Inviting Teacher Characteristics and Teacher Effectiveness: A Prelininary Study

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School systems that attempt to respond to outside pressures of accountability have an obligation to seek changes that make schools and teaching more effective. Any factor, including affective factors, proven to have an impact on the degree of teacher effectiveness should be carefully considered by administrators.

Brophy (1979) demonstrated that teachers who believe strongly that their students are capable of learning new skills or subject matter are more likely to be successful in increasing students' learning. Students usually respond positively to teachers who believe that their students can learn. Sabine's (1977) teacher effectiveness research demonstrated that students prosper under two teacher characteristics; teachers challenging students, and teachers caring for students.

This study examined whether a significant relationship exists between inviting characteristics of teachers and the effectiveness of these teachers as rated by their principals. The study also examined the difference between the effectiveness of humanistic or inviting teachers versus the effectiveness of custodial or disinviting teachers. If a relationship exists, and if a significant difference can be found between the effectiveness of inviting versus disinviting characteristics, school planning can be affected. Promoting inviting teacher characteristics through inservice and staff development activities may be realized.

Lunenburg and Schmidt (1989) defined quality of life in school as the students' satisfaction with school, commitment to class work, and students' reactions to teachers. Their research supported the hypothesis that custodial pupil control ideology, defined here as disinviting teaching, was related to unfavorable quality of school life. In contrast, humanistic or inviting teaching was correlated to favorable quality of school life. These researchers used an instrument designed to measure the quality of life as perceived by students.

Willower and Lawrence (1979) found a significant relationship between teacher perceived threats and "custodialism" of teachers. The custodial orientation favors a rigid and highly controlled setting concerned primarily with the maintenance of order. According to these researchers, impersonality, pessimism, and "watchful mistrust" imbue the atmosphere of the custodial school. The greater the perceived threat to teacher status, the greater the custodialism. Estep, Willower, and Licata (1980) found a positive relationship between humanistic acts and classroom robustness. Robustness involved interest level, "eventfulness", and the stimulation of a class. The researchers concluded that high interest levels, eventfulness, and stimulation in these robust classrooms clearly make them interesting places that do not require strict control.

Lunenburg and Stouten (1983) found a direct relationship between custodialism or disinviting acts in teachers' pupil control ideology and children's projections of rejections and hostility onto teachers. They also found that inviting acts on the part of teachers were related to low student rejection of teachers.

Shearin (1982) demonstrated that consistency or agreement on humanistic or inviting acts among teachers within a school is important. Teachers' ratings on control ideology for four junior high schools were analyzed in relation to student alienation. These data showed that more humanistic schools had less student alienation.

Kottkamp and Mulhern (1987) studied the problem of motivation among teachers. They found that humanistic control ideology and an open school climate were positively related to motivation among teachers.

These studies indicate a genuine need for research demonstrating a relationship between humanistic inviting acts and teaching effectiveness. While these studies show a relationship between humanistic schools and classroom robustness, less rejection and hostility, less student alienation, and more teacher motivation, research is needed to link humanistic acts with teaching effectiveness using other indicators. This study is a preliminary attempt to do just that.

Method

Operational Definition

Inviting teachers were defined as teachers in the sample who responded to twenty written ideological statements and scored above a certain criterion. The ideological statements concerned teachers, students, and schools. Disinviting teachers were defined as teachers who scored below the selected criterion on the twenty ideological statements. The criterion for inviting or disinviting classifications was chosen by an analysis of the mean score for all participants on the ideological statements. A score clearly above the mean or clearly below the mean was used to form inviting or disinviting cells in classifying subjects for this preliminary study. Teaching effectiveness, the dependent variable, was operationally defined as principal-rated effectiveness as determined by responses to eight different indicators.

Methods of Observation

The method of observation for the independent variables, disinviting and inviting characteristics of teachers, was a pupil control ideology form consisting of twenty statements about schools, teachers, and students. This form was introduced into the literature by Willower, Hoy, and Eidell (1967). Possible scores range from 20 to 100 points on the form. Teachers could select responses from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" on a 5 point Likert scale. The higher scores ostensibly pointed to more humanistic, inviting attitudes while lower scores favored more rigid, autocratic, and less inviting attitudes.

The validity and reliability research undergirding the instrument was a major reason this form was chosen for this preliminary study. Willower, Hoy, and Eidell validated the instrument by demonstrating that teachers previously judged to hold a custodial or autocratic ideology scored significantly below average on the instrument in comparison to teachers who scored above average and were previously judged humanistic. Willower, Hoy, and Idell (1967) also calculated split-half reliability resulting in a.91 reliability coefficient.

The method of observation for the dependent variable, teacher effectiveness, was a principal's rating form consisting of eight different indicators. Possible scores of effectiveness range from 8 to 40 points. Principals rated the effectiveness of teachers on the eight indicators using a scale of I to 5, with I being "low" and 5 being "Superior." Higher scores on the principal's rating form represented higher effectiveness, lower scores represented lower effectiveness.

Research shows a link between quantitative and qualitative changes in the learning of students and the eight teacher effectiveness indicators on the principal

rating form. Studies undergirding these effectiveness indicators are Sabine (1977), Brophy (1979), and Gorton (1983).

The instrument was validated further by having principals use the instrument and rate the effectiveness of 60 teachers previously evaluated by existing state-approved instruments. Sixty teachers previously rated "meritorious" or "in need of improvement" were selected for the validation process. There was a statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of previously rated "meritorious" teachers and teachers "in need of improvement." The validation process suggested the rating instrument was valid.

Subjects

Nine schools including four high schools, two middle schools. and three elementary schools participated in the study. Schools participating in the study were selected on the basis of size, diversity of student population, socioeconomic status, and geographical boundary. A total of 235 teachers and their principals from the nine schools in South Carolina participated. Ninety-eight percent of all the teachers from the nine schools chose to participate in the study.

Respect for confidentiality was emphasized as part of the orientation process with the school principals. The orientation process involved visits with each school administrator and discussion of the details of their involvement. The instruments were described and discussed in detail with the principals. Each of the instruments had space at the top for recording demographic information. Separation of this information from the actual responses was easily accomplished by paper perforation. This helped assure confidentiality. The principals stapled the appropriate data together for statistical analysis after removing the demographic data.

Procedure

The pupil control instrument was administered to the 235 teachers. Principals asked the teachers to complete the pupil control ideology form during a faculty meeting. Principals were asked to control conversations between teachers while the forms were being completed by asking them not to share their data for the fifteen minutes required to complete the process. The principals subsequently completed the rating forms, and were instructed circumspectively in the orientation process not to examine any of the ideology forms before they responded to the eight indicators of teaching effectiveness for the teachers.

Demographic data included marital status, age, years of experience, and subject area. The form completed by each teacher and the corresponding

principal's effectiveness form were stapled together and delivered to the researcher.

Results

A Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was computed between the scores for the 235 teachers on the pupil control form and the principal's ratings of effectiveness. A positive relationship was found to be statistically significant [r (233) = .37, p. < .0011. This means a positive significant relationship existed between humanistic, inviting teacher characteristics and teacher effectiveness when all subjects were analyzed.

A t-test for uncorrelated means was used to determine if a significant difference existed between the effectiveness of teachers with humanistic, inviting attit' des and the effectiveness of those with custodial, disinviting attitudes. A statistically significant difference was found [t (149.1) = 4.65, p. < .001], meaning that humanistic, inviting teachers were more effective than their disinviting, custodial counterparts.

A correlation coefficient was also computed separately for the four secondary schools, two middle schools, and the three elementary schools. There was a positive and statistically significant correlation, low to moderate, between pupil control ideology and teacher effectiveness in the four secondary schools [r (I 19) = .36, p. < .001]. There was also a positive and significant correlation between the pupil control ideology and teaching effectiveness in the two middle schools [r (43) = .54, p. <.001]. The relationship at the elementary level was not statistically significant [r (67) = .20, P. = .09].

An analysis was also performed to determine if a significant difference occurred in the effectiveness of inviting and disinviting teachers when secondary, middle, and elementary schools were compared.

Table I shows that there was a statistically significant difference in the effectiveness of the inviting versus the disinviting teachers in the four secondary and two middle schools. The difference favored the inviting teachers in these schools. The difference between means among the three elementary schools was not statistically significant.

Table 1

Mean Differences in Teacher Effectiveness

		N	M	SD	p
4	Secondary Schools				
	Inviting	65	31.50	5.9	
					< .0001
	Disinviting	56	27.17	7.9	
2	Middle Schools				
	Inviting	30	30.70	5.7	
					= .002
	Disinviting	15	24.93	5.7	
3	Elementary Schools				
	Inviting	53	32.60	5.3	
					= .15
	Disinviting	16	30.18	7.3	

Demographic data were analyzed to determine if significant differences existed in either pupil control ideology or effectiveness for people of varying marital status, age, years of experience, or subject areas. There were no significant differences on either ideology or effectiveness for teachers being analyzed according to marital status, age, or years of experience.

However, a statistically significant difference was found when teachers were analyzed according to subject areas. Teachers in math were significantly different from all the other subject areas in pupil control ideology and effectiveness (p. < .05). Math teachers tended to express more disinviting attitudes and as a group were rated less effective by their principals. No other significant differences were found among subject areas.

Discussion

Based on the results of this study, certain attitudes that parallel the concept of "inviting" teacher behaviors seem to correlate with effective teacher performance, as measured by school principals. As a preliminary investigation, this study serves as a catalyst for discussion as to how best to identify an inviting teacher. What statements, ideology, or forms would most efficiently identify an inviting teacher? For all young professionals beginning a teaching career and

wondering about their ideology, what statements could help them determine that they were or were not unintentional disinviters? How is the best way to measure effectiveness? Is effectiveness even the most important criterion?

As a preliminary endeavor, this study has obvious limitations. The Willower, Hoy, and Eidell form does not include questions pulled directly from invitational theory. Few would question, however, that pupil control ideology is inexorably linked to invitational theory. Another limitation is that the instrument for pupil control ideology measures self-rated attitude. The instrument does not measure behaviors directly. The fact, however, that attitude alone as measured in this study significantly correlated in six of nine schools to teacher effectiveness was promising. By using only attitudes toward pupil control ideology, we found significant differences in effectiveness for six of nine schools.

This study should help stir the water and motivate proponents Of invitational theory and practice to answer these questions and others yet to be posed. Further research is needed in this vital area that holds so much potential for teaching and learning in the next century. More precise methods of defining, describing, and validating inviting behaviors are needed to affirm the preliminary findings of this study and support the belief that humanistic, inviting teachers are effective classroom leaders.

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Appendix A
Pupil Control Ideology Form

On the following pages a number of statements about teaching are presented. Our purpose is to gather information regarding the actual attitudes of educators concerning these statements.

You will recognize that the statements are of such a nature that there are no correct or incorrect answers. We are interested only in your frank opinion of them.

Your responses will remain confidential, and no individual or school will be named in the report of this study. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

INSTRUCTIONS: Following are 20 statements about schools, teachers, and pupils. Please indicate your personal opinion about each statement by circling the appropriate response at the right of the statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. It is desirable to require pupils to sit in assigned seats during assemblies.	SA	A	U	D	SD
2. Pupils are usually not capable of solving their problems through logical reasoning.	SA	A	U	D	SD
3. Directing sarcastic remarks toward a defiant pupil is a good disciplinary technique.	SA	A	U	D	SD
4. Beginning teachers are not likely to maintain strict enough control over their pupils.	SA	A	U	D	SD
5. Teachers should consider revision of their teaching methods if these are criticized by their pupils.	SA	A	U	D	SD
6. The best principals give unquestioning support to teachers in disciplining students.	SA	A	U	D	SD
7. Pupils should not be permitted to contradict the statements of a teacher in class.	SA	A	U	D	SD

8. It is justifiable to have pupils learn many facts about a subject even if they have no immediate application.	SA	A	U	D	SD
9. Too much time is spent on guidance and activities and too little on academic preparation.	SA	A	U	D	SD
10. Being friendly with pupils often leads them to become too familiar.	SA	A	U	D	SD
11. It is more important for pupils to learn to obey rules than that they make their own decisions.	SA	A	U	D	SD
12. Student governments are a good "safety valve" but should not have much influence on school policy.	SA	A	U	D	SD
13. Pupils can be trusted to work together without supervision.	SA	A	U	D	SD
14. If a pupil uses obscene or profane language in school, it must be considered a moral offense.	SA	A	U	D	SD
15. If pupils are allowed to use the lavatory without getting permission, this privilege will be abused.	SA	A	U	D	SD
16. A few pupils are just young hoodlums and should be treated accordingly.	SA	A	U	D	SD
17. It is often necessary to remind pupils that their status in school differs from that of teachers.	SA	A	U	D	SD
18. A pupil who destroys school material or property should be severely punished.	SA	A	U	D	SD
19. Pupils cannot perceive the difference between democracy and anarchy in the classroom.	SA	A	U	D	SD
20. Pupils often misbehave in order to make the teacher look bad.	SA	A	U	D	SD

Appendix B
Principal Rating Form

Effective teachers demonstrate certain behaviors and attitudes to a far greater degree than other teachers. Consider the effective teacher indicators listed below and assess each teacher that completes the PCI instrument according to these standards. Please circle the appropriate rating number beside the 8 effectiveness indicators as it directly applies to each teacher. *Please fold or staple the teacher PCI instrument to the matching principal rating form. Remove the teacher's name at the top of the PCI inventory sheet before placing in the appropriate self-addressed envelope.

Superior	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Low		
5	4	3	2	1	(1)	The teacher demonstrates a high degree of subject matter expertise.
5	4	3	2	1	(2)	The teacher overtly demonstrates that he/she has a responsibility for student success.
5	4	3	2	1	(3)	The teacher spends a majority of the class time actively involved with students in the learning process.
5	4	3	2	1	(4)	The teacher provides regular feedback to students which informs them of their progress and indicates how they can improve.
5	4	3	2	1	(5)	The teacher assigns tasks to students appropriate to their ability level so that chances of success are high and failures low.
5	4	3	2	1	(6)	The teacher clarifies what needs to be learned and illustrates how to do the assigned work.
5	4	3	2	1	(7)	The teacher addresses higher- as well as lower-level cognitive objectives.
5	4	3	2	1	(8)	The teacher effectively uses existing instructional materials in order to devote more time to practices that enrich and clarify the content.

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