



SERVANT-LEADERSHIP AND TRUST BETWEEN TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

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A school district in the northeast had as its motto for many years, “We serve youth, that youth may learn to serve.” At first glance, the idea of serving youth may seem overly permissive, but this concept of service did not mean waiting on students, but rather creating an environment in which they would be challenged with a focus on their development. It was based on trust among students, teachers, administrators and parents. This investigation is an examination of trust and servant-leadership between teachers and principals in elementary school.

This study explored what hinders and contributes to the level of trust a teacher has of the school principal. Trust is defined as one’s willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). If the principal is not able to build trust, there is a negative impact on their relationships with teachers, school climate, and student achievement (Fullan, 2014; Louis, et al. 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015).

Blasé and Blasé (2003) explained the dark side of educational leadership, describing the varying degrees of mistreatment when principals abuse their power. These behaviors can begin with and include minor gestures, like ignoring, nitpicking, or overanalyzing.



However, they can lead to more severe and intentional behaviors of the principal, such as, withholding resources or public criticism.

Miller (2004) adds how principals can also show a lack of trust by being overly prescriptive and modeling excessive control. This can lead to the teacher feeling resentment and being resistant to innovation and change. If the way the message is shared leads to distrust, there is often deteriorated performance and a potential for the teacher to leave the school or profession completely (Robinson, 1996).

Lack of trust not only influences the relationships between the teachers and principal but will also have a negative impact on school climate (Blasé & Blasé, 2003). Principals who strive to become servant-leaders need to understand how their ability or inability to create trust, and its impact on school climate, will eventually lead to effecting student achievement.

The field of leadership for school principals has been conceived in several ways. Instructional leadership has put the responsibility for school improvement on the shoulders of the principal (Hallinger, 2003). Distributed leadership emphasizes the role of teachers and those who take both a formal and informal role in creating change (Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, & Hopkins, 2007). Moral leadership calls schools to be places of community and trust (Sergiovanni, 1992), and transformational leadership moves beyond management to make fundamental changes in people and organizations.

Servant-leadership falls primarily in the last three categories of distributed leadership, moral leadership and transformational leadership. Cerit (2009) explains how servant-leadership is similar in ways to other theories like transformational and distributive leadership. He shares how they all are based on a reliance of trust,



but also states that they are not the same. Transformational leaders can be more motivated by organizational success instead of individual development (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004). Distributive leadership is similar in the way of the need for collaboration, but also does not place significance on cultivating the growth of individuals (Laub, 1999). Throughout these different models of leadership there is an underlying theme of trust. Servant-leadership leads to trust and organizational effectiveness that influences job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and a reduction in teacher turnover (Joseph & Winston, 2005).

Servant-leadership is closely connected to trust (Greenleaf, 2002; Laub, 1999; Patterson, 2003). The leader can create a positive school climate by instilling trust among all groups in the school. Servant-leaders empower stakeholders, honor commitments, develop coaching skills, and foster risk taking, which build trust based on integrity and competence (Joseph & Winston, 2005). The efforts of the principal to put the needs of students, parents, and teachers first, has a direct effect on the climate and increase trust.

Servant-leadership has been defined as a style inspired by the desire to serve first and put the needs of the followers before the leader (Greenleaf, 2002; Stone et al., 2004). Woodruff (2004) added that it is an attitude of placing a priority on the organizational purpose and developing the followers, which leads to increased capacity. This belief is built on the concept that long-term success is only achieved when the leader enables growth and development of the individuals in the organization (Stone et. al, 2004).

Greenleaf (2002) specified seven characteristics of servant-leadership: love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service. Other researchers have operationalized these terms and field-tested questionnaires. Dennis and Bocarnea (2005) developed a servant-leadership questionnaire, in which they interpreted servant-



leadership as valuing people, developing people, building community, displaying authenticity, providing leadership, and sharing leadership. In the field of education, Ekinçi (2015) developed a questionnaire in Turkey with the following items: altruist behaviors, empathy, justice, integrity, and humility.

The terms of the questionnaires vary, but the themes are similar. They have to do with empowering stakeholders, honoring commitments, developing coaching skills, and fostering risk taking, all of which build trust (Joseph & Winston, 2005). They also mirror many of the facets of Tschannen-Moran's concept of trust in schools.

Servant-leaders are involved in professional development, have strong communication skills, and seek to support teachers in the classroom. This leads to an increase in teacher satisfaction and retention rate (Cerit, 2009). When teachers enjoy their job, and feel supported, there is a direct correlation to improved student achievement (Shaw & Newton, 2014). However, all of this cannot be attained without the foundation of high levels of trust between the principal and teachers as identified by Tschannen-Moran's theory of trust in schools.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the study is to explore the factors that teachers feel contribute to or deter from the level of trust between teachers and the principal. This study will investigate the extent to which principals are perceived as servant-leaders who establish trust. In order to determine what contributes to trust between the teachers and principal on an elementary campus, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What do teachers describe as helping to foster trust between teachers and the principal?



2. What do teachers describe as hindering trust between teachers and the principal?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

With the ever-growing emphasis on school achievement scores, principals are left with the task of creating a school climate that includes healthy teacher relationships based on a foundation of trust. According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998) and Bryk and Schneider (2002), building trust between teachers and the principal leads to increased levels of student achievement.

The theoretical framework for this research is based on Tschannen-Moran's (2014) theory of trust in schools and Greenleaf's (2002) conception of servant-leadership. Each theory can be expressed in terms of characteristics of the leader. Tschannen-Moran's (2014) theory is based on five facets of trust: benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence.

Trust is at the heart of Greenleaf's (2002) conception of servant-leadership and can be represented by the Spears (2010) list of characteristics. Larry C. Spears is President and CEO of the Larry C. Spears Center for Servant-Leadership, Inc. and was the president and CEO of the Robert K Greenleaf Center for Servant-leadership from 1990-2007. He is often quoted to describe those characteristics that express servant-leadership in practice (Spears, 2010). They are: listening, empathy, healing, (self) awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, building community. These characteristics align with the facets of trust as shown in Table 1.



Table 1: *Characteristics of Trust and Servant-leadership*

Characteristics of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2014)	Characteristics of Servant-leadership (Spears, 2010)
Benevolence is the ability to show care and extend goodwill.	Listening, empathy, healing, and commitment to the growth of people are expressions of benevolence.
Honesty, begins with the principal always telling the truth. This can be shown by, keeping promises, accepting responsibility, and honoring agreements.	Stewardship is the most important responsibility to undertake honestly. It is the promise for the institution to maintain its commitment to its mission.
Openness is tied to communication, and a principal sharing information with his teachers. This sharing of information includes delegating and allowing all stakeholders to be involved in the decision-making process.	Building community involves sharing across all levels of the school and giving individuals a sense of ownership.
Reliability is most simply described as being consistent.	Self-awareness begin with the individual's self-understanding and interactions with others that are consistent across different contexts and time periods.
The last facet of trust is competence or having the ability to possess the required skill set for the position.	Foresight, conceptualization, and persuasion are the skills leadership.

The relationship between trust in the first column and servant-leadership in the second column will be explored in interviews with teachers.



METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

Qualitative research has been described by Merriam (1998) as a method for discovering people's experiences and how they make sense of the world. This study used interviews to understand teachers' views of the principal. It is best understood as action research (Creswell, 2002) because it examined problems that teachers experienced in working with principals and attempted to see what action improved trust and promoted practical solutions.

This research was conducted using qualitative interviews to seek responses that both reflect the ability to ask specific questions of the topic, while also allowing for open-ended responses (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Morgan and Krueger (1998) explain how the qualitative interview study is an effective method that allows participants to share their experience. These individual interviews provided an opportunity to collect rich and thick data from a variety of participants. The teacher interviews were semi-structured and in a one-on-one setting.

Site

The site is a high achieving unified school district with approximately 10,000 to 15,000 students. High achieving in this district is defined by an over 99% high school graduation rate and an API score of 925 (Education Data Partnership, 2018). This district was selected due to the importance of principal trust in a "high achieving" district and the ability to acquire access. This suburban community is located in Southern California and could be described as high wealth, with a median household income of \$118,780 and property value of \$968,200 (Data USA, 2015).

The community is invested in the success of the school district but could also be described as very demanding. The support by the community is shown through the collection of robust volunteer



organizations. The PTSA, Booster Clubs, and the local Education Foundation organize thousands of volunteer hours, in addition to donating millions of dollars each year to the school district. The generosity from these organizations are instrumental in the districts overall success, but also increase pressure on the district to maintain high academic results.

Sample

The sample included 10 veteran elementary level teachers. For this study, veteran teacher was defined as having ten or more years of experience (kindergarten through 5th grade) in the classroom at two or more schools. The purpose for selecting teachers with this experience would allow for a broader perspective of trust to be shared, describing incidents from a variety of principals and school settings.

Data Collection

This study included interviews as the primary method of data collection. As a qualitative study this method best matches the design and purpose of this research, allowing for an exploratory approach to better understand the concept of trust between teachers and the principal.

The teacher interviews followed a semi-structured model and utilized a seven question protocol. The questions were selected based on Tschannen-Moran's facets of trust. A semi-structured protocol provided the opportunity to modify the flow of the interview and probe based on participant responses.

Data Analysis

The data were transcribed and analyzed for common codes and themes. Saldana's (2016) 2-cycle coding process was implemented to identify codes throughout the transcripts. An initial codebook was



created based on the literature and Tschannen-Moran's facets of trust.

RESULTS

The focus of the interviews was to provide the teacher an opportunity to share personal experiences that they felt contributed and/or deterred from the level of trust they had with the principal. During the interview the participants were asked specific questions to allow them to describe a particular incident or moment that they felt directly affected the level of trust. All of the participants shared multiple incidents with varying degrees of detail and explanation. The transcripts of the interviews were reviewed, and the incidents were coded. The incidents described in the interviews were organized into two groups, the incidents that increased the level of trust and the incidents that decreased the level of trust with the principal. The coding process then included each incident being categorized into one of Tschannen-Moran's five facets of trust.

Increased Level of Trust

Each participant in the study described multiple incidents that they felt increased the level of trust they had with the principal. The minimum number of specific incidents shared by a participant that increased trust was two, and the maximum number of incidents was five. The participant's explanation of the incidents all varied in detail and significance, but the two most frequent facets of trust that were coded to these incidents were Openness and Benevolence.

Openness corresponds to Spears (2010) concept of building community. It was the most frequent facet identified in the transcripts and is defined by Tschannen-Moran as the way a principal communicates and shares information. It can also be described by the way a principal gets faculty involved in the decision-making process. The participants shared a variety of



examples of how the principal modeled openness, but the consistent themes included being supportive, showing mutual respect, and giving teachers a “heads up.” Examples of each of these themes will be further described in the paragraphs below.

One teacher shared how their principal was supportive when they described a time that they had an issue with a parent. Supportive in this incident could be also described as the principal defending the teacher. The teacher participant shared:

My principal did not give in to a parent. The parent complained, and the principal just said thank you for sharing your concerns. The principal then came and spoke with me about it. The principal wanted to hear my thoughts on the situation. I really appreciated this approach, I felt that they trusted and believed in me.

The teacher did not only care that the principal did not “give in” to the parent, but that they valued their perspective and believed in them.

Multiple teachers shared how their level of trust grew with the principal when they felt there was a feeling of mutual respect. One teacher shared a particular incident about how her respect for the principal grew due to the principal being willing to listen to her. The teacher explained:

There was this one time where I felt a particular student should not be in my class because of a history I had with the family. The principal did not agree and thought that I was a good match for the child. We had a long discussion about the situation and in the end, they agreed with me. This biggest issue in this discussion was not who was right, but that we had enough respect for one another to hear each other’s rationale



for their opinion. I already trusted this principal, but it grew immensely after this incident because they were willing to listen.

Mutual respect can also be shown when a principal accepts a teacher's perspective and values their opinion. This was explained when one teacher said:

One principal asked for my input and actually took my advice. They were not sure about a particular program and decided on one based on what I had shared with him. This made me feel included in the process and validated my opinion.

Another teacher described a time that they were involved in the decision-making process and that it made them feel that they were, "part of a team," and in it together.

Lastly, openness was also described by the teacher participants as an incident when a principal would give them a "heads up" about something. This could be the principal warning them about an upcoming initiative or an event. The teacher participants appreciated knowing ahead of time, allowing them to prepare and not be surprised by anything. One teacher responded:

There was another time that was very simple. The principal just told all of us that the parents were going to be on campus this weekend. This may not seem like a big deal, but the principal gave us a heads-up, just so we knew what was going on. Everybody knew, just communication, it is a big deal.

Benevolence is defined by Tschannen-Moran as a principal who shows caring and extends goodwill. It corresponds to Spears' (2010) characteristics of listening, empathy, healing, and commitment to the growth of people. In other words, the principal supports teachers and expresses appreciation for their efforts. In the interviews many of the



teachers described incidents as their principal “showing care.” This was described in different incidents, but they all had a consistent theme of the teacher feeling that the principal cared about them as an individual. For example, one teacher shared “The principal would always leave you a voicemail or send you an email after they observed you. The message would provide some feedback in a positive light, but it just showed they cared.” Another teacher mentioned:

I had one principal that would just drop by my class and talk with the kids. The principal really showed they cared. The first time they did it, it was so cute how they spoke to the kid, and they later left me a note in my mail box. It was nothing big, but a little post-it saying a few kind words.

The participant’s examples could also be described as showing compassion. One teacher shared:

The principal pulled me aside one time and spoke to me like they were my mom. They did not judge me about something I had done, they listened and gave me direction for the future. I felt like they truly cared for me.

The overall consensus as reflected in the frequency and similarity of the incidents was that teachers place a high value on principals that show they care. This can be exhibited in many ways, but usually has a personal connection like a note, words of support, or even an action.

The participants in this study shared a variety of examples that they felt increased the level of trust between them and the principal. Overall, the common themes encompassed two concepts, the principal showing care for the teacher and open communication. This communication included providing feedback and direction to the teachers but also incorporated listening and valuing their perspective.



One participant described it very simply, “They would include us in the decision-making process. This made us all feel that we were part of the team, and in it together.”

Decreased Level of Trust

The participants in the study also described multiple incidents that they felt decreased the level of trust they had with the principal. The participant’s explanation of the incidents all varied in detail and significance, but the two most frequent facets of trust that were coded to these incidents were Honesty and Openness.

Honesty is defined by Tschannen-Moran as a principal who tells the truth, keeps promises, and honors agreements. It corresponds to stewardship in which the principal guards the mission of the school (Spears, 2010). It is also described as a principal that is true to himself and has a high level of integrity. The participants described many different incidents that resulted in them losing trust in the principal. These incidents included the principal sharing confidential information, not keeping their word, and talking negatively about teachers.

Many of the participants explained how their principal would tell parents and other members of the community information about teachers that was shared with the principal in confidence that it would be kept private. This breaking of confidentiality will be described as betrayal. This information could be personal or work related, but all had a negative effect on the level of trust between the teacher and the principal. One teacher said, “They would share confidential information outside of school in social settings. These were sensitive issues, that people did not want shared.” Another teacher described an incident as:

I learned that I could never tell the principal a secret. One time they told multiple people that a member of the staff was



pregnant, and that person did not want others to know. This resulted in me not really ever being able to trust her again.

The participants also described incidents where the principal did not keep their word. One teacher explained:

I had a principal that changed the class rosters after we had worked on creating balanced classes. The principal told us that they would be left alone, but they went ahead and changed them anyway. I could not understand why they would do this, but it hurt our feelings and made us feel that she did not value or respect our opinion.

Other incidents were described by teachers that had a perception of the principal not being honest and forthright. The teacher explained:

I had one principal that only visited my classroom once in the three years that I worked with that person. After the visit the principal called me in and spoke to me about a problem. I found out later that other teachers had visits by the principal, after they had received a complaint from a parent. We confronted that principal about this and they denied the issue. I cannot prove that the principal only came in when there was a problem, but many teachers including myself felt that was the case. We did not have a problem with the principal coming in but wish they would have been honest and wish they would have come in when there wasn't a problem.

All of the incidents described above had a negative effect on the level of trust the teachers had with the principal. However, it did not matter whether the principal was not honest or there was just a perception of a lack of honesty, they both resulted in the teachers having a decreased level of trust with the principal.



Openness was mentioned frequently as a facet that led to both increased and decreased levels of trust. It is defined as the way a principal communicates and shares information (Tschannen-Moran, 2014) as well as how the principal builds community (Spears, 2010). It can also be described by the way a principal delegates or gets faculty involved in the decision making process. The participants described many incidents that included poor communication or not being included in decisions that directly impacted the teachers.

One teacher described an incident where she felt that the principal handled a situation very inappropriately by saying:

I was told I would have a combo class the week before school started. The principal did not ask me or give me any reason as to why this had been decided. This really upset me, I wish they would have approached the situation differently.

Another participant shared an incident about how the principal communicated with her reporting:

An email was sent out about getting new smartboards and I had not heard anything about it. The emails did not make sense, and the wording was even very snarky, so I went and asked the principal about it. They said, "I guess people don't read my emails." This really hurt my feelings.

The participants in the study knew that there were going to be situations that they did not like or understand, but their level of trust with the principal was often negatively affected by how this information was communicated with them. If they felt that their voice was not heard or that they were spoken to in a negative manner it had a direct impact on the level of trust they had with the principal.



Communication is not only about how information is shared, but also the ability to hear and receive input from stakeholders. One teacher explained an incident as:

The principal was not easy to talk with or even get ahold of. One time I had stopped by the office a few times and the principal either wasn't there or the door was closed. I then tried to call and I could not even leave a message because the mailbox was full. I ended up sending an email, but it took almost three days to get a response.

The participants in this study explained that their level of trust with the principal declined due to incidents where the principal either did not distribute or receive information well, leading to increased levels of both frustration and even anger.

Other Aspects of Trust

Throughout the interviews the participants shared what they felt contributed or deterred from trust, but they also shared how they then responded to these incidents. Having a better understanding of how these incidents influenced the participants current and future behavior was an unintentional byproduct of this study, but still a valuable insight.

The participants shared many different examples of how the level of trust with the principal influenced their effort or involvement on the school campus. One participant shared how an increased level of trust led to an improved work ethic, "If you trust your principal, and feel like there is a connection or a bond, and that they have empathy for you, you are more willing to work hard for that person." Another participant explained how just the opposite or having a negative level of trust can have a direct impact on their willingness to give back to the school, "There was a lack of teachers



volunteering to help out, or it was the same few teachers. This was all because of the lack of trust the teachers had of the principal.” Other participants described how the feeling of being micromanaged influenced how they approached their job. The teacher stated:

The principal trusted us to do what we were going to do in our classrooms and that we would do it right. The principal didn’t micromanage us and tell us what to do all of the time, he trusted us to do our job well.

A few of the participants expressed how trust is reciprocal, and that principals that showed they trusted them as teachers were also the ones that teachers trusted the most. One teacher shared:

I think it was the trust he put in us and how honest he was with us and how we were doing. I think he had built that trust and a relationship, but it was reciprocal. The staff is like a big family, all respecting one another, and he created this.

This reciprocal trust also allowed for honest conversations between the teacher and principal, “Yes, and the trust was already there so that if something did happen, you could go and call out the principal. The respect and expectations to be honest with one another went both ways.” These examples all expressed how trust could have a direct effect on a teacher’s actions and their feelings. There were also comments on how trust is complex and not one dimensional.

The participants described how trust can be difficult to describe, because it is not really one concept or facet. One participant shared:

I feel that it is a ball of wax, it’s like a puzzle. They all fit together and they’re all important, so it is hard to decide. I think she had a softer side that he didn’t have, but that was only a small aspect that contributed to the level of trust I had with both of them.



Another participant explained how different individuals could hear a different message. The teacher stated, “Like I said, everybody’s different and everybody’s perceptions are different. What they hear and what I hear could be totally different, even when the same words are being said.”

All of these comments and incidents contributed to the purpose of this research and helped to better understand what influences trust with the principal. How a teacher responds to an incident that impacts the level of trust with the principal is a critical aspect of this research and can help to guide future educational leaders.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

This study identified that the level of trust is most significantly impacted by the principal’s ability to show care, communicate openly, and model honesty with their teachers. Principals who strive to become servant-leaders will need to recognize these aspects of trust and take deliberate action to apply them when interacting with their teachers.

Showing care

Principals can show they care about the teachers at their school in a variety of ways. Being compassionate to their needs and connecting with them on a personal level are two methods that can lead to increased levels of trust. Showing compassion may be accomplished by being empathetic and supportive of teachers when they are dealing with personal challenges. They can also show they care by seeking to build relationships with their teachers. These relationships take both time and effort. The principal needs to be available to the teachers by keeping an open door and intentionally scheduling time to be with them. These interactions with teachers should include communication that contains both professional and



personal matters. These incidents of “showing care” and building relationships will increase the level of trust with the teachers, but also require open communication that is ongoing and consistent.

Open communication

The way with which the principal communicates with teachers is critical when seeking to build trust. Communication should be open, allowing teachers to provide input when making decisions. The principal should utilize a variety of methods when communicating to their faculty. Written and in-person or oral communication should be clear and consistent, expressing an unambiguous and similar message when interacting with all teachers. Communication should include a combination of professional direction or feedback and personal inquiry. Teachers want to understand what their principal expects of them professionally, while additionally knowing who they are as an individual. Leaving a voicemail or written note in the teacher’s mailbox after an observation were two types of incidents that participants described as leading to increased levels of trust. These messages can help the principal to stay connected with the faculty, while also showing that they care. Lastly, communication includes both the way information is shared, but also the way information is received. Principals must also be active listeners, reflecting on the information that is shared with them to guide future decisions.

Honesty

Telling the truth is the basic foundation of building trust with teachers. This facet of trust is the most simplistic to understand but can sometimes be the most difficult for a principal to follow. A principal may feel that being honest about a teacher’s actions or performance could lead to the teacher’s feelings being hurt. This can then motivate some principals to avoid being honest and instead tell teachers what they want to hear instead of communicating truthfully.



If a principal lies or does not keep a promise their ability to be trusted by the teachers will be considerably limited. When a principal is dishonest this incident can resonate with a faculty for an extended amount of time. This will then affect their ability to build relationships and be a respected leader.

All three of these different examples of trust intersect with one another and are woven together. These new perspectives lead to a consideration for a different explanation of what builds trust. The inability and challenge to describe each term independently without including aspects of the other provide an argument that there is a need for a new model and definition to be created.

TOWARD A MODEL OF TRUST AND SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

The results of this study offer guidance to principals who strive to be servant-leaders. Table 2 shows the three facets of trust that were most important to teachers: benevolence, honesty, and openness. They correspond to characteristics of servant-leadership listed in the second column.

Table 2: Characteristics of Trust and Servant-leadership

Characteristics of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2014)	Characteristics of Servant-leadership (Spears, 2010)	Trust and Servant- leadership (Romero & Mitchell, 2018)
Benevolence is the ability to show care and extend goodwill. Extending goodwill, supporting teachers and expressing appreciation, showing concern and respect for others, connecting with others	Listening, empathy, healing, and commitment to the growth of people are expressions of benevolence.	Benevolence



Honesty begins with the principal always telling the truth. This can be shown by, keeping promises, accepting responsibility, and honoring agreements. Honesty, reliable, openness, telling the truth, honoring agreements and keeping promises, sharing information, dependable	Stewardship is the most important responsibility to undertake honestly. It is the promise for the institution to maintain its commitment to its mission.	Integrity
Openness is tied to communication, and a principal sharing information with teachers. This sharing of information includes delegating and allowing all stakeholders to be involved in the decision-making process.	Building community involves sharing across all levels of the school and giving individuals a sense of ownership.	Competence in communication

We can now suggest a third column that takes into account the model proposed by Romero and Mitchell (2018). They compared multiple previous models of trust and suggested three facets: competence, benevolence, and integrity. The integrity facet includes the concepts of the leader being: reliable, open, and honest. Romero and Mitchell defined competence as having a skill set and problem solving to handle difficult situations successfully. A good part of this problem solving is communication, which we have combined to make competence in communication. The model in the third column (Table 2) is made of up three facets: benevolence, integrity, and competence in communication.

Still, this model falls short because it does not address the injustices in society and the need for a moral perspective that is central to servant-leadership. Letizia (2014) calls for radical servant-leadership:



A servant-leader leads by serving, by putting the welfare and well-being of followers above his or her own interests (Greenleaf, 2002; Northouse, 2013). Radical servant-leaders must make not only the welfare of followers but the justice of followers as the number one priority. This can be accomplished by mobilizing and re-interpreting the vast amount of information in the information age. (p. 176)

The teachers in this study did not mention the need for radical servant-leadership and the call for social justice. Caring, integrity, and competence in communication are critical elements of servant-leadership, but the moral imperative is to go beyond the personal and address societal issues of justice.

The primary author of this study is a principal who now recognizes the importance of trust and will utilize the findings of this study to further influence the level of trust with the teachers on his campus. He will show care and seek to connect with teachers both professionally and personally. Most recently he developed and implemented a cultural sensitivity training to be shared with both teachers and administrators. This training will help to continue to address the growth and improvement of social justice in his district.

He will show care and seek to connect with teachers both professionally and personally. He will value the relationships he builds with his staff, continuously striving to maintain a culture centered around a team atmosphere. He will deliberately spend time with teachers with the intent to learn more about who they are and what they stand for. He will lead with integrity, keeping promises and striving to always be open, honest, and reliable. He will seek to create clear and consistent open lines of communication, while also placing value on the importance of being an active listener. His aim is to be a competent leader, who possesses the required skill set for



the position while continually seeking to learn and grow. Finally, he will strive to be a servant-leader who challenges others to build a more just world.

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