

Teachers' Perspectives of Classroom Observation in Instructional Rounds

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Abstract

The Instructional Rounds protocol has been adopted by many school districts as a way to improve teaching and learning. Instructional Rounds (IR) is a specific process of identifying a problem of practice, conducting classroom observation, debriefing, constructing an image of current practice, and making informed decisions designed to influence the organizational practice of a school. Studies of teachers' perspectives regarding classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation or professional development, reveal that teachers believe classroom observation can help improve the student learning and teaching practices. Nevertheless, evaluative observation has been associated with teachers' feelings of anxiety and nervousness when they are overserved. The purpose of this study is to understand teacher perspectives when their classes are observed for the purpose of IR. A web-based Likert-type scale survey was used to collect teachers' beliefs and feelings responses from two school districts participating in this process. The findings of this study suggest that teachers believe that classroom observation for the purpose of IR may inform district leadership teams of professional development, which in turn can improve teacher practices and student achievement. The findings further suggest that teacher feelings about IR classroom observation are more favorable than the literature revealed for teacher feelings of classroom observation for evaluative purposes.

Keywords: teachers' perceptions, beliefs, feelings, classroom observation, Instructional Rounds

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my three children Matthew, Iliana, and Samuel.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank my mentor and thesis advisor, Dr. Charles Weis III for his guidance through this paper. I also thank my husband Sergio, for his continued encouragement, love, and support.

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Teachers' Perspectives of Classroom Observation in Instructional Rounds

Chapter One: Introduction

For the past two decades, Instructional Rounds (IR) have become part of a process adopted by many school districts as a way to improve teaching and learning (City, 2009, 2011; Meyer-Looze, 2015). This process is based on a model carried out by doctors in the medical field that helped them train new doctors and improve practice. City (2009) along with her colleagues at Harvard University developed IR to be a specific process of classroom observation and debriefing where leadership teams can make informed decisions that influence the organizational practice of a school, and by extension of whole school districts. As part of their participation in IR, teachers allow the leadership teams to observe their classroom and collect data which will be analyzed and help make decisions for professional development or institutional change.

Most teachers' participation in the IR process is centered on the observation of their classroom instruction, their participation in the professional development and instructional changes recommended by the IR observing team. There are many studies that reveal teachers' perspectives regarding classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation or professional development. However, studies of teachers' beliefs and feelings about IR observations could not be located in the literature.

Research of teachers' perspectives about evaluative classroom observation reveals that teachers believe it can help improve the learning of students and teaching practices (Dos Santos, 2016; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011; Romano, 2014). Nevertheless, evaluative observations have been associated with teachers' feelings of anxiety and nervousness when they are overserved (Borich, 2008; Wang & Day, 2001). However, the IR process depends on direct observation, which can be stressful, even for experienced teachers.

This study will explore the perspective of teachers when leadership teams observe their classroom in order to collect the data needed as part of the IR process. Educational reformers highlight the need to know and understand the perspectives and concerns of the people who are asked to make a change (Fullan, 2016; Hall & Hord, 1987; Heath, 2010; Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin & Hall, 1987). Furthermore, studies reveal that teachers' beliefs and feelings can impact their ability to implement change (Romano, 2014). In order for effective change to be successful the concerns that teachers' have, need to be addressed (Hall & Hord 1987; Hord et al., 1987). It is important to consider the personal side of any change effort especially from the people who have to make the change.

Research Question

The research question that will guide this study is:

What are teachers' beliefs and feelings about classroom observation for the purpose of Instructional Rounds?

By understanding teachers' beliefs of classroom observation for IR, any school district participating in this process can improve upon their own implementation of IR. Improvement of the IR process can influence teacher implementation of the changes that the IR leadership teams suggest. When teachers improve their teaching this can have a positive outcome for student learning.

Instructional Rounds Process of Observation

It is essential to understand the process of IR from the viewpoint of a member of the leadership team. City (2009) has outlined five key stages to conducting IR which include forming a leadership team, creating a problem of practice, conducting classroom observation, debriefing and creating plans for next steps.

The arrangement of a leadership team may vary. Indeed, some may solely include administrators like superintendents and principals while other teams may invite a mix of school leaders, teachers and other educators from outside the school district to participate. A leadership team will meet several times during the process of IR within a specified time so that they develop a common understanding of goals and a set norms that will guide each of their following meetings.

A problem of practice will be the focus for the classroom observations. Typically, the problem or issue is one that the school or district is concerned about for example, a particular outcome of student learning. According to City (2011), the best problems of practice are those that are data-based and will allow for continued observation and improvement. Problems of practice could include the level of rigor of the classroom activity or the use of scaffold to support student learning.

Classroom observation groups range between four and five people. Each group conducts the classroom observation between 20 - 25 minutes. The focus of the observation is to collect evidence that will support the presence or absence of the problem of practice. As part of the procedure, team members remain silent once they exit the classroom so that teachers do not overhear conversations regarding the observation.

When all classroom visitations are complete, the leadership team will reconvene and discuss their findings. In the debriefing stage, each group within the leadership team looks for patterns in the classroom evidence collected. This process begins by having each person in the group share their observational findings with the rest of the group. Once everyone has shared, the group begins to look for patterns in the observational notes. The leadership team discusses the individual patterns and determines overall school patterns.

Based on the findings from the debriefing stage the leadership team will collaborate to establish the next steps geared toward improving the problem of practice. Available school resources and professional development training are usually considered as possible next steps. Teachers are presented with the next step plans so that they may implement them.

This thesis is organized into six chapters. The introduction describes the statement of the problem, the research question and the process of observation for the purpose of IR. The second chapter, the Literature Review, will explore the works that indicate the need to understand teacher perspectives as an essential element for educational improvement and the studies that have explored teachers' beliefs and feelings during classroom observations. The methodology chapter describes the study design and instrument used. It also detail the method by which the data are collected and analyzed. The fourth chapter offers a descriptive analysis of the findings related to each survey question. The fifth chapter, provides a discussion that compares the results of teachers' perspectives during the IR process with those of classroom observations for the purpose of professional development and evaluation.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

For decades, the medical field has been using the process of rounds as part of their practice to develop plans of action based on the data they have collected from their daily patient rounds. The Harvard Graduate School of Education adopted this framework as a process for educational administrators to encourage improvements in teaching and learning practices (City, 2009; Teitel, 2013). Through a specific process of classroom observation and debriefing, leadership teams make decisions that influence the organizational practice of a school, and possibly of whole school districts. This literature review will examine the role of classroom observation in IR as it compares to the classroom observation for personnel evaluation purposes. It will also review literature on teachers' perspectives when administrators and peers observe their classroom. Finally, this literature review will discuss the work of educational reformers that promote an understanding of teacher perspectives and concerns by administrators as a part of effective educational change.

Theoretical Framework

Teacher perspectives of observation are examined through the theoretical framework developed by Rosenberg and Hovland (1960). They state that teachers' perspectives and attitudes toward observation can be complex. To organize these different ideas teacher perspectives can be separated into three categories, cognitive, affective and conative. The cognitive component deals with a teacher's thoughts and beliefs about being observed. The affective component relates to the feelings a teacher has about this observation process. Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) note that it is not uncommon for the cognitive and affective component to conflict, a teacher may believe that observation through IR can be a positive experience for the school but may feel nervous when an observer is in the classroom. The conative component can be defined as the

actions taken by a teacher due to observation, for example, their willingness to volunteer her/his classroom for the purpose of the IR process. For the purpose of this study, only the cognitive and affective components of teachers' perspectives will be discussed, the actions that a teacher may take due to classroom observations will not be examined as part of the study.

Purpose of Observation in Instructional Rounds

Classroom observation is essential for educational improvement (Romano, 2014). It is a practice that can significantly increase a teacher's expertise, (Marzano, 2011). It is also at the center of the IR process but when compared to classroom observation for teacher improvement or evaluation it is considerably different. City (2011) identifies five significant differences in the way classroom observation for IR is to classroom observation for evaluative purposes. These differences are in the primary focus in the classroom, learning stance, unit of improvement, output, and accountability.

For evaluation purposes, classroom observations are focused directly on the teacher. Scripting is a common practice, this is where the observer notes word for word teacher instruction and conversation with students. During IR the teacher is not the central focus of the observation but a member of the "instructional core." City (2011) and her colleagues refer to this as the interaction between teacher, student, and the classroom activity. A teacher's actions are noted with respect to the interactions with students and the content they provide to students. IR observers focus on this interaction noting what the teacher says, student responses, and the level of learning that students display from the activity in which they are engaged. IR observers are instructed to note only what they see and cannot make inferences, all writing is to be a descriptive, not a critical account of what was witnessed.

Similarly the learning stance and unit of improvement also shift in IR observations. The teacher is not expected to learn or make individual changes from the IR observation process. During the evaluative process, administrators intend for the main learner to be the teacher, the discussion to enable this learning takes place during the post-observation meeting between the administrator and teacher. The teacher is given feedback from their observation and a plan is made to improve their teaching, through professional development or reflective strategy. In IR the observation team is expected to learn from the various classrooms they visit. During the post-observation meeting in IR, the team is designed to discuss the actions of the “instructional core” and the impact made on student learning. Through these discussions the team learns about the current practice of the school, then decisions are made through these discussions that are meant to improve the school or district practice. By finding overall trends within the school, the IR observation team makes recommendations for the next steps or “output” of the observation process. At the end of the IR post-meeting, all notes taken during the IR observations are shredded and teachers never receive individual feedback about their teaching. Teachers are not intended to acquire any individual learning about their teaching practice. They are also not expected to make any individual plans for improvement and take the next steps for individual professional development plans. Any professional development is done school-wide or district-wide and organizational change is expected. Lastly, accountability to the process of classroom observation for personnel evaluation is top-down when an administrator observes a teacher, but is lateral from peer to peer within the members of the observational team. (City, 2011)

According to City (2011), the purpose of the IR is a culture building process. It is meant to break down the idea that teaching is an isolated profession and to bring about a shared language and culture in the school environment. Teachers should be able to view classroom

observation as a method of providing observers with information about the instructional core that will increase the observing team's knowledge that will help guide next step plans. Teachers should not perceive IR classroom observation as an evaluative activity.

Teacher Perspectives on Classroom Observation

The research regarding teacher perspectives has centered on classroom observations for the purpose of individual teacher improvement and evaluation, no research regarding teacher perspective on classroom observation for the purpose of IR could be found. Through quantitative and qualitative research methods, teachers' beliefs, feelings, and actions have been explored. Understanding how teachers feel, and the cause for these feeling, will help in understanding how to improve the observation process and the overall IR process. One of the main factors that affect teacher's perspectives about classroom observation is who observes them and the purpose for the observation (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011; Philpott & Oates, 2015; Sahakian & Stockton, 1996; Wang & Day, 2002).

Teachers' Beliefs

The cognitive component deals with a teacher's thoughts and beliefs about observation. Research shows that a teacher's cognitive perception of observation highly depends on who is the person conducting the observation and the purpose of the observation (Wang & Day, 2002). It also reveals that teachers prefer classroom observations that are conducted by peers compared to the observations by administrators. Teachers' believe that peers can provide feedback that will be most beneficial to their professional development (Ali, 2007; Cosh, 1999; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011; Sahakian & Stockton, 1996)

Merç (2015) quantitative study surveyed 204 teachers from diverse school settings to determine their perception, sentiments, and readiness for action regarding classroom observation

for the purpose of professional development. This study of Turkish TOEFL teachers, revealed that over 90% of the teachers believed that classroom observations were important to their profession. Similarly, teachers believed that classroom observations were an effective way to improve a teacher's skills in the classroom, especially if they were observed by colleagues. This study concluded that although teachers strongly believed that classroom observation was important, 64% of teachers surveyed responded that they had not taken any courses, seminars or attended conferences related to classroom observation.

In a quantitative study of 263 participants, Romano (2014), surveyed both teachers and administrators to examine their beliefs regarding classroom observations with the purpose of improving current practices. He found that teachers and administrators both believed that classroom observations are a means of improving a teacher's profession. Although both teachers and administrators felt this same way about classroom observation, there was a discrepancy in the way they believed that it was the actual goal. According to Romano, less than 50% of teachers felt that observation for professional growth was the goal for classroom observation while more than 70% of administrators believed it was. This study concluded that, in order to improve the current classroom observation practices, there was a need to build a greater level of trust between the observer and teacher since the trust in the observer was believed to be important belief for teachers to hold (Romano, 2014).

Lam's 2001, quantitative study, surveyed 2400 educators to understand their opinions of classroom observations for the purpose of staff development and appraisal. Like Romano, Lam's study included the opinions of both teachers and administrators. This study, discovered that teachers more than administrators believed that classroom observation was used for personnel appraisal over staff development. This study also concluded that teachers preferred to be

observed by peers and the use of a coaching model over any others forms of classroom observations (Lam, 2001).

Lasagabaster & Sierra (2011) provides another quantitative study, conditions that could make classroom observations successful for professional development purposes. In this study, 185 educators were questioned about their beliefs, feelings, and actions associated with being observed. This study found that 85% of the teachers believe that classroom observation is an effective way to improve teaching. It concluded that teachers prefer peer observation as more useful than administrative observation because the feedback from someone who is currently working in the class and not removed from the common experiences of the classroom teacher. Like Romano's (2014) study, teachers also believed that observation was a positive experience as long as there was mutual trust between the observer and the person being observed.

In general, teachers have positive beliefs about classroom observation. Many teachers believe that classroom observations carried out by school administrators are the least effective type of classroom observation for a teacher's professional development due to the sentiments that administrators can cause in the teacher being observed. (Sahakian & Stockton, 1996; Cosh, 1999). Teachers believe that classroom observations conducted by a peer, who provides useful feedback that promotes a reflection, are best for professional growth. (Ali, 2007; Cosh, 1999).

Teachers' Feelings

The affective aspect is the way teachers feel about classroom observation. A teacher's profession can be described as being isolated (City, 2001). Many teachers are not accustomed to someone coming into their classroom to observe them, just the mention of an observation can cause feelings of discomfort, anxiety, and tension (Borich 2008). By identifying some of the reasons for teachers' negative reaction to classroom observation, the observation

process can be improved. The solution seems to be to create a process where positive feelings like trust, safety, and confidence can be developed between the observer and the observed.

In their study, Wang & Day (2001), focused on teachers' feelings about their classroom observation experience. Their qualitative, exploratory case study of 16 teachers, who were observed for various reasons and were in different stages of their careers, gives detailed information about teachers' feelings and the causes for them. In their analysis, teachers' experiences are categorized into three distinct categories that are directly connected to a specific feeling of the teacher. These teachers reported that observation are nerve-wracking and uncertain, and an embarrassing experience. Regardless of years in the profession, teachers being observed felt high levels of stress, uncomfortable, extremely self-conscious, exposed, and vulnerable. Many teachers wondered why the observation was being conducted leaving teachers feeling doubtful, or uncertain about their observation experience. These feelings were especially expressed by teachers who experienced a walk-through observation, where an administrator comes in unannounced for several minutes and leaves without ever giving the teacher any feedback. This uncertainty was also expressed by teachers who received vague feedback or general comments that did not explain a low score on an evaluation. Embarrassment was described by teachers who have experienced a disruption to their teaching. One teacher explained how the observer intervened in the class lesson, making the teacher feel embarrassment at the loss of authority. The study concludes that in order for a teacher to experience a feeling of respect, safety and trust, the teacher and administrator need to work together and build a relationship based on respect and trust. (Wang & Day, 2001).

Other studies have revealed negative feelings associated with observations conducted by administrators. Romano (2014) found that teachers felt intimidated when an administrator came

into their classrooms, took notes and did not give the teacher any type of feedback regarding their teaching. This is similar to Wang and Day's (2001) "wonder – why" category where teachers were left feeling apprehensive for not having received any feedback. Romano (2013) concluded that feelings of distrust and isolation exist when there is an unwillingness or inability to communicate effectively. Lam's (2001) study of teachers in Hong Kong, who were observed quite often by administrators, reported that observations led to a feeling of stress because teachers felt they were being judged.

Merc's (2015) study was able to identify a feeling of eagerness that was observed in teachers. This study concluded that 67% of teachers surveyed said they were eager to be observed. The study also revealed that younger teachers or teachers who had been in the profession for less than 5 years felt more eager than teachers who had been in the profession for over 5 years. (Merc, 2015).

According to Lasagabster & Sierra (2011), the disadvantages of classroom observations can be summarized as worry and anxiety which can cause an unpleasant feeling of being monitored. Most frequent reactions from being observed were the uneasiness, distrust, insecurity, and anxiety from having another person in class. In order for the benefits of observation to most beneficial, the person being observed must feel comfortable psychologically and feel a sense of trust. In order for trust to be established a good working relationship meaning that teacher's voices need to be heard (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011).

Overall, teachers felt that classroom observation had to have honesty and confidentiality in order to promote instructional growth. Having a relationship that is built on trust and open communication was the desirable element when classroom observations were conducted.

Teachers' Perspectives and Change

This section will discuss the literature on education change that relates to understanding teacher perspectives that can affect their participation in effective educational change. According to Fullan (2016), it is important to know and understand teachers' perspectives and concerns when they are involved in a process of change. Teacher's perspectives are important because they may affect a teacher's implementation of planned change (Hord & et al., 1987).

Fullan and Quinn (2016) identify drivers that facilitate action for school improvement. Successful administrators, "use the group to change the group" (Fullan, 2016, p. 6). Successful school districts use the drivers described and view educators as professional partners who contributed to the solutions and improvement plan of the district. By involving teachers the process of change, teachers feel valued and part of the change process. School districts that have experienced successful change efforts have focused on cultivating a collaborative culture that emphasizes positive relationships, the centrality of teachers and students, trust, and empowerment. Teacher participation in decision making is important in a change effort because it sends a message to teachers that they are valued and knowledgeable in the needs of the school and it increases the likelihood of acceptance and participation of the changes (Fullan & Quinn, 2016).

Hall and Hord (1987) describes a "stages of concern" experienced by teachers as they implement a change. The concerns that teachers experience are different and distinct based on the amount of experience teacher has. Additionally, the degree to which each teacher will experience these different stages of concern varies from teacher to teacher. In order for administrators to be successful and change to be effective, the concerns of teachers must be identified and met (Hall & Hord, 1987).

Hall and Hord (1987) state that change is not an event but a process in which individuals will react differently. In order for change to be accomplished, everyone's personal experience to the change has to be taken into account. The change effort will be most successful when attention to individuals concerns are understood and addressed by administrators. They explain that in any change process, teachers go through different phases of concern and it is the responsibility of the change facilitator to know and understand these concerns. The goal is to understand teachers' level and stage of concern in order to meet teachers' need, in a personalized, caring way. This approach will enable teachers to be more willing, and in the right frame of mind, to apply changes to their pedagogy.

This review of the literature suggest that overall teachers believe that classroom observation can help to improve a teacher's profession. Although teachers have a positive belief about classroom observation, having administrator observe can cause feeling of anxiety, nervousness and embarrassment. It is important for administrations to be knowledgeable of teacher's feelings and concerns because addressing these concerns can facilitate their participation in a change process.

The next chapter describes the methods used to conduct this study. The quantitative design and survey instrument for this study is explained. The participants and setting of the study are described and the process used for collecting and analyzing teacher responses are discussed.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Research Design

This chapter details the design used to complete this study. This study used a cross-sectional survey quantitative research design. According to Creswell (2012), a survey research design is used in order to identify peoples' beliefs and attitudes. It allows the researcher to find trends in feelings and beliefs in teachers' perspectives from the different schools that participated in this study. A cross-sectional survey design is best suited in this study since current attitudes towards classroom observations in IR will only be examined (Creswell, 2012).

Survey Instrument

A web-based questionnaire was used to collect teacher responses. No survey questionnaires relating teacher perspective of classroom observation during IR was available to the researcher. Questions for the online survey to collect teacher perspectives was created specifically for this study (see Appendix A for a printed version of the online survey). The survey consists of 11 closed questions where participants were asked to indicate the level of agreement or non-agreement on a five-point bipolar Likert-type scale. The last two questions were multiple choice used for demographic purposes. Questions in the survey are categorized in different themes, this explanation is given in the data analysis section.

Participants and Setting

The participants for this study were from two schools, in the same county in Southern California, which are currently involved in the IR process. Ninety-one teachers were invited to participate in the study, 35% completed the survey. Participants in the study are teachers that vary in knowledge and experience in the IR process.

Some teachers were trained in the IR process by county personnel experienced in IR and have participated as observers in IR where they have followed the process of improvement as well as having their classrooms observed. Other teachers have participated in mini-training sessions where they received general knowledge of the process of IR but did not participate as part of the IR observation team. Finally, other participants have not received training as observers in the IR process and have only participated in IR as teachers whose classrooms were observed.

The IR leadership teams in both of the school districts contained a combination of administrators, Teacher's on Special Assignment (TOSA's) and classroom teachers. At one district, in order to minimize any feelings of uncertainty and to educate classroom teachers of the process, three mini IR trainings were held. Any teacher wanting to participate was invited to attend one of the three mini rounds and attended a training on the IR process with the county personnel that specializes in IR. Classrooms for observation were chosen at random and rotate with each observation cycle. In both schools, teachers were never notified of who will be observed, they are only notified of the day IR teams will come in. Prior to this school year, teachers were not advised of the problem of practice. Since the new problem of practice focused on student academic conversations, teachers were informed to ensure that the classroom would not be engaged in individual assignments.

Each school has 45 teachers on staff. The two schools range in size from 750 to 1250 students. The demographics of the two schools are comparable, both have a high Hispanic population that make up more than 70% of the student population.

Data Collection Procedure

Permission to conduct the study through teacher email accounts was obtained from the district superintendents of each school district. (See Appendix B and C for school district letters of consent.) The researcher presented the study to participants through teacher email accounts, which are publically posted on school websites. A participation consent form was part of the survey that required acceptance by each teacher before the survey could begin. If a teacher did not consent to take the survey or if a teacher wished to stop the survey, they could log-out of the website at any time, without penalty. The consent form for participation is attached to the survey (see Appendix A).

A minimal burden existed for the participants as they had to fill out the questionnaire on their own time. In order to minimize any other risk, the researcher informed all participants about the purpose of the study and their option to exit the survey at any time without consequence. All participants were informed that no identifying information would be collected and that participant data would remain anonymous. Furthermore, participants were informed that all data collected would be password protected and that only the researcher and thesis advisor will view the data. The above information was included in the consent form at the beginning of the survey.

To ensure the confidentiality of all subjects, the researcher will distribute the survey through Qualtrics.com. Qualtrics.com does not collect any identifying information, therefore all participants remained anonymous. The data will be stored for two years through Qualtrics.com and will remain password protected. Only the researcher will have access to the data. Only the researcher and thesis advisor will view the stored data.

Analysis

To interpret the results of the five-point Likert-type scale survey, descriptive analysis was used. The descriptive analysis of each question identified the percentage of teachers who agree or strongly agree with the statement. The survey is based on a five-point Likert-type scale, so it is expected that each option will have a probability of a 20% response.

The mean score for themed categories of the questions was compared to the overall mean score with the mean score of teachers who were observed and have participated as observers and those teachers who have only participated in IR by allowing their classroom to be observed. The questions in the survey are grouped in the following themes:

Theme 1: Can classroom observation help **improve** teaching or learning?

Theme 2: Can the classroom observation effectively **inform** the leadership team?

Theme 3: Do teachers feel that they **participate** in IR process as a result of having their classroom observed?

Theme 4: Do teachers **trust** that data collected will be used to judge their teaching ability?

Theme 5: What do teachers **feel** when the leadership team is observing their classroom?

Bold words are the labels used to identify the different themes in the figures, the results, and the discussion sections.

The results of this survey will determine what teachers believe and feel about participating in IR classroom observations. By identifying teachers' current perspectives of their beliefs and feeling while having their classrooms observed, a comparison to previous studies of classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation and professional growth was made.

Understanding teacher perspectives can allow administrators the ability to address teacher needs and concerns that will allow teachers to make changes suggested by the IR leadership teams.

Chapter Four: Results

Teacher Beliefs

This chapter answers the study question: What are teachers' beliefs and feelings for the purpose of IR. The results of 32 teachers that participated in the web-based questionnaire will be described. Responses of each question are represented in percent form. Percent averages and mean scores are calculated and displayed in graphs.

The results in this section identify the percentage of teachers who agree or strongly agree with the statement and the percentage of teachers who did not agree or strongly agree with the statement. It was expected that an equal distribution of the results will be represented in each of the categories. The first seven questions have a five-point Likert-type scale, therefore it is expected that the results will be distributed evenly by 20% for each of the options in the scale.

The questions in the survey are grouped in the following themes:

Theme 1: Can classroom observation help **improve** teaching or learning?

Theme 2: Can the classroom observation effectively **inform** the leadership team?

Theme 3: Do teachers feel that they **participate** in IR process as a result of having their classroom observed?

Theme 4: Do teachers **trust** that data collected will be used to judge their teaching ability?

Theme 5: What do teachers **feel** when the leadership team is observing their classroom?

Bold words are the labels used to identify the different themes in the figures, the results, and the discussion sections.

Question 3 – I believe the Instructional Rounds process can improve student learning.

79% of the teachers agree and strongly agree with the statement. This is almost double of what was expected. 21% did not agree that the IR process could improve student learning.

Question 4- I believe the Instructional Rounds process can improve my teaching.

81% of teachers agree or strongly agree with the statement. 19% of the teachers did not agree that the IR process can improve their teaching.

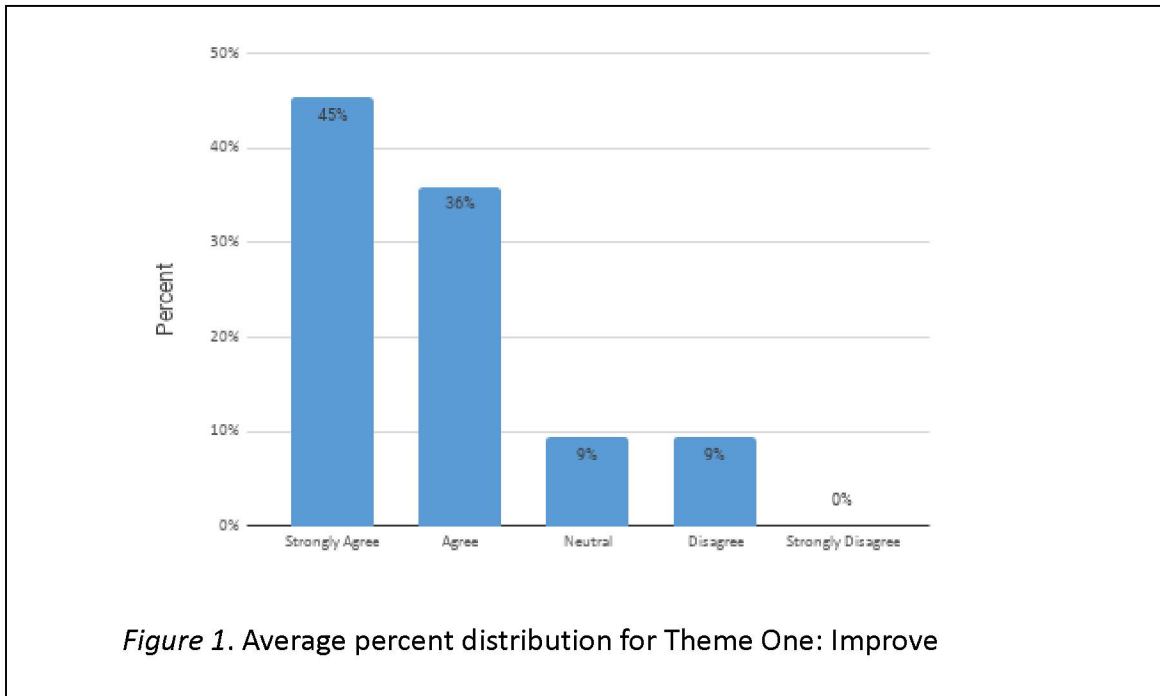


Figure 1 illustrates that 81% of the teachers agree or strongly agree that classroom observation in IR can improve teaching and learning.

Question 6 – I believe that the classroom observation process can better inform the leadership team of the type of professional development the school needs.

84% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. 16% of teachers did not agree that classroom observation process can better inform the leadership team of the types of professional development the school's needs.

Question 7 – I believe that the classroom observation process can inform the leadership team of the schools strengths.

84% of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. 16% of teachers did not agree that classroom observations process can help the leadership team identify the school's strengths.

Question 11 – I believe that the classroom observation process can inform the leadership team of the school's weaknesses. 78% agree or strongly agree with the statement that the observation process can help identify the weaknesses in the school. 22% of the teachers did not agree that classroom observations for the purpose of IR could identify a school's weaknesses.

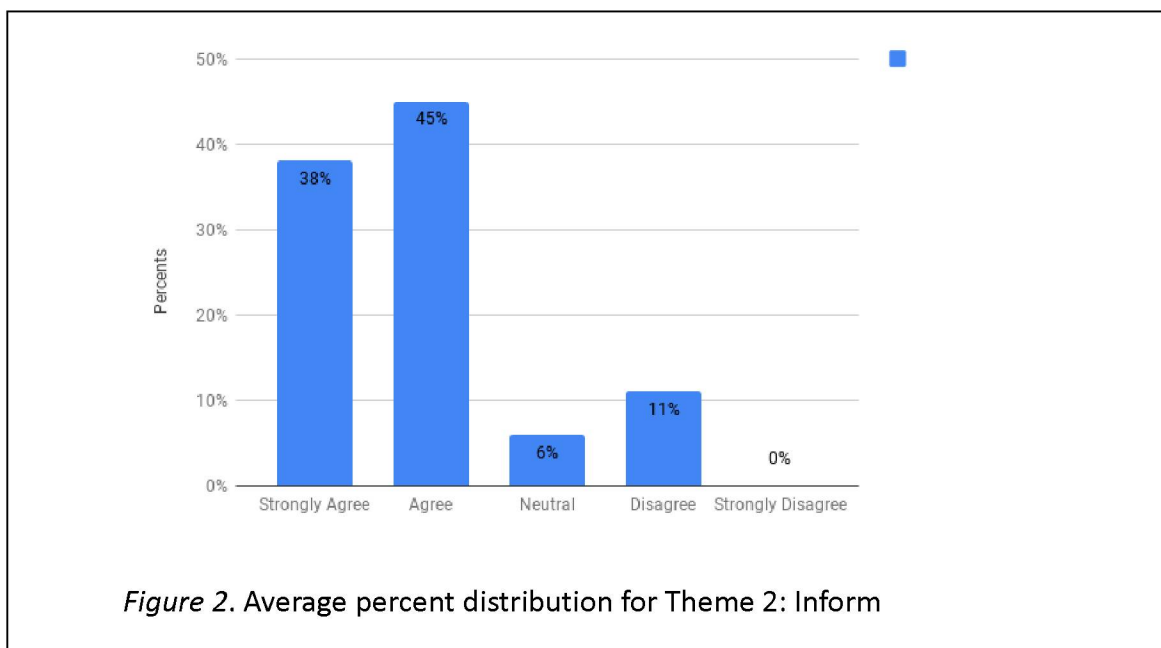


Figure 2 shows that 83% of teachers agree or strongly agree that classroom observation in IR can inform leadership teams of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

Question 8 – I trust that the notes collected from the observation in my classroom will NOT be used to evaluate my teaching ability.

69% of the teachers agree or strongly agree with the statement. 31% did not agree that notes collected from the observations for the purpose of IR would be used for evaluate a teacher's

ability.

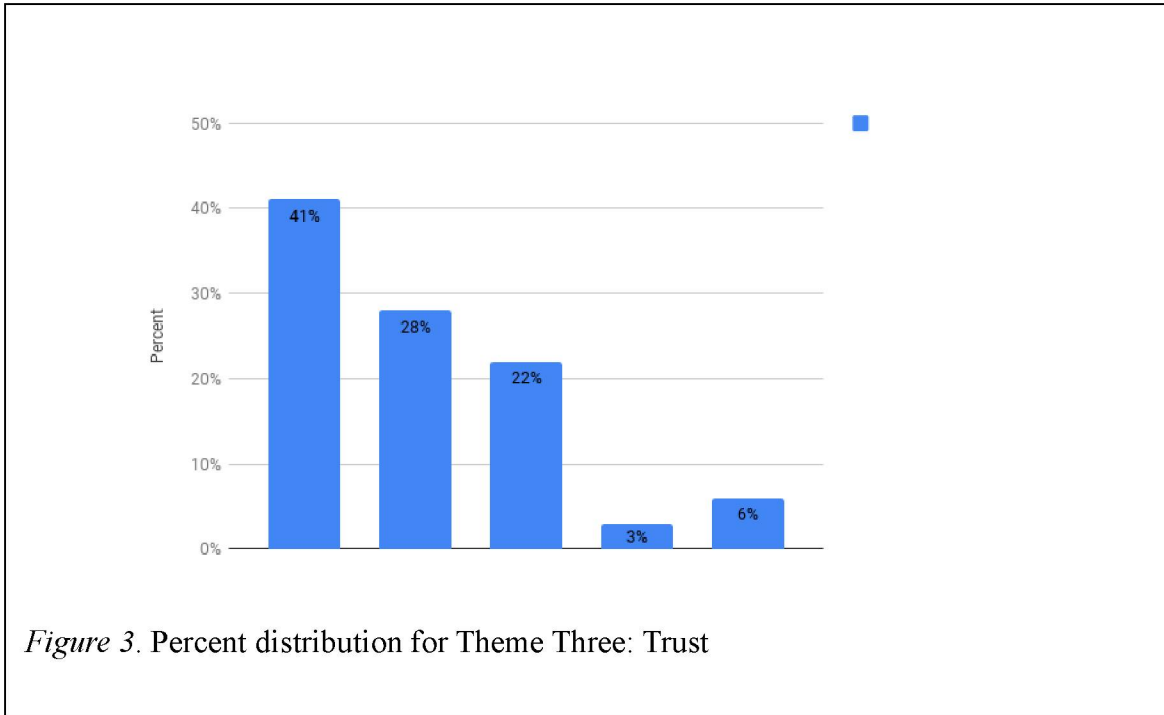


Figure 3 shows that 69% of teachers agree or strongly agree that classroom observation in IR will not be used to judge their individual performance.

Question 5- I believe that I am a participant of the Instructional Rounds process as a result of having my classroom observed.

39% of the teacher's agree or strongly agree with the statement. 61% of the teachers did not agree that they were part of the process of IR when their classrooms were observed by a team.

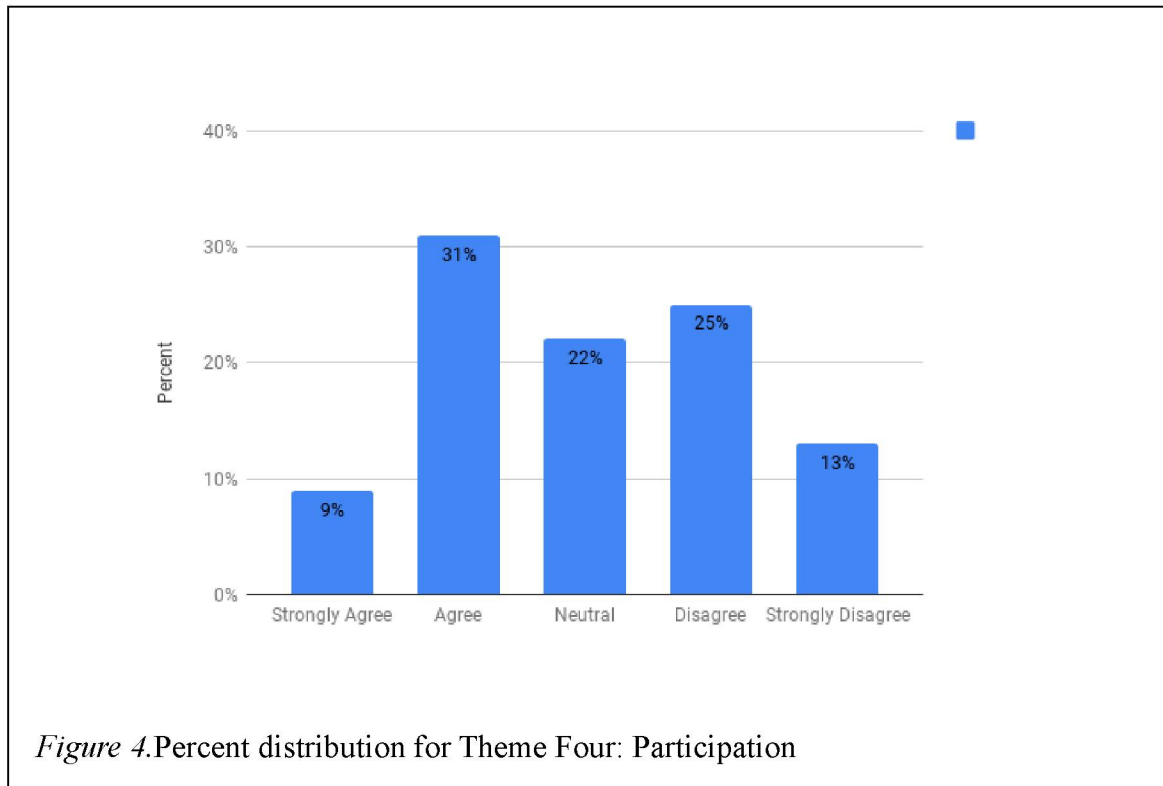


Figure 4 shows that 40% of teachers believe that they are participants as part of the IR process by having their classroom observed.

Teacher Feelings

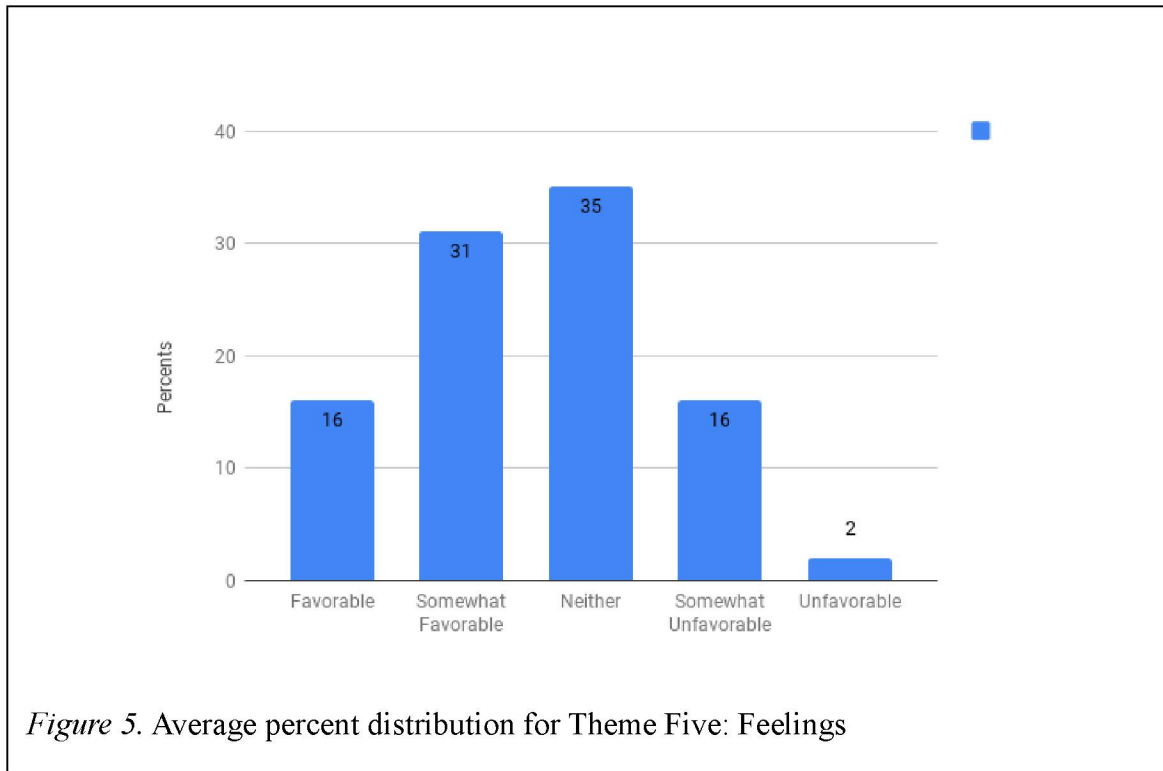
The results from the next four statements are responses of teachers when asked how they felt when their classes were observed for the purpose of IR observations. Results of these statements were on a Likert scale that gave teachers a positive emotion to choose from at one end with the opposite emotion at the other end of the scale. Percentage will be given for all of the positive feelings and the opposite feeling that teachers had. The same stem statement was given for all of the feeling questions. As in the previous section, it is expected that teacher results will be equally distributed among the five choices for an outcome of 20% for each option.

I felt _____ about having the leadership team observe my classroom and teaching.

66% of teachers stated that they felt **confident or somewhat confident** having the leadership team observe their classroom and teaching. While **3%** of teachers stated they felt **embarrassed or somewhat embarrassed** of having the leadership team observe their classroom and learning. **53 %** of teachers stated they felt **calm or somewhat calm** of having the leadership team observe their classroom and teaching. **19%** felt **nervous or somewhat nervous** from having the leadership team observe their classroom and teaching.

41% of teachers felt **carefree or somewhat carefree** and **22%** of teachers felt **anxious or somewhat anxious** from having the leadership team observe their classroom and teaching. **28%** felt **empowered or somewhat empowered** and **28%** felt **vulnerable or somewhat vulnerable** when their classrooms were observed.

The figure shows that an average of 47% of teachers felt a favorable or somewhat favorable feeling when their classroom was observed during the IR process.

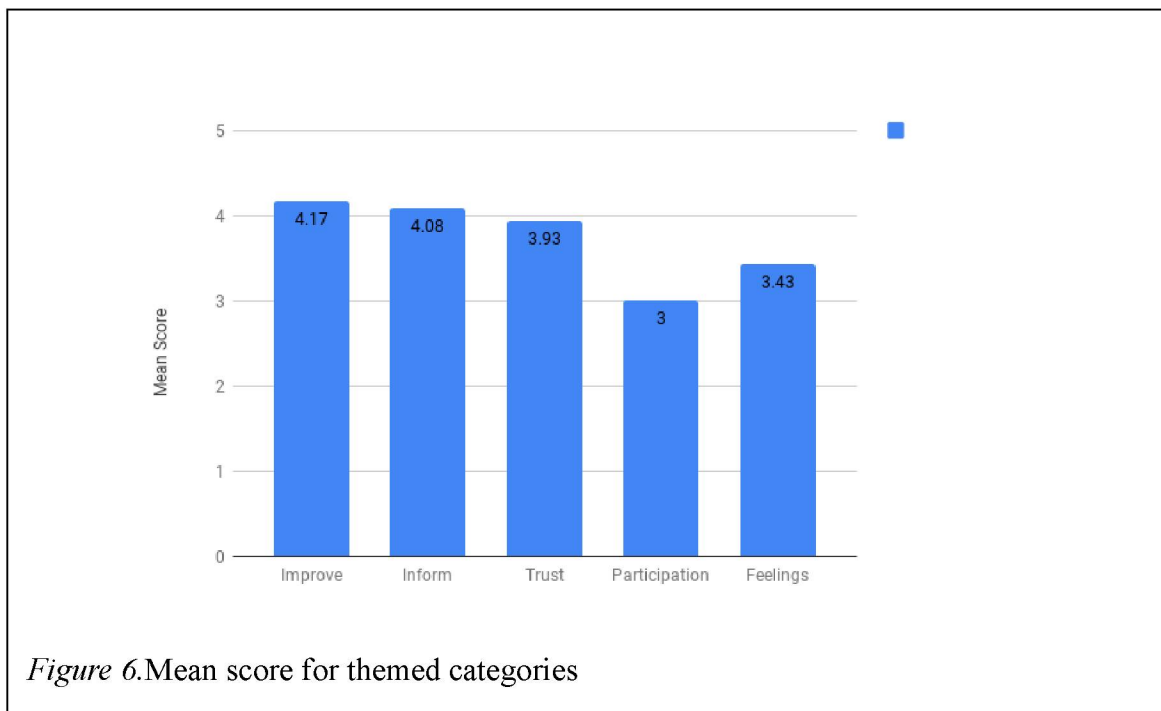


Mean Score for Themed Categories

The themed categories in this section are the same as the one in the previous section. To calculate the mean score, a numeric value is assigned to each of the five options in the Likert scale. The values of each option for the questions in the Belief section are as follows:

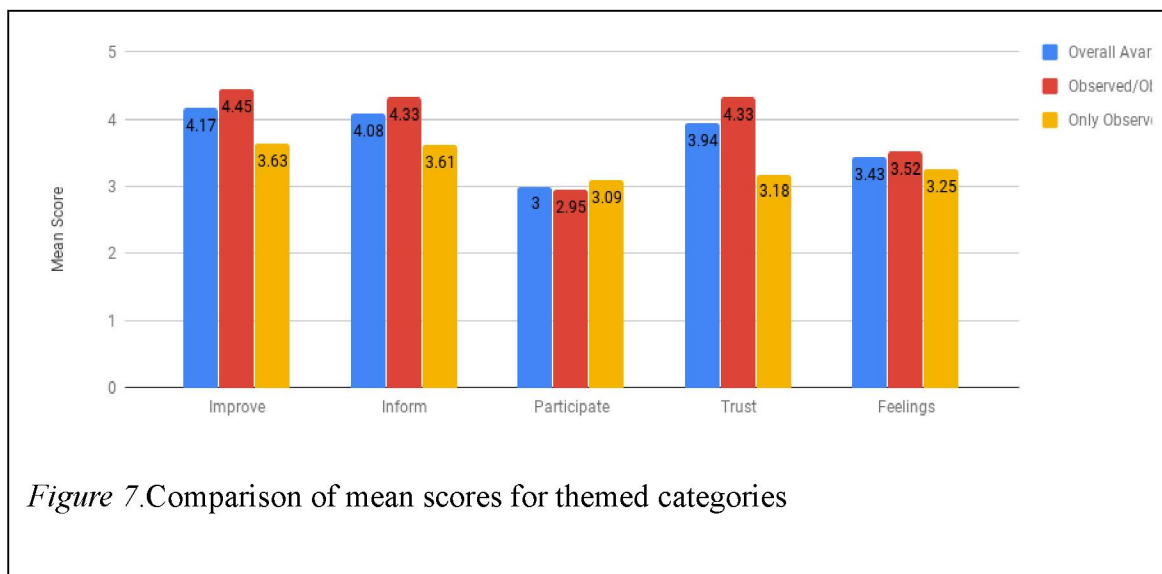
5 strongly agree; 4 agree; 3 neither; 2 disagree; 1 strongly disagree. As in the previous results section in order to identify the different emotions the word agreeable will represent those feelings such as confident, calm, carefree and empowered. The word disagreeable will represent those feelings such as embarrassed, nervous, anxious, and vulnerable. Responses in the Feelings section were valued in a similar way they are as follows: 5 favorable, 4 somewhat favorable, 3 neither, 2 somewhat unfavorable, 1 unfavorable.

Figure 6 shows the mean scores from the themed categorize described above.



Comparison of Mean Scores

Figure 7 shows a comparison of the mean score for themed categories in the questionnaire. The blue bar represents the mean score for all participants. The red bar represents the mean score for those teachers that have both been observed by the leadership team and have participated as observers in IR. The yellow represents the teachers that were observed by the leadership team but have never participated as observers during IR. Scores for each category are listed respectively.



The mean score of teachers' belief that IR could **improve** teaching and learning is 4.17, 4.45 and 3.64.

The mean score for responses regarding teacher beliefs if the IR process can provide leadership teams with **inform** for professional development is 4.08, 4.32, and 3.60.

The mean score of teacher belief that they felt **participants** of the IR process when their classes were observed is 3, 2.95 and 3.09.

The mean score for teachers **trust** that information gathered from the observation will not be used for evaluative purposes is 3.94, 4.33, and 3.18.

The mean score is for the **feelings** teachers have from being observed they are 3.43, 3.52 and 3.25.

The next chapter will discuss the results of the survey. A comparison of the expected percentage and actual outcome is discussed. The results are also compared to the literature reviewed and the implications of these findings for IR will be examined. Limitations of the study and suggested for future research is included as part of this section.

Chapter Five: Discussion

Purpose of Study

Many school districts have adopted the IR process as a way to improve student learning and teacher practices. Through a specific process of identifying a problem of practice, conducting classroom observation, debriefing, constructing an image of current practice, the IR process, helps leadership teams make informed decisions that influence the organizational practice of a school. Studies of teachers' perspectives regarding classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation or professional development, reveal that teachers believe classroom observation can help improve the student learning and teaching practices. Nevertheless, evaluative observation has been associated with teachers' feelings of anxiety and nervousness when they are overserved. The purpose of this study was to answer the research question:

What are teachers' beliefs and feelings about classroom observation for the purpose of Instructional Rounds?

Leaders in educational change reveal that teachers' beliefs and feelings can impact their ability to implement change efforts. By understanding and addressing teacher perspectives about classroom observations for the purpose of IR, school leaders can be more successful in improvement efforts that are part of the IR process.

This final chapter of the study discusses the results from the survey using the themes outlined in the methodology and results chapters. The descriptive analysis compares each themed percent score with the expected outcome. The themed mean scores are discussed in terms of the findings in the literature review of teachers' perspectives of classroom observation for professional development and evaluative purposes. Limitations of the study are addressed and suggestions for future studies are included.

Discussion of Findings

The survey is based on a five-point Likert-type scale, so it is expected that each option will have a one in five chance of being selected. A one in five chance probability of being selected equates to a 20% distribution for each of the responses in the five point Likert scale in the survey. The descriptive analysis compare each themed percent score with the expected probability outcome of 40% for the two options of agree and strongly agree.

The questions in the survey are grouped in the following themes:

Theme 1: Can classroom observation help **improve** teaching or learning?

Theme 2: Can the classroom observation effectively **inform** the leadership team?

Theme 3: Do teachers feel that they **participate** in IR process as a result of having their classroom observed?

Theme 4: Do teachers **trust** that data collected will be used to judge their teaching ability?

Theme 5: What do teachers **feel** when the leadership team is observing their classroom?

Bold words are the labels used to identify the different themes.

Theme One: Improve has 81% of teachers who agree or strongly agree, where the expected outcome is 40%. This implies that more than twice the amount of teacher felt that classroom observation for IR could improve student learning and teacher practices than expected.

The results of the survey appear to show that teachers' beliefs of the classroom observations for the purpose of IR are similar to the beliefs of teachers of classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation and professional development. 81% of teacher's agreed or strongly agreed that classroom observation for IR could improve teaching and learning. These findings are similar to Lasagabaster & Sierra (2011), which found that 85% of teachers in their study felt

that classroom observation could improve teaching and learning when classroom observation was done for professional development or evaluative purposes.

Theme Two: Inform had an average of 83% agree or strongly agree. Theme two also had a percent outcome more than twice the expected outcome of 40%, this suggests that teachers believe that classroom observation in IR can inform leadership teams of a schools strengths and weakness in order to implement professional development.

Theme Three: Trust, has a 69% of teachers who agree or strongly agree, this outcome is 29% more than the expected outcome. Again, this suggests that more teachers trust the classroom observation and data collection process of IR than expected. The result mean score for the Theme: Trust is 3.93, this score is closer to a score of 4 (agree) than to a score of 3 (neutral). This suggests that teachers agree to trust when the leadership team observes and collects data for the IR process without judging the individual teacher. Trust was a feeling in the literature review that suggested to improve the practice of classroom observation. Teachers value when trusting relationships are present between the teacher and administrator during a classroom observation (Wang & Day, 2002).

Theme Four: Participation has a 40% of teachers who agree or strongly agree that they are participating in the IR process when leadership teams observe their classroom. This is the only theme where the actual outcome and expected outcome is the same.

Theme Five: Feelings has an outcome of 47% of teachers have favorable or highly favorable feelings when their classes are observed during the IR process. This outcome is 7% higher than the expected percentage of 40. Unlike the literature review that suggested that teachers had unfavorable feelings associated with classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation or professional development (Romano, 2014), this study suggest that teachers have a

neutral feeling about IR classroom observations represented by a mean score of 3.43. This score may imply that teacher feelings about observations for the purpose of IR are more favorable than teacher feelings for the purpose of evaluation or professional development.

Teacher involvement in the IR process might imply that an association may exist between the experiences teachers have and their beliefs and feelings towards the IR observation process. Of the five themes outlined in this study four of the five themes resulted in apparently higher mean scores from teachers who have been observers and have been observed than overall mean scores. (see Figure 7 for actual scores). Theme One: Improve has a difference of 0.28, Theme Two: Inform has a difference of .30, Theme 4: Trust has a difference of 0.39, and Theme Five: Feelings has a difference 0.09. This may suggest that when teachers have the opportunity to participate in IR as both observers and classroom teachers whose classes are observed, their beliefs and feelings are more favorable about the IR observation process.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

The areas addressed for the limitations and suggestions for future study of this paper are, the participants, the survey questionnaire and the analysis of the results.

This study invited two school districts in the county to participate of the study. For future studies, inviting all school districts involved in IR will provided a larger teacher pool that may enhance external validity.

This study grouped the survey questionnaire into themes that were used to describe and interpret the results. A different number of questions are assigned to each theme, there are two questions in theme one, three questions in theme two, one question in both themes three and four, and four questions in theme five. Increased confidence in the theme could have been formed if a larger number of question with the same amount of questions per theme were used.

The survey questionnaire included two teacher demographic questions. If the survey contained more demographic questions, a more accurate depiction of the type of teacher responding may be obtained. The results of the survey could be compared to a teacher's years of service, gender and grade level they teach. These comparisons could determine if a teachers' perspectives of classroom observation in IR are associated with these variables.

Finally, the analysis of the results to this study are simply descriptive. In order to determine if the mean scores are significantly different in the comparison section, further inferential analysis is necessary.

By understanding teachers' beliefs and feelings about classroom observation for IR, school districts participating in this process may be able to improve their implementation of IR, which might influence teacher implementation of the changes that the IR leadership teams suggests. When teachers improve their teaching practices it will have positive learning outcomes for students.

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Appendix A

Survey Consent Form and Survey Questions

4/13/2018

Online Survey Software | Qualtrics Survey Solutions

**Welcome to the research study!**

This is a Masters Thesis research project conducted by a graduate student at California State University, Channel Islands. You have been selected to participate in this study because your school site is currently implementing the Instructional Rounds model. We are interested in understanding Teachers' Perspectives of Classroom Observation during Instructional Rounds.

You will be asked to answer some questions about your beliefs and feelings regarding the classroom observation aspect of Instructional Rounds. Your responses will be collected through qualtrics.com. All responses collected will be password protected. Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential.

The study should take you around 10 minutes to complete, and you will receive no direct benefit for your participation. Your participation in this research is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study, for any reason, and without any prejudice. If you would like to contact the Principal Investigator in the study to discuss this research, please e-mail blanca.mendieta219@myci.csuci.edu.

By clicking the button below, you acknowledge that your participation in the study is voluntary, you are 18 years of age, and that you are aware that you may choose to terminate your participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

Please note that this survey will be best displayed on a laptop or desktop computer. Some features may be less compatible for use on a mobile device.

- I consent, begin the study
- I do not consent, I do not wish to participate


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Survey Consent Form and Survey Questions

4/13/2018

Online Survey Software | Qualtrics Survey Solutions

Close Preview Restart Survey [Settings] Place Bookmark



I believe the Instructional Rounds process can improve student learning.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I believe the Instructional Rounds process can improve my teaching.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I believe that I am a participant of the Instructional Rounds process as a result of having my classroom observed.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I believe that the classroom observation process can better inform the leadership team of the type of professional development the school needs.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I believe that the classroom observation process can inform the leadership team of the school's strengths.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I believe that the classroom observation process can inform the leadership team of the school's weaknesses.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I trust that the notes collected from the observation in my classroom will NOT be used to evaluate my teaching ability.


Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Survey Consent Form and Survey Questions

4/13/2018

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I felt _____ about having the leadership team observe my classroom and teaching.

Confident	Somewhat Confident	Neither	Somewhat Embarrassed	Embarrassed
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I felt _____ about having the leadership team observe my classroom and teaching.

Calm	Somewhat Calm	Neither	Somewhat Nervous	Nervous
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I felt _____ about having the leadership team observe my classroom and teaching.

Carefree	Somewhat Carefree	Neither	Somewhat Anxious	Anxious
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I felt _____ about having the leadership team observe my classroom and teaching.

Empowered	Somewhat Empowered	Neither	Somewhat Vulnerable	Vulnerable
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>




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Number of Years Teaching:

- Less than 1 year
- 1 - 2 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 21 and more years

Have you ever been a member of the district leadership team observing other teachers?

- Yes
- No



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Appendix B

District Consent Form – Santa Paula School District

March 28, 2018

Research and Sponsored Programs Office
CSU Channel Islands
One University Drive
Camarillo, Ca 93012-8599

Dear CSUCI Institutional Review Board Committee:

The proposed study, *Teachers' Perspectives of Classroom Observation in Instructional Rounds* was presented to me by Blanca Rosa Mendieta, a graduate student of Educational Leadership at California State University Channel Islands. I am writing to grant permission for the study to be conducted in the Santa Paula Unified School District.

I understand the purpose of the study is to determine the beliefs and feeling of teachers as participants in the classroom observation part of the Instructional Rounds process. The activity will be an online survey for teachers only. It is to my understanding that no students or parents will be involved in the collection of data in any way.

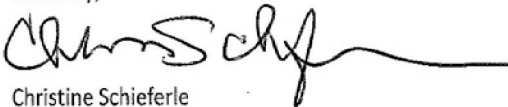
I understand that teachers will be invited to participate of an online survey through district email accounts. It is to my understanding that teacher participation is voluntary and anyone may decline to participate without penalty. Any teacher who agrees to participate may exit at any time without penalty.

I understand that the data collected from the survey is anonymous. Quatrics.com, the web-based tool for the survey does not collect any identifying information. It is to my understanding that the data will be stored through Quatrics.com and will be password protected. The data will be kept for no more than 2 years and will only be viewed by the researcher and her thesis advisor.

I understand that the survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete at the teachers convenience. It is also to my understanding that no disruption to classroom instruction will occur as a result of this study. It is also to my expectation that this study will end no later than June 15, 2018.

If the CSU Channel Island Institutional Review Board has any concerns about the permission being granted by this letter, please contact me at my office at (805)933-8819 or email me at cschieferle@santapaulaunified.org

Sincerely,



Christine Schieferle
Superintendent
Santa Paula Unified School District

Appendix C

District Consent Form – UPCS at CSU Channel Islands

March 15, 2018

Research and Sponsored Programs Office
CSU Channel Islands
One University Drive
Camarillo, Ca 93012-8599

Dear CSUCI Institutional Review Board Committee:

The proposed study, *Teachers' Perspectives of Classroom Observation in Instructional Rounds* was presented to me by Blanca Rosa Mendieta, a graduate student of Educational Leadership at California State University Channel Islands. I am writing to grant permission for the study to be conducted in the **University Preparation Charter School at CSU Channel Islands**.

I understand the purpose of the study is to determine the beliefs and feeling of teachers as participants in the classroom observation part of the Instructional Rounds process. The activity will be an online survey for teachers only. It is to my understanding that no students or parents will be involved in the collection of data in any way.

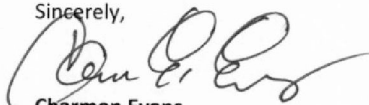
I understand that teachers will be invited to participate of an online survey through district email accounts. It is to my understanding that teacher participation is voluntary and anyone may decline to participate without penalty. Any teacher who agrees to participate may exit at any time without penalty.

I understand that the data collected from the survey is anonymous. Quatrics.com, the web-based tool for the survey does not collect any identifying information. It is to my understanding that the data will be stored through Quatrics.com and will be password protected. The data will be kept for no more than 2 years and will only be viewed by the researcher and her thesis advisor.

I understand that the survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete at the teachers convenience. It is also to my understanding that no disruption to classroom instruction will occur as a result of this study. It is also to my expectation that this study will end no later than June 15, 2018.

If the CSU Channel Island Institutional Review Board has any concerns about the permission being granted by this letter, please contact me at my office at 805-482-4608.

Sincerely,



Charmon Evans
Executive Director
University Preparation Charter School at CSU Channel Islands