept a decision that goes against their preferences if they feel that, in the process of reaching a decision, the principal took their concerns and insights into consideration (Cho & Ringquist, 2011). Everitt described his first school where the principal was not receptive to his offering input. Rather, Everitt was presented with data in a very formal setting with the teacher on one side of the table and the principal on the other, a positioning that Everitt described as adversarial. There was no opportunity for discussion about his teaching assignment. Conversely, in his second school he sat side-by-side with his principal in an open and collaborative manner and discussed his teaching schedule well before the close of the school year. In an environment where open, honest communication is supported and valued, different points of view can be expressed safely because people feel that their voice is a necessary part of the symphony of the orchestra. For trust to prosper the right environment is required. The responsibility for creating this environment falls to the principal who models the standard of conduct in a healthy work environment.

Transparency in leadership links directly to the concept of organizational trust (Chhuon, Gilkey, Gonzales, Daly, & Chrispeels, 2008). Sweetland and Hoy (2001) found that principals that support a closed organization by withholding information and spinning the truth engender distrust and suspicion within the school. Honesty and

openness are facets of trust that permit people to express themselves freely in a non-hostile environment, thereby promoting expressions of vulnerability and trust building (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Chhuon et al., 2008; De Jonge, Van Trijp, Van der Lands, Renes, & Frewer, 2008; Mishra, 1996; Rusch, 2004; Shulman, 2008). Communication represents a key factor in keeping a workplace free from rumors, negativity, and dishonesty. Tschannen-Moran (2004), who investigated teacher trust in principals, suggested that a breach in the facet of honesty can be “more damaging to trust than lapses in other facets because it is read as an indictment of the person’s character” (p. 23). Moreover, Tschannen- Moran suggested that although many leadership actions can violate honesty, leaders who try “to please everyone or to avoid conflict” (p. 23) run great risks of being viewed as dishonest and untrustworthy.

This honesty in the workplace does not just mean truth or lies, but equates to simple, straightforward communication. When open, honest communication is established, confidence is built and thereby reduces fear. Conversely, distrust and conflict develop through a lack of feedback or when information is withheld (Adrian-Taylor, Noels, & Tischler, 2007; Boonstra, & Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 2010). It is critical for relationship-building to have effective, open, and honest communication because honesty issues have a significant impact on all workplaces, no matter how large or small. In addition, in any relationship, it’s important to be a good listener as well as a good communicator.

A trust-based environment protects teachers’ abilities to contribute, to bring their best and creative ideas forward without fear of consequences (Cosner, 2010). Everitt, in

describing “pitching” an idea to his principal to help make Ends reporting (student record reporting system) easier and more streamlined, shared the following:

In my current school when Ends reporting was introduced, I actually looked at it and I tried to figure out a more efficient way to do it. I knew that any ideas I came up with would be received by admin ‘cause he was open to that. So the openness and receptivity to new ideas is motivating and trust building. (August 11, 2011)

This is an example of how teachers who feel that their ideas will be heard and feel positive about what they are doing and who they are working with, who derive a positive sense of purpose from what they are doing, are willing to go that extra mile to help. Principals should nurture an environment where people feel open, honest communication is fostered and modeled, so that staff can contribute their talents and abilities. This effect was tangibly demonstrated to Everitt when he transitioned from one school to another which provided him the opportunity to contrast two different administrative approaches to student supervision on World Skills Day⁷.

In Everitt’s first school it was a top down decision made by the principal, told to the staff in June, and then staff were directed to “practice a dry run through” (August 11, 2011). Conversely, in the school that Everitt joined that fall, staff were encouraged by the principal “to both question the process that was being suggested and give input to

⁷ World Skills Day occurred in Calgary in September of 2009 where Grade 10 students from across Alberta were transported to the Stampede Grounds to tour the World Skills Pavilions to see first-hand what career options are available in the skills, trades, and technology sectors and watch provincial, national, and international students compete in various Career and Technology events.
<http://archive.worldskills.org/2009calgary/WorldSkills-English/>

possibly changing the process before we finalized it” (August 11, 2011). Staff was concerned because they would be supervising Grade 10 students that they had just met and were taking them on a field trip with thousands of other Grade 10 students from other schools and jurisdictions. The openness to input was demonstrated by the principal when 3 days prior to departure a staff member suggested using their umbrellas,

because the administration, at the beginning of the year or sometime at some point in the year, gives out staff gifts. Well this year it happened to be umbrellas with the school logo on it. So a very wise staff member happened to have the idea, “Hey, when we get to the grounds, rain or shine” (because it can either be hot or rainy) “why don’t we open up the umbrella and the students can follow the umbrella.” And this was a great idea because the kids could easily recognize the school colors, it’s got the school logo on it, and you can find a teacher. So we didn’t lose any students! So it’s a valuable process to have that input because the decision was affecting us directly! (Everitt, August 11, 2011)

All of the study participants expressed the need to be involved in decisions that affect them and have an impact on how they do their job. Group decision making or group input was commented on by every teacher in the study. They described it as a type of participatory process in which multiple individuals acting collectively analyze problems or situations, consider and evaluate alternative courses of action, and select from among the alternatives a solution or solutions.

Lena, having survived what she described as a dictatorial principal, was now enjoying the benefits of a consensus building principal. This is her experience with a principal who listens and allows staff to speak and process together:

He gets them talking. And they talk and they talk and they talk, and he listens.

And he doesn't do anything right away so they talk more. He starts conversations that are just very open-ended and just puts it out there and waits for people to bite.

(August 2, 2011)

This strategy was particularly poignant for her in the year-end staff meeting. Lena shared that it was very emotional where one teacher stood and shared her frustrations and was crying,

he [the principal] let that person keep talking. A couple of times she'd pause to get herself together. He didn't interrupt her, and stayed focused on her. Didn't start looking at anybody else, to let everybody else know that person is still talking and we're going to wait until she's done. When she finally sat down and he knew she was finished talking, he didn't even actually say anything. It was all body language to let the staff know that they could now talk. And we sat there until everybody was finished talking. He didn't say, "We've got 5 more minutes. Two more people can talk." It's like we're going to sit here and talk this through until people are done. (August 2, 2011)

Leaders who want to gain the confidence of their staff must make themselves vulnerable to them by being open, reliable, kind, and honest (Hoy & Miskel, 2005). Without such trust, leader influence is limited; with it, the leader's influence is great. Trust

development is encouraged reciprocally when participants feel that information is shared in an open, honest manner both publically and privately (Hoy & Smith, 2007; Rusch, 2004; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). In a specific social context, behaviours are viewed as correct if respected people are seen performing them. The relationship is reciprocal; trust begets trust just as mistrust begets mistrust.

Those who change their position depending on the person or audience they are addressing or the situation in which they find themselves, or who say one thing and do another will be deemed untrustworthy (Cho & Ringquist, 2011). Lena shared her experience with a principal who could not be trusted to be consistent in her messaging and conversations, as a result staff was cautious. She had to explain to the new principal why staff would not go and talk to him without a witness being present:

When people would go see him about things they always had their pal with them. Almost to act as a witness to say, “Yes. This really was said.” And he said, “People won’t come see me by themselves.” And I said, “Well, you have to understand the legacy here of a person who would say one thing one minute to your face, and then go and do something completely different the next day. One day she would say one thing; then the next day it would completely change. And so nobody knew what to expect from her from one day to another. So people want a witness.” (August 2, 2011)

The participants stressed that trust is necessary for open communication in a school because people with a high degree of trust are more likely to disclose more accurate, relevant, and complete data about problems and seek solutions together. When one is

interacting with a distrusted person on the other hand, especially if that person holds more power within an organizational hierarchy, the goal of communication becomes the protection of one's interest, the protection of self, and the reduction of one's anxiety rather than the accurate transmission of ideas. Participants offered that a high degree of trust allows for the open exchange of information, where problems can be disclosed, diagnosed, and corrected before they are compounded. Principals can help foster the flow of information to them by being open with their communications (Bartolme, 1989). Principals who want to encourage candor among their staffs must cultivate an atmosphere of trust.

In our society, schools are held to higher standards of behaviour and judgment and so are their leaders (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). Teaching children makes educational leadership a sacred trust (Sergiovanni, 2005). School leadership is complex, but sometimes it becomes more complicated than necessary. When it comes to openness and honesty school leadership is very simple. All of the study participants indicated a preference for a principal who was principle-centred, for whom honesty and transparency were their most important leadership traits. They shared that if the person is a principled principal, who bases his or her actions and decisions on honesty and transparency, and who tries to do the right thing, as he or she understands it, in all situations based on what is best for kids, that would be the person they would trust. If a principal modeled these behaviours consistently, he or she would be a valued principal. Teachers want principals that live their values, who *walk the talk* and practice open, honest communication and decision making every day.

Trust is experienced as having confidence in or reliance on.

He [the principal] would just say, “Well, I don’t really know anything about that because so-and-so is looking after that,” which just threw me right for a loop, because I thought, “You need to know everything that’s going on. It really all does come back to you.” (Rose, August 2, 2011)

Reliability is an important pre-requisite for the establishment of trust. Rotter (1970) defined “interpersonal trust” as “an expectancy held by an individual or a group that the word, promise, verbal or written statement of another individual can be relied upon” (p. 657). Such trust is part of many daily decisions. This component of trust is a basic sense of predictability defined as consistent behaviour or knowing what to expect from others (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Hosmer, 1995; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000; Walker et al., 2011). Smith and Shoho (2007, p. 64) define this relationship, stating, “Reliability represents the degree to which one person party to a relationship can depend on the other to provide that which is needed.” Yet, while predictability is a component of reliability, the terms are not interchangeable.

Predictability in and of itself is a poor substitute for reliability. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) give the example that we can trust someone to be predictably late, malicious, or self-serving but that does not make them *reliable*. They contend that trust is diminished when an expectation of harm comes to the fore. Tschannen-Moran (2004) also suggested that the facet of reliability is important with respect to leader trust and urged principals to “demonstrate enough consistency in their behaviour to inspire confidence that teachers can count on them in their time of need” (p. 30). Therefore,

reliability evokes a feeling of consistent assurance that one's physical or emotional requirements will be satisfied without the worry or expenditure of effort to plan for failure. Trust decisions are based on the extent to which interacting parties meet the expectations or commitments that others in the interactional setting hold for them (Cummings & Bromiley, 1996; Walker et al., 2011). Over time these expectations "change in response to the extent to which subsequent experiences either validate or discredit them" (Kramer, 1999, p. 576). Conversely, actions that appear to violate various facets of trust, such as norms pertaining "to the personal expectations between a trustor and trustee," undermine the development of trust (Elangovan & Shapiro, 1998, p. 549). In virtually all conceptions of trust there is an element of expectation.

A number of the participants shared that their respective school divisions generally did not hire principals from outside of its own division teachers/administrators. Consequently, a principal coming from another school would have developed a certain reputation and may bring that reputation to his or her new school. This reputation may afford the principal an initial level of trust, or not, but this initial trust has a very short shelf life (Clark & Payne, 2006). The participants shared that the teachers at the new school will afford initial trust based on the principal's exhibited behaviour. Without prior knowledge of a new principal's actions in similar situations, teachers are not able to predict the principal's actions with any degree of certainty and may not trust that appropriate action will be taken (Macmillan, Meyer, & Northfield, 2004). When trust in a newly appointed principal is still forming, exhibited behaviour precedes expectation as the teachers are looking to see if they can instill their confidence or positive expectations

in their new leader (Day, 2009). Lena similarly shared, “You hear that this guy’s coming. And, because teachers have relationships, before he walked in here, people had an opinion about him” (August 2, 2011). Meyer, Macmillan, & Northfield (2011) found that “new principals may experience conflict in attempts to bridge personal leadership styles with their predecessors’ while teachers adjust to potential changes in values and to a new principal’s perceptions of leadership” (p. 2). This is what they refer to as the micropolitics of succession. Clark observed that when a new principal “comes to your school teachers are apprehensive because at first, you’re nervous. You know what you had in the previous principal, now you don’t know what to expect” (August 11, 2011).

Once trust is established, expectations no longer need to be built. Expectation now precedes exhibited behaviour (Forsyth, 2008; Seashore Louis, 2007). When principals and teachers have had the opportunity to observe each other’s reactions and actions, they gain insight into patterns of practice. Consistency between a principal’s practices and words enables teachers to predict how the principal will respond; exhibited behaviour now validates the set expectations as Lena explained,

It didn’t take long for people to realize that they weren’t going to get punished for that, that bad things weren’t going to happen if they said their opinion, and it was the same for everyone. The kind of talk around town was that he was a very good guy, easy to get along with, down-to-earth person who was approachable, and fair. So that’s what we were expecting when he walked in and that’s what he was. (August 2, 2011)

The reputation that preceded Lena's principal was reinforced by his consistent actions at his receiving school. His reputation for being fair, easy to get along with, and a down to earth approachable *guy* was reinforced when he met and engaged with staff. Trusting teachers harbour expectations about the principal who, in turn, must exhibit behaviour to meet these expectations. Knowing that the principal will be trusted to respond consistently, regardless of the situation, participants said that they could then, with such an understanding, focus their energy on teaching without having to worry about the principal's reactions. As Tschannen-Moran (2004) pointed out, "teachers have greater confidence when they feel they can predict the behaviours of their principal" (p. 30). Principals must consistently do what is right and do it consistently across all contexts. This is an ongoing interplay between expectations and exhibited behaviour. This facet of trust is confidence (expectation) that the principal will consistently do what is right (exhibited behaviour) so that the staff can rely on the principal. One of the predominant elements of trust raised by the participants in this study was reliability. The term "predictable" was also used to describe the behaviours that contributed to the development of trusting relationships with teachers.

Tara had a similar experience. Her first principal set out his expectations when she first arrived at her school,

When I first came to this school, the principal clearly, at the beginning of my very first year of teaching, was very clear in laying out expectations to the staff as a whole. And he took all the new teachers and worked with them individually so

that there was a deeper understanding of what the school culture was and what the expectations were. (August 10, 2011)

Interacting with new employees is a common workplace occurrence. Rotter (1967) found that past experiences and frequency of interaction with another individual and/or prior knowledge of the trustor help a trustee decide whether to trust. However, sometimes initial trust is not based on past experiences or information about the new member since the parties have no past history. Given this situation, McKnight, Cummings, and Chervany (1998) argued that trust within an organization needs to develop at the beginning of the members' relationship. Clear expectations need to be communicated. This was not the norm for Tara. It was not again until her fourth principal that she experienced the same clarity of what her principal's expectations were.

When that principal came into the school, he again, very clearly laid out expectations and also for teacher expectations as far as professional development and professional learning communities and how that would occur and what expectations were and how it'd be managed. And we probably moved more in that year than we had in the past 10! We knew what was expected of us and he didn't deviate from this! (Tara, August 10, 2011)

As in Lena and Tara's examples, staff will be watching the principal as the leader of the school. Consensus of a new reputation will form and this new reputation may or may not conform to the old reputation. However this new reputation is now the reality for the staff. It becomes the lived experience of the teachers in the school—their new truth. The

old adage that actions speak louder than words is true as teachers try to form their opinions as to whether the new “guy or girl” at the top can be trusted.

Conversely, the opposite can happen when a principal says one thing to the staff and then does not follow through on what he or she verbalizes, as was the case with Ramona and one of her principals.

I remember one administrator that always promised us one-on-one meetings. So I was very excited because I really wanted to have my one-on-one. And I never got my one-on-one. And this was years ago! “OK, so you couldn’t even find 5 minutes to have a one-on-one with me.” What does that tell me? Something like that, it just kind of eats away at that basic trust you have with somebody. That was something that was important that wasn’t followed through on and to this day I don’t really trust that principal when he says that he is going to do something. I have to wait and see if it is actually going to happen. (Ramona, July 28, 2011)

The participants shared that teachers don’t trust those who act in a contradictory or erratic manner that is unpredictable. Being reliable is about consistently keeping commitments. If the principal fails to fulfill a commitment made to staff, the staff may lose some degree of trust in the principal’s reliability; the teacher’s confidence in the principal is shaken.

Normally, we don’t say that we trust our own actions, we just act. A teacher doesn’t say “I trust that I will make lesson plans for tomorrow.” The teacher, if the will is there, just makes the lesson plans. Ramona had an expectation that her principal would act in a certain manner. However, in her confidence, Ramona was passively involved because she was dependent on something happening without her active participation—the

principal setting up and attending the one-on-one interview. Ramona relied on the principal to do what he said he was going to do. Here, reliability is expressed as the idea that someone can be counted on to come through and competence is the ability to come through.

Confidence and trust are strongly related but they are not the same thing. Bollnow (1989) distinguishes between confidence and trust where “[confidence] acts as the less complicated preform of real trust” (p. 24). He defined confidence (*Zutrauen*) as one-sided which relates to the natural abilities of the person and trust (*Vertrauen*) as a reciprocal relationship where trust demands a response (p. 24). The capacity of the principal to uphold his or her word, in Lena and Tara’s examples, is reciprocal in that they had an expectation that their principals would act in a certain way based on what the principals communicated to the teachers. Dominic had a similar experience with his principal. As a new teacher on staff Dominic described his experience with his principal as follows:

He shared his expectations by saying “This is your job to do. And I’m here to support you in whatever avenue.” But he treats everyone like that. You just know, you know. It’s like—I do the same thing in my classroom. They always say the students know where that line is from the first day. I don’t tell them where it is. I just tell them what the expectations are and move forward. And the students don’t go over that line. It’s the same idea. You know where the line is; you don’t have to go there. So, knowing that right from day one builds that trust

factor. He held teachers accountable, but he was accountable himself, from day one. (August 11, 2011)

The participants shared that teachers who do not know their principal's expectations experience anxiety. As Dominic communicated, it is better to be aware of expectations at the onset. Clear expectations communicated with support and guidance from the principal will be well received because communicated expectations make life safer and easier for people. They know where the line is; the line becomes the benchmark.

Leaders are responsible for holding others to the same standard, for communicating clear expectations, and holding everyone accountable (as described by Dominic, August 11, 2011). This was not Laura's experience. She recounted an incident with her teaching assistant (TA) for a little boy with special needs. The TA, who was assigned to the teacher for 0.56 FTE [full time equivalent], would miss her assigned class time about 50% of the time and the teacher would have to adjust her teaching schedule. The teacher, when speaking to the principal about her concerns for the programming needs for the student, shared the following:

He protects her! There are rules when you are employed. Everyone understands that there are rules. And not that you shouldn't have the flexibility under unique circumstances to bend those rules, because that does happen, and I don't think everything is written in stone, and circumstances change. But there is a general set of guidelines that we just need to adhere to. And if you're expecting me to adhere to them, then you'd better be adhering to them because you are my leader.

(Laura, July 28, 2011)

Similarly, Clark found himself in a situation where he felt that there was a double standard. He described an incident that involved a teacher who would yell at colleagues. The teacher would organize a year-end barbecue for school volunteers where some school board trustees would also attend. Clark made a comment, in a joking manner, that there wasn't any ice-cream "like last year" and the teacher "went up one side of me and down the other. He was screaming at me and people were leaving the room because it was so uncomfortable" (August 11, 2011). This teacher had yelled at Clark in the past so this time Clark said to himself, "No. It's not who I am. I'm not one to be yelled at. I'm not one to cower from an awkward conversation" (August 11, 2011) and Clark yelled back. As a result of his actions Clark was called into the principal's office and asked to explain what had happened. The principal commented that he was concerned because there was a trustee present that witnessed the incident and then threatened Clark with a reprimand and an ATA investigation into Clark's conduct. In response Clark said,

"Well that's interesting," because that trustee had later said to me, "Are you OK? Because that was inappropriate on that teacher's part to behave that way. I just want to make sure that you're OK." And I explained this to this principal and he said, "I don't care. This time I won't give you a letter of reprimand to go into your file." (August 11, 2011)

For Clark, "this double standard was the final nail in the coffin and that's when I actually started looking for jobs in other districts" (August 11, 2011). Unfortunately, when staff feels, as Laura and Clark did, that there is a double standard in the work place, it is perceived as favoritism and this is can be poisonous in the workplace. The participants

communicated that those employees who feel they aren't the "chosen ones" (Betty, August 12, 2011) may feel their incentive drain away as their resentment grows.

Respected leaders need to be fair to all. But what does that mean? According to the OED, fair means "fair and square with absolute accuracy, being honest and straightforward according to the relative merits of each or consistent with rules." Dominic recounted an incident involving a colleague that struggled throughout the whole year and left at the end of his first year teaching at the school. But due to the actions of the principal:

You never would have known it. There was no animosity from his part. He would call that teacher just like anyone else on the staff, so you would never even know that there was an issue there. Then the teacher didn't return after that first year, but only finding out after the teacher was gone that wow things were really bad. But you never knew it from him. There was no animosity, no power play being done. He still talked to that teacher just like you'd talk to anyone else. The teacher left education but not with a bad feeling 'cause of how he was treated. He was treated fairly, with integrity, by the principal. (Dominic, August 11, 2011)

All of the participants expressed that they expect principals to treat everyone fairly and equitably. For them a fair principal does not play favorites. When the principal is being fair, he or she does not take advantage of others by virtue of their leadership position. Some teachers, like Clark, respond to unfairness by finding a position in another school. Being fair to everyone all the time is not easy. It's a lot of hard work. It requires a great deal of thought and planning.

At one time or another you may have felt like a boss has liked someone better than you at work. Maybe it was just the way they talked to another person or possibly they actually did play favorites in the office. One of the primary effects of workplace favoritism on employees is resentment (Cho & Ringquist, 2011). Workers feel that, no matter how hard they work, it won't matter because *preferred* employees will always get better benefits, more attention, and greater opportunities. Despite open communication and the best of intentions, a double standard, a rule which is applied more stringently to one party than to others, may be perceived to exist. Hurt feelings, stress, resentment, and anxiety by those who are left out; friction between the favored and un-favored employees; and decreased morale and productivity overall may be the outcomes if there is a perception of a double standard or favoritism (Ghamrawi, 2011). If the principal wants to instill trust with teachers, he or she must be seen to be consistently fair.

Consistency as a concept is prevalent in the trust definitions in most of the research literature reviewed earlier. The value of consistency is rooted in the fact that trusting relationships entail some degree of vulnerability and that whoever is being relied on will perform as expected. Risk moderates the trust relationship whereby "trust is supported and buttressed when expected behaviours occur but is diminished and undermined when they do not" (Hoy & Tarter, 2004, p. 253). Bryk and Schneider (2002) emphasize the role of consistency in stating that trust diminishes when individuals perceive that others are not behaving in ways that are consistent with their expectations. The relationship between expectations and the role of consistency is furthered explored

by Shaw (1997) who describes how perceptions of inconsistency can result in increasing distrust.

In the experiences shared by the participants, people often scrutinize their leader's behaviour. Those who act consistently on what they say do well under this scrutiny. Morgan (2009) found that those who change their position depending on expediency or the audience of the moment, or who say one thing and do another are deemed untrustworthy. Successful leaders help themselves and their organizations find proper balance by making expectations explicit. Teachers know how to relate to a principal who is consistent and predictable: consistent in words and actions, consistent in how staff is treated, consistent in how parents and students are treated, consistent in behaviour (and emotions), consistent in how policies are applied, and consistent in communication. All of the research participants indicated that having a principal who exhibited consistency in his or her actions and expectations fostered a trusting work environment. "She did the things that she said she was going to do" (Clark, August 11, 2011). "He held teachers accountable, but he was accountable himself, from day one" (Dominic, August 11, 2011). Participants indicated that a lack of consistency breeds uncertainty, which breeds speculation and suspicion, which breeds distrust.

Trust is experienced as feeling safe.

I always make sure I can account for myself. It's funny I try to create trust because of the lack of trust. (Daryl, July 28, 2011)

Trust in administrative leadership also appears salient in times of conflict, crisis, change, and school reform (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Seashore Louis, 2007). The leadership of any organization displays exceptional relevance by contributing to the development of a sense of psychological safety and security. This feeling of safety has extra significance in the workplace (Edmondson, 2004). In his study of stakeholder trust, Edmondson (2004) recommended three leadership behaviours to facilitate psychological safety: leader accessibility, inviting input and feedback, and modeling openness and fallibility. Edmondson (2004) argued that individuals who feel psychological safety are more likely to engage in five important team learning behaviours including feedback seeking, help seeking, speaking up about concerns and mistakes, innovation, and boundary spanning. The trust that one will not do harm leaves one vulnerable to the will of the person being trusted (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). In other words, at a personal level, one person trusts another when he or she is willing to make himself or herself vulnerable to the other person (Frost, Stimpson, & Maughan, 1978; Hoy, 2002; Rotter, 1967; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1999). So establishing relationships with a party places the trusting party at risk when he or she engages in a relationship without knowing the intentions of the trusted party (Kelley, 1979; Murray, Derrick, Leder, & Holmes, 2008; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camere, 1998; Solomon & Flores, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). In order to maintain trust and professional growth, principals must manage their personal behaviours and refrain from abuse (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Tepper, 2000) and deception (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001). Principals should set examples for their teachers through meaningful exchange without fear of retribution, which then permits the

growth of trust within the school. All the participants shared that the principal who is open to discussion and exchanges with teachers will build confidence in those around them.

Since schools are people places they are all vulnerable to actions, comments, and attitudes that may leave people feeling emotionally or psychologically vulnerable or unsafe. In Abraham Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* (Mathes, 1981), the need to be safe supersedes all but biological needs. Based on Maslow's work, I believe that we have a hard-wired human need to feel safe and that we never outgrow this need to feel safe. When teachers work in an environment of trust, where trust is modeled by the principal, teachers feel reinforced, validated, and supported and are more likely to be creative, thereby fulfilling a higher order need (Cosner, 2010). Cosner (2010) found that "through interactions, individuals learn about another person's willingness and abilities to meet expectations or fulfill commitments, and they become knowledgeable about another person's behavioural predictability all of which are important understandings with respect to trust formation" (p. 119). Likewise, Bryk and Schneider (2002) reported on the development of trust between members of a school community:

Trust is forged in daily social exchanges. Through their actions, school participants articulate their sense of obligations toward others, and others in turn come to discern the intentionality enacted here. Trust grows over time through exchanges where the expectations held for others are validated in action. (pp. 136–137)

Lena shared how a principal new to their school was able, over a period of time, to change the culture of the school to one where staff input was valued and staff felt safe to voice their opinions. With her previous principal Lena shared that “you’d either get yelled at or something would happen. It was very clear that you shouldn’t have spoken out” (August 2, 2011). With her new principal:

He doesn’t penalize people for being honest. That’s probably the biggest thing he does that the previous principal did not. Gradually, one by one, people have started being more honest and nothing ever happens to them. We actually have a discussion in the staff meetings now! Nobody ever says anything bad about them.

They don’t get crappy classes the next year. (Lena, August 2, 2011)

Lena’s examples demonstrate the importance of the staff feeling safe to have a voice in their environment, particularly with regard to decisions that impact them individually or as a whole. This allows the diverse strengths and expertise of the staff to generate a greater number of high quality alternatives and options than those developed by a single individual. As well, it creates a sense of ownership of the decision which is likely to contribute to a greater acceptance of the course of action selected and greater commitment on the part of the affected individuals to make the course of action successful. As Harvey said,

the goal is to have the meeting at the meeting and not in the parking lot because people feel that they could not speak openly about an idea or because they have been coerced into something during the meeting itself. The post-meeting discussions begin to undermine what was decided. (August 10, 2011)

Undermining occurs because people feel that their input is not heard or valued. Harvey's parking lot conversations move back indoors into the open communication of the staffroom, the principal's office, and the staff meeting when there is the perception that it is safe to voice an opinion.

Beliefs like the boss is supposed to keep up a front of being cool, calm, and collected and leaders are to have all the answers and should not share their fears or admit their mistakes, downplay the human-ness of leaders (Goldring & Rallis, 1993). If you are a leader espousing that you have open and honest communication then it needs to be perceived as being reciprocal. Lena shared an example where her principal, in the June staff meeting, made himself vulnerable to the staff by saying "If I can't do this in the next couple of years you're going to be looking for a new principal, as I am not the right person to assist you in your journey" (August 2, 2011). Lena shared that he showed his human-ness to the staff by voicing his uncertainties as his comment came across as a heart-felt plea. Dominic shared that

when people can be vulnerable and not be judged, you have trust and this was demonstrated by my principal because he came across as, "He's not perfect. He's there to help us and support us." And he would tell us that he doesn't have all the answers, but he would find them because that was his job to help and support us. (August 11, 2011)

In these examples the principals demonstrated their own vulnerability. Their vulnerability was based on the value of honesty and a commitment to truth-telling. The building of trust is described in the literature as a reciprocal process in which the leader

must be willing to make him or herself vulnerable to others, thereby opening the door for other staff to also risk (Ring & Van de Ven, 1994). Showing vulnerability is a humanizing way to break down the artificial barrier that typically separates bosses from employees.

The reality of hierarchical school structures is that individuals have varying degrees of power and authority (Reina & Reina, 2006). However, it is essential that leaders do not assume positional power when establishing any kind of trusting relationship. “A common mistake leaders make is to assume that the position, role, or title earns them their trustworthiness. The only thing that earns leader trustworthiness is the way they behave” (Reina & Reina, 2006, p. 10). The principal, desirous of keeping communication lines open, adopts an *open door policy*. But what does this mean? The OED gives an example of open door policy as “the manager’s door is always open for any employee to air grievances or concerns, or to offer suggestions.” Many administrators say that they have an open-door policy to encourage teachers to come and speak to them about any issue at any time or to give them a *heads-up*. Nevertheless, teachers’ experiences with the open-door varies.

Where and how teachers see themselves fitting into this structure with their administration may determine the degree to which teachers feel safe. In Lena’s example, she risked the possibility that her principal would behave contrary to her expectations and contrary to his communications to staff. In the education system, having the principal’s door open means that staff have easy access to the principal so they can communicate questions or concerns at any time. However, as educators know, schools are busy places

and time is a valuable commodity. Nancy shared that she “had an administrator who was very, very open. He actually articulated an open door policy and he lived by that!”

(August 9, 2011) Rose stated that

if you feel that you can walk into your principal’s office, and you can sit down in there and somebody’s made the time for you, that you think they care about you, that they have your best interests in mind, that they are people that you can probably say that about, you know, that you have some trust. (August 2, 2011)

These examples illustrate the value of principal accessibility. For the participants accessibility was a necessary prerequisite for the establishment of trust. They cautioned that there is a difference, however, between being accessible and available and being accessible, available, *and* attentive.

Participants expressed that when a teacher approaches the principal and the principal shows undivided attention, the teacher feels heard, feels respected. Gimbel (2003) suggests that trustworthy communication by leaders also involves being accessible for informal conversations and engaging in active listening (2003). What does this look like? “The principal is not scanning emails, looking at his or her phone for messages when it vibrates, or reviewing a report” (Betty, August 12, 2011). This attentiveness is what Finzel (2007) refers to as being focused on peoplework versus paperwork. If a staff member enters the principal’s office to talk, the principal needs to decide whether the teacher’s visit is an interruption or an opportunity. Teachers have become masters at reading non-verbal cues. After all, they work with students all day and are constantly

reading them, looking for feedback regarding their learning. Rose shared her experiences with two very different principals.

That door was open all the time. It was very seldom closed. No matter who you were, nobody was any better than anybody else. There wasn't that feeling that you really had to answer to that higher power above. When I went into her office she took the time to really listen to me. You knew by her body language that she was really listening to you! She'd look at them, stop what she was doing, ask questions, take the time to hear what we have to say. It was we're all together; we were all at the same level. We were all teachers first. (August 2, 2011)

As a sharp contrast, with her current principal Rose described the feeling of we're the administration and you're the teachers. Like two levels are operating in the school. If you do get in to speak to the principal it feels like you are interrupting the important business of running the school; you are an inconvenience. (Rose, August 2, 2011)

Principals must engage teachers in conversation with their whole body. Posture, eye contact, and focus communicates to the teacher that what he or she has to say is valued because the principal cares enough to suspend their other activities and give the teacher their whole attention. Principals who ask questions for clarification that extend the conversation help the teacher feel that they are being heard. Participants shared that if the principal does not value the teachers' opinions or concerns the teachers may infer that the principal is indifferent to them personally or that they are not respected professionally.

Principals express their understanding of their role through their leadership style, in how they appear to others. Staff knows, based on the principal's actions, whether or not he or she is a paperwork or peoplework administrator. All of the participants indicated that they understood that principals have organizational duties to fulfill, the paperwork portion of their position. However, each participant voiced that as a teacher, their time to have a conversation with the principal is extremely limited given the nature of the school day. So, as Betty said "when I need to talk, I need to!" (August 12, 2011). Clark said:

It's important that you're approachable to the kids and the staff. Open door policy—but actually mean it. You know, some people will say, "Oh, yeah. My door's always open—but don't bother me." But to say "my door's always open to assist you with things" and actually mean it. I know they are busy. We all are. (August 11, 2011)

Laura shared her frustration in not being able to meet with the principal and engage in a conversation as her time during the day was limited given that she was teaching. Laura shared the following:

Let me know that I'm part of the open dialogue because this isn't their school. This is our school. When I need to talk [to the principal] it's usually before school, recess, lunch, or after school. Don't have your administrative meetings during those times. It's almost like they deliberately block you out 'cause they don't want to hear it. And it's like there's always these closed door meetings

going on. The little clandestine 4- to 5-minute things. And the bell rings and, oh, the door opens and “Oh, gee, I have to go teach.” (July 28, 2011)

The examples cited demonstrate the importance of the human element. The participants acknowledged that although the principal may have been taking care of management tasks to make the job of the teacher easier, the person-to-person contact was missing. As a result, the teachers perceived that the principal didn't care about them. Teachers understand that the job of the principal demands being task oriented and meeting deadlines and completing reports. Paperwork, deadlines, and appointments/meetings can often consume the principal and create a barrier between the principal and their staff. Principals are expected to produce, but leadership is a people business. According to all participants, it is always direct contact with people that has the most powerful impact.

Schools, as in any work environment, involve many different players and relationships laden with expectations and involving varying degrees of risk (Hardin, 2006). The result of past exchanges in which the teacher has risked will determine the level of trust in the principal. However, as their interactions progress and teachers gain some knowledge of the principal, teachers may be more willing to enter into risky interactions based on their perceptions of the other's character, competence, and judgment, in addition to the dynamics of the interpersonal relationship (Schoorman et al., 2007). All such considerations have to be taken into account when considering taking the risk of placing oneself in a vulnerable position. Trust-building behaviours vary depending on the stage of a relationship (Lewicki et al., 1998). Teachers need to know that if they risk making themselves vulnerable in sharing private information they will be

safe. Dominic had to trust his principal with confidential medical information owing to the fact that medical appointments would impact his teaching availability.

And so I went and informed him of that and knew that it would stay there. And it did because to this day no one's ever questioned me or come to me with questions of something they've heard or anything like that. So I knew it stayed in those four walls and stayed with him. He respected that privacy issue and respected the fact there would be the odd day I'd be gone. (Dominic, August 11, 2011)

Dominic weighed the level of trust in the possible exchange with his principal against the level of perceived risk before engaging in an exchange. Such expectations are often grounded in a history of past interactions based on implicit expectations of how people should act. Participants shared that in their experience relationships with low trust must engage in low risk activities and build a trusting foundation before moving to more risky exchanges. Because of Dominic's prior sharing of private information with no recourse he believed that if he made a mistake he would be safe.

The mistake will stay between him and me. I mean, also under the understanding that if those mistakes continue they can't stay just with him. But knowing that every little "oops" that you did, the superintendent's not going to know about. He has my back. I think teachers always have that fear—"Oh man, the superintendent's going to hear about that. That's going to be a mark on my file. I'm going to be the next one transferred" or whatever the case may be. So you knew that it could be a situation that was handled with a parent, or was handled with a student, or that it was going to stay between you and him, for the time

being. So long as it corrects, you aren't going to do it again. That's that trustworthy part of it. (Dominic, August 11, 2011)

Participants shared that teachers need to know that their principal will stand shoulder to shoulder with them when things become rough. A willingness to risk is the degree of confidence one has in a situation of vulnerability (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). The propensity to trust describes the sense of vulnerability that a person has in entering trust relationships. The roots of these relationships provide a solid foundation on which to grow shoots in a variety of directions without fear of the tree losing its stability and toppling.

In environments in which teachers feel unsupported, mistrusted, or constantly on the verge of reprimand, trust between teachers and administrators is unlikely to improve (Hardin, 2006). The presence of fear and anxiety in a school may signal the presence of a lack of trust. If trust is low, they may outwardly pretend that trust exists, while finding their own coping mechanisms. Solomon and Flores (2001) refer to this as *cordial hypocrisy*. Tom said that

it got to the point where I just checked out, where I will not do anything for you [principal] because I don't know where you're going, and I don't support what you're doing, and I'm not sure what you're trying to do. I'm not disrespectful, I don't sabotage, I just don't engage. (August 11, 2011)

The participants acknowledged that when working with people of diverse personalities, backgrounds, and experiences, conflict can occur. Clashes of personalities, misunderstandings, or disagreements often cannot be avoided. However, the result can

be extremely different based on how conflict management is approached and “if there is a power differential as with principals and teachers” (Tom, August 11, 2011). Lena, when speaking about her dictatorial principal, said that the staff survived the experience by engaging in anarchy or apathy. In Lena’s subject area, the teachers banded together because the principal “had this place in armed camps” and teachers “were up in arms” and rebelling “just like a bunch of bad kids in a classroom, just breaking the rules” (Lena, August 2, 2011). To address their concerns the department asked to have a meeting with the principal. Lena described the experience as “terrible” and it left an indelible mark in her memory. Here is her experience:

She yelled at us like a bunch of bad kids. We were sitting in a classroom, in desks, and she stood at the front and she yelled at us like we were a bunch of bad little kids. And we just sat there. I remember we sat there open mouthed. I remember my face was red. And then she left. We were quiet and just got up to go and teach our classes. Later when we started talking to each other, basically the idea was, well, we’re just going to do things the way we want to do things here. We basically just cut her out of the picture. She’s not our leader anymore. And we said, “I guess we’re going to be our own little school within a school because that’s it. We’ll have nothing more to do with that person.” (August 2, 2011)

Over the long term, if a climate of distrust develops in which teachers refuse to cooperate with the principal and even form protective cliques to counteract the principal’s influence (Blasé & Blasé, 2001; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007) this can be destructive to the staff

and school. As Walker et al. (2011) found, one of the most difficult things about distrust is that once it is established it has a tendency to be self-perpetuating and it can undermine the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. If conflict is not handled effectively, the results can be damaging as it can quickly turn into personal dislike.

With the same principal, on an individual level Lena was the recipient of a “direct attack” as she called it (August 2, 2011). Lena was supervising the hallway outside her classroom, it was near the end of lunch and Lena went to the library to get the projector that she had signed out for her next class. While she was gone the principal came to her hallway and Lena was not there supervising. This is how she described the encounter when the principal came to her classroom after lunch after the class had already commenced. Lena remembers:

She stood in the doorway and yelled at me in front of the students! She said, “Why weren’t you supervising at noon!” And I said, “I was. But I had to go get the projector.” And I was still setting it up as she was talking to me ‘cause it wasn’t working. She said, “No you weren’t. Next time you better be out there!” And she stormed off. I turned to face the class again and, oh, my face is red. I remember my class, the kids said to me, “Holy cow. Are you in trouble?”
(August 2, 2011)

In another situation the same principal slammed a door on Lena. Lena could not remember why it happened but the incident is etched in her mind because the vice-principal, who was not present when the incident occurred, apologized to Lena later for the actions of the principal.

I asked how did you know? And he told me through the underground information highway. And I said, “Why are you apologizing to me?” And he said, “Well, I’m just sorry that happened to you.” It was happening often enough, her behaviour, it started to be something I just coped with. (August 2, 2011)

Some of the participants spoke about being “weary,” “frustrated,” “unhappy,” “demotivated,” even being “bullied” by a principal or “avoiding at all costs” their principal, and when this happened they had to develop coping strategies in order to “continue going to work every day” (Tom, August 11, 2011).

In situations where the boss is obviously impeding progress or morale, Cho and Perry (2012) recommend that employees try to mobilize their peers to create a course of action. They acknowledge that this is easier said than done, especially when a bad boss has created a culture of fear. But teaming up to effect change need not require a palace coup. Lena and her colleagues developed their own coping mechanism to deal with their principal.

We were going to support each other. When we had issues we helped each other with them. If we had late issues, we took each other’s students. If we had discipline issues, we dealt with them. We just did it ourselves. We completely cut the admin off. And when they did things that we didn’t agree with we would band together and go there together and say, “That’s just not happening; that’s not going to happen. Then it was like a war. BIG WAR! It was terrible. It was like armed camps. (Lena, August 2, 2011)

In schools, administrators who hold no or little credibility in the eyes of the staff have lost the necessary tools for restoration of trust. Under such conditions, there seems to be no way to escape from the condition of distrust (Walker et al., 2011, p. 478). Walker et al. (2011) found that when trust declines, the costs of work increase because people must engage in self-protective actions and continually make provisions for the possibility that another person will manipulate the situation for their own advantage.

It is easy to culminate in a vicious downward spiral of negativity where teamwork breaks down and people disengage from their work (Walker et al., 2011). This effect was seen in the case of Lena and her colleagues. Owing to their solidarity, no one left their department but instead they sought safety in numbers. In Walker et al.'s (2011) study, the most common belief among the participants was that trust "takes years to develop and a moment to lose" (p. 482). For Lena and her colleagues "it took 3 years after the principal left the school before healing took hold" (Lena, August 2, 2011). This is not a unique example. Rose too went from a very collegial relationship between teachers and their co-principals to one where, in Rose's words, "teachers were abandoning the ship in droves" (August 2, 2011) and at the end of the first year with the new principal 13 of her colleagues transferred to other schools. The only teachers left were on temporary contracts that had been placed or some of the teachers who had only been at the school for 1 year.

All of the 13 teachers who had left had been long standing, at least 5 years in the school, and they're gone. I'm at the point right now where I don't want to have to fight any battles. I just want to enjoy my kids and do what I can do here for the

next couple of years. I don't need to go out in a blaze of glory, in the fighting mode. But I can tell you that if you look at trust, I've seen one end of the spectrum and now I'm experiencing the other one. So that's how quickly it can happen. It can happen in 1 year. Less than 1 year! (Rose, August 2, 2011)

Many of the participants shared stories wherein the whole environment of the school changed because of the principal's leadership style and approach to people. Participants' reactions varied. For some, the response was to leave and find a position in another school or school division. For others, it was to band together and "do their own thing," while others went into their room, taught, and left at the end of the day, preferring voluntary isolation.

Cosner (2010) posited that there is a difference between power and strength and this is evident in the leadership style that is exhibited. Power comes from position. Power is attempting to control others. Power is wielded as a source of fear. Power may get the job done, but at what cost? Fear will never sustain a relationship (Cosner, 2010; Ring & Van de Ven, 1994). Farrell (2009) offered that trust clearly must sometimes be possible between people of unequal power, "otherwise, the concept's applicability is confined to a relatively small set of human relationships; those between genuine equals" (p. 130). Therefore, he argues, the difficulties of maintaining trust in a situation of extreme disparities of power between people should be accounted for, while at the same time acknowledging that trust can be present in relationships where disparities of power between people exist, but are less marked. Participants shared that whenever distrust creeps into workplace relationships it produces attitudes and behaviours guaranteed to

undermine the working environment through suspicion, resistance, defensiveness, interpersonal conflict, withholding information, and the formation of camps as described by Lena. However, Farrell (2009) acknowledges that “while disparities in power may certainly affect the way in which the proceeds of trust-based cooperation are distributed, they will not necessarily prevent trust from arising” (p. 131). Lena’s principal shared with her that central office actually told him,

“You need to transfer that person, that particular person and they would support him.” And he’s said, “No.” And I think it was a wise move, because what the rest of the staff sees is him trying to bring these people together. You know, if you just get rid of the trouble makers then people think that, “Any time I say something that goes against what he says or wants, I might be the next person who gets transferred out. (August 2, 2011)

People’s time and energy are channeled into actions that may make them feel somewhat safer but do not produce strong, trusting working relationships. Respondents used phrases such as “she is a liar,” “he only cares about himself,” “I can’t believe anything she says,” “governs from the castle,” and “rules with an iron fist” to describe their experiences. When a person perceives that others in positions of power are going to bring harm, when a person has a low capacity for trust in others, they may model self-protective behaviours that influence others to follow suit. This phenomenon was demonstrated when almost half of the participants described their environment in military terms such as “front lines,” “in the trenches,” “battles,” “under fire,” “shell shocked,”

“toe-to-toe,” “marching orders,” “divide and conquer,” “circle the wagons,” and “under fire” where someone had to win and someone had to lose.

As trust diminishes, fear fills the void and energy is directed to protection. “The result is tension, leading to one of three responses: withdrawal to safety; fighting back; or reverting to dependence on someone or something to intervene, such as a manager, rules or an advocate (union) for protection and direction” (Irvine & Reger, 2006, p. 148).

Education isn’t a war, but for some participants it felt like it. In education there aren’t supposed to be any losers and no one is supposed to die. These military references denote low morale. The participants indicated that morale for them is mostly influenced by the leaders treating people respectfully. Often people will attribute distrust to personality conflicts among key individuals, as in Lena’s case. Overcoming distrust requires a break from past practices where the old way of operating is being replaced by a more collaborative approach. This break from the past may involve changes in leadership, as was the case with Lena’s former principal. It could also involve more informal changes, such as leadership being open and honest, as with the examples shared by Lena (with her current principal), Rose, Dominic, and Nancy.

All of the participants spoke of the concept of positional power of the principal and alluded to the distinction between strength and power which, for them, lies at the heart of the difference between success and failure. Power typically suggests something bestowed from the outside and frequently tied to position, being the CEO, a manager, a superintendent. The concept of power implies what can be done to other people including hiring and firing and limiting autonomy. Conversely, strength is internal.

Where power sometimes motivates people through fear, strength leads people through inspiration; it is not dependent on any position or what can be done to others (Cosner, 2010). Further, all of the participants expressed that teachers are motivated to trust and cooperate based on considerations other than the leader's title. People more easily follow a strong person. Communicating from a power position is to tell people what to do and leave only minimal room for comment. Strength is to offer an idea and encourage staff to rally around the idea and allow them to plan the implementation themselves. Leading from a position of strength means motivating others to action without external leverage and encouraging voluntary engagement (Hoy & Smith, 2007; Sirota, Mischkind, & Meltzer, 2005). Strength comes from inside, not from trying to control everything, but from accepting things as they are and working with them. Respondents shared that those principals who are perceived as strong tend to have the respect and trust of others.

Trust results from doing many fundamental things right rather than from direct attempts to raise the level of trust within an organization or team (Morgan, 2009). The effective approaches to building trust, as the respondents shared, are often those that focus on actions that produce trust rather than on trust itself. As a start, principals should personally model appropriate behaviour, that being acting with integrity and credibility and treating staff as valued individuals and professionals. In extreme situations, the fastest and, in some cases, the only way to move beyond distrust is to change those in key leadership positions. Further, individuals with a long history of antagonistic relationships are often unable or staff are unwilling to allow the switch to a more collaborative process. Trust is the outcome of doing a number of fundamental things right. Those coming into

new positions of leadership (like Lena's current principal) must use the first few months of their tenure to demonstrate new ways of thinking and acting. People often discount words and believe what they see. The participants shared that those who are successful at building trust don't usually talk about it, they live it.

Being able to express concerns and disagreement without fear of reprisal is essential to building trusting relationships. Seashore Louis (2007) argued that administrators "must be ruthless in scrutinizing how their own behaviour and context are interpreted by others. Getting information about how one is being perceived requires developing strategies for getting honest assessments" (p. 19). Clark shared that his principal was working half-time at central office this last year and half-time in the school. One day the principal shared with Clark that he felt the transition into the school year went really smoothly. Clark felt differently and because of his relationship with his principal felt that he could voice his opinion without fear of reprisal. "I was like, 'Are you freaking kidding me? When you're out of the building half the time! No, it wasn't smooth, my friend'" (August 11, 2011). Clark reported that the principal did not see the conversation as confrontational but rather informational and as a result changed his practice of being out of the building so much.

Blasé and Blasé (2001) advise principals to "welcome and embrace conflict as a way to produce substantive, positive outcomes over the long run. Regarding conflict as potentially constructive helps build supportive human relationships because it allows us to deal with our differences in win-win ways" (p. 29). Constructive conflict also allows teachers to feel more secure in providing honest input and participate meaningfully in

school decision making and as a result ‘buy-in’ to decisions being made. The understanding part of the equation is really where the trust building comes in according to Everitt.

If you had some method of input, and you’ve had a chance to voice your concerns in a free and open manner, then there’s a chance for administration to allay those concerns, and you can mitigate them and avoid them by changing the decisions or changing the implementation. You understand them a lot better and that builds trust in the decision that’s made, what’s going on in the school. You’re more on board with it as a member of staff—you believe in it as a member of staff.

(Everitt, August 11, 2011)

Bryk and Schneider (2002) remind school leaders that, “as public criticism focuses on schools’ inadequacies, teachers need to know that their principal values their efforts and senses their good intentions” (p. 129). A core element of this reassurance is demonstrating, through both words and actions that “teachers can and should be trusted to do what is best for students” (p. 33). “When we stand poised between our genuine desire to serve and be productive, and our fears about rejection or failure when we reach out to make that contribution, what tips the balance is trust” (Ciancutti & Steding, 2001, p. 13).

The participants stressed that it was important to give teachers room to try new things and to make mistakes. Supporting innovation and risk taking demonstrates respect for teachers as learners and as professionals whose judgment can be trusted. This highlights teachers’ competence in bringing valuable knowledge and insights to contribute to decisions; allowing teachers to have a voice and trusting that voice to make

sound pedagogical decisions for optimum student learning is critical in building trust in a safe environment.

Trust is experienced as efficacy

It's also important to recognize that you're working in a building of people who are professional and it's important to take their input. (Clark, August 11, 2011)

I believe teaching could be a lonely occupation if teachers spent their entire time with their students without ever interacting with other teachers or administrators. The one-room school house, repeated room-by-room down the halls of some of our schools, is a reality for some teachers. A principal is "essential to the life of the school only insofar as you make a contribution to the effectiveness of others" (McEwan, 2003, p. 161). All of the participants expressed that the principal is not only the instructional leader of the school but also a teacher and colleague as well. They valued principals who encouraged professional growth, showed an interest in teachers, who engaged in professional conversations, and who empowered teachers with a sense of efficacy.

Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, and Hoy (1998) defined teacher efficacy as "the teacher's belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context" (p. 233). In later research Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2003) explain that there is a positive correlation between high levels of trust in a school and a high level of teacher-perceived efficacy. Bryk and Schneider (2002) noted that teachers "are dependent in numerous ways on the actions of their principal, if they are to be successful and feel efficacious" (p.

128). Schools, as professional institutions, are social places deriving much of their effectiveness from the interactions of their employees. If there is trust among school professionals, this will provide a better basis for the development of positive attitudes and collaboration than if trust is weak.

Clark explained that he saw the principal as being in a position to empower teachers, provide support and resources, and remove the bureaucratic obstacles so that the teachers can do their job.

I mean I drank the Kool-Aid. She wanted to do this. I was with her. “Yep. Let’s do it.” Because I felt supported. I was listened to. I had autonomy. I knew I could go to her if I had problems. I knew that she was there to help make my job easier. I knew that I could go in and say, “I’m having these problems. Can you help me out with this?” I knew that she saw me as a professional. (August 11, 2011)

“Persuading others that they can succeed is a basic role of all leaders accomplished by strengthening the individual’s conviction that they have the capability to achieve their objectives” (Hoy & Smith, 2007, p. 163). In his current school, based on his relationship with his principal, Clark knew he could have an open and honest conversation with him; so when one of his colleagues was struggling Clark “stepped up to the plate” and spoke candidly with his principal.

Listen, she needs more help from you than just saying “phone the parent.” You need to work with her on this. She needs to know that you believe in her. That’s

your job as an instructional leader. Just let her know that you know that she can do it. Boost her confidence in herself. (August 11, 2011)

Leaders who are successful in helping teachers develop a sense of efficacy do so primarily by providing them with situations and tasks in which they can be successful (McIntyre, 2011). Research has suggested that principal actions to cultivate teacher empowerment, delegate authority, and share control and decision making are important antecedents to the development of leader trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Moye, Henkin, & Egley, 2005; Seashore Louis, 2007; Tschannen-Moran, 2004; Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 1998). In fact, Seashore Louis (2007) concluded that leader trust “cannot be easily separated from expanded teacher empowerment and influence. Teachers are not passive actors in the school but co-constructors of trust. As active professionals, teachers, who feel left out of important decisions, will react by withdrawing trust” (p. 18). Tara, when recalling her first year of teaching, indicated that she almost quit the profession because it was not a positive experience. She remembered “feeling really at loose ends, and really struggling to know that I was doing what I should be doing” (August 10, 2011) and because she received no feedback from her principal she thought that she might not teach anymore given her experience. The following year she had an opportunity to go into another teaching setting, where the principal was supportive and engaged in professional conversations with her and as a result Tara “felt more capable of working” (August 10, 2011). In Tara’s first school she felt alone in a school surrounded by educators.

By contrast, Dana, when accepting her teaching position, found that the principal was willing to “do whatever it took to get her on staff” (August 2, 2011). She went to the interview and was offered the position but she had to decline it because the principal wanted her teaching full-time and she only wanted part-time because she had young children. “And the next day I get a call and the principal said, “Well, we’ll change the timetable.” Her principal then took her around and partnered her with people that would help her

to learn some of the ropes at that school, some of the strong leaders in there so that you kind of learned how the whole place worked. There was a strong sense that the principal believed in his staff, that everyone was going in the same direction. And he would check in to make sure that I was ok and that I had everything that I needed. You just felt that you got in and you belonged there.

In addition, part way through her first year she found herself picking her replacement when she went on maternity leave.

The principal said to me, “we’re going to interview, and I’ll take you into the interviews, and we’ll decide together who’s going to cover for you while you’re away.” And so he let me make some choices where, I think, the people—I was picking very much for who would keep my program going that I had set up, not for the personality. He trusted who I chose. (August 2, 2011)

By being included in the process Dana’s belief that she would be highly efficacious in carrying out the choice of her replacement was affirmed by the principal’s belief in her judgment. When her family needs were accommodated even though she was a new hire

and she was offered a part-time position the principal communicated in his actions that she had a valuable contribution to make to the school and staff. Rob also shared an experience where his principal made the needs of the staff a priority when determining the teaching assignments for the year. The principal built on the strengths of his staff and placed their needs over his own. When developing the teaching assignments he would speak to each staff member and say:

“What is it you want to teach? OK, there you are. What is it you want? OK, there you are. OK, these are the ones left over. OK, I’ll teach those.” And so that, compared to another school with a friend teaching at, where the new principal comes in and says, “OK. I’m teaching this, this, and this.” And all of a sudden, somebody who has taught that the last 4 or 5 years finds out “Well, I’m not teaching it. Well, why not?” “Because I’m the principal and that’s what I want to teach.” He supported us as a staff, as teachers. It felt as though he were in the trenches with us and not ruling from the castle! (Rob, August 9, 2011)

Tom had a principal who recognized Tom’s potential and challenged Tom to stretch himself professionally. Tom felt empowered as a teacher when he was encouraged to lead a program at the school.

He didn’t push me, just said “let’s see how it goes.” Just those simple words and I felt that I could do it but if I made mistakes he wouldn’t throw me under the bus. And I was given resources to do the job, given a VISA, and I felt supported. I wanted to update some things and change some things and I would go and talk to him, often. So basically he just says “I trust you and you go do it and if I have a

concern I will ask you about it. Not question me, have a conversation with me.

Now that is powerful! (Tom, August 11, 2011)

Leading in such a way that one exercises one's power and influence in appropriate ways can be very difficult (Ladkin, 2006). Tom and Dana spoke about principals that choose to empower them as teachers, to include them in decision making; their experiences were in sharp contrast to that of Daryl. When the principal extends to the whole team the responsibility and accountability for success, efficacy is enhanced.

The participants expressed that the principal is often referred to as the instructional leader, but cautioned that being the instructional leader does not make the principal an expert in everything. A principal, or educator for that matter, develops their expertise over time, but we cannot be experts in everything. What principals do as instructional leaders is foster learning in their staff in a way that honors their professionalism. Shared decision-making is the highest level of honoring teachers' professionalism. Shared leadership involves allowing an individual or group other than the principal to exercise authority in a given context. The principal must understand that the decision that results from shared leadership may not align with his or her ideal course of action but that decision has a better chance of acceptance and effective implementation. Clark spoke about a principal that emulated this in her interactions with staff. This particular principal's leadership style had such an impact on Clark that when she left and went to another school district "I applied for a job in that other district because I wanted to (laughter) go to the same school that she was going to" (August 11,

2011). Shared decision making and honoring the professionalism of the staff was the hallmark of this administrator.

The process of shared decision making starts with informing all stakeholders about the entirety of the question. Rose experienced this first hand with one of her principals:

When decisions were made previously, most of them were usually brought to the staff and anything that concerned the whole school we discussed together. So we're all used to decision-making that was done by everyone. Like when issues are brought to them so that we can all sit and hash them over and decide where we're going to go with it. (August 2, 2011)

Then things changed with the new principal. Rose reported that the new principal would “pretend” to be in a collaborative discussion with the staff but make an arbitrary decision. Rose shared an example about the continuation of an 18-year tradition of taking a group of elementary students on a ski field trip. The staff could see no reason not to continue the annual trip. Parents and students also supported the tradition. Under their previous principal, the teachers had become accustomed to openly discussing their concerns and views at staff meetings. On this occasion, however, the principal’s response was very different. Teachers had formed the opinion that the trip would continue. Rose reports, about a week later:

So then we got an email, always an email, it's never “Let's sit down and talk about this.” It's an email. An email from the principal saying, “It was an

administrative decision that we are going with our original plan.” Teachers were furious. But what could we do? (Rose, August 2, 2011)

As expressed, teachers will do as they are told, to a certain degree, but will do so grudgingly. On the other hand, the participants advanced that teachers will throw all of their creative energy into defining, refining, and implementing a decision in which they have been involved because teachers want to be considered professionals. They want to demonstrate that when they are involved, decisions are more effective and more widely adopted as opposed to being decreed from the top down.

One of the dangers of being in a position of power and authority is that these attributes can create a sense of entitlement and a tendency to disregard others’ opinions and feelings (Currall & Inkpen, 2006). There are many ways in which principals can work from the top down. A principal can lead by decree, but often the course of action fails to deliver long-term results. The staff may go through the motions of complying with the decree only while the principal is present. When principals lead mainly in such a manner, they risk becoming disconnected from their teachers’ realities. They risk making unreasonable decisions and losing teachers’ cooperation, trust, and respect.

The principal made a big mistake when he asked for the opinion of the staff about the Christmas concert and then proceeded to do whatever he wanted which was completely opposite to what the staff told him. Why ask us if you don’t want our input! (Rob, August 9, 2011)

Principals certainly have the power to determine new procedures or rules in their schools, in theory. In Rob’s example, imposing a rule that the Christmas concert always be in the

evening, rather than alternating it from school day to evening caused anger amongst the staff which then led to resentment. It is certainly faster for one person to make a decision and impose it on others than to take the time to gather input from a group and come to a consensus. However, expediency of decision-making cannot be the only consideration. Teachers want to have the opportunity to influence decisions that impact their school, their classrooms, and their professional decisions. This desire does not mean that teachers should demand to get their own way, but it does mean that they want to be heard as part of the process.

Trust in their professional abilities provides school staff with a belief that they will be highly efficacious in carrying out the tasks assigned (Goddard & Skrla, 2006). Participants shared that it pushes them to try harder to achieve goals, persist despite setbacks, and develop coping strategies to overcome possible pitfalls. In other words, trust is an effective tool for increased teacher self-efficacy. Participants shared that trusted teachers are more willing to act as risk-takers. If the principal trusts them to do their job they are more willing to stretch their boundaries; they are willing to try out new instructional methodologies, implement alternative assessment plans, and thereby boost their creativity.

In two mammoth research studies completed by the Gallup Organization over a 25 year period, over a million employees from a broad range of companies, industries, and countries were surveyed about all aspects of their working life (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). Gallup researchers qualitatively and quantitatively assessed the most salient employee perceptions and subjected their conclusions to rigorous confirmatory

analyses, including comprehensive meta-analyses. The most consistent links were to the measure of productivity. Buckingham and Coffman commented: “People have always believed there is a direct link between an employee’s opinion and his work group's productivity” (p. 32). Empirical evidence indicates that teachers with higher teacher efficacy do set more ambitious goals and are more willing and likely to implement new instructional programs, leading to the acquisition of new teaching skills (French, 2003). Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy (2000) talk about teacher efficacy in terms of the perceptions of teachers in a school, where there is the belief that the efforts of the faculty as a whole will have a positive effect on students. Goddard and Skrla (2006) in their research also highlight some teacher behaviours found to be related to a teacher’s sense of efficacy. Teachers with a stronger sense of efficacy: a) Tend to exhibit greater levels of planning and organization; b) Are more open to new ideas and are more willing to experiment with new methods to better meet the needs of their students; c) Are more persistent and resilient when things do not go smoothly; and d) Are less critical of students when they make errors. Finally, Goddard and Skrla (2006) looked at school characteristics reported by 1,981 teachers and correlated them with teachers’ reported levels of efficacy. Less than half the difference in efficacy could be accounted for by factors such as the school’s socioeconomic status level, students’ achievement levels, and faculty experience. Based on this, they suggest that principals have the opportunity to build collective efficacy through the experiences they provide for teachers.

In order to positively influence teachers within a school building, many of the participants indicated that principals must understand how their personal characteristics

and their behaviours impact the efficacy, or sense of confidence and effectiveness, of teachers. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) noted that the positive nature of the school atmosphere, the sense of community in a school, and teachers receiving positive feedback on their performance from the principal affect efficacy (p. 946). Other studies have found similar results and concluded that principals' behaviours such as instructional leadership, encouraging risk taking, focusing on student achievement, building relationships with teachers, and involving staff in making decisions have an impact on teacher efficacy and a corresponding effect on student achievement (Barnett & McCormick, 2004; Dee, Henkin, & Duemer, 2003). Additional behaviours, Goddard, Hoy and Hoy (2000) posited, that influence and sustain teacher efficacy include: listening, recognizing efforts, empowering teachers to make decisions, expressing confidence in teachers' abilities, the presentation of a congenial interpersonal style, and a strong people orientation.

Ebmeier (2003) found that principal involvement in instructional decisions and participation in classrooms in the building were found to contribute to improvements in teacher efficacy along with the establishment of a trusting environment where teachers were allowed and encouraged to take risks in their teaching. In their research, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) reported several aspects of principal leadership that have been linked to teacher efficacy, specifically: a) the principal's ability to inspire a common purpose; b) the principal's ability to control student behaviour and maintain student discipline; c) the provision of resources for teaching; d) the reduction and elimination of distractions and disruptive factors from outside of the classroom; e) a

philosophy that provides teachers with flexibility over classroom affairs; and e) the creation of a collaborative atmosphere where teachers are involved in decisions that affected them. The provision of appropriate supports and principal behaviours that are perceived as supportive to teachers in the classroom are essential in the development of teacher efficacy. In addition, the absence of these behaviours can result in a decrease in the sense of efficacy among teachers in a building.

Empowerment and shared decision-making was discussed repeatedly with all the participants. Rose captured a critical need, “He gives us freedom, trusts us as professionals, encourages us to try new ideas and strategies, and finds the resources to support special interests and projects” (August 2, 2011). The most important resource in our schools today is the teacher. Considerable research has been conducted to examine the link of teachers’ sense of efficacy to school reform efforts and instructional effectiveness in schools. As a result, there is general agreement that teacher efficacy is an important dimension that forges the link between these factors (McIntyre, 2011). Principals give teachers room to try new things and to make mistakes. Supporting innovation and risk taking demonstrates respect for teachers as learners and as professionals whose judgment can be trusted. This is demonstrated through both words and action that “teachers can and should be trusted to do what is best for students” (Betty, August 12, 2011). Also, when pervasive feelings of professionalism existed and teachers collaborated and worked as a team, a strong sense of community and positive climate also existed. As a result, McIntyre (2011) found that teacher behaviours characterized

extensions of efficacy, such as risk-taking, initiating and implementing innovative ideas and teaching strategies, and furthering their own growth.

Trust is experienced as feeling appreciated.

One of the commodities in life that most people can't get enough of is compliments. The ego is never so intact that one cannot find a hole in which to plug a little praise. But, compliments by their very nature are highly biodegradable and tend to dissolve hours or days after we receive them—which is why we can always use another. (Phyllis Theroux as cited in Ehrlich & DeBruhl, 1996, p. 680)

A principal needs to make a continuing, concentrated, and conscious effort to notice and recognize what people in their school are doing. As Finzel (2007) suggests, “humans need to have their emotional batteries charged often” (p. 62) but that principals need to be cognizant that their staff requires different types and levels recognition. All of the participants indicated that they wanted to feel appreciated for their work. Many of the participants reported that their motivation is fuelled by feeling their contribution is appreciated; that their professional opinion is valued by others. Dana shared that her principal actually took the time to ask staff how they like to be recognized and felt that this was important because,

some people shrivel if you're going to say out in front of everyone, “Gee, you did a great job!” But instead you just want to hide in your mailbox, because that's not how some people are. And then other people thrive on that and if you miss saying

they did a good job, they're mad because you didn't say that. And then other people just would prefer that you would say in the hall "Hey, that was awesome." So that was a smart thing, to step back and just ask, "How would you respond best to praise?" or to anything. Because what we think publicly would be great, doesn't work for everyone. (August 2, 2011)

The reality is that people feel appreciated in idiosyncratic ways, as shared by the participants. In order to understand these idiosyncrasies principals need to know their staff. The participants shared that feeling appreciated is important in a work setting because each of us wants to know that what we are doing matters, that our contribution is valued. Recognizing people for their work sends an extremely powerful message to the recipient, their work team, and other employees through the grapevine and formal communication channels (Sirota et al., 2005). Researchers have found that attempts to communicate blanket appreciation across an organization are ineffective (Bruna & Dugasa, 2008; Hopkins, 1995; Luthans, 2000; Sirota et al., 2005). To many employees, receiving sincere thanks is more important than receiving something tangible.

Employees enjoy recognition through personal, written, electronic, and public praise from those they respect at work, given in a timely, specific and sincere way (Bruna & Dugasa, 2008). As Nancy shared, "being publically recognized is like torture. I hate to be in front of groups and I don't want public attention" (August 9, 2011). Giving her public recognition is embarrassing to Nancy and a negative experience for her—clearly not affirming. Appreciation needs to be viewed as valuable to the recipient in order to have an impact. In order to do this, principals need to understand how to express

appreciation that resonates with each individual on their staff. The following examples demonstrate the diversity of how principals individualized their appreciation to some of the participants in the study. For Rose, receiving cards or notes of appreciation, words of praise, or a small token demonstrated that she was valued and appreciated. “I would get beautiful notes from her after that with a little card to Earl’s or Second Cup or something like that” (August 2, 2011). Rose stressed that her principal would:

come into the classroom and she would never talk to the teacher. She’d come in and she’ll address all her comments to the children—like “Boys and girls. You have such a beautiful classroom here. Your teacher works so hard. Look at all these lovely things that you have here. I love the project that you’re working on. I can tell that a lot of good learning is going on here.” It’s not necessarily a comment that’s being made to the teacher, but it makes you feel good. Her noticing some of the stuff that’s going on. (August 2, 2011)

Because of the principal’s actions, Rose was emphatic that the principal created “an environment that feels comfortable and people are happy to be here. You like coming to your job in the morning. You like being here. That’s something that doesn’t happen naturally” (August 2, 2011). For Ramona, having time with her principal was important, because she felt like a member of the team and her contribution was valued.

I’ve had three principals at this school. All three have promised to do sit-down interviews, one-on-one’s. Only one’s ever done it, and that was a good conversation. They actually talked to me about my practice and they said things

to me that indicated that I was trusted in terms of my professional practice. (July 28, 2011)

For Laura, recognizing her strengths and giving her the latitude to take on a leadership role in the school was how she felt appreciated and valued. When she thanked him for giving her “the leverage to really go forward and take on a lot of things. He said “Don’t thank me. You’re just making me look good!” For Clark, it was receiving feedback and words of encouragement from his principal and even though he had been teaching for 16 years he said “I need that feedback still periodically, that I’m doing a good job and that you think I’m doing a good job” (August 11, 2011). For Harvey, it was being given the gift of time from his principal. The principal would stop by a teacher’s class and ask what the lesson plan was and could someone else handle teaching the lesson. If the teacher said yes the principal would say “Good. Get out of here” and he would take the class and give the teacher a period off to do whatever they needed to do. Tara, in talking about her principal:

He was really good about celebration. And he pushed for that. He pushed for making sure that you were recognized for the work that you did as a staff . . . between the budget and between central office, after a year where the staff had really worked hard and moved and come together a great deal, he took us all out for dinner as kind of a celebration. (August 10, 2011)

Words, both oral and written, can be used to affirm and encourage. Having personal time with the principal can be used to affirm and encourage; working with a teacher on a task or giving them time can be used to affirm and encourage; receiving a small token can be

used to affirm and encourage. The key is that principals must know and understand each staff member's needs and how they like to be recognized.

Recognition and rewards were visualized in a variety of ways across schools, "trust and freedom to do as we believe," "public relations," "awards," "gifts," "public announcements of accomplishments," "feedback on job performance," "special privileges," "leadership opportunities" to "socials and celebrations." Despite the variety, the sample of participants indicated that what is done is never enough. One of the most frequently explored ways in which leaders can influence an organization's effectiveness is through creating a positive organizational environment where people are valued (Wahlstrom & Seashore Louis, 2008). Valuing is about appreciating the worth of something (someone) and of esteeming something (someone) highly. When we value employees, we appreciate them for who they are and what they bring to the organization. We acknowledge them not merely for tasks, but for the deeper intrinsic worth they add to the organization by just being there (Finzel, 2007). Recognizing an individual means successfully completing a project. Valuing someone is letting him or her know that you are glad he or she is on the team and that things wouldn't be as good without them (Cho & Perry, 2012). If a principal fails to treat a teacher with dignity and respect this can send a powerful message that can be perceived as devaluing the importance of teachers.

Rose shared an example where the value of teachers' time was summarily dismissed by the principal. It was a Friday after school near the end of June and the teachers had just returned from a 2-day camping trip with Grade 6 students. The teachers were tired; one was even sick with the flu and strep-throat. They all just wanted to go

home for the weekend but before they could leave they had to stop by the principal's office to retrieve their report cards which had been submitted earlier in the week for proofing. The report cards were due back on the Monday. The principal's door was closed. He and the two vice-principals were in a meeting with a parent that he met with on what seemed like a weekly basis. To their knowledge the meetings were never scheduled, the parent just arrived at the school and demanded to meet with the principal. Here is her experience.

We knocked on the door and were told, even before we had a chance to say anything that they were in a meeting with a parent [the regular]. And we had the door shut on us and were told that we'd have to wait until they finished the meeting. We sat there until quarter to five, in the office, while the three principals were in the office with this parent. What does that say? You couldn't pass three folders out? You couldn't take a minute and say excuse me, instead of making us sit there until quarter to five. But how difficult would it have been to stop for 20 seconds, just to stop there and pass out those folders? So, what was that all about? I'm not sure. Lack of respect? Power? Control? I'm not sure. But, how does a teacher perceive this? That you're just not important. That you're at the bottom of the barrel. (August 2, 2011)

For this participant a lack of appreciation or acknowledgement of effort or good work led to a feeling of being extremely undervalued and very demotivated. Repeated experiences of feeling disregarded or unimportant in work relationships can lead to a person

undervaluing themselves and their qualities and strengths or to a teacher seeking another position.

Clark also had a negative experience wherein he believed that, as a teacher, he was devalued by his principal who failed to support him in his need for time to recover from surgery. Instead of honoring Clark's medical note, the principal negotiated Clark's recovery time. Clark had been sick for about 2 weeks, but because it was near the end of volleyball season and he did not want his team to go into play-offs with a substitute coach he "put up with the pain and coached slumped over, pushing in on my side because it kind of alleviated the pain" (August 11, 2011). When the season ended Clark finally took some time to go to the doctor because he "turned a funky yellow colour" (August 11, 2011). He was immediately admitted into the hospital and underwent emergency surgery on his appendix. When Clark was released from the hospital he went to the school to submit his medical note to the principal indicating that he would be off work for 3 weeks to recover from surgery.

I said "I have this doctor's note for 3 weeks." He's "How about one." I'm like, "What do you mean? Are we negotiating how much time I can have off right now?" And not knowing any better, 'cause I was still relatively a new teacher so we ended up negotiating and I got 2 weeks off. (Clark, August 11, 2011)

This example resonates with Clark because he was astounded that, given all his work with students, both in the classroom and in an extra-curricular capacity, his medical issue would be so easily dismissed by his principal. Part of Clark's motivation to contribute had been fuelled by feeling that his contribution was appreciated. This belief was

dampened when the principal failed to come through with appropriate support. It would be the hope that situations as described by Rose and Clark would be the anomaly in a school setting and that teachers are generally valued for their contribution to education. It doesn't cost anything to show appreciation to the people who work in the school, to acknowledge their contributions and accomplishments, and to recognize them as individuals. Informal recognition—a thank you note, a pat on the back, spending one-on-one time with a teacher, helping a teacher—should be part of the day of a principal.

Thinking that people should not be recognized for doing their job because that is why they were hired, de-values the contribution that staff make to the school every day. “Organizational researchers have been telling us for years that affirmation motivates people much more than financial incentives. People thrive on praise” (Finzel, 2007, p. 62). Based on the accounts shared by the participants, the effect we have on other people flows from the strength of our presence, not the power of our position.

By being acknowledged for their particular way of doing things, their style, and the characteristics that make them stand out from others (originality, elegance, ingenuity, thoroughness), they begin to feel recognized for the unique contribution they bring to their professional life (Brun & Dugas, 2008). Cho and Perry (2012) suggest that recognition of job dedication acknowledges the level of participation, commitment, and contribution shown by an employee or team in the work process, as regards effort and recognition of work performance focuses more on what employees do than who they are as people. Brun and Dugas (2008) caution that “recognition of results is likely to have perverse effects, such as jealousy, sense of unfairness, more competitiveness among

employees and loss of credibility” (p. 723). Based on their research, Brun and Dugas (2008) define recognition as:

first and foremost a constructive response; it is also a judgment made about a person’s contribution, reflecting not just work performance but also personal dedication and engagement. Lastly, recognition is engaged in on a regular or ad hoc basis, and expressed formally or informally, individually or collectively, privately or publicly, and monetarily or non-monetarily. (p. 727)

To better elaborate on their definition of employee recognition, Brun and Dugas (2008) broke it down into five components:

1. It constitutes a constructive, authentic response, preferably one that is personalized, specific, consistent, and short-term; and that is expressed through human relationships, against the backdrop of various types of work- and company-related interaction.
2. It is based on recognition of the person as a dignified, equal, free, and unique being who has needs, and also as an individual who is a bearer and generator of meaning and experience (ethical and existential nature of recognition).
3. It represents an act of judgment on workers’ professional endeavours (recognition of work performance) as well as their personal commitment and collective engagement (recognition of job dedication). It also consists of an evaluation and celebration of results produced by employees and valued by the organization (recognition of results).

4. It is furthermore a regular daily or ad hoc exercise expressed through a set of practices that are formal or informal, individual or collective, private or public, and monetary or non-monetary in nature.
5. Finally, for its beneficiary, recognition represents a reward experienced primarily at the symbolic level, but may also take on emotional, practical or financial value. (pp. 728–729)

Recognition is therefore linked to the notion of concern for others, their being, their unique, distinctive character and their existence (Cho & Perry, 2012). According to this perspective, it is important to take the time to “get to know the people we work with, fully acknowledge their existence and ultimately give meaning to their actions” through recognition. It is often expressed in everyday interpersonal relations and gestures.

Bruna and Dugasa (2008) found that most employees express a need to be recognized by their supervisors, co-workers, and clients, regardless of their job status or type and that a lack of recognition constitutes the second-largest risk factor for psychological distress in the workplace. They further found that for many people as well, work has taken on excessive importance in their quest for identity and their need for personal fulfillment. Consequently, their recognition expectations tend to be much higher in this area of their lives. Cho and Perry (2012) argued that recognition is a question of human dignity and social justice, and not just an organizational performance or workplace mental health issue; where the concept of human dignity is founded on the belief that the person is an end in itself and, as such, should not be

considered as a mere means or instrumental entity for the company. In this perspective, the worker cannot be designated merely as a number, case, or file.

Leading is a personal choice to influence other people by the way in which we conduct our lives from moment to moment. It is a commitment and a capacity to encourage, support, and guide other people through the strength of who they are (Irvine & Reger, 2006). Irvine and Reger (2006) compare leadership to gardening, where plants only grow when conditions are right and they receive the proper care. Leading people requires providing continued attention and investment as well as remembering that people at work are still people with multifaceted and multidimensional needs, wants, interests, and aspirations.

Trust is experienced as community.

A lot of effort is done by the principal on building a community and building relationships with students and parents and staff. It's a rich tapestry of communication. And through that communication and that presence, he shows his care for students and staff and how all of his actions relate back to that student population, relates back to building our school community, our family. (Everitt, August 11, 2011)

McMillan and Chavis (1986) define community as “a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together” (p. 9). Cranston (2011) in his conversations with principals about trust found that it was “the

non-negotiable social condition that acted as a foundation for the kinds of mature adult relationships necessary in schools” (p. 69). Principals saw themselves as “brokers of relationships” and that trust was interpersonal in that “it exists in some state between two people” (p. 69). Similarly, Ciancutti and Steding (2001) found that principals need to form and nurture trusting relationships that allow them to go beneath the surface matters typically discussed with and among teachers and engage them in conversations at deeper emotional levels. Barth (2006) also suggested that the relationships among a school’s educators highlight important connections within that school’s culture.

Teachers and administrators demonstrate all too well a capacity to either enrich or diminish one another’s lives and thereby affect the social milieu of the school. Barth (2006) outlines the importance of healthy relationships with administration by suggesting that research has produced an important postulate:

The nature of relationships among the adults within a school has a greater influence on the character and quality of that school and on student accomplishment than anything else. If relationships are trusting, generous, helpful, and cooperative, then the relationships between teachers and students, between teachers and parents are likely to be trusting, generous, helpful and cooperative. (p. 9)

McAllister (1995) as well addressed trust among managers in organizations where survey data was gathered from a sample of 194 managers and professionals regarding working relationships within their organizations. The data indicated that the frequency of interaction between the parties helped to either strengthen or diminish the trustor’s

perception of the trustee's trustworthiness. As David highlighted "the formalities are good to be there and you can say you're a leader, but if you don't have any followers, you're not really a leader. Trust gets you those followers. Getting to know your staff and them you gets you those followers" (August 11, 2011). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) in their research found that positive social relationships with colleagues and the school leadership relate to teachers' feelings of belonging to the school.

What makes a great place for children to study and learn makes a great place for adults to teach and thrive (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). Developing a sense of community or family and attaining an ethos of a welcoming place is appealing. Going to a job every day in an environment that feels like living in a close-knit community, where there is the feeling that everyone is part of a team, represents a movement away from a hierarchical, top-down style of administration. The OED (2011) defines team as

a group of people with complementary skills who are involved in a common set of goals for which they are collectively accountable; a social unit that has a relatively rigid structure, organization and communication pattern. The task of each member of a team is usually well defined, and the successful functioning of the team depends on the coordinated participation of all.

Achieving a sense of team cannot happen if everyone in the school is pulling in different directions. Teachers need and are demanding collegial, collaborative relationships in their schools, both with their teacher colleagues and administration.

Van Maele and Van Houtte (2012) acknowledge that involvement in the school as a social system is inherent to the teaching job and "one key characteristic of the quality of

teachers' social relationships within their workplace is trust" (p. 880) and that the quality of teachers' social relationships in school informs the level of satisfaction experienced. Tara shared that because of the conscious effort by her principal to "make sure he was active in the lives and the roles of people within the school building" the staff felt as though they were members of a community because "he knew us and we knew him so there was trust. We wanted to be there, to go to work" (August 10, 2011). The importance of positive relationships with other school members cannot be downplayed as school leaders play a crucial role in establishing a school environment conducive for the development of trust relations because "trust is functionally necessary for the continuance of harmonious social relationships" (Lewis & Weigert, 1985, p. 969). Nancy described her principal as "a master at building relationships and understanding the staff" (August 9, 2011). Her principal, to build a sense of community:

has the ability to get to know every single person in her school. She has gone out of her way to make everybody feel comfortable. She "gets" human beings. She gets to know us first. She makes us feel important and what we have to say is important, just making an effort to talk to people. Actually going down the hallway and connecting and making sure she's talking to people all the time. She looks to see what we're good at, what our skills are, what our passions are, and she lets teachers fly. And by that I mean supporting them, supporting them financially but also supporting them emotionally. (Nancy, August 9, 2011)

Principals, as Nancy has shared, need to work continually in the social network of the school to nurture trust, and this takes time, commitment, effective communication, and being present.

School leaders who foster trust among the staff and cultivate similar trust in their leadership position enhance this ethos in their schools. The presence of trust, then, is crucial to the daily interactions of people and serves as a foundation for the establishment of lasting relationships that support the school (Cranston, 2011; Ghamrawi, 2011; Seashore Louis, 2007; Wahlstrom & Seashore Louis, 2008). Trust does not arise by chance or natural evolution. Principals earn trust from members of the school community by encouraging and modeling open communication and actively making themselves available (Blasé & Blasé, 2001; Ghamrawi, 2011; Sebring & Bryk, 2000). Rose described her principal as a person that she would “trust with my first born child!” (August 2, 2011) because of the relationships that were formed with staff and the close sense of community at the school. This did not happen by chance. It was purposeful.

We all knew about each other’s families just through assimilation. Sitting in the staff room. You talk about what your kids did that weekend and the principal would talk about her kids. She had a pretty good idea who everybody was about, and knew who your families were. She knew a lot of information that she had just sort of picked up, just naturally, rather than directly talking to you about things. I totally trusted her. We all did. She was *one of us*. We were part of this huge extended family! (Rose, August 2, 2011)

Similarly, Daryl talked about his principal who took the time to talk and listen; to hear people's stories. His principal made connections with staff on a professional and personnel level:

I got a sense that he knew everybody, that he made that effort to know people.

That taking the time to talk and listen. To hear peoples' stories. To listen to them and also to know what they're doing. To know what their life is filled with. All those things show value, show people that you value them, whatever way. That's what he did. Just little things work, and then we felt trusted because he took the time to get to know the person, not just the teacher. (Daryl, July 28, 2011)

Nancy offered that "in order to trust a person, you must know the person; and in order to know the person you need to have a conversation" (August 9, 2011). Meyer et al. (2011) suggest that the communicative leader who is open to discussion and exchanges with subordinates will build confidence in those around them.

Although the ability to talk seems natural enough, some adults avoid having a conversation. Laura shared that she believes that her principal is not a skilled communicator. "I talk to him, but its' very light conversation. It's never been anything deep or heavy. It's a 4-5 minute conversation and then he's gone." Communication is a craft. Small talk, getting to know your staff and the terms they use to communicate, is just one of the skills principals must cultivate to a level of excellence for trust to be nurtured and grow (Tschannen-Moran, 2011). Dana shared that she felt her principal was a master at having conversations with people. He excelled at making people feel comfortable, but it was a conscious effort for him. Though it was conscious it didn't feel

forced, it felt genuine and that was a real gift for the staff in building community. The principal was the connective tissue.

It was genuine. Perhaps that's where the trust comes from. It didn't ever seem forced, or "I'd better go down and say 'hi' to Dana because I've said 'hi' to these three people and if I don't she'll be mad." He was just a genuine person . . . He managed sometimes to find out a little bit about our personal lives. So if this guy liked to golf, then they'd talk about golfing. And if you loved going to theatre, he could ask about that. And he, in turn, would sometimes develop interests based upon what he'd hear from other people. One lady was totally into music and different CDs so that he started to share that with her. And I think he'd sort of almost become—it feels like he's your friend, even though you know there's a line. And he is pretty much your friend. But I think it was from developing personal one-on-one relationships with him. (Dana, August 2, 2011)

"The highly effective principal is a facilitator—a leader with outstanding human relations skills that include the abilities to build individual relationships; collaborative teams; and a school wide community of learners" (McEwan, 2003, p. 55). The participants shared that it is important that the principal builds a relationship with them; that the principal cares about them personally, about them in the classroom, and about them with other staff.

This collegiality helps build trust and professional respect.

A principal is not only a boss, but also, a principal is your advocate. So you have this interesting relationship where you have this person speaking for you and

speaking to you, and because of that relationship, you have to be able to trust this person. (Rob, August 9, 2011)

Teachers do not expect to do it alone; people's experiences of themselves are constructed in relationships and evolve over time, "particularly if they are with people having a significant influence over one's life, and provide the canvas for the meaning making experience" (Beaudoin & Taylor, 2004, p. 53).

Cosner (2009) in his research found that those school principals who placed emphasis on *making connections* between teachers on staff and fostering collaboration increased teacher trust. Macmillan et al. (2004) found that teachers use "personal and professional interactions to analyze patterns of behaviour and to predict those practices that will support instruction and that will be consistent with the ethos and the culture of the school and its wider community" (p. 279). Sergiovanni (2001) calls this "leadership by building, bonding, and binding" (p. 145). The ethos of the school that Betty taught at was definitely influenced by her principal. Her principal made connections with staff on a regular basis, so much so that Betty even invited her principal to her wedding.

She'd always have conversations with the staff. We knew about her kids, she'd know about my family. I mean she was invited to my wedding! We just knew everything about our staff and we were very close. All of us were close. We had one girl on our staff ran sort of a 'biggest loser' fitness group and the principal showed up and did everything with us. And, I mean she was no pinnacle of fitness either, but she was in there and that was a big risk. She didn't judge us.

Despite what we looked like or what we looked like on paper, she really got to know us. (Betty, August 12, 2011)

To foster this connection, the participants suggested that it is essential for the principal to have interactions and conversations with staff on a regular basis that are both personal and professional so that a sense of belonging, a necessary antecedent to a positive sense of self-worth, is nurtured.

A meta-analysis by Dirks and Ferrin (2001) of trust data from a variety of organizations, besides the effect on productivity and effectiveness, trust in leadership also allows people to develop deeper personal bonds. Achieving these bonds relies upon a nurtured sense of teamwork and collegiality. Teachers need to feel part of a community and not just another staff member by their principal and their colleagues. It is never too early to begin to form this connection. Dominic, in starting at a new school, remembers his principal taking an interest right away in his well-being.

I remember moving and found an apartment and he questioned me about it. “You’re sure everything’s OK? You got what you need?” It was a bigger picture; it wasn’t just the job. I knew that he was concerned about me as a teacher, me as a person new to the town, new to the community. (Dominic, August 11, 2011)

Macmillan et al. (2004) also suggest that “friendship and informal conversations build an emotional connection that enables individuals to identify with each other” (p. 289). In their study, thoughts about and the analysis of behaviour appeared to be of less importance than an intuition developed from social interactions that extended beyond

discussions about the school (Macmillan et al.). Principals and teachers who knew each other, either from having worked together previously or who had developed a friendship over the course of their working relationship appeared to demonstrate this type of trust.

All of the participants in the study indicated that their principals' relationships with staff also had a strong influence on trust within their school's formal and informal social system. Several participants spoke of the importance of principals engaging with staff both professionally and personally and the value of personal interactions in building of trust. Harvey's principal was a man that he described as having a strong presence in the school. He was not a principal to spend his time in his office. He was a "hands on principal" because he was always with the staff and students.

You'd get there early and you'd try to get organized and he'd come into the staff room to chit chat and then leave. And he'd walk around the school. He'd talk to people. He'd be at sporting events, be at plays, be at fine arts events, be there later than other teachers. I don't know when he got his paperwork done! But the school ran smoothly. He had a strong presence not just in the school as an administrator, but as a person, as a colleague, as a friend for teachers, for students. As staff we were not afraid to confide in him because we didn't just see him as the principal. Our school was all about the people in the building. He touched all of us. (Harvey, August 10, 2011)

Through his actions the principal was telling his staff and students that his focus was on peoplework and not paperwork. Making connections and not only developing that sense of community but continuing to nurture it was important. The principal was not afraid to

show his human side and led by example for his school community. Harvey's principal was both a principal and a friend to staff and students. He touched their spirits.

The concept of a friend of the soul, an *anam cara*, is derived from the ancient Celts. The soul friend is meant to be friend, teacher, companion, spiritual guide, and someone to whom one confesses (O'Donohue, 1997). The friend of your soul recognizes you and with that recognition comes understanding and belonging. A similar idea exists in African-American cultures, in the belief that one has the ability to touch the spirit (Mann, 2000). Becoming a soul friend requires getting to the heart of what matters to another person. Tom shared that he was fortunate to work with principals that he trusted to share the good and bad that was happening in his classroom and that was because they had formed a connection, a relationship beyond the *sterile* professional one:

I've had administrators where I would tell anything to—your personal life or your non-personal life, or what's happening in the classroom or not happening in the classroom, things you're frustrated with maybe, or you get into those little debates “we need this or we don't need that.” I have one now that I would not share any personal information with. A lot of that is understanding personalities and the character and the people that you're working with. It's getting out of your office and being one of us. It's asking me about my life, sharing a bit about your life. It's all about your relationship with your staff that really shifts your level of trust or your willingness to share. (Tom, August 11, 2011)

The personal interactions that allow trust to develop may require a communicated vulnerability that can be achieved through personal kinds of contact that go deeper than

cliché conversations (McIntyre, 2011). Some participants spoke of sharing a confidence with their principal or developing and nurturing a relationship which was a crucial component to developing trust. Similarly, Tara described a principal who was trusted by staff, a person that was “beloved” on staff because he was honest and trusted.

He’d meet with you in the morning, be there early, sit beside you at lunch, ask what was going on in your life. If there were difficult times, he would make personal contact with you. He was beloved because he was honest and he was trusted and he was open, and he listened, and you could confide in him and feel confident that he would hold that confidence for you. He was sincere and it wasn’t superficial. We became a fairly cohesive staff. There were personal relationships formed, we moved beyond being just teaching colleagues. That was because of him. (Tara, August 10, 2011)

The participants also spoke of the value of demonstrating care for others in building trust, especially in difficult circumstances that can occur in schools from time to time.

Expression of care for others seemed to help establish longer-lasting trusting relationships. Clark shared a very personal and poignant experience that resonated with him. He had been teaching at the school for only 2 months and he was having a difficult time with a student who was also new to the school, sleeping in class one day. Clark tried to get the student to wake up and participate in class a number of times. In response the student “probably told me 13 times to go f--- myself” (August 11, 2011). It was when the student threatened to kill Clark that he asked the student to leave the room. The student left the school, went home, and committed suicide. When it was reported to the

school they went into a lock-down for 3 hours “to keep the kids out of the community, basically” (Clark, August 11, 2011). Clark shared that he was called to the office during the lock-down to explain what had happened to one of his students. The principal was not in the building at the time; he was with a group of students on a field trip. When the principal arrived back at the school and dismissed the students he went immediately to Clark’s home.

He came in and sat down, and it was late because he was late coming back and we watched it on the news and we just talked about what had happened, what was going on. How did I feel about it? Was I OK? I had a lot of support through that in terms of “was I OK?” (Clark, August 11, 2011)

Clark insisted on going to school the next day and

they wouldn’t let me walk the hallways by myself. And there was a contingent of students in the school that were blaming me—that this was my fault, that I had caused this, even though the parents had said, “No.” There were some mental health issues there and I was just the straw that broke the camel’s back—this had been building for a while. (August 11, 2011)

Clark shared that the principal and staff, because of their actions, “that’s really where that trust was built. I know that they have my back” (August 11, 2011). This was further reinforced when Clark decided that he needed some counseling to help him cope with the incident, but the counseling sessions started before the school day ended.

So my principal came and relieved me every time I had to go at 3:00 o’clock so I could make this appointment on time. So, my principal protected me while I was

there, especially that first year. I knew that the staff and the principal truly cared about me as a person, not just as a teacher. (Clark, August 11, 2011)

Clark, new to the school, faced a very traumatic event in his career as a teacher, but he did not have to face it alone. His principal rallied around him to offer support and care. His principal stepped out onto the platform and stood with him, supported him, cared for him, was there for him. The principal demonstrated that Clark wasn't just a staff member—he was part of the school community and as a member of that community was embraced, enveloped, and encircled during one of his darkest times as a teacher. The principal, in a very short period of time, was able to create trust with Clark because of his caring nature and strong interpersonal skills. Baier's (1986) insight about trust was "whatever matters to human beings, trust is the atmosphere in which it thrives" (p. 231). All respondents in the study indicated that having an interpersonal relationship with their principal was a key factor in developing and sustaining trust. In every case they had shared something of what was important to them as an individual: their values, hopes, fears, and/or concerns. This is how a connection is formed, how it grows. Healthy interpersonal relationships have been related to levels of staff trust in the principal and in colleagues (Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011, 2012) as was demonstrated in Clark's example.

Concern for others as an imperative for trust goes beyond caring for teachers as individuals. It includes a broader concern for the group. Seashore Louis (2007), who engaged in a qualitative study and reported on issues of school and district administrator trust, observed that teachers most often reported leader behaviours that demonstrated

caring concern, and respectfulness as the basis for their perspectives on leader trustworthiness. A principal can be trusted when the teachers believe he or she is acting in the best interests of the collective whole, when they see the principal's actions as supporting and sustaining what they value. If this is their perception, then teachers will generally extend trust with few conditions across many different circumstances (Seashore Louis, 2007). Clark experienced this first hand when his "bean counter" principal left and another principal was appointed.

It was like a complete change in staff because we knew that if there was a decision to be made that affected us, she would ask and really listen to what we had to say. This is what she did all the time. The morale just jumped up and everybody was more willing to do sort of the extra things that you do at a school to make that school special. We were part of a team again! Like we were all in this together as a family. (August 11, 2011)

On a daily basis, trust is increased or diminished depending on how consistently our actions align with expectations.

According to Bryk and Schneider (2002), teachers prefer a principal who allocates resources and makes assignments in fair and consistent ways. "The idea of favorites does not play well into building a community" (Rose, August 2, 2011). Everitt, at the beginning of his career, was very focused on what was happening in his classroom; on how to do his job and learning his curriculum area. "But as my career developed, trust became an increasingly important aspect of whether I was satisfied being at the place that I was" (August 11, 2011). In his current school Everitt shares that he doesn't have to

worry about “my admin screwing me over” because he knows that his principal “doesn’t play favorites because she knows how destructive that can be” and as a result

removing that aspect of concern and letting me focus on what really drives me in the position, which is the kids—and for a lot of teachers that’s what really truly drives them. I can get my energy from the kids and I can do my job better because the trust is there. (August 11, 2011)

The participants were clear in that they want a principal to take an interest in their professional and personal well-being. This is manifested in the actions of the principal. If teachers trust only conditionally and limit their trust to specific instances, unfortunately this may mean that each instance must be negotiated. It is an effective collaboration killer when some teachers believe that the principal doesn’t care about their collective interests or about them as a person.

Leaders lose trust if people conclude that they are primarily self-serving or watching out for their own career first and foremost (Day, 2009). Important to these participants was that the principal can’t force the process of getting to know his or her staff. It has to have meaning and cannot be perceived as a means to an end. As Tara indicated:

sometimes it happens so naturally that you don’t even notice that it’s happening. There’s tons of things that happen every day that you don’t even notice that they are happening, because with some people it is just so natural. But you sure notice when it’s not there or when trust has been broken! (August 10, 2011)

People with a high degree of trust are more likely to disclose, more willing to share their thoughts, feelings, and ideas (Cho & Ringquist, 2011). Conversely, a person may feel compelled to be evasive or to distort attitudes or information in communicating with a distrusted person.

Teachers need to interact meaningfully with principals. When that doesn't happen, teachers may assume something is wrong or feel ignored. When the principal does not interact with staff, assumptions may form. From these assumptions, conclusions are drawn. This process gives rise to suspicion that is antithetical to trust (Ghamrawi, 2011). Unfortunately, "when we don't have information, we have a tendency to make it up, right or wrong" (Daryl, July 28, 2011). Daryl shared his experiences with a principal who he believed failed to interact meaningfully with the staff and it had a profound effect on him, even though the principal was only at his school for 1 year and did nothing in any negative way toward him or his career.

I was scared crapless for the whole year. Mostly because I had no relationship to base any kind of decisions about trust with and I lived in fear the whole year because how do you know how someone is forming their opinion of you if they're not in your space, or there's nobody to build that relationship with? I don't believe that my experience was unique. She would meet with the department heads pretty regularly and they became her minions to the rest of the staff. (July 28, 2011)

"Empirical evidence supports the claim that trust is affected by the amount and quality of communication present in a relationship" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 581). So,

as long as principals are perceived to keep themselves (and their *chosen ones*) above everyone else, they'll never truly have a sense of team and trust will not develop in the school.

Creating connections with staff helps to facilitate the feeling of belonging and a sense of unity, a sense of community, a sense of team (Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2012). This requires that he or she needs to be both flexible and able to cope with internal and external demands. In order to promote a sense of “the feeling that we’re all in this together” (Kouzes & Posner, 2003, p. 10) school leaders play a pivotal role in contributing to the sense of team by being skilled conveners. The participants all acknowledged that the work of the principal is both diverse and hard as the principal needs to manage paper and people. Striking a fine balance so that one does not consume the other can be difficult. It means that the principal needs to work smarter and make their time really count and not be consumed by paperwork; they need to make time for peoplework. As the participants shared, it was important that the principal regularly walk through the school to see things through the eyes of students and teachers; to look for what needs to be changed to enable them to work easier, better, faster, or smarter, and to use face-time with the teachers and students. Why? Relationships play a pivotal role in learning, teaching, and administration and most confusion, problems, and misunderstandings occur because of conversations that never took place (Barth, 2006; Delpit, 1995).

All of the participants indicated that having the principal out in the hallway, getting to know the students and staff on a deeper level, and building rapport makes a

huge difference, because if the principal maintains a state of “privileged seclusion from the real world of the hallways and classrooms he or she loses credibility with the staff and students” (Rob, August 9, 2011). The only way for principals to discover what is truly happening at school is to get out of his or her office and engage with staff and students. Clark stressed that “the principal is in center of a web of relationships ensuring that everyone is somehow connected” (August 11, 2011). For Tara it was her principal’s caring and involved presence at every level which was so remarkable and so important:

He wasn’t an administrator that sat in his office all the time. He was out in the hallways. And it wasn’t just with teachers that he was very outgoing; it was with students also, always talking to students. Getting to know them. Finding out what was of interest in their lives; what they were doing. He just made the time to be out in the hallway so that he could interact with everyone in the school.

(August 10, 2011)

For Everitt it was his principal knowing the students’ names and interacting with them in the hallway that built the ethos of community at the school and described it as a “comfortable working relationship; it’s an easy going one” because:

He’s always in the hallways. He’s out there. He knows the kids’ names—and I mean there’s 1500 kids at our school. He knows the kids. He’s talking to the kids. He’s not just dealing with the problem kids in the office. (August 11, 2011)

Everitt explained that because Grade 10 was the first grade at their school, when the students entered into Grade 10 the principal, “knowing the importance of establishing the idea of community” (August 11, 2011) would meet with all of the Grade 10s on the first

day of the school year and talk to them about what it meant to be a student at the school. “The principal welcomed the students. He made them feel like this was their school too and because of this this instilled a real respect for the school, the teachers, other students. We never had garbage or vandalism issues” (August 11, 2011). This was in sharp contrast to his previous principal who, some of the students reported to him, the first time students met the principal was when they walked across the stage at graduation.

She wasn’t there. She didn’t know those kids. The assistant principals were the ones dealing with them. She was in her office. In her ivory tower. She didn’t come around to the classrooms unless it was for a teacher evaluation. It was a business-like relationship in my first school, and in my second school it’s a community.

For Daryl his principal would connect with students on their birthday; “he would go to the class and he would bring them a Hershey kiss or something like that to connect individually with the student. He didn’t miss a student! It was that important to him” (July 28, 2011).

David shared the impact it had on him when while out on a camping trip with students the principal “would trek his way into the bush and come see the kids. All those little things, they’re small at the time—but they’re huge!” (August 11, 2011). Sergiovanni (1994) offered that “people are bonded to each other as a result of their mutual bindings to shared values, traditions, ideas, and ideals” (p. 61) and because of this that educators might better understand, design, and run schools as social rather than formal organizations and, in particular, as communities. Sergiovanni’s (1994) reasoning was the

universal need for a sense of belonging, of being connected to others and to ideas and values.

Researchers Solomon and Flores (2001) assert that “a relationship is by its very nature ongoing and dynamic, in which one of the central concerns of the relationship is the relationship itself, its status and identity and, consequently, the status and identity of each and all of its members (p. 219). Trust is an essential and existential dimension of that dynamic relationship. This appreciation for trust’s existential nature was communicated by all of the participants who said that it was imperative that principals develop interpersonal relationships with not only their staffs but their students as well; that the principal get to know the people in their school beyond a superficial professional level. Beaudoin and Taylor (2004) spoke about schools being presented as the “ultimate cradle of socialization for children” (p. 114), where teaching is often considered one of the most social of professions. Interestingly, however, Beaudoin and Taylor found that “conversations with adults and children often reveal a profound sense of alienation, isolation and disconnection that is further intensified by the innumerable possibilities for relationships” (p. 114). In other words, there is nothing worse than feeling alone in a crowd. The building and nurturing of community in the school is paramount to breaking down the feelings of isolation and disconnection.

Schools are enduring increasing public scrutiny and the relevance of trust has emerged as a salient aspect of healthy schools (Chiaburu & Lim, 2008; Smith, Hoy, & Sweetland, 2001). Indeed, a large body of research supports the key role trust plays in maintaining productive relationships and organizational effectiveness (Axelrod, 1984;

Gambetta, 1988). In my research, six superordinate themes offered as propositions are: trust is experienced as open and honest communication; trust is experienced as having confidence in or reliance on the principal; trust is experienced as feeling safe; trust is experienced as efficacy; trust is experienced as feeling appreciated; trust is experienced as a sense of belonging, and; trust is experienced as being a visible presence in the school.

Putnam (2000) has shown that when citizens trust each other less and become less engaged in society, a country loses an asset, that being the social capital that is essential to collective problem-solving. Bryk and Schneider (2002) contend that schools with a high degree of relational trust are far more likely to make the kinds of changes that help raise student achievement than those where relations are poor because trust is the connective tissue that holds improving schools together. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) also stress that trust is based on interdependence, “where the interests of one party cannot be achieved without reliance upon another” (p. 7). If interdependence is absent, then trust is unnecessary (Rousseau et al., 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Similarly, Kramer (1999) suggested that “trust between two or more interdependent actors thickens or thins as a function of their cumulative interaction. Interactional histories give decision makers information that is useful in assessing others’ dispositions, intentions, and motives” (p. 575).

Building trusting relationships takes time, energy, and a conscious effort. Trusting relationships are not automatic; they must be developed and be nurtured throughout the relationship (Tschannen-Moran, 2011). Since there are an endless variety

of relationships, the levels and shades of trust are equally endless. Consequently, understanding the facets and dynamics of trust among teachers and principals in schools is important. I believe that we all think we know what trust is from our own individual experience, but as Harvey and Drolet (1994) state, “Trust is much like love—we know it when we see it, but we are not sure what creates it. Trust is not an act or set of acts, but the result of other actions or variables” (p. 18). As teachers and the principal enter into repeated exchanges and the number of successful interactions grows, so may the level of trust. Failed trust relationships remove themselves from the abstract and take on a concrete reality and ascertaining the root of the failure becomes of paramount concern. Can we be sure that the word trust means a single phenomenon? Maybe it is just a word used for different, although related, things placed within a specific context.

Summary

This chapter opened with data from the experiential understandings of each participant illustrated around subordinate themes. Next, the superordinate themes were introduced by examining the interface of the subordinate themes in the superordinate themes and drawing some general conclusions. The chapter concluded with a detailed narrative around the superordinate themes supported with interview excerpts and relevant literature. Based on these findings and those outlined in the previous chapters, a brief synthesis of the *founding* trust research conducted in schools, and a synthesis of this study and conclusions will be outlined in the final chapter. In addition suggestions for future research related to trust in schools will be presented.

Chapter 6:
Overview of the Study, Synthesis of Findings,
Research Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter begins with an overview of the study which includes its purpose and significance, the main research question, and methodology. Next a synthesis of the foundational trust research conducted in schools is presented followed by an outline of the major findings and conclusions of this inquiry. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

Overview of the Study

Purpose and significance of the study.

Trust has been explored in educational and organizational research as vital for efficient and effective operations. Within a school or district, one of the primary measures of effectiveness is student achievement (Fullan, 2002; Hargreaves et al., 2009; Hargreaves, Sahlberg, King, & Murgatroyd, 2008; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Wallace, 2005). Student achievement drives school grading and ranking, not only in Alberta, but in many provinces in Canada (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). Studies have found that trust contributes to achievement through a direct impact on standardized test scores (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Sweetland & Hoy 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2004, 2011), as well as by improving factors that contribute to student learning, such as the level of teacher collaboration (Christensen, 1996; Leonard & Leonard, 2001; Stewart, 1996; Tschannen-Moran, 2001), participation in decision making (Sweetland & Hoy, 2001), a systemic

ability to respond quickly to trends (Hoy et al., 2006), collective teacher efficacy (Goddard et al., 2000; Goddard & Skrla, 2006; McIntyre, 2011; Tschannen-Moran, 2004, 2007; Wahlstrom & Seashore Louis, 2008), productive conflict resolution (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, 2007), and organizational commitment (Tschannen-Moran, 2003, 2007).

Supplemental to this the Alberta government is also talking about a transformative agenda for education (Alberta Education 2009, 2010). However, school reform efforts are founded upon the premise that staff cooperating and/or collaborating with each other in a learning community will result in a better educational organization, improved teaching, and greater student achievement (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). As a precursor to the transformation agenda, all public schools in Alberta fell under a provincial mandate to become professional learning communities owing to legislative acceptance of a recommendation from Alberta's Commission on Learning (Alberta Education, 2003). Efforts in Alberta to encourage learning communities (Fullan, 2005; Hargreaves, 2007; Hord 2008, 2009; Leonard & Leonard, 2001; McIntyre, 2011; Ronsyn, 2005; Seashore Louis et al., 1996; Sackney & Mitchell, 2005; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Wahlstrom & Seashore Louis, 2008; Wahlstrom et al., 2010) are based on the assumption that achieving restructured organizations and learning environments requires collaborative, flexible teachers and school leaders who share professional knowledge to achieve improved student learning and analysis and improvement of classroom practice. Trust is of prime importance in these circumstances.

There is evidence of a strong link between the nature of the relationships in a school and both student achievement and the success of school restructuring efforts

(Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; McIntyre, 2011; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2006; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Wallace, 2005). Trust is said to play a role in the development, the existence, and the sustenance of collegiality and community. For education to be transformed all partners in the process should be working together and not at cross-purposes. The role of the principal is critical. As Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) assert in their review of teacher retention a “lack of administrative support” is an important reason cited for beginning teachers leaving the profession (p. 1030). Their work further reveals that weak administrative support is also an important reason cited for beginning teachers leaving the profession.

Trust of and in the other is vital to successful transformation. Evans (2000) put forward that “transformation begins with trust,” and describes it as the “essential link between the leader and led” (p. 287), and asserts that “school leaders seeking change need to begin by thinking of what will inspire trust among their constituents” (p. 288). Mounting research indicates that leaders who develop trust among their staff can affect positive school outcomes (Hoy, 2002, 2003; Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2006; Hoy, Hoffman, Sabo, & Bliss, 1996; Hoy, Tarter, & Witkoskie, 1992; Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Lewis, 2008; Smith, 2000, 2002; Smith & Birney, 2006; Smith, Hoy, & Sweetland, 2001; Tarter, Bliss, & Hoy, 1989; Tschannen-Moran, 2001). Accordingly, scholars have reacted to the interest in schools by studying what traits characterize effective schools; one emerging body of research is the study of trust. Indeed, the ability to trust in one’s own working environment and to contribute in a trusting and open manner have emerged as important facets of healthy school

environments. Teachers and administrators demonstrate all too well a capacity to either enrich or diminish one another's lives and thereby affect the social milieu of the school.

As well, society has a longstanding reliance on trust, even though many conceptual discrepancies arise from cultural and philosophical differences about the notion of trust. The construct of trust, and its opposite (distrust), is notable in all facets of every human culture (Gulati & Sytch, 2008). Nanus (1989, p. 101) describes trust as "the mortar that binds leader to follower" and Powell (1990) declares trust is "a remarkably effective lubricant" that reduces the complexities of organizational life and facilitates transactions more quickly than other management means. Trust is a global phenomenon occupying a critical role in human interaction.

Trust brings a necessary element of reliability and stability to people who live and work together (Boonstra & Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 2010; Cho & Perry, 2012; Cho & Ringquist, 2011; Forsyth et al., 2006; Hargreaves, 2007; Sackney & Mitchell, 2005; Seashore Louis, 2007; Tschannen-Moran, 2004, 2007). The accountability movement reinforces feelings of distrust in school systems because the need for standardized testing implies that schools cannot be trusted to educate students without oversight (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Hargreaves et al., 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). However, trust is difficult to explain and/or measure because it is based on subjective factors—beliefs, and perceptions (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). As a result, a variety of definitions for trust exist.

Philosophically, trust has been explained as a focus on a person's trustworthiness: his/her competence and his/her ability to act ethically and morally (Baier, 1986; Hosmer,

1995). From an economic perspective, trust is the result of a rational decision, the balancing of risks and benefits (Bottery, 2003; Coleman, 1990; Currall & Inkpen, 2006; Reina & Reina, 2006; Tierney, 2006; Walker et al., 2011; Williamson, 1993; Yin et al., 2011). From an organizational viewpoint, trust is based on the belief that an individual or group will act in good faith and in the best interest of the whole organization (Bradach & Eccles, 1989; Coleman, 1990; Cummings & Bromily, 1996; Currall & Epstein, 2003; Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Jones & George, 1998; Leithwood & Seashore Louis, 1998; Leithwood et al., 2004; Reina & Reina, 2006; Rousseau et al., 1998; Schoorman et al., 2007; Seashore Louis, 2007; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Tschannen-Moran, 2011).

While cultures may have differences in philosophy and expectations for social behaviours, the concept of trust is universal. In addition, although the definitions of trust may vary, its presence is critical for organizational participants. Trust research continues to expand and the focus on schools has prompted extensive scholarly interest and a growing body of work is accumulating. Educational researchers studied trust in leadership (the principal), trust in colleagues (faculty trust of one another), and the mutual trust existing, limited, or missing between the school personnel and students and their parents. The study of trust in educational organizations is currently dominated by Hoy and Koppersmith (1984), Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2011), Bryk and Schneider (2002), Galford and Drapeau (2002), Tierney (2006), and Seashore Louis and Wahlstrom (2004, 2007, 2008, 2010). These authors all posit that trust represents a common yet complicated concept widely considered to be the “moral

glue that bonds people and organizations together.” It is a critical cog in the engine of effective social interactions and serves as a requisite for the health of organizations.

The rationale for my examination of trust is based on the assumption that trust is a key element in all human relationships and is often taken for granted because it is usually not thought about until it fails to exist. Recognizing that teachers are both leaders in their classrooms and colleagues in the larger organization of the school, this study focused on experiences of trust between teachers and their principals, as expressed by the teachers and drew upon the foundational work of researchers Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998), Bryk and Schneider (2002), Flores and Solomon (1998), and Seashore Louis (2004).

Over our careers, each of us has constructed beliefs about our interactions with our colleagues: some productive, some not. For example, on occasions when trust has been extended, something may happen to leave a person feeling burnt or betrayed. For some, the emotional response is immediate: shock, fear, loss, and anger. The mental reaction is sometimes a “never again” decision that affects trust with that person. If a teacher has a “betrayal” event with an administrator, for instance, the teacher may unconsciously conclude that all administrators of that “type” cannot be trusted. When these decisions occur at the subconscious level, they could result in a block or limitation and future administrators may be fighting this hidden barrier to trust. Further, protection may occur by unconsciously reducing the motivation to go the extra mile, to be flexible, or to take appropriate risks.

The presence of trust is crucial to the daily interactions of people. Moreover, trust serves as a foundation for the establishment of lasting relationships that support healthy

organizations (Barth, 1990; Bolman & Deal, 1995; Cho & Perry, 2012; Cho & Ringquist, 2011; Clark & Payne, 2006; Cosner, 2010; Forsyth et al., 2008; Ghamrawi, 2011; Hoy et al., 2006; Jones & George, 1998; Shockly-Zalabak et al., 2000; Tschannen-Moran, 2011; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011, 2012). Teachers are dependent upon principals, but so too are principals dependent upon teachers; it is this interdependency that makes both parties vulnerable and in need of trusting relationships (Tschannen-Moran, 2011). An understanding of the conditions and processes that enable teachers and administrators to learn to trust and cooperate is critical as schools increasingly are faced with changing expectations. It is for the foregoing reasons that I chose to conduct a study with a view to better understand the perspectives of teachers about the phenomenon of trust in the organizational context of a school, specifically between themselves and their principals. The research question drove the research design and a phenomenological approach and methodology was adopted in order to explore what happens when the everyday flow of lived experience takes on a particular significance for teachers and their understanding of trust with their principal.

Methodology.

In order to guide my choice of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as my research methodology, I was influenced by the work of Smith et al. (2009). Since phenomenology tries to understand the relationship between the participant's experience and the world, the researcher must enter that world through the participant. The participant is the conduit.

This study involved interviewing 16 Alberta teachers using stratified purposeful sampling to control participation for geography (north/south), gender, and demographics. The research interviews took place during the summer, over 2 months, when teachers were off school and free to engage in lengthy conversations about their experiences. According to Smith et al.(2009), these “conversation[s] with a purpose” (p. 57) involved the participants telling their own stories and sharing their experience(s) of a particular moment of significance to them. My purpose was to listen. “Unless one has engaged deeply with the participant and their concerns, unless one has listened attentively and probed in order to learn more about their lifeworld, then the data will be too thin for analysis” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 58). However, because this was a guided conversation, a schedule of open questions was prepared in advance to guide me in conducting the interviews. My goal in preparing same was to help participants move beyond analytic and evaluative accounts of their experience to a narrative or descriptive account of their experience of the trust phenomenon. The guiding questions, however, did not direct the interview except to assist with moving the participant from the general to the specific. The flow of the interview was more like a one-sided conversation with the participant doing the majority of the talking. After each interview, I made reflective notes on my impressions of my interaction with the participant. All the interviews were transcribed from the audio recordings.

The second major theoretical underpinning of IPA is the theory of interpretation. Interpretation is about the researcher’s perspective and insights that flow after a systematic and detailed analysis of the data. Smith et al. (2009) posit that “if one has

engaged in a detailed, comprehensive and holistic analysis, one can end up with an understanding of the utterer better than he understands himself” (p. 22). The purpose is not to “relive the past but rather to learn anew from it, in the light of the present” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 27), to understand how trust has been understood from the perspective of the teachers’ experiences with their principal. IPA starts with the participants in their individual contexts, explores their personal perspectives, and completes a detailed examination of each case before moving to more general claims. Each interview was analysed line-by-line and the identification of emergent patterns and then relationships between themes was noted. The narrative that followed was a “detailed commentary on the data extracts, which takes the reader through the interpretation, usually theme-by-theme” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 80). Subordinate and superordinate themes emerged from multiple readings of the data.

Synthesis of Findings

Early work by Hoy and Kupersmith (1985) led the way for research into teacher perceptions of the principal and his or her colleagues. Their protocol called for a questionnaire to be administered to 146 teachers in 46 schools in an effort to conceptualize the meaning of trust and measure its different facets among the faculty. Hoy and Kupersmith also sought to measure the authenticity of the principal’s behaviour by having participants complete the Trust Scales questionnaire, which measures the teachers’ perceptions of trust in colleagues, trust in the principal, and trust in the school district. Initial findings by Hoy and Kupersmith positively related teacher trust in the

principal, colleagues, and the organization with each other. The positive correlation of trust and principal authenticity drew attention to the fact that perceived principal behaviours positively influence trust levels, which in turn positively affect the overall climate of the school. The reaches of the principal's influence were also noted to directly affect trust relationships with the staff.

Building on the seminal work of Hoy and Kuper-Smith (1985), Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999, 2003) conceptualized trust, the center point of the definition, as the ability to make one-self vulnerable. Hoy et al. (2006) and Schoorman et al. (1995) similarly noted that the willingness of one to be vulnerable to another person and communicate openly with that person is critical in developing open and honest social relationships. Thus, a person permits vulnerability to another to occur based on some facets of trust. In a study of Chicago area elementary schools, Bryk and Schneider (2002) suggested that schools with a higher level of trust would also have the highest levels of student achievement based on the organization's ability to institute changes necessary for improvement of student success. In addition, researchers have empirically identified, through survey and qualitative research as well as from reviews of literature, a variety of antecedents and facilitators to the development of trust in leaders. Although findings vary, certain facets of trust as well as related leader actions appear important with respect to the development of trust in a leader (See Table 2.2).

Research has suggested that several variations of the trust construct exist and even without a common definition, certain concepts or qualities of trust are repeated. Based on existing definitions of trust, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) is the one that appears to

be the most often adopted by researchers as a definition applicable to schools and the elements are consistent with the aspects of trust examined throughout the literature. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (2000) five components of trust (a) benevolent, (b) reliable, (c) competent, (d) honest, and (e) open have been augmented by the addition of vulnerability (Smith et al., 2001) and confidence (Rousseau et al., 1998; Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

The insights of the 16 participants contributed to the following synthesis of findings and informed my reflections about the phenomenon of trust between teachers and principals. Distilling the volume of detail from the transcripts and initial notes to map the inter-relationships, connections, and patterns from the 16 transcripts produced a master list of subordinate themes. The meanings of the various subordinate themes often overlapped which aided in the development of the superordinate themes. According to the participants, those principals who exhibited openness and honesty in their communication with staff; along with principal actions that were considered to be consistent and reliable, and together with principal actions that developed a sense of belonging and safety, where staff felt efficacious, appreciated and part of a community, yielded high levels of trust with teachers.

The Interface of Trust and Principal Actions

Interface of open and honest communication.

Open and honest communication is essential to trust and without ample trust, vital communication within the organization degrades, hurting overall performance (Smith et

al., 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). In addition, the cultivation of trust occurs when a sense of reciprocity is reached through openness and information sharing without hostility or exploitation of any vulnerability such information may bring (Mishra, 1996; Rusch, 2004; Tschannen-Moran, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). The effective schools research has also found that schools with a high degree of openness tend to have increased faculty trust in the principal and their colleagues (Blasé & Blasé, 2001; McEwan, 2003; Meyer et al., 2011; Sebring & Bryk, 2000; Smith et al., 2001). Likewise, Seashore Louis (2007) found that a lack of faculty trust in the principal stifled sharing of information vital to the progress of the school and its agenda. In a culture of trust, transparent communication forms a foundation for building relationships.

Participants in this study recounted that in order for trust to develop, the principal's communication and actions must exhibit transparency and honesty with no hidden agendas. Barlow (2001) argues, "once the leader takes the risk of being open, others are more likely to take a similar risk—and thereby take the first steps necessary to building a culture of trust" (p. 26). Coupled with their value of truth-telling, participants deemed it important that the principal be transparent in his or her manner of communication, in how decisions are to be made, and how they are implemented within the school. The use of *spin* in communication was seen as a deception. One way to promote transparency, it was suggested, is to provide information about the rationale, background, and thought processes underpinning decisions. In addition, participants reported feeling betrayed when principals gave *lip service* to shared and collaborative

decision-making and then made arbitrary decisions. If the principal is perceived to have a disconnect between what they say and what they do, trust in the principal will suffer, even if they think that the principal is telling a harmless lie to avoid hurting or upsetting someone. Finally, participants indicated that it was paramount that a principal's message shared privately would also be the same message shared publically. This added to the principal's credibility and trust with staff.

Truth-telling by principals was of the utmost importance to teachers. Becoming vulnerable from a point of opening oneself up to listen and to speak was considered the highest form of truth between two people. We have all been taught to tell the truth but with the caveat, "If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything." How many of us have told a white lie and when confronted with a contradiction, smiled sheepishly, and justified it because we don't want to hurt or upset others, or because we just don't want to deal with another's hurt or anger? Being honest and telling the truth is simpler. Based on my experience and what the participants shared, I believe that we trust people because they develop a reputation for telling the truth. If the principal has such a reputation, he or she will be known for being transparent and open because they have neither nothing to hide nor a trail of lies to remember. Once the trust in the staff is established, the trust extended is reciprocated through vital information presented to the principal from teachers and relevant campus personnel (Hoy et al., 2006), thus creating exchange of trust from which further relationships can be cultivated.

Interface of reliance and confidence.

Participants reported watching their principals very closely to determine how congruent his or her actions were with their words. If the principal is a new appointee, teachers are looking to see if they can invest their confidence or positive expectations in their new leader and so scrutinize the congruency of the principal's actions and words. These observations and conclusions will determine the principal's reliability which is the belief that the principal consistently fulfills commitments and does what is right in all situations. Further, participants reported being open to meeting those principal expectations that are communicated with support and guidance because such transparent expectations make interacting with the principal safer and easier for teachers.

Teachers expect principals to treat everyone fairly and equitably. Participants reported that a fair principal does not play favourites. Fair principals do not take advantage of others by virtue of their position or with caprice. If the principal wants to instil trust in teachers, he or she must be seen to be consistently fair. All of the research participants indicated that having a principal who was consistent in his or her actions, follows through, is accountable, and sets standards of behaviour for self and others was necessary to foster a trusting work environment. As the instructional leader of the school, participants reported that the principal who consistently leads by example, leads with integrity, and does not *play favorites* instils trust with the staff because that person is seen to be reliable which then instils confidence. Without such consistency, uncertainty takes hold which breeds speculation and suspicion, which breeds distrust.

Interface of feeling safe.

Principals need to provide an environment where people feel safe enough to openly contribute. The principal must provide opportunities for staff members to express their opinions and to bring forth suggestions regarding the administration of the school. All participants expressed a desire to be involved in decisions that impacted their work and their school. Participants illustrated that the trust teachers have in the principal will grow when that principal shows that staff can voice an opinion without fear of retribution or retaliation from their leader. Teachers felt empowered when principals included them in making decisions that affected them. Having their voice heard, honoured, and respected either in a one-on-one setting (teacher classroom, hallway, principal's office), in small groups (staff room, hallways), or large groups (staff meeting) was extremely important to all participants. For organizations to succeed, a culture rich in trust and collaboration enhances the foundation for performance, allowing experts to do their respective jobs (Cook & Friend, 1991; Hoover & Achilles, 1996; Leonard & Leonard, 2001; Stewart, 1996; Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011). The teachers equated being heard with being valued, with being respected, which had a significant positive impact on the trusting relationship with their principal. Trust is the assurance that the other will not take advantage if the opportunity is available (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1999). Maintaining appropriate confidentiality, such as protecting the privacy of private information shared, also promotes trust (Fullan, 2003; Gimbel, 2003).

Principals who personally modelled appropriate behaviour in relation to acting with integrity and credibility was important to the participants of the study. Giving teachers room to try new things and to make mistakes, supporting innovation and risk taking demonstrates respect for teachers as learners and as professionals whose judgment can be trusted. In the absence of trust teachers are cautious and unwilling to take risks; trust fosters cooperation, while distrust undermines it. The effective approaches to building trust, according to the participants, are those that focus on actions that produce trust rather than on trust itself. Words are easy; it is the behaviour that demonstrates expectations in action and that helps teachers trust their principal.

The participants expressed an appreciation for the plethora of paperwork that could consume a principal. Nevertheless, they also discussed the importance of people work as well. Principals earn trust from staff by actively making themselves available (Blasé & Blasé, 2001; Sebring & Bryk, 2000). Participants offered that the problem arises when the obsession with being task-oriented clouds the principal's sense of the importance of the human element. Sometimes principals don't see that the people around them are critical to the overall success of the school, and their body language communicates the message to people around them that they really aren't interested in listening because they have "more important" things to do. Having an open door means being accessible and available, both in body and mind, to have a conversation.

An intriguing finding of the study was that, particularly at the elementary level, teachers distrustful of their principals tended to express themselves in the military-esque language of conflict and wins and losses. Teachers spoke of banding together and

circling the wagons so that they could go toe-to-toe with their principal who was governing from the castle with an iron fist. I had anticipated that such sentiments might be expressed by Division IV teachers, perhaps owing to the clustering that happens in high school departments. What I found surprising was the fervid language that Division I and II teachers chose in their descriptions of distrust, where distrust was portrayed as worse than just the absence of trust. Lewicki et al. (1998) would categorize this language as being in quadrant four, where there is high trust with colleagues characterized by high-value congruence and interdependence and also high distrust with the principal characterized by highly segmented relationships that are continually monitored due to the risks and vulnerabilities of the teachers involved.

In all of the examples provided, participants spoke of the principal exercising his or her power as in a dictatorship. Participants clearly understood the difference between a principal leading from a position of power and another leading from a position of strength. Respondents shared that those principals who have a presence of strength tended to secure teachers' respect and trust. In extreme situations, participants suggested that the fastest and, in some cases, the only way to move beyond distrust was to replace those in key leadership positions. In some cases, culture brings people together; other times, culture divides people (Deal & Peterson, 1999; Firestone & Seashore Louis, 1999). For instance, a culture of control may exist within a more toxic culture potentially leading to distrust and declining motivation, whereas a culture of collaboration may exist within a more collegial culture which potentially may lead to increased trust and increased productivity.

In addition, I had also assumed that an absence of trust would yield distrust. However, some participants described a middle ground characterized by apathy. Lewicki et al. (1998) would place this phenomenon in their quadrant two where there is low trust characterized by passivity and casual acquaintances. Teacher behaviour would be observed based on limited interdependence with arm's-length transactions based on professional courtesy and high distrust characterized by undesirable eventualities expected and feared. As a result harmful motives would be assumed, interdependence would be managed, and paranoia where the feeling is that the best offense is a good defense would be present. Apathetic teachers often progressed to the next step, that being distrust (Lewicki et al., 1998). Many of the participants spoke of being at that point and in response deciding to find another teaching position. This experience was particularly prevalent with those teachers who had enjoyed a trusting relationship with a principal, the principal moved to another position, and the incoming appointee did not "measure up." For a school to move from high trust to distrust took only a few months involving a few episodes to a few teachers. The distrust spread rapidly. What the principal did to one staff member was likened to having been done to the entire staff, especially if the objectionable action was suffered by a respected staff member. Conversely, if a new principal was appointed to a school where the staff had been enduring a negative trust experience, trust took years (not months) to build.

Interface of efficacy.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2003) explain that there is a positive correlation between high levels of trust in a school and a high level of teacher-perceived efficacy. In fact, “when teachers trust each other, it is more likely that they will develop greater confidence in their collective ability to be successful at meeting their goals” (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, p. 127). According to participants in this study, self-efficacy beliefs are tied to having autonomy in their classrooms where the principal demonstrates their trust by “leaving them alone to do their job,” trusting in the staff’s professionalism. Participants argued that this trust is a necessary condition for successful collaboration. In order for these professional relationships to produce a deep sense of collaboration, the principal must take the initial step in trusting the faculty (Hoy, 2002; Seashore Louis, 2007; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Tschannen-Moran, 1998).

When teachers are efficacious and feel empowered they are more confident to share instructional practices and break down the *walls* between their classrooms so that professional conversations are fostered. This trust also provides school staff with a calmness that makes them approach difficult tasks with a belief that they will be highly efficacious in carrying out those tasks. It pushes them to try harder to achieve goals, persist despite setbacks, and develop coping strategies to overcome possible pitfalls. In other words, trust is an effective tool for increased teacher self-efficacy.

Interface of appreciation.

An intriguing finding of the study was that all of the participants indicated that they wanted to feel valued and appreciated. This was intriguing because the trust models and definitions present in literature reviewed did not mention appreciation in such a concrete manner. All participants indicated that they wanted to have their contributions recognized and that principals must make continuing, concentrated, and conscious efforts to notice staff's actions and efforts. They cautioned that principals must also be cognizant that their staffs respond to idiosyncratic modes of recognition. In other words, principals need to know their staffs. If the teachers feel that their contribution is noticed then they feel that the principal is not just focused on paperwork but is also focused on them as a person.

At the Division I and II levels, receiving cards or notes of appreciation, small tokens, words of encouragement, or the gift of additional meeting time with colleagues was valued. At the Division III and IV levels teachers appreciated principals recognizing strengths and giving teachers latitude to take on leadership roles in the school, providing feedback and words of encouragement, and advancing additional preparation time (when the principal took their class or lunch supervision). Through these actions of their principal, teachers were motivated to do their best, to give that little bit extra without being asked. Siegall and Worth (2001) reported that teachers produce better outcomes when they have trust in the school's administration and feel that their contribution has been noticed.

Interface of community.

All respondents indicated that having a positive interpersonal relationship with their principal was a key factor in developing and sustaining trust. In every case, respondents shared something of what was important to them as an individual, their values, hopes, fears, and/or concerns and it was reciprocated. A connection was formed. It is essential for the principal to regularly and meaningfully interact with staff personally and professionally to establish a teacher's sense of belonging, a necessary antecedent to a positive sense of self-worth. Developing a sense of community or family makes the workplace appealing and welcoming. A work environment that feels like living in a close-knit community where there is the feeling that everyone is part of a team represents a movement towards a flat organization and away from a hierarchical, top-down style of administration. The participants related that teachers need collegial, collaborative relationships among teachers and administrators. School leaders who foster trust enhance the welcoming ethos of the school. This trusting environment does not happen by chance or natural evolution. Principals earn trust from members of the school community by encouraging open communication and actively making themselves available.

Several participants spoke of the importance of principals engaging with staff on a personal as well as a professional level. Higher levels of collegial trust are evident in schools where teachers support each other and are advocates for each other's needs. In many cases of high-level trust, staffs are even known to extend their care and attention outside of work requirements to personal functions such as birthdays, weddings, and family gatherings (Solomon & Flores, 2001). In addition, teacher trust in colleagues

abets the school community and develops a sense of confidence when the staff members identify with each other. The personal interactions that allow trust to develop may require a communicated vulnerability that can be achieved through personal contact that goes deeper than cliché conversations. Participants communicated that teachers trust principals who act in the best interests of the whole; they see the principal's actions as supporting and sustaining what they value.

All of the participants spoke about the principal being out of his or her office and being visible around the school, interacting with both students and staff. This was important because as the principal it demonstrated to the staff that the principal was "in the trenches" with them and for students it was an opportunity for the principal to talk to students and get to know them so that if they ever did have to be sent to the office the principal had already established a relationship with them. Being present does not only help to build powerful relationships with the school community, but also creates an environment where the principal is in a position to see teaching and learning that happens in schools. This fostered community and belonging in the school and from these personal relationships trust was developed.

A second intriguing finding of the study was that very few of the participants spoke of the presence of a strong, unifying mission and vision communicated by the principal to promote a trusting environment. However, some participants did articulate that it was incumbent upon the principal to internalize and model the core values and vision of the school and the district to staff, students, and the community. For leadership

to flourish, a leader must lead by example, work to establish credibility (Palestini, 1999), and model behaviour (Kouzes & Posner, 1987).

Research Conclusions

Building new relationships, whatever the circumstances, takes time; rebuilding relationships in which trust has been damaged can take far longer (Walker et al., 2011). If educators want to make meaningful, lasting change within school communities, increasing trust and taking the time to develop it may well be “worth the investment.” “Without trust,” as Blasé and Blasé (2001) write, “a school cannot improve and grow into the rich, nurturing micro-society needed by children and adults alike” (p. 23). Despite decades of research within the field of education and leadership there remains much to learn about trust among teachers and their principals. I found that open and honest communication, confidence and reliance, safety, efficacy, appreciation, and community are necessary in a trusting relationship but insufficient in isolation. All of the facets together develop trust.

Even though there is no one practical construct of trust that allows a person to design and implement organizational interventions that result in significantly increased trust levels between people, as mentioned earlier even without a common definition, certain concepts or qualities of trust are repeated. Clark and Payne (2006), who studied the development of trust in leaders from several organizational settings, concluded that leader behaviours that demonstrate the facets of fairness, openness, ability, and integrity are salient with respect to leader trustworthiness. Seashore Louis (2007), who engaged in

a qualitative study and reported on issues of school and district administrator trust, observed that teachers most often reported leader behaviours that demonstrated caring, concern, and respectfulness as the basis for their perspectives on leader trustworthiness. According to Bryk and Schneider (2002), the cognitive features of the calculation take into consideration four features: (a) competence, (b) integrity, (c) personal regard for others, and (d) respect. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (2000) five facets of trust: (a) benevolent, (b) reliable, (c) competent, (d) honest, and (e) open was my jumping off point. My facets presented above: open and honest communication, confidence and reliance, safety, efficacy, appreciation, and community dovetail into some of Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (2000) and Bryk and Schneider (2002) facets. This is an interface of the characteristics as reported by teachers that instil trust in a principal.

When Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) talk about benevolence being the belief that one's well-being and interests will be taken into consideration and protected by another party/individual, the participants in this study spoke most strongly about being safe—safe to take risks, safe to express their opinions and to bring forth suggestions regarding the administration of the school without fear of retribution or retaliation from the principal, and safe to approach the principal one-on-one without having to have a witness present. The establishment of trust through benevolence may be closely linked to fairness. Fairness was conceptualized by Hoy and Smith (2007) as the need for “individuals to desire fair treatment” (p. 162). Failure to offer fairness can bring about a “dark side” in employees that evokes destructive behaviour such as institutional sabotage (Barth, 2006; Cho & Ringquist, 2011; Cosner, 2010; Forsyth et al., 2006; Ghamrawi,

2011; Shockley-Zalabak et al., 2000; Walker et al., 2011) leading to damage or disruptive operations that destroy relationships as was shared by the participants. Included in this facet could also be the characteristic of teacher efficacy where the principal, through his or her actions, promoted teacher efficacy which then gave teachers the sense that risk-taking would be *safe*. Tschannen-Moran (2011) found that “faculty perceptions of the professionalism of their colleagues were strongly related to faculty trust in the principal as well as to the professional orientation of administrators” (p. 10). This aspect could also encompass Bryk and Schneider’s (2003) facets of personal regard for others and respect.

When Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) talk about reliability being the predictability and consistency of one’s behaviour, the participants in this study spoke about reliability and having confidence in knowing that the principal would behave in a consistent manner. If a principal is reliably committed to following a line of predictable behaviours, then the staff develops a reasonable degree of expectation of what is to come in a given scenario. Then, it is likely that trust is cultivated based on a known degree of reliability, where reliability as an element of trust may be satisfied when principals exhibit consistent fulfillment of the expectations of the job requirements as perceived by his or her staff. So, in the capacity of trust, true reliability requires predictability along with benevolence (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Seashore Louis, 2007; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000) and the belief that the individual will consistently provide needed action or material in a given situation (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Mishra, 1996; Rotter, 1967; Seashore

Louis et al., 2010). As shared by the participants, once teachers follow a leader who has proven themselves consistently reliable, they will continue to support that leader until proven otherwise.

When Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) talk about honesty being an individual's character, together with integrity and sense of genuineness and openness being the ability to share information without hiding or concealing relevant details, the participants in this study spoke about the same facets in virtually the same manner. This aspect could also encompass Bryk and Schneider's (2003) facet of integrity. Sweetland and Hoy (2001) found that principals that support a closed organization by withholding information and spinning the truth engender distrust and suspicion within the school. Similarly, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) found that "people who are guarded in the information they share provoke suspicion; others wonder what is being hidden and why" (p. 558). Bryk and Schneider (2002) reported on the development of trust between members of a school community:

Trust is forged in daily social exchanges. Through their actions, school participants articulate their sense of obligations toward others, and others in turn come to discern the intentionality enacted here. Trust grows over time through exchanges where the expectations held for others are validated in action. (pp. 136–137).

It is evident that the facets of trust were, for the most part, considered by the 16 teachers involved in this study and that the interplay of benevolence and fairness, reliability and consistency, and openness and honesty is complex.

However, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) and Bryk and Schneider's (2003) talk about competence being the dependence of one party on another to have the skills necessary to fulfill an expectation was not a facet that was clearly identified by the participants in this study as a significant constituent of trusting relationships. It was not clear why the teachers did not comment more on this, but it is my presumption that competence would fit with the principle of expertise proposed by Hoy and Smith (2007). Both of these authors posit that an effective leader is able to convince a group and engender trust via their expertise. Thus, the leader should be able to demonstrate his or her expertise by exhibiting the skills necessary to complete the desired organizational goal and utilizing a subtle resolution of the appropriate solution from previous experience (Hoy & Smith, 2007). What was understood by all participants was that the principal was considered to be competent, knowledgeable, and skilled in management by virtue of his or her appointment to the administrator role. Richards et al. (2007) referred to this as "certificates of trust," or affirmations by one trusted entity to another, where competence arises from credentials and appointment as was demonstrated in my study when the participants did not reference their principals' competence. Meyerson, Weick, and Kramer (1996) have noted the basis for this role-based trust and explain that it is not necessarily the person that is trusted. Instead, trust is placed in the system of expertise that produces and maintains the role-appropriate behaviour of the role occupants.

Two facets that could not be placed in the models that Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2000) and Bryk and Schneider (2003) propose were the importance of appreciation and community. Dirks and Ferrin (2001), Ghamrawi (2011), and Sergiovanni (2005) all

speak to the importance of developing a sense of belonging in the organization, a sense of community. In addition, although it is gaining wider and wider currency in sociology and organizational psychology circles, this complex notion of employee appreciation is still fairly vague in the management world (Brun & Dugas, 2008). “Employee recognition has not been systematically conceptualized nor has it been subject to a satisfactory theoretical integration, which is reflected in the vagueness of the written corpus on the issue” (Brun & Dugas, 2008, p. 716). Employee recognition is key to preserving and building the identity of individuals, giving their work meaning, promoting their development, and contributing to their health and well-being (Grawitch et al., 2006). The participants in this study surmise that it is imperative to recognize your staff’s positive contributions and achievements, no matter how small. The key is not necessarily what recognition is bestowed, but the fact that the staff member is being recognized. Further, just as teachers need to differentiate their instruction, so too should principals differentiate their appreciation to staff. The reward must be meaningful to the individual receiving it. Since all teachers are different, it is incumbent on the principal to learn enough about his or her staff to know what types of things motivate them and what they would find important.

As well, the research in schools about developing professional learning communities (Christensen et al., 1996; Hargreaves, 2007; Hord, 2008, 2009; Spillane & Seashore Louis, 2007) and literature on community in society and community in organizations (Cho & Ringquist, 2011; Clark & Payne, 2006; Coleman, 1990; Currall & Inkpen, 2006; Little, 2006; MacMillan, 2006; Perkins, 2003; Putnam, 1995; Schoorman

et al., 2007) addresses fostering relationships in order to develop collaboration and collegiality to foster trust. The literature on schools as communities is unified in agreeing that trust is an element of collegial and collaborative relationships (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996; Hord, 2008, 2009; Spillane & Seashore Louis, 2007).

A school that is a true community is a group of individuals who have learned to communicate honestly with one another; who have built relationships that go deeper than their composites; and who have developed some significant commitment to rejoice together, mourn together, delight in each other, and make others' conditions their own. (Flynn & Innes, 1992, p. 203)

In order for this to happen, the principal needs to create spaces where teachers can work with each other, share ideas, and discover common ground in a setting where there is support and trust. Therefore, I propose that two additional ways, from a teacher's perspective, to help create a trusting environment with strong, respectful, and supportive relationships are focus on genuine expressions of appreciation for specific achievements and building a community with a strong sense of belonging.

Being cognizant that I was not measuring actual principal behaviours but only teachers' perceptions of how their principals behave, the current study adds to the extant trust literature by augmenting the existing five referents of trust that have been found to influence the social milieu of schools. Furthermore, my research will assist teachers and school leaders in creating school environments conducive to building increased levels of trust because "where trust is high, teachers are more likely to conduct themselves in a professional manner, to go beyond their minimal contractual obligations in contributing

to school success, to be authentic, and to collaborate more productively” (Tschannen-Moran, 2011, p. 10). Tschannen-Moran (2011) further posits that “for principals to foster trust, they must conduct themselves with authenticity and integrity, and lead with a collegial leadership style. And adopting a strengths-based approach to school reform with leadership coaching has been shown to lead to measureable growth in trust in underperforming schools” (p. 10).

Secondly, my research findings supported Lewicki et al.’s (1998) assertion that, within the building blocks of a relationship in a given context, at a given point in time, around a given interdependency, trust or distrust can develop. This development occurs because, within the same relationship, different encounters accrue to create the texture and essence of a tapestry, one that continues to be woven as the relationship evolves. Macmillan et al. (2004) also ascertained that trust development as a continuum is probably a better way of understanding trust, with stages represented as nodes along that continuum. Due to a variety of factors, including knowledge about the incumbent, time in position, and previous experience with succession, they theorized that trust development is not lockstep, or even sequential to beginning with “role” (p. 279). In addition, Day (2009) offered that trust is not a linear process, since the growth of trust in human relationships will be subject to many challenges, not all of which may be anticipated.

Finally, whether stated explicitly or implicitly, a common aspect of most definitions of trust articulated is vulnerability. This willingness to risk is the degree of confidence one has in a situation of vulnerability; without vulnerability there is no need

for trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2007). In *Figure 2.1* I propose that people undertake a risk assessment of themselves, asking if what they feel is important and valuable is safe with the other person, and then conduct the same assessment on the other person before they decide to trust. The questions answered about the other person are based on the knowledge of at least two variables: a) positional trust: perceived competence of the other together with consistency of their words and actions; and b) relational trust: perceived character of the other based on interpersonal relationships and care for the other. This study reveals that trust is best understood in a combination of two ways. First, trust is a process of holding certain perceptions and anticipation of the reliability of the other party, and trust is a product of accumulated opportunities for interaction between teachers and the principal.

The findings of this study support the viewpoint that trust in the principal was influenced by specific behaviours of the principal. Second, school principals who are sensitive to building trust rather than demanding loyalty from their staff may be impacting their schools very positively. Finally, the intent of this study was to contribute to the growing body of literature on trust. As many existing trust research is quantitative in nature, and the need exists for that which is qualitatively designed (Bottery, 2003) this study contributes to trust research as an IPA study.

Recommendations for Future Research

The purpose of this study was to examine and describe the interplay of trust in the interpersonal professional relationships of teachers with their principals. This study does

not test a theory, but rather explores the phenomenon of trust within the professional context of a school, in order to better inform our educational practices as teachers and leaders. This study explores teachers' lived experiences of trust as it has taken on a particular significance for them. Researchers (Barnett & McCormick, 2004; Barth, 1990; Cho & Ringquist, 2011; Clark & Payne, 2006; Cosner, 2010; Currall & Inkpen, 2006; Day, 2009; Forsyth et al., 2006; Forsyth, 2008; French, 2003; Goddard et al., 2000; Hardin, 2006; Hoy & Smith, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2004; McIntyre, 2011; Meyer et al., 2011; O'Brien, 2001; Seashore Louis, 2007; Seashore Louis et al., 1996; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Timperley & Robinson, 1998; Tschannen-Moran, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2006; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Walker et al., 2011) looking at trust suggest that higher levels of trust in the principal lead to increased collaboration among teachers and the principal in school improvement efforts, gains in student achievement, and decreased student behaviour and attendance issues. The rationale for examining trust is based on the assumption that trust is a key element in human relationships. It is an element often taken for granted and therefore trust and how it affects professional working relationships in schools remains a fertile area of inquiry. Suggestions for future research include:

1. The sample utilized for the current study was restricted to public and catholic schools in Alberta. Will there be similar results if a sample of charter or private school teachers is used?

2. Is there a difference in trust with teachers and principals when analyzed along lines of:
 - a. Gender
 - b. Teaching years of experience
 - c. Level of education—bachelor of education degree versus masters versus doctoral degree
3. What is the impact of the leadership style of the principal on trust? Is there one particular style of leadership that better facilitates the development of trust?
4. Is there a relationship between the frequency of interaction between a teacher and principal and a teacher's perception of a principal's trustworthiness? What occurs during these interactions and/or the result of these occurrences that possibly could lead to higher levels of trust? Are there other factors, other than a principal's trustworthiness, that need to be considered in studying the level of principal trust?
5. What are the implications for teachers' work when trust is lacking, or in the extreme, when teachers and principals feel betrayed by the other's actions?
6. What key factors (e.g., school context, experience level of teachers, experience with succession) affect the evolution of trust?
7. How is trust fostered when a new principal (or superintendent) enters a school setting?

8. How does a new principal foster trust when following on the heels of a “beloved” principal?
9. What strategies do expert principals use in establishing trust with new staff?
What impact does the existing level of trust in a building have on the decisions and strategies of a new principal coming into that building?
10. What kinds of school structures facilitate staff trust?
11. How is student and parent trust fostered by teachers? By principals?
12. Are certain leadership styles more or less conducive to the development of student trust? Are certain teaching styles more or less conducive to the development of student trust?
13. Longitudinal studies of the formation of trust in schools would be useful.

Further research into principal trust is required because professional development and/or principal preparation programs have been found to be lacking in trust-building content and skills development (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2004; Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

Epilogue

Although phenomenological research does not provide definitive answers, it does raise awareness and encourage insight. The inquiry is designed to acknowledge and respect the diversity of participants with regard to their unique characteristics and experiences. Moreover, the phenomenological approach makes it evident that “the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit” (Patton,

1990, p. 78). All work environments, including schools, involve many different players, students, teachers, principals, parents, and central office personnel engaged in complex and dynamic interpersonal relationships. All relationships carry their own expectations and will involve varying degrees and types of trust. Trust then is relational (Bryk & Schneider, 2002), reciprocal (Kouzes & Posner, 2003), and grounded in the behaviour of the individual desiring trust.

The interactive nature of Bryk and Schneider's (2002) intrapersonal component of relational trust and Hardin's (2002, 2006) assessment of the intentions of others support that school principals need to be cognizant that they have an interdependent relationship with teachers. This study found that frequency of interaction has a strong relationship with building trust. As the number of specific interactions increased, the more parties work together, the greater opportunity they have to get to know one another and build trust so it would appear that trust and collaboration are mutually reinforcing. Important findings from this study extend previous research by identifying specific modes of support and recognition that teachers welcome from principals.

Building trust among educators, be they teachers or administrators, is rarely a simple matter. Trust-building takes time, energy, and a conscious effort. Trusting relationships are not automatic; they must be developed and nurtured. Understanding trust in schools supports Tschannen-Moran's (2011) conclusion that it is time for school leaders to become knowledgeable about cultivating trust. It is vital that school leaders do so owing to their important role in society and in the development of children. While

generalizations should be made with caution, teachers and administrators are encouraged to use the findings discussed here as a springboard to cultivate trust at school.

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Appendix A

Letter of Introduction - School Teachers

[*date*]

Dear teacher:

I am currently completing a doctoral degree in Education Policy Studies at the University of Alberta. As required by the degree program I am completing doctoral research in the area of trust. More specifically I am examining how trust is understood by teachers within the organizational setting of a school. Increasingly, trust is being recognized as a vital element needed in a well-functioning organization. The rationale for the examination of trust is based on the assumption that trust is a key element in our relationships and is often taken for granted because we usually do not think about trust until it fails to exist. The literature on trust is substantial, offering a rich insight that points to the importance of trust, but little of it really delves into any detailed examination of what trust really is and how trust is experienced by teachers. There is a continued assumption that trust exists or is understood by everyone. Understanding trust in schools, therefore I believe, is vital because of the role schools play in society. I will be the researcher, working under the guidance and direction of my supervisor, Dr. Rosemary Foster. The data I collect during the study will be used for the purposes of reporting the research findings to you and will also be used in the preparation of other materials, such as professional or academic presentations, web postings, reports, articles, or book chapters.

I am interested in speaking to you as a school teacher who might be willing to participate in a research study entitled *Making Meaning of 'Trust' in the Organizational Setting of a School*. I am particularly interested in involving you in this study because of your knowledge of your organization and practices of your school, but, moreover, because of the contribution you can make to the research about the impacts of understanding trust between teachers and administrators. My intent is to collect data for this study through interviews with you and other school teachers within Alberta. I am hoping that you will consent to being a 'key informant' of this study, participating in individual interviews at your convenience. The interviews will take about 2 hours each, and will focus on your experiences with trust with your principal(s) with whom you have worked over your career in teaching. Interviews will begin with you discussing your training, experience and background as a teacher in Alberta and then move into broad questions asking you to share what trust means to you as a teacher and your experiences of trust with your principal at the school level. I will be audio-taping the interviews and taking notes of our conversation. I will have the interviews transcribed by a research assistant who will comply with the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research

Participants and who has signed a confidentiality agreement which can be found at <http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/gfcpolicymanual/policymanualsection66.cfm>.

Only myself and the transcriber will have access to the data.

Later I will synthesize my notes – summarizing my understandings or interpretations of what you have told me. I will then provide you with the interview transcript and invite you to read over the interview transcripts and, if necessary, make additions, corrections, or deletions to the record of what you shared. At any point, you are free to ask any questions about the research and your involvement with it. At no time will you be judged or evaluated, and at no time be at risk of harm. The information gathered in this study will be kept in strict confidence, and will be stored at a secure location to which only I will have access. All raw data (i.e. transcripts, field notes) will be destroyed 5 years after the completion of the study as per University of Alberta ethical standards. When I write every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality through the use of pseudonyms and the deletion of any identifying information. In writing the findings, I will not use any quotations that might identify the participant, principal, or the school.

Your participation is voluntary. You are under no obligation to participate and, if you do consent to participate, you may, at any time and without consequences, decide not to continue your involvement or to refuse to answer any question. You may, at any time up until the point when all data has been collected and analysis of the data as a whole begins and without consequence,, decide not to continue your involvement in the study. Should you be willing to participate in this study (up to 2 interviews of no more than 2 hours) please complete and return the attached demographic questionnaire, research consent form and confidentiality agreement in the separate white envelope provided. Your signature on the consent form indicates that you have read the information provided above and have given me permission to consider you for inclusion in the study. From all returned consent forms a sample will be drawn that is representative in terms of gender differences, and geographic and demographic diversity within Alberta. Those selected will be contacted directly to arrange interview times.

Neither me nor anyone associated with this research study is receiving any personal remuneration, payments, or compensation. All reporting will be done in a way that ensures that individual persons, schools, and communities cannot be identified. Once the project is complete, you will be provided with a summary report of the findings should you choose.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education, Extension, Augustana and Campus Saint Jean Research Ethics Board (EEASJ REB) at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the EEASJ REB c/o (780) 492-2614.

Thank you for considering this research project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (780) 718-6432 or at grabstas@ualberta.ca. I am very excited about this possibility of learning more about trust relations between teachers and administrators.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

Konni deGoeij
Doctoral student
Faculty of Education
Educational Policy Studies
University of Alberta
Phone (780) 718-6432
grabstas@ualberta.ca

Advisor:
Dr. Rosemary Foster
Professor
Faculty of Education, Educational Policy Studies
University of Alberta
Phone (780) 492-0760
ryfoster@ualberta.ca

Reported reading level: Flesch Kincaid level of 10

Appendix B

Consent Form – Adult Participants

Project: Making Meaning of ‘Trust’ in the Organizational Setting of a School

I, _____, understand that my participation in this study is voluntary.

I also understand that, up until data analysis begins in the fall of 2011, I have the right to withdraw from the study any time, without penalty or negative consequences. Up until that time I may also request that any information I have contributed, whether in written or audiotaped form, be eliminated from the project.

I understand that at no time will I be at risk of harm. Value judgments will not be placed on my responses, nor will any evaluation be made of my participation in the study.

I understand that the data collected during this study will be used for research purposes: The only people who will have access to the raw data (i.e., audiotapes, transcripts, field notes) are the principal investigator, Konni deGoeij and, if necessary, her Research Assistant. I understand that all raw data will be stored in a secure location and will be destroyed 5 years after the completion of the study.

I understand that the data will be analysed and that this analysis may be used for the purposes of reporting the research findings to my School Division, and will also be used in the preparation of other materials, such as professional or academic presentations, web postings, reports, articles, or book chapters. All reporting will be done in a way that ensures individual persons, schools, and communities cannot be identified.

Specific to interviews, I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any question at any time, and that I may refuse to be audiotaped. I understand that interviews will be transcribed and that I will have the opportunity to read the transcripts and, if necessary, I will be able to make additions or corrections to the record of the things I said.

I understand that the information obtained in individual interviews will be kept in strict confidence. I understand that individual interviews will take about 2 hours each.

I understand that my involvement may not benefit me directly, but that it will contribute to the understanding of the effects of trust in my school and/or community.

I understand that, upon request, I will be given a summary report of the findings once the project is complete.

I understand that, at any point, I am free to contact Konni deGoeij to ask any questions about the research and my involvement with it:

Faculty of Education
 Educational Policy Studies
 University of Alberta
 Phone (780) 718-6432
grabstas@ualberta.ca

Advisor:
 Dr. Rosemary Foster
 Professor
 Faculty of Education, Educational Policy Studies
 University of Alberta
 Phone (780) 492-0760
ryfoster@ualberta.ca

I understand that the plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education, Extension, Augustana and Campus Saint Jean Research Ethics Board (EEASJ REB) at the University of Alberta; and should I have questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, I can contact the Chair of the EEASJ REB c/o (780) 492-2614. I understand that I will be signing two copies of this consent, one to be signed and returned to the researcher and one for me as the participant to keep for my own records.

=====
 By signing below, you are indicating that you are willing to participate in the study, that you have received a copy of the information letter, and that you are fully aware of the conditions above.

 Name of participant (please print)
 Date

 Signature of participant

Please initial here if you would like a summary of the findings of the study upon completion: _____

Reported reading level: Flesch Kincaid level of 10

Appendix C

Demographic Questionnaire

Project: Making Meaning of 'Trust' in the Organizational Setting of a School

Name of teacher: _____

Name of Alberta School Division: _____

Name of School: _____

School Grade configuration: (what grades does your school accommodate): _____

Division Classification: (Check the one that best describes the Division)

Rural Urban Suburban

Division Location: (Check one)

Northern Central Southern

Years of Teaching experience: _____

Years at current school: _____

Years working with current principal: _____

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education, Extension and Augustana Research Ethics Board (EEA REB) at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the chair of the EEA REB at (780) 492-3751. A copy of this consent form will be given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Appendix D

Confidentiality Agreement

Project: Making Meaning of 'Trust' in the Organizational Setting of a School

I, _____, the _____ [*specific job description, e.g., research assistant, interpreter/translator*] have been hired to _____.

I agree to -

1. keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the *Researcher(s)*.
2. keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., USB, CDs, tapes, transcripts) secure while it is in my possession.
3. return all research information in any form or format (e.g., USB, CDs, tapes, transcripts) to the *Researcher(s)* when I have completed the research tasks.
4. after consulting with the *Researcher(s)*, erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the *Researcher(s)* (e.g., information stored on computer hard drive).
5. other (specify).

(Print Name)

(Signature)

(Date)

Researcher

(Print Name)

(Signature)

(Date)

Reported reading level: Flesch Kincaid level of 10

Appendix E

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

1. Please tell me about your training, experience and background as a teacher in Alberta. (Descriptive)
2. How would you describe yourself as a (Descriptive)
 - teacher?
 - colleague?
 - staff member?
3. Please tell me what trust means to you as a teacher on 'x' staff (Descriptive)
 - a) Can you tell me a bit more about that? (Prompt)
 - b) What do you mean by ...? (Probe)
4. Describe the events where trust was important for you as a teacher
 - a) Can you tell me a bit more about that? (Prompt)
 - b) What do you mean by ...? (Probe)
 - c) In your opinion, what impacts or influences affect your decision-making as a teacher? (Narrative)
5. How does your principal demonstrate that he/she trusts you?
 - a) Can you tell me a bit more about that? (Prompt)
 - b) What do you mean by ...? (Probe)
6. What does your principal do that demonstrates that he/she is trustworthy?
 - a) Can you tell me a bit more about that? (Prompt)
 - b) What do you mean by ...? (Probe)