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TEACHER EVALUATION IN THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL SETTING: A PROGRAM
EVALUATION OF THE T.E.S.T. PROGRAM

By
Mark S. Apgar

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Gardner-Webb University College of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Gardner-Webb University
2021

Approval Page

This dissertation was submitted by Mark S. Apgar under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Gardner-Webb University College of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

Philip Rapp, EdD
Committee Chair

Date

David Shellman, EdD
Committee Member

Date

Stephen Laws, EdD
Committee Member

Date

Prince Bull, PhD
Dean of the College of Education

Date

Abstract

TEACHER EVALUTION IN THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL SETTING: A PROGRAM
EVAUATION OF THE T.E.S.T. PROGRAM: Apgar, Mark, 2021: Dissertation,
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Since the early 1800s, various educational experts and philosophers have contributed to an ever-growing database regarding teacher evaluation. This valuable research has been instrumental in shaping teacher evaluation in our public schools as we know it today.

While much research has taken place in public schools, there has been limited research conducted in the private Christian school setting. This research was in response to the limited research data available and sought to identify best practices regarding teacher evaluation in the Christian school setting. The T.E.S.T. (Teacher Evaluation, Support, and Training) program is a teacher evaluation program specifically designed for implementation in the Christian school setting. A program evaluation of the T.E.S.T. program was conducted in a Christian school following the CIPP model of evaluation. Findings from this study support the conclusion that teachers at Christian School A perceived that the T.E.S.T. program had a positive impact on their professional growth while also providing a means of teacher accountability in the Christian school setting. The findings also demonstrated that the T.E.S.T. program had a more neutral impact on the spiritual life of individual teachers. It is recommended that school administrators annually review their school's evaluation program and provide teachers adequate time and resources needed to fully participate in the evaluation process.

Keywords: teacher evaluation, program evaluation, CIPP model, private schools, Christian schools, Christian education

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Christian schools in America date back to the 1700s when these schools were established by early settlers seeking a religious education for their children (McCalman, n.d.). These early Christian schools were in many ways similar to their public school counterparts, as religious concepts were taught in both. The growth of the nation and the separation of church and state slowly changed education in America over the centuries, resulting in the public and Christian school entities we have today (Freemont, 2015).

Christian and public schools of today are by law different from each other but hold the common bond that they both have the same purpose of educating children; they are schools that by nature are designed to educate and prepare students (Kennedy, 2018). With this purpose to educate and prepare, both types of schools share the responsibility of educating a large portion of our nation's students. Both types of schools are accountable for the quality of education their students receive, regardless of the challenges they may face, and should provide the teaching and support each student needs to meet the expectations set before them (Education Post, 2019). The classroom teacher is at the forefront of this accountability. Teachers are seen as the most important factor affecting student learning; and seemingly, no other single factor could improve education more than improving teacher effectiveness (Wright et al., 1997). That being said, one of the best tools to evaluate teacher effectiveness is an effective teacher evaluation program (Huber & Skedsmo, 2016).

In 2008, the North Carolina State School Board initiated the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (NCESS) program. The system provides North Carolina

public schools with a teacher evaluation instrument targeting 21st century learning and the North Carolina professional teaching standards (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction [NCDPI], 2015). The instrument is designed to “promote effective leadership, quality teaching, and student learning while enhancing professional practice leading to improved instruction” (NCDPI, 2015, p. 4). NCESS has given North Carolina public schools an approved instrument to help ensure that there is accountability in the education of their students. But in North Carolina’s 497 Christian schools (North Carolina Department of Administration, 2019), there is no approved instrument set forth by a governing body. North Carolina Christian schools are largely autonomous environments that operate with minimal accountability to state standards and have programs that vary in design and implementation (Hall, 2015).

It has been demonstrated through research conducted in public schools that quality teaching verified through teacher evaluation has a direct impact on student learning (Wright et al., 1997), yet research on the implementation of a teacher evaluation program and its effect on the quality of student learning in the unique Christian school environment is relatively scarce (Leven & Riegel, 2018). The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of implementing a teacher evaluation program specifically designed for Christian schools, which had not been formally evaluated. The Teacher Evaluation, Support, and Training (T.E.S.T.) program was specifically designed for implementation in the Christian school setting by considering the unique characteristics that differentiate Christian and public schools. These differences are reflected in the biblical foundations of Christian schools, which resonate throughout the schools’ mission, vision, and operational structures. Biblical foundations, rooted in scripture and

Christian themes, are used to formulate school policies, construct curriculum, and form shared beliefs of the school staff.

An evaluation can be defined as the identification, clarification, and application of defensible criteria to determine an evaluation object's value in relation to those criteria (Fitzpatrick et al., 2012). This research utilized specific criteria found in the attributes that make up the Christian school to ensure that the T.E.S.T. program was evaluating teacher effectiveness relative to the Christian school setting. Because biblical principles are expected to permeate throughout all aspects of a Christian school, an evaluation tool is needed that is specifically designed to identify and evaluate the levels on which those biblical principles are being implemented.

With a void in research pertaining to Christian schools' teacher evaluation, Christian schools are vulnerable to inadequate and nonexistent teacher evaluation programs. It is with this in mind that I embraced the opportunity to conduct a program evaluation of a teacher evaluation program in a Christian school that had never undergone formal evaluation.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers can place themselves in key leadership roles in their students' lives. "Teachers have a direct influence on students' learning, have an enriching effect on their daily lives, promote lifelong learning and help build their career aspirations" (Tucker & Stronge, 2005, p. 2). Despite knowing this, "when reformers look to improve teachers, teaching, and schools in general, they often neglect one of the most powerful catalyst for improvement, which is teacher evaluations" (Toch, 2008, p. 32). Many Christian educators echo Tucker and Stronge's (2005) and Toch's (2008) sentiments. In a recent

anonymous survey about teacher evaluations conducted at a Greater Charlotte Area Christian School conference, 24 school administrators from accredited Christian schools were asked about their teacher evaluation program. The results showed that all 24 administrators agreed or strongly agreed that teacher evaluations were vital to student achievement. Twenty of the administrators agreed or strongly agreed that teacher evaluations were vital to creating a successful Christian school. Eighteen administrators agreed or strongly agreed that teacher evaluations had a direct impact on the culture of the school. Clearly, the administrators in this survey believed teacher evaluations were important. Further questions demonstrated, however, that despite the importance of teacher evaluations, improvements were needed. When asked if “all teachers under the supervision of the administrator were evaluated during the school year,” only half answered “yes.” Only four of the administrators stated, “all teachers evaluated received some sort of feedback from the evaluation.” When asked about the effectiveness of the evaluation program utilized in their schools, only 10 administrators believed the teacher evaluation program they used was effective. Five administrators stated they were actively seeking a new program; three stated that they had no operating evaluation program at their schools; and the rest were open to improving the program to which they were currently committed. All the administrators agreed that this was an area in which public schools have improved but one that is still lacking in Christian education. It was also stated that one of the reasons for this is that public schools have been forced to improve teacher accountability, while Christian schools have not.

This forced accountability is rooted in the recent history of accountability in public education that emerged in 1983 when the report, *A Nation at Risk*, brought to the

forefront the need for educational and economic reform in the United States. Since then, accountability reforms have targeted many different aspects of public education including several reform movements focusing on teacher evaluation (Tyack & Cuban, 1995); but private schools have been largely isolated from these reforms, operating under legislation born from the Supreme Court decision *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972). This Supreme Court decision authorized the individual states to regulate their private schools in terms of teacher certification, curriculum, reporting, and accreditation. In 1979, North Carolina passed General Statute 115C Article 39. With the passing of 115C, North Carolina joined 25 other states in electing not to require teacher certification or school accreditation of its private schools (North Carolina Department of Education, 2009).

According to Wagner (2013), North Carolina General Statute 115C Article 39 has provided minimal regulation and accountability in the state's private schools. Private Christian schools, which are schools operated by a religious organization or on religious principles, have been given even more freedoms under § 115C-554. Specifically, Section 554 of the North Carolina General Statute 115C Article 39 (1979) states,

No school, operated by any church or other organized religious group or body as part of its religious ministry, which complies with the requirements of this Part, shall be subject to any other provision of law relating to education except requirements of law respecting fire, safety, sanitation and immunization. (§ 115C-554)

In states such as North Carolina, legislation has allowed Christian schools to operate independently of state and federal policies that help govern public schools. This legislative freedom has allowed for private Christian schools to operate independently

from policies, procedures, standards, and reporting of teacher evaluations. Furthermore, this independence has become the nature of Christian schools, isolating them from educational research (McTighe, 2004). The nature of Christian schools has isolated and removed them from valuable research data that has taken place over the past 50 years (Kabler, 2013), putting Christian education behind in areas such as teacher accountability (Nichols, 2018).

We are seeing a trend in public education at the state level, demonstrating the need for research data involving teacher evaluations to be specific to that area and the school's culture. One organization collecting such data is the state of Georgia's Reform Support Network (RSN). RSN (2013) stated,

States are making changes or calling for local educational agencies (LEAs) to make changes to the rules for how evaluations are conducted—including setting requirements for who conducts evaluations, specifying the timing of teacher observations, identifying methods for collecting data on teachers' classroom practice, and laying out how to incorporate different types of evidence for rating teacher performance. (p. 1)

Across the country, state and local agencies are making decisions about the type of teacher evaluation programs to utilize. They are determining the best practices, observation tools, resources, and policies to use based on what fits the specific culture of the specific area (RSN, 2013). They are collecting data about what works for them and may or may not work in another area. People in Alaska are different than people in Florida; and they have different needs, values, and use of language and an existing culture in which they operate (Abadi, 2018). Schools in different geographic areas reflect

this as well, having different values and definitions of what is quality teaching and how to evaluate it (RSN, 2013). Schools ultimately benefit from having a teacher evaluation program that has been designed to meet the needs of their specific area and culture. Christian schools are affected by this phenomenon as well but at a much deeper level than simple geography. They also have to be aware that they have a unique spiritual culture that makes them different from non-Christian schools. The spiritual culture in Christian schools is built upon the biblical foundations that make up the very backbone of Christian education. Their nature is different than public schools due to this biblical foundation. One Christian accrediting body, the American Association of Christian Schools, has asked that its member schools, like Grace Christian Academy, operate under biblical foundations. Per their handbook, Grace Christian Academy (2018) stated the following:

A Christian school's mission and purpose statement clearly defines the reasons for its existence. The Bible is viewed as the inerrant Word of God, and its teachings and principles are regarded as guiding lights for every aspect of school life. Every policy of the school, every decision made by leadership, every course taught in the classrooms, every extracurricular activity is in accord with Scripture. Teachers and support staff are professing Christians, each faithfully attending a Bible-believing church. The Christian school is different by design. It unashamedly promotes the Bible and its teaching. The Christian school is Christ-centered as compared to the man-centered philosophy promoted by the secular public schools. (para. 3)

The unique culture that exists in Christian schools makes them different than

public schools and has created the need for unique teacher evaluation programs designed specifically for them. There is a need for a teacher evaluation program that will hold teachers accountable for their responsibility to teach students through a biblical lens (Christian Educational National, 2018). The problem with this expectation is that it is not being met. There are very few teacher evaluation programs specifically designed for Christian schools, nor is there much research available to assist schools in creating their own evaluation programs (McTighe, 2004). We have already established that Christian schools have been isolated from research regarding teacher evaluations in public schools. Christian educators are not conducting research and sharing information like their public school counterparts. One explanation as to why this may be was provided in an article written by Burton (2013). Burton stated,

I feel the sense of waste even more strongly for those of us who research and write in the field of Christian education. First, we are a fairly small community of scholars. There are not that many of us who actively performed research in the field over the course of several years. Many of the first-time authors who publish research on Christian education are generating an article from their dissertation research. Then sadly, their scholarly voices go silent. Our field needs us to stay active in research in order to continually inform theory, practice, and policy in Christian education. (p. 111)

Burton (2013) certainly offered a plausible explanation as to the reason why there is little educational research being conducted by Christian educators. No matter the reason, Christian-based teacher evaluation programs and associated research are scarce. I have personally experienced this as an administrator in a Christian school. With access to

several Christian school research databases, my searches have consistently found limited, outdated research. This clearly is a problem as many Christian schools have minimal resources available to establish teacher evaluation programs for their schools and often choose not to evaluate their staff. This is what happened at Christian School A, where the school was not evaluating its teachers. This happened despite the fact that the school's educators knew the value of teacher evaluations and had made the promise that it would provide an evaluation of its staff. As part of Christian School A's accreditation in the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), it made commitments to evaluate the school's teachers. The school signed documents pledging that the administration would support the implementation of effective instructional practices of the faculty through annual observation, evaluation, and goal setting to more effectively achieve desired student outcomes (ACSI, 2019).

Public schools have identified and are embracing the link between teacher effectiveness and student progress and have prompted new reforms in the teacher evaluation process (Strong et al., 2011). Christian schools have isolated themselves from these reforms and have produced limited research of their own. Christian schools are compelled, and many are required through various accreditations, to evaluate their teachers based on the premise that teacher accountability promotes quality learning in the classroom. The nature of Christian schools is biblically based, and this makes them different from their public school counterparts. Being biblically based, they have the added burden of evaluating their teachers through a biblical lens in order to assure that the distinct spiritual component of Christian education is alive in their schools. All the mentioned factors have created a need for a Christian school-specific teacher evaluation

program with research to verify its effectiveness, and it is simply not available; thus, a formal assessment of a teacher evaluation program must be administered that has been designed and implemented in the Christian school setting.

Methodology

The methodology of this study is guided by the CIPP (context, inputs, process, and products) model of evaluation developed by Stufflebeam (1968). The CIPP model of program evaluation focuses on improvement by placing a priority on guiding, planning, and implementation of development efforts (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007). The CIPP model uses a comprehensive framework by evaluating an entity's context, inputs, processes, and products to serve in both a formative role and summative role to assess and improve services and target the needs of rightful beneficiaries (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to conduct a program evaluation using the CIPP model to measure teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth through the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program which was implemented at Christian School A in August 2016. One of the main objectives in conducting teacher evaluations is for administrators to facilitate teacher growth within their staff (Hoerr, 2005). This study focused on teacher growth as one of the main components in evaluating the effectiveness of Christian School A's teacher evaluation program. Teacher growth was identified and evaluated focusing on improvements in teacher effectiveness related to the three components of the T.E.S.T. program: (a) professional and spiritual growth, (b) classroom management utilizing biblical principles, and (c) utilizing biblical integration into lesson

planning for all academic subjects. It was important to investigate these certain characteristics of teaching as they construct the most probable of influences a teacher can have on the classroom and individual student learning (National Research Council, 2000).

The value of these teacher characteristics was seen as vital and worthy of evaluation. Emphasis was given to lesson planning, as it is central to the general overview and objectives of the course, the plan of teaching and learning activities, and to check the students' understanding (E Learning Network, n.d.). Utilizing biblical principles in classroom management and biblical integration into academic classes are both worthy of evaluation and are requirements of Christian School A under its current terms of accreditation through ACSI. The setting and evaluation of professional and spiritual goals, while at times difficult to evaluate, are important and help teachers understand their roles as members of a learning community (National Research Council, 2000).

Student achievement was also considered as a measurable element of this evaluation. Student achievement can be valued as an indicator of how successful students at Christian School A were in terms of individual growth as reflected on how they scored on standardized comparative tests. However, it should be noted that the success of a teacher evaluation program cannot definitively be correlated to student achievement. The correlation between teacher evaluation and student success has been researched thoroughly in such reports as the Gates Foundation MET Report with mixed results (Resmovits, 2013). The Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project looked to answer how much weight should be placed on each measure of effective teaching. MET

researchers sought to answer this question through data collected from the RAND Corporation and Dartmouth College. According to Cantrell and Kane (2013), MET research was conducted using the following thoughts:

The MET project used data to compare differently weighted composites and study the implications of different weighting schemes for different outcomes. As in the *Gathering Feedback for Teaching* report, these composites included student achievement gains based on state assessments, classroom observations, and student surveys. The researchers estimated the ability of variously weighted composites to produce consistent results and accurately forecast teachers' impact on student achievement gains on different types of tests. The goal was not to suggest a specific set of weights but to illustrate the trade-offs involved when choosing weights. (p. 10)

Through extensive examination of the MET project's findings, the decision was made to not utilize student achievement as a part of this study. My concerns were shared by other researchers, as Schmidt (2011) noted,

The reports misinterpretation of the data is unfortunate. The MET project is assembling an unprecedented database of teacher practice measures that promises to greatly improve our understanding of teacher performance, and which may yet offer valuable information on teacher evaluation. However, the new report analyses do not support the report's conclusions he concludes. The true guidance the study provides, in fact, points in the opposite direction from that indicated by its poorly supported conclusions and indicates that value-added scores are unlikely to be useful measures of teacher effectiveness. (para. 11)

Evaluating the T.E.S.T. program would not only be beneficial to Christian School A, but it could also be utilized by other Christian schools. This was seen as a first step in creating a useful database in a subject area that is nonexistent. The union of Christian education, bound by biblical principles, is one that promotes the sharing of knowledge and the encouragement of educational growth. Christian educators should focus on this while acknowledging specific evaluation must correspond with the reality of each private school while serving the practical needs for information in a prudent and diplomatic manner that is performed both legally and ethically (Fitzpatrick et al., 2012).

Research Questions

1. What were the perceptions related to the needs of Christina School A that led to the establishment of the T.E.S.T. program?
2. What were the perceptions relative to how the T.E.S.T. program was structured?
3. What are teacher perceptions relative to the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program?
4. To what degree did the components of the T.E.S.T. program change teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study started with the general concept that teachers and the teaching that takes place in their classrooms are significant. Maya Angelou (as cited in Tucker & Stronge, 2005) was quoted as to her perspective on the value of the classroom teacher:

This is the value of the teacher, who looks at a face and says there's something

behind that and I want to reach that person, I want to influence that person, I want to encourage that person, I want to enrich, I want to call out that person who is behind that face, behind that color, behind that language, behind that tradition, behind that culture. I believe you can do it. I know what was done for me. (p. 1)

By forging strong relationships, educators can affect virtually every aspect of their students' lives, teaching them the important life lessons that will help them succeed beyond term papers and standardized tests (Teach, 2020). Teachers are seen as one of the vital elements in the lives and education of students. So important is teaching, that it demands accountability and platforms for teacher growth. We should embrace that teacher accountability has never been under such scrutiny with all aspects of the system suspect to review (Marzano & Frontier, 2011). Clearly, public education has made teacher evaluation a priority as cited in one of the latest policy statements from the National Education Association:

The NEA believes that our students and teachers deserve high quality evaluation systems that provide the tools teachers need to continuously tailor instruction, enhance practice and advance student learning. Such systems must provide both ongoing, non-evaluative, formative feedback and regular, comprehensive, meaningful, and fair evaluations. Such systems must be developed and implemented with teachers and their representatives, either through collective bargaining where available, or in partnership with the affiliate representing teachers at the state and local level. ("New Policy Statement," n.d., para. 2)

In private Christian schools, there is also a value and priority placed on teacher evaluations. Two of the most influential governing bodies in Christian education have

taken similar stances on teacher evaluations being a foundation of their schools. One of those organizations is Christian Schools International (CSI), which was one of the first national organizations created to assist Christian schools by creating professional and biblical standards for its member schools. CSI (“Principles for Christian Education,” n.d., para. 2) recommends that Christian schools perform annual teacher evaluations and requires all member schools to have and provide written procedures for accountability to stakeholders and the community, practicing them with integrity. Two of the largest accrediting bodies in Christian education state that all schools seeking accreditation must have some type of teacher evaluation program in place. Both organizations support the theory that teacher evaluation is essential because it is in line with the biblical theory that Christians should seek to be “Christ-like” in all things they do. Christian schools, in theory, are in line with their public counterparts in regard to teacher evaluation; but in practice, research indicates that teacher evaluations in Christian schools are not equal to the standards of public schools. Surveys I have conducted, along with the interactions and conversations while participating in Christian education for the past 20 years, have provided the insight that Christian education is lacking in the area of teacher evaluations. This is cautionary for the part that Christian schools have on the nation’s education and commitment to educating and partnering with parents in the lives of their children. Data collected from a 2012 survey by the National Center for Educational Statistics showed that 14,514 non-parochial Christian schools were operating in the United States, with each of these schools averaging 175 students. In the United States alone, approximately 2,539,950 students are receiving a Christian education. These students have the right to a high level of quality in their Christian education. Christian educators need to be taking all

the steps necessary to ensure that it is possible to provide that level of quality education in our schools. As Christian educators, there is the expectation among these teachers in Christ to make their schools the best that they can be--truly putting into practice the challenge of being "Christ-like," or perfect, in all that they do.

Christian School A, like the other thousands of Christian schools in the country, has made a commitment to teach and partner with parents in the lives of their children. Like many of those schools, Christian School A was not living up to its commitment to ensure quality teaching through teacher evaluations (Christian School Management, 2018). This neglect of teacher evaluations at Christian School A clearly had an effect on the teachers at the school. This was made apparent in the feedback received from the 75 classroom teachers at Christian School A who participated in the end-of-the-year teacher survey. Table 1 represents a sample from the 2014 AdvancedED teacher survey results.

Table 1*AdvancedED Teacher Survey Results*

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral %	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Our school has a continuous improvement plan based on data, goals, actions, and measures for growth.	4.17%	25%	16.7%	12.5%	41.67%
Our school's leaders support an innovative and collaborative culture.	0%	16.7%	33.33%	29.17%	20.83%
Our school's leaders regularly evaluate staff members on criteria designed to improve teaching and learning.	0%	8.33%	16.7%	16.7%	58.3%
Our school's leaders ensure all staff members use supervisory feedback to improve student learning.	0%	4.17%	20.83%	18.83%	56.17%

The survey data identified that at least 75% of Christian School A's teachers believed principals were not evaluating them or giving feedback regarding their "on the job" performance. It was also noted that at least 75% of the teachers believed supervisors were not providing feedback to ensure improved student learning. Knowing the correlation between quality teaching and student learning, these data were alarming because they demonstrated that the school was operating without any form of accountability to ensure the quality of teaching and learning taking place in its classrooms.

This program evaluation was vital for Christian School A. It is the beginning of establishing an effective and sustainable teacher evaluation program that will benefit its

teachers and students. Beyond helping Christian School A, there is the opportunity to add information to the development of teacher evaluations in all Christian schools. This information is so important because it establishes the fact that the teacher truly makes a difference and that there are attributes of those effective teachers that can be identified and shared with others (Resmovits, 2013).

Setting

Christian School A is a Christian school founded by a Presbyterian Church in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The school has five educational buildings, athletic facilities, and playgrounds spread out on a 24-acre campus. The school has a student enrollment of approximately 600 students and has approximately 100 employees.

Christian School A holds accreditations through ACSI and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS-CASI). Christian School A is three schools in one. There is an elementary school for junior kindergarten through fifth grades, a middle school for Grades 6 through 8, and a high school. The high school is a college preparatory school offering honors and AP courses through Christian and secular curriculums. Each school has its own administrative team under the leadership of a Head of School, a designated school board, and a church leadership board.

To better understand the environment at Christian School A, it would be helpful to look back a few years to 2008 when the economic downturn began in the United States. This economic downturn had an adverse effect on the local economy and as a result, there was an enrollment drop of approximately 300 students at the school over the course of several years. This enrollment drop necessitated the elimination of several

teaching and support positions at the school. The process of eliminating positions and staff, which was led by the Head of School and Administration, initiated mistrust between the teachers and administration that would grow over the next several years. At the core of the initial mistrust was the fact that teachers were being dismissed without a consistent evaluation program in use by all the school principals. The criteria and reasons why certain teachers were let go were not validated in the eyes of the stakeholders of the school and became subject to rumors and gossip. The mistrust in the administration led to a time period of several years when multiple evaluation programs were introduced and then quickly scrapped. The programs were being quickly scrapped because they were not being implemented fully and lacked teacher support. The administration did not take the time, nor did they have the resources, to investigate the types of evaluation programs that were available to meet the needs and culture of the school. The school was at a disadvantage because it is an independent Christian school not receiving guidance or support from a state or federal entity. Overall communication between the administration and the teachers began to diminish further, establishing a culture of isolation and mistrust at the school. In 2016, the situation became exponentially worse. The Head of School and the pastor of the church who established the school were indicted for embezzling money from the school. The subsequent trials and media coverage put enormous stress on all stakeholders of the school. By the time the two individuals pled guilty to specific crimes, it had become publicly known that during a 17-year period, the two had stolen over \$12 million. The school entered a very dark time as all stakeholders felt anger and mistrust and were emotionally scarred. This scandal cemented a culture of mistrust between the teachers and the administration, setting the two sides even further apart; however, out of

the “ashes,” reforms began to take place at Christian School A.

A new Head of School was named, and new school boards and church boards were placed in governance. New principals have joined the staff, and there is a great effort being placed on repairing the culture of the school. One of the keys to creating a more positive school culture is to start evaluating, mentoring, coaching, and promoting the growth of our teachers. The school has never been more primed for introducing and implementing a new teacher evaluation program that will contribute to a more positive school culture. There has also never been a more opportune time to establish a research database for the development of a teacher evaluation instrument in the Christian school setting.

Definition of Key Terms

The following are key terms that need to be defined in order to better understand their usage and meaning in this dissertation.

Biblical

Having origins from the Bible that establish, influence, and define ideas or actions of a person or organization.

Christian School

A non-parochial school that is privately funded and is associated with having Christian theology in its teaching.

Christian Education

A broader term that encompasses all aspects of Christian schools such as teachers, curriculum, policies, etc.

Comprehensive Teacher Evaluation Program

Sometimes referred to as portfolio-based, it is a teacher evaluation program that contains several different components that work together as one tool for assessing the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and classroom practices of a professional educator.

Best Practices

Encompasses the best ways to accomplish a task using individual activities, procedures, and policies.

Teacher Growth

Teacher growth in this context is defined as improvements in teacher outcomes.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to measure teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth through the implementation of a teacher evaluation program specifically designed for the Christian school setting. The significance of this study was justified by the fact that Christian schools have been isolated and removed from valuable research data that has taken place in public schools over the past 50 years (Kabler, 2013), putting Christian education behind in areas such as teacher accountability (Nichols, 2018). The selected school for this study, Christian School A, had implemented a teacher evaluation program that had yet to undergo any type of formal assessment. Since the birth of No Child Left Behind, there has been a growing knowledge base that indicates that teachers and their instructional practices are key factors in the effectiveness of schools and guide school improvement (Papay, 2012). This growing knowledge base has been flooding the educational landscape with various methods, models, and programs aimed at creating effective teachers and effective schools (Huber & Skedsmo, 2016). The challenge for schools now is how to comprehend the available data to select which method, model, or program of teacher evaluation is best suited for their particular school culture and environment.

Teacher Evaluation in Christian Schools

Over time, there have been many major reforms regarding teacher evaluation initiated from research and experiences gained in the public school setting (Marzano & Frontier, 2011). The history of those reforms is detailed later in this chapter and was pertinent to my research in evaluating the effectiveness of a teacher evaluation program

in the Christian school setting. The history was pertinent because it reflected that Christian schools have not conducted their own teacher evaluation research or participated in the research performed in public schools at a level to provide any beneficial feedback (McTighe, 2004). It is also relevant because Christian schools need a research-based foundation to build on when establishing best practices regarding teacher evaluation. The research conducted in public schools, while not applicable in its raw form, does provide a useful database of information that Christian schools have not created on their own. In raw form, teacher evaluation research conducted in public schools must be viewed while acknowledging that Christian schools are founded and operated on biblical principles which are the bedrock upon which the distinction between Christian and non-Christian schools must be built (Eckel, 2003).

Christian schools are defined by a philosophy of education that is built on biblical principles and is differentiated from a secular philosophy in the areas of educational purpose, providers, content, and philosophy of the learner and teaching (Guillermin & Beck, 1995). Biblical principles therefore guide and shape the school's curriculum and set the expectations placed on its teachers; thus, these should be prevalent in any teacher evaluation program taking place in a Christian school. This requirement makes it difficult to apply a teacher evaluation program developed for public schools directly to the Christian school setting (Eckel, 2003). Modifications are needed for public school teacher evaluation programs before they can be utilized in the Christian school setting; however, this is rarely done as there is a great divide that Christian education has created distancing itself from all things related to public school philosophies, programs, theory, and practice (Horton, 2017). The T.E.S.T. program was designed taking into consideration the

immense information gathered in public schools and the specific characteristics central to the Christian school. The T.E.S.T. program consists of three main components. Each component of T.E.S.T. has characteristics found in many public school evaluation programs, but in order to be utilized in the Christian school setting, the components have been customized by the application of biblical principles. The three main components of T.E.S.T. include professional and spiritual growth, classroom management utilizing biblical principles, and utilizing biblical integration into lesson planning for all academic subjects. The following information describes how each component is evaluated in the T.E.S.T. program and details the value each has in relation to Christian education.

Biblical Integration

One of the specific characteristics that should be present and evaluated in Christian schools is the implementation of a Christian-based curriculum that permeates through all teacher lesson plans. Christian schools are based on biblical foundations derived from the Bible. The Bible according to Horton (2017),

is not only the most important subject matter but also the source of the principles determining the other subject matters and the way in which they are taught. The presentation of biblical truth is thus not confined to a single segment of the curriculum—the study of the Bible—but is diffused throughout the teaching of all subjects. The teacher’s knowledge of the Scriptures controls his selection and interpretation of materials and determines his whole perspective on his subject matter. (p. 10)

In the Christian school, all subjects should have a biblical connection. Even if a curriculum utilizes a secular textbook, there is still the expectation that there will be

elements of scripture or Christian themes that tie teaching to the school's Christian mission and vision (ACSI, 2019). This biblical worldview is prevalent in Christian schools and is the basis of what makes them different from public schools. It also lays the foundation for any teacher evaluation program that would be utilized in the Christian school setting. One would need to consider that the biblical foundations in Christian schools would set the guidelines and expectations for what was being taught by teachers. Setting the stage for the evaluator of any teacher to determine the level of effectiveness the teacher implements biblical foundations into the daily lessons.

Measuring the implementation of biblical foundations and the overall quality of teacher lesson plans is evaluated in Section 3 of the T.E.S.T. program. This section is designed to assist teachers in creating lessons/activities that represent best teaching practices and expose students to a variety of appropriate and biblically based instruction, practice, and assessment methods. The T.E.S.T. program identifies "variety" utilizing the *Revised Bloom's Taxonomy* that classifies levels of cognitive behavior. In Section 3, teachers answer self-reflection prompts and perform self-evaluations regarding their use of Bloom's Taxonomy. A Likert scale assessment is also contained in Section 3. This Likert scale assessment is designed to identify best practices in lesson planning and to measure the implementation of those practices in the classroom environment.

Classroom Management Utilizing Biblical Principles

Teachers in all schools should be expected to be able to demonstrate an understanding of teaching and learning, have strong content knowledge, exhibit classroom management skills, and be able to connect students to the curriculum through effective lessons (Montoro, 2014). All the before mentioned are qualities that are

regularly evaluated in all schools through various forms of teacher evaluation. Christian teachers have added qualities that should be prevalent as they integrate the Christian faith into all aspects of the learning experience (Montoro, 2014). This integration of faith is a unique aspect of Christian teaching and thus requires a unique and effective tool for its measurement of extent and effectiveness (Beimers, 2008).

Classroom evaluations are included in Section 4 of the T.E.S.T. program. This section documents and measures teacher classroom observations utilizing AdvancED's Effective Learning Environments Learning Tool (ELEOT) and a customized rubric created specifically for the T.E.S.T. program. ELEOT's purpose is to identify observable evidence of classroom environments that are conducive to learning and to ensure that learners are engaging, acting, reacting, and benefiting from various contexts or environments that should be evident in all effective learning settings (AdvancED, 2012). The customized rubric is designed to measure the implementation of biblical principles in the classroom setting and the general school. The T.E.S.T. program encompasses three types of observation methods:

1. Peer-to-peer observations utilizing ELEOT with reflection of what was seen in another's classroom.
2. Mentor/lead teacher observations utilizing ELEOT with feedback from the mentor/lead teacher and reflection on that feedback.
3. Principal/assistant principal observations utilizing ELEOT and Christian classroom rubric with feedback from the principal/assistant principal and reflection on that feedback.

Teacher Spiritual Growth

Christian educators are unique in terms that they are being asked to blend their spiritual beliefs with their professional selves. While this may exist for many educators in various settings, it is almost always a prerequisite for teaching in a private Christian school. ACSI has mandated that all staff working in an accredited school must demonstrate religious beliefs that correlate to the biblical principles inherent to the specific school. According to ACSI (2019), “Each staff member has a clear testimony of faith in Christ, has signed the school’s statement of faith, and endorses the school’s code of ethics/lifestyle statement” (p. 19). Christian educators are seen as individuals who are fulfilling their role as a Christian and teacher simultaneously. This factor places an emphasis on Christian educators to investigate and seek growth in their relationship with God as a means of improving themselves and thus their teaching (Hughes, 2015).

Teacher spiritual growth is contained in Section 1 of the T.E.S.T. program. This section contains self-reporting and self-reflection activities designed to foster growth, monitor, and add accountability to the spiritual lives of teachers.

Teacher Evaluation in Public Schools

During the past 300 years, there has been a gradual evolution regarding teacher evaluation that has led to our current views, practices, and programs. Teacher evaluation in public schools has a long history of growth in the United States that mirrors the overall growth of education influenced by philosophical and political changes. It is important to examine teacher evaluation looking through this historical lens. This allows us to see its overall growth while noting the research that others have conducted and the impact that research has had in shaping our current practices regarding teacher evaluation.

In the early 1700s, teaching was not seen as a true profession, and subsequently, teacher evaluation was left to various entities such as church and local government officials and therefore varied greatly in model and form (Marzano & Frontier, 2011).

During the 1800s, the growth of the country spawned larger urban cities with more complex school systems creating the demand for professional teachers which required more formal methods of teacher evaluation (Marzano & Frontier, 2011). The growth of education during this time period had created an awareness that acknowledged effective teaching but also indicated that there was much to learn. As Marzano and Frontier (2011) noted,

That pedagogical skills are a necessary component of effective teaching.

Although there was little or no formal discussion about the specifics of these skills, the acknowledgment of their importance might be considered the first step in the journey to a comprehensive approach to developing teacher expertise. (p. 13)

From the late 1800s until the 1940s, two competing theories influenced teacher evaluation and divided education in the United States (Marzano & Frontier, 2011). The first theory, led by John Dewey, saw education as a foundation for democracy and citizenship with the teacher being viewed as a guide rather than a facilitator of learning. This impacted teacher evaluation as educational quality would be based on student perceptions, thus changing the roles and responsibilities of classroom teachers making traditional assessment obsolete (Piedra, 2018). The second theory was based on the scientific method led by theorists and educators Frederick Taylor, Edward Thorndike, and Ellwood Cubberley (Marzano & Frontier, 2011). The scientific method approach to

education viewed schools as factories and emphasized the production of educated students (Ireh, 2016). This emphasis on production created a need for school administrators who engaged in measurement and the analysis of data to ensure that teachers and schools were productive (Marzano & Frontier., 2011).

The era of clinical supervision in the United States saw the development of the teacher as an individual and the role of supervisors grow exponentially. These changes led to the rise of clinical supervision which would have a dramatic effect on teacher evaluation and supervision by introducing one of the first teacher-centered observation programs (Marzano & Frontier., 2011). Morris Cogan was instrumental in developing clinical supervision with the goal of improving teaching by providing teachers with direct feedback about their individual teaching practices rather than focusing on evaluation forms that were vague in nature and provided little feedback to teachers (Reavis, 1976). Clinical supervision was highlighted by five phases that included the pre-observation conference, the classroom observation, analysis, a supervision conference, and the post-conference analysis (Reavis, 1976). Clinical supervision was designed to empower the teacher, as Reavis (1976) noted, “the emphasis of clinical supervision is on enhancing the professional status of the teacher in the supervisor-teacher relationship” (p. 361). Support for the clinical supervision model waned in the early 1980s, as administrators became too focused on the procedural aspect of conducting the five phases of the program and neglected to utilize the intimate feedback opportunities with teachers it was originally designed to initiate (Marzano & Frontier, 2011).

The work of Madeline Hunter established new ways of approaching teaching and teacher evaluation during the 1980s. She established the Hunter model of lesson design

that spotlighted quality teaching and thus what administrators should look for while conducting observations (Marzano & Frontier, 2011). Hunter (1984) outlined a quality lesson plan through the following seven steps:

1. An **anticipatory set** would be used to allow students to know what was expected to be learned.
2. **Objectives and the lesson's purpose** allowed students to know why the information they were learning was important to them.
3. The **input** of the lesson defined how the student would acquire the information.
4. **Modeling** included opportunities for the teacher to show examples of the learning process to students.
5. **Checking for understanding** throughout the lesson.
6. Teachers are to provide a **guided practice** under the supervision of the teacher.
7. When students are ready, they should be assigned **independent practice** to work through problems or material with minimal teacher input.

Through Hunter's (1984) work, teacher observation changed in focus to what the students were doing in the classroom instead of solely focusing on the teacher and their actions. Her model was adopted by several states and demonstrated how mastery teaching could impact student achievement (Marzano & Frontier, 2011).

Teacher evaluation and supervision took a shift towards more developmental and reflective models during the early 1980s, highlighted by the work of Carl Glickman and Allan Glatthorn. Their work helped schools to see the teacher as an individual

professional worthy of having input in their own professional growth. Supervision through differentiation was introduced, promoting the growth of teachers by meeting their individual needs identified through classroom observations and self-reflection (Glatthorn, 1984). Glickman et al. (1985) outlined the concept of differentiation in teacher accountability. Glickman et al. identified characteristics of a strong evaluation program: teacher collaboration, professional development, curriculum development and coordination, and long-term research for best practices. Glatthorn's (1984) work utilized clinical supervision but added other components that allowed teachers some control over their assessment and development through the use of personal and professional goals. According to Glatthorn, "teachers have a choice of four types of supervision: clinical supervision, cooperative professional development, self-directed development, and administrative monitoring" (p. 11). This approach was revolutionary at the time, and several aspects of differentiated supervision can be found in teacher observation programs utilized today (Marzano & Frontier, 2011). Differentiated supervision led the way to the establishment of the casual-drop in observation performed by administrators, promotion of teacher collaboration, peer assessment, student feedback, acknowledging teacher experience, and qualification in the observation process, and by linking teacher observation with professional development designed for the specific needs of individual teachers (Glatthorn, 1984).

The 1980s also saw an impactful study performed by the Rand group that sought to determine what supervisory and evaluation practices were actually taking place in schools across the country (Marzano & Frontier, 2011). The study titled *Teacher Evaluation: A Study of Effective Practices* (Wise et al., 1984) identified and sent surveys

to 32 school districts that were noted to have excellent teacher evaluation programs. From the initial list of 32 districts, the group selected four school districts to participate in case studies that, according to Wise et al. (1984), “represented diverse teacher evaluation processes and organizational government” (p. vii). Wise et al.’s research showed that there were similarities and differences among the districts that were surveyed. A similarity was that each of the 32 original surveyed school districts was currently operating with a teacher evaluation program that had recently replaced what was seen as a “paper only” program. This showed that the seriousness to which these school districts and their school boards were taking teacher evaluation; they had acknowledged that their school districts needed change (Wise et al., 1984). Teachers in these districts echoed this as they had seen a need for a program that was standardized to eliminate bias and inconsistencies of program implementation by building principals (Wise et al., 1984). Another similarity among the districts was that most of them used some type of committee made up of school personnel to develop their teacher evaluation program. There was also a similar design to each evaluation program; each consisted of the general pre-observation conference, the actual observation, and a follow-up conference (Wise et al., 1984). Differences noted among the districts centered on inconsistencies in the level of training of the evaluators, the number of times teachers were evaluated, and the various types of instruments used to conduct the evaluations (Wise et al., 1984). Through the research process, the study identified that the differences among the districts had a greater impact than their similarities; and according to Wise et al. (1984), “these differences in practice, we believe, indicate that teacher evaluation presently is an under conceptualized and underdeveloped activity” (p. 21).

Two major problems involving teacher evaluation the Rand study identified were common in all 32 districts. First, according to Wise et al. (1984), all teachers surveyed believed “principals lacked sufficient resolve and competence to evaluate accurately” (p. 22). The Rand researchers believed this perception was rooted in principals not fully understanding their role as educational leaders and evaluators (Wise et al., 1984). The second problem identified was that teachers were resistant to the feedback they received during the evaluation process (Marzano & Frontier, 2011). Teacher anxiety and mistrust towards evaluators and the evaluation process itself were noted as being probable causes. Both problems identified by the Rand study highlighted the lack of adequate training and knowledge for both teachers and principals regarding the implementation process of their specific teacher evaluation program (Wise et al., 1984). Through their research, the Rand study made four conclusions and listed 12 recommendations for teachers to improve and to help schools make personnel decisions (Wise et al., 1984). The findings are reported in Table 2.

Table 2*Conclusions and Recommendations From the RAND Study*

Conclusions	Recommendations
"To succeed, a teacher evaluation system must suit the educational goals, management style, conception of teaching, and community values of the school district" (Wise et al., 1984, p. 66).	Examine goals and purpose of educational system and align system to those ends (Wise et al., 1984).
"Top-level commitment to and resource for evaluation outweigh checklists and procedures" (Wise et al., 1984, p. 67).	Provide administrators with adequate time for evaluations (Wise et al., 1984).
"The school district must decide the main purpose of its teacher evaluation system and then match the process to the purpose" (Wise et al., 1984, p. 70).	Examine current systems to determine and align with primary purpose. Consider adopting multiple systems if there are different purposes (Wise et al., 1984).
"To sustain resource commitments and political support, teacher evaluation must be seen to have utility. Utility depends on the efficient use of resources to achieve reliability, validity, and cost effectiveness" (Wise et al., 1984, p. 73).	Allocate resources as aligned to importance of purpose. Target resources to achieve maximum results (Wise et al., 1984).
"Teacher involvement and responsibility improve the quality of teacher evaluation" (Wise et al., 1984, p. 76).	Involve expert teachers in the supervision and assistance of peers (Wise et al., 1984).

Source: *Effective supervision supporting the art and science of teaching* (p. 24) by

Marzano, R., & Frontier, T. (2011). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

The RAND study made these recommendations for districts to have a starting point in creating a teacher evaluation program that could be modified based on their local

experience (Wise et al., 1984).

During the 1990s, teacher accountability added new elements designed to measure the ability of teachers to perform their classroom responsibilities. This was best described by Charlotte Danielson's model of teacher evaluation (Marzano & Frontier, 2011). According to Marzano and Frontier (2011),

The Danielson model included four domains: Planning and Preparation, the Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities. Within each of these domains, she described a series of components that further articulate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to demonstrate competence in the classroom. The framework was intended to accomplish three things. First, it sought to honor the complexity of teaching. Second, it constituted a language for professional conversation. Third, it provided a structure for self-assessment and reflection on professional practice. The framework was considered comprehensive by Danielson in that it included all phases of teaching—from planning to reporting achievement. Additionally, Danielson noted that the model was grounded in research and that it is generic or flexible enough to be used across levels and disciplines. (pp. 23-24)

Danielson's work added to the expanding view of teacher accountability and, according to Marzano and Frontier (2011), "provided the foundation for the most detailed and comprehensive approach to evaluation to that time" (p. 24).

Starting in 2000, there were major shifts in teacher accountability that established student achievement as being just as important as teacher behaviors (Marzano & Frontier, 2011). This shift prompted the political system to aid educators in creating initiatives

such as No Child Left Behind and the Common Core Standards.

During this time, researchers from the New Teacher Project conducted a study and produced the report entitled the *Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness* (Weisberg et al., 2009). The goal of this report was to improve teacher effectiveness by investigating the habit of schools whereby evaluations were performed under the assumption that teacher effectiveness varied little from teacher to teacher, eliminating valuable individualized feedback (Weisberg et al., 2009). *The Widget Effect* research was conducted in 12 school districts across the country involving 15,000 teachers and 1,300 school administrators (Weisberg et al., 2009). Central to their findings was that among tenured teachers evaluated using a binary rating (satisfactory or unsatisfactory), 99% of teachers received a “satisfactory” rating. Teachers who were evaluated under a multi-tier system (outstanding, very good, satisfactory, improvement needed, unsatisfactory) reflected 94% of participants scoring in the top two ratings. This was in contrast to survey data in which 84% of these same teachers noted that they could identify at least one ineffective teacher in their school (Kraft & Gilmore, 2017).

Table 3 outlines the breakdown of ratings for tenured teachers in districts with binary ratings.

Table 3*Evaluation Ratings for Tenured Teachers in Districts With Binary Ratings*

Districts	Denver	Jonesboro	Pueblo	Springdale	Toledo
Number of teachers evaluated	2,378	3,966	660	1,772	1,105
Number of teachers rated unsatisfactory	32	10	2	0	3
Percentage of teachers rated unsatisfactory	1.3%	.3%	.3%	0%	.3%

Table 4 outlines the breakdown of ratings for tenured teachers in districts with multiple-rating systems.

Table 4*Evaluation Ratings for Tenured Teachers in Districts With Multiple-Rating Systems*

Districts	Akron	Chicago	Cincinnati	Elgin	Rockford
Highest ranking	60.1%	68.7%	57.8%	88.1%	80.2%
Second highest ranking	31.3%	24.9%	34.7%	11.4%	18.9%
Neutral ranking	8.0%	6.1%	6.9%	NA	NA
Second lowest ranking	.7%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Lowest ranking	0%	.4%	.6%	.5%	.9%

Sources for Tables 3 and 4: *The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness* (p. 11) by Weisberg, D., Sexton, S., Mulhern, J., Keeling, D. (2009). The New Teacher Project.

The survey data highlights the evaluator's habits of rating all teachers in the top category instead of distinguishing those top teachers who actually outperform their peers (Weisberg et al., 2009). It was noted by Weisberg et al. (2009), that "the basic outcome remains true: almost no teachers are identified as delivering unsatisfactory instruction" (p. 11). The *Widget Effect* report took issue with these teacher evaluations when

compared to student achievement as only 10% of failing schools had at least one teacher rated unsatisfactory, showing the discrepancy from actual quality teaching to the noted teacher evaluation data (Weisberg et al., 2009). Overall, the *Widget Effect* made the following observations: Teacher effectiveness is ignored; excellent and poor performing teachers go unrecognized; observation patterns are inconsistent; and professional development is nonexistent for mid-level performing teachers. Recommendations made by the report included adopting evaluation programs that offered fair and legitimate rating systems, training administrators on how to implement teacher evaluation systems while being held accountable to use them, and utilizing evaluations for keying professional development and for legitimizing teacher retention and dismissal (Weisberg et al., 2009).

Another extensive study focusing on teacher evaluation was launched in 2009 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's MET project. The MET project involved some 3,000 teacher volunteers, including some from Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, who worked with college educators, business leaders, and other education foundations to investigate better ways to identify and develop effective teaching (Cantrell & Kane, 2013). According to Cantrell and Kane (2013), the MET project utilized a variety of tools including teacher observation methods, student surveys, and student achievement gains on state and other cognitive assessments. These tools were used to help answer three fundamental questions: (a) Can measures of effective teaching identify teachers who are more effective in helping students learn; (b) How much weight should be placed on each measure of effective teaching; and (c) How can teachers be assured of receiving trustworthy results from classroom observations? The hope is that by answering these

three questions, researchers will be able to create the best blueprint for creating a truly effective teacher accountability program (Cantrell & Kane, 2013).

Question 1 asks if measures of effective teaching identify teachers who are more effective in helping students learn. According to the MET project, the answer is “yes” (Rothstein & Mathis, 2013). Cantrell and Kane (2013) outlined the research process and how the MET project identified “effective teachers” during the 2009-2010 school year by collecting and analyzing teacher classroom observation results, student perception survey responses, and student achievement gains. These teachers were then assigned random students for the 2010-2011 school year with the same information collection process repeated. The results showed that those teachers identified as being effective had higher observation scores and had higher student performance scores than those teachers placed in the less effective group (Cantrell & Kane, 2013). This information is seen as being important because it establishes the fact that the teacher truly makes a difference and there are attributes of those effective teachers that can be identified and shared with others (Resmovits, 2013).

The second question the MET project looked to answer was how much weight should be placed on each measure of effective teaching. MET researchers sought to answer this question through data collected from the RAND Corporation and Dartmouth College. Researchers created four composite models of effective teaching, with each model representing different values of the criteria: student gains on state tests, student survey results, and teacher classroom observations (Alderman, 2013). Model 1 was designed to best calculate maximum gains in student state achievement test scores. Model 2 reduced the impact of state testing to 50% and valued student surveys and teacher

classroom observations equally. Model 3 is a composite model that values all three criteria equally. Model 4 placed a higher value of 50% on teacher observation while treating student test gains and surveys as equal (Cantrell & Kane, 2013). The four models and the criteria percentages are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Four Models to Construct a Composite Measure of Effective Teaching

Model	Weights given to each criterion
Model 1	Students gains on state test – 81% Student survey results – 17% Teacher’s classroom observations – 2%
Model 2	Students gains on state test – 50% Student survey results – 25% Teacher’s classroom observations – 25%
Model 3	Students gains on state test – 33% Student survey results – 33% Teacher’s classroom observations – 33%
Model 4	Students gains on state test – 25% Student survey results – 25% Teacher’s classroom observations – 50%

Source: *Measures of Effective Teaching* by Cantrell and Kane (2013).

The results in the assessment of the data collected through the four models allowed researchers to conclude that Models 2 and 3 are the best models for school systems to further investigate or adopt based on their balance. Teachers who would score high via those two models would have to be considered balanced teachers as well. Models 1 and 4 are considered less desirable because they put too much or too little weight on student gains on state tests (Alderman, 2013).

The third question the MET project investigated was how can teachers be assured

of the validity of the results from classroom observations. To answer this question, the MET project researchers worked with the 67 Hillsborough County (FL) teachers who volunteered to participate in the study. According to Cantrell and Kane (2013),

Two types of observers took part in the study: Fifty-three were school-based administrators—either principals or assistant principals—and seventy-six were peer observers. In Hillsborough County’s evaluation system, teachers are observed multiple times, formally and informally, by their administrators and by peer observers. Administrators and peers are trained and certified in the district’s observation instrument, which is based on Charlotte Danielson’s Framework for Teaching. These observers each rated 24 lessons for us and produced more than 3,000 ratings that we could use to investigate our questions. MET project researchers were able to calculate reliability for many combinations of observers (administrator and peer), lessons (from 1 to 4), and observation duration (full lesson or 15 minutes). We were able to compare differences in the ratings given to teachers’ lessons by their own and unknown administrators and between administrators and peers. (p. 17)

Through this study, MET researchers believed they had identified the best practices to be used when designing teacher observation policies. They concluded that having individual teachers observed by multiple trained persons multiple times during announced visits allows for the most reliable teacher observation scores. It was also recommended that teacher lessons be recorded for observers to watch on their own time and with the option of re-watching certain parts. The objective of these steps is to increase reliability in the observations and more importantly to build the trust teachers

have for them; that trust can be used to foster growth in the teachers from the feedback the observations contain (Resmovits, 2013).

After 3 years of research, MET project researchers believed they had truly impacted the teacher evaluation process, especially if schools would adhere to the nine principles outlined in MET project final report (Rothstein & Mathis, 2013). All stakeholders involved in a school should work together to set expectations on teacher skills and behaviors that enable better student learning. Some of the principles include (a) use multiple tools to measure effective teaching; (b) use balanced weights in evaluation of the information gleaned from each tool used in evaluating teachers; (c) ensure validity to long-term teacher evaluation scores by committing to randomly selecting students for each teacher each year; (d) ensure reliability by always including multiple sources of information when collecting data; (e) make meaningful distinctions when scoring teacher abilities; avoid using vague terms like “average”; (f) prioritize support and feedback to teachers so student needs are met before or along with teacher needs; teacher growth should never come at the expense of the students; and (g) always research and look to collect data and learn how to interpret the data to increase teacher and student learning (Cantrell & Kane, 2013).

Not everybody agrees with the findings set forth by the MET project because the study’s results were inconclusive and provide little usable guidance (Rothstein & Mathis, 2013). As Schmidt (2011) noted, there have been concerns raised about the validity of the reports:

The report’s misinterpretation of the data is unfortunate. The MET project is assembling an unprecedented database of teacher practice measures that promises

to greatly improve our understanding of teacher performance, and which may yet offer valuable information on teacher evaluation. However, the analysis of the new report does not support the report's conclusions according to Schmidt. The true guidance the study provides, in fact, points in the opposite direction from that indicated by its poorly supported conclusions and indicates that value-added scores are unlikely to be useful measures of teacher effectiveness. (para.10)

It has also been noted that the MET project findings lack the promotion of collaboration in schools. Cody (2013) described his view of schools under the MET program recommendations as being isolated and that he was "highly skeptical about the proposals from the Gates Foundation regarding teacher evaluation, because they do not correspond with how I have seen teachers collaborate and grow together" (para. 2).

Summary

The research conducted in this chapter shows that teacher evaluation in public schools has had a long history filled with reforms, modifications, and improvements unparalleled in Christian schools. Over time, various contributors have added theories and practices that have shaped public school teacher evaluation as we know it today. Christian schools have had neither the long history of reforms nor adequate contributions to keep up with the advancements made in public school teacher evaluation. Christian schools have spent much time defining what Christian teaching and learning are and have neglected developing programs to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Therefore, for Christian schools to create a useful and effective teacher evaluation program, they will need to utilize the valuable research conducted in our public schools while adding and blending in biblical principles that define Christian education.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

As compared to public schools, there has been limited research conducted in the Christian school setting regarding teacher evaluation and the impact utilized programs have had on teacher performance (Leven & Riegel, 2018). This fact was reflected at Christian School A where teachers had been operating with no formal evaluation program. During this time, surveys and interviews indicated that teachers perceived that a lack of accountability, feedback, and support from school administrators was stymying their development and growth as professional educators. School board members and administration at the school were concerned by the negative perceptions conveyed by the teachers. This situation caused school administrators to seek a solution to change teacher perceptions and institute forms of accountability to promote teacher growth. With that in mind, the T.E.S.T. program was created to evaluate educators in the Christian school setting, taking into account the biblical requirements and principles that are the basis of Christian education (Horton, 2017). This study utilized the CIPP model to measure perceptions of the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program and to measure changes in teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth in the Christian school setting. Teacher growth in this context was defined as improvements in teacher outcomes related to each component of the T.E.S.T. program: professional and spiritual growth, classroom management utilizing biblical principles, and utilizing biblical integration in lesson planning for all academic subjects. Chapter 3 details the methodology used in this study, provides a description of the participating school and teachers, details the instruments and procedures used to collect the data, and explains the statistical techniques that were

applied in analyzing the collected data.

Participants

Participants who qualified for this study were staff currently employed at Christian School A. The target population included the Head of School, administrators, and teachers representing junior kindergarten through 12th grades who were designated to one of Christian School A's sub-schools. Sub-school 1, an elementary school, was represented by one administrator and 20 teachers from junior kindergarten through fourth grades. Sub-school 2 was a middle school containing fifth through eighth grades and was represented by two administrators and 25 teachers. Sub-school 3 was a high school spanning ninth through 12th grades represented by three administrators and 30 teachers. Other demographics and factors considered during this study included teacher exposure to other teacher evaluation programs and years of service in public education. The minimum requirements for employment at Christian School A include a documented statement of faith that demonstrates a personal relationship with Jesus Christ along with a bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college. Teachers are required to hold a teaching certification through the school's accrediting partner, ACSI. Teacher participation in this study was voluntary, and teachers could withdraw from the study at any time; I expected at least 65% participation.

Research Design

The CIPP program evaluation model provided the comprehensive framework to assess the overall value of the T.E.S.T. program. Within that framework are the procedures that guided a mixed methods approach designed to collect quantitative and qualitative data to ascertain descriptive and formative information needed to answer the

four research questions. The CIPP model focuses on four types of evaluation—context, input, process, and product—and is designed to improve a program as well as retroactively judge its value (Stufflebeam, 2003). In this study, the context evaluation measured the perceptions related to the needs of Christian School A that led to the establishment of the T.E.S.T. program, and the input evaluation measured the perceptions relative to the structure of the T.E.S.T. program. Measuring the context and input aspects required analyzing quantitative data collected from school artifacts and qualitative data collected through interviews conducted with school administrators. The process evaluation measured teacher perceptions relative to the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program by analyzing quantitative data collected from the results of administering the American Teacher Panel (ATP) survey and qualitative data collected through follow-up teacher interviews. The product evaluation measured to what degree the components of the T.E.S.T. program changed teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth by analyzing quantitative data collected from administering the Spiritual Lives of Teachers survey and a custom survey. Further qualitative data were collected through interviews with teachers and administrators.

In each aspect of the CIPP model evaluation, quantitative data collected from artifacts or surveys guided the formation of questions utilized in the qualitative interviews. This process utilized an explanatory sequential mixed methods approach in order to explore in more depth the results from the survey questions. As Creswell (2014) noted, “the overall intent of this design is to have the qualitative data help explain the in more detail the initial quantitative results” (p. 224). The interviews were designed to gain descriptive insight into how the T.E.S.T. program had changed teachers, identify levels of

accountability within the program, measure the program's ease of use, and provide an opportunity for participating teachers to give suggestions for improvements to the program.

Role of the Researcher

I am an administrator at Christian School A managing teachers in junior kindergarten through eighth grades. I created several components of the T.E.S.T. program and I do conduct classroom observations but do not directly manage the T.E.S.T. program at the school. Due to my role at Christian School A, another school administrator conducted interviews with junior kindergarten through eighth-grade teachers when applicable.

Instruments

Three separate survey instruments were administered to participating teachers in this study. Each individual survey asked questions that related to individual components of the T.E.S.T. program. One survey was used to measure teacher perceptions of the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program. A second survey measured how participation in the T.E.S.T. program had changed teacher perceptions regarding their own spiritual lives. A third survey was administered to measure how the T.E.S.T. program had changed teacher perceptions of how they implement biblical principles in their classroom management and lesson planning. All three survey instruments were designed to measure changes in teacher perceptions of their own growth since participating in the T.E.S.T. program.

ATP Survey

Teacher perceptions regarding the levels of implementation of the T.E.S.T.

program were measured using a survey created by ATP supported by the Rand Corporation. ATP is a panel of randomly selected public school teachers from across the United States who participate in various surveys (Tuma et al., 2018). In October 2016, 1,825 teachers participated in a 43-question ATP survey designed to measure their perceptions about feedback they received regarding their instructional practices and their overall experience of participation in formal evaluation systems (Tuma et al., 2018). The ATP survey utilized self-reporting Likert scale questions with analyses conducted in Stata (Software for Statistical and Data Software), and all estimates were adjusted using inverse probability weights via the *pweight* specification (Tuma et al., 2018). Face validity was obtained for the ATP survey from research specialists representing the RAND Corporation (Tuma et al., 2018). Reliability of the ATP survey was supported by the results of the study that, according to Tuma et al. (2018), demonstrated the following:

Analyses of teachers' responses to the questions about evaluation systems indicated that teachers who reported being observed or given feedback more often had more-positive perceptions of the helpfulness of their schools' teacher evaluation systems. In addition, perceptions about the fairness of evaluation systems varied among teachers with different understandings of the purpose of those systems. More precisely, teachers who believed that evaluation systems were intended to promote teacher growth and development were more likely to rate those systems as fair. (p. 4)

The ATP survey was a licensed instrument and granted all users the right to copy, redistribute, transform, and edit the survey without further permission or fees (Tuma et al., 2018). Modifications to the original 43-question ATP Likert scale survey for use in

this study required removing questions that measured content unrelated to the T.E.S.T. program. These modifications were minor adjustments and did not alter the survey's overall design, which was to collect data measuring to what degree the T.E.S.T. program was implemented at Christian School A. The modified version of the ATP survey is shown in full in Appendix A.

Spiritual Lives of Teachers Survey

The T.E.S.T. program seeks to add accountability in teacher pursuit of growing in the knowledge of God's word and their relationship with the Lord. The T.E.S.T. program requires teachers to self-evaluate their spiritual lives and to set spiritual goals that align with their roles as Christian educators. Changes in the perception of the spiritual lives of teachers through participation in the T.E.S.T. program were measured using a modified version of the Spiritual Lives of Teachers Survey (Appendix B) created by Dr. June Hetzel and David Costillo. Correspondence with Dr. Hetzel granting me permission to modify and administer the survey is documented in Appendix C. The original Spiritual Lives of Teachers Survey was administered in May 2013 to 1,509 teachers representing 38 countries (Hetzel & Costillo, 2014). The original Spiritual Lives of Teachers Survey was designed to measure what changes had taken place in the spiritual lives of teachers since joining the profession. Survey questions were utilized that focused on measuring changes in teacher prayer habits, attitudes towards others, personal characteristics, and understanding the value and role of the spirit-led teacher. Face validity of the original Spiritual Lives of Teachers Survey was established by experts in the field who had educational experience and training in spiritual formation (J. Hetzel, personal communication, July 7, 2020). The reliability of the original survey has not been formally

established, but the survey's results have been widely accepted and published by numerous Christian-based research organizations including Christian School Education, CSI, ACSI, and Biola University. Modifications have been made to the original Spiritual Lives of Teachers Survey. The original 45-question survey was examined, and 10 questions were selected for this current study. Questions were excluded that measured aspects of teacher spiritual lives not evaluated by the T.E.S.T. program. An additional modification of the original survey included substituting the term "since becoming a teacher" with "since participating in the T.E.S.T. program."

Custom Instrument

A custom-designed self-reporting survey instrument (Appendix D) was used to measure how participation in the T.E.S.T. program has changed teacher perceptions regarding their professional growth, classroom management utilizing biblical principles, and utilizing biblical integration in lesson planning for all academic subjects. A custom survey instrument was needed in order to measure the custom components specific to the T.E.S.T. program. The design and creation of the custom instrument were influenced by my exposure to other instruments similar in structure, design, and implementation. The similar instruments include the Teacher Evaluation Process survey created by Dr. Daniel Duke, the Teaching and Learning International Survey created by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the Launch Michigan Educators Survey created by the private organization Launch Michigan. Each of these instruments offered worthy examples of how to construct questions that would collect data rich in detail and insight from the participants. The custom instrument was validated (Appendix E) by three Christian education professionals with experiences in educational research that relates to

my study. Those who validated the custom instrument include a classroom teacher and curriculum specialist with 20 years of experience in Christian education, a principal and curriculum specialist at a Christian school, and the Head of School from a Christian school with over 20 years of experience. The custom instrument consisted of teacher background questions and three sections of Likert scale type survey questions.

Background questions were used to identify the various degrees of teaching experience of the participating teachers. The additional three sections of the survey consisted of questions related to professional growth, classroom management utilizing biblical principles, and utilizing biblical integration in lesson planning for all academic subjects respectively.

Procedures

Upon Institutional Review Board approval and permission granted from the Head of School (Appendix F) and school board (Appendix G) of Christian School A, formal surveys and interviews were conducted. A mixed methods evaluation approach was utilized in this study as it is one of the best ways of measuring the effectiveness of a comprehensive teacher evaluation program (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The strength of the mixed methods approach is based on seeking and collecting both quantitative and qualitative data corresponding to a particular problem (Creswell, 2014). This approach guided the procedures in this study and required two phases. The first phase included the administration of surveys seeking quantitative data, and the second phase conducted qualitative interviews.

In the first phase of this study, the 75 teachers who were eligible to participate received an introductory email through the school's communication portal RenWeb 1 that

stated the purpose of the research and provided a direct link to each of the three surveys via Survey Monkey online services. Directions were included in the email directing teachers to complete the ATP survey first, the Spiritual Lives of Teachers Survey second, and the custom survey last. The introductory email also notified teachers that participation in the first phase of the study was voluntary and anonymous. Surveys were made available for a 2-week period. Reminders were sent to eligible teachers after the end of the first week and each of the last 2 days the survey was available. The settings in the Survey Monkey application were configured to keep responses anonymous, link the three surveys to each user email, and prohibit more than one completed survey by each email invitation to ensure participants did not submit multiple responses. Upon completion of the custom survey, teachers had the opportunity to continue to Phase 2 of the study by providing a contact phone number or email.

The second phase of this study began approximately 1 week after the three sets of survey data had been collected and analyzed. The first step in this phase was to contact those who indicated on the ATP survey their willingness to participate in secondary interviews. All teachers who indicated a willingness to participate in the qualitative phase were interviewed. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 virus pandemic, teachers were given two options for participating in interviews. One option allowed teachers to participate in face-to-face interviews following social distancing guidelines of staying 6 feet apart from the interviewer and wearing face coverings. The second option allowed teachers to participate in interviews using the Zoom virtual meeting program. The teachers who participated in the interview process were contacted via phone or email to determine the interview option they wanted to use and to designate an interview time. I conducted

interviews with the participating high school teachers, and another administrator conducted interviews with participating junior kindergarten through eighth-grade teachers. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes, and questions were built upon the analyzed data collected from the custom, Spiritual Lives of Teachers, and ATP surveys.

Data Collection

The process of collecting data utilizing the CIPP model is detailed in this chapter. Table 6 is an outline of that process.

Table 6*Data Collection Process Utilizing the CIPP Model*

Research question	Corresponding CIPP evaluation	Data collection
What were the perceptions related to the needs of Christian School A that led to the establishment of the T.E.S.T. program?	Context evaluation	Review of school board meeting notes, accreditation documents, and previously administered teacher surveys. Interviews with administration who initiated the establishment of the T.E.S.T. program.
What were the perceptions relative to how the T.E.S.T. program was structured?	Input evaluation	Review of meeting notes from committee formed to create a custom teacher evaluation program. Interviews with administration who managed the development of the T.E.S.T. program.
What are teacher perceptions relative to the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program?	Process evaluation	ATP (American Teachers Panel). Follow-up teacher interviews.
To what degree did the components of the T.E.S.T. program change teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth?	Product evaluation	Spiritual Lives of Teachers survey results. Custom survey results. Follow-up teacher interviews.

What Were the Perceptions Related to the Needs of Christian School A That Led to the Establishment of the T.E.S.T. Program?

The first aspect of the CIPP model was the context of the evaluation that provides a rationale for determining why a particular program is needed and asks the question, “what needs to be done” (Stufflebeam, 1968). Evaluating the context for implementing

the T.E.S.T. program at Christian School A required reviewing evidences which included school board meeting notes, accreditation documents, and ACSI teacher surveys that had been administered each of the past 10 years. These evidences demonstrated that teachers perceived that a lack of accountability, feedback, and support from school administrators was stymying their development and growth as professional educators. Evidences collected also confirmed that Christian School A was not evaluating its teachers even though it was part of the school's accreditation requirements. These qualitative data were collected to identify the perceived needs of Christian School A and cited the reasons for the establishment of a teacher evaluation program. In addition to these data, additional qualitative data were collected from interviews with school board members and school administrators who initiated the establishment of the T.E.S.T. program. These data were collected to identify the perceptions that guided the establishment of the T.E.S.T. program.

What Were the Perceptions Relative to How the T.E.S.T. Program was Structured?

The second aspect of the CIPP model was the input evaluation intended to assess the best course of action to answer the question of how the program should be structured (Stufflebeam, 1968). In the summer of 2016, a formal committee consisting of three teachers and two administrators from Christian School A was formed, and it held weekly meetings for 2 months investigating and discussing various teacher evaluation approaches. Notes were collected from these past meetings showing evidence that the group determined the best course of action was to create a custom teacher evaluation program designed to meet the academic and spiritual needs of the school. In addition to these meeting notes, additional qualitative data were collected from interviews with

administrators who managed the development of the T.E.S.T. program. These data were collected to identify the perceptions that guided the development and structure of the program.

What Are Teacher Perceptions Relative to the Implementation of the T.E.S.T. Program?

The third aspect of the CIPP model was the process evaluation that assesses the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program at Christian School A and looks to answer the question, “Is the program being implemented” (Stufflebeam, 2003). Quantitative data from the ATP survey were collected to document and measure the level at which the T.E.S.T. program was actually being implemented at Christian School A. Teacher interviews provided qualitative data to measure teacher perceptions of the implementation process.

To What Degree Did the Components of the T.E.S.T. Program Change Teacher Perceptions Regarding Teacher Growth?

The final aspect of the CIPP model was the product evaluation that assessed the intended and unintended outcomes of the evaluated program (Stufflebeam, 2003). The intended outcome of implementing the T.E.S.T. program was to change teacher perceptions regarding their own growth and to add an element of teacher accountability. As noted earlier in this chapter, teachers at Christian School A reported that the lack of a teacher evaluation program was limiting their growth as Christian educators, with growth in this context defined as improvements in teacher outcomes. Therefore, it is necessary to collect data to measure if teachers perceive they have improved as Christian educators as a direct result of participating in the T.E.S.T. program. Quantitative data from the

Spiritual Lives of Teachers survey were collected to measure changes in teacher perceptions regarding their own spiritual lives since participating in the T.E.S.T. program. Additional quantitative data were collected from the custom survey to measure teacher perceptions regarding how they integrate biblical principles into lesson plans and classroom management. Teacher interviews provided qualitative data that offered deeper insights from the Spiritual Lives of Teachers and the custom survey results.

All data collected from this research will be stored in a password-protected external hard drive locked in a fireproof safe for 2 years. At the end of the 2 years, the data will be erased.

Data Analysis

The purpose of analyzing the collected data in this current study was to measure how participating in the T.E.S.T. program has changed teacher perceptions regarding their own growth. The overall process included the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data performed in two phases.

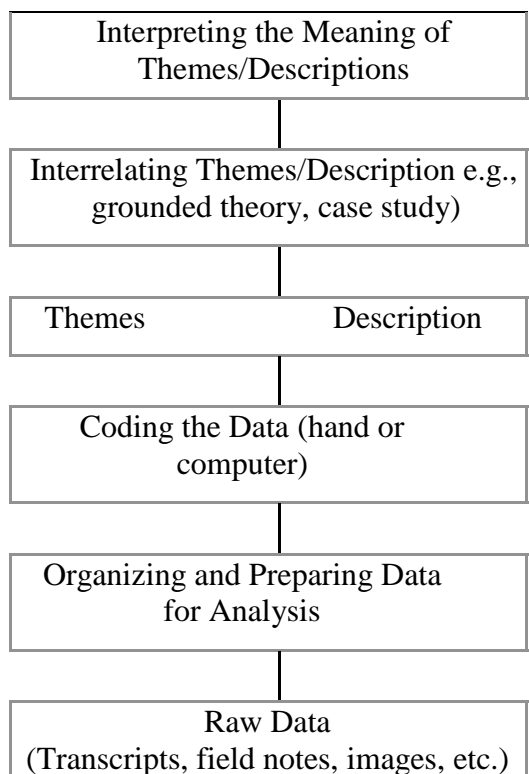
In the first phase, the three sets of quantitative data from the custom survey, the Spiritual Lives of Teachers survey, and the ATP survey were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to be analyzed. Descriptive analysis was applied to scores for each individual question and questions grouped together based on the corresponding subcategories: professional growth, spiritual growth, classroom management from a biblical perspective, lesson planning from a biblical perspective, and implementation of the T.E.S.T. program. Data were analyzed to obtain sum scores for each individual and groups of questions. These sum scores were used to measure changes in teacher perceptions by calculating the mean and variability measured through standard

deviation. Frequency distribution was determined to measure the degree of change regarding teacher perceptions for each individual and groups of questions. This process was conducted on scores for the whole group and subgroups determined by years of teaching experience of participants: less than 5, between 5 and 10, and more than 10 years respectively. This allowed for comparisons of teacher perceptions based on their years of experience.

In the second phase of data analysis, teacher and administrator interviews were analyzed following Creswell's (2014) process of data analysis for qualitative data. As seen in the figure, the process began with the collection of raw data and concluded with interpreting the meaning of themes/descriptions.

Figure

Diagram of the Process of Data Analysis for Qualitative Research



Note. Diagram of the process of data analysis for qualitative research. Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Sage Publications, Inc., p. 197.

Through this process, I developed descriptions and themes from multiple perspectives that gave an in-depth analysis of teacher perceptions relative to the structure of the T.E.S.T. program and how the program impacted their perceptions of teacher growth (Creswell, 2014). Data were processed and carefully considered before being reported in a narrative format (Frechtling & Sharp, 1997). All findings including collected data and analysis were presented to the Head of School and school board at the conclusion of this study.

Delimitations

There were limitations in the methodology of this study as the survey sampling was limited to 75 eligible participants. This sampling size could have limited the generalizability of the results.

Limitations

Teacher bias and influence were possible limiting factors in the validity of the results. The study examined a new teacher evaluation program being implemented in a school that had never before had formal teacher observations. Teachers may have been predispositioned to view the program negatively due to limited or past unfavorable experiences with teacher evaluations.

I am an administrator at the subject school and despite precautions taken to assure anonymity, some teachers may have felt uncomfortable sharing their true opinions.

The current cultural and health crisis in our country could have limited the study

as added stresses have been placed on teachers. This could have limited the ability of participants to focus on questions being asked during the surveys and interviews.

Summary

The research conducted in this chapter outlines a program evaluation using the CIPP model developed by Stufflebeam (1968) measuring changes in teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth through the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program in Christian School A. Three separate survey instruments were utilized to gather quantitative data, and follow-up interviews supplied qualitative data. The collected quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS in an effort to measure changes in teacher perceptions regarding their own growth since participating in the T.E.S.T. program. The collected qualitative data were analyzed following Creswell's (2014) process of data analysis for qualitative data and offered the ability to gain deeper insights from the collected quantitative data. It was the goal of this research to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the T.E.S.T. program and to gather data to determine if the program should continue in its current form or be modified for improvement.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to conduct a program evaluation using the CIPP model to measure teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth through the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program at Christian School A. Teacher growth in this context is defined as improvements in teacher outcomes related to each component of the T.E.S.T. program: professional and spiritual growth, classroom management utilizing biblical principles, and utilizing biblical integration in lesson planning for all academic subjects. Quantitative data were collected utilizing three separate 5-point Likert scale surveys administered to 56 teachers. The teaching experience of the survey participants included four teachers with less than 5 years of experience, 21 teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience, and 31 teachers with more than 10 years of experience. Qualitative data were collected through interviews conducted with 15 teachers and one administrator. The teaching experience of those teachers interviewed included two teachers with less than 5 years of experience, six teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience, and seven teachers with more than 10 years of experience. The findings were organized according to the four research questions utilized in this study.

Findings

Research Question 1

What were the perceptions related to the needs of Christian School A that led to the establishment of the T.E.S.T. program? To answer this question, interviews were conducted with a current school administrator and a school board member who were both in their present roles before the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program in 2016. I first

interviewed the school administrator and asked her if she knew how it was decided that a teacher evaluation program was to be implemented at Christian School A for the start of the 2016-2017 school year. She responded, “I was called to a school board meeting in March of 2016 and was directed by the school board to work with other school administrators to establish a teacher evaluation program by August of 2016.” She also stated that she did not know any other details other than, “The board felt that teacher evaluation and training at the school had been grossly overlooked for some time.”

I also interviewed a school board member who is a session member of the church that founded the school. During that interview, I asked him if he could give details regarding the school board’s decision to implement a teacher evaluation program at Christian School A. He stated that in the spring of 2016, “The school board became very active as it dealt with the financial scandal the school was going through.” The school board believed it had been kept in the dark about many of the day-to-day operations of the school. In order to gain better insight into what was actually going on at the school, the board conducted approximately 30 interviews with teachers and staff. The school board member said that during those teacher interviews, “It became evident that the teachers felt like they had very little support from school administration and that they were receiving little feedback on how they were teaching.” The school board’s interviews with teachers led them to address several areas of concern within the school including teacher evaluation. The school board member explained, “The board worked hard on several issues related to policy and procedures, we made it a priority for school administrators to get something in place to evaluate the teachers.”

Research Question 2

What were the perceptions related to how the T.E.S.T. program was structured? To answer this research question, I conducted separate interviews with a teacher and a school administrator who were part of a 5-person committee formed in April 2016 which was tasked with establishing a teacher evaluation program at Christian School A. Each individual interviewed was asked if they could describe the process that led to the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program.

The interviewed teacher stated that the committee had examined five existing teacher evaluation programs being utilized in public, secular private, and Christian private schools respectively. She stated that while examining the programs, “Concerns arose about the lack of Christian components in the programs being used in the public and secular private schools.” The teacher recalled that during one of those meetings, the decision was made to try something else: “We eventually got discouraged, and all the programs we were looking at just didn’t seem to fit us, so we voted to try to create something for ourselves.”

The interviewed administrator echoed many of the same comments about the examination process. She also added,

We didn’t like what we had, so I called some administrators I knew at other Christian schools and talked to them about what they were doing. I found out that a few of them were using one of the programs we had already looked at and they really didn’t like it, and the others were just observing teachers and writing down notes and didn’t really use any type of formal program.

After several meetings during April, the committee decided that the best course of

action was for the school to create its own teacher evaluation program. I was called to one of the committee's meetings in early March and was asked if I could help create a teacher evaluation program for the school. During that meeting, I questioned the committee members in order to ascertain what elements they valued in a teacher evaluation program. The interviewed administrator recalled, "We knew we wanted something that would evaluate classroom teaching from a biblical perspective, encourage teachers to seek mastery in their profession, and would be portfolio or comprehensive in nature." I worked on the project during May and presented the first edition of the T.E.S.T. program to the committee at the beginning of May 2016. I worked with the committee through several edits and changes to create the final version of the T.E.S.T. program at the end of May 2016. The interviewed administrator commented on the final product:

T.E.S.T. was something that came together from input from teachers and administrators; while not perfect, it had the components that we wanted in it. I felt that the program would be easy for teachers to use, and it would be an effective tool for administrators to know what was going on in the classrooms."

Research Question 3

What are teacher perceptions relative to the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program? To answer this question, the data from the ATP survey were compiled and analyzed for all teachers based on their years of experience. In addition to the ATP survey data, qualitative data were obtained from teacher interviews utilizing Creswell's (2014) process of data analysis for qualitative data. This process required the coding of interviews to single out both positive and negative words and phrases to create

descriptive themes pertaining to each question asked. I also selected some direct quotes that alone added reasoning and depth to the survey questions. During the interviews teachers were asked to give their perspectives on the implementation process of the T.E.S.T. program at Christian School A. Interview questions are located in Appendix H.

The ATP survey asked questions designed to measure teacher perceptions regarding the implementation process of the T.E.S.T. program. One of the key elements of the T.E.S.T. program is ensuring that all teachers are receiving feedback regarding their instructional practice multiple times a year and from a variety of sources. The ATP survey demonstrated that all 56 teachers surveyed had received some type of feedback from either a school administrator, a colleague, or a parent/teacher survey.

Table 7 shows crosstabs of the number of times a teacher received feedback and the source of that feedback based on years of teaching experience.

Table 7*Participant Responses for Feedback Times by Years of Experience*

		Years of teaching experience of teachers						Total N
		<5 Yrs.		5-10 Yrs.		>10 Yrs.		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
In a typical school year, how often do you receive informal or formal feedback regarding your instructional practice from OTHER TEACHERS?	Never	1	6.67%	5	33.33%	9	60.00%	15
	Once			5	38.46%	8	61.54%	13
	Twice							
	Three	1	7.69%	3	23.08%	9	69.23%	13
	Three +	2	13.33%	8	53.33%	5	33.33%	15
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56
In a typical school year, how often do you receive informal or formal feedback regarding your instructional practice from SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS?	Never					4	100.0%	4
	Once	1	6.25%	6	37.50%	9	56.25%	16
	Twice	2	10.00%	11	50.00%	9	40.00%	22
	Three	1	10.00%	1	10.00%	8	80.00%	10
	Three +			3	75.00%	1	25.00%	4
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56
In a typical school year, how often do you receive informal or formal feedback regarding your instructional practice from some type of PARENT/STUDENT SURVEY?	Never	1	12.50%	1	12.50%	6	75.00%	8
	Once	2	5.71%	15	42.86%	18	51.43%	35
	Twice	1	12.50%	2	25.00%	5	62.50%	8
	Three			2	50.00%	2	50.00%	4
	Three +			1	100.00%			1
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56

Note. N=Never, Once=Once a year, Twice=Twice a year, Three=Three times a year, Three+=More than three times a year.

The data collected from this first section of questions highlight the peer, administration, and survey feedback components of the T.E.S.T. program. Results show that only one teacher with less than 5 years of experience and five teachers with between

5 and 10 years of experience had received no feedback from a peer; nine teachers with more than 10 years of experience reported receiving no feedback from a school peer. In regard to receiving feedback from a school administrator, the data showed that all teachers with less than 5 years of experience and between 5 and 10 years of experience had received feedback, while four of 31 teachers with more than 10 years of experience reported receiving no feedback from school administrators. This was confirmed by two teachers during the follow-up interview process. One teacher stated, "I think that because I teach a non-core class, I have not been observed in quite some time and I understand that it may not be looked at as an important academic subject like math." A teacher with more than 10 years of experience explained his thoughts on receiving feedback from school administrators: "I have been here a long time and I think the school has confidence in what I do, I really think they trust me and so I'm left alone to do my job." Results from the final question in this section show that one teacher with less than 5 years of experience and one teacher with between 5 and 10 years of experience had not received feedback from a teacher/parent survey, along with eight teachers with more than 10 years of experience reported receiving no feedback.

Table 8 shows crosstabs of how teachers perceived the helpfulness of the feedback they received from a variety of sources based on years of teaching experience.

Table 8*Participant Responses for Feedback Helpfulness by Years of Experience*

		Years of teaching experience of teachers						Total N
		<5 Yrs.		5-10 Yrs.		>10 Yrs.		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
How helpful was the feedback from OTHER TEACHERS for improving your instructional practice?	NH			2	40.00%	3	60.00%	5
	MNH					2	100.00%	2
	NoDiff	1	8.33%	3	25.00%	8	66.67%	12
	SH	2	8.00%	10	40.00%	13	52.00%	25
	EH	1	8.33%	6	50.00%	5	41.67%	12
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56
How helpful was the feedback from SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS for improving your instructional practice?	NH					4	100.00%	4
	MNH							
	NoDiff							
	SH	2	6.45%	13	41.94%	16	51.61%	31
	EH	2	9.52%	8	38.10%	11	52.38%	21
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56
How helpful was the feedback from some type of PARENT/STUDENT SURVEY for improving your instructional practice?	NH			2	33.33%	4	66.67%	6
	MNH	1	11.11%	2	22.22%	6	66.67%	9
	NoDiff			6	40.00%	9	60.00%	15
	SH	2	10.00%	9	45.00%	9	45.00%	20
	EH	1	16.67%	2	33.33%	3	50.00%	6
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56

Note. NH=Not helpful, MNH=Mostly not helpful, NoDiff=Made no difference, SH=Somewhat helpful, EH= Extremely helpful.

The information reported in Table 8 shows that 75% of teachers with less than 5 years of experience, 76% of teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience, and 58% of teachers with more than 10 years of experience found the feedback they received from other teachers helpful. In terms of feedback from school administrators, 100% of teachers with less than 5 years of experience, 100% of teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience, and 93% of teachers with more than 10 years of experience found the feedback helpful.

Finally, 75% of teachers with less than 5 years of experience, 52% of teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience, and 46% of teachers with more than 5 years of experience found the feedback they received from parent/student surveys helpful. These data show that teachers believed the feedback they received from school administrators was the most helpful in improving their instructional practice. The teacher interview process added details to the findings presented in Table 8. One teacher with 12 years of experience stated, "I don't expect much valuable feedback from a student survey; I think that those types of things are popularity contests, I'm not very popular." Another teacher who is in her second year stated, "I really valued the feedback I received from my principal, I am still learning this job and I know I still have a great deal to learn." The survey data and teacher interviews also demonstrated that peer observations conducted as part of the T.E.S.T. program were seen as helpful. Results from the survey show that 75% of teachers with less than 5 years of experience, 76% of teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience, and 58% of teachers with more than 10 years of experience reported peer feedback as helpful. Peer observations were mentioned positively from 11 of the 15 teachers interviewed. As one interviewed teacher commented,

It takes a little time, but getting a chance to watch some of our teachers here is so worth it; we have amazing teachers and I always pick up something new watching others and from getting feedback from what they saw in my classroom."

Table 9 shows crosstabs of how teachers perceived the design of the T.E.S.T. program based on years of teaching experience.

Table 9*Participant Responses for Design of T.E.S.T. by Years of Experience*

		Years of teaching experience of teachers						Total N
		<5 Yrs.		5 - 10 Yrs.		>5 Yrs.		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
In my school, the teacher evaluation program was designed in a way to be fair to me.	SD					1	100.00%	1
	D					1	100.00%	1
	N	2	13.33%	5	33.33%	8	53.33%	15
	A	2	7.41%	12	44.44%	13	48.15%	27
	SA			4	33.33%	8	66.67%	12
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56
In my school, the teacher evaluation program is designed to prompt teacher growth and development.	SD							
	D					2	100.00%	2
	N	1	14.29%	1	14.29%	5	71.43%	7
	A	1	4.17%	8	33.33%	15	62.50%	24
	SA	2	8.70%	12	52.17%	9	39.13%	23
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56
In my school, the teacher evaluation program is designed to prompt student learning.	SD							
	D					1	100.00%	1
	N	1	11.11%	2	22.22%	6	66.67%	9
	A	2	9.09%	8	36.36%	12	54.55%	22
	SA	1	4.17%	11	45.83%	12	50.00%	24
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56

Note. SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree.

The data in Table 9 reflected that all three experience groups of teachers had positive perceptions regarding the design of the T.E.S.T. program. When asked if the program was designed in a way to be fair, 50% of teachers with less than 5 years of experience, 76% of teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience, and 68% of teachers with more than 10 years of experience agreed or strongly agreed. When asked if they perceived the program had been designed to prompt teacher growth and development,

only two teachers, both with more than 10 years of experience, disagreed. The last question in this section asked teachers if they felt the program had been designed to prompt student learning. Once again, the overall scores were positive in each teacher's age bracket with only one teacher, with more than 10 years of experience, disagreeing. This positive view of the design of the T.E.S.T. program was noted during the teacher interview process. When specifically asked to identify any positive or negative aspects regarding the design of the T.E.S.T. program, 23 positive comments were recorded versus three negative comments.

Table 10 shows crosstabs of how teachers perceived the overall implementation process of the T.E.S.T. program based on years of teaching experience. Table 10 contains varied responses across all three brackets of teacher years of experience. Teachers were asked during the interview phase to provide any positive or negative comments regarding the implementation process of the T.E.S.T. program.

Table 10*Participant Responses for the Implementation Process by Years of Experience*

		Years of teaching experience of teachers						Total N
		<5 Yrs.		5 - 10 Yrs.		>5 Yrs.		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
In my school, I received sufficient training in how to participate in the components of the teacher evaluation program.	SD					2	100.00%	2
	D	1	12.50%	3	37.50%	4	50.00%	8
	N	2	16.67%	3	25.00%	7	58.33%	12
	A	1	5.26%	7	36.84%	11	57.89%	19
	SA			8	53.33%	7	46.67%	15
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56
In my school, I have sufficient time to participate in the components of the teacher evaluation program.	SD					4	100.00%	4
	D	4	22.22%	6	33.33%	8	44.44%	18
	N			6	50.00%	6	50.00%	12
	A			7	43.75%	9	56.25%	16
	SA			2	33.33%	4	66.67%	6
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56
In my school, I have sufficient access to the needed materials to participate in the components of the teacher evaluation program.	SD							
	D	1	11.11%	1	11.11%	7	77.78%	9
	N	3	20.00%	4	26.67%	8	53.33%	15
	A			9	42.86%	12	57.14%	21
	SA			7	63.64%	4	36.36%	11
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56
In my school, I have sufficient access to help/support regarding participation in the teacher evaluation program.	SD							
	D	1	16.67%	1	16.67%	4	66.67%	6
	N			2	20.00%	8	80.00%	10
	A	2	8.70%	12	52.17%	9	39.13%	23
	SA	1	5.88%	6	35.29%	10	58.82%	17
	Total	4	7.14%	21	37.50%	31	55.36%	56

Note. SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree.

The two most common themes created from the transcribed data for this question involved not enough time and the physical T.E.S.T. portfolio notebook itself. One

teacher, with less than 5 years of experience, stated, “It is a great program, but I just don’t have time to fill out some of the paperwork involved with it.” That same teacher also described the burden of keeping up with the T.E.S.T. notebook: “It would be so much more convenient if I could access the program from my laptop; keeping up with the notebook is a hassle and I have even lost it a couple of times.” This new teacher’s sentiments were echoed in the survey results as all four teachers with less than 5 years of experience disagreed that they had sufficient time to participate in the components of the T.E.S.T. program. Among the 21 teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience, six disagreed, six were neutral, and nine had a positive response to having sufficient time. Varied responses were also given by the 31 teachers with more than 10 years of experience with 12 negative, six neutral, and 13 positive responses. Other questions in this section referenced the training and support teachers received in order to be sufficiently prepared to participate in the T.E.S.T. program. In regard to receiving sufficient training, the teachers with less than 5 years of experience gave varying responses, with one teacher giving a negative response, two teachers responding neutral, and one teacher giving a positive response. Teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience reported a mostly positive perception as 15 of the 21 teachers agreed that the training they received was sufficient, while a more modest 18 of 31 teachers with more than 10 years of experience agreed that sufficient training was received. Teachers also gave positive answers when asked if they felt they had received sufficient help and support while participating in the T.E.S.T. program; 75% of teachers with less than 5 years of experience, 86% of teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience, and 61% of teachers with more than 10 years of experience agreed that they had received sufficient help and support.

Research Question 4

To what degree did the components of the T.E.S.T. program change teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth? Four areas of teacher growth were measured in answering this question. Growth in teacher spiritual lives was measured from data acquired through a modified version of the Spiritual Lives of Teachers survey. A custom survey was used to measure teacher growth in the areas of teacher professional lives, classroom management, and lesson planning utilizing biblical principles. The teacher follow-up interviews also contained questions specific to teacher growth.

Spiritual Lives of Teachers Data. Table 11 shows generally positive or neutral responses to how the T.E.S.T. program has impacted the way teachers respond and interact with others.

Table 11*Participant Responses to How They Interact With Others as a Christian Educator*

		N	%
Participating in our teacher evaluation program has encouraged me to be more prayerful for others.	SD	3	5.36%
	D	7	12.50%
	N	13	23.21%
	A	29	51.79%
	SA	4	7.14%
	Total	56	100.00%
Participating in our teacher evaluation program has led me to have more patience with others.	SD	2	3.57%
	D	5	8.93%
	N	21	37.50%
	A	22	39.29%
	SA	6	10.71%
	Total	56	100.00%
Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more sensitive to others from different backgrounds and cultures.	SD	3	5.36%
	D	5	8.93%
	N	18	32.14%
	A	21	37.50%
	SA	9	16.07%
	Total	56	100.00%
Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more forgiving of others.	SD	2	3.57%
	D	5	8.93%
	N	23	41.07%
	A	21	37.50%
	SA	5	8.93%
	Total	56	100.00%

Note. SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree.

The data in Table 11 highlight that a slight majority of teachers (58.93%) had a positive perception and 23.21% had a neutral response to how participation in the T.E.S.T. program has encouraged them to be more prayerful of others. Other questions in this section had similar responses. When asked if the program had encouraged them to be

more patient with others, 37.50% of the participants gave a neutral response, while 50% agreed or strongly agreed that it had impacted their level of patience. The largest neutral responses came in the last question of this section, which asked if the T.E.S.T. program had made them more forgiving of others; 41.07% of the teachers gave a neutral response. This question was mentioned several times during the teacher interviews. One teacher gave the following statement, “I mean it’s a teacher evaluation program; I know it guides us to strengthen our relationships with others and Christ, but I just don’t think it makes me more or less forgiving.” Another teacher stated, “I hope that I am a forgiving person with or without T.E.S.T.”

Table 12 shows how teachers perceived how the T.E.S.T. program impacted their Christian life.

Table 12*Participant Responses Regarding Their Christian Life*

		N	%
Participating in our teacher evaluation program has added accountability in my overall prayer life.	SD	3	5.36%
	D	9	16.07%
	N	20	35.71%
	A	21	37.50%
	SA	3	5.36%
	Total	56	100.00%
Participating in our teacher evaluation program has led me to be more involved with my church.	SD	4	7.14%
	D	11	19.64%
	N	25	44.64%
	A	14	25.00%
	SA	2	3.57%
	Total	56	100.00%
Participating in our teacher evaluation program has encouraged me to read my Bible more often.	SD	3	5.36%
	D	10	17.86%
	N	25	44.64%
	A	13	23.21%
	SA	5	8.93%
	Total	56	100.00%

Note. SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree.

The responses collected in Table 12 contain the lowest percentages of answers where participants either “agreed or strongly agreed.” When asked if the T.E.S.T. program had added accountability in their prayer life, 43% of the surveyed teachers answered with a positive response. Only 29% of the survey participants selected either “agree” or “strongly agree” as their response when asked if participating in the T.E.S.T. program had led them to be more involved with their church. Finally, when asked if the T.E.S.T. program had encouraged them to read their Bibles more often, approximately 32% of teachers surveyed responded agree or strongly agree. The teacher follow-up

interviews gave some insight into the data collected in Table 12. There were 22 recorded comments or phrases that indicated the T.E.S.T. program alone had played a significant role in impacting the Christian lives of the teachers. Recorded comments included, “has little effect,” “really doesn’t make me think about being a better Christian,” and “T.E.S.T. doesn’t instill in me that I need to be at church on Sunday; I want to do that on my own.” One interviewed teacher gave the following response:

I actually see this thing in the opposite light; I don’t see how the T.E.S.T. program has really impacted my life as a Christian, but I do see how me being a Christian has impacted the T.E.S.T. program. I believe that I am called to do my best as a Christian in everything I do. Being honest, faithful, hard-working, and committed are some of my Christian characteristics that come out as I am performing my duties involving the T.E.S.T. program.

Table 13 shows participant responses in regard to how the T.E.S.T. program has impacted them being a Christian educator.

Table 13*Participant Responses in Regard to Being a Christian Educator*

		N	%
Participating in our teacher evaluation program has heightened my awareness of the gravity of my teaching responsibility.	SD	1	1.79%
	D	4	7.14%
	N	11	19.64%
	A	27	48.21%
	SA	13	23.21%
	Total	56	100.00%
Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more teachable.	SD		
	D	3	5.36%
	N	17	30.36%
	A	25	44.64%
	SA	11	19.64%
	Total	56	100.00%
Participating in our teacher evaluation program has improved my understanding of Christian Education.	SD	3	5.36%
	D	2	3.57%
	N	17	30.36%
	A	22	39.29%
	SA	12	21.43%
	Total	56	100.00%

Note. SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree.

The last section of questions from the Spiritual Lives of Teachers survey sought to determine teacher perceptions regarding how the T.E.S.T. program impacted certain aspects of their role as a Christian and an educator. Results from the data showed that 71% of the surveyed teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the program had heightened their awareness of their teaching responsibility. When asked if the program had made them more teachable, 64% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed, compared to 5% who disagreed. The data were similar from the last question of the survey, when asked if the program had improved their understanding of Christian education, with

approximately 9% of teachers disagreeing or strongly disagreeing and 61% agreeing or strongly agreeing.

Custom Survey Data. A custom survey was utilized to measure how participating in the T.E.S.T. program had changed teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth in the areas of overall professional growth, classroom management, and lesson planning utilizing biblical principles.

Table 14 shows participant responses in regard to how the T.E.S.T. program has impacted their professional growth.

Table 14*Participant Responses to How the T.E.S.T. Program Has Impacted Professional Growth*

		N	%
2. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has helped me identify teaching practices that I can improve.	SD		
	D	6	10.71%
	N	6	10.71%
	A	32	57.14%
	SA	12	21.43%
	Total	56	100.00%
3. Through participating in our teacher evaluation program, I have had opportunities to participate in valuable professional development.	SD		
	D	14	25.00%
	N	4	7.14%
	A	27	48.21%
	SA	11	19.64%
	Total	56	100.00%
4. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has allowed me to grow overall in my teaching abilities.	SD		
	D	4	7.14%
	N	9	16.07%
	A	33	58.93%
	SA	10	17.86%
	Total	56	100.00%
5. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has allowed me to grow in my overall knowledge of my subject/grade area.	SD		
	D	9	16.07%
	N	8	14.29%
	A	31	55.36%
	SA	8	14.29%
	Total	56	100.00%

Note. SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree.

Table 14 shows teacher perceptions regarding their own professional growth were mostly positive, with all questions in this section having a combined mean score of 3.44. All four questions had combined “agree” and “strongly agree” responses above the 65% level. Question 1 had the highest number of positive responses, with 78.57% of the

answers being “agree” or “strongly agree.” Question 2 reported 67.85%; Question 4 reported 76.79%, and Question 5 reported 69.65% positive responses. The only significant contrast to mainly positive answers was reflected in Question 3 responses in which 25% of the participants disagreed that the T.E.S.T. program had provided opportunities to participate in valuable professional development. During the teacher interview process, one teacher added some insight to the results of Question 3: “We have professional development opportunities, but the PD is designed for the masses, I just don’t need help in classroom management compared to technology issues.”

Table 15 shows how participants responded to how the T.E.S.T. program impacted their perceptions regarding classroom management utilizing biblical principles.

Table 15*Participant Responses to How the T.E.S.T. Program Has Impacted Classroom**Management Utilizing Biblical Principles*

		N	%
6. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has helped me create classroom discipline procedures/policies based on biblical principles.	SD	2	3.57%
	D	7	12.50%
	N	9	16.07%
	A	30	53.57%
	SA	8	14.29%
	Total	56	100.00%
7. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more aware of creating a classroom environment where scripture is posted.	SD	3	5.36%
	D	7	12.50%
	N	21	37.50%
	A	19	33.93%
	SA	6	10.71%
	Total	56	100.00%
8. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more mindful of taking time for students to share prayer concerns.	SD	2	3.57%
	D	8	14.29%
	N	21	37.50%
	A	21	37.50%
	SA	4	7.14%
	Total	56	100.00%
9. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more aware of looking for opportunities to share the gospel with my students.	SD	1	1.79%
	D	6	10.71%
	N	20	35.71%
	A	26	46.43%
	SA	3	5.36%
	Total	56	100.00%

Note. SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree.

A strong majority of the teachers believed the T.E.S.T. program helped them create classroom discipline procedures/policies based on biblical principles, with 67.86% responses being “agree” or “strongly agree”; 16.07% answered “neither agree nor

disagree”; and 16.07% answered “disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Questions 7, 8, and 9 had some of the higher neutral responses reported from this survey. Questions 7 and 8 both reported 37.50% of teachers surveyed responding, “neither agree nor disagree,” and a similar 37.50% was reported for Question 9. Generally, participants gave positive answers in this section, as the mean score of the sums for all four questions was 3.42. Teacher follow-up interviews provided some insight into the information presented in Table 15. All teacher interviews included positive comments regarding how the T.E.S.T. program had changed the way they manage their classrooms in terms of discipline. One teacher stated, “through the program, I have become much more in tune to when to extend some grace to my students and when not to.” Other positive comments recorded included, “discipline is really an act of love;” “I’m more forgiving, I am after their heart;” “I catch them being good all the time,” and “I want them to be Christ-like in all that they do.”

Table 16 shows how participants responded to questions related to how the T.E.S.T. program impacted lesson planning utilizing biblical principles.

Table 16*Participant Responses to How the T.E.S.T. Program Has Impacted Lesson Planning**Utilizing Biblical Principles*

		N	%
10. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has increased my awareness of how often I connect scripture to daily lessons.	SD	1	1.79%
	D	4	7.14%
	N	17	30.36%
	A	26	46.43%
	SA	8	14.29%
	Total	56	100.00%
11. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has improved my ability to connect scripture to daily lesson plans.	SD	1	1.79%
	D	7	12.50%
	N	17	30.36%
	A	25	44.64%
	SA	6	10.71%
	Total	56	100.00%
12. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has improved my ability to teach through a Christian worldview.	SD	3	5.36%
	D	2	3.57%
	N	10	17.86%
	A	29	51.79%
	SA	12	21.43%
	Total	56	100.00%
13. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has improved my ability to utilize different teaching methods.	SD	1	1.79%
	D	3	5.36%
	N	12	21.43%
	A	24	42.86%
	SA	16	28.57%
	Total	56	100.00%

Note. SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree.

Once again, the majority of responses in this section were positive. All four questions had a 50% or higher recording of “agree” or “strongly agree,” and the mean of all questions from this section was 3.71. Question 12 showed 73.22% of the participants

“agree” or “strongly agree,” and Question 13 reflected that 71.43% “agree” or “strongly agree.” The largest number of “disagree” or “strongly disagree” responses, eight total, emanated from Question 11 which asked if participation in the T.E.S.T. program had improved the teacher’s ability to connect scripture to daily lesson plans.

Teacher Follow-up Interviews. Data collected from the teacher follow-up interviews were conducted and analyzed following Creswell’s (2014) process of data analysis for qualitative data. This process involved documenting several direct quotes from teachers and coding other responses into themes to be interpreted for meaning. Many of the direct quotes recorded during the interview process were presented throughout the narrative of this chapter to provide clarity and contrast to the pertinent survey data. Other responses collected through the interview process are presented by themes in Tables 17 and 18.

Table 17 displays totals of the positive, negative, and neutral comments as they related to how teachers perceived the impact of the T.E.S.T. program on four selected areas of teacher growth.

Table 17

Tone of Comments From Teacher Interviews Regarding the Impact of the T.E.S.T.

Program on Identified Areas of Teacher Growth

Area of teacher growth	Number of neutral comments	Number of positive comments	Number of negative comments
Spiritual growth	19	17	7
Professional growth	6	37	12
Classroom management utilizing biblical principles	5	26	11
Lesson planning utilizing biblical principles	8	11	6

Table 17 highlighted that there were mostly positive comments made during the interview process regarding the impact the T.E.S.T. program had on the four areas of teacher growth measured in this study. There were 37 positive comments recorded that referenced professional growth, 26 regarding classroom management, and 11 regarding lesson planning. The only area of teacher growth that did not receive a majority of positive comments was in reference to spiritual growth. Regarding spiritual growth, there were 19 neutral comments, compared to 17 positive and seven negative comments.

Table 18 lists themes related to possible future changes/improvements to the program that were developed during the coding process and how often they were mentioned.

Table 18

Themes Related to Future Changes and Improvements Based on How Often They Were Mentioned

Theme	Number of times mentioned
Accessibility	11
Time	10
Training	8
Mentor program	5
Licensure	5
Student achievement	4
Extracurricular activities	2

There were 11 comments related to teacher ability to access the T.E.S.T. program. This was most often a comment referring to the desire for the program to be accessible digitally. Not having sufficient time to participate in the program was mentioned 10 times. Training was mentioned eight times during the interview process; these eight comments all referred to teachers wanting training to be conducted in smaller group settings. Blending our school's mentoring program into the T.E.S.T. program and connecting the program to state and ACSI licensure was mentioned five times each. Several teachers mentioned wanting to see their students' end-of-year test scores included in the program. The idea of providing a place within the T.E.S.T. program to include the recognition of student extracurricular activities such as coaching and clubs was suggested.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to conduct a program evaluation using the CIPP model to measure teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth through the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program at Christian School A. T.E.S.T. has been in

place at the school since 2016, and until this study was conducted, no formal evaluation of the program had taken place. The data collected during this study identified how teachers perceived the impact of the T.E.S.T. program on their own spiritual and professional growth as well as their ability to manage classrooms and produce lesson plans utilizing biblical principles. In Chapter 5, a discussion of the significance of the results of each survey instrument and follow-up interviews is presented along with implications for future research in creating a more effective teacher evaluation program for Christian schools.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to conduct a program evaluation using the CIPP model to measure teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth through the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program at Christian School A. Until this study, there had been no formal evaluation of the effectiveness of the T.E.S.T. program. This fact, combined with an overall lack of research regarding teacher evaluation in the Christian school setting (Kabler, 2013), created an opportunity to identify best practices for evaluating and supporting teachers at Christian School A and for Christian schools in general.

Data were collected utilizing three separate survey instruments and individual interviews. The ATP survey collected data to measure teacher perceptions regarding the implementation and design of the T.E.S.T. program. The Spiritual Lives of Teachers survey measured teacher perceptions of their own spiritual growth through participation in the T.E.S.T. program. Teacher perceptions regarding their own professional growth, classroom management utilizing biblical principles, and utilizing biblical integration into lesson planning for all academic subjects were measured through data collected via a custom survey. Individual interviews were conducted with voluntary participants in order to add depth and clarity to the survey data.

Summary of Findings

A summary of research conducted for this program evaluation is presented in the following section. The findings have been organized according to the four research questions and the correlating CIPP component that guided the research process

throughout this study.

Research Question 1. What Were the Perceptions Related to the Needs of Christian School A That Led to the Establishment of the T.E.S.T. Program?

This research question correlates to the first aspect of the CIPP model, the context of the evaluation, which seeks to provide the rationale for determining why a particular program is needed and what needs to be done (Stufflebeam, 1968). Interviews were conducted with a school board member and an administrator at Christian School A. These interviews acknowledged that there was no formal teacher evaluation program in place at the school prior to the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program. The school board member shared how over 30 teachers had communicated their concern and frustration regarding the fact that there was no teacher evaluation and feedback process at the school. The board was also concerned because the school was not evaluating its teachers despite the fact that it was part of the school's accreditation requirements with ACSI (2019). Christian School A needed to establish the T.E.S.T. program because it had no formal teacher evaluation program in place despite the fact that the school was required to have one. Christian School A, like the other thousands of Christian schools in the country, has made a commitment to teach and partner with parents in the lives of their children. Like many of those schools, Christian School A was not living up to its commitment to ensure quality teaching through teacher evaluations (Christian School Management, 2018).

Christian School A is an unfortunate example of how a school, being free of state requirements and regulations, can neglect its responsibility to provide accountability and training for its teachers. The school was large, well-established, and had a good academic

reputation in the area. Things appeared to be going well at the school, even in the midst of a challenging financial scandal. It took a large-scale needs assessment of the school's teachers to identify the problem and the need for the T.E.S.T. program. These findings demonstrated the need for Christian School A, and essentially all private schools, to periodically assess their teacher evaluation, feedback, and training processes. To address this need, Christian School A developed an end-of-year teacher survey that includes survey questions specifically regarding the teacher evaluation program. The results of the survey data are reviewed by the school administrators and school board 2 weeks after the last day of school. During this meeting, recommendations and suggestions can be made to address any identified concerns regarding the teacher evaluation program.

Research Question 2. What Were the Perceptions Relative to How the T.E.S.T. Program Was Structured?

This research question correlates to the second aspect of the CIPP model, the input evaluation, and is intended to assess the best course of action to answer the question of how the program should be structured (Stufflebeam, 1968). The findings from interviews conducted with a teacher and school administrator who helped design the T.E.S.T. program identified two major points.

First, it was clear that Christian School A desired to implement a teacher evaluation program that would incorporate Christian beliefs. The school existed to teach students in all subject areas utilizing biblical principles. As noted in Chapter 2, these biblical principles therefore guide and shape the school's curriculum and set the expectations for its teachers; thus, these should be prevalent in any teacher evaluation program taking place at the school. This requirement makes it difficult to apply a teacher

evaluation program developed for public schools directly to the Christian school setting (Eckel, 2003). The team designated to select a teacher evaluation program to implement at Christian School A made the decision to exclude any programs that had been designed for secular schools and would focus on finding a program that was designed for Christian schools.

Finally, the findings related to Research Question 2 show that there are a limited number of teacher evaluations specifically created for Christian schools compared to the number of programs designed for use in secular schools. The school administrator who was interviewed noted that their search for a Christian-based teacher evaluation program “only yielded a few programs to choose from.” She also added that “it just makes sense; there are just far less Christian schools in the world compared to secular schools.” This fact led the team to the conclusion that the best course of action for Christian School A was to design its own teacher evaluation program. To fulfill the needs of Christian School A, the T.E.S.T. program was designed to combine the best practices developed in secular schools with biblical principles essential to Christian education.

Research Question 3. What Are Teacher Perceptions Relative to the Implementation of the T.E.S.T. Program?

Research Question 3 relates to the third aspect of the CIPP model; it is the process of evaluation that assesses the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program at Christian School A and examines how the program is being implemented (Stufflebeam, 2003). Findings related to Research Question 3 were based on the results from the ATP survey questions and teacher interviews. The ATP survey questions were analyzed using crosstabulations based on years of teaching experience.

One of the main goals of implementing the ATP survey was to identify the level at which teachers were receiving feedback regarding their instructional practices from school administrators. Survey results showed that all teachers with less than 5 years of experience and between 5 and 10 years of experience had received feedback from a school administrator, while four of 31 teachers with more than 10 years of experience reported receiving no feedback from school administrators. These four teachers' years of experience likely were the reason they had not received any feedback from administrators. Three of these teachers participated in the interview process and made statements regarding how they were trusted and had good reputations in the school based on their many years of service. They all believed they were "left alone" based on that experience. Despite these teachers' years of experience, it is concerning that they had not received any feedback considering that the goal of the T.E.S.T. program is for all teachers to receive feedback as it is one of the best means of ensuring quality instruction (Huber & Skedsmo, 2016). It would be a goal for Christian School A to have all its teachers evaluated and provided feedback from school administrators. This would certainly be discussed at the end-of-year meeting between school administrators and the school board. It will be up to the school board and the Head of School to decide the level of accountability that would be placed on the school's principals in order to assure that all teachers are evaluated and provided feedback.

The T.E.S.T. program is designed to provide teachers with instructional feedback from three sources: other teachers, administrators, and parent/student surveys. Crosstabulations of the helpfulness for each source were performed based on years of teaching experience. The survey results combined with information gathered during

teacher interviews demonstrated that the majority of teachers with less than 5 years of experience acknowledged feedback helpful regardless of the source. This indicates that less experienced teachers should benefit from a teacher evaluation program that provides as much feedback as possible. As one teacher with less than 5 years of experience stated during the interview process, “I am eager to improve as a professional educator and will take any feedback I can get.” The data also showed that teachers with more than 5 years of experience reported that the feedback they received from school administrators was the most helpful and that feedback from peers and parent/student surveys was less helpful. As one teacher with 17 years of experience shared during the interview process,

I will always value the feedback I receive from my administrators; they hold me accountable to the school’s policies and procedures and I take that very seriously.

The peer observations and surveys, not so much. I find that I really just get the same recommendations and commendations year after year from my peers. The surveys aren’t much help either, just opinions from parents who either love or hate what I am doing; I’ve heard it all before and nothing surprises me anymore.

In regard to the design of the T.E.S.T. program, a vast majority of the teachers, regardless of their experience, reported that the program is designed to prompt teacher growth and student learning. These findings are encouraging as they could represent teacher buy-in of the T.E.S.T. program. Especially encouraging was the fact that 77% of the teachers with more than 10 years of experience reported that the T.E.S.T. program was designed to prompt teacher growth and student development. These veteran teachers are leaders and mentors to others; this status gives them influence over the staff. Their support of T.E.S.T. could help establish the program as the long-term solution to the

school's teacher evaluation needs.

The final set of questions from the ATP survey (Table 10) asked teachers to provide their perceptions regarding training, time, materials, and support needed to participate in the T.E.S.T. program. The findings show that the time needed to participate in the T.E.S.T. program was a concern for teachers in all three experience brackets. None of the teachers with less than 5 years of experience reported that they had sufficient time to participate in the program. Of the teachers with 5 to 10 years of experience, 43% believed they had sufficient time; and 42% of the teachers with more than 10 years of experience reported having sufficient time. The teacher interview process highlighted that the lack of time could be based on the overall workloads of the teachers and not the T.E.S.T. program itself. As stated by one teacher with 5 to 10 years of experience,

The issue I have with time is that I teach a full schedule with just one break at the very end of the day. I give all the time and energy I have to make sure that I am prepared to teach my class and deal with emails. I really don't have time for any kind of extra responsibility or work.

The T.E.S.T. program does require periodic input from participating teachers, as teacher goals and self-reflection notes are to be documented. Teachers also perform peer evaluations and share recommendations and commendations with the observed teacher. These tasks thus require extra time in the teacher's schedule to adequately respond to the T.E.S.T. program expectations. Administrators at Christian School A should be mindful of the time constraints placed on teachers as they perform their day-to-day tasks and fulfill the requirements of the T.E.S.T. program.

Teachers also reported that they did not like having to use the physical T.E.S.T.

notebook itself. Teachers were asked during the interview process to identify ways to improve the T.E.S.T. program; the physical T.E.S.T. notebook was mentioned 11 times, the most of any suggestion. Teachers would like a digital format of the T.E.S.T. program made available that would be accessible from home or school.

In summary, data collected from the ATP survey showed that teachers believed that through participation in the T.E.S.T. program, they had received valuable feedback that was helping foster teacher and student growth. The ATP data also highlighted teacher concerns regarding the time needed to participate in the program and the lack of a digital T.E.S.T. program format.

Research Question 4. To What Degree Did the Components of the T.E.S.T. Program Change Teacher Perceptions Regarding Teacher Growth?

This research question relates to the final aspect of the CIPP model; it is the product evaluation that assesses intended and unintended outcomes of the evaluated program (Stufflebeam, 2003). The findings related to this research question were based on data acquired through a modified version of the Spiritual Lives of Teachers survey, a custom survey, and teacher interviews.

Spiritual Lives of Teachers Survey Findings. Data from the Spiritual Lives of Teachers survey highlighted that teachers were divided regarding their perceptions of how the T.E.S.T. program influenced their own spiritual life. In terms of how the program influenced teacher dealings with others, results showed that 50% of the teachers believed the T.E.S.T. program had led them to be more patient with others; and 46% agreed that the program made them more forgiving of others. High numbers of neutral responses were given regarding teacher perceptions of how the program impacted their

own spiritual lives. Responses show that 44.64% of the teachers believed the program led them to be more involved with their church, with the same number of teachers responding that the program had led them to read their Bibles more often. The teacher interviews also produced divided responses to questions regarding the T.E.S.T. program's influence on the spiritual lives of the teacher. Seven teachers gave responses during interviews acknowledging that the program influenced them to be better Christian educators. As one teacher stated, "The self-reflection components of T.E.S.T. have really made me think about how I am living my life as a Christian and how I perform my job as a Christian teacher." In contrast to that sentiment, eight teachers gave statements during the interview process that the program had no impact on their spiritual life. A teacher from this group stated,

I believe that these qualities: patience, prayerfulness, forgiving others, church participation, and reading my Bible, are things that I already have instilled in me through years of living life as a Christian. That is why I wanted to work here, and why I was hired to work here. While I certainly don't think the program hinders me from being mindful of these things; I just don't need the program to remind me that I need to be a good Christian. I would say, however, that if I wasn't really a Christian, that would come out as I participated in T.E.S.T.

The results from this section of the Spiritual Lives of Teachers survey indicated that the Christian components of the T.E.S.T. program will be beneficial to some and not to others seeking growth in their relationship with God as a means of improving themselves and thus their teaching (Hughes, 2015). The helpfulness of T.E.S.T. to encourage spiritual growth in teachers will be dependent on how and where those individuals look

for inspiration in living the Christian life. School administrators at Christian School A have a program that will help encourage some teachers with their spiritual growth, while also providing a means of identifying a teacher's overall spiritual beliefs. This does create a way to help ensure that teacher spiritual beliefs are in alignment with the school's overall Christian beliefs, mission, and vision (ACSI, 2019). Therefore, Christian schools would have documentation for retaining a teacher based on how they adhere to the school's Christian beliefs, mission, and vision.

The final section of questions from the Spiritual Lives of Teachers survey focused on how the T.E.S.T. program influenced participants as Christian educators. Higher numbers of positive responses were recorded in this section, with 71.42% of teachers responding that the program had heightened their awareness of the gravity of their teaching responsibility. Results also showed that 60.72% of teachers believed the program had improved their understanding of Christian education. These findings highlight that a majority of the participants in this study believed the program had helped them develop as Christian educators. This information implies that the T.E.S.T. program could benefit new teachers to the school who may not have experience or prior training in teaching in the Christian school environment, as the program would expose them to some of the concepts, foundations, and theories pertinent to Christian education. Therefore, it is essential to keep the spiritual life components in the T.E.S.T. program. A secondary program could be created designed to acclimate new teachers to specific religious aspects of Christian School A and Christian education in general.

Custom Survey Findings. A custom survey was utilized to measure how participating in the T.E.S.T. program had changed teacher perceptions regarding teacher

growth in the areas of overall professional growth, classroom management, and lesson planning utilizing biblical principles. The findings show that a majority of the participants in this study found that the T.E.S.T. program had a positive impact on their professional growth. The results demonstrated that 78.57% of the teachers reported that the program helped them identify teaching practices on which they could improve and 76.79% reported that the program allowed them to grow overall in their teaching abilities. These data indicate that the program has been successful in helping teachers develop their teaching skills and abilities.

Teacher responses were more divided when asked if the program had impacted how they utilize biblical principles in classroom management. One positive result showed that 67.86% of teachers believed the program helped them create classroom discipline procedures/policies based on biblical principles. In contrast, only 44.64% of teachers believed the program had helped them create classroom environments where scripture was posted, with the same number of teachers responding that the program had made them more mindful of taking time for students to share prayer concerns. Comments recorded during the teacher interviews added some insights to the survey results. One teacher stated, "Yes, going through this program has helped me greatly in how I incorporate biblical principles in my discipline, with forgiveness, redemption, and accountability being the foundations of my classroom rules." Another teacher commented,

I could not believe that posting scripture in my classroom was something that I would be evaluated on. I just couldn't believe it; I mean this is a Christian school; what else is going to be put on my walls. Seriously, I am going to put scripture on

my walls because I can here, not because I know that I am going to be evaluated on having it there.

The findings from this section of the custom survey show that the T.E.S.T. program is likely to help a majority of teachers in utilizing biblical principles in their classroom management and will help them integrate the Christian faith into all aspects of the learning experience (Montoro, 2014).

In terms of how the T.E.S.T. program had impacted teacher lesson planning utilizing biblical principles, a majority responded that they believed the program had improved their ability to connect scripture to daily lesson plans, teach through a Christian worldview, and utilize different teaching methods. As one teacher commented during the interview process, “I have certainly been challenged to find a way for every lesson to connect to the Bible. It is not always easy, but I have gotten good at finding unique ways to make connections.” The findings indicate that the T.E.S.T. program will help teachers meet the expectation that there will be elements of scripture or Christian themes that tie teaching to the school’s Christian mission and vision (ACSI, 2019).

Final Conclusions

The T.E.S.T. program was created and implemented at Christian School A to provide the school with a teacher evaluation program that was specifically designed for implementation in the Christian school setting. Central to the design of the T.E.S.T. program are components to evaluate and provide training related to the spiritual lives and roles of the teachers as Christian educators. The determination of teacher perceptions regarding the design, implementation, and effectiveness of those components was central to the design of this study.

In this study, teachers reported that the T.E.S.T. program did provide feedback from a variety of sources that promoted teacher and student growth. A majority of teachers identified the feedback they received from school administrators as being the most consistent and effective. A smaller number of teachers benefited from peer observations and surveys; it was viewed as supplemental feedback for them. Overall, the feedback process outlined in the T.E.S.T. program produced positive conversations and prompted teachers to self-reflect on strategies to improve instruction.

Half of the teachers who participated in this study reported not having sufficient time to participate in the components of the program. This was especially true of the teachers with less than 5 years of experience; all four of those teachers reported that they did not have enough time. As all aspects of the T.E.S.T. program are valued, it is difficult to remove components in an effort to reduce participation time. School administrators should look for ways to reduce time demands on teachers, especially those new to the profession. Hiring extra staff to reduce individual teacher class responsibilities and providing full-time assistants in lower grades are possible ways to reduce time demands placed on teachers.

In terms of teacher spiritual growth, collected data indicated that the T.E.S.T. program's impact on the teachers at Christian School A has been moderate. The program did not encourage spiritual growth in a majority of the teachers and cannot be relied on as a sole means of promoting spiritual growth. Information gathered during teacher interviews demonstrated that teachers believed that the program's design was less about promoting spiritual growth and more about holding teachers accountable to the school's Christian mission, vision, and values. As one teacher noted, "The program really did not

help me grow in my faith, but it did put before me that the school has certain expectations of how I conduct myself as a Christian teacher.”

The survey and interview data collected from this study showed that teachers at Christian School A perceived that they had grown as professional Christian educators through their participation in the T.E.S.T. program. The program has identified areas of improvement for teachers specific to the subject/grade they teach. Along with identifying areas for improvement, teachers reported that participating in the program has provided them some means to make those improvements. Teachers have also grown in their understanding of Christian education and their role as Christian educators. This growth has helped teachers develop skills needed to integrate biblical principles into daily lessons and classroom management policies/procedures. Therefore, Christian School A should continue to utilize the T.E.S.T. program for evaluating and developing its teachers.

Limitations

Several of the limitations associated with this study are based on the unique and custom design of the T.E.S.T. program itself. This study was an evaluation of a program that is only 5 years old and has never been previously evaluated. This fact made the task of finding suitable survey instruments difficult. Two of the instruments utilized in this study were modified as possible to measure the program; a custom instrument was developed with the T.E.S.T. program specifically in mind. These instruments provided adequate but not sufficient information by themselves to truly measure the effectiveness of the T.E.S.T. program. Interviews were a needed component in order to fill in the feedback voids left by the surveys. The process of utilizing three separate survey

instruments to measure the program was time-consuming. It is not practical for a school to perform this type of research on an annual basis. The unique nature of the T.E.S.T. program has also limited it to only being implemented at one Christian school. This fact limited data collection for the study from just Christian School A.

The current health crisis in our country also limited in person communications resulting in many teachers opting not to participate in teacher interviews via video conferencing.

Recommendations for Further Study

It is recommended that administrators should provide teachers sufficient time to participate in the T.E.S.T. program. This could be accomplished by easing workloads through the reduction of classes taught by teachers and providing an assistant for teachers in self-contained classrooms. Time should also be specifically designated for teachers to work on the T.E.S.T. program during teacher workdays and afterschool sessions.

An electric version of the T.E.S.T. program should be made available that is compatible with multiple computer operating systems and can be accessed from off-site locations. This would ensure that teachers could access the program with Apple and Microsoft based computers and would allow them to work on the T.E.S.T. program away from the school campus.

Placing teachers in cohorts or teams based on their subject or grade level is recommended when providing teacher training and support opportunities. This would allow for smaller group settings in which teachers with commonalities could work and assist each other.

It is also recommended that a single survey instrument be created that would

measure all the components of the T.E.S.T. program. This would allow schools that participate in future studies a more efficient way of measuring the effectiveness of the program. While it was important to establish a base of research regarding the T.E.S.T. program, future research involving additional Christian schools is highly recommended. It would be beneficial for Christian School A to make this study and the T.E.S.T. program itself available to other Christian schools. More Christian schools utilizing and evaluating the program would allow for more information to measure the program's strengths and weaknesses, which would allow for future edits and modifications to the program.

Summary

A program evaluation using the CIPP model was conducted to measure changes in teacher perceptions regarding teacher growth through the implementation of the T.E.S.T. program at Christian School A. Data from this study confirmed that teachers perceived individual growth related to each component of the T.E.S.T. program: professional and spiritual growth, classroom management utilizing biblical principles, and the utilization of biblical integration into lesson planning for all academic subjects. The T.E.S.T. program has provided Christian School A with a viable means to provide Christian teachers evaluation, support, and training.

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Appendix A

ATP (American Teacher Panel) Survey Modified

ATP Survey

In a typical school year, how often do you receive informal or formal feedback regarding your instructional practice from **OTHER TEACHERS**?

- Never
- Once a year
- Twice a year
- Three times a year
- More than three times a year

In a typical school year, how often do you receive informal or formal feedback regarding your instructional practice from **SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS**?

- Never
- Once a year
- Twice a year
- Three times a year
- More than three times a year

In a typical school year, how often do you receive informal or formal feedback regarding your instructional practice from **PARENT/STUDENT SURVEY**?

- Never
- Once a year
- Twice a year
- Three times a year
- More than three times a year

How helpful was the feedback from **OTHER TEACHERS** for improving your instructional practice?

- Not helpful
- Mostly not helpful
- Made no difference
- Somewhat helpful
- Extremely helpful

How helpful was the feedback from **SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS** for improving your instructional practice?

- Not helpful
- Mostly not helpful
- Made no difference
- Somewhat helpful
- Extremely helpful

How helpful was the feedback from **PARENT/STUDENT SURVEY** for improving your instructional practice?

- Not helpful
- Mostly not helpful
- Made no difference
- Somewhat helpful
- Extremely helpful

In my school, the teacher evaluation program has been fair to me.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

In my school, the teacher evaluation program is intended to prompt teacher growth and development.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
-

In my school, the teacher evaluation program is intended to prompt student learning.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

In my school, I received sufficient training in how to participate in the components of the teacher evaluation program.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

In my school, I have sufficient time to participate in the components of the teacher evaluation program.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

In my school, I have sufficient access to the needed materials to participate in the components of the teacher evaluation program.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

In my school, I have sufficient access to help/support regarding participation in the components of the teacher evaluation program.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Appendix B

Spiritual Lives of Teachers Survey Modified

Spiritual Lives of Teachers Survey

Participating in our teacher evaluation program has encouraged me to be more prayerful for others.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Participating in our teacher evaluation program has led me to have more patience with others.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more sensitive to others from different backgrounds and cultures.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more forgiving of others.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Participating in our teacher evaluation program has added accountability in my overall prayer life.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Participating in our teacher evaluation program has led me to be more involved with my church.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Participating in our teacher evaluation program has encouraged me to read my Bible more often.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Participating in our teacher evaluation program has heightened my awareness of the gravity of my teaching responsibility.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more teachable.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Participating in our teacher evaluation program has improved my understanding of Christian Education.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Appendix C

Correspondence With Dr. June Hetzel

On Tue, Jun 16, 2020 at 12:45 PM Mark Apgar <MApgar@[REDACTED]>
wrote:

Dr. Hetzel,

Hello! My name is Mark Apgar. I am a principal at [REDACTED] located in Huntersville, N.C. I am currently writing chapter 3 of my dissertation through Gardner-Webb University. My dissertation is a program evaluation of a teacher evaluation tool I created called T.E.S.T. (Teacher Evaluation, Support and Training). TEST has been designed specifically for teachers in the Christian school setting. TEST includes a component that is designed to encourage the growth of teacher's spiritual lives. In looking for a way to measure the impact that TEST has had on the spiritual lives of teachers I came across an article in the ACSI database that you co-authored titled "The Spiritual Lives of Teachers". I found the article very useful and I am asking your permission to utilize a modified version of the questions asked of teachers in that article. Basically, I would like to use the narrative responses given in the article to form a Likert scale of questions that would help determine at what level the TEST program is fostering spiritual growth in participating teachers.

I certainly appreciate your consideration and time in this matter. I am also available to discuss my request in more detail. XXXXXX

Thank you,

Mark S. Apgar

Principal JK – 8th Grade

[REDACTED]

From: June Hetzel [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 4:08 PM
To: Mark Apgar <MApgar@[REDACTED].org>
Subject: Re: permission to use survey

Hi Mark,

Absolutely! You have my permission to use a modified version of the questions from the Spiritual Lives of Teachers Survey. The only request that I would ask:

- 1) reference to the original survey and article in your dissertation
- 2) a copy of your findings after you complete your study

May the Lord bless you in this endeavor!!!

June Hetzel, Ph.D.

Dean of Education

Biola University

Appendix D
Custom Survey Instrument

Custom Survey

1. Please select the answer that best describes your teaching experience.
 - I have been teaching less than 5 years.
 - I have been teaching between 5 and 10 years.
 - I have been teaching more than 10 years.

2. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has helped me identify teaching practices that I can improve.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

3. Through participating in our teacher evaluation program, I have had opportunities to participate in valuable professional development.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

4. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has allowed me to grow overall in my teaching abilities.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

5. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has allowed me to grow in my overall knowledge of my subject/grade area.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

6. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has helped me create classroom discipline procedures/policies based on biblical principles.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

7. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more aware of creating a classroom environment where scripture is posted.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

8. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more mindful of taking time for students to share prayer concerns.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

9. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has made me more aware of looking for opportunities to share the gospel with my students.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

10. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has increased my awareness of how often I connect scripture to daily lessons.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

11. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has improved my ability to connect scripture to daily lesson plans.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

12. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has improved my ability to teach through a Christian worldview.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

13. Participating in our teacher evaluation program has improved my ability to utilize different teaching methods.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

14. This is the end of the survey section of this research. Please indicate if you would be willing to participate in secondary interviews designed to gain further insights regarding your survey answers. Please note that further participation is voluntary.

- Yes, I would like to participate in further interviews. I will email [REDACTED] to provide my contact information.
- No, I do not wish to participate in further interviews.

Appendix E

Reliability and Validity of Custom Survey

Mr. Apgar.

The following survey questions would be considered in my opinion to be valid and reliable in measuring teacher's perceptions on the impact of the TEST program within a Christian school environment.

James Hall, Ed.D.
Curriculum Instruction Specialist and
Middle School Teacher, Brookstone Schools
22 years experience in Christian education/research

Mr. Apgar,

Thank you for sharing your survey questions for the program evaluation with me. In reviewing them, I found them to be both valid and reliable survey questions in this study. In my 20 years of experience in Christian education I can say that helping teachers to continually strive for excellence and growth is an ever changing goal. This survey would be both a helpful and effective tool in evaluating the T.E.S.T. program.

Blessings,

Kim Goodwin
Head of School
Grace Covenant Academy
[REDACTED]

Mr. Apgar,

The Custom Survey created is a reliable and valid way to measure teachers' perceptions relative to the structure and implementation of the T.E.S.T. program.

Becky Makla
21 year experience as an educator (7 years as an administrator)
Interim Upper School Principal, [REDACTED]

Becky Makla
Interim Upper School Principal

Appendix F

Permission From Head of School to Conduct Research at Christian School A

Mr. Mark Apgar,

Consider this correspondence confirmation of permission to conduct research at [REDACTED] Academy toward completing of your doctoral degree. Verbal permission was granted prior to the beginning of the research so this email serves as written/electronic confirmation.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Head of School

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Appendix G

Permission From School Board to Conduct Research at Christian School A

Mark,

As we discussed, it has been approved for you to conduct research at [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] for the purposes of completing your doctoral dissertation.

We appreciate your service at [REDACTED] and wish you the best of luck as you complete your doctorate.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

School Board Chair, [REDACTED]

Appendix H

Interview Questions for Teacher Follow-up Interviews

Interview Questions for Teacher Follow-up Interviews

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research by volunteering to be interviewed. Do I have your permission to record our conversation for transcribing at a later time?

Begin Recording.

Today I am going to be asking you some questions related to the T.E.S.T. program and the recent surveys that you have participated in.

Interview Questions and Prompts:

- 1. How many years of experience do you have as a classroom teacher?*
- 2. Please describe any positive or negative aspects you can think of in regards to how the T.E.S.T. program was implemented at our school.*
- 3. Please describe any positive or negative aspects you can think of in regards to how the T.E.S.T. program is structured or designed.*
- 4. Please describe your experience with the T.E.S.T. program in regards to how it has impacted your life as a Christian and as a Christian educator.*
- 5. Please describe your experience with the T.E.S.T. program in regards to how it has impacted your professional growth.*
- 6. Please describe your experience with the T.E.S.T. program in regards to how it has impacted your classroom management.*
- 7. Please describe your experience with the T.E.S.T. program in regards to how it has impacted your ability to integrate biblical principles into daily lessons.*
- 8. The survey data showed that about 75% of our teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the participating in our teacher evaluation program has allowed them to grow overall in their teaching abilities. What are your thoughts regarding those results?*

9. *Do you have any suggestions related to how we could improve or change the T.E.S.T. program?*

Once again, thank you for your willingness to participate in this study.