EFFECTS OF TEACHER EVALUATIONS ON TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS AND
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

Schools are changing how teacher evaluations are performed and increasing the frequency in which they take place. These changes are occurring because state mandates are now requiring schools to show teacher effectiveness and student achievement to assure students are receiving the best possible education. The data collected from teacher evaluations should be used to make adjustments with teaching methods and practices in an effort to increase student achievement. This literature review has helped me identify what evaluation tools and processes should be used to perform unbiased teacher evaluations. I was also able to identify ways to encourage positive teacher attitudes and personal perceptions towards evaluations. When teachers and administrators work collaboratively through the teacher evaluation process, everyone involved including the students will benefit from the information and data obtained from the evaluation. Using the new evaluation processes will help our students be better prepared for a very competitive global economy.
Chapter I: Introduction

Teacher evaluation systems are dramatically changing as a result of the No Child Left Behind Act and the Race to the Top initiative. State and federal governments are demanding districts prove an increase in student achievement with the use of highly effective teachers. Districts are designing new teacher performance assessments to assure that the best possible teachers are educating students. Supervision and evaluation is linked through identifying, planning, and providing professional development to increase teacher effectiveness and student achievement (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008).

Previous evaluation methods included one or two classroom observations, using checklists, rating forms, and/or anecdotal records (Boyd, 1989; Loup, Garland, Ellett, & Rugutt, 1996). These evaluations were often occurring on a random schedule that did not include yearly observations of each teacher. The new evaluation systems tend to occur yearly using more classroom observations, rating scales for classroom management and instruction, non-instructional responsibilities, and proof of student growth with data presentation. Student achievement data showing expected learning outcomes will provide valuable information for teachers (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008). Teachers will use the acquired data to adjust instruction for student learning and make a greater attempt to reach each and every student. High stakes achievement data should by no means be the only data acquired to meet the proof of student achievement. Teachers should be involved in the process of designing a variety of assessment tools, such as, pre and post-tests, extended written responses, written and oral communication between teacher and student, and performance assessments, all of which should be gathered in portfolios or other means of collection (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008; Green, 2010).
The evaluation process should incorporate constructive feedback to the person being observed. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) suggest creating a system that provides feedback as the core of the responsibility for monitoring and evaluating. A discussion should occur between evaluator and evaluee about what was witnessed in regards to the school’s expectations placed on the teacher. Teachers want and need the principal (evaluator) to share constructive feedback, provide advice and encouragement, and give pedagogical feedback in a timely manner (Zimmerman & Deckert-Pelton, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

The new all-encompassing evaluation tools have created concern for some teachers and administrators while others are embracing the tool as a method to develop quality teachers and schools. Many states are requiring more stringent evaluation tools be used that require the teacher to show teacher effectiveness and student growth through data. Every teacher in these states will be affected by the new evaluation requirement. Many teachers are concerned the evaluation tools are ambiguous and time consuming. The evaluation requirements are creating fear and stress amongst teachers in regards to how the evaluation results will impact teachers and students. There is a gap in knowledge concerning how personal perception of the teacher evaluation and the attitude teachers hold towards the evaluation process will influence the outcome of evaluations. This study will investigate and present information regarding the effects the new evaluation system has on teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The study will explore evaluation tools used by various states and countries that support the potential positive impact an effective teacher evaluation system can have on teacher effectiveness and student achievement.
Research Questions

1. What impact does personal perception towards the evaluations of teachers have on the new evaluation process and how does attitude towards the evaluation process influence evaluation results?

2. What specific characteristics and methods of teacher evaluation tools have been proven to be effective in promoting professional growth in teachers and student achievement?

Definition of Terms

Effective Teacher. A warm, friendly, enthusiastic person who presents ideas, gives thought to questions, organizes thoughts, give thought provoking presentations and can provide explanations for answers (Green, 2010). A caring enthusiastic individual using classroom management skills to share knowledge of subject matter in a manner that links learning objectives to instructional activities using a range of instructional strategies while considering student interests and perceptions (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008).

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Federal law requiring each state to categorize its public schools based on results from state standardized tests (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008). NCLB supports the idea that having high standards and measurable goals will improve individual outcomes.

Race to The Top Initiative. Implements rigorous standards and high-quality assessments, attracts and keeps effective teachers in the classroom, supports the use of data systems to make informed decisions and improve instruction (Office of the Press Secretary, 2009).

Student Achievement (Growth). The greatest amount of variance in student learning (Peterson, 2004).
**Supervision.** A formative process that is focused on teacher growth and development (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008).

**Teacher Evaluation.** Reports based on one or two classroom visits using a checklist, rating form, or anecdotal record (Boyd, 1989; Loup, Garland, Ellett, & Rugutt, 1996).

**Summary**

Teacher tenure and job security was once based on maintaining teacher certification and licensing with an occasional evaluation of classroom presentation and classroom management. Today, teacher evaluations are becoming a yearly requirement with rigorous goals to be met by the teacher and proof of student growth and achievement must be visible. The changes in evaluation requirements have come on fast and furiously. Teachers and administrators are spending large amounts of time preparing to meet the new expectations by attending professional development to learn new ways to create data for proving student growth and utilizing effective teaching methods. The stress of proving one’s effectiveness in the classroom through observation and student growth data is upsetting the basic human need of feeling safe and secure at one’s job. Teachers are becoming anxious about receiving a fair and unbiased evaluation. Personal perceptions about the evaluation tools and attitudes about the evaluation process may begin to affect the evaluation results.

This change in evaluation policy does not have to create grief and unrest amongst school employees. As lifelong learners, teachers and administrators can use the evaluation tool as a means to design professional development for improving teacher instruction and enhancing a student’s educational experience. Consideration of the potential benefits and an open line of
communication between administration and educators can result in a positive situation that will help create growth and positive change for our schools, states, and country.
Chapter II: Review of Literature

Characteristics of Effective Evaluations

Subjective evaluations by trained professionals and objective performance data have been identified by Rockoff & Speroni (2010) to play an important role when designing evaluation systems for teachers. This was determined with a quantitative study measuring the impact new teachers in New York City have on student achievement. Evaluation data from 4,221 math and English teachers was collected and divided into three categories of teachers: subjective evaluations of new teachers by mentors, subjective evaluations from an alternative certification program (New York City Teaching Fellows), and objective evaluations of first year teachers based on 3rd to 8th grade student achievement tests during the years 2003-2008. The study found that teachers who receive higher subjective evaluations in their first year of teaching or in a mentor program prior to hire produce higher gains in student achievement. The teachers with higher student gains in their first year of teaching also tend to produce greater student gains in the second year of teaching. New statistical methodologies, databases with student achievement information, and changing assessment strategies allow for new ways to identify teacher effectiveness (Grant, Stronge & Ward, 2011). When the above criteria are identified and the evaluation results are revealed, teachers may benefit by utilizing the information to improve their own effectiveness.

A well-designed evaluation program can provide educators with information in regards to teaching, encourage self-reflection, and create conversations between teachers and administrators about effective teaching skills (Taylor & Tyler, 2012). A sampling of midcareer elementary and middle school teachers in Cincinnati, Ohio were observed in a yearlong evaluation program (Teacher Evaluation System) during the 2003-04 through the 2009-10 school years. Data
consisted of teacher evaluations that included four observations: three by a trained, high-performing, experienced teacher and one by a school administrator. The first observation was scheduled and the final three were unannounced. Informal walkthrough evaluations were the most widely used form of evaluation. Walkthrough evaluations provided a snapshot of teaching and gave principals material for feedback and discussion starters. The shorter evaluations allowed the principal opportunities to make more visits and create more opportunities for immediate feedback to stimulate teacher self-reflection (Range, Scherz & Holt, 2011). During the quantitative study teachers were evaluated on specific skills including management, instruction, content, and planning. The four evaluations were calculated for a summative score and presented to the teacher. The score could result in tenure, promotion, peer assistance, or dismissal. The study also analyzed data on math scores for grades 4-8, looking for a connection between test scores and teacher evaluations. The study revealed well-structured evaluation systems can be expensive to maintain, but the outcome of improved teacher effectiveness may very well outweigh the cost. Despite the cost of multiple tool evaluations, several school systems are utilizing this method for teacher evaluations.

Another quantitative study suggests using multiple sources of data for teacher evaluation, which should include peer review, lesson plans, classroom observations, and portfolio reviews (Namaghi, 2010). Portfolios appear to be a promising tool to support teacher professional growth and measure teacher performance. Portfolio-based teacher evaluations are becoming a new option to make the evaluation process more time efficient, productive, and a process which is meaningful, comprehensive, and accurate. Schools should consider the use of portfolios when looking for a way to identify the standards being taught, proving accountability, and using an effective form of authentic assessment (Attinello, Lare & Waters, 2006). The Chili National
Teacher Evaluation System (NTES) which was established in 2003 and mandated by law in 2004 suggests the use of evaluations consisting of four instruments with varying weights: a portfolio with teaching units, instructional materials, and student evaluations (60%); a structured interview by peer evaluators (20%); performance appraisal questionnaires completed by two supervisors (10%); and a self-evaluation questionnaire (10%) (Tornero & Taut, 2010). Schools currently using a summative evaluation may want to incorporate a formative form of evaluation that will allow for professional development (Namaghi, 2010).

One voluntary quantitative study, consisting of eighty six teachers in an educational leadership course, determined through a Professional Appraisal Systems Survey that using effective evaluative interactions following an evaluation will increase the effectiveness of a teacher evaluation (Zimmerman & Deckert-Pelton, 2003). Teachers want the principal to have adequate time to provide encouragement and constructive, pedagogically appropriate feedback. A sense of consistency and commitment by the evaluator must be apparent during the evaluation process, along with a presence of motivation and involvement by the principal. In the study, all of the survey answers were analyzed by the constant comparative method of analysis. Responses were put into a database by question and thematic similarities were found. General categories were then identified and created. Each thematic group was re-evaluated for conceptual parallels and this developed the basis for identifying the main variables. The variables and teachers’ perceptions of evaluations generated hypotheses. The responses revealed how teachers perceive the role of the principal as evaluator including the following domains: interaction, consistency, commitment, and knowledge. The conclusion of the study states principals must have knowledge, skills, and abilities relative to teaching and evaluations to provide effective evaluations. Principals also believe they must have knowledge of the state standards to properly
rate teacher performance (Range, Scherz, & Holt, 2011). Principals must be able to adapt to changing evaluation expectations and provide the teaching staff with knowledgeable and constructive feedback.

According to one study by Kimball & Milanowski (2009), evaluation accuracy and validity need to be improved prior to using evaluation tools as a means to determine teacher pay or dismissal. Accuracy in evaluations is also necessary when determining useful feedback and plans to improve student achievement. These conclusions are the result of a quantitative study that occurred in a district in the western United States with more than 60,000 students in 88 schools with 3,300 teachers. The district had been using a standards-based evaluation system for more than three years. A sample of evaluators was selected to look at how the evaluators differ in conducting teacher evaluation processes and ratings. Data and method triangulation were used to check the validity of the study assumptions. A sample of teacher evaluations was compared using scores on the district’s supplemental evaluation form. Teachers were scored using four composite scores. Scores were then correlated between the four performance components and student achievement data. The data identified 23 principals with valid evaluation results.

Responses were categorized under will, skill, and context. Substantial degree variations were found between teacher performance ratings and student achievement. The results did not provide an explanation for the differences in validity. Will, skill, and context were used to analyze the interview data and evaluation documents. Evaluator will or motivation to conduct evaluations was illustrated through descriptions of evaluation standards, purposes and goals, procedures, outcomes, and written evaluations. Evaluator knowledge or skill identified evaluator background and training. Context took into factor socio-economic status, student achievement levels, administrator experience, and relationships between evaluators and teachers. The three
aspects were examined for possible interactions that could explain differences in evaluation validity. The study found substantial variations in teacher ratings and student achievement. When effective evaluation tools are identified and utilized, the results can be used to develop professional growth, promoting teacher effectiveness.

**Teacher Evaluations Promoting Professional Growth and Effectiveness**

Teacher evaluations are used to measure teacher performance with two potential purposes, to identify quality educators and to identify professional development. Data driven plans for evaluations can also have an effect on professional lives (Namaghi, 2010). The documented data is a great resource to identify teaching strengths and weaknesses and improve any areas that need improvement (Clipa, 2011). Moore (2006), Range, Scherz, & Holt (2011) all state that using evaluation data is one of the best ways for teachers to improve classroom instruction. Teacher quality can also benefit from incorporating subjective evaluations and objective evaluations of student data (Rockoff & Speroni, 2010).

Evaluations can be validated by accepting teacher input when identifying what qualities make up an effective teacher. One study was designed to provide insight into the qualities teachers’ view as characteristics of effective teachers (Watson, Miller, Davis & Carter, 2010). The participants came from 22 middle schools in an 81 school district in southeastern United States. Principals were asked to select a sample group from each of the schools to make up focus groups. Two individuals conducted the focus group sessions to maintain consistency and allow for an unthreatening environment. Holding interviews with groups allowed for greater coverage of answers sought for the interview questions. The study used Stronge’s Teacher Skills Assessment Checklist to categorize the responses. Quantitative data was collected and relationships in the data were explained with quantitative data. The data was collected annually.
over a three year period from 2006-2009 using 66 focus groups, made up of 8-12 teachers in each group. The interview consisted of nine questions followed by one question in regards to teacher quality. Responses were examined to identify common themes, key words, and patterns for Stronge’s five domains: teacher as a person, classroom management and organization, planning and organizing for instruction, implementing instruction, and monitoring student progress and potential. Evaluations can identify effective teachers as those who are organized, have positive personal relationships and promote student responsibility (Grant, Stronge, & Ward, 2011). Caring, dedication, interactions, and enthusiasm were the top four responses making teacher as a person an important factor in teacher effectiveness. A fifth quality, content knowledge, along with the four previously mentioned qualities made up over 50% of the most identified qualities. Caring and dedication was mentioned in 25% of the total responses. Fifteen percent of the responses consisted of the teacher qualities: happy, likes kids, communication skills, and flexibility. While the majority of responses could be found in Stronge’s five domains, several responses did not. Researchers feel if these responses are considered to be genuine and reflective of the perceptions of teachers, one should consider the responses as valid, suggesting teaching situations change and therefore indicators for teacher effectiveness should change as well.

While many principals believe teacher improvement plans are an effective way to change teacher behaviors, a portion of them suggest the improvement plan will only work if the teacher has ownership in the plan (Range, Scherz, & Holt, 2011). Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005) suggest principals provide the teachers with appropriate professional development based on what teachers feel they need as a result of their evaluations. The professional development should be
based on the individual’s area of assignment and should be designed to enhance each teacher’s professional needs (Green, 2010).

**Teacher Evaluations Promoting Professional Development**

A key role in achieving excellence in the schools today is attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers (OECD, 2005; Barber & Mourshed, 2007). One of the main purposes for teacher evaluations is to identify the need for professional development (Namaghi, 2010). Chile stands in the forefront with their National Teacher Evaluation System (NTES) that guides change in teachers with shortcomings, providing help with the selection of new teachers, and facilitating a dismissal plan for unsatisfactory teachers. A qualitative study was designed to formulate program theories regarding the NTES (Taut, Santelices, Araya, & Manzi, 2009).

The subjects for this study consisted of fourteen representatives from four stakeholder groups involved in the NTES. The groups consisted of three to four members from the Chilean Education Ministry, Chile’s Teacher Union, Association of Local Authorities, and the Measurement Center. The program theories for each of the groups were examined by interviewing current and former leaders. Legal and policy documents were reviewed for the program’s underlying theory. Next, the study analyzed the different perspectives of each stakeholder’s organization through personal interviews. Each person from the four groups was presented with a diagram of the NTES’s theory and asked to share the expected consequences and how change would be generated. The interviews were approximately an hour in length and were conducted with two interviewers and one representative. Each representative was presented with a diagram of the NTES’s underlying theory and asked to give examples of the key characteristics of the NTES, consequences and mechanisms used in the evaluation process, expected long-term effects of the NTES, and potential changes that will be made at an individual
teacher level. The responses were not to be the opinion of the interviewee but what was actually occurring. The collected information was analyzed in individual matrices which reflected the study’s goals and questions. Each matrix was then summarized in a diagram representing each of the four groups interviewed. Commonalities and differences between the groups were then compiled into summary tables. The results identified the theories of the NTES as providing quality instruction and student achievement through improved teacher performance and competence. Another theory is the use of diagnostic information to identify teacher strengths and weaknesses to help with better decision making about professional development and educational plans.

A variety of teacher evaluation tools can be useful in developing professional development for teachers. The use of portfolios as evaluation tools will identify areas needing improvement and provide data for administrators to plan professional development (Attinello, Lare, & Waters, 2006). The Faculty of Science of Education, Stefan cel Mare University (2011) has found that formative evaluations help the teacher identify their own strengths and weaknesses and are used to help make improvements through professional development. A study of Cincinnati teachers using the Cincinnati Public Schools’ Teacher Evaluation System suggests schools provide professional development in classroom management skills first and then instructional issues, followed by thought provoking questions and engaging students in discussions when wanting to increase student achievement and teacher effectiveness (Kane, Taylor, Tyler, & Wooten, 2011). Moore (2006) suggests promoting professional development by having co-workers share best practices and experiences amongst each other. When the teacher evaluation reveals a need for professional development, and the professional
development is designed to improve classroom content, process, and enrich context, it may increase teacher effectiveness and student achievement (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008).

**Teacher Evaluations Promoting Student Growth and Achievement**

One of the most important variables influencing the learning process is the teachers (Clipa, 2011). Kane, Taylor, Tyler, & Wooten (2011) look at whether classroom observations by trained evaluators, using an extensive set of standards, can identify teaching skills that will raise student achievement. This quantitative study reviewed the evaluation records of Cincinnati teachers between 2000-01 and 2008-09. Scores were calculated for each teacher on the eight Cincinnati Public Schools’ Teacher Evaluation System (TES) standards. Scores were determined by averaging the ratings assigned during four different observations of each teacher for each element in the standard. The eight standards were then collapsed into three summary indexes that measure different aspects of a teacher’s practices. The aspects included overall classroom practices, classroom management vs. instructional practices, and question/discussion vs. standards/content.

A statistical technique, referred to as principal components analysis, was used to predict teacher effectiveness in raising student achievement (Kane, Taylor, Tyler, & Wooten, 2011). The technique identifies the smaller number of underlying constructs captured in the eight different standards. The study found 87% of the total variations in teacher performances across the eight standards can be found in the three summary indexes. Overall classroom practices were found to be between proficient and distinguished, with one quarter of the teachers rating closer to distinguished and another quarter rating at a basic level. Teacher ratings were compared to student achievement test data for reading and math for each teacher’s students. The comparisons were made with student test scores the year following the year a teacher taught the student.
Kane et al. (2011) found the results of the study to show classroom practices can predict differences in student achievement growth. A sample of 365 teachers in reading and 200 teachers in math has proven when a teacher’s overall classroom practice score raises from proficient to distinguished a student’s reading achievement score will also raise one-seventh of a standard deviation and math scores raise one-tenth of a deviation. While achievement score results do not make drastic jumps, the change is significant enough to see the influence improved instruction can have on student achievement.

The impact teachers have on student achievement can be affected by two facts: (1) the wide variety of teacher effectiveness and (2) experience, not necessarily linked to certification qualifications and salary (Rockoff, 2004; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005). Gawlik, Kearney, Addonizio, & LaPlante-Sosnowsky feel there is a positive correlation between student success and fully certified teachers and graduates from competitive colleges. Teachers with master’s degrees and higher salaries are also inter-related to successful students.

Incorporating and examining subjective and objective evaluations can also make an impact on student achievement (Rockoff & Speroni, 2010). Rockoff & Speroni’s (2010) study found teachers to be more effective at raising student scores during the year a teacher is being evaluated. Even higher student scores continued after the evaluation year; the study also showed the student scores to be lower the year prior to the evaluation. This study also found teachers who made the greatest improvement on teacher evaluations from the beginning to the end of the year also showed the greatest student improvement on test scores. The extra critical feedback received during the evaluation process obviously is beneficial to the teacher receiving an evaluation (Taylor & Tyler, 2012; Zimmerman & Deckert-Pelton 2003).
Grant, Stronge, & Ward (2011) worked with three districts, one being a large urban and suburban district and two rural districts in southeastern United States to study the impact teachers have on student learning. The quantitative study obtained two years of reading and math test scores for students from 307 fifth-grade teachers and compiled the data into a common data set. The database consisted of records from more than 4,600 students and 307 teachers. The methodology was regression-based with hierarchical linear modeling (HEM). HEM was used to estimate the student growth in order to predict each student’s expected achievement level. Student level variables were used as predictors of student performance.

The teacher portion of the study came from 17 teachers who taught the students with the highest level of student achievement and 15 teachers who taught students showing the least achievement gains. Teachers completed a Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale to identify their beliefs about instructional strategies, student engagement, and classroom management. The responses for the efficacy scale were similar for both groups of teachers. The observers of the study also took five minute samplings of student disengagements in the teacher’s classrooms. Observers found three times the disruptions in classrooms from teachers showing the least student achievement gains. Observation findings also showed large differences in favor of the effective teacher group for organization, positive personal relationships, and student responsibilities. The results of the study clearly showed student achievement can be an outcome measure for effective teachers. Unfortunately, the study does not take into consideration if a teacher happens to have a group of students that may be more challenging or difficult during the study. In conclusion, the study views the teacher as the common denominator for school improvement and student success (Grant, Stronge, & Ward, 2011). Evidence thus far has shown the importance of valid teacher evaluations on teacher effectiveness and student achievement.
Another factor that can affect the effectiveness of a teacher evaluation is a teacher’s perception and attitude towards the evaluation system.

**Personal Perception and Attitude towards Evaluations**

Research reveals educational evaluations have been predominately designed by the business world, yet literature promotes teacher participation in planning, implementing, and designing follow-up processes of the evaluation process (Clark, 1996). Clark implemented a quantitative study for the purpose of identifying and comparing teacher perceptions about evaluation procedures and the effectiveness of the tools on instructional improvement. The target population for this study consisted of 11,552 teachers who taught in South Dakota public schools. The participants were asked to complete a 33 question survey which would provide data for thirteen research questions in regards to teachers’ perceptions about teacher evaluation. The data was compiled and analyzed by descriptive statistics consisting of Pearson’s product-moment correlation coefficient and one-way analyses of variance.

The study revealed the importance of teacher participation in evaluation planning, evaluation timelines, and how evaluations are carried out. The results indicate when teachers are involved in the evaluation process; concerns from the teachers are less likely (Clark, 1996). Koster, Brekelmans, Korthagen, & Wobbles (2005) support the idea of positive perception and attitude towards teacher evaluation when teachers participate in the process of identifying tasks and competencies to be evaluated. This group designed a quantitative study to reveal what tasks educators feel are required in their job and competencies teachers should possess.

The research for this study consisted of three phases: a literature search and a Delphi study with open-ended interview questions, a second Delphi study with a written questionnaire
about tasks and competencies for teachers, and a third Delphi study using a written hearing regarding proposed amendments. The first round used broad interview questions to obtain the opinions of two groups of eight teachers about teacher tasks and competencies. The literature search and open-ended interview created a professional profile for teachers. The second Delphi study used a written questionnaire using a seven point Likert scale that could obtain the opinions of four different types of teacher groups each containing 100 teachers. One hundred thirty-two respondents returned a completely filled in questionnaire. Round two results from the questionnaire were compiled and shared with the respondents. One hundred-nineteen respondents were asked to share if they preferred previous wording or new wording for a teachers profile, job responsibilities, and job competencies which were created from the questionnaire results. Respondent opinions determined the wording for a professional profile in the third round (Koster et al., 2005).

Data from the literature research was analyzed in a comprehensive inventory to identify teacher task areas, tasks, competence areas and competencies mentioned. An overview was created by analyzing the responses of the questionnaires and comparing the responses from the two groups. Questionnaire results were then combined with literature search results to make a professional profile for teachers consisting of six task areas and four competence areas (Koster et al., 2005).

Koster, Brekelmans, Korthagen, & Wobbles’ (2005) study indicates necessary task areas for teachers as: working on personal and colleague development, provide a teacher program (materials, evaluation, course content), take part in policy development and collaboration, organize activities for and with teachers, teacher selection, and carry out research. Competence areas are identified as content competency, communicative and reflective competencies,
organization competency, and pedagogical competencies. In conclusion, the study suggests the results will be useful in clarifying the tasks teachers should participate in and the competencies a teacher should possess. When a professional group, such as teachers, plays a role in creating a profile for their position, they are more likely to use the profile to reflect on their job performance. Hopefully, teachers will use the profile to assure a quality education for students.

A qualitative study performed by Namaghi (2010) developed a data-driven plan for teacher evaluations by looking at teacher evaluation criteria (conditions), teacher perspectives and actions of the criteria (action), and the effect the criteria has on professional lives (consequences). Twelve probationary and tenured teachers with a minimum of six years of experience from Shahrood University of Technology in Iran were interviewed for data collection. The teachers had previously been evaluated by a tool containing 15 items. The evaluation tool used only one source, the students. Dissatisfaction with the evaluation process was clear amongst the teachers. Confidentiality for the participants was assured by transcribing and coding the interviews. The identity of the participants was not paramount because the concepts revealed were the primary importance of the study. The data collected was conceptualized and categorized. Categories were formed in open coding and terms of their given properties and dimensions were fleshed out (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). A conditional matrix was developed from axial coding. The core category or roots of concern were selected and systematically related to other categories. Despite the interviewer validating the concepts and categories through member checking, the information obtained cannot guarantee truth despite tying to obtain a holistic account of the information. The study analyzed the complaints and dissatisfaction with teacher evaluations. The causes for the dissatisfaction were revealed as
students’ incorrect views, faulty evaluation tools, faulty administering of the tool, and limiting decisions following the evaluations.

Strauss & Corbin’s (1998) study showed the students’ views to be erroneous because they reflect factors other than just teaching performance. The student evaluations of teachers revealed the teacher ratings to be based on student success on final exams versus the amount of knowledge the student obtained, the size of the class, or prior knowledge of the material being presented. Another result of the study revealed the use of an evaluation tool that was not tested for validity. The evaluation tool was very general and did not take into consideration specific disciplines. Some of the items on the evaluation tool were very subjective and left room for interpretation. The study also found the evaluation tool was administered in very different environments, under different circumstances, and not required by the students. The lack of confidentiality was also a concern revealed in the study. The final aspect revealed by the study was how a single source of data limits the reliability of the evaluation and the uncertainty with having students evaluate someone that should be more knowledgeable about the subject matter (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The types of evaluations differ from country to country depending on the purpose of the evaluation, Faculty of Science of Education, Stefan cel Mare University (2011) created a quantitative study to look at how primary school teachers feel about evaluation methods and purposes and what teachers think about the manner in which teachers are assessed. The participants in the study consisted of 121 primary school teachers from the country Bukovina. The average teacher was 32 years of age and had 4.5 years of teaching experience. The study used a questionnaire-based inquiry with 73 closed-ended questions. Each question had a variant from 1-5, 1 identified total disagreement and 5 identified total agreement. The questions referred
to teacher opinions about the purposes of evaluation (showing strengths and weaknesses and professional development), who should be the evaluator, when evaluations should take place, what should be included in the evaluation, which criteria and methods should be used, and how evaluation results should be communicated. The main purpose of the study was to learn teachers’ perceptions on the purposes of evaluation and who should conduct teachers’ evaluations.

Teacher age, length of service, position, and average on graduation exams were considered when analyzing the data. Significant positive correlations were found about evaluations emphasizing teachers’ strengths and weaknesses amongst those who were of similar age. Teachers who tended to be older, with more teaching service felt evaluations should highlight professional aspects that may need improvement. The results showed teachers with more experience feel life-long learning is important, while younger teachers do not yet see the advantage of needing to continue to learn. The more experienced teachers also felt the evaluations can be used to demand permanent training and increase professional responsibility. Teachers who received higher graduation scores view evaluations as a cause for professional confrontation and believe measuring teachers’ strengths and weaknesses can affect personal and social prestige. A significant difference was also found in the outcome of who should be performing the teacher evaluations. Older teachers with more experience would prefer an evaluator that is from the school in which the teacher works. These teachers felt an evaluator from their own school would know them better. Newer teachers with less experience feel more comfortable with an evaluator from a different school because the evaluation would be more objective.
The study concluded the goals and choice of evaluators is dependent on the age and length of service of teachers. Schools may benefit from different assessment tools and evaluators for teachers with different demographics. Differences in evaluations may optimize the quality of teaching and assessment process (Faculty of Science of Education, 2011).

Another study finding evaluation opinions to be different for teachers with different ages, length of service, didactic degree, and teacher graduation exams was performed by Otilia Clipa (2011). The purpose of the study is to identify the main purposes of teacher evaluations and develop a profile of the assessor in the evaluation process. A questionnaire-based inquiry with 73 closed-ended questions with variants from 1 to 5 was used as a method to collect data. The questions referred to teachers’ opinions on the purpose of evaluations, who should conduct the evaluations, when evaluations should occur, what tools should be used, what criteria should be included and how the results should be communicated. The participants in the study consisted of 121 primary school teachers in Bukovina County, Romania. The median number of years teaching is 4.5 and the median of the respondents’ age is 35.

The study analyzed the correlations between age, length of service, didactic degree, and teacher graduation exams (Clipa, 2011). An Independent Sample T-Test revealed significant differences between younger and older teachers. Older teachers felt evaluations can emphasize strengths and weakness. Older teachers also expressed the objective of an evaluation is to make improvements in professional aspects. Many younger teachers do not view teachers as life-long learners while older teachers feel teachers are in permanent training. Teachers who had lower score on the teacher exam tended to feel evaluations were designed to promote confrontation and promote personal and social prestige. Younger teachers prefer an assessor from an external source while more experienced teachers prefer an administrator from their own school. In
conclusion, the study suggests teacher evaluation methods be varied for teachers with different years of service, age, and didactic degree. Making these considerations will provide better evaluation systems to develop improved in-service training and quality teachers and assessment processes.

Many governments have taken the initiative to design an instrument for teacher evaluations as a result of the new accountability measures (Timperley & Robinson, 1997). Tuytens & Devos (2009) measured teachers’ perceptions about the change and structure of teacher evaluation with a quantitative study. Seven hundred and forty teachers from thirty seven Flemish secondary schools were randomly selected to participate in completing a questionnaire that measures teachers’ perceptions about policy implementation. The response rate was 82%. The sample of participants is divided into two sub samples: 22 schools completed the questionnaire in May, while 15 schools completed the questionnaire in June. The division was to show the stability of survey results. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis was used to reveal the underlying structure of teachers’ perceptions on the new teacher evaluation policies.

The study found the teachers to be fairly positive about the new policies on teacher evaluation put into action by the Flemish government. The new policies are viewed to be necessary and successful at clarifying the function of schools. On the other hand, teachers are concerned about how the evaluations will be implemented. Teachers are not the only ones with concerns; principals have feelings of frustration also.

A quantitative study by Range, Scherz, & Holt (2011) study surveyed principals in the state of Wyoming to assess the perceptions and actions pertaining to supervision and evaluation of teachers. All 286 K-12 principals in Wyoming were sent the survey and 143 returned the
survey, for a 50% response rate. The study was intended to identify how Wyoming principals supervise, evaluate, and improve teacher performance. The survey consisted of six open-ended questions about the supervision and evaluation processes. Principals were also asked about frustrations and improvement plans that come from the evaluations. A twenty statement Likert scale format survey was also used to measure principal attitudes and actions about supervision and evaluation practices. The data was coded and analyzed then both means and standard deviations were calculated on the Likert-scaled items. Open-ended questions were coded, re-coded, and categorized into themes.

Range et al. (2011) revealed the importance of linking teacher supervision and evaluation processes to developing teacher skills. Teachers should use the evaluation as a formative process (Clark, 1996). Results for a number of questions revealed principals have more of a supervisory approach than an evaluative approach when overseeing teacher performance. Wyoming principals believe standards drive instruction in schools. Principals also believe they must have knowledge of the state standards to properly rate teacher performance. The study identified three common themes frustrating principals; lack of time for supervisory practices, evaluation tools, and teachers’ willingness to change (Range et al., 2011).

Two surveys titled, *Teacher Survey: Perceived Value of Teacher Portfolios* and *Administrator Survey: Perceived Value of Teacher Portfolios* conducted by Attinello, Lare, & Waters (2006) were given to the teachers and administrators from a rural/suburban school district in southeastern United States that has used portfolios for the past four years. The surveys were sent to all 23 schools in the district. The participants consisted of 752 teachers and 46 administrators. The return rate for the surveys was 63.4%. Additional insight was obtained from
fourteen personal interviews with ten teachers and three focus groups containing eight teachers and eight administrators.

A quantitative analysis was used to determine an average rating for each item (Attinello et al., 2006). A multivariate analysis was used for the data analysis between teachers and administrators (MANOVA). MANOVA allows for simultaneous studies of two related dependent variables to control the correlations among them. The results of the study revealed both teachers and administrators believe portfolios to be accurate and more comprehensive than a traditional observation evaluation. Both groups also feel the portfolio does not reflect all aspects of teaching; some believed an excellent teacher may not create the best portfolio while some in-efficient teachers might make fabulous portfolios. The groups were in agreement that portfolios are a richer and more comprehensive picture of teacher performance. Mutual beliefs about portfolios may encourage self-reflection to identify strengths and weaknesses and portfolios may have a positive effect on teaching practices (Attinello et al., 2006). When teachers are allowed to collaborate with principals (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008) about evaluation processes and procedures, a teacher’s evaluation may be positively affected by personal perceptions and attitudes towards teacher evaluations.

**How Personal Perception and Attitude Affect Evaluations**

Teacher’s attitudes about the evaluation process will influence how a teacher will benefit from the evaluation process (Wagoner & O’Hanlon, 1968). A favorable attitude will allow for greater benefits from the evaluation by allowing the teacher to become aware of specific strengths and weaknesses. Ideally, teachers will improve teaching performance as a result of a positive evaluation experience. Teachers may find the evaluation process produces a threatening feeling while others see the evaluation as a challenge to receive an award. Teacher perception
about teacher evaluation will play a huge role on the success or failure of new policy
implementation that show educational accountability (Tuytens & Devos, 2009).

Wagoner & O’Hanlon (1968) conducted a study in an attempt to identify whether
teachers can be divided into groups related to feeling threatened or challenged when referring to
their attitudes about evaluation. The following comparison groups were formed: teachers who
rate themselves as better than average, average, and below average, teachers who are tenured
versus teachers who are not tenured, male teachers against female teachers, female secondary
teachers against female elementary teachers, female secondary teachers against male secondary
teachers, and teachers in districts with merit pay versus districts without merit pay. Eight
hundred randomly selected Arizona public school teachers were chosen for the study. The
teachers selected consisted of slightly more than 5 percent of the teacher population.
Approximately 75% of the questionnaires were returned allowing for 534 usable questionnaires.
The questionnaires consisted of two parts; the first part placed the participants into the
comparison groups listed above and the second part provided a measure of teacher attitudes from
seven yes or no questions. The responses were compared with the analysis-of-variance statistical
technique.

Wagoner & O’Hanlon (1968) found positive attitudes in tenured teachers versus non-
tenured teachers. One belief is the tenured teachers no longer feel they are on trial to prove
teacher competence. Another significant attitude difference occurred between teachers who felt
they were better than average and below average in job performance. Teachers who rate
themselves below average felt evaluations cannot be done in a valid manner. Teachers rating
themselves as above average did not have a fear of inaccuracies in the evaluation system, giving
them confidence in how they would be rated. Tenured teachers who rated themselves as better
were much more favorable on evaluations than tenured teachers who rated themselves as average. No comparable difference was found between elementary and secondary teachers. The greatest significance was found when comparing teachers who receive merit pay amongst teachers who do not receive merit pay. Those who receive merit pay had a much more positive attitude towards evaluations.

In conclusion, the study suggests supervisors consider the findings to formulate techniques when working with various teachers. The study also suggests when teachers gain a reward as a result of an evaluation; the teacher will hold a more favorable attitude towards evaluations (Wagoner & O’Hanlon, 1968).

Negative perceptions about teacher evaluations may have detrimental effects on how a teacher handles the process of evaluation. Tornero and Taut (2010) conducted a study of teachers whose perceptions and attributions led them to actively refuse to participate in the teacher evaluation process. Three parties composed of the Ministry of Education, the Teacher Union, and the Chilean Association of Municipalities started negotiations in 1998 to design the National Teacher Evaluation System (NTES) which was established in 2003 and mandated by law in 2004. The system was intended to align with current international thinking in regards to teacher evaluations. NTES evaluations consist of four instruments with varying weights: a portfolio with teaching units, instructional materials, and student evaluations (60%); a structured interview by peer evaluators (20%); performance appraisal questionnaires completed by two supervisors (10%); and a self-evaluation questionnaire (10%). Teachers are found to be outstanding, competent, basic, or unsatisfactory. Professional development will be offered to teachers in the unsatisfactory category, but if found to be unsatisfactory for three consecutive years; the teacher will be dismissed with retirement compensations. If a teacher refuses to
participate in the evaluation, a rating of unsatisfactory will be assigned and the teacher will stop teaching after three years without compensation. This study was designed to understand teachers’ refusal to participate in the NTES by looking at the teacher’s thoughts, meanings, and perceptions of the NTES. A Grounded Theory consisting of comparing and analyzing information from the participants was used to describe the teacher’s perceptions and attributions. The nine participants are teachers who refused to be evaluated since the year 2006. Two sampling criteria emerged as a result of the data: years of service or age (older participants tend to refuse change) and members of the Teacher Union or not (some unions asked members to refuse participation). In-depth personal interviews were used to collect data from each of the nine individuals. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed after coding and analysis procedures were applied. A category system with code families and sub-codes was used with qualitative data analysis software. A diagram was then developed to illustrate the relationships found between categories. A limitation in the study was the small sample size but the in-depth study provides adequate information for the first insights into teachers refusing to be evaluated.

Results of the study reveal three reasons why the teachers refused to be evaluated; concerns about the time and additional workload needed to prepare for the evaluation, the evaluation goes against the teacher’s values and beliefs, and a teacher’s impending retirement. Three different perceptions were also revealed from the study; feelings of displeasure came from the mandatory requirement of the evaluation, a fear of obtaining poor results, and some perceived the evaluation and how the evaluation is carried out to be unfair. All of these perceptions cause negative attitudes towards the evaluation system. In conclusion, the study suggests evaluation systems should consider teachers’ subjective perceptions and attributions when introducing accountability policies. The study reveals if a teacher is not feeling safe or
secure with a situation, even high stake consequences will not force a teacher into participating in a program the teacher fears or lacks knowledge about (Tornero & Taut, 2010).

Policy makers and school principals should analyze the problems teachers expect and provide solutions for the problems. The researchers suggest further investigation into trust in the school and visions of school leaders. Future research evaluating how positive perceptions can affect a successful outcome would also be useful for future policy implementation (Tuytens & Devos, 2009).
Chapter III: Results and Analysis Relative to the Problem

Identifying teacher effectiveness and student achievement are the basis of teacher evaluations in schools today. Changes within teacher evaluations systems are occurring worldwide as countries compete to have the best educational programs that prepare children for a global economy. Teacher evaluations can be an extremely useful tool for improving teacher effectiveness and student achievement when used properly. Teacher perceptions and attitudes can be affected by the type of evaluations used and the methods in which evaluations are carried out. As districts develop new teacher evaluation systems to meet the guidelines provided by new state evaluation mandates, considerations must be made concerning how the evaluation should be carried out and which evaluation tools should be used.

Effective Evaluation Tools

Researchers agree teacher evaluations should incorporate a number of evaluation methods and techniques (Attinello, Lare, & Waters, 2006; Clipa, 2011; Faculty of Science of Education, 2011; Range, Scherz, & Holt, 2011). Evaluation systems tend to be more accurate and useful when both subjective evaluations and objective performance data have been collected (Rockoff & Speroni, 2010). Observations and reviews of teacher instruction, student assessment, data collection, and state standards should all be included in the evaluation process (Kane, Taylor, Tyler, & Wooten, 2011; Namaghi, 2010; Taylor & Tyler, 2012). Effective evaluations allow for self-reflection and should use an open line of communication between evaluator and evaluatee (Attinello, Lare, & Waters, 2006; Range, Scherz, & Holt, 2011; Taylor, & Tyler, 2012). Portfolios seem to be the best way to combine multiple evaluation tools, prove accountability, and allow for communication (Attinello, Lare, & Waters, 2006). Portfolio requirements will create consistency for all educators and an opportunity for constructive
feedback with accuracy and fairness. An evaluation will not be effective if useful feedback is not provided to the teacher. Feedback must include praise and/or improvement plans for the evaluation to be worthwhile (Zimmerman & Deckert-Pelton, 2003). Incorporating a variety of evaluation tools will result in more effective evaluations, which will impact teacher effectiveness and ultimately improve student achievement.

**Evaluations Lead to Professional Effectiveness and Student Achievement**

Evaluations should be used to identify teacher quality and potential professional development. Teacher effectiveness is an important factor in student achievement (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008). Numerous studies have found teachers receiving higher evaluation scores also tend to have higher student achievement. Teachers, who are organized, require student responsibility, have a positive attitude, and have content knowledge are found to be more effective.

Evaluation data should be used as a method to improve teacher instruction. An effective evaluation system can identify teacher qualities. Identifying strengths and weaknesses along with providing an opportunity to improve these qualities will enhance teacher performance. Numerous studies have found higher teacher performance leads to higher student achievement (Grant, Stronge, & Ward, 2011; Rockoff & Speroni, 2010; Taut, Santelices, Araya, & Manzi, 2009; Watson, Miller, Davis, & Carter, 2010; Zimmerman & Deckert-Pelton, 2003).

Regular classroom observations and evaluations can have a positive impact on student learning. Numerous studies have identified student achievement to be higher during and immediately following the years in which teachers are being evaluated (Grant, Stronge, & Ward, 2011; Kane, Taylor, Tyler, & Wooten, 2011; Rockoff & Speroni, 2010; Taylor & Tyler, 2012). Constructive feedback about teacher performance has also has been identified to have a positive
effect on student achievement (Zimmerman & Deckert-Pelton, 2003), and such feedback may result in opportunities for improvement provided by professional development.

**Professional Development as a Means to Improve Teacher Performance**

Professional development is one purpose for teacher evaluations. Improving teacher performance and competence should be considered when planning and developing professional development. Reviewing teacher evaluations is an important way to identify teacher strengths and weaknesses that need to be addressed when attempting to improve teacher instruction. Teachers should be provided with the necessary professional development to enhance their instruction (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008; Green, 2010; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Taut, Santelices, Araya, & Manzi, 2009). Professional development is an opportunity to allow proficient teachers to share their own best practices and experiences with others. This will allow teachers to feel ownership in the professional development plan, which will lead to better attitudes about the evaluation process.

**Teacher Perceptions of the Evaluation Process**

Teacher attitudes and perceptions about teacher evaluations tend to be positive when teachers are allowed to be a part of planning, designing, implementing and creating follow-up processes for evaluation tools (Clark, 1996; Koster, Brekelmans, Korthagen, & Wobbles, 2005). Teachers should also play a role in identifying a profile of the responsibilities and duties of the teaching staff. This will allow the teachers reflect and identify what is needed to provide quality instruction for increased student achievement.

Several studies found older teachers and those who have obtained tenure to be more accepting of the evaluation process. The above mentioned teachers tend to feel life-long learning
is important and are willing to accept constructive criticism to identify areas in which the teacher may need to learn or develop new skills. Teachers also tend to be more accepting of new evaluation systems when a government body has enforced new policies; teachers seem to understand new policies also have an impact on those who must perform the evaluations (Clipa, 2011; Faculty of Science of Education, 2011; Tuytens & Devos, 2009).

**Attitude and Perceptions Affect the Evaluation Process**

How a teacher perceives and feels about teacher evaluations can affect the results of the evaluation process. A negative attitude established by the extra work, feelings of someone looking over your shoulder, and having your values and beliefs questioned may cause a person to have a negative perception of an evaluation system. Poor attitudes and perceptions may cause feelings of displeasure, fear, and a sense of unfair practices. When individuals are not feeling safe and secure they tend to hold ill feelings towards the individuals performing teacher evaluations. One study found teachers with extremely poor attitudes were willing to lose their teaching position instead of undergoing the evaluation system (Tornero & Taut, 2010).

Attitudes and perceptions may be very positive when teachers understand the necessity of an evaluation process and are allowed to participate in designing and implementing evaluations. When teachers have a positive attitude towards evaluations they tend to have better results on evaluation scores. Teachers with positive attitudes are willing to accept constructive criticism in order to enhance instruction which will in turn increase student achievement. Merit pay and incentives appear to give teachers a reason to develop a positive attitude towards evaluations (Kimball & Milanowski, 2009; Wagoner & O’Hanlon, 1968).
Summary

Teacher evaluation tools are a critical tool in identifying teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Many states and countries are implementing more rigorous evaluation tools to assure student growth and achievement. When school districts accept teacher involvement in the planning and designing of evaluation tools, the teachers tend to have a better attitude about evaluation processes. Teachers seem to want constructive feedback from evaluators to help guide them in becoming the best educators possible. Administrators must use the data and information obtained from evaluations to guide professional development that leads to a teacher’s professional growth, otherwise, the purpose of the evaluation will not be met.
Chapter IV: Recommendations and Conclusion

**Recommendation**

School districts in many states are required to increase student achievement by improving and maintaining teacher effectiveness. School districts will need to work with teachers to create teacher performance assessments that will link teaching practices to student achievement. The process of creating a valid and reliable assessment model should be a collaborative effort between administrators and teachers. Working collaboratively will prevent negative perceptions and attitudes about the new stringent evaluations tools which are needed to assure best possible teaching practices are being used to improve student learning. Administrators will need to provide teachers with timely constructive feedback in regards to individual evaluations to assure evaluation processes are effective. The teachers must be empowered with the necessary information and tools to make positive improvements to ensure increased student learning.

**Areas for Further Research**

To further answer my research questions, I would want to perform a quantitative research study including a large number of teachers and administrators with a variety of differences. These differences include geographical locations, district sizes, traditional and alternative school systems, a variety of grade levels, and schools using different types of evaluation processes. Research questionnaires and methods for measurement will have to be developed. The data must be compiled within the previous mentioned categories followed by a cross categorized compilation. An analysis of the data will be used to identify similarities and differences in what appear to be effective and non-effective teacher evaluations. Data will also be used to identify causal relationships on how personal perceptions towards evaluations can impact the evaluation process and the effects on student learning.
Further researching teacher evaluation practices and outcomes might help identify resources and barriers that may affect teacher and student performance. Information obtained from further research may be used by administrators and educators to design improved teacher evaluation systems. This additional information may benefit teachers throughout the different phases of a teaching career by identifying strengths and weaknesses which affect teacher effectiveness at different times in a teacher’s career. Areas of further study may identify if evaluation results are used to correct and improve teacher and student performance or if results tend to be used negatively to remove ineffective teachers. Public perception of schools and teachers may improve from continued research which validates teacher evaluation systems by providing useful information to make data supported conclusions.

Conclusion

Data-driven teacher evaluations will continue to be used more frequently throughout the world. The global economy is increasing the need for countries to be competitive from teacher effectiveness and student achievement. If schools are going to use supervision and evaluations to identify, plan, and provide professional development to increase teacher effectiveness and student achievement, then administration and teachers will need to create and implement useful evaluation systems together. Teachers and administrators tend to agree that an effective evaluation system uses a variety of evaluation tools, such as classroom observations, student assessments, and data collection in a portfolio. When administrators have an open line of communication with the educators throughout the entire evaluation process, teachers tend to be more receptive to making necessary changes for improvement and are more willing to share instructional successes with co-workers. Teacher perceptions and attitudes toward evaluations
remain positive when appropriate measures are taken throughout the evaluation process; this creates a willingness in teachers to increase teacher effectiveness and student achievement.
References


