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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE PERCEPTUAL ORIENTATIONS
OF EFFECTIVE PRINCIPALS AS IDENTIFIED BY
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION LEADERS IN
SELECTED MICHIGAN SCHOOL
DISTRICTS

By

Richard C. Peterjohn

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ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE PERCEPTUAL ORIENTATIONS OF EFFECTIVE PRINCIPALS AS IDENTIFIED BY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION LEADERS IN SELECTED MICHIGAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS

By

Richard C. Peterjohn

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptual characteristics of effective principals, as identified by teacher education association leaders. The secondary purpose was to contrast and compare the perceptual characteristics of effective principals with those of principals not identified as effective.

The basis for this study was the work of Arthur W. Combs and his associates at the University of Florida. Combs has conducted research concerning what he calls the "helping professions" (teachers, counselors, nurses), establishing that effective helpers share certain positive, confident perceptions about themselves, other people, their jobs, and the world in general.

Combs' studies, in turn, can be traced to the development of perceptual psychology, which assumes that behavior is the result of the behavior's perceptions--of himself, of his situation, and of other people--that any

behavior which is not consistent with one's deepest beliefs is perceived by others as unauthentic.

Thirty-six Michigan public school principals, eighteen of whom were identified by teacher education association leaders as effective and eighteen selected at random from those not identified as effective, were interviewed. They included males and females in urban and suburban, elementary and secondary positions. The interviews, carefully structured to elicit responses which would reveal perceptions, were taped and then evaluated by three trained judges. A modification of Arthur Combs' Perceptual Characteristic Scale served as a basis for judging. This scale designates eleven perceptions which seem to be common among effective individuals in a helping relationship. The data were analyzed to see whether or not the perceptions of principals identified as effective differed from those of principals not identified as effective, and whether the effective principals as a group shared a common set of perceptions.

A one-way analysis of variance revealed that there is a difference between the perceptions of principals identified as effective and those not identified as effective. The analysis of data revealed no significant difference in perceptual characteristics of effective principals whether they were male or female, were elementary or secondary principals, or employed in urban or suburban

school districts. Thus it might appear that effective principals as a group share a set of common perceptions.

The effective principals perceived other people as generally capable, friendly, trustworthy, and worthy and themselves as capable and possessing strong self concepts. They seemed more concerned with people than with things, and viewed their purposes as freeing and facilitating rather than controlling and coercing. Analysis of one variable, the educational level of the participating principals, revealed that the effective principals had a higher level of education.

The data appears to indicate implications for several groups of individuals, five in particular: school principals, school teachers and counselors, school personnel who are involved in hiring, college professors and administrators in preparatory programs for administrators, and researchers in the fields of administration, perceptual psychology, and the helping professions.

The results of this study imply that college preparation programs for school administrators should be concerned with developing affective as well as cognitive competencies, with the understanding that both are essential to success as an educational leader. Assuming that positive perceptions people hold about themselves, others, their jobs, and the world in general are related to effective leadership seems to suggest that the affective aspect of administrator

preparation programs should be emphasized to a greater degree than is generally true at the present time. This preparation might well include experiences in encounter groups, communication, decision making, sensitivity training, interpersonal relationships, and curriculum change or process.

More effective methods need to be developed to measure both affective and cognitive competencies and to indicate where pre-service and in-service administrative leaders need growth experiences.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this study to my parents who have made all this possible by giving me life and valuing education.

This is also dedicated to my wife, Elspeth, and my two children, David and Kristen, for their everpresent faith, encouragement, love, and goodwill.

I would hope also that this study adds a little bit of understanding and knowledge for all people, young and old, who are concerned about helping other people.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In appreciation for the time and effort given to me during the writing of this dissertation, I would like to thank my committee consisting of Dr. Collier, Dr. Durr, Dr. Alam, and Dr. Faunce. I would like to give special consideration to my major advisor, Dr. Collier, for all his encouragement and help and many hours he has given of himself. All of these men have been very understanding, friendly, and approachable at all times.

I would like to recognize Dr. Splete and Dr. Brady for their personal interest, encouragement, and support.

I would also like to recognize Mr. Ward and Dr. Hagar for assisting me in scoring and tabulating of data.

The Michigan State University Educational Research Department has been very helpful and available at all times.

I want to thank the participating school systems and the participating principals that are part of this study.

Last, but not least, the constant awareness, helpful consideration and kindness of my wife and my two children.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Anyone who has taught for any length of time is aware that some principals are more effective than others in creating a climate that facilitates teaching and learning. Many programs for the training of administrators place emphasis on the cognitive approach. But necessary as a certain amount of this approach may be, success in such a program is no guarantee of success as a principal. The principal is called upon to handle many situations in which awareness of specific facts and methods is useful, even necessary. Ultimately, however, his job consists of helping his staff members, students, and community carry out their responsibilities. In this aspect of his work, he deals with human behavior and interpersonal relationships. Many studies (those by Combs, for example) have shown that individual behavior is largely a result of one's perceptions at a given moment. Behavior is, therefore, likely to be unpredictable, and it defies absolute classifying and categorizing. As a result, the principal cannot learn ahead of time how best to handle every situation he will face. Studies have also indicated that success in areas involving human behavior and relationships depends less on knowledge

of facts and the use of certain methods than on an awareness of the nature of behavior, that of oneself as well as others, and an open, confident approach to relationships.

Fiedler found that therapists, regardless of their effectiveness in helping others, knew what a good helping relationship should consist of even though in practice they might not have followed such beliefs.¹ In a similar study, Combs found the same thing to be true of teachers. They all seemed to know the kind of relationship they should have had with their students even though not all were successful in establishing such relationships.

Almost without exception, the attempt to distinguish between effective and ineffective persons in such a relationship on the basis of their overt behavior has proved most disappointing.²

In the same way, success in the part of the principal's job involving relationships is a matter not so much of knowing facts and methods as of seeing oneself and others in ways that produce a helpful relationship. The method by which a principal believes a problem can be solved seems to be less important than the way in which he sees himself, the other individuals involved, and the problem. And knowing how an effective principal ought to behave, how he ought

¹F. E. Fiedler, "The Concept of an Ideal Therapeutic Relationship," Journal of Consulting Psychology, XIV (1950), 239-245.

²Arthur W. Combs, Florida Studies in the Helping Professions (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1969), p. 26.

to think if he is to be an effective helper, is not the same as being that kind of principal.

Measuring how much a principal knows about the various aspects of his job, the problems he is likely to encounter, and the methods by which they may be solved would be a large but fairly straightforward task. But since this kind of knowledge does not necessarily produce effective leadership, such measurement seems fruitless. Instead, what does seem worthwhile is a close look at the perceptual characteristics of the effective principal. How does he perceive himself; how does he perceive others; how does he perceive the world? And do these perceptions lead to helpful or unhelpful relationships? Such a measurement is less objective than one which deals with specific facts and is more difficult to make, but the results could provide insight into the role of the principal and might suggest ways in which training for administration could be improved.

A review of the literature concerning the role of expectations in student achievement indicates that the most influential reference groups in terms of expected school behavior are parents, peer groups, and teachers. If one person is in a position to influence all three of these groups, it is the principal or educational leader. One of his primary duties is to create a climate among community, staff, and students where learning or achievement can most readily take place. To do this, he must develop satisfactory

relationships with parents, teachers, and students. To have positive results which affect the whole school community, these relationships must be "good" or "helpful" relationships. The research documented and interpreted by Arthur Combs in his Florida Studies in the Helping Professions seems to indicate that those individuals who are most effective in the helping professions (counseling, teaching, nursing, the ministry) share certain ways of looking at themselves and others.³ Combs suggests that these same perceptions may be found among those who are successful in other relationships, for example, parent to child, foreman to worker. One of the "helping professionals" not included in Combs's study is the school principal. In view of the tremendous potential influence of the principal, a study of the perceptions of principals who are exerting a positive influence should be useful to various groups:

1. Practicing principals, as they work with teachers, students, and parents in performing their function.
2. All members of school staffs, since they work with people and are considered helping professionals.
3. College professors, as they develop preparation programs for teachers, counselors, and particularly administrators.

³Ibid., pp. 72-75.

4. Researchers in the field of human relations, psychology, and the helping professions, as they develop hypotheses for further research. Framing such a study in terms of Combs's work seems a logical way to begin.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptual characteristics of effective elementary and secondary principals, as identified by teachers, who are key leaders in local education associations, in selected Michigan school districts.

The secondary purpose was to contrast and compare the perceptual characteristics of effective principals with those principals not identified as effective.

Assumptions

Basic to this investigation was the assumption that principals are important at both the elementary and secondary school levels in creating a climate conducive to learning. It was assumed that the principal's job consists largely of helping staff members, students, and community fulfil their educational responsibilities. This concept of school administration as a helping profession, in the sense that Combs uses the term, is recognized by other authorities.

The effective administrator . . . is he who challenges teachers and parents to develop into leaders by inspiring and leading them to participate in planning and executing activities within a school. Furthermore, the effective administrator is one who is himself continually

inspired and guided into participating as one of the group by the leadership which emerges from teachers, parents, and students.⁴

The administrative leader must be able to deal with people. The good administrator is a student of human relations. He is keenly aware that the most important thing about people is their attitude toward others. . . . The good administrator acts toward all person with complete respect, even when he does not agree with their philosophy. He deals with all people with courtesy and integrity and convinces them that their opinions matter.⁵

Regardless of size or complexity of total operation, administrators exist primarily as a means of facilitating the instructional program. To judge them otherwise would be distorting the objectives of American education.⁶

Since teachers are in day to day contact with students and work closely with principals, it was assumed that their selections of effective principals are valid and that the perceptual characteristics of these principals are worthy of investigation.

Hypotheses

1. There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of principals identified by teachers as effective and the perceptual characteristics of principals not identified by teachers as effective.

⁴J. Wilmer Menge and Roland C. Faunce, Working Together for Better Schools (New York: American Book Company, 1953), p. 48.

⁵Ibid., p. 50.

⁶Collier, Houston, Schmatz, and Walsh, Teaching in the Modern Elementary School (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), p. 82.

2. There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective urban elementary and secondary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective suburban elementary and secondary principals.
3. There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective male elementary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective female elementary principals.
4. There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective urban and suburban elementary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective urban and suburban secondary principals.

Definition of Terms

Perceptual Characteristics: One's general frame of reference, his way of seeing others as well as himself, and the purposes behind his behavior in general.

Effective Principals: Those selected by key leaders of local teacher education associations.

Principal: Any person practicing under the title of principal at one of the two levels of education included in the study.

Secondary Level: Includes high schools, junior high schools, and middle schools (grades 7-12 or 6-12).

Elementary Level: Schools including grades kindergarten through five or kindergarten through six.

Teachers (who identify effective principals): Key leaders of local teacher education associations.

Scope and Limitations

This study was purposely limited in its scope. Rather than investigating perceptual characteristics of all principals, this study was designed to focus on the recognized effective principals and their perceptual characteristics. It was recognized that students, parents, and administrators have their perceptions of principals, and that these perceptions would be of value; however, this study was designed to focus on principals who are seen by teachers as effective helpers. This study was confined to four selected school districts in Michigan in order to permit detailed, in-depth study of the identified principals and to control the scope of the study.

Other limitations of the study are found in the analysis procedures. The "self" as instrument (described in detail in Chapter III) and inference techniques are still fairly new and under some criticism; however, the work that has been done by these methods appears promising, and difficult problems and questions concerning human behavior are being investigated by these somewhat subjective means.

Overview

A frame of reference for the entire study has been developed in Chapter I. Included were the introduction, statement of problem, basic assumptions underlying the

study, general research hypotheses, scope and limitations of the study, and definitions of important terms.

In Chapter II, a review of the related literature is presented. This includes the development of perceptual psychology, the concept of the helping relationship, and the implications of these ideas for principals.

The design of the study and the procedures followed in the use of the research technique are reported in Chapter III. This chapter includes sources of data, the research instrument, development of interview questions and observation guidelines, and the treatment of data.

The reporting and analysis of data are described in Chapter IV.

In Chapter V, a summary of the study, conclusions, and implications for further research are presented.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In view of the tremendous influence of our schools, it seems essential to determine as specifically as possible the qualities which make for effective leadership in the schools. The studies conducted by Combs concerning the helping professions are an excellent place to begin thinking about the subject and to consider ways of observing and drawing conclusions about effective principals.

Combs states:

While the various forms of the helping professions differ with respect to their purposes, clientele, and techniques, nevertheless, they are basically alike in the psychology through which they operate. It seemed to us that the crux of the problem of "helping" lay not in some mysterious special technique. Rather the various helping professions seem really to be expressions of a kind of basic "good" human interrelationship. That is to say, these professions appear to represent the concentration and crystallization of the best we know about human interrelationships for the sake of the person or persons to be helped.¹

However, the roots of Combs's studies and of similar discussions of the helping professions can be traced to the development of what is known as perceptual psychology, the notion that any behavior is the result of the combination

¹Combs, op. cit., p. 70.

of the behavior's perceptions--of himself, of his situation, and of others--at the time. This view of human behavior, which is highly individualized and is concerned with something more than simply stimulus and response, has been termed humanistic.

Two major theorists of the movement give us clues to its direction in their emphasis on the individual in seeking answers to behavior. Abraham Maslow describes what he terms the "self-actualizing" individual and the behaviors which lead to self actualization. Self actualization occurs through full and spontaneous involvement in experiences and is an ongoing process, resulting from daily choices, rather than something which occurs once, dramatically, and is thus accomplished for a lifetime. It requires an awareness of self and a willingness to act upon one's individuality and accept the responsibility for one's acts. It demands honesty, with and about oneself as well as others. It assumes the ability and will to see other persons as individuals of worth, to look at others, "under the aspect of eternity." The self-actualizing individual, Maslow notes, is invariably one who gives himself to something outside himself, "some calling or vocation, in the priestly sense."²

²Abraham H. Maslow, The Farther Reaches of Human Nature (New York: The Viking Press, 1970), pp. 41-53.

Carl Rogers speaks of the "fully-functioning" individual, who feels strong, sure of himself, and in complete control. He is singleminded, able to withstand opposition, spontaneous and expressive. To the observer, this individual looks reliable, dependable, and trustworthy.³

Hamachek has more recently differentiated among three theories of man by summarizing that

. . . existentialism focuses on man's existence; phenomenology is concerned about man's here and now perceptions of his existence, and humanistic psychology studies the personal meaning man assigns to his perceptions of his existence.⁴

The present study, although primarily related to phenomenological or perceptual psychology, implies a humanistic approach to the helping relation.

The famous demonstrations in perception by Adelbert Ames at Honover Institute were major advances and clarified some basic principles concerning perceptions:

1. What is perceived is not what exists, but what one believes exists.
2. What is perceived is what we have learned to perceive as a result of our past opportunities and experiences.⁵

³Carl R. Rogers, On Becoming a Person (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1961).

⁴Donald E. Hamachek, Encounters with the Self (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1968), p. 48.

⁵Arthur W. Combs and Donald Snygg, Individual Behavior: A Perceptual Approach to Behavior (New York: Harper and Row, 1959), pp. 84, 85.

Men like Dewey, Kelley, and Combs were impressed and influenced by Ames's work. Dewey states in a letter to Ames:

I think your work is by far the most important work done in the psychological-philosophical field during this century--I am tempted to say the only really important work.⁶

Kelley particularly, having visited and observed Ames's experiments, saw the possibility of relating the principles clarified by Ames to human behavior. Kelley says that "in order to be effective social beings, we have to approach the other person's point of view."⁷ Snygg and Combs also pursued this line of thought, which has come to be known as perceptual psychology. Fundamental to perceptual psychology, therefore, is the belief that the individual point of view is crucial in determining behavior.

Equally fundamental is the notion that ideas or theories which run counter to an individual's perceptual organization, however well-tried or clearly proven they may be, will be ineffective or useless for that individual. Ultimately, behavior must be consistent with beliefs.

Purkey says that

Dissonance results when we take action which is incompatible with the beliefs we hold about ourselves and others.

As general assumptions, we can say that if a potentially new concept of himself appears to the

⁶Hadley Cantril, The Morning Notes of Adelbert Ames, Jr., with Correspondence with John Dewey (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1960), pp. 230-231.

⁷Early C. Kelley, Education for What is Real (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), p. 55.

individual to be consistent with and relevant to the concepts already present in his systematized view of himself, it is accepted and assimilated easily. If the concept appears to have no relation or relevance to that system, it is generally ignored. And if it is inconsistent and uncongenial with the system, it is likely to be rejected or distorted.⁸

Both of these beliefs are significant in discussion of the helping professions. In attempts to be helping persons, people generally use one of two approaches. They observe and analyze behavior in terms of what they see as helpers, or they try to view behavior in terms of how the behavior perceives himself in relation to his environment. This latter approach is based on perceptual or phenomenological psychology. Combs says that "behavior is a function of the perceptual field of the behavior at the instant of action."⁹ Kilpatrick says,

We act not in terms of what "is" but in terms of a prognosis of what "will be" at the projected point in time at which we expect our act to take effect on whatever it is we are dealing with, whether an object, a person, or a long range aspiration we are trying to achieve.¹⁰

Bruner declares,

The prediction of behavior, particularly complex behavior, is cripplingly incomplete without an account of the perceptual field of the predictee.

⁸W. W. Purkey, Self-Concept and School Achievement (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1970), p. 13.

⁹Combs and Snygg, op. cit., p. 20.

¹⁰Franklin P. Kilpatrick, Explorations in Transactional Psychology (New York: New York University Press, 1961), p. 356.

And so many of the controlling principles of behavior manifest themselves in changes in the perceptual field.¹¹

According to Hamachek,

A fundamental thesis of the perceptual point of view is that behavior is influenced not only by the accumulation of our past and current experiences, but even more importantly it is influenced by the personal meanings we attach to our perceptions of those experiences.

By and large, people tend to behave in a manner which is consistent with what they believe to be true. In this sense, seeing is not only believing; seeing is behaving. A fact is not what is; a fact is what one believes to be true.¹²

Purkey complies,

The world of the self may appear to the outsider to be subjective and hypothetical, but to the experiencing individual it has the feeling of absolute reality.¹³

Behavior is, therefore, an expression of one's attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and values.

Moustakas views the acceptance of this theory of human behavior as a matter of honesty.

Honesty implies a willingness to assert what one sees and a fastidious allegiance to what one perceives.¹⁴

¹¹Bruner and Krick, Perceptions and Personality (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1949-50), v.

¹²Hamachek, op. cit., pp. 32, 38.

¹³Purkey, op. cit., p. 13.

¹⁴C. E. Moustakas, "Honesty, Idiocy, and Manipulation," in Readings in Humanistic Psychology, ed. by A. J. Sutich and M. A. Vich (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 27.

To ignore individual perceptions and rely upon objectivity is to ignore what is real.

Forms of things have no absolute reality. Their truth lies in our personality. The meaning of experience comes from individual, personal perception. These meanings constitute a pattern which is reality for the person. . . . It is upon these perceptions of what is real that people base their actions and decisions.¹⁵

Behaviors which are consistent with values, beliefs, and perceptions tend to make one honest, authentic, and free. People are then able to be themselves and fulfill all their potential in life. In contrast, people who verbalize beliefs, values, or perceptions which are inconsistent with their behavior, or vice versa, feel themselves to be hypocrits, unauthentic and constricted, always on guard; and they relate or come across to others in the same manner. Authentic behavior seems crucial to good helping relationships and personal fulfillment, and it allows others to be authentic and fosters their personal growth. As Moustakas says,

To live in terms of the persons we are is the only way to health and self-fulfillment. Being authentic permits us to establish a personal identity and fosters genuine human relations.¹⁶

. . . persons can serve the growing individual through genuine presence, by being sources of life

¹⁵C. E. Moustakas, Self (New York: Harper, 1956), pp. 277-278.

¹⁶Clark Moustakas, The Authentic Teacher: Sensitivity and Awareness in the Classroom (Cambridge: Howard A. Doyle Publishing Company, 1966), p. 32.

itself. In relations, in genuine encounters with others, the individual grows in awareness and widens his world of sensitivity and perception.¹⁷

The proponents of this view of human nature express confidence in man's capacity to develop fully and to realize his potential. Horney believes that

. . . man has the capacity as well as the desire to develop his potentialities and become a decent human being, and that these deteriorate if his relationship to others and hence to himself is, and continues to be, disturbed. I believe that man can change and keep changing as long as he lives.¹⁸

Maslow sees people who are accepted and respected as individuals as capable of

. . . turning toward honesty, affection, self respect, intellectual and aesthetic growth, acceptance of our own nature, and turning away from hypocrisy, from meanness, prejudice, cruelty, cowardice, and smallness.¹⁹

Implicit in these statements is the need as well as the capacity for personal growth. It appears that much of our personal identity and individuality has been lost through industrialization, technology, and huge, complex establishments. People feel they have become numbers, conformists, and they experience frustration when they try

¹⁷Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁸Karen Horney, Our Inner Conflicts (New York: W. W. Norton, 1945), p. 19.

¹⁹A. H. Maslow, "Personality Problems and Personality Growth," in Self, ed. by C. E. Moustakas (New York: Harper, 1956), p. 246.

to change or direct their lives. The urgency to discover the self and relate to others is crucial as we rush toward a mechanical, electronic society. As Rogers states,

Man has long felt himself to be but a puppet in life--molded by economic forces, by unconscious forces, by environmental forces. He has been enslaved by persons, by institutions, by the theories of psychological science. But he is firmly setting forth a new declaration of independence. He is discarding the alibis of unfreedom. He is choosing himself, endeavoring, in a most difficult and often tragic world, to become himself--unique, individual self.²⁰

Out of this background in perceptual psychology have grown ideas about what characterizes an effective helping relationship. The qualities suggested by these questions are considered essential to the effective helper.

1. Can I be in some way which will be perceived by the other person as trust-worthy, as dependable or consistent in some deep sense?
2. Can I be expressive enough as a person that what I am will be communicated unambiguously?
3. Can I let myself experience positive attitudes toward this other person--attitudes of warmth, caring, liking, interest, and respect?
4. Can I be strong enough as a person to be separate from the other?
5. Am I secure enough in myself to permit him his separateness?
6. Can I let myself enter fully into the world of his feelings and personal meanings, and see these as he does?
7. Can I receive him as he does?
8. Can I act with sufficient sensitivity in the relationship that my behavior will not be perceived as a threat?

²⁰C. R. Rogers, "Toward a Science of the Person," in Readings in Humanistic Psychology, ed. by A. J. Sutich and M. A. Vich (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 49.

9. Can I free him from the threat of external evaluation?
10. Can I meet this other individual as a person who is in the process of becoming, or will I be bound by his past and by my past?²¹

According to Combs and Snygg, adequate persons

1. perceive themselves in essentially positive ways.
2. are capable of acceptance of self and others.
3. perceive themselves as closely identified with others.²²

Truax and Wargo note three things the effective psychotherapist is able to do.

1. Sensitively and accurately understand the patient, and accurately and emphatically know the patient's "inner world" and respond in such a manner as to communicate this deep understanding.
2. Communicate a non-possessive warmth and acceptance of the patient.
3. Communicate his own genuineness, authenticity or integration within the therapeutic encounter.²³

Rogers describes the effective, client-centered counselor as one who

holds a coherent and developing set of attitudes deeply imbedded in his personal organization, a system of attitudes which is implemented by techniques and methods consistent with it. . . . The counselor who tries to use a "method" is

²¹C. R. Rogers, "The Characteristics of a Helping Relationship," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XXXVII (1958), 7-11.

²²Combs and Snygg, op. cit.

²³C. B. Truax and D. G. Wargo, "Human Encounters that Change Behavior: For Better or for Worse," American Journal of Psychotherapy, XX (1960), 4.

doomed to be unsuccessful unless this method is genuinely in line with his own attitudes.²⁴

The ability of the helper to identify with the other individual is significant.

Repeatedly, good therapists tended to see more similarity between themselves and their patients than did their less highly rated colleagues.²⁵

Certain characteristics, then, particularly authenticity or genuineness, seem essential to the effective helping relationship. Rogers also notes that relationships which are not helpful are marked by different qualities.

It seems clear that relationships which are helpful have different characteristics from relationships which are unhelpful. These differential characteristics have to do primarily with the attitudes of the helping person on the one hand, and with the perception of the relationship by the helpee on the other.²⁶

Heine notes that patients who had been successful in therapy were in agreement about the qualities of a helpful relationship, whatever the therapist's method. A helpful relationship is one in which the therapist elicits trust, a feeling of being understood, and a sense of independence in the patient. Unhelpful therapists seem uninterested, remote, overly sympathetic, prone to give direct

²⁴Carl Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1965), p. 19.

²⁵Psychological Monographs (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 1959), LXXIII #3, article 473, 2.

²⁶Rogers, "The Characteristics of a Helping Relationship," p. 11.

advice, and concerned with past history rather than present problems.²⁷

Fiedler's findings in this regard are similar. He comments that successful therapists, whatever their method, are likely to agree on what constitutes a good helping relationship. Further, he finds that the man on the street can detect this kind of relationship as readily as can an expert.²⁸

The importance of warmth and empathy to a helping relationship is noted by Weiss, Krasner, and Ullman who found that the warm, supportive individual elicited an increase in the frequency of self-reference on the part of the helpee.²⁹

Studies concerning the student-teacher relationship support the idea that perceptual organization, rather than method, is the key to success in helping. Truax and Tatum discovered a direct correlation between positive performance and social adjustment and the amount of empathy and warmth

²⁷R. W. Heine, "A Comparison of Patients' Reports on Psychotherapeutic Experience with Psychoanalytic, Non-directive and Adlerian Therapists" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1950).

²⁸Fiedler, op. cit., pp. 239-245.

²⁹R. L. Weiss, L. Krasner, and L. P. Ullman, "Responsivity to Verbal Conditioning as a Function of Emotional Atmosphere Patterning of Reinforcement," Psychological Reports, VI (1960), 415-426.

shown by the teacher.³⁰ Christensen found that the degree of school learning achievement was significantly related to teacher warmth.³¹ Rosenthal's "self fulfilling prophecy" concerns the situation in which a child's chances of achievement increase as the teacher perceives him as being able.³² A study of the effects of group counseling on college underachievers found that the students receiving high and moderate levels of empathy and warmth showed greater gains than a compared control group.³³

Although the helping relationships explored in the research reviewed cover a variety of situations and, obviously, involve many methods, the implications in terms of perceptual psychology seem clear. Whatever the situation, when one individual is in a position of helping another, the degree to which the helper is positive, warm, and honest in his approach has much to do with the success of the relationship.

³⁰C. B. Truax and C. R. Tatum, "An Extension from the Effective Psychotherapeutic Model to Constructive Personality Change in Pre-school Children" (unpublished manuscript, University of Kentucky, 1964).

³¹C. M. Christense, "Relationships Between Pupil Achievement, Pupil Affect-Need, Teacher Warmth, and Teacher Permissiveness," Journal of Educational Psychology, XI (1960), 169-174.

³²Robert Rosenthal, Experimenter Effects in Behavioral Research (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966).

³³W. A. Dickenson and C. B. Truax, "Group Counseling with College Underachievers," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XLV (1966), 243-247.

The most recent research concerning the helping professions is that compiled by Combs. It indicates, at least for the professions it covers, that perceptual organization is the major factor in determining success or lack of success in the helping relationship, and that though the specific jobs may differ, those who are effective in any of the helping professions share certain characteristics. The effective helper perceives from an internal rather than external frame of reference, in terms of people rather than things. He sees others as able rather than unable, as dependable rather than undependable, as friendly rather than unfriendly, as worthy rather than unworthy. He considers himself adequate and identifies with rather than separates himself from people; he is self revealing rather than concealing. And he believes his purposes are freeing rather than controlling, concerned with larger rather than smaller meanings.

Combs and his associates have conducted research in several specific areas. A study made during the 1961-62 academic year typifies the approach they have used. Combs and Daniel W. Soper conducted a study, which involved thirty-one counselors-in-training. On four different occasions the participants were asked to hand in a description of a "Human Relations Incident," describing the incident, what he thought about it at the time, what seemed to him to be the crux of the problem, and what he

now felt he might better have done about it. These descriptions were analyzed by four judges, trained in the "self as instrument" technique, who asked themselves what the participant must have perceived to have written about the incident as he did. The participants who possessed the perceptions listed in the preceding paragraph were also those who, in a completely different manner, had been judged most effective in ratings made by the faculty. The study supports the assumption that it is possible to distinguish good counselors on the basis of their perceptual organization.³⁴

Similar studies concerning teachers, by C. Thomas Gooding; Episcopal pastors, by John A. Benton, Jr.; student nurses, by John Frederick Dickman; and college teachers, by Richard Usher, also support this idea.³⁵

Having established that this pattern of attitudes exists among the effective helpers studied, the researchers suggest that the pattern will hold true for individuals who are successful in any helping relationship.³⁶ It is upon this suggestion that this study is based.

³⁴Arthur W. Combs and Daniel W. Soper, "The Perceptual Organization of Effective Counselors," in Florida Studies in the Helping Professions (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1969), pp. 21-27.

³⁵Combs, op. cit., pp. 28-66.

³⁶Ibid.

As has already been noted, the idea of the school principal as a helper has been noted by various authorities. Other sources comment thus:

The supervisor's (principal) role has become supporting, assisting, and sharing rather than directing. It is used to promote growth through assuming responsibility and creativity rather than through dependency and conformity.³⁷

The superintendent or principal, if he is a genuine person, has as much in common with the lowest paid beginning teacher who also is a genuine person, as with any other person who happens, like him, to be high in administrative ranks.³⁸

Frederick Mayer makes the following statements concerning the traits of the successful administrator and the ways in which he actualizes high educational objectives.

The outstanding administrator believes in academic freedom and he resists pressure groups.

The outstanding administrator recognizes that he is fallible and is willing to learn from others.

The outstanding administrator builds a feeling of good will and cooperation in the community.

The outstanding administrator believes in team spirit. He knows how to share responsibilities with others.

The outstanding administrator will guide his subordinates indirectly; he will exhibit a sense of humility.

The outstanding administrator thinks more of objectives and goals than of routine affairs.

The outstanding administrator will encourage new ideas and new concepts of education.

The outstanding administrator is invariably friendly, and his advice is sought freely by his associates and subordinates.

³⁷ Arthur Jersild, In Search of Self (New York: Columbia University Teachers College Press, 1968), p. 32.

³⁸ Kimball Wiles, Supervision for Better Schools (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1955), p. 9.

The outstanding administrator is concerned more with the philosophy of education than with the techniques of education.

The outstanding administrator is altruistic, and he exemplifies the democratic way of life in action.³⁹

Douglas McGregor's Theories X and Y give us insight into human nature and behavior concerning leadership and administration. Theory X involves the assumptions upon which traditional organizations are based and which appear inadequate to the fulfillment of human potential. These assumptions, that people cannot be trusted, are inadequate, and need to be coerced if the organization is to attain predetermined goals, are the basis for authoritarian organizational structure. Theory Y, by contrast, is consistent with current research knowledge of human motivation, assuming that persuasion and professional help is as successful as the use of authority in the realization of both individual and organizational goals.

Carl Rogers paraphrases McGregor's Theory Y as it pertains to educational administration.

In terms of this theory the educational administration is responsible for organizing the resources of the institution--the teachers, the students, the funds, the equipment and materials in such a way that all of the persons involved can work together toward defining and achieving their own educational goals. The mainspring of the organization is the motivation for development and learning which is inherent in each person. The task of the administrator is to so arrange the organizational conditions

³⁹Frederick Mayer, A History of Educational Thought (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1960), p. 436.

and methods of operation that people can best achieve their own goals by also furthering the jointly defined goals of the institution. The administration finds that his work consists primarily of removing obstacles such as "red tape," of creating opportunities where teachers and students and administrators (including himself) can freely use their potential, of encouraging growth and change, and of creating a climate in which each person can believe that his potential is valued, his capacity for responsibility is trusted, his creative abilities prized.⁴⁰

Additional support for the notions of the school administrator as coordinator, facilitator, and helper, rather than "boss," appears in an article concerning job specifications for principals.

The principal is an educational leader. His major responsibility should be--in cooperation with his staff--to direct, guide and coordinate the total educational program within the school. All his other activities must directly support his central function, the improvement of instruction. As educational leader, the principal: keeps instruction and learning foremost in his own planning, making certain they are central to all school deliberations; adapts the school's program and procedures to the requirements of the individual student and is sensitive to the needs of the individual teacher; . . . acts as a catalyst for innovative thinking and action on the part of others in the school, as well as suggesting his own ideas for program, curriculum and organization; . . . fosters sound interpersonal relationships among the students, teachers, and administration.⁴¹

Carl Rogers has this to say about the administrator's task:

⁴⁰Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960), pp. 33-57.

⁴¹George E. Melton and John Stanavage, "Job Specifications for Principals," The Education Digest, XXXVI, No. 2 (October, 1970), pp. 25-26.

. . . The administrator has the task of using himself in just as fulfilling a way as he makes possible for his staff and students. He does not submerge himself, but uses his leadership qualities, his vision, his wider information, all the characteristics which have led to his being placed in a position of responsibility, as positive input in a living and changing organization.

. . . As in setting the conditions for a classroom, genuineness is perhaps the most important ingredient for success. If an administrator can grant only a small sector of freedom to the members of his organization, he should be completely open about the control he intends to exercise over the remaining sectors of their functioning.⁴²

This developing view of school administration takes the position that knowledge of methods alone will not guarantee success for there is no "right" or "good" method. There is, however, a "good" or "right" relationship which will lead to effective administration. And the person who can establish this relationship is a confident, positive, authentic individual, one whose perceptual organization is like that described by Combs. This study will investigate this point of view.

⁴²Carl R. Rogers, Freedom to Learn (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1969), pp. 207, 212.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This study was designed to investigate and describe the perceptual characteristics of effective principals in selected Michigan public school districts. In this study, behaviors of principals seen by teachers as effective were identified and described to determine whether or not the perceptual characteristics of effective principals were similar to those of principals not identified as effective by teachers.

The Sample

The respondents in the study were public school principals in selected school districts. The sample for this study was drawn from personnel in four Michigan school districts selected to represent both urban and suburban schools. Discussion with various local teachers association leaders before beginning the study helped determine whether or not they saw potential value in this kind of research, were willing to participate themselves, and believed principals from their particular districts would cooperate. The interest of these individuals was a consideration in the selection of the four districts.

Limiting the study to four districts helped to establish control over the scope of the study.

The participating school districts had to meet three requirements:

1. that the school district have both secondary and elementary principals
2. that the principals be full-time and certified
3. that elementary be designated as K-5 or K-6 and secondary as 6-12 or 7-12.

Effective Group

In order to facilitate statistical analysis, the "effective group" consisted of eighteen principals, nine urban and nine suburban. The urban sample consisted of three secondary, three male elementary, and three female elementary principals. The suburban sample also consisted of three secondary, three male elementary and three female elementary principals. Letters were sent to the key leaders of the local teacher education association in each of the four selected districts, asking them to name the most effective principals in their school districts (see Appendix A). On the basis of the size of the school district, and with regard to the plan to use specific numbers of principals to facilitate statistical analysis, the following numbers of effective principals were requested.

District A	Urban	- 4 secondary
		4 male elementary
		4 female elementary

District B	Suburban	- 1 secondary 2 male elementary 2 female elementary
District C	Suburban	- 1 secondary 1 male elementary 1 female elementary
District D	Suburban	- 1 secondary 1 male elementary 1 female elementary

A total of twenty letters was sent, twelve to the suburban districts and eight to the urban district. In an attempt to get more valid identification of principals in the large urban district, four letters were sent to secondary leaders and four to elementary. Ten of the twelve suburban letters were returned and six of the eight urban.

If a principal was identified as effective by two or more of the key leaders of the local teacher education association, his name became part of a list of principals considered effective and therefore eligible to be one of the eighteen effective principals to be selected for observation and interview in the study. This list eventually totaled twenty names; however, only eighteen of the twenty were selected because of the predetermined numbers based on sex, level, and type of district. The two extra names were in the urban male elementary group; the only factor involved in omitting them and selecting the others was that the replies naming the others came in earlier.

Comparison Group

In addition to the eighteen effective principals, the plan of this study included interviewing a comparison sample of eighteen principals not identified as effective. Although the teacher education association leaders were willing to participate in identifying the most effective principals in their school districts, they felt it unwise and impractical to identify the poorest, least effective principals. Therefore the comparison sample is not to be considered a group of ineffective principals; it is rather a group randomly selected from those not identified as most effective.

Of the eighty-five principals in the four participating districts, thirty-one were named at least once as effective. Out of the remaining fifty-four, eighteen principals were selected as a comparison sample. These were randomly selected; the fifty-four names were put into a hat and the first eighteen drawn, without regard to sex, level, or type of district were selected as the comparison sample.

Collection of Data

The data for the study were collected through a series of interviews and observations.

Each of these eighteen principals identified as "effective" was sent a letter requesting permission to visit his school to observe and interview him concerning effective principals (Appendix B).

The eighteen principals in the comparison group were sent letters requesting their participation (Appendix C). The comparison group was only interviewed as compared to the effective group which was interviewed and observed.

The principal means of gathering information, from both the effective and comparison group, on which to base inference concerning perceptual organization was the structured interview. The effective group was also observed in order to identify specific behaviors. In planning the interviews, the writer's chief concern was to elicit responses which would provide insight into the participant's perceptual organization and data by which to test the hypotheses of the study, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Discussion with several interested principals who were not a part of the study helped in formulating a set of questions concerning various aspects of the principal's job and his feelings about it. The intent was to ask forthright questions which would encourage the principal to talk freely and at the same time assure the writer the kind of information needed for the study. The Perceptual Characteristics Scale (PCS) developed by Arthur Combs and his colleagues at the University of Florida was carefully studied prior to formulating questions for the structured interview used in gathering the data. The following scale, as Combs and his associates used it in reference to

counselors, deals with the helper's perceptions of the world in general, other people, himself, and his job.

- A. With respect to their general perceptual orientations, good counselors will be more likely to perceive:
 1. From an internal rather than from an external frame of reference. . . . He seems sensitive to and concerned with how things look to others with whom he interacts, and he uses this as bases for his own behavior. He is concerned with perceptions of others as well as their overt behavior.
 2. In terms of people rather than things. Central to the thinking of the subject is a concern with people and their reactions rather than with things and events.
- B. With respect to their perceptions of other people, good counselors will perceive others as:
 1. Able, rather than unable. The subject perceives others as having the capacities to deal with their problems. He has faith that they can find adequate solutions as opposed to doubting the capacity of people to handle themselves and their lives.
 2. Dependable rather than undependable. The subject regards others as being essentially dependable rather than undependable. He shows confidence in the stability and reliability of others and does not need to be suspicious of them.
 3. Friendly rather than unfriendly. The subject sees others as being friendly and enhancing. He does not regard them as threatening to himself but, instead, sees them as essentially well-intentioned rather than evil-intentioned.
 4. Worthy rather than unworthy. The subject tends to see other people as being of worth rather than unworthy. He sees them as possessing a dignity and integrity which must be respected and maintained rather than as unimportant people, whose integrity may be violated.
- C. With respect to their perceptions of self, good counselors will perceive themselves as:
 1. Identified with people rather than apart from people. The subject tends to see himself as a part of all mankind; he sees himself as identified with people rather than

- as withdrawn, removed, apart, or alienated from others.
2. Enough rather than wanting. The subject generally sees himself as enough, as having what is needed to deal with his problems. He does not see himself as lacking or unable to cope with his problems.
 3. Self revealing rather than self concealing. The subject is self revealing rather than self concealing; that is, he appears to be willing to disclose himself. He can treat his feelings and shortcomings as important and significant rather than hiding them or covering them up. He seems willing to be himself.
- D. With respect to purposes, good counselors will perceive their purposes as:
1. Freeing rather than controlling. The subject's purpose is essentially freeing and facilitating rather than controlling, dominating, coercing, or manipulating.
 2. Altruistically rather than narcissistically. The subject appears to be motivated by feelings of altruism rather than narcissism. He is concerned about others, not merely about self.
 3. Concerned with larger rather than smaller meanings. The subject tends to view events in a broad rather than narrow perspective. He is concerned with larger connotations of events, with larger, more extensive implications than the immediate and specific. He is not exclusively concerned with details but can perceive beyond the immediate to future and larger meanings.¹

The Perceptual Characteristics Scale focuses attention on perceptual characteristics and organization. In developing the PCS, Combs and his colleagues were seeking to differentiate between good and poor helpers. Certain findings of Dr. Fred Fiedler were significant as background to the work of Combs. First, Fiedler noted that expert

¹Combs, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

psychotherapists, whatever the school of thought from which they began, tended to have similar ideas about the nature of a good therapeutic relationship and in this respect were more alike than beginners and experts from the same school of thought. This finding suggested the existence of a "good helping relationship" toward which effective practitioners drift no matter what their beginning frame of reference. Fiedler noted, "The therapeutic relationship may be but a variation of good interpersonal relationships in general." Fiedler also found that the man in the streets could describe a good helping relationship nearly as well as the experts, suggesting that any individual can recognize it when it exists. Thus Fiedler's study supported a general idea Combs had developed, that helping professions were highly similar. A study by Heine concluding "that there probably is a psychotherapy and that all existing psychotherapies are more or less approximations of that fundamental relationship" lent further support.²

A paper by Carl Rogers, "The Characteristics of a Helping Relationship," further influenced Combs's thinking and provided impetus for his work. Dr. Rogers, in this paper, concluded:

It seems clear that relationships which are helpful have different characteristics from relationships which are unhelpful. These different

²Ibid., pp. 4-5.

characteristics have to do primarily with the attitudes of the helping person on the one hand and with the perception of the relationship by the "helpee" on the other.³

His behavior, which perceptual psychology indicates grows out of individual perceptions, especially values, beliefs, and purposes, is that which sets him apart from the individual who perhaps knows the same things he knows but is unable to establish helpful relationships with others. In Combs's research it became apparent that the subject for study was the self of the effective helper, not his method or his knowledge, but the firmly established beliefs, the fundamental perceptions about himself and the world, which determine his behavior and therefore make him helpful.⁴

In devising a way to study the self of the helper, Combs and his associates settled upon four major areas for observation and worked from the basic assumption that helpers can be distinguished from non-helpers in terms of these four areas of perception: (1) general frame of reference, (2) way of seeing others and their behavior, (3) ways of seeing themselves, and (4) ways of seeing the task of the helper. The result of this work was the Perceptual Characteristic Scale reproduced earlier in this chapter.

³Ibid., p. 5.

⁴Ibid., pp. 10-12.

Questions for the structured interview instrument were organized into four sections, A, B, C, D, to co-ordinate with the four groups of assumptions in the PCS. Each principal in both the effective group and the randomly selected comparison group was asked the following pre-determined questions. The interviews were tape recorded and judged by a procedure which will be described later.

- A. The effective principal is people-oriented rather than thing oriented.
 - 1. What do you feel is the outstanding quality of your school?
 - 2. What priorities are used when interviewing for additional staff?
- B. The effective principal sees people as able rather than unable.
 - 1. Describe your staff and their role.
 - 2. Describe your student body and their role.
 - 3. Describe your community and parents and their roles.
- C. The effective principal has a positive self-concept.
 - 1. Describe to me your training and background. Would you do it again in the same way?
 - 2. What is your most important contribution as a principal?
 - 3. What is your greatest shortcoming as a principal?
- D. The effective principal sees his purposes as freeing rather than controlling.
 - 1. What are your purposes concerning your staff?
 - 2. What are your purposes concerning discipline?
 - 3. What are your purposes concerning parents?
 - 4. What is the organization and climate of your staff meetings?
 - 5. What sort of evaluative procedure do you use with teachers?

Analyzing Data

In previous studies related to the one under consideration, two major difficulties confronted the researchers. One was to distinguish between helpers and non-helpers. Previous research indicated that objective means were ineffective in making such a distinction. In a pioneering situation which he likened to that of Binet, who had teachers select more intelligent and less intelligent children and then constructed tests to differentiate between them, Combs and his researchers relied on the judgment of "persons in positions to know" to identify helpers and non-helpers.⁵ In much the same way, this study recognized the weakness of objective means and relied upon teachers, surely in a position to know about principals, to identify those who were most effective.

A second difficulty encountered in the past was that of measuring the perceptions of the helpers and the non-helpers, once they had been identified as such. Here again, objective means proved inadequate; the direct manipulation or measurement of perceptions was impossible. Some form of inference based on a sample of observable behavior was necessary. And since previous studies confirmed "a lack of trustworthy relationships between self-report and self-concept," methods involving self-report

⁵Ibid., p. 16.

were ruled out.⁶ Ultimately, in previously related studies, measurements were made by individuals specifically trained in making inferences concerning perceptions in the basis of observable behavior. The same difficulty of measuring perceptions marks the current study, and the same solution to the problem was employed.

The Modified Perceptual Characteristics Scale

This study used a modified Perceptual Characteristics Scale (PCS), adapted from Combs's scale, in order to analyze the perceptions of the participating principals. This research instrument, the modified PCS, consists of eleven assumptions, falling into four groups, regarding the effective principal's perceptions of the world in general, other people, himself, and his job. The modified PCS is as follows:

- A. With respect to their general perceptual orientations, effective principals will be more likely to:
 - 1. perceive in terms of people rather than in terms of things.
- B. With respect to their perceptions of other people, effective principals will perceive others as:
 - 2. able rather than unable.
 - 3. dependable, rather than undependable.
 - 4. worthy, rather than unworthy.

⁶Ibid., p. 18.

- C. With respect to their perceptions of self, effective principals will perceive themselves as:
 - 5. identified with people rather than apart from people.
 - 6. capable rather than incapable.
 - 7. self-revealing rather than self-concealing.
 - 8. friendly rather than unfriendly.
- D. With respect to purposes, effective principals will perceive their purposes as:
 - 9. freeing rather than controlling.
 - 10. facilitating rather than non-facilitating.
 - 11. concerned with larger rather than smaller meanings.

Judging

Once the interviews had been completed, the process of judging began. Three judges, including the writer, participated in listening to and scoring the tapes and making inferences about the perceptual organization of the interviewed principals. The other two judges, also Ph.D. candidates, have been trained and have practiced as counselors, and have had training at the National Training Laboratories in Bethel, Maine. They are qualified to lead sensitivity groups and have cognates in interpersonal communications. All three judges were thoroughly aware of the purpose of the study. Extensive discussion concerning the modified PCS and the rating technique preceded the judging.

In addition, the writer used two principals not in the actual study as a pilot study, interviewing them by asking the questions listed on page 38. All three judges rated these two pilot interviews with a consistency well

above 85%. Having thus established this high degree of consistency, each judge scored twelve of the thirty-six interviews in the study. When this scoring was completed, two interviews scored by the writer were scored by the other two judges as a further check on consistency. Consistency on these scorings was 95%.

In scoring the taped interviews a rating scale from one to seven was used, one being highly positive and seven highly negative. Scores were noted on a rating sheet (Appendix D) organized in terms of the modified PCS. Each response to an interview question was scored in terms of what it indicated about the speaker's perceptions. For example, if a principal's statement indicated that he allowed his staff great freedom in developing curriculum and methods and was pleased with their innovations, the score concerning "perceptions of others as able rather than unable" might be 1 or 2, positive. However, if he suggested that he did most of the planning himself to be sure it was done properly, the score might be 6 or 7, negative.

When all the tapes had been judged, the total scores and other pertinent information were recorded in chart form to provide an overview of the study (see Tables 26 and 27 in Appendix E). The lower the score, the more positive the correlation between the individual's perceptions and the assumptions of the modified PCS concerning effective principals.

The Hypotheses

The data, the scores based on the interviews, which were collected by the procedure already described, were used to test the following four hypotheses.

1. There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of principals identified by teachers as effective and the perceptual characteristics of principals not identified by teachers as effective.
2. There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective urban elementary and secondary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective suburban elementary and secondary principals.
3. There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective male elementary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective female elementary principals.
4. There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective urban and suburban elementary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective urban and suburban secondary principals.

Each of the hypotheses is examined in twelve ways, in terms of each of the eleven assumptions, the modified Perceptual Characteristics Scale, and in terms of a total score based on all eleven assumptions. The data were statistically analyzed by means of a one-way analysis of variance. The hypotheses will be rejected at the .05 level of significance or better.

In addition, the interview data were used to test the one variable, the educational level of the thirty-six participants, to determine whether or not there exists

a relationship between educational level and effectiveness as a principal.

The Observation

Each "effective" principal was observed for a half-day as a second means of judging perceptions. Incidents of observable behavior, which, like the answers to the interview questions, providing insight into perceptions, were noted during the half-day spent with each principal. The guidelines for specific behaviors for which the writer looked, were, like the interview questions, predetermined, and they were also the subject of early discussion with principals not part of the study (Appendix F). In the course of the visit, as the writer noted these particular behaviors, positive and negative checks were made unobtrusively on a small card. The results of these observations will be reported in Chapter IV.

Summary

Briefly then, this study is concerned with the perceptual organization of thirty-six Michigan public school principals, eighteen of whom were identified by teacher education association leaders as effective, eighteen selected at random from those not identified as effective. They included men and women in urban and suburban, elementary and secondary schools. The particular background for the study was the work of Arthur Combs and his

colleagues, who have advanced the idea that the value of a helping relationship is determined largely by the perceptual organization of the helper. A good helper, according to their studies, is an individual who has positive, confident attitudes about himself and others and is able to convey this attitude to the people with whom he works. With Combs's work as a basis, the study assumes that effective principals will share the perceptions--of themselves, other people, their jobs, and the world in general--of other "effective helpers" (nurses, teachers, clergymen, counselors) studied by Combs. A modification of Combs's Perceptual Characteristics Scale served as the instrument for measuring perceptions. The trained judges, using this scale, evaluated tape-recorded interviews with the participating principals and thus determined their perceptions. Such evaluation is subjective, but precedents (the development of I.Q. tests, for example) for such subjective studies exist, as does the awareness that many crucial matters cannot be evaluated objectively.

The data compiled from this judging were statistically tested by means of a one way analysis of variance. Chapter IV will report on the analysis of data compiled in this study.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

The purposes of this chapter are to report the findings of this study and to make comments about the findings.

The data presented contain a report of the findings reached in accordance with the methods developed by Arthur Combs for measuring perceptions by inferential means; the data were compiled from taped interviews of the effective principals as identified by teachers and a random group of principals not identified as effective by teachers.

An analysis of the data was accomplished by statistically testing four research hypotheses concerning perceptual characteristics of respondents.

Before the results are reported, a brief review of terminology related to the data is presented to help the reader interpret the findings.

Terminology

Effective principals are those identified by education association leaders two or more times as the most effective in their school systems.

Principals in the random group were selected from those principals not identified as effective by any of the teachers. This is not to say that they are poor or ineffective, but rather that they were not identified as the most effective and thus were used as a comparative group.

In scoring the responses of the participating principals, a rating scale of one to seven was used, with one being the best score, indicating the greatest similarity to the defined perceptions. Thus the lower the score, the more helpful the principals' perceptions.

Analysis of the Data

The following tables present the results of the statistical analysis. The results concerning each perceptual characteristic are presented in tabular form and are listed under the particular hypothesis to which the characteristic applies.

Hypothesis 1

There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of principals identified by teachers as effective and the perceptual characteristics of principals not identified by teachers as effective (Tables 1-5).

The scores of each principal obtained from the rating scale were subjected to a one way analysis of variance to determine if a difference exists between the perceptual characteristics of principals identified as effective and those not identified. Their perceptions are different at

TABLE 1.--With respect to their general perceptual orientations, good principals will be more likely to . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
1. be sensitive and concerned about others than insensitive and unconcerned.				
Effective	18	2.11	51.56	.01
Random	18	4.06		
2. perceive in terms of people than in terms of things.				
Effective	18	2.33	41.83	.01
Random	18	4.50		

TABLE 2.--With respect to their perceptions of other people, good principals will perceive others as . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
3. able rather than unable.				
Effective	18	2.61	72.00	.01
Random	18	4.61		
4. dependable rather than undependable.				
Effective	18	2.83	40.98	.01
Random	18	4.44		
5. worthy rather than unworthy.				
Effective	18	2.72	42.25	.01
Random	18	4.61		

TABLE 3.--With respect to their perceptions of self, good principals will . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
6. perceive themselves as friendly rather than unfriendly.				
Effective	18	2.50	27.01	.01
Random	18	4.44		
7. perceive themselves as identified with people rather than apart from people.				
Effective	18	2.56	42.25	.01
Random	18	4.44		
8. be confident and see themselves as capable rather than unable to cope with problems.				
Effective	18	2.67	29.46	.01
Random	18	4.56		
9. perceive themselves as self-revealing rather than self-concealing.				
Effective	18	3.39	8.45	.01
Random	18	4.61		

TABLE 4.--With respect to purposes, good principals will perceive their purposes as . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
10. freeing rather than controlling.				
Effective	18	3.39	15.52	.01
Random	18	5.11		
11. facilitating rather than non-facilitating.				
Effective	18	2.50	50.20	.01
Random	18	4.78		

TABLE 5.--Mean scores for total characteristics 1-11.

	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
Effective	18	29.67	62.65	.01
Random	18	50.17		

the .01 level of significance for each characteristic and for the total score. Effective principals are more concerned with people (students, staff, parents) and their needs than with things (building, books, supplies, for example). They seem to view others as worthy, dependable people to whom they feel friendly and with whom they identify. They are self-confident and able to talk openly about their successes and failures. They see their purposes as helping, freeing, facilitating, rather than controlling and managing. By contrast, the random, comparison sample of principals, those not identified as effective, scored noticeably higher (less like Combs's "effective helper") than the effective group. Hypothesis 1 is rejected.

Hypothesis 2

There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective urban elementary and secondary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective suburban elementary and secondary principals (Tables 6-10).

The data indicate no significant difference in the perceptual characteristics of effective urban and suburban principals. Effective principals in cities and suburbs seem to share the perceptions mentioned in regard to effective principals in the discussion of Hypothesis 1. Only one significant difference between effective urban and suburban principals emerged, and that concerned perception of purposes as freeing rather than

TABLE 6.--With respect to their general perceptual orientations, good principals will be more likely to . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
12. be sensitive and concerned about others than insensitive and unconcerned.				
Urban	9	2.33	1.49	NS
Suburban	9	1.89		
13. perceive in terms of people than in terms of things.				
Urban	9	2.56	0.35	NS
Suburban	9	2.11		

TABLE 7.--With respect to their perceptions of other people, good principals will perceive others as . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
14. able rather than unable.				
Urban	9	3.11	5.29	NS
Suburban	9	2.11		
15. dependable rather than undependable.				
Urban	9	3.22	2.72	NS
Suburban	9	2.44		
16. worthy rather than unworthy.				
Urban	9	3.22	5.06	NS
Suburban	9	2.22		

TABLE 8.--With respect to their perceptions of self, good principals will . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
17. perceive themselves as friendly rather than unfriendly.				
Urban	9	2.67	0.22	NS
Suburban	9	2.33		
18. perceive themselves as identified with people rather than apart from people.				
Urban	9	2.78	0.68	NS
Suburban	9	2.33		
19. be confident and see themselves as capable rather than unable to cope with problems.				
Urban	9	2.67	0.00	NS
Suburban	9	2.67		
20. perceive themselves as self-revealing rather than self-concealing.				
Urban	9	3.67	0.47	NS
Suburban	9	3.11		

TABLE 9.--With respect to purposes, good principals will perceive their purposes as . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
21. freeing rather than controlling.				
Urban	9	4.22	5.63	.05
Suburban	9	2.56		
22. facilitating rather than non-facilitating.				
Urban	9	3.00	3.25	NS
Suburban	9	2.00		

TABLE 10.--Mean scores for total characteristics 12-22.

	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
Urban	9	33.56	2.03	NS
Suburban	9	25.78		

controlling (Table 9, Char. 21). Urban principals seemed much more concerned than their suburban counterparts with discipline, controls, a degree of authority, and "keeping things in hand." Doubtless this particular attitude reflects society in general and conditions in many urban schools in particular during these years of change and upheaval. What in many urban areas amounted to a complete about face, a shift from accepting school authority as absolute to rejecting school authority completely, may well make the most confident and humane administrator conscious of a need to control. The concerns and actions regarding control of these effective urban principals were real and probably needed. Despite this one factor, however, they were judged to be authentic, warm individuals, genuinely concerned about helping people. Hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Hypothesis 3

There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective male elementary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective female elementary principals (Tables 11-15).

There was no statistically significant difference for any characteristic or for the total score. The perceptual characteristics of effective male and female elementary principals seem similar. The widely held beliefs that as administrators men are "stronger" and

TABLE 11.--With respect to their general perceptual orientations, good principals will be more likely to . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
23. be sensitive and concerned about others than insensitive and unconcerned.				
Male	6	2.00	2.54	NS
Female	6	2.33		
24. perceive in terms of people than in terms of things.				
Male	6	2.67	0.69	NS
Female	6	2.17		

TABLE 12.--With respect to their perceptions of other people, good principals will perceive others as . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
25. able rather than unable.				
Male	6	2.67	0.12	NS
Female	6	2.50		
26. dependable rather than undependable.				
Male	6	3.00	0.17	NS
Female	6	2.83		
27. worthy rather than unworthy.				
Male	6	2.67	0.15	NS
Female	6	2.83		

TABLE 13.--With respect to their perceptions of self, good principals will . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
28. perceive themselves as friendly rather than unfriendly.				
Male	6	2.33	0.33	NS
Female	6	2.67		
29. perceive themselves as identified with people rather than apart from people.				
Male	6	2.67	0.29	NS
Female	6	2.50		
30. be confident and see themselves as capable rather than unable to cope with problems.				
Male	6	2.50	0.45	NS
Female	6	2.83		
31. perceive themselves as self-revealing rather than self-concealing.				
Male	6	3.33	0.45	NS
Female	6	3.83		

TABLE 14.--With respect to purposes, good principals will perceive their purposes as . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
32. freeing rather than controlling.				
Male	6	3.33	0.69	NS
Female	6	3.83		
33. facilitating rather than non-facilitating.				
Male	6	2.83	0.62	NS
Female	6	2.50		

TABLE 15.--Mean scores for total characteristics 23-33.

	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
Male	6	30.00	0.08	NS
Female	6	30.83		

have more control and women are more understanding and concerned with people are not borne out by this study. On the contrary, sex seems to make no real difference in the perceptual characteristics of effective elementary principals. Hypothesis 3 is accepted.

Hypothesis 4

There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective urban and suburban elementary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective urban and suburban secondary principals (Tables 16-20).

There was no statistically significant difference for any characteristic or for the total score. Because of the nature of their jobs, elementary and secondary principals have somewhat different training and daily tasks. Perceptual characteristics, however, rather than training or method, appear to be the determining factor in success at either level. The data revealed no significant difference between the perceptions of effective elementary and effective secondary principals. Hypothesis 4 is accepted.

Education as a Variable

One variable which may have statistical significance is that of the educational level of the participating principals. For purposes of scoring educational level, the following coding was used: Master's degree to Master's degree plus 15 credits = 1; Master's degree

TABLE 16.--With respect to their general perceptual orientations, good principals will be more likely to . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
34. be sensitive and concerned about others than insensitive and unconcerned.				
Elementary	12	2.17	.232	NS
Secondary	6	2.00		
35. perceive in terms of people than in terms of things.				
Elementary	12	2.42	.168	NS
Secondary	6	2.17		

TABLE 17.--With respect to their perceptions of other people, good principals will perceive others as . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
36. able rather than unable.				
Elementary	12	2.58	.027	NS
Secondary	6	2.66		
37. dependable rather than undependable.				
Elementary	12	2.92	.246	NS
Secondary	6	2.66		
38. worthy rather than unworthy.				
Elementary	12	2.75	.028	NS
Secondary	6	2.67		

TABLE 18.--With respect to their perceptions of self, good principals will . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
39. perceive themselves as friendly rather than unfriendly.				
Elementary	12	2.50	.000	NS
Secondary	6	2.50		
40. perceive themselves as identified with people rather than apart from people.				
Elementary	12	2.58	.036	NS
Secondary	6	2.50		
41. be confident and see themselves as capable rather than unable to cope with problems.				
Elementary	12	2.67	.000	NS
Secondary	6	2.67		
42. perceive themselves as self-revealing rather than self-concealing.				
Elementary	12	3.58	.704	NS
Secondary	6	3.00		

TABLE 19.--With respect to purposes, good principals will perceive their purposes as . . .

Characteristic	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
43. freeing rather than controlling.				
Elementary	12	3.58	.589	NS
Secondary	6	3.00		
44. Facilitating rather than non-facilitating.				
Elementary	12	2.67	.744	NS
Secondary	6	2.17		

TABLE 20.--Mean scores for total characteristics 34-44.

	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
Elementary	12	30.42	.217	NS
Secondary	6	28.17		

plus 16 to Master's degree plus 30 = 2; Master's degree plus 31 to Master's degree plus 60 = 3; Specialist or Ph.D. = 4. In this analysis 4 represents the highest educational level, 3 the next highest, 2 next to lowest and 1 the lowest. The following tables present statistics concerning this variable.

TABLE 21.--Comparing the educational level of the principals identified as effective with the random group.

	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
Effective	18	2.50	5.60	.05
Random	18	1.89		

The educational level or training of the effective principals is higher than that of the random group; this fact suggests that exposure to more education--in the form of readings, interaction with colleagues and professors, research, and exposure to many points of view--may contribute to the individual's perceptual organization. Greater education may be a factor in increased sensitivity to people and their problems. Such a conclusion would be in keeping with the basic precept of perceptual psychology which stresses the potential for growth and development along such lines.

TABLE 22.--Comparing the educational level of the effective principals in urban and suburban schools.

	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
Urban	9	2.11	5.44	.05
Suburban	9	2.89		

The data indicate that the educational level of principals in suburbs is higher than in urban areas. This may suggest that suburbs have a freer hand in hiring and, because of size, are less prone to large, insensitive bureaucracies. In addition, many urban principals seem to have "worked their way up" through the system, which perhaps rewards longevity rather than education. This seems particularly true at the secondary level.

TABLE 23.--Comparing the educational level of effective male elementary principals with that of effective female elementary principals.

	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
Male	6	2.33	0.00	NS
Female	6	2.33		

The data indicate no significant difference in the educational level of effective male and female elementary

principals. This may suggest that effective male and female elementary principals pursue higher educational levels and that both sexes seek self-improvement and more knowledge and tend to seek similar educational goals.

TABLE 24.--Comparing the educational level of effective principals at the elementary and secondary level.

	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig. Level
Elementary	12	2.33	1.03	.325
Secondary	6	2.83		

The data indicate no significant difference in the educational level of effective elementary and secondary principals. This may suggest that the myth that effective secondary principals are more trained and professional than effective elementary principals is not true.

In the light of all these findings, however, it is important to remember that while the educational level of the effective principals is generally higher than that of those not identified as effective, education is not a guarantee of effectiveness as a principal. One can be highly educated but lack the perceptions of a good helper.

The foregoing tables presented the data gathered from interviews with the participating principals. A second method for gathering information, which was

described in Chapter III, was observation of the effective principals. Although the findings based on observation were not tested statistically, they are nonetheless worth reporting in that they provide additional insight to the conclusions based on interview data. The following table presents the numbers of positive and negative incidents which were noted during each observation of the eighteen effective principals. The observations were made and data analyzed in terms of four perceptual areas: (1) general perceptual organization, (2) perceptions of others, (3) perceptions of self, and (4) perceptions of purposes.

Brief descriptions of incidents noted during observations of effective principals may be helpful. For example, in reference to item 5, Table 25, under "Perceptions of Self" which deals with the principal's relationship to teachers, one positive incident occurred in a school where the principal invited the writer to have coffee in the faculty lounge. Several teachers were already in the lounge; friendly, informal greetings were exchanged; some of the teachers joined in conversation with the principal and writer; others continued their original conversation without embarrassment. The atmosphere was relaxed, free of tension. None of the teachers left the room.

In some schools, hallways and classrooms were lined with bulletin boards displaying student work. Many schools were marked with signs directing visitors to various parts

TABLE 25.--Perceptual areas of behavioral incidents.

Positive	Negative	Item	Behavioral Incidents
General Perceptual Organization			
21	3	1.	interest in seeing and availability to students
17	2	2.	interest in seeing and availability to staff
12	1	3.	interest in seeing and availability to parents
24	5	4.	availability of equipment, both hardware and software, for children's use and learning
14	2	5.	principal identifies with teachers, students, and parents, and sees concerns and problems from their points of view as well as his own
<u>10</u>	<u>4</u>	6.	principal listens according to the other person's point of view, not just his own
98	15		
Perceptions of Others			
9	2	1.	teachers heading committees as opposed to principal
7	4	2.	teachers share responsibility for new and innovative programs; choose books, methods, materials; present new programs to board of education and parents
6	2	3.	teachers are involved in most decisions--class scheduling, hiring, course offerings, attendance procedures, etc.
7	2	4.	teachers can handle the great majority of student and parent conflicts themselves
<u>23</u>	<u>6</u>	5.	principal delegates authority without fear or anxiety
52	16		
Perceptions of Self			
56	7	1.	generally friendly and identifies with people
5	1	2.	generally confident and secure rather than feeling inadequate
4	1	3.	objective, open-minded, is his own man
--	--	4.	honest
41	3	5.	relates to teachers in a friendly and relaxed manner
<u>31</u>	<u>7</u>	6.	teachers feel comfortable with the principal
137	19		
Perceptions of Purpose			
7	2	1.	principal is frank and open, gives staff, students, and parents explanations for situations; he is not closed, evasive, or concealing
29	3	2.	parent questions and involvement are encouraged; open school policy for daytime visitors and evening programs to display work encourage suggestions
11	15	3.	library practices essentially freeing and facilitating rather than coercing and controlling
10	12	4.	cafeteria practices freeing and facilitating rather than coercing and controlling
18	7	5.	campus or playground practices freeing and facilitating rather than coercing and controlling
6	4	6.	evaluation practices are of help and use to the teacher and actively involve the teachers toward growth and independence
18	0	7.	vehicles exist for student participation in decision-making
<u>18</u>	<u>6</u>	8.	appreciation for the democratic process
117	49		

of the building. Once or twice the writer noted parents observing classes. Situations like these suggest that the principal encourages parent interest and involvement rather than feeling threatened by it, and they were noted as positive incidents for item 2, Table 25, "Perceptions of Purposes."

Regarding library practices (item 3, Table 25, "Perceptions of Purposes"), the writer made positive notations in situations where children appeared to use the library freely. They were able to get assistance from the librarians when they needed it; they could go to the library before and after regular school hours and were not dependent on a set class library period for using the library; they were free to take out several books at a time unless they had been irresponsible in the past about using library materials; they were expected to be quiet but not absolutely silent in the library. Negative notations were occasioned by librarians who seemed more concerned with counting, mending, and shelving books than with helping children use them, and by procedures for going to the library and checking out books which were so restrictive as to discourage use of the library. It is interesting to note that in all the observations, there were just two areas in which negative incidents occurred more frequently than did positive incidents. These areas have to do with library practices

and cafeteria practices, suggesting that these are particularly thorny administrative problems.

The observations serve to reinforce the basic conclusions about the perceptions of effective principals arrived at through interviews.

Summary

Within the limitations of this study, described in Chapter I and based on the data in this chapter, the following results are presented for summary.

Hypothesis 1

There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of principals identified by teachers as effective and the perceptual characteristics of principals not identified by teachers as effective.

Hypothesis 1 was rejected.

Hypothesis 2

There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective urban elementary and secondary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective suburban elementary and secondary principals.

Hypothesis 2 was accepted.

Hypothesis 3

There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective male elementary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective female elementary principals.

Hypothesis 3 was accepted.

Hypothesis 4

There is no difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective urban and sub-urban elementary principals and the perceptual characteristics of effective urban and suburban secondary principals.

Hypothesis 4 was accepted.

The variable of educational level indicates a difference between principals identified as effective and those not identified as effective. Effective principals have a higher educational level.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter summarizes the study, presents conclusions and implications of the study, and suggests possible areas for future research.

Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptual characteristics of effective elementary and secondary principals, as identified by teachers, in selected Michigan school districts. The secondary purpose was to contrast and compare the perceptual characteristics of effective principals with those of principals not identified as effective. Chapter I provided an introduction to the study.

A review of the related literature and research was presented in Chapter II. The immediate basis for the study was the work of Arthur Combs and his associates at the University of Florida. Combs has conducted research concerning what he calls the "helping professions," establishing that effective helpers share certain positive, confident perceptions about themselves, other people, their jobs, and the world in general, and that these perceptions,

rather than a specific method or training, are the key to creating a helpful situation. His studies have dealt with teachers, counselors, nurses, and clergymen, but not school administrators. Combs's studies, in turn, can be traced to the development of what is known as perceptual psychology, the notion that behavior is the result of the behavior's perceptions--of himself, of his situation, and of other people--at the time. This view of human behavior, which is highly individualized and is concerned with something more than simply stimulus and response, has been termed humanistic. It assumes not only that behavior grows out of one's deepest beliefs, but that any behavior which is not based on beliefs is not genuine or authentic and will be seen by others as insincere. Thus, for example, the "helper" who does not genuinely believe that other people are generally capable, dependable individuals will be unable to convince them that he believes they can do well. His behavior grows out of his perceptions, which can be sensed by those with whom he deals. And their behavior is influenced in part by their perceptions of him. Existing studies which serve as a precedent for viewing principals as members of a helping profession are also noted.

Chapter III presents the design and procedure of the study. Thirty-six Michigan public school principals, eighteen of whom were identified by teachers as effective

and eighteen selected at random from those not identified as effective, were interviewed by the writer. They included men and women in urban and suburban, elementary and secondary situations. The interviews, which were carefully structured to elicit responses which would reveal perceptions, were taped and then evaluated by three trained judges. A modification of Arthur Combs's Perceptual Characteristics Scale served as the instrument for measuring perceptions. This scale designates eleven perceptions typical of the individual who is effective in a helping relationship. The object of the analysis of data was to see whether or not the perceptions of principals identified as effective differed from those of principals not identified as effective, and whether the effective principals as a group shared a common set of perceptions. The data were statistically tested by means of a one-way analysis of variance.

Analysis of the data was reported in Chapter IV. It revealed that there is indeed a difference between the perceptions of principals identified as effective and those not identified as effective. These perceptions of the effective group differed from those of the comparison group at the .01 level of significance; Hypothesis 1, that there is no difference between the perceptions of principals identified as effective and those not identified as effective, was rejected. Analysis of the data also revealed

that effective principals share a common set of perceptions about the world, other people, themselves, and their jobs. Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4, that state there is no difference in the perception of effective principals, urban or suburban, male or female, elementary or secondary, were accepted. One variable was tested, the educational level of the participating principals. Analysis revealed that the effective principals had a higher level of education, suggesting that education may play a role in developing the kinds of perceptions common to an effective helper.

Conclusions

This study had two purposes, to investigate the perceptual characteristics of effective principals and to contrast and compare the perceptual characteristics of effective principals with those not identified as effective.

Analysis of the data by a one way analysis of variance appears to support the first five of the following conclusions.

1. There is a significant difference between the perceptual characteristics of principals identified by teachers as effective and the perceptual characteristics of principals not identified as effective. These characteristics included perceptions of the world in general, other people, oneself, and the purposes of one's job. Principals identified as effective were discovered to be

more sensitive and concerned about others, and more likely to perceive in terms of people than in terms of things, than those not identified as effective. Their perceptions of other people as capable, dependable, and worthy, and of themselves as identified with people, friendly, self-revealing, and confident were stronger than those of the principals not identified as effective. They shared a definite sense of their purposes as freeing and facilitating rather than controlling.

2. There is no significant difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective urban elementary and secondary principals and those of effective suburban elementary and secondary principals. Of the eleven perceptual characteristics considered, differences appeared in only one area, a perception of purposes as freeing rather than controlling. Urban principals appeared more concerned about maintaining control than did their suburban counterparts. This difference seems to reflect the difficult conditions which are present in many of today's urban schools.

3. There is no significant difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective male elementary principals and those of effective female elementary principals.

4. There is no significant difference between the perceptual characteristics of effective elementary principals and those of effective secondary principals.

5. The data concerning the one variable tested, the educational level of the participating principals, revealed that the effective principals had a higher level of education than the random group. While this is not to be taken as proof that a highly educated person is automatically a good helper, it does suggest that education may contribute to the development of the perceptions which effective helpers share.

6. The foregoing conclusions are based upon the analysis of data gathered by interviewing the thirty-six principals who participated in the study. A second method of gathering information, described in Chapter III and reported in Chapter IV involved observing and noting specific behaviors of the effective principals. This descriptive data was analyzed and reported as positive or negative behavioral incidents. Like the interview data, these observations supported the conclusion that effective principals share similar perceptions. The design of the study did not include observing the comparison group of principals, but such observation could be useful and perhaps presents a possibility for future research.

Several additional conclusions, though not supported by statistical analysis of the data, can be drawn from the study.

7. This study suggests that teachers and counselors should recognize effective principals with the

identified perceptual characteristics and should, as a result, support them.

8. This study suggests that principals who are identified by key leaders of teachers' associations do possess the perceptual characteristics of effective helpers as defined by Arthur Combs.

9. This study suggests that effective principals as a group have the perceptual characteristics found in effective teachers, counselors, nurses, and like groups (as studied by Combs). It appears that it may be the nature of the person, rather than his method or the nature of his job, that determines effectiveness as a helper. The perceptions which make for effective helping seem to cross professional lines, and humanistic individuals are likely to be successful in a variety of helping vocations.

10. This study suggests that effective principals in a helping relationship are similar regardless of sex, type of district, or level of school; the helpful perceptions are part of the person rather than part of the job.

11. Since the educational level of the effective principals was generally higher than that of those not identified as effective, the study suggests that the effective helper is involved in a continuing process of study and personal growth, without which an individual with even the finest motives may become less effective.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study are significant and have implications for several groups of individuals, five in particular: school principals, school teachers and counselors, school personnel who are involved in hiring, college professors and administrators in preparatory programs for administrators, and researchers in the fields of administration, perceptual psychology, and the helping professions.

A basic implication which applies to all five of these groups is that people in the helping professions or in helping relationships seem to be identified by the "helpees" as effective if they possess the highly positive perceptual characteristics identified by this study.

1. School principals ought to be aware that they are more likely to be effective if, regardless of their methods, they see their purposes as primarily facilitating. Their leadership will be most successful if they regard it as an opportunity to help others, staff and students in particular, realize their full potential rather than as an opportunity to enforce their own ideas and plans and to control their schools as they see fit. Contrary to authoritarian thinking, this kind of facilitating leadership does not involve abdication of responsibility; it merely recognizes the capacity of other individuals as well as oneself to be responsible and employs this

capacity for the good of all involved. The facilitating principals still accept ultimate responsibility for their schools. Effective leaders surely have definite values and goals of their own; however, they recognize that those whom they are to lead also have worthwhile values and goals, and that not everyone reaches his potential in exactly the same way. They exert their leadership to create an environment where diversity flourishes. Practically, this may be accomplished by encouraging and providing the means for staff, student, and community participation in decision and policy making. Facilitating principals do not run their schools by making all decisions themselves.

In their dealings with others, effective principals are honest, open, and authentic. The confidence in and respect for others which are essential to the effective helping relationship cannot be pretended or superficial. Further, when areas exist in which principals for some reason must assert their authority, they must do so openly and honestly. Any attempt to manipulate staff or students, to make them believe they are making choices which are in reality the principal's will immediately be recognized as unauthentic.

If a principal is to function as a person who is an effective helper in an ongoing process (Maslow's "self-actualizing"), he should recognize the value of involving

himself in activities and experiences which deal with and create awareness of values, attitudes, and behaviors. Participation in encounter group, communications, sensitivity training, and related activities serves to increase the individual's sensitivity to the needs of others.

2. Though this study deals specifically with principals, it also has implications for teachers and counselors. Just as teachers identified effective principals who share the positive, genuine, optimistic perceptual characteristics examined in this study, so might students recognize as effective the teachers and counselors who have these attitudes. Students as well as teachers respond to leadership which assumes they are responsible, trustworthy individuals. Like principals, teachers and counselors should be aware of the characteristics which constitute the effective helping relationship and be willing to involve themselves in the kinds of experiences which serve to create and develop these characteristics.

3. The implications of this study for school personnel involved in hiring are particularly significant. Since it has been established that perceptual organization is the key to success in leadership, those who must hire administrators should be aware of the characteristics which contribute to effective leadership and the means by which these characteristics may be recognized. They might well look at the beliefs, values, and behaviors of

individuals being considered for administrative posts as well as at transcripts and credentials. Interacting with candidates for administrative jobs and observing their behavior in "real" situations of confrontation and interpersonal relationships would surely be helpful in determining whether or not the candidate is likely to be an effective principal. And the same practices might be employed by principals, department heads, and anyone else who shares responsibility for hiring individuals who need to be effective helpers.

4. Since research indicates that perceptions as well as methods are keys to success in administration, the implications for colleges of education are clear. Training for administration must be affective as well as cognitive. Emphasis must be placed on the two areas, with the understanding that both are essential to success as an educational leader. Methods need to be developed to measure both affective and cognitive growth and to indicate where administrative candidates need new experiences and growth. Once the candidates needs have been determined, they should have individualized programs to provide the training they need. Affective training, in particular--experiences in encounter groups, communications, decision making, sensitivity training, interpersonal relationships, and curriculum change or process--should be developed and enlarged. Belief that human beings are

capable of growth and change is fundamental to humanistic and perceptual psychology. Surely this belief ought to be manifest in the kinds of training made available in colleges of education.

5. Researchers in education and psychology should continue to pursue the reality of the good or effective helper. Continued effort needs to be placed on developing ways to measure the individual's effectiveness as a helper. As has already been noted, such measurement methods could be very useful to those who must train or hire administrators. In addition, research into methods of training or developing effective leaders and helpers is of utmost importance. If we are indeed on the right track in determining the kind of person who is effective in helping relationships, finding ways to develop this kind of person is the logical and necessary next step.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

As a doctoral candidate in Elementary Education at Michigan State University, I am in the process of conducting research for my dissertation, an Investigation of the Perceptual Characteristics of Effective Elementary and Secondary Principals in Selected Michigan School Districts.

You have been chosen to participate in identifying effective principals because you are one of the key leaders of the teachers association and are in a position to receive "feedback" concerning your school system through your many meetings and personal relationships with administrators, students, parents, and, above, teachers.

One way to improve administration is to study the perceptions and behavior of exceptional or effective principals. The results of this study could have an influence on the direction of our profession in terms of training and practice for administrators.

I am requesting that you identify the "best," exceptional, most effective principals in your school district. In naming your choices, please do not identify yourself. All responses will be kept anonymous.

Your quick response to this request is urged in order that some significant and helpful results can be obtained. Please record your answers on the form provided and return them, unsigned, in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope.

I will be most grateful for your participation and will personally share any results with you. If you have any questions regarding this request, please feel free to call me at 355-9836.

Sincerely,

Richard Peterjohn
Doctoral Candidate in
Elementary Education

Below, please name _____ secondary principal(s),
_____ male elementary principal(s), and _____ female ele-
mentary principal(s).

Secondary

Male Elementary

Female Elementary

APPENDIX B

April 23, 1971

Dear

As a doctoral candidate in Elementary Education at Michigan State University, I am in the process of conducting research for my dissertation. I am concerned with the characteristics of effective principals. You have been selected as an effective principal, and I would like to visit you and your school to observe and to interview you. I will disrupt your day as little as possible and there will be no paper work for you to do.

The results of this study could have influence on the direction of our profession in terms of training and practice for administrators. Your participation will be most helpful.

A few days after you receive this letter I will call you to set up a date convenient to you for my visit.

Sincerely,

Richard Peterjohn
Doctoral Candidate for
Elementary Education

APPENDIX C

April 30, 1971

Dear

As a doctoral candidate in Elementary Education at Michigan State University, I am in the process of conducting research for my dissertation. I am concerned with the characteristics of effective principals. In connection with this work, I would like to visit you and your school to interview you. I will disrupt your day as little as possible and there will be no paper work for you to do.

The results of this study could have influence on the direction of our profession in terms of training and practice for administrators. Your participation will be most helpful.

A few days after you receive this letter I will call you to set up a date convenient to you for my visit.

Sincerely,

Richard Peterjohn
Doctoral Candidate for
Elementary Education

APPENDIX D
RATING SHEET

Number _____

	Extremely	Very		Neutral		Very	Extremely	
A. General Perceptual Orientations:								
Sensitive and Concerned	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unconcerned
People	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Things
B. Perceptions of Others:								
Able	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unable
Dependable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Undependable
Worthy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unworthy
C. Perceptions of Self:								
Friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unfriendly
Identified with people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Apart from people
Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wanting
Self-revealing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Self-concealing
D. Perceptions of Purposes:								
Freeing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Controlling
Facilitating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Non-facilitating

APPENDIX E

TABLE 26.--Effective principals.

Principal	Age	Sex	Level	District	Education	*	PCS
1	30	M	E	S	MA 60	3	20
2	43	F	E	S	Ph.D.	4	43
3	42	F	E	S	MA 30	2	29
4	48	M	S	S	MA 24	2	20
5	30	M	S	S	Ph.D.	4	27
6	38	M	S	S	MA 35	3	18
7	47	M	S	U	MA	1	52
8	65	M	E	S	MA 24	2	27
9	45	M	E	S	MA 60	3	28
10	47	M	S	U	Specialist	4	32
11	40	M	S	S	MA 60	3	20
12	58	F	E	U	MA	1	26
13	44	F	E	U	MA 30	2	32
14	51	M	E	U	MA 50	3	25
15	52	M	E	U	MA 30	2	48
16	28	M	E	U	MA 15	1	32
17	38	F	#	U	MA 30	2	26
18	44	F	E	U	MA 36	3	29

*Educational Level

1--Master's degree - Master's degree plus 15

2--Master's degree plus 16 - Master's degree plus 30

3--Master's degree plus 31 - Master's degree plus 60

4--Specialist or Ph.D.

TABLE 27.--Randomly selected group.

Principal	Age	Sex	Level	District	Education	*	PCS
1	58	M	S	U	MA	1	45
2	52	M	E	U	MA	1	54
3	39	M	E	U	MA 60	3	50
4	45	F	E	S	Specialist	4	55
5	54	M	S	U	MA	1	45
6	43	M	E	U	MA 15	1	51
7	42	M	#	U	MA	1	51
8	59	F	E	U	MA 40	3	41
9	60	F	E	S	MA 20	2	59
10	37	M	S	S	MA 30	2	42
11	61	F	E	U	MA	1	57
12	40	F	E	U	MA 20	2	44
13	45	M	S	U	MA	1	55
14	50	M	E	U	MA	1	52
15	54	F	E	U	MA 24	2	45
16	47	M	E	S	MA 36	3	56
17	43	F	E	U	MA 20	2	43
18	46	M	E	U	MA 45	3	58

*Educational Level

1--Master's degree - Master's degree plus 15

2--Master's degree plus 16 - Master's degree plus 30

3--Master's degree plus 31 - Master's degree plus 60

4--Specialist or Ph.D.

APPENDIX F

BEHAVIORS FOR OBSERVATION

A. The effective principal is people oriented as opposed to thing oriented.

1. Interest in seeing and availability to students.
2. Interest in seeing and availability to staff.
3. Interest in seeing and availability to parents.
4. Availability of equipment, both "hardware" and "software," for children's use and learning, as opposed to a need for storing and locking up such equipment, and instructions such as "hands off" and "adults only."

(hardware--all A.V. equipment, desks, wash-rooms, etc.

software--films, filmstrips, books, magazines, lab supplies, physical education equipment)

5. Principal identifies with teachers, students and parents, and sees concerns and problems from their points of view rather than just his own.
6. Principal listens to others according to their point of view, not just his own.

B. The effective principal sees people as able rather than unable.

1. Teachers heading committees as opposed to the principal.
2. New and innovative program responsibilities are shared with teachers. Teachers choose books, materials, methods, directions, and present new programs to parents and to the board of education.
3. Teachers are involved in most decisions: for example, new recess plan, class scheduling, course offerings, hiring, attendance procedures.
4. Teachers can handle the great majority of student and parent conflicts themselves, rather than the principal handling all such difficulties.
5. Principal delegates authority without fear or anxiety.

- C. The effective principal has a positive self-concept.
 - 1. Generally friendly and identifies with people.
 - 2. Generally confident and secure rather than feeling inadequate.
 - 3. Objective, open-minded, is his "own man."
 - 4. Honest and objective.
 - 5. Relates to teachers in a friendly, relaxed manner.
 - 6. Teachers feel comfortable with principal.
- D. The effective principal sees his purpose as freeing rather than controlling.
 - 1. The principal is frank and open and gives staff, students, and parents explanations for situations; he is not closed, evasive, or concealing.
 - 2. Parent questions and involvement are encouraged. Open school policy for daytime visits and evening programs to display work encourage suggestions.
 - 3. Library practices are essentially freeing and facilitating rather than controlling, coercing and manipulating.
 - 4. Cafeteria practices are essentially freeing and facilitating rather than controlling, coercing and manipulating.
 - 5. Playground and campus practices are essentially freeing and facilitating rather than controlling, coercing and manipulating.
 - 6. Evaluation practices are of help and use to the teacher and actively involve the teacher toward self-growth and independence.
 - 7. Vehicles exist for student participation in decision making.
 - 8. Principal has an appreciation for the democratic process.