Running Head: Teaching with your Strengths

Building a World Class Islamic School:

Teaching with Your Strengths

Loretta Abbasi

Al Ihsan School of Excellence

Study submitted for
7th Annual Islamic Society of North America Education Forum
Rosemont, Illinois
April 2006

Introduction

In this new millennium, Islamic education has begun an exciting and momentous venture in America. The number of Islamic schools in the United States has steadily grown over the past twenty years from 50 schools in 1987 to over 220 in 2006 (Klienerman, 2005). In the post 9-11 era, it is clear that Islamic schools will play a pivotal role in shaping the future for American-Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Concurrently, public education is undergoing the biggest reform movement in its history. As public schools are reacting to several factors of the No Child Left Behind Law by creating competitive initiatives in school privatization, Islamic schools are struggling with developing quality programs as they are rapidly shifting from community start up schools into world class institutions. All are racing to raise the bar for students as they compete with international education in their fear of being left behind.

Qualified Teachers are necessary in both Islamic and public schools across America. As schools struggle to recruit and retain talented teachers in the midst of a teacher shortage, they are in pursuit of best practice models to develop their staff. Highly successful schools have qualified teachers who implement effective and rigorous instruction for student achievement. As with any ambitious project, starting a tradition of Muslim institutions in a non-Islamic country has many challenges. Many schools struggle with public perception, a lack of financial resources, and developing a sound curriculum to name a few. This study will examine staff development models and propose teacher quality as a foundation of building a world-class Islamic school.

This paper will argue that schools must implement supervision models that raise teacher efficacy. An action research project will be analyzed which reports a measurement of teacher efficacy levels after reading and participating in the Gallup Organization's book and workshop, *Teaching with Your Strengths.* Additionally, a teacher supervision model implemented at Al Ihsan Islamic School of Excellence in Cleveland, Ohio will be presented.

Purpose of Study

Phi Delta Kappa report that since 1968 Americans worry about a lack of great teachers (Liesveld, et al, 2005). In the 2002 Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup study, Rose and Gallup (2002) found that 73% of Americans believe that one of the most serious problems facing education is a lack of qualified teachers. Gallup has conducted a mega-research study analyzing the best teachers around the country. Gallup asked, "What do great teachers do differently?" Mountains of research point to this crucial fact; while their styles and approaches may differ, all great teachers make the most of their natural talents. Here is something else: Great teachers do not strive to be well rounded. They know that fixing their weaknesses does not work. It only produces mediocrity. Worse, it diverts time and attention from what they naturally do well. Gallup has discovered that great teachers have an innate talent for the job. Teacher talents are natural and individual, and it spurs great teachers to behave in ways unique to each one of them (p. 16). They discover what they do best and do it continuously. The idea of realizing one's innate talents and strengths can be used to magnify teacher efficacy.

The purpose of this study will focus on:

1. Can teachers develop a better perception of self-efficacy when they learn to apply their natural talents and strengths?

These factors will be translated into a model of teacher supervision used at ASE. Furthermore, teacher surveys measuring teacher efficacy and personal teacher interviews will be included to understand recent behavior changes after reading and participating in the Gallup Organization's "Teaching with Your Strengths" book and workshop.

Review of the Literature

A thorough review of the literature has explained important factors surrounding teacher efficacy. However, there are two separate but intertwined conceptual strands growing from two theoretical frameworks. In the past, educators have confused Rotter's locus of control and Bandura's perceived self-efficacy as the same concept. Bandura (1997) clarifies the difference between these two concepts in his latest work. Goddard & Hoy (2005) explain as they state, "beliefs about one's capability to produce certain actions (perceived self-efficacy) are not the same as beliefs about whether actions affect outcomes (locus of control)". Certainly, perceived self-efficacy and locus of control bear little or no empirical relationship with each other. Further, perceived self efficacy is a much stronger predictor of behavior than locus of control. Rotter's scheme of internal-external locus of control is concerned primarily with causal beliefs about the relationship between actions and outcomes, not with personal efficacy. One may believe that a particular outcome is internally controllable, that is, caused by the actions of the

individual, but still have little confidence that he or she can accomplish the desired actions.

According to Bandura, four factors influence a person's efficacy beliefs, (1) mastery learning, which involves mastering tools and processes that allow competency to manage ever changing life circumstances; 2) vicarious experiences, like modeling, that focus on successful practice; 3) social persuasion, the result of positive support and encouragement from others; and 4) psychological and emotional states, that influence an individual's attitude, mood, and ability to cognitively process information in ways that affects levels of effectiveness.

In response to the conceptual confusion surrounding teacher efficacy and in keeping with the substantial body of research, Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (2001) proposed an integrated model of teacher efficacy. Consistent with social cognitive theory, the major influences on efficacy beliefs are assumed to be the attributional analysis and interpretation of the four sources of information about efficacy described by Bandura (1997) -- mastery experience, physiological arousal, vicarious experience, and verbal persuasion. However, teachers do not feel equally efficacious for all teaching situations. Teacher efficacy is context-specific. Teachers feel efficacious for teaching particular subjects to certain students in specific settings, and they can be expected to feel more or less efficacious under different circumstances. Even from one class period to another, teachers' level of efficacy may change (Ross, et al., 1994). Therefore, in making an efficacy judgment, consideration of the teaching task and its

context are required. In addition, it is necessary to assess one's strengths and weaknesses in relation to the requirements of the task at hand.

In the past 20 years much research has been completed in an attempt to understand teacher efficacy, how to measure it, how it effects school climate and most importantly, implications for student achievement. For the purpose of this study, the concept of perceived self efficacy will be examined.

Self Efficacy

Self efficacy is a concept that categorizes how one assesses personal competencies to perform a specific task (Hoy, A., 2004). Self efficacy beliefs are about the future, about what one will be able to do in a particular situation, not what one has already accomplished, or why it was accomplished in the past. In relation to this study, "Teaching with Your Strengths," self efficacy is an extremely powerful idea as definitions stress that self efficacy is completely task specific. This idea supports the philosophy in that if one has difficulty learning or performing in one area it does not mean that they have trouble in another. Furthermore, teachers can complete a task based on what they do well. Thus, teachers can teach with their strengths while seeking resources and support for their weaknesses. In schools, there are three kinds of efficacy judgments; student, teacher, and collective. Research strongly suggest that a teacher's self efficacy also influences student self efficacy.

Student Efficacy

Students' self-efficacy beliefs are strong predictors of behavior. In fact, Piaget, the pioneer of cognitive developmental psychology, realized near the end of his life that simply focusing on logical thinking and its development was not enough. He came to believe that the beliefs that people acquire about their learning were as important or even more important in shaping their thinking (Dweck, 1999). Self-efficacy influences motivation through the choices we make and the goals we set. Highly efficacious students tend to select tasks that are more challenging, have higher levels of effort, and persistence in the face of setbacks. Zimmerman found that even students with the same level of academic skills completed tasks differently; those with higher levels of efficacy performing better (1995).

Teacher Efficacy

A second conceptual strand of theory and research grew out of the work of Bandura (1977), who identified teacher efficacy as a type of self-efficacy—the outcome of a cognitive process in which people construct beliefs about their capacity to perform at a given level of competence. These beliefs affect how much effort teachers expend, how long they will persist in the face of difficulties, their resilience in dealing with failures, and the stress they experience in coping with demanding situations (Bandura, 1997).

Researchers have established strong connections between teacher efficacy and teacher behaviors that foster student achievement (Goddard, 2005). Teacher efficacy is a simple idea with significant implications. A teacher's sense of efficacy is their judgment

of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated to learn (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Teachers' sense of efficacy has been related to student outcomes such as achievement, motivation, and students' own sense of efficacy. In addition, teachers' efficacy beliefs also relate to their behavior in the classroom. Efficacy affects the effort they invest in teaching, the goals they set, and their level of aspiration. Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy tend to exhibit greater levels of planning and organization. They also are more open to new ideas and are more willing to experiment with new methods to meet their students' needs. Teachers with a high sense of efficacy influence teachers' persistence when things do not go smoothly and their resilience in the face of setbacks (p. 783). They are less critical of students when they make errors, can work longer with a student who is struggling, and may be less inclined to refer a difficult student to special education. Teachers with a high sense of efficacy have greater enthusiasm for teaching, greater commitment, and are more likely to stay in teaching longer (p. 784).

Collective Teacher Efficacy

Collective teacher efficacy is defined as, "the perceptions of teachers in a school that the efforts of the faculty as a whole will have a positive effect on students". It is based on Bandura's (1977, 1986, 1997) social cognitive theory, a unified theory of behavior change. Social cognitive theory is concerned with human agency, or the ways that people exercise some level of control over their own lives. Central to the exercise of control is a sense of self-efficacy or "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute

a course of action required to produce a given attainment" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Social cognitive theory acknowledges that "personal agency operates within a broad network of socio-structural influences" (p. 6) and thus the theory "extends the analysis of mechanisms of human agency to the exercise of collective agency" (p. 7)—people's shared beliefs that they can work together to produce effects. Collective teacher efficacy extends the concept of individual teacher efficacy to the organizational level.

Godderd and Hoy from The Ohio State University conclude in their current research that schools that have high levels of collective teaching efficacy have higher levels of student achievement. Bandura (1993, 1993, 1997) defines collective teaching efficacy as the "perceptions of teachers in a school that the efforts of the faculty as a whole will have a positive effect on students". Clearly, collective school efficacy can be a determining factor in understanding what types of school structures promote student achievement.

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to examine the supervision and evaluation model used at ASE and the effects it has on the cultivation of teacher efficacy.

Design

The supervision model was introduced in the 2004/2005 school year. The following year, teachers began full implementation of the model as outlined below. In November of 2005, teachers also participated in a two-day retreat entitled, *Teaching with your Strengths*. Al Ihsan School and The Universal Academy of Pittsburgh joined efforts

to conduct the retreat. Eighteen educators attended. The retreat was designed and conducted by Dalia Mogahed, a parent of ASE and consultant of the Gallup Organization.

Before attending the retreat all teachers read the book, *Teaching with your strengths* by Leisveld and Miller and took an on-line assessment to learn their signature themes of talent. Teachers from ASE took the long version of the *Teacher Efficacy Scale,* developed by A. Wolfolk and W. Hoy, before and after they attended the retreat. Additionally, teachers participated in 1 refresher workshop in March. The second survey was given after the refresher workshop in March.

Supervision Model

The supervision model at ASE operates on the philosophy of continuous improvement. It has adopted some components of the model from Dr. Saleh Ayari's supervisory model presented at the 2005 ISNA conference. It's purpose is to evaluate staff while providing resources for continuous professional development with the goal of excellence in student achievement. To accomplish this we have set these supervisory objectives:

- Validating excellence in education
- Assessing the performance levels of teachers
- Insuring implementation of the prescribed ASE curriculum
- Establishing and maintaining high academic standards for all students
- Empowering all educators in improving student learning through
    - increasing teacher professionalism
    - increasing opportunities to share ideas and best practices
    - allowing time for self-reflection
    - providing meaningful feedback to improve instruction

- enhancing cooperation and communication with administrators, board members, and parents
- providing opportunities for mentoring

Additionally, teachers are evaluated according to the following criteria and are required to participate in the following:

1. Participate in School Wide Improvement Plan
2. Participate in all Staff In-Service & Professional Development Workshops
3. Participate in Teacher Induction Program
4. Complete and follow an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)
5. Bi-Yearly Scheduled Classroom Observations and Lesson Evaluations
6. Daily unscheduled classroom observation and lesson evaluation
7. Bi-Yearly Teacher Report Cards
8. Teacher Mentorship/Colleague Evaluations/Lesson Video Taping & Reflection
9. Teacher Self-Evaluations
10. Parent/Student Evaluations and Surveys
11. Bi-Annual Conferences with Principal

Annual Retreat

The retreat was designed to enable teachers to be completely surrounded by their team of co-workers and able to focus on their teaching capabilities. A retreat house was rented in Youngstown, Ohio, which was private and secluded. Teachers arrived and left together and all meals were catered so that no distractions would occur. Teachers were provided with Strengths Discovery Manuals and participated in various activities that addressed the following learning objectives:

- Increased self-awareness around individual talent
- Increased understanding of how to use individual talent to inspire and educate
- Understand the individual talent of team members to better work together
- Understand what we need to build an engaging workplace
- Understand the effect of an engaging workplace on school performance

The retreat focused on the development of natural talents within each teacher and ways to maximize talents to develop strengths. Gallup defines talents as "naturally recurring patterns of thoughts, feelings, or behaviors that can be productively applied. Talents are the ways in which you think, feel, and behave instinctively, unintentionally, and without even noticing. When talent, knowledge, and skill are combined they become strengths" Liesveld & Miller, 2005). Teachers learned to identify natural talents in themselves and in others to realize what they do well and then maximize upon it individually and in teams. The philosophy of a strengths based program shifts the focus from what is wrong to what is right. This also promotes a more positive, supportive climate in schools.

Participants

The participants included nine teachers of who all were female. One holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood education with post graduate course work, one holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood education, one holds a bachelor's degree in middle school education, one holds a bachelor's degrees in elementary education, two hold associate's degrees in education, and two hold high school diplomas with some college course work. The teachers had from 1 to 32 years teaching experience with a mean of 7.6 years of teaching, and ranged in age from 22 – 68 years (mean = 35.8). The sample included all Muslim teachers with one European American, one African American, one Pakistani American, three American Arabs, and two Arab Americans. All participants taught various subjects in Kindergarten – 7th grades, and one was the principal of the school. The teachers at Universal Academy were not included in the survey results.

Instrument

Teacher Self Efficacy Scale. We used the long version of the Teacher Efficacy Scale developed by A. Woolfolk and W. Hoy (1990), originally based on the Teacher Efficacy Scale developed by S. Gibson and M. Dembo (1984). The scale was designed to measure two dimensions or factors: Factor one, Personal Efficacy (PE) is composed of thirteen items, and Factor two, Teaching Efficacy (TE) is composed of nine items. Responses for each item were spread along a 6 point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 = strongly agree and 6 = strongly disagree. For the dimension of Teacher Efficacy (numbers 14-22) the higher the score, the more efficacious. The scores were reversed for Personal Efficacy items. The reverse scored items on the twenty two-item version are: numbers 1 – 13. For the dimension of Personal Efficacy, the lower the score, the more efficacious. To determine the TE and PE scores, we compute outweighed means of the items that load .35 or higher on each respective factor. It is not recommended in combining the TE and PE scores to compute a total score because the TE and PE scales represent independent factors.

Findings

The survey results were divided into personal efficacy and teacher efficacy. Each question was averaged and categorized into before and after results. A percentage of change after the intervention was also recorded. Ideally, high personal efficacy would calculate as a score of 1 and high teaching efficacy would calculate as a score of 6. Tables 1 and 2 show the Personal Efficacy results:

Table 1

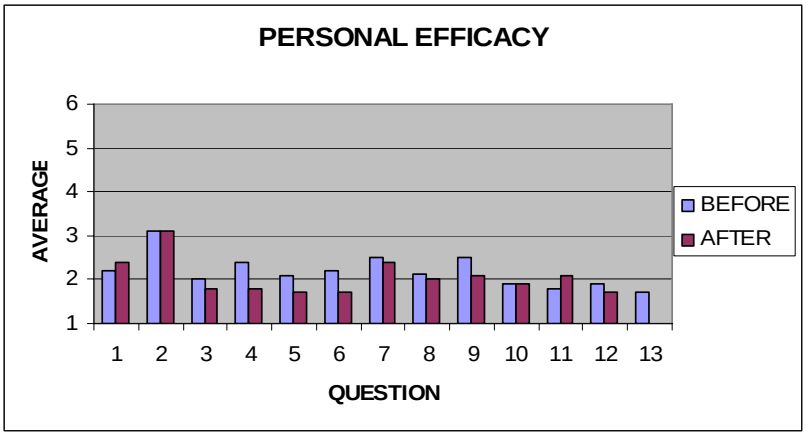

Table 2 **Personal Efficacy** **Goal of '1'**

ITEM NUMBER	ITEM	BEFORE AVERAGE	AFTER AVERAGE	% OF CHANGE
1	When a student does better than usually, many times it is because I exert a little extra effort.	2.2	2.4	-3.3%
2	I have enough training to deal with almost any learning problem.	3.1	3.1	0%
3	When a student is having difficulty with an assignment, I am usually able to adjust it to his/her level.	2	1.8	3.3%
4	When a student gets a better grade than he/she usually gets, it is usually because I found better ways of teaching that student.	2.4	1.8	10%
5	When I really try, I can get through to most difficult students.	2.1	1.7	6.7%
6	When the grades of my students improve, it is usually because I found more effective approaches.	2.2	1.7	8%
7	If a student masters a new concept quickly, this might be because I knew the necessary steps in teaching that concept.	2.5	2.4	2%
8	If a student did not remember information I gave in a previous lesson, I would know how to increase his/her retention in the next lesson.	2.125	2	2%
9	The influences of a student's home experiences can be overcome by good teaching.	2.5	2.1	6%
10	If a student in my class becomes disruptive and noisy, I feel assured that I know some techniques to redirect him/her quickly.	1.9	1.9	0%
11	If one of my students couldn't do a class assignment, I would be able to accurately assess whether the assignment was at the correct level of difficulty.	1.8	2.1	-5%
12	If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students.	1.9	1.7	3.3%
13	My teacher training program and/or experience has given me the necessary skills to be an effective teacher.	1.7	1	11.6%

Results to question 13 illustrate the highest personal efficacy score from the study in that teachers feel that they have been trained well to be effective teachers. Teachers also answered high in regards to looking for better ways of teaching as a means to higher student achievement. However, the lowest score was obtained for question 2 in that teachers do not feel well trained for teaching students with special needs. Additionally, results from questions 1 and 7 may indicate that teachers do not feel a high level of efficacy in the context of responsibility to student achievement.

One may interpret these low scores based on the limited resources of private Islamic Schools. ASE does not have special needs teachers, counselors, or school psychologists. Factors that are outside of teacher control such as small classroom size, low parental support, and limited funding may lead teachers to feel that their capabilities to teach are limited, thus limit their feelings of personal efficacy.

Tables 3 and 4 show the Teacher Efficacy results:

Table 3

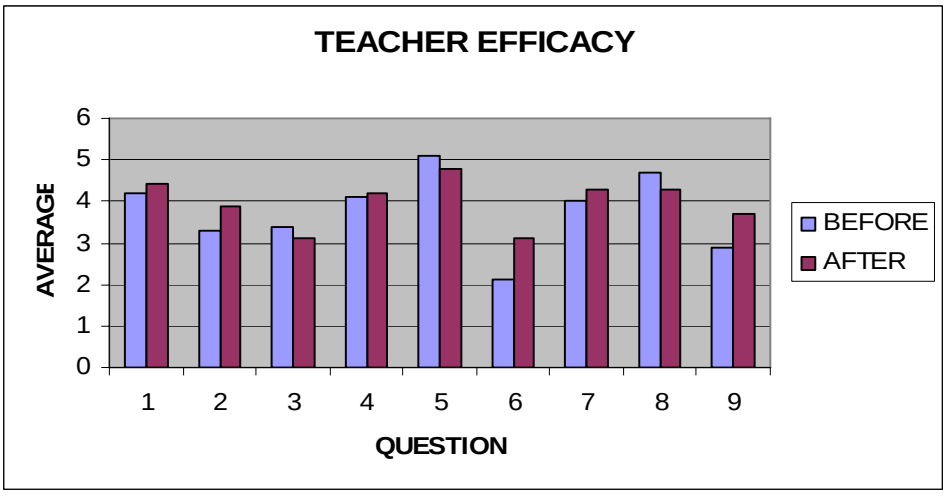

Table 4 Teacher Efficacy

ITEM NUMBER	ITEM	BEFORE AVERAGE	AFTER AVERAGE	% OF CHANGE
1	The hours in my class have little influence on students compared to the influence of their home environment.	4.2	4.4	3.3%
2	The amount a student can learn is primarily related to family background.	3.3	3.9	10%
3	If students aren't disciplined at home, they aren't likely to accept any discipline.	3.4	3.1	-5%
4	A teacher is very limited in what he/she can achieve because a student's home environment has a large influence on his/her achievement.	4.1	4.2	2%
5	Teachers are not a very powerful influence on student achievement when all factors are considered.	5.1	4.8	-5%
6	If parents would do more for their children, I could do more.	2.1	3.1	16%
7	Even a teacher with good teaching abilities may not reach many students.	4	4.3	5%
8	When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment.	4.7	4.3	-6.7%
9	Some students need to be placed in slower groups so they are not subjected to unrealistic expectations.	2.9	3.7	11.60%

There were no averaged scores of 6 on Teacher Efficacy. The highest averaged score (4.8) was on question 5, however, the score was actually poorer on the second survey in relation to the first. This again points to feelings of limitations concerning external factors of the school community. The highest averaged change was on question 6. Teachers improved 16% in that they felt that their teaching efforts could overcome low parental involvement. However, the score is well below a score of 6. Question 9 illustrates improvement in that teachers may hold higher expectations for all students as the average increased by 11.6%. Teachers may be able to understand students' strengths and individual needs, as a result of understanding their own talents and strengths.

Teacher Interviews

Interviews were also used in the research to gain a better understanding of the effects of the intervention. Teachers gave their age and number of years of full time teaching experience. Teachers were asked, "How has your teaching changed after discovering your strengths and attending the workshop?" Many responses relate to self realization. Others related that knowing their own personal strengths has led them to better realize student strengths. All agreed that they now understand their co-workers better and realize why they behave in a particular manner. They now feel that they can work better as a team. The individual responses were as follows:

- Teacher 1 states that with the strength of Connectedness, she is better able to integrate subject matter and connect various aspects of knowledge.
- Teacher 2 states that she feels that instruction is like a piece of fabric and as she puts it together, it makes a beautiful quilt (Connectedness). She is better able to connect what children do in school to their lives.
- Teacher 3 states that with the strength of Individualization, she finds it easy to meet the needs of her students. She can easily choose various teaching methods to meet all learning styles.
- Teacher 4 states that because she has the strength of Relator, she can easily accommodate all learning contingencies; from special needs to gifted and talented students. She also has high expectations for all students as she is a Maximizer.

- Teacher 5 has the strength of Includer. She finds that she often uses cooperative learning activities and is one to volunteer often in school wide programs because she likes to be included.
- Teacher 6 feels that her combination strengths of Input, Learner, and Achiever help her to focus on an inquiry approach to curriculum and instruction and she can easily develop integrated unit plans. She often finds herself doing many things at once and usually begins another project before finishing the first.
- Teacher 7 uses her strength of Maximizer as she teaches to all levels in the same classroom. She can easily differentiate instruction to meet the learning needs of all students.
- Teacher 8 feels that the program has helped to raise engagement levels of teachers and as a result their passion for teaching is greater. She feels that students have learned to enjoy school more because teachers are more engaged.
- Teacher 9 states that she now envisions success. She feels that she has more positive input in relation to student achievement. She uses her strength of Woo to include her students in her plan for success and hook them in when teaching. Her vision can now become a reality.
- Teacher 10 feels that she is now a better teacher. She has a very challenging class this year and she is better able to teach her students because she knows her strengths and realizes what she is good at.

Additionally, Teachers report that they had a "spiritual connection" at the retreat. The principal reports that a higher level of involvement now occurs amongst the teachers, teachers are willing to volunteer more often for school-wide events, and a better feeling

of team cohesiveness now exists. The Gallup consultant states that she has never experienced a higher level of learning as with the teachers at the retreat and that the teachers learned in 2 days what business clients learn in a year.

Limitations

Although the Gibson and Dembo measure has been the most popular of the teacher efficacy instruments to date, and this instrument models it, problems remain as to the lack of clarity about the meaning of the two factors and the instability of the factor structure make this instrument problematic. A new clearer measure is needed such as the subject-matter specific modifications of the instrument. It is difficult to determine the optimal level of efficacy without specificity. As efficacy is very context and subject-matter specific, a teacher may feel very competent in one area of study or when working with one kind of student and feel less able in other subjects or with different students. It is not clear what the appropriate level of specificity should be in order to obtain an accurate measure.

Conclusions

One important factor at ASE is that teachers feel less efficacious because of outside factors. It would be wise to conduct an Organizational Health Inventory or an Organizational Climate Survey to determine what other factors would contribute to the overall school health and working conditions of the school. Teacher interviews were extremely positive towards their participation in the strengths building program. Teachers exhibit cooperative behaviors with co-workers, feel that they possess the

knowledge of teaching methods for instruction, and show promise in the desire to learn. It is evident that teachers have benefited from the supervision model in regards to the professional development opportunities and the Individual Professional Development Plans and goals set by the teachers.

Continued communication strategies to improve parent/teacher, parent/board, and community/school relationships would benefit the school climate and collective school health. Although teachers have begun to team build, a school-wide effort may be wise to build community bonds and strengthen support for the teachers and school.

Discussion

Teacher efficacy is context specific. Teachers may feel efficacious in one situation, and less efficacious in another. Therefore, the collective efficacy of the organization is also a significant factor when looking at teacher efficacy. At times, teachers feel that factors influencing their personal or teaching efficacy are out of their control. In order to have a clearer understanding of teacher efficacy, one could examine the collective efficacy of a school and implement an administrative plan of action. Working conditions, employee engagement, and human relations could be explored to build a stronger school community and strengthen bonds between all stakeholders. In addition, context and subject specific situations could be examined to understand teacher needs and help raise teacher empowerment and abilities.

Future Implications

Future research of teacher efficacy may explore the effects of teacher efficacy and teacher attrition. Johnson (2005) describes them as the "stayers and leavers". In the past 10 years, trends have shown that more and more teachers are leaving the profession. The average length of a teaching career is only 11 years. 25% of all teachers leave within 4 years. Urban teachers rate far higher with 50% leaving within 4 years. The National Center for Educational Statistics report that private school teachers are far more likely to leave their jobs when compared to their public school counterparts (NCES, 2004).

Often times, Research suggests that teachers' decisions to remain in their schools and in teaching are influenced by a number of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Johnson et al, 2005). Intrinsic motivations include the pleasure of being with children, the exhilaration of contributing to students' learning, the enjoyment of teaching subject matter one loves, or the chance to develop new skills and exercise expanded influence on the job. Extrinsic motivations would include salary, benefits, and bonuses, public recognition for one's accomplishments, or being chosen to take on special responsibilities (Johnson, 2005).

Individual Teachers may stay or leave their positions for any number of reasons. Causes vary from poor working environments, vague job responsibilities, low salaries, low administration support, and high stress. Research suggests that a teacher's decision to stay in their school and in teaching is influenced by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Because individuals may have different expectations and what satisfies one may not satisfy another, it is impossible to specify a simple set of elements that will satisfy all teachers.

Research has shown that the single most important factor in teacher retention and teacher effectiveness is a high sense of teacher's self efficacy (Johnson, 2005). Teachers may decide to come and go at various schools for any number of reasons; nevertheless, Johnson suggests that when teachers have the feeling that "they were teaching their students well" the decision to stay is more prevalent. Certainly, organizational structures and working conditions can be examined to promote teacher effectiveness and teacher retention while preventing teacher attrition.

References

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review, 84, 191-215.*

Bandura, A. (1993). Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning. E ducational Psychologist, 2 8 (2), 117-148.

Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. New York: W. H. Freeman and Company.

Dweck, C. (2000). *Self-theories: their role in motivation, personality, and development.* Lillington, NC: Edwards Brothers.

The Gallup Organization. www.gallup.com. Accessed on November 2, 2006.

Gibson, S. & M. Dembo (1984). Teacher Efficacy: a construct validation. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 76*, 569-582.

Goddard, R., et all. (2005). Collective teacher efficacy: it's meaning, measure, and impact of student achievement. The Ohio State University.

Hoy, A. (2004). *What do teachers need to know about self-efficacy?* The Ohio State University.

Johnson, S., et all. (2005). *Who stays in teaching and why: A review of the literature on teacher retention.* The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers: Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Klienerman, E. (2005). "A school built on faith". Cleveland: *The Plain Dealer*.

Liesveld, R. & Miller J.A. (2005) *Teach with your strengths how great teachers inspire their students.* NY: Gallup Press.

National Center for Educational Statistics. (2005). Private School Teacher Turnover and Teacher Perceptions of School Organizational Characteristics. U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences: NCES 2005–061.

Ross, J. A. (1994, June). "Beliefs that make a difference: The origins and impacts of teacher efficacy". Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies.

Tschannen-Moran, M. & Hoy, A. (2001). Teacher efficacy: capturing an elusive construct. Teacher and Teacher Education 17, pp. 783-805.

Woolfolk, A. E., & Hoy, W. K. (1990). Prospective teachers' sense of efficacy and beliefs about control. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 82*, 81-91. Originally based on the Teacher Efficacy Scale developed by S. Gibson & M. Dembo (1984). Teacher Efficacy: a construct validation. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 76,* 569-582.
Zimmerman, B.J. (1995). Self-efficacy and educational development. New York: Cambridge University Press.