

Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice

Volume 9, 2003

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The International Alliance for Invitational Education

Editor:

Phillip S. Riner, Ed.D.
Division of Curriculum and Instruction
College of Education and Human Services
University of North Florida
Jacksonville, FL 32224-2645

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Co-directors:

William W. Purkey
*The University of North Carolina
at Greensboro*
Betty L. Siegel
Kennesaw State College, Georgia

Alliance Mailing Address:

The International Alliance for Invitational
Education
PO Box 7009, Radford University,
Radford, VA 24242

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Editorial—

Aging Gracefully

When a writer cannot think of what to write, we call it “writer’s block.” So, when an author has too many things to say, I suppose we would call it “writer’s jumble.” So I confess up front that in introducing this volume of JITP I’m nearly overwhelmed by writer’s jumble. Even with all the rambling ideas, the one statement that wins out over all the rest is this: “This world we live in just gets better and better.”

Although these are my words, I’m rather shocked to write them. First, my orientation as the “researcher/scholar” is always more than a bit skeptical, particularly when claims are made that an improvement over the past has been found. Second, it is rather obvious to any observer that our world is embroiled in turmoil. The face of Africa is pocked with in episodic pustules of genocide. The Arab world boils with a fury of violence, seasoned with seething hatred, served with ample misery and the suffering of the innocent. Korea, divided for fifty years by mutual distrust, still “done in” from just a few years of righteous warfare in the 50’s, threatens to awake from its nap of uneasy piece into a nightmare of confused hatred and retribution. The United States, home for many of our readers, struggles with itself as it toys with curtailing its long-cherished freedoms to protect those very freedoms from threat of violence. The customary pursuit of happiness is interrupted by cries of wretchedness and despair unresolved by humankind and time. And the pursuit of greed, graft, and general dishonesty by leaders in business and industry is sickening in a scale hereto unthinkable.

How can this add up to a conclusion that we live in a world that's getting better and better? In one way, it doesn't. I cannot defend one single act of hate, one cry of a single hungry child, or the witness of the subservience of even one person so that the haughty greed of others can be satisfied. Let's face it though, the world has never known a time free of injustice. Our turn at making history is not so different in some ways, but there are a few significant points: There is less suffering now than in any time in history. War is increasingly an unacceptable alternative. Might doesn't make right with the same voracity of the past. Attempts at genocide bring international condemnation. People dream of peace with a grim reality of how difficult that goal will be to achieve.

True, our tools for justice, decency, kindness, integrity, and peace are woefully inadequate for the demands of the times. True, our skills in the arts of war exceed our efforts in the arts of peace. True, our commitment to the ideals of freedom and justice *for all* wavers frequently. True, the world does not share a commitment to usher in an epoch of profound goodness and an unbridled determination for all of the world's people to share our universal human rights.

But we are working on it.

We can see a time where we recognize hate for what it really is and recognize what it really does. Never has there been a time where so many have taken peace so seriously as today. Our perceptual tradition can play tricks on us as we look only toward our destination without looking back to our point of departure. A hundred years ago, my own country, the United States, was officially pursuing the North American aborigines, herding them into reservations, and slaughtering those that refused, all in the name of manifest destiny . . . the nation's leaders and its teeming immigrating population had a calling and felt they were ultimately

ordained by God to rule from ocean to ocean...and beyond. Americans, acting “independently” of their government, deposed the queen of Hawaii and requested annexation to the United States. The United States debated the annexation of Cuba and the Philippines going so far as to fight battles in both countries to gain an advantage in negotiations. Americans were participating in economic occupation of China, actually fought to protect the economic partitioning of China, yet ended up standing beside China to prevent its desolution.

One hundred years ago our nation’s meatpacking plants were selling beef, with liberal amounts of ground up rats, to an unsuspecting public. Standard Oil was eliminating the vestiges of free enterprise in the emerging petroleum industry while practicing “free enterprise.” Ten year old children worked 14 hour days in the nation’s factories, usually at great physical risk of harm and under unforgiving conditions. Jim Crow had a legal hold on society although de facto segregation was already a social fixture of American life. Oh yes, women were struggling to get to vote. It seems that many of our nation’s decision-makers distrusted the feminine influence on our nation’s policies. Not to leave out our international readers, the whole world was in a “subjugate or be subjugated paradigm.” Justice, as we understand it today, was certainly a vision for only the wild-eyed radicals and crazy folks. I hope JITP readers are among today’s wild-eyed radicals and crazy folks...at least crazy enough to focus their attention on what our world will look like one hundred years hence. . .if the invitation is extended and accepted. Our visions today will determine the status of the world one hundred years hence.

As a world community we are increasingly recognizing that the security of one depends on the sanctity of all. Our steps at peace are certainly unsure; but certainly there are more of them. Just as we watch with excitement our toddlers’ first stuttering steps to bipedal mobility, we are thrilled with the progress. . .even though

there are falls and crashes, our toddler gains balance and walks boldly into a world filled with sudden risks and constant dangers. Our world society is taking its first faltering steps toward international caring, albeit, our society may be a slow learner considering the urgency the task. Some of those first steps toward a universal goodness are found in this edition of JITP. Tiny steps surely, but steps that accumulate, enlighten, and will ultimately improve our collective condition on this planet.

The first article is not baby step, but a powerful theoretical piece on the role of the helper and where the line, the “net,” of respect and self-determination resides in the counselor-client relationship. Bill Stafford, an invitational education founder and “long marcher” examines the issues involved in “respecting the net” and how to help while respecting and nurturing the dignity of those who troubles impair their judgment. Regardless of your answer to that nagging issue, I think you’ll find his analysis will launch hours of contemplation about what a helper does and does not do for others.

Our second piece comes from “down under” out of the glistening green islands of New Zealand. While we are ending summer, New Zealanders are experiencing the cold of midwinter and the warmth of the suggestions in this article is well timed. Patsy Paxton examines how our electronic communication, which permitted Patsy and I to communicate several times a day (for free, even), can be made more inviting and the “cold impersonal electrons” can be warmed a bit and trained to be considerably more inviting. My own university students, who receive a good bit of instruction from electronic media, liked Patsy’s ideas and we are using them even though we are primarily a face-to-face endeavor. I think that is adequate testimony to the value of her contribution. Enjoy.

Our third piece is from your JITP editor, Phil Riner, and examines the prominent data in effective classroom management and how it

correlates with basic premises of invitational education. I tried to examine some of the misconceptions that researchers have regarding invitational education as it relates to self-concept theory and connect invitational theory to the empirical findings of effective management. Good management supports efforts to give expression to the untapped potential in our students. By using Kathleen Cotton's widely referenced summary of research that supports learning, I examine the widely developed and replicated empirical support for invitational education premises, how the research forms a "version" of the inviting "vision," and how these ideas can be employed readily in today's classrooms.

Our final two pieces are empirical investigations into the inner workings of invitational theory and how invitational theory manifests itself in daily life. Phillip Rice publishes his first research with an examination of a state university system's willingness to assist schools in locating university graduates for teaching positions. One increasingly important aspect of the university is using its reputation to assist marketing graduates as they search for jobs. This activity, an inviting expression for both graduates and the community the state university is to serve, may be taken for granted. However, Phillip finds that inviting ideas have not reached all corners of the university. There is work to be done.

Richard Egley presents an investigation of the relationship between the professionally and personally inviting behaviors of high school principals in the state with teacher job satisfaction, perceived principal effectiveness, the principal's Invitational Quotient, and a measure of school quality used by state agencies. To wit, in a complex work environment, would inviting characteristics of a principal be related to outcomes valued by state decision makers and others. Richard is providing the type of examination needed to convince skeptics that inviting behavior is not just an appropriate psychological stance to help children grow

morally healthy, but how to build an effective school and school curriculum.

I hope this edition will prove to be enjoyable and thoughtful reading.

Phil Riner
Editor

To Honor the Net in Invitational Counseling

William B. Stafford
Lehigh University

Honoring the net is a concept presented by Purkey in his discussion of the four-corner press. In a counseling setting this concept relates to the perceptions of the counselor and the client as they encounter one another in the counseling relationship, as well as the relationship itself. This manuscript attempts to examine the dynamic of the net and the process of honoring the net in these interactions.

Dante, in his *Inferno*, related how the Pilgrim was about to descend into Hell in order to rise through Purgatory from where he could reach the pinnacle of the Mount of Joy and ultimately the Light of God. The Pilgrim had some idea of what he might expect to encounter on his journey and he dreaded it, so he chose a fellow traveler to help him better understand what he would experience. His choice was interesting. He did not choose a person of science, for the answers he sought were not rational-logical understandings. He did not choose a philosopher, as he reasoned the philosopher only speculates about life. The companion the Pilgrim did choose was Virgil, the poet, for Dante knew the poet had encountered life and had an understanding of life, which Dante also sought.

One of the more pivotal notions in the discussion of invitational theory has been that of honoring the net. The net is a metaphoric representation of the boundaries that separate the inviter and the person being invited. As in any interaction where a net is employed, the net may *not* be violated as a boundary between the individuals involved in the interaction. In an invitational sense, the counselor may send messages, both verbal and nonverbal, of his or her intent to help to the client. However,

the counselor may not violate the net by imposing or coercing his or her values and judgments on the client without violating the integrity of the client as well as the *process* of counseling itself. The counselor must, of necessity, view the client as being genuinely valued, able and responsible for his or her own decisions and actions without direct intervention from the counselor, i.e., violating the net.

This concept seems to embody so many of the basic principles, understandings and beliefs of effective human interactions, and especially invitational theory, that it stands out in a singular and summary manner. Rogers recognized the importance of this back in the '40s when he spoke of unconditional positive regard for the other. This notion also has a more universal implication, as Emerson (1929) stated this issue in his "Essay on Self-Reliance":

Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind . . . There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better or for worse as his portion. The power, which resides in him, is new in nature, and no one but he knows what he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. p. 138

Purkey presented the notion of honoring the net when he presented what he labeled "An Anatomy of An Invitation". This is a perceptual construct of the inviting process from the perspective of both the person doing the inviting, and the person being invited. Stafford (1992) examined this concept in counseling because of his belief in the intensely personal and dynamic interaction between counselor and client that *must* occur in any meaningful counseling relationship.

Many facets are involved in the process of honoring the net, which draw their roots from perceptual psychology. While we may be able to examine directly and quantify some of the more overt aspects of honoring the net, we must ultimately conclude, I believe, that the quality of the interaction, is probably un-definable to some extent. These processes, however, are critical and essential components of the counselor's stance. This stance, in turn, directly affects the perception of the client, which may either allow for or deny the opportunity for this interaction even to occur. Jung stated this so succinctly: "Learn your theories as well as you can, but put them aside when you touch the miracle of living soul." (quoted in Belkin, 1988, p.42).

Respect

Central to the whole notion of honoring the net is the very basic assumption of respect for the client. As noted before, respect for the person is very closely akin to Rogers' position for positive regard. We, as counselors, must come to the client with no preconceived agenda of what the client is to do or to become. That is not only the *client's prerogative*: it is also the *client's task*. The counselor, in essence, is saying to the client: "I respect your right to be you, and I have no desire, no hidden agenda, nor any motive, to re-create you in any particular image. I am I, and you are you (in a very clear sense of Fritz Perls, 1974), and I will not violate who you are because I honor who you are." This is so crucial for the counselor to express, and for the client to perceive, if any interaction of significance between the two is to occur.

It is also important to acknowledge that this type of acceptance and respect are difficult to achieve and maintain. We, as outsiders of the other's private perceptual world, may often see serious consequences of particular choices the client may be considering. It may be so tempting to intervene directly. This disregards the

client's perception of reality and bypasses the opportunity to help the client discover from his or her perspective what more effective alternative might be explored. Each client presents a new perspective that assumes the counselor must constantly be sensitive to his or her level of client respect and acceptance.

Accepting the counselor's invitation is an acknowledgment that, temporarily at least, the client has allowed the counselor to come into contact with some aspects of the client's life with which the client feels comfortable and safe enough to share with the counselor at that moment in time. It may be very fragile; it may be very transient; and it may not be highly significant in terms of content, but the power of the process of this interaction may often defy quantification and definition, while at the same time its personal significance seems undeniable.

Listening

Stephen King (1982) in the prologue to his story, "The Body" from his book, *Stand By Me*, expresses the importance of being heard, understood, and accepted. The most important things are the hardest things to say:

They are the things you get ashamed of, because words diminish the...words shrink things that seemed limitless when they were in your head to no more than living size when they're brought out. But it's more than that, isn't it? The most important things lie too close to wherever your secret heart is buried, like landmarks to a treasure your enemies would love to steal away. *And you make revelations that cost you dearly only to have people look at you in a funny way, not understanding what you've said at all, or why you thought it was so important you*

almost cried while you were saying it. That's the worst, I think. When the secret stays locked within not for want of a teller, but for want of an understanding ear. (p.45) [italics added by author]

Kopp (1987) spoke to this issue as well in his book, *Who Am I...Really?* Kopp's thesis was that each person has a personal life story to tell. The importance of telling the story is to share it so that it can be better understood by the teller as he or she attempts to relate it to others. The person searches for someone who is able to hear and understand the significance of his or her story. Our culture, and many times the helping professionals within the culture, often mistake this process as the individual seeking someone to hear their story so the listener will tell them what they should do. Kopp, however, maintains the individual is capable of setting one's own course. In order to do this, however, the individual needs the affirmation that his or her own life story has been heard and understood in terms of the story's significance by another. Kopp would agree with King that the problem is *not* the want of a teller, but the want of an understanding and caring listener.

One assumption regarding this dilemma seems to lie with the degree to which the counselor has a reasonable degree of self-understanding of his or her own life story. This is not to suggest the counselor is to be a perfectly adjusted individual. On the contrary, Rollo May (1984), in his consideration of "The Wounded Healer", stated the therapist who presents himself/herself as being the model of personal adjustment, should probably be avoided because that person probably is *not* in touch with his or her own personal existence. Therapeutically, such a counselor could likely be a hindrance to the client's growth because of this lack of self-understanding regarding one's own existence.

This does not mean that an effective listener must, therefore, be maladjusted. Peck (1978) maintains that all of us are “wounded” (a la May) to some extent; but that these wounds are the price one pays for engaging and interacting with life. Therefore, that person has some sense of what life is about and how one grows through life experiences. The person, who ignores the vicissitudes of engaging life, has a limited experience base to bring to the counseling relationship.

Clark Moustakas (1972), in his book, *Loneliness and Love*, states this notion forcibly:

When I am in touch with myself, whatever there is, is all there—the bright, radiating lights and the dark, disturbing shadows . . . This faith in myself, to be who I am extends beyond me; it does not consider the other as separate but lets life flow in its own spiraling way. I think this is the only way to authentic communication. (p 3)

The Counselor as a Fellow Traveler

Dante's *Inferno* also expresses another very important concept related to honoring the net. Much of contemporary research literature in human behavior is typically postulated in terms of process vs. outcome. Sadly, this is often presented as being dichotomous. That is, the focus of the counseling relationship must be either process (what we are doing) *or* outcome (what happens as a result of the interaction). This suggests that one has little to do with the other. The end result is that in most human interactions we tend to opt for measuring outcomes primarily because they are more easily established, more easily observed and quantified. From an invitational point of view, however, the outcomes (goals) are typically established *external* to the client who, is presumably be-ing helped, and those goals may or may not be part of the

client's milieu. Additionally, in these conditions the process involved is often viewed as a “technique” or “formula” to be tried to achieve the established goals. The process is seldom examined in light of the qualitative interactions between counselor and client and how they were determined as mutually defined goals. Perhaps this is due in part to our obsession for outcomes. Perhaps it is also due to the difficulty in understanding and evaluating process variables even though a wealth of research supports this area. Dante was more concerned with the process of experiencing life rather than putting all the emphasis on the outcome of life. In essence, perhaps Dante was saying—if you experience life, your direction and outcome will become clearer. Camus (1987) stated this sometime later when he proclaimed, “existence precedes essence.” That is, you must *live* life in order to *experience* life. A number of years ago a former student shared what I consider to be a brilliant insight to me. It was not her creation, but it was a seed another had planted some years back, and which had been significant to her. The insight was a simple declarative statement: “May your destination be as rewarding and fulfilling as your journey to that destination” (anonymous).

The Client and Counselor’s Journey

It has been suggested that the therapeutic journey is a joint venture for both the counselor and the client. While the counselor may have traveled similar roads in the past with former clients, there must always be the recognition that *this* client is new and unique.

This can become a critical incident when one looks at the dyad of the counselor interacting with the client. The counselor may look at the client’s dilemma and see a logical and desirable goal, perhaps concluding what the client ought to do. As the client needs to incorporate his or her life experiences into a personal gestalt, so

must the counselor *allow* for this process to happen if it naturally unfolds this way. The counselor, however, should not *make* it happen because the counselor determines that it should be the goal.

In the counselor's best judgment, he or she may see an ideal goal; the most desirable outcome and the most professional thing to do. However, the counselor, too, must remember that counseling is the *client's* journey; the counseling outcomes are the *client's outcomes* and the personal existence is the *client's existence*. This may well be the *essence* of honoring the net.

Thich Nhat Hanh's book, *Zen Keys* (1974), relates the statement of Lin Chi, the Zen master: "If you meet the Buddha, kill the Buddha. If you meet the Patriarch, kill the Patriarch" (p. 50). Thich Nhat Hanh continues,

For the one who only has devotion (to the Buddha), this declaration is terrible; it confuses him completely. But its effect depends on the mentality and capacity of the one who hears. If the man is strong, he truly will have the capacity to liberate himself from all authority, whatever it might be, and to accomplish in himself ultimate truth. Truth is reality itself and not concepts. If we cling to a certain number of concepts and consider them as being reality, we lose reality. This is why it is necessary to "kill" the concepts of reality in order that reality itself can be realized and reveal itself. To kill the Buddha is without doubt the only way to see the Buddha. The concept one has formed of the Buddha impedes one from seeing the Buddha himself. (p. 50)

How Far Should We Honor the Net?

A logical question, which might arise at this point, is to what extent is it practical to honor the net when interacting with another. Are there no limits, and how do we justify either the imposition of limits or maintain the net is inviolable? Even as the notion that honoring the net is basic to effective human interaction, this must also be a question for the reader. You, as the reader, may be saying to yourself, “Yes, in theory this may be true, but are there limits to which you can apply this or any principle?” This is an issue for each of us individually, and this is an issue which each of us must address in our own way.

Personally, this whole notion evolved from a conundrum I faced a number of years ago. That dilemma centered on the issue of how intelligent, capable and mostly stable adolescents with whom I was working could periodically engage in such paradoxical behavior making apparently random, senseless, irrational, and often destructive decisions and engage in corresponding behaviors. During that time, I happened upon a book authored by Donald Snygg and Arthur Combs. I regret that I have lost the citation, but a statement by Combs provided me an entirely fresh perspective, which responded to my puzzle. The words stand out clearly in my mind, although I am sure they are *not* a direct quote, but the intent of the paraphrase was: *Whatever the individual does is purposeful, relevant and pertinent to the individual as he or she perceives the situation at the moment of action.* What a basic and yet powerful observation, and what a unique way of looking at individual behavior. Very succinctly, Combs was summarizing the very basic tenets of perceptual psychology.

While Combs did not draw directly from Alfred Adler (1956), Adler’s point that all behavior is caused, and likewise, all misbehavior is caused, became a part of my awareness at that time. Combs, however, provided a sharper focus to the issue. In a perceptual sense, we see, perceive, understand and respond

depending upon how we are able view a given situation in our private world at a point in time. This perception can indeed be quite temporal in nature. All of us have experienced those situations in which we have said or done something, which seconds later, we have regretted and would immediately undo if we could possibly have the opportunity to do so. Rationally and logically the approach typically taken by an outside observer would be to question the offender, “Why did you do that?” Such a question would do little beyond producing a series of rationalizations for the inappropriate behavior. It would do little in understanding what had transpired.

Combs was suggesting that each interaction is unique to the individual and perceptions of what is transpiring at a given time will be determined not only by the obvious circumstances of the situation, but also by other and more subtle factors at play in that situation of which neither participant may be fully aware. Each of us brings more to a given interaction more than may be apparent as the situation unfolds. These other factors can and do play a significant part in how we perceive the situation. They affect how we will respond.

Current research adds to the richness of understanding of situations related to this phenomenon. The National Institute of Mental Health (2001) has reported research related to patterns of adolescent brain development and its attendant effects on adolescent behavior. Through the use of more sophisticated brain imaging (e.g., MRI), neurologists have reported some dramatic changes which occur during adolescence. While the cause is not completely understood, it is believed to be a part of neurological process of “pruning” of gray matter which is produced in excess at various times of development. It has long been recognized that the human organism is “overbuilt,” so to speak, and as a result, a pruning process takes place based largely on the principle of “use

it or lose it.” Thus, it is with the gray matter during adolescence, where the gray matter predominates largely to the frontal lobe, which is often referred to as the seat of executive functions. That is, the areas of planning, impulse control and reasoning. The current research is aided by the use of 145 longitudinal subjects. Thus with this pruning process in early-to-late adolescence, there is a decrease in impulsive behaviors and a greater awareness of the importance of planning and reasoning. All of these factors may be related to the more irrational behaviors and reckless actions referred to earlier in relation to Combs’ observations. It is one of the factors influencing the characters on stage who are interacting with life situations.

In the case of the adolescents mentioned earlier in this discussion, too often the readily available excuses of “Boys will be boys,” “It’s just that adolescence thing,” or “His hormones are really cooking today” may provide an amusing but not very helpful response. Ignoring the situation is not only useless; it may be harmful, as it tends to perpetuate unexamined behavior. What Combs was suggesting was that the interaction between the counselor and the client be processed for the dynamics involved.

Individual perception is influenced, in part, by how the person also perceives external assessments or statements regarding one’s behavior or being. A case in point, I was recently invited to attend a 40th class reunion of a school where I had worked in the past. Each of the former students did brief biographies since they had graduated. One such entry stood out in very stark relief from the others: “As expected, I never amounted to anything.” In contrast, most who knew that former student regarded him in just the opposite of his perception.

Purkey and Stanley (1990) have clearly demonstrated this in their Blue Card- Orange Card metaphor. We are indeed influenced by the perceptions, both overtly and covertly expressed, by other

individuals. Combs reminded us that we behave according to the way we perceive. In a counseling or therapeutic sense that means that if I, as a counselor, ignore, reject, disagree, argue or rebut your stated perceptions of yourself, I may be showing you very clearly that I *do not* understand what it is like in your perceptual world. There are many things that can happen at this point. Perhaps the most devastating is that the person trying to get you to understand his/her perceptual world may conclude: "What's the use? You cannot understand where I am, and perhaps nobody can. As a result, I am even more isolated than ever!" What a feeling of despair must come over a person at such a time.

Conclusion

Combs (1967) also noted that people do not consistently act on ideas; they do tend, however, to act upon beliefs. The “idea” of people regarding others as being valued, capable and responsible are just ideas, and they probably have limited impact upon our behaviors as long as they remain at the idea stage. However, the ideas become incorporated into one's belief system, however, these beliefs become quite different in terms of how that person attempts to behave in relation to beliefs. This is also true about honoring the net of interactions with others. If this notion of honoring the net is incorporated into our belief system, then that belief, and the way we behave in our interactions, is unconditional to the extent we are able to practice it, and our behaviors will be quite different from those at the idea stage.

Burlew (1995) addressed this issue of our theoretical and philosophical roots when he stated, “(for counselors) once graduated . . . it is easy to forget our ‘roots’. On the other hand, maybe we are not forgetting our roots but are forgetting that theory is nothing until the practitioner gives it life and meaning” (p. 4).

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William B. Stafford is Associate Professor Emeritus at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA. A charter member of the International Alliance of Invitational Education, Bill is a past editor of the *Journal of Invitational theory and Practice*. wbs0@lehigh.edu

Inviting E-Learning: How Hard Can It Be?

Patsy Paxton
Auckland University of Technology
New Zealand

From an Invitational Education perspective, e-learning will only succeed as an educative environment if educators are able to provide an e-learning environment that preserves dignity and encourages communication. The converse: using an online environment to “throw information” at students has the opposite effect; it is experienced as deeply disinviting.

This article identifies some of the more common disinviting practices currently being experienced by learners who are new to an e-learning environment. It also examines practical ways in which e-learning educators can make the online environment more invitational.

Introduction

Invitational Theory originated from the work of William Watson Purkey and Betty Siegel at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro, USA. They spearheaded the establishment of the International Alliance for Invitational Education in the early 1980s. Since then, Invitational Theory has continued to be enriched by scholars from across the world. Invitational Education is a theory of practice based on trust, respect, a belief in cooperation, empathic understanding and genuineness. Its purpose is to create total learning environments and climates where people want to be and where they want to learn. Invitational Education focuses on all the forces that contribute to human achievement in an organisation, including the places, policies, programs, processes

and the people who create these forces (also referred to as “the 5 P’s”) (Purkey & Novak, 1996).

Whenever one of these five P’s evokes positive feelings in a person, that person is said to be “invited”. On the other hand, whenever one of these five Ps evokes negative feelings in a person, that person is said to be “disinvited.” Everything in an educational institution either works to add to or to take away from being a beneficial presence in the lives of people.

E-Learning

For the purposes of this article, e-learning is taken to be a subset of distance learning, in as much as it draws upon the same strategies and philosophies of distance education. The basic premise of e-learning is to electronically connect physically separate teachers, students and learning experiences. The class always meets in a technological, information-rich environment where original content and learning experiences are placed online and links can be to anything and anyone via the Internet. Communication and other software connects people with each other (Heeter, 15 February 2003). Another term for *e-learning* is *online learning*.

“E-learning, if structured correctly, can be an invaluable support to the learner in a distance education as well as face-to-face environment where huge classes can sometimes cause learners to be lost in the system” (Poole & Axmann, 15 February 2003).

Disinviting E-Learning Practices

According to Oliver (Oliver, 2002), a quality learning experience meets the following criteria: it has authentic content; it provides multiple perspectives; it involves mindful engagement and reflection; it encourages collaboration; it incorporates authentic assessment; and it involves the teacher as a coach/facilitator. In other words education is a profoundly social experience.

Oliver further points out that most e-learning practices at present do not meet these criteria. He estimates that 90% of the resources being channeled into e-learning courses are spent on the development of content and only 10% on the learning strategies geared towards engaging the learner. In other words, there are indications that e-learning courses currently are often not being designed to be intentionally inviting.

Following a search of the literature, e-learning discussion groups, and the author's personal experiences as an e-learner, the following elements of e-learning have been identified as creating stress and feelings of deep frustration in new e-learners; that is they are deemed to be disinviting. This has a direct influence on the levels of motivation of the new e- learner:

- Feelings of isolation, the lack of an obvious “classroom community of learners” and the disconnectedness for the individual embarking on e-learning for the first time
- The perception of the absence of accountability arising from the “faceless” aspects of the environment
- The perception that the e-learning environment is not “real”
- The perception that e-learning educators/teachers don't have the opportunity to really “delve” into a student's thinking processes

- E-learning courses appear to be biased towards students with a learning style that favours digesting the written word
- There does not seem to be strong evidence that e-learning courses are validly and reliably assessed
- E-learning appears to create contrived discussions that lack spontaneity
- Attempts are often made to directly transfer conventional classroom activities to the e-learning forum
- Long delays are often experienced in receiving feedback on assignments submitted, or assignments are not being sent out on schedule
- E-learners often experience a lack of logistical support and rapid assistance with technical problems in the e-learning classroom and the lack of clarity with regard to navigating the specific course website

Solutions to Disinviting E-learning Practices: Make Them Intentionally Invitational!

Curtis Bonk, Associate Professor at Indiana University applied learner-centered principles from the American Psychological Association to design, implement, and refine e-learning educational psychology courses and laboratory experiences offered to pre-service teachers at Indiana University. As a result of teaching a basic undergraduate educational psychology course over the Internet to students at Indiana University at Bloomington, he came up with twelve recommendations (Bonk & Cummings, 1998). These recommendations for learner-centered e-learning form the basis of the suggestions in this paper for the successful implementation of Invitational Theory to e-learning practices aimed at fostering student thinking skills, problem solving abilities, teamwork, and social interaction and debate.

Problem: Feelings of Isolation and Disconnectedness

One-to-one teacher-student interactions can be initiated by the teacher more easily than in traditional classroom instruction. In the traditional classroom, between 20 and 500 students attend class together. When one student is asked a question, all the others must wait and watch. A few students will stay after class to ask questions while a few others may take advantage of the teacher's set consultation hours. Some students reported (University of Brighton, 15 February 2003) that they had felt the impact of the absence of the social aspects of being part of a class; having breaks together and developing friendships—things that did not occur in the e-learning environment.

In order to deal with this problem, three possible solutions are offered for consideration:

- Establish a safe environment and a sense of community. One way to do this is to ask e-learning students to introduce themselves by posting messages that describe themselves (hobbies, interests, major, learning strengths.) This gives fellow students and teachers a reasonable amount of student background information. In a survey conducted at the California State University, Monterey Bay, Armando (Armando, 15 February 2003) found that computer technologies had the potential to promote participation and learning in traditionally “communicative-apprehensive” learners such as shy students, limited English proficient students, and women who avoid verbally confronting men. The teacher can actively encourage contacts between students and the teachers, and develop reciprocity and cooperation among students

- Use public and private forms of feedback. In the traditional face-to-face classroom students usually submit written work to the teacher without others seeing it, and then expect to receive feedback within a reasonable period of time. In stark contrast, when an assignment is conducted in an e-learning conferencing environment, students can view peer contributions. Private and personalised forums and e-mail contact can also be used for individual consultation and feedback. These promote invitational practices where an individual student and the teacher can communicate one-on-one along with questions, reactions and comments. Moreover, individual differences in learning styles and motivation can be addressed, meaningful learning activities agreed and appropriately high and challenging standards established.
- Encourage informal peer mentors. Peers in the same class or sub-class can be effective e-learning mentors or e-mail pals. Graduate students can individually mentor the under-graduates and provide them with weekly electronic feedback. The notion of a formal system of mentoring is describe later in this paper.

Problem: The Perception of a Lack of Accountability

In a reflection (University of Brighton, 15 February 2003) one student reported: “During our exercise of e-learning I also noticed that I felt less committed to this part of the MA. There was no teacher to ‘report’ to; it was just me and the computer and the different exercises. I thought it was great that I didn’t have to come in to class and do the exercises at one particular time of the week, but the danger was that I saw myself postponing things, and not getting things done. In a busy schedule you always have to prioritise, and I realised that I found it easier to postpone the work

for this module, than it was to postpone work for modules where we met up in person every week.”

To deal with this disinviting aspect of e-learning, it is important to remember that both teachers and students are more accountable in an e-learning course. Unlike a discussion in the traditional classroom where no record is kept other than students' individual notes, in an e-learning course all the discussion content exists online in fully archived notes and can be viewed or reviewed later. Furthermore, teachers must be aware that prompt feedback is crucially important if the e-learner is to feel cared about.

Problem: The Perception that the E-learning Environment is Not “Real”

New e-learners can easily feel that because they are not in a traditional classroom something in the total learning experience is missing. In order to address this, the e-learning teacher should seek ways to personalise the e-learning experience for the student. This can be done in a number of ways:

- Videoconferencing and affordable webcams now “make it possible to view someone as clearly as if one were sitting opposite the person in a lounge chair, so that one is able to take into account both verbal and non-verbal communication” (Rheingold, 1994).
- Alternating e-learning and live class sessions. For example, one week of “live” class with two weeks of e-learning class.
- Cycle student electronic feedback or progress reports on two or three week intervals.
- Arrange forums for synchronous chatting with an expert on a given topic. This will serve to enhance the personal touch by giving students the sense that someone is listening and immediately reacting to their comments and questions.

- Use small groups and e-mail pal activities to enhance students' connectedness to the course.
- Hold role-play group discussions during which everyone assumes a role (school principal, vice-chancellor) or specific character identity (e.g. George Bush, Nelson Mandela), thereby giving students license to be creative and share personal insights and perspectives. This could also have the effect of raising the level of excitement, connectiveness and a sense of belonging within a class.

Problem: The Perception that E-learning doesn't "Delve" into Thinking Processes

A solution to this problem is suggested by Heeter (Heeter, 15 February 2003). She cites the work of Hara and Kling who demonstrated how relatively small changes in protocol and technology can have profound effects on e-learners. One example of this is the manner in which e-learning multiple choice examinations are administered. When the course developers added a form requiring students to explain why they thought the answer they chose was correct, the multiple choice examination "transformed into a sophisticated tracking tool to help the instructor know what the students understood at any point in the semester" (Heeter, 15 February 2003).

Problem: E-Learning Courses are Biased Towards the Written Word

Central to Invitational Theory is the concept of learner-centered teaching, which maintains that students should be encouraged to be self-directed learners, making, wherever possible, their own decisions. Bonk's (Bonk & Cummings, 1998) student course evaluations reveal that students genuinely appreciate having some personal choice and alternatives within class assignments. They find value in exploring e-learning databases, joining in discussions and conversations and making selections from class assignment options.

To address the accusation from some quarters that e-learning courses favours a "written" learning style, the following strategies could be considered:

- Provide students with options which enable them to "capitalise on student interest areas and strengths, thereby dramatically expanding overall course accomplishments beyond the norm" (Bonk & Cummings, 1998)
- Use threaded discussion groups which offer an important added dimension for learners and educators by promoting a group dynamic where attitudes, interpretations learning abilities and styles interplay
- Build a sense of community and respect for diversity and different learning styles
- Enhance the learning experience by incorporating collaborative elements

Furthermore, the teacher can focus on creating balance by varying the pedagogical activities in the e-learning classroom. In addition to the obvious tasks of writing, summarising information, reading and debating chapter information, students can be asked to

reflect on personal experiences, create their own case studies and simulations, respond to the ideas of their peers, brainstorm and evaluate e-learning class activities. They can also facilitate the process of evaluating and comparing Internet websites to enhance course content. To encourage the last-named activity, e-learning educators could offer students prompt feedback on their website suggestions and base a portion of student grades on the quality of websites students locate and submit to the course (Bonk & Cummings, 1998).

Problem: E-Learning Courses are Not Validly and Reliably Assessed

One of the most frequently asked questions is how one can validly and reliably assess student learning in an e-learning environment. In order to address the criticism that there are serious flaws in the assessment of e-learning courses, teachers can embed thinking skills and portfolio assessments as an integral part of e-learning assignments.

Bonk and Cummings point out; “While conferencing technologies create complete records of student electronic contributions, such rich chronicles of student development can also overwhelm the assessor” (Bonk & Cummings, 1998). For the assessment of student portfolios, they suggest the use of dimensional scoring schemes of key skills and objectives rated on a 1 (low) to 10 (high) scale. For example, “Is the work insightful, clear, sequentially flowing, responsive, persuasiveness, inspirational, and original? How are new knowledge relationships drawn? Is sufficient knowledge growth displayed?” Group projects might similarly be rated for goals or purpose, originality, scope or impact, practicality, effort, and knowledge of topic displayed. “These dimensional scoring schemes not only help in the fairness

of the portfolio grading, but they also provide thinking skill-related feedback to students and help them construct more meaningful and coherent knowledge representations.” This method of assessment would also work towards reducing the incidence of plagiarism.

Problem: Contrived Discussions Lack Spontaneity

E-learning discussions are often perceived as being contrived and this may have the effect of discouraging students from engaging. Many individuals prefer face-to-face conversations, which allows for impulsive input, spontaneous body language and energy.

One solution to this problem is to employ recursive assignments that build from personal knowledge and experience. E-learning teachers should strive to make course assignments integrative, as this allows students to combine text, online, field and other resources to build on their prior experiences and help them connect textbook information to real life. Bonk and Cummings (Bonk & Cummings, 1998) give the example of how, in one of their assignments, students were asked to write about their best teacher, thereby introducing concepts associated with effective teaching within familiar teaching and learning experiences. In a class discussion forum, students posted a description of the characteristics that distinguished their favourite teachers. These “best teacher” postings were used in other assignments as the semester progressed. In another task later in the semester, a field reflection activity required students to record the various strategies a teacher might use to motivate the students in a class. Prior to the observation, students read a chapter on motivation. They then were required to post their classroom observations in the discussion forum. “The recursive and intrinsically motivating part of the assignment came when the students had to later re-enter that forum and use some of the classroom

observations recorded by their peers. After reading peer observations, each student then assumed the role of an instructional consultant who based his/her classroom advice and recommendations on concepts in the text” (Bonk & Cummings, 1998).

Problem: The Direct Transfer of Conventional Activities to the E-learning Forum

The perceived direct transfer of conventional activities to the e-learning environment is one of the most common criticisms from e-learning students. It raises the question: what purpose does weekly e-learning lecture notes and tests serve when students now have access to information and course resources that extend thousands of times beyond the teacher’s current and potential knowledge base?

The obvious solution to this disinviting practice is to exploit the potential of the medium for deeper student engagement. A significant challenge in creating invitational e-learning environments is to create learning activities that take advantage of the characteristics and assets of the medium, rather than duplicating activities that typify conventional classrooms. To elaborate on this point, Bonk and Cummings (Bonk & Cummings, 1998) explain how in one of their classes an e-learning debate was initially going to take the form of a traditional debate, with one side presenting a position and the other posting a rebuttal. As a result of the asynchronous conferencing time delay, students had the opportunity to consult the original sources for arguments used by their opponents, and in so doing significantly enhanced the quality of their rebuttals. Student surveys have revealed that the conferencing tools encourage students to participate “in class” without normal inhibitions, or as one student put it, “they aren’t scared to say anything” (Bonk & Cummings, 1998).

In an e-learning environment, the most a teacher can be is the “guide on the side” rather than the “sage on the stage.” As Dale Spender puts it: “Teaching is on the brink of becoming an entirely new profession: that of learning management . . . it is a shift from the relatively passive and dependent readers . . . to the active users of the digital medium—who can *change* the information . . . create their own meanings as they go—who access rather than memorise” (Spender, 2002).

This paradigm shift is becoming apparent in e-learning courses where lectures (“sage on the stage” element), which are central to much face-to-face teaching, are almost nonexistent. When a lecture is inserted, it is usually after most students have completed their electronic contributions for the week or unit, and is usually directed at key concepts that were misinterpreted, missing, or understated.

A crucial mistake educators can make when teaching online is to interfere too much in students’ learning. “While students certainly are anxious for feedback on their class contributions and are curious about the instructor’s position on a topic, they typically want this after they have wrestled with key issues or problems on their own or in their small groups. If a teacher’s long-winded opinions or pointed statements are inserted too quickly and forcefully into an electronic conversation, student interaction and knowledge building will be stifled” (Bonk & Cummings, 1998). To combat this, e-learning teachers could consider assuming a more collegial approach in the learning situation.

Problem: Grading Assignments and Providing Feedback

The obvious solution to complaints from e-learners regarding the grading and providing feedback on assignments is to provide

clear expectations and course structuring. As in any instructional situation, students in an e-learning course require detailed task clarity as well as appropriate and timely instructional guidance in such tasks (Bonk & Cummings, 1998). In online teaching the syllabus and course structure must be clearer and more concise than in traditional classrooms. In the latter, changes or clarifications are relatively easy to announce at the beginning or end of the class. However, in an e-learning class, any confusion regarding task assignments or due dates will likely result in student frustration and anger (with the resultant multiple e-mail queries!). Task structuring and set due dates and timelines can be dealt with via e-mail distribution lists.

Problem: Lack of Timely Logistical Support with Technical Problems

El-Tigi (El-Tigi, 2002) examined college students' perceptions of course Internet websites as an instructional resource for classroom-based courses. The focus was on identifying functions on the sites that students perceived as supporting and fostering their learning experiences. Students in this study found that one of the greatest barriers was the lack of Internet navigational skills together with the absence of technical assistance when needed.

While the introduction of the e-learning option has moved the emphasis on the educator from the "sage" to the "guide," there remains a great need for the teacher/instructor/mentor who is personally available when needed to assist students as they focus on communication tasks that promote learning.

In 1999 the staff of Florida State University's Office for Distributed and Distance Learning (ODDL) made the decision to offer four undergraduate degree programs online (Mullane, 15

February 2003). However, in order to ward off any problems in this venture they decided to be proactive and to introduce mentors to serve as the students' primary point of contact, and to act as liaisons between the instructor and the student. These mentors are typically retired teachers, librarians or graduate students. All have advanced degrees in their mentoring subject area, experience in the field and a strong desire to help students achieve success in their course.

In order to become a mentor for the ODDL, selected applicants must attend a three-day workshop during which they meet the course teachers, learn the course management software (Blackboard) and e-learning communication skills.

A mentor is assigned to a cohort of between 15 and 25 students. Their job involves contacting each of their students by e-mail and explaining the range of services they are available to provide, including acting as the student's guide and motivator. Throughout the course, the mentor monitors student participation levels. If a student goes for a week without engaging with the course material, the mentor will e-mail the student. If this does not elicit a response then the next step is a telephone call.

Two years into the mentor programme, great successes have been reported, as mentors have addressed several disinviting aspects of e-learning. They have also served to lessen the number of time-consuming interactions the course teacher must typically do in order to coach a student through the mechanics of an e-learning environment.

However, the greatest advantage of making use of e-learning mentors is in the relationships they form with their e-learning students. The isolation of e-learning environments can result in difficulty for the student to remain motivated and focused on the course. Tracking of a student's participation by the mentor has had

a significant positive impact on completion rates. And because “the more successful students there are, the more interest there is in the programs,” this has also led to great increases in enrollments in the four e-learning degree programs (Mullane, 15 February 2003).

At the ODDL, mentoring programs continue to foster a “high tech, high touch” learning environment, aimed at providing “a zone of familiarity and consistency that the student can rely upon in an otherwise remote and unfamiliar environment” (Mullane, 15 February 2003). This results in the establishment of trust, which is fundamental to the goal of facilitating learning, and is indeed an underlying principle of Invitational Education. Mentors play a vital role in building this trust and creating a stimulating, successful and enriching e-learning environment: an invitational e-learning environment.

Conclusions

The literature clearly shows that “successful” e-learning courses have been able to overcome the disinviting aspects of the medium by applying the technologies to “humanise” the environment and establish a “social presence” of all participants; to encourage cooperation and collaboration between individuals, groups, and e-learning educators/facilitators; to stimulate a much more meaningful view of the subject matter being taught; and to use operational activities which specifically address the disinvitational aspects on e-learning.

In essence, effective e-learning is much more than “digital page turning” (as in the more traditional classroom teaching) it is a holistic educational experience that focuses on deep and insightful learning that includes discourse, discussion and debate.

This paper has considered a number of issues, that need to be addressed in order to make e-learning more inviting. However, of paramount importance is that it is ultimately the person in the process that drives the e-learning processes. The invitational e-learning educator embodies an intentionally caring stance that includes trust, respect, empathic understanding, genuineness and a belief in cooperation. Moreover, this stance is consistent, even during the most challenging times.

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Patsy Paxton is a professor at Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. Her address is Private Bag 92006, Auckland, New Zealand. patsy.paxton@aut.ac.nz

The Intimate Correlation of Invitational Education and Effective Classroom Management

Phillip S. Riner
University of North Florida

Critics of Invitational Education and other self-concept approaches to learning have long argued that there is a lack of empirical data to support the claims that approaches to student instruction based on self-concept theory are central to effective learning. Ellis (2001) examines a number of these analyses where self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy are derided as antecedents to successful learning. However, by examining the empirical research on classroom management, all of the critical elements of invitational education can be found. Invitational education is shown to provide a strong, comprehensive, and comprehensible theoretical foundation to a classroom or school-based classroom management plan based on the maturing field of classroom management research.

Misunderstandings Examined

Self-concept approaches to learning performance have been rigorously criticized for a lack of empirical data to support the claims that approaches to student instruction based on self-concept theory are central to effective learning. Ellis (2001) does an excellent analysis of self-esteem programs, claims, and outcomes noting confusion in the corresponding terminology, theory, and research. However, like most critics, Ellis takes the field of self-esteem research as a singular entity, lumping critical analyses with “feel good” emotionalism, treating the broad research in this field as if the various works were part of a uniform concept, consistently defined, and based on the same theoretical explanations.

Often *the advocates* of self-concept programs as well as their critics use naïve analyses and simplistic slogans to examine the complex relationships between achievement and self-image. Napoleon Hill's (1937) "think and grow rich" approach to success has found repeated popularity. Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) popularized this notion of "thinking it so makes it happen" in a landmark study of expectation effects. They subsequently labeled the phenomenon after Shaw's famous Broadway play *Pygmalion*.

The logic of the Pygmalion Effect is simple: if everyone thinks children have talent, children will have talent, and the children will therefore demonstrate that talent. In this mentality, *believing* is all that is necessary to becoming. This misinformed notion has been at the center of many criticisms of self-concept approaches to education. No one has been able to systematically duplicate Rosenthal and Jacobson's research and although a great deal of research has been done on induced expectations (Good & Brophy, 1970, 1974, 2003), the results have been mixed. There are logical reasons for the unstable relationships between self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-esteem and subsequent achievement as examined by many researchers.

Good and Brophy's (2003) research reveals that success expectations did affect the outcomes of instructional events, but the linkage was tenuous and certainly not likely to be causal. What they did find was a medial variable: expended effort. They hypothesized that when teachers or students felt that they would be successful, they were more likely to expend the effort necessary to realize success in the selected endeavor. The success is not based on "belief" but based on the "action" that resulted from the belief. Good and Brophy (2003) refer to this recognition as effort-outcome covariation. In effect, the harder you try the more likely you are to succeed. The more you believe you will succeed; the

harder you will try. Invitational education employs this effort-outcome linkage that is mediated not simply by outcomes, but by the perceptions of the likelihood of various outcomes based on very personal assumptions about how the world operates. Living and learning success is nurtured and supported by assisting the learner in understanding these perceptions and accepting invitations and opportunities to develop his or her abilities.

The Problem

This paper explores whether the invitational education self-concept approach to learning (as understood with the caveats above) is sound, and if it correlates with the maturing empirical research on effective teaching and classroom management.

Success expectations are closely related to self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy; constructs that are essential to understanding invitational education and other approaches to student learning that emphasize the perception tradition (Purkey & Novak, 1996; Purkey & Schmidt, 1987; Purkey & Stanley, 1991; Purkey & Strahan, 2002). The postulate is that we seek out success and avoid failure. Feather (1982) added an additional construct that is also included in invitational education's understanding of the perceptual tradition: This key construct is the perceived value of the outcomes of success. The value of any learning is also largely based on personal perception and judgment. In order to unify the empirical findings, a theory that incorporates perception, self-concept, effort, and behavior is needed. Invitational education supplies a method to obtain that cohesion.

The problem is thus: How can effort-outcome covariation (representing a perceptual outlook focused on untapped ability) be developed within the school environment using what we know about successful teaching and learning?

The Method

The method employed in this study is a derivative strategy based on a jurisprudential model. In this case, the major tenets of invitational education are identified from major texts and theoretical explanations and compared to the collective empirical findings of classroom management and effective teaching research. With that evidence, it is up to the reader to determine the viability of the thesis.

The research on effective teaching and classroom management has matured since the 1970's and has been assembled by a number of researchers and texts (see Cotton 2000; Cruikshank; 1990 as examples.) The Northwest Regional Education Laboratory (NWREL) has perhaps the longest continual summary of this research initially compiled by Cotton (1990, 1997, 2000, 2001). (The most current version can be found online at the NWREL website.) The enormity of the research is substantial, has been replicated, and has remained stable for approximately two decades. However, its popularity has lagged due to a professional quirk that is well known: American education is addicted to faddish bandwagon approaches to learning.

The method employed in this paper will be to examine the major premises in invitational education and compare that to supporting (or contradictory) research findings in the NWREL summary by Cotton (2000). This approach has been employed in many fields. Eisner (1985a, 1985b) has argued for a connoisseur's approach to evaluation of the effects of complex problems. In effect, highly trained experts, or connoisseurs, experience and rate the environment and render a judgment. In this case, the value of their judgment critically hinges on the reader's willingness to trust the judgment of the expert and how effective the expert actually

judges. Art criticism, wine tasting, motion picture reviews, policy development, and law-making rely on this or similar approaches.

For this study, it will be assumed that the reader is acting as an expert for his or her own judgment and for any subsequent conclusion regarding the efficacy of the invitational approach. Thus, the information is presented in the form of an argument but the reader is free to structure or restructure the data and form an independent conclusion.

Our legal system provides a poignant example this research approach to complex assessment and evaluation. In a trial by jury, evidence (which is governed by a complex set of rules and examples) is presented to a jury. The decision is made, not on a statistical outcome, but rather by individuals of good will attempting to estimate the truth of various propositions. A single statistical measure rarely has any practical relevance in isolation. Rather, evidence is collected, collated, and examined in relationship to a number of variables involved.

The Results

Using a modified jurisprudential model, keeping in mind the complex interactions of the constructs that compose invitational education, an examination of the research in classroom management revealed a general pattern of correlation with few deviations. The most common areas of non-alignment are in contexts where invitational instruction remains mute such as class size, technical aspects of assessments, and questioning strategies.

The single most notable difference between the pattern of research and the basic premises of invitational education lies in the educator's reaction to inappropriate behavior. While the methods advocated are nearly the same, the level of emphasis in many

summaries of classroom management findings differs with invitational education as invitational education emphasizes greater reliance on student oriented self-analysis/self-correction than that advocated by the included research summaries. The readers should note, however, that the methods themselves are not in conflict, only the degree of reliance that is advocated. (As will be shown, coercion and other popular myths about “discipline” are not being upheld by the research. In general, “rough” solutions tend to create defiance and accelerate the negative effects of the undesired behavior.)

The management research as summarized by Cotton (2000) clearly illustrates that rules with corresponding enforcements or consequences are essential to any management plan. Please note that this research differs from the “get tough” perspectives exemplified by Canter and Canter (1992) and others where the classroom’s ethical development is based on the barter system. That is, each enactment of a sanctioned behavior results in a cost (or consequence) that restricts the freedom and happiness of the offender. In these systems, however, little attempt is made to get the offender to analyze his or her behavior and look for potential solutions.

There is nothing in invitational education, per se, that denies logical and appropriate consequences to misdeeds (Purkey & Strahan, 2002). However, rather than reach for the sanction as an automatic outcome, invitational education advocates for a process where the student is confronted with the misdeed in a way that the initial purpose of the behavior, the outcome, and the impact on others, is carefully assessed by the student.

Consequences as a form of external control are far removed from the optimistic view that students can be led to control and regulate their own behavior, including determining a course of

activity when they make an error in judgment or interfere with the happiness of others (Purkey & Strahan, 2002; Glasser, 1986 & 1998). Consequences in invitational education serve as strategies for assisting the student in reassessing the erring behavior. However, invitational education is still developing its theoretical base in this area. Purkey & Strahan (2002) for example, have written about the “5 C’s” where a sequence of teachers strategies for communication address the disruptive or harmful behavior and thereby lead to amelioration. However, the prevention of confrontations and equipping students with skills to cope with disappointments remain the dominant preferred strategies for invitational education theorists and practitioners (Purkey & Strahan, 2002; Reed & Strahan, 1995).

The primary assertions of invitational learning examined in the paper are (Purkey & Novak, 1996):

- Human potential can best be realized by creating and maintaining places, policies, processes, and programs specifically designed to invite development.
- Education should be a collaborative, cooperative activity.
- People are able, reliable, and responsible and should be treated accordingly.
- People possess untapped potential in all areas of worthwhile human endeavor.
- Human interactions should be characterized by Respect, Intentionality, Optimism, and Trust.

Human potential can best be realized by creating and maintaining places, policies, processes, and programs specifically designed to invite development.

Research Findings (Cotton, 2001):

- Emphasize the importance of protecting learning time when interacting with each other and with parents and students.

- Keep unassigned time and time spent on non-instructional activities to a minimum during the school day; ...keep loudspeaker announcements and other administrative intrusions brief and schedule them for minimal interference with instruction.
- Review testing practices and eliminate excessive and/or redundant testing.
- Keep student pull-outs from regular classes to a minimum for either academic or nonacademic purposes, and monitor the amount of pull-out activity.
- Provide extra learning time outside of regular school hours for students who need or want it.
- Review alternative scheduling strategies (e.g., block scheduling) and make changes based on the needs of students and staff.
- Model respect for efficient time use by keeping conferences focused and short, streamlining internal communications, and aligning personal time use with district and school priorities.
- Offer full-day, as opposed to half-day, kindergarten programs, especially for poor and minority students.
- Place a high priority on school safety, which includes specifies sanctions for violence, weapons, and illegal drugs, as well as more minor infractions.
- Administer discipline procedures quickly following infractions, making sure that disciplinary action is consistent with the code and that all students are treated equitably.
- Take action on absenteeism and tardiness quickly normally within a day.
- Adapt any discipline programs developed in other settings so that they match local circumstances and needs.

- Develop and implement, as needed, projects to prevent violence and gang activity.
- Understand that smaller schools facilitate the reflective dialogue among teachers, de-privatized, practice, and peer collaboration that characterize professional learning communities.
- Assist young people who are not succeeding in school to explore other options, including small alternative schools.
- Recognize that smaller classes are associated with more positive student social behavior and attitudes, as well as higher achievement.
- Know the learning and behavior of students is affected by the quality of the physical environment, especially air quality, heat control, lighting, space, and availability of equipment and furnishings.
- Arrange for physical facilities to be kept clean and reasonably attractive; damage is repaired immediately.
- Maintain a no-tolerance policy for graffiti or other vandalism of school facilities or grounds.
- Arrange for hallways and classrooms to be cheerfully decorated with student products, seasonal artwork, posters depicting positive values and school spirit, etc.
- Use elements of the school building itself to enhance teaching and learning, including bulletin boards, display cases, murals painted by local artists, permanent information panels, interior windows to classrooms, and bas reliefs on building exteriors.

Education should be a collaborative, cooperative activity.

Research Findings (Cotton, 2001):

- Require specific kinds of group interaction for routine learning tasks; for tasks whose object is conceptual

learning, fewer constraints are placed on the nature of the interaction within groups.

- Set up peer tutoring and peer evaluation groups to use time effectively and to ensure that students receive the assistance they need to learn successfully.
- Ensure that learning groups exhibit gender, cultural, ability-disability, and socioeconomic balance.
- Provide students training in how to work cooperatively and periodically review strategies for effective group work.
- Involve all school staff in the development of school discipline policies.
- Know that research favors smaller learning environments over larger ones for student achievement, attitudes, and social behavior, as well as teacher and administrator morale.
- Seek to achieve the shared purposes, personal loyalties, and common sentiments that characterize the culture of smaller schools.
- Secure staff and student input periodically on facilities needs-repair, replacement, refurbishing, lighting, temperature, cleanliness, etc.

People are able, reliable, and responsible and should be treated accordingly.

Research Findings (Cotton, 2001):

- Set standards, which are consistent with or identical to the building code of conduct.
- Establish rules that are clear and specific; they avoid vague or unenforceable rules such as “be in the right place at the right time.”
- Provide a rationale for each rule, explaining why it is necessary and beneficial.
- Elicit students' views on classroom life and disciplinary fairness and involve them in helping to establish standards and sanctions.
- Maintain a professional demeanor and remain calm when dealing with disruptive students.
- Teach and reinforce positive, prosocial behaviors and skills, including self-control skills, especially with students who have a history of behavior problems.
- Defuse potentially disruptive situations using conflict resolution strategies.
- Provide a written code of conduct specifying acceptable student behavior, including speech, at school, on school buses, at school-sponsored events; discipline procedures; and consequences.
- Make certain that students, parents, and all staff members know the code by providing initial training and periodic reviews of key features.
- Work to create a warm, supportive school environment. The principal, in particular, is visible and personable in interactions with staff and students.

People possess untapped potential in all areas of worthwhile human endeavor.

Research Findings (Cotton, 2001):

- Know that research does not support between-class academic tracking because of its negative effect on the achievement and attitudes of most students
- Review alternative strategies for student and teacher placement and make changes as needed to increase learning efficiency.
- Identify students to receive conflict resolution training and function as peer mediators with their classmates.
- Work with schools to establish broadly representative school-based management teams that draw their membership from administrators, teachers, students, non-certified staff, parents, and community members.

Human interactions should be characterized by Respect, Intentionality, Optimism, and Trust.

Research Findings (Cotton, 2001):

- Know that corporal punishment is ineffective, illegal in many settings, and ethically questionable.
- Make certain that students understand why they are being disciplined, in terms of the code of conduct.
- Carry out discipline in a neutral, matter-of-fact way, focusing on the student's behavior rather than personality or history.
- Develop and provide training in and positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior, particularly for those students with a history of behavior problems.
- Assist students with behavior problems to develop social interaction, self-control, and anger management skills.

- Avoid expulsions and out-of-school suspensions whenever possible, making use instead of in-school suspension accompanied by assistance and support.
- Engage in problem solving with each other and with students to address discipline issues, focusing on causes rather than symptoms.
- Strike agreements with parents about ways to reinforce school disciplinary procedures at home.
- Be aware that their support is essential for school-based management to be successful; they communicate vision, trust, and a willingness to help in their interactions with schools.

Conclusion

Research-based instruction as well as school and classroom management can be viewed as one of many applications of invitational theory. In that light, invitational theory is viewed as the vision while classroom and school management practices are viewed as a version. The version-of-the-vision perspective is quite helpful in that it permits us to look abstractly to guiding principles that assist us in developing solutions to specific problems. This interaction between “theory and practice,” where abstractions are interpreted and given embodiment by application, is a complex one and often misunderstood.

Generally, as noted earlier in the interaction of success expectations and assessed value, attempting to isolate a construct from other associated variables is a mistake. Thus, any principle can be misapplied when its application violates another principle or faces a paradoxical implementation. Invitational education theory is a strategy to keep separate empirical findings from being used in isolation and therefore, assists the development of a

comprehensive understanding that promotes effective teacher judgment that promotes effective teaching and learning.

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Phil Riner is Professor of Education at the University of North Florida.
priner@unf.edu

Invitational Leadership: Does It Make a Difference?

Robert Egley

University of South Florida St. Petersburg

This study investigated the relationship between professionally and personally inviting behaviors of high school principals in the state of Mississippi and: (a) Teacher Job Satisfaction, (b) Principal Effectiveness, (c) Principal as an Agent of School Improvement, and (d) Principal's Invitational Quotient, and (e) The Computed Accreditation Performance Index of their respective school district. The foundation for this study evolved as an extension of earlier research (Asbill, 1994) that examined the value of Invitational Education Theory (IET) as a workable theory for educational leaders in the school setting.

Invitational Education Theory

At the time this study was conducted, Asbill's (1994) research was the only documented research on principals' behaviors based on the tenets of IET. Asbill (1994) examined the literature on IET and determined that few studies addressed the application of IET to educational administrative practices. Asbill (1994) noted that the few studies that did exist focused on suggestions for IET's application to the administration of schools. The research on the effects of IET in the educational administrative process is relatively new as compared to other theories pertaining to leadership. Invitational Leadership is a refreshing change from the standard theories of leadership that emphasized the process of influencing others through the use of power to an alternative leadership style that promotes collaboration and shows consideration and respect for individuals in the educational system. Barth (1991) noted that improving the interactions among teachers,

and between teachers and principals is a significant factor in the school improvement process.

According to Purkey and Novak (1996), IET is a theory of practice that offers a systematic approach to the educational process and it provides strategies for making schools more inviting. IET furnishes educators with principles of practicing behaviors that seek to integrate, in creative and ethical ways, research, theory, and practice. Other researchers (e.g. Amos, 1985; Amos, Purkey & Tobias, 1985; Novak, 1992; Purkey & Collins, 1992; Purkey & Novak, 1984, 1996; Purkey & Stanley, 1991; Stanley, 1992, 1996; Strahan & Purkey, 1992) have expanded this theory of education and have seen a broader level of acceptance and practice during the past quarter century.

The goal of IET is to create schools with a climate that invites everyone in the school to experience success. According to Strahan and Purkey (1992), the school climate should reflect a sense of excitement and a sense of satisfaction for both students and staff. Purkey and Novak (1984) believe that educators should operate from a consistent stance of (a) trust, (b) respect, (c) optimism, and (d) intentionality. The literature concerning the role of school climate is widespread with findings that support school climate as a variable that has an effect on in improving student achievement and the relationships within the school setting (Anderson, 1982; Brookover & Lezotte, 1977; Howe, 1985; Lezotte, Hathaway & Miller, 1980; Stronge & Jones, 1991).

The findings from effective schools research (Brookover & Lezotte, 1977; Edmonds, 1979; Kelley, 1981; Sergiovanni, 1987, 1992) indicated that the educational leader possesses a greater influence on education than any other factor. Other researchers such as Deming (1986), Wissler & Ortiz (1988), Leithwood (1992), have created models of leadership that are examples of

current and progressive leadership styles that function quite well in the complex world of educational leadership. The currency of leadership lies in personal resources of people. Leadership styles have become a primary concern as a means to produces patterns of interactions and to provide meanings that other participants attached organizational events.

Purpose of the Study

There has been no study involving Invitational Education Theory (IET), related to principals, in the state of Mississippi. There is no empirical evidence that the tenets of IET, if practiced, has a measurable effect on principal effectiveness as perceived by the teachers. In addition, there is no research that has examined the effects of principals' behaviors and school effectiveness as reported by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) Performance Index.

This study investigated the relationship between professionally and personally inviting behaviors of high school principals in Mississippi and serves as a follow up study to Asbill's research. Asbill (1994) investigated the basic assumptions of IET as related to the teacher-principal relationship in elementary schools. Further research using different participants and introducing new variables of interest, may validate or modify earlier findings. In addition, further research of IET can be a productive way of extending previous research and may add to the body of knowledge in the area. Ary, Jacob, and Razavieh (1985) have suggested that one study should not stand-alone. They contend that the desirability of replication to confirm, refute or modify previous findings is one of the most important characteristics of research. According to Bensimon, Neumann, and Birnbaum (1989), scholars have recognized that new ideas, research concerning the quality of leadership, and how that leadership affects organizational

performance deserve investigation. An understanding of the application of IET can extend our knowledge base of how teachers' perceptions are related to the presence of principals' leadership behaviors.

Methodology

Subjects for this study were drawn from 149 school districts in the state of Mississippi that had a performance index rating assigned to their district. Agricultural schools and school districts on probation were excluded from the study. The school districts were grouped according to performance ratings: Level 1 and 2 (36 school districts); Level 3 (80 school districts); Level 4 and 5 (33 school districts). Out of 149 school districts invited to participate, 77 districts agreed to be involved in the study representing a 52% participation rate. Overall, 509 surveys were distributed to high school teachers in the school districts agreeing to participate and 283 surveys were returned and usable. This represents a 55.6% response rate for the study.

A Leadership Survey Instrument developed by Asbill (1994), was a 45-item Likert-type instrument designed to measure teachers' perceptions of administrators' personally and professionally inviting behaviors as related to IET. The Leadership Survey Instrument also addressed the teachers' perceptions of the principal as being an effective agent of school improvement. In addition, the Leadership Survey Instrument yields an invitational quotient that reflects the professionally and personally inviting practices of principals as perceived by the teacher. Validation of the instrument has been assessed and the reliability was tested using the Cronbach's coefficient alpha. The Leadership Survey Instrument has a .97 level of reliability, which indicates a high degree of internal consistency (Asbill, 1994).

Principals from participating districts were provided with a packet of information for each teacher to be surveyed. The packet contained information and instructions detailing the necessary steps needed to gather the desired teacher data and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The principal was instructed to have teachers complete the survey and return to the researcher in the self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Teachers were asked to rate their administrators' behaviors on 44-items by selecting the response that best describes their perceptions. Item 45 was an open-ended question that allowed the teachers to express additional comments concerning their principal's leadership style and behaviors. Items 1-37 reflect the components of invitational stance of: trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality. These components comprise the definition of personally and professionally inviting behaviors. Items 38-40 indicate the relationship of the administrators' Invitational Quotient and principal effectiveness. Item 41 indicates the relationship of the administrators' Invitational Quotient and the principal as an agent of school improvement. Items 42-44 rate the teachers' satisfaction with the administrator and with their jobs.

Data from the Leadership Survey Instrument were used to address five research hypotheses. The hypotheses were analyzed using a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient analysis. An alpha level of .05 was used to determine statistical significance of the relationship of the variables studied. Table 1 provides a visual of the five hypotheses and the survey items that correspond with the variables of interest in this study.

Hypothesis #1 (H1) investigated the relationship between the 17 variables that represent Professionally Inviting Behaviors of the principal and the 3 variables that represent Teacher Job Satisfaction.

Hypothesis #2 (H2) investigated the relationship between the 9 variables that represent Personally Inviting Behaviors of the principal and the 3 variables that represent Teacher Job Satisfaction.

Hypothesis #3 (H3) investigated the relationship between the 37 variables that comprise the Invitational Quotient of the principal and the 3 variables that represent Principal Effectiveness.

Hypothesis #4 (H4) investigated the relationship between the 37 variables that comprise the Invitational Quotient of the principal and the 3 variables that represents the principal as an Agent of School Improvement.

Hypothesis #5 (H5) investigated the relationship between the 37 variables that comprise the Invitational Quotient of the principals and the Performance Index of the school districts. Level 1 and 2 school districts were combined. Level 3 school districts stood alone. Level 4 and 5 school districts were combined. This provided three levels to determine if a relationship existed between the Invitational Quotient of the principals and the Performance Index of their respective districts.

Results

Based on analysis of the data, all five of the null hypotheses were rejected. The Pearson product-moment correlation indicated a statistically significant relationship existed for each. The results of each hypothesis are discussed in Table 1.

A statistically significant relationship was found between Professionally Inviting Behaviors of high school principals and Teacher Job Satisfaction as measured by the Leadership Survey Instrument [$F(1,282) = 286.63, p < .001, r = .504$]. The correlation coefficient .50 indicates a moderate positive relationship between Professionally Inviting Behaviors of high school principals and Job Satisfaction of high school teachers. The moderate positive correlation coefficient of .50 suggests that as teachers rated principals higher on professionally inviting behaviors, they also rated themselves as more satisfied with their jobs. The $R^2 = .25$ indicates that 25% of the variable for teacher job satisfaction is explained by one or more of the professionally inviting behaviors of the principal.

A statistically significant relationship was found between Personally Inviting Behaviors of high school principals and Teacher Job Satisfaction as measured by the Leadership Survey Instrument [$F(1,282) = 335.35, p < .001, r = .54$]. The correlation coefficient .54 indicates a moderate positive relationship between Personally Inviting Behaviors of high school principals and Job Satisfaction of high school teachers. The moderate positive correlation coefficient of .54 suggests that as teachers rated principals higher on personally inviting behaviors, they also rated themselves as more satisfied with their jobs. The $R^2 = .29$ indicates that 29% of the variable for teacher job satisfaction is explained by one or more of the professionally inviting behaviors of the principal.

Table 1

Hypothesis #1 (H1) investigated the relationship between the 17 variables that represent Professionally Inviting Behaviors of the principal and the 3 variables that represent Teacher Job Satisfaction. $r = .50$ significant at the .05 level

Hypothesis #2 (H2) investigated the relationship between the 9 variables that represent Personally Inviting Behaviors of the principal and the 3 variables that represent Teacher Job Satisfaction. $r = .54$ significant at the .05 level

Hypothesis #3 (H3) investigated the relationship between the 37 variables that comprise the Invitational Quotient of the principal and the 3 variables that represent Principal Effectiveness. $r = .59$ significant at the .05 level

Hypothesis #4 (H4) investigated the relationship between the 37 variables that comprise the Invitational Quotient of the principal and the 3 variables that represent the principal as an Agent of School Improvement. $r = .57$ significant at the .05 level

Hypothesis #5 (H5) investigated the relationship between the 37 variables that comprise the Invitational Quotient of the principals and the Performance Index of the school districts as assigned by the Mississippi Department of Education. $r = .39$ significant at the .05 level

Leadership Survey Items Included in Each Construct

Construct 1: Professionally Inviting Behaviors: Survey Items 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 30, 34, 35, 36

Construct 2: Personally Inviting Behaviors: Survey Items 3, 7, 19, 20, 21, 27, 31, 32, 33

Construct 3: Invitational Quotient: Survey Items 1 - 37

Construct 4: Teacher Job Satisfaction: Survey Items 42, 43, 44

Construct 5: Principal Effectiveness Survey Items: 38, 39, 40

Construct 6: Performance Index as assigned by Department of Education: 1 - 5

Construct 7: Agent of School Improvement: Survey Item 41

A statistically significant relationship was found between the Invitational Quotient of high school principals and perceptions of high school principal effectiveness by high school teachers as measured by the Leadership Survey Instrument [$F(1,282) = 403.46, p < .001, r = .59$]. The correlation coefficient .59 indicates a moderate positive relationship between the Invitational Quotient of high school principals and the perception of high school Principal Effectiveness. The moderate positive correlation coefficient of .59 suggests that as teachers rated the Invitational Quotient of principals higher, they also rated the principal more effective. The $R^2 = .35$ indicates that 35% of the variable for principal effectiveness is explained by one or more of the behaviors that comprise the Invitational Quotient of the principals.

A statistically significant relationship was found between the Invitational Quotient of high school principals and perceptions of the principal as an Agent of School Improvement by high school teachers as measured by the Leadership Survey Instrument [$F(1,282) = 367.47, p < .001, r = .57$]. The correlation coefficient .57 indicates a moderate positive relationship between the Invitational Quotient of high school principals and the perception of the principal as an Agent of School improvement. The moderate positive correlation coefficient of .57 suggests that as teachers rated the Invitational Quotient of principals higher, they also rated the principal higher as an Agent of School Improvement. The $R^2 = .32$ indicates that 32% of the variable for principal as an Agent of School Improvement is explained by one or more of the behaviors that comprise the Invitational Quotient of the principals.

A statistically significant relationship was found between the Invitational Quotient of high school principals and the Performance Index of their school district as measured by the Leadership Survey Instrument [$F(1,282) = 177.71, p < .001, r = .39$]. The correlation coefficient .39 indicates a weak positive relationship between the Invitational Quotient of high school principals and the

Performance Index of their school district. The weak positive correlation coefficient of .39 suggests that as teachers rated the Invitational Quotient of principals higher, the Performance Index of their school district was also rated higher. The $R^2 = .15$ indicates that 15% of the variable for the Performance Index of the school district is explained by one or more of the behaviors that comprise the Invitational Quotient of the principals.

Summary

The statistical analysis revealed a statistical significance for each of the five hypotheses. The statistical significance indicates that a relationship does exist for each of the five hypotheses and that the relationship was positive. Of practical significance, the results of this study indicate that there is a relationship between the professionally and personally inviting behaviors of the principals and the perceptions of the teachers in their schools.

Based on the results of the study, several inferences were made. The relationship between the teacher and the principal is supreme in the educational setting. Research into the perceived relationships of teachers and educational leaders is an important area for investigation. Teacher job satisfaction was found to be positively correlated with the professionally and personally inviting behaviors of the principals. This confirms previous research on the powerful influence of the leadership within the organizational setting (Barth, 1991; Louis & Murphy, 1994; Sergiovanni, 1992). In addition to teacher job satisfaction, a positive relationship was found to have occurred between the principals' Invitational Quotient and the perception of principal effectiveness as an agent for school improvement. Principals who were perceived as being effective exhibited more aspects of professionally and personally inviting behaviors.

This study indicates that the tenets of IET may be a worthwhile theory that can be applied to the preparation programs for future administrators as to the dimension of people orientation. Daft (1999) contends that people and task orientation behaviors are important leadership variables that require our attention. Daft also reports that leadership, with concern for people, tends to be related to higher employee satisfaction and fewer personnel problems across a wide variety of situations.

In addition, the findings of this study extended and supported the research of Asbill (1994) in which she contends that IET has merit in transforming the school setting. These contributions add to the understanding of IET of leadership, especially on the relationships that develop among the participants in the leadership relationship. This is in concert with other researchers that have found that organizational quality can be improved by focusing on the interactions of the various individuals within that setting (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995).

Several recommendations are made based on the findings of this study. Replication of this study should be conducted in other areas of the United States, as this study was limited to the state of Mississippi. Research studies similar to this one should be undertaken to examine elementary and middle schools. A study should be conducted to determine the correlation of the tenets of IET and the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards. This research was concerned with people, which is only one of the five major areas IET may play a valuable role in the educational setting.

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Robert Egley is Assistant Professor at the University of South Florida
St. Petersburg. regley@stpt.usf.edu

What are Universities Doing to Help Prospective Teachers Find Positions?

Phillip Bradley Rice
South Asheboro Middle School
Asheboro, NC

The average tuition of a four-year public college is \$3510 per year (Adriane, 2003). In this study, letters were sent to the education departments of fifteen state universities in a southern state by a school level administrator. Each university was asked to help the local education agency (LEA) find prospective teachers from the universities' recent and/or future graduates. This article looks at the response times as well as which universities invite future success of their graduates.

Background

Higher education is expensive and getting more expensive with the average tuition of a four-year public college at \$3510 per year (Adriane, 2003). Most students attend these colleges with the hope of getting a job. What do universities do to help fulfill the hopes and dreams of students? Are universities are willing to do a little extra to help these students find a job upon graduation?

Many Southern states are experiencing a teacher shortage, as is much of America. One middle school assistant principal spent many hours in the summer of 2002 looking for quality teaching applicants. He looked to the state universities for assistance. In February his school sent letters to fifteen state supported universities comprising both prestigious flag-ship research institutions and regional institution with mission specifically designed to support state initiatives.

The letters asked for contact information for recent graduates as well as future graduates in education. A sample letter is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Sample Letter to Universities

<p>February 24, 2003</p> <p>University Address Inserted Here</p> <p>Dear Sir or Madam:</p> <p>My name is _____ and I am the Assistant Principal at _____ Middle School. As spring graduation approaches I know that many future graduates are starting the hunt for fall employment. Our school system will be coming to job fairs to seek potential applicants. I would like to take recruiting a step farther.</p> <p>Last summer we experienced several vacancies during the summer. I tried to contact several universities to see if any recent graduates had yet to attain employment. Since it was the summer it was hard to get in touch with the appropriate people that might help fill the need of our school and your students. I would like to know if it would be possible to get contact information for Spring or Summer graduates in case the same situation were to occur this summer.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration, Signature Assistant Principal _____ Middle School</p>
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Results

Of the fifteen Universities approached, only five responded. These responses took the following form:

Within three weeks, a representative from University A called. University A is a regional university in a rural setting. It is known nationally for its teacher education programs. The representative reported that she could not give out contact information due to privacy restrictions but she would like to help. She gave her e-mail address and phone number. She asked to be contacted about each vacancy. She would then forward the vacancy information to each qualified graduate.

A representative from University B called within a month of the letters origination. University B is the largest land grant institution in the state and is a doctoral granting major research institution. This representative also reported that she could not give out contact information due to privacy restrictions but she would like to help. She provided contact information and, like University A, asked to be notified of each vacancy and promised to contact each qualified graduate on file in the placement office.

That same week, an envelope was received from University C which was an historical black institution with a strong reputation within the state. The envelope contained a spreadsheet listing of students. The list was arranged in alphabetical order and contained the student's major, local/permanent address and local/permanent phone number. There was no letter or any school contact information.

Six weeks after the initial letter, an envelope was received from University D containing a spreadsheet listing of candidates for positions. University D is a doctoral granting research university

that had undergone transition from a regional to a nation institution and was the recipient of the state's newest medical school. It resided in what some called an "underserved" region of the state. The listing was in a table format and the tables were separated into the following categories: Birth -K, Elementary K-6, Middle Grades (6-9), Secondary Education (9-12), Special Subject Areas K-12, and Vocational Education roughly following the state's teacher certification areas. These tables were listed in alphabetical order and contained the student's internship school system, county of residence, phone number, and licensure area. There was a letter stating that the students had given permission to make the information available to school systems. The letter also gave contact information and a request for feedback.

At about two months after initial request for information a representative for University E called the research and provided information regarding the school's constantly changing website. University if widely recognized in the state a major teacher education institution with certification programs in almost every area of the curriculum. The institution provided the researcher directions as well as login facilities and within six minutes of the telephone call and provided the needed information.

No information was received from the other ten institutions within a six month period of the initial request.

Conclusion

State universities are wonderful places to receive an education. However, based on the basis of this survey, many do not utilize opportunities presented by the public school system to assist student in locating appropriate teaching positions. Purkey (1990) states, "The long-term success of any organization depends on the satisfaction of the people who live and work there." The findings

of this survey are not a good reflection on the state university system examined in this research. It should be noted, that this system has been recognized as one of the most outstanding higher educational systems in the nation. Surely, universities have a moral obligation to their students to facilitate their progression into the workplace. Ten of the fifteen universities in this survey did not take the time to call the researcher to tell him a reason for not giving out contact information. While two institutions explained the reasoning for an inability to comply, it was possible to anticipate inquiries and have information releases prepared as did University C. Clearly, most universities in the study could improve their outreach employment programs to the state school systems they are to serve. The good news is that five of the universities did respond. Even though several of the universities could use some help in creating more inviting correspondence, they did respond.

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- Phillip Bradley Rice is Assistant Principal at South Asheboro Middle School in Asheboro, NC. rice336@aol.com

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