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### **Does Teacher Immediacy Matter? The Relationship among Teacher Immediacy, Student Motivation, Engagement, and Cognitive Learning**

Jessica Rene Stilwell

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Does Teacher Immediacy Matter? The Relationship among Teacher Immediacy, Student  
Motivation, Engagement, and Cognitive Learning

By  
Jessica Rene Stilwell

A Dissertation Submitted to the  
Gardner-Webb University School of Education  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Gardner-Webb University  
2018

## Approval Page

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## **Abstract**

Does Teacher Immediacy Matter? The Relationship among Teacher Immediacy, Student Motivation, Engagement, and Cognitive Learning. Stilwell, Jessica Rene, 2018: Dissertation, Gardner-Webb University, Nonverbal Immediacy/Verbal Immediacy/Motivation/Cognitive Learning

According to the Academic Development Institute (Walberg, 2010), elementary and middle school students linger behind students from other economically advanced countries on achievement tests and fall further behind during the school years. With a need to improve classroom instruction and enhance cognitive learning for students, this study focuses on immediate communication behaviors of the classroom teacher, both verbal and nonverbal, and student academic motivation as factors in improving learning proficiency in both math and reading. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teacher immediacy behaviors and teacher/student rapport on student motivation, engagement, and academic growth.

The researcher utilized a nonexperimental, quantitative research design to guide this study. Teacher and student data were collected using the Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy Scale, the TRAAM (Teacher Rating of Academic Achievement Motivation), and AIMS (Atmosphere, Instruction, Management, Student Engagement) Classroom measure. Participants were encouraged to be honest in reporting information concerning teacher communication behaviors.

The data revealed that teacher immediacy behaviors, both verbal and nonverbal, were perceived differently in terms of student and teacher perceptions. The results showed that teacher self-ratings of their immediacy behaviors were significantly higher than student ratings of teacher immediacy behaviors. The results showed that teachers who display communication behaviors verbally had a positive impact on student reading proficiency while teachers with high nonverbal immediacy skills made a significant impact of academic achievement in math. The results also revealed that motivation was significant in determining competence in both reading and math.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **Statement of Problem/Background**

Nearly half of the students in Gallup's 2014 student poll report being either not engaged (28%) or actively disengaged (19%) in school (Collier, 2015). The poll of 825,000 fifth through twelfth graders shows a clear slide as children progress in school (Collier, 2015). A 2003 report by the National Research Council paints a shocking picture of schools. The report shows that by the time many students reach high school, they often lack any sense of purpose or real connection with what they are doing in the classroom (Gehring, 2003). Forty-two percent of high school students report that they do not see any value in the schoolwork they are asked to do (Parker, 2014). A poll of nearly one million U.S. students concluded that schools need to work on building supports to keep students invested in their education, especially as they advance in grade (Brenneman, 2016). The survey, conducted by Gallup, found that only half of adolescents reported they are feeling engaged in school, and one-fifth reported they are actively disengaged. About 10% of students are classified as both disengaged and discouraged. Engagement levels show an inverse relationship by consistently decreasing as students get older, reaching its lowest point in the 11th grade. Engagement drops with student age because older students feel less cared for by adults and see less value in their own work, showing links between absenteeism, engagement, and academic performance (Brenneman, 2016).

Human brains work on a use it or lose it principle. An adolescent's brain goes through extensive maturing and production of dendrites that cause the cortex to thicken before 6 or so years of pruning. It is important that our students are deeply engaged



cognitively during this period of pruning. All of these changes mean that adolescent brains are in a prolonged period of development that has an impact on their learning, decisions, and behaviors. While there are common characteristics of brain development, the rate and impact of the changes vary from one person to the next. A positive learning environment provides opportunities for adolescents to encounter and explore a wide range of ideas, perspectives, people, and places as well as opportunities to discover interests and talents, practice skills, and build competence (Farrington et al. 2012).

Disengagement may have a thinning effect on the brain cortex and might actually harm students' ability to think (Wright, 2013). The consequences of not engaging students in learning are reportedly dismal (Claxton, 2007). "Some educationists consider engaging disengaged pupils to be one of the biggest challenges facing educators, as between 25% and over 66% of students are considered to be disengaged" (Harris, 2008, p. 57).

Student engagement, described as the tendency to be behaviorally, emotionally, and cognitively involved in academic activities, is a key to motivation (Stephens, 2015). Students may show engagement in any or all of the three elements of student engagement: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement. They may also show a combination of engagement and disengagement in a variety of these three elements.

Students may be positively engaged in any combination of these at any one time or over any certain time period. Equally, we have to recognize that students might be negatively engaged in all or any of these elements; and they might be disengaged behaviorally, emotionally, and/or cognitively at various points. Authentic intellectual engagement requires a deeper reciprocity in the teaching-learning relationship where

student engagement begins as they actively construct their learning in partnership with teachers, work toward deep conceptual understanding, and contribute their own ideas to building new knowledge or devising new practices in activities that are worthy of their time and effort (Dunleavy & Milton, 2009).

While engagement brings academic success, positive engagement provides opportunities for personal and social development, not just intellectual or academic development (Billingham, 2014). Compared to less involved peers, engaged students demonstrate more effort, experience more positive emotions, and pay more attention in the classroom (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Student engagement also refers to a student's willingness, need, and desire to participate and be successful in the learning process supporting higher level thinking for understanding (Saeed & Zyngier, 2012).

Disengaged students may do their work, but without interest and commitment; while engaged students work hard and attempt to master their learning achievement at the highest level they are capable of obtaining (Saeed & Zyngier, 2012). Student engagement is generally considered to be among the better predictors of learning and personal development. The more students think about school and the more they practice and study, the more they tend to learn. The very act of being engaged also adds to the foundation of skills and dispositions that are essential to living a productive and satisfying life. Engagement not only drives learning but also predicts school success. Student engagement is increasingly viewed as one of the keys to addressing problems such as low achievement, boredom and isolation, and high dropout rates. The conditions that lead to student engagement and reduce student apathy contribute to a safe, positive, and creative school climate and culture (Martin & Torres, 2016).

A report by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute said that disengagement is a sign of trouble, and not just because student engagement is closely linked to academic achievement (Northern & Petrilli, 2017). There are varying levels of engagement. Just because a student is sitting up and nodding their head does not mean they are truly engaged in authentic learning. Authentic engagement means students do more than just answer a question during a session of “sit and get.” It means they have dialogue and ask questions at the same time they are engaging in giving an answer. It means students are talking as much as teachers are (Dewitt, 2016). Schlechty (2001) defined the compliant classroom as the picture of traditional education. This type of classroom is orderly, and most students will appear to be working so it would be easy to infer that learning is taking place; however, while there is little evidence of rebellion, retreatism is a very real danger as it is very common in the compliant classroom.

Humans are hardwired for connection with each other. When challenges in life situations happen, people often seek out others from which to learn. Six of 10 students in America enter kindergarten unprepared. They enter school without background knowledge, experience, and enrichment and enter school traumatized, abused, starved, homeless, or neglected. One in four children in American schools have experienced a traumatic event, and the number is even greater for those living in impoverished communities. Before a child can learn academically, a child's emotional wounds need to be recognized. The positive student-teacher relationship can help children with adverse experience have a chance to succeed (Kane, 2016).

The need to connect with their teachers may represent a fundamental motivator for student learning. When students feel like they can relate to their teacher and feel

connected with their teacher, they tend to recognize the values and practices of the teacher and experience a sense of belonging (Niemic & Ryan, 2009). The inability of teachers to emotionally connect with students stifles the possibility of influencing unmotivated minds to learn (Whitaker, 2004). “A fundamental question for a student is, ‘Does my teacher like me?’ Given a rigorous, aligned curriculum, the answer to that simple question is our best predictor of student achievement” (Terry, 2008, p. 1). A student wants to feel connected to people and to feel as though he or she deserves to be cared for and respected (Stipek, 2002). According to Stipek (2002), many of the children who are not doing well academically are the same ones who have a poor relationship with their teachers; therefore, in order to facilitate learning, a classroom atmosphere in which the students do not feel intimidated or threatened is needed (Boyle, 2000).

When kids are exposed to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) like abuse, neglect, or household dysfunction earlier in life, there is a larger risk for negative impacts on learning, health, and well-being in later years; that is because of both emotional and social pains as well as physical pain are neurological. ACEs have more than an emotional impact on children; they change the brain, affecting memory, cognition, and learning capacity. Students who have strong connections in school perform better because relationships are central to learning and development; that is why forming strong connections with students and teachers is crucial (Abud, 2017).

Kindergarten children with better relationships and less conflict with teachers develop better social skills as they approach the middle school years than kindergarten children with more conflicting relationships (Berry & O'Connor, 2010). Supportive teacher-student relationships are just as important to middle and high school students as

they are to elementary students. Positive relationships encourage student motivation and engagement in learning. Older students need to feel that their teachers respect their opinions and interests just as much as younger students do (Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2017). Persistent teacher-student conflict throughout the elementary years increases the likelihood that children will exhibit negative externalizing behaviors (Dearing, O’Conner, & Collins, 2011).

Teven and McCroskey (1997) found that students who believe their teacher is caring also believe they learn more. Further, positive relationships with teachers predict enhanced social, cognitive, and language development in younger children (Kontos & Wilcox-Herzog, 1997). Positive student-teacher relationships help to establish a learning environment in which educators and students display mutual respect for one another, rather than exchanges that involve conflict (International Survey Associates, 2016). Developing positive relationships between a teacher and student is the essential aspect of quality teaching and student learning. These relationships promote a sense of school belonging and encourage students to participate cooperatively. Students develop the confidence to work hard to succeed in an environment where they are not restricted by the fear of failure. Teachers are able to support students with motivation and goal setting, and students can turn to them for instruction and guidance (The Scots College, 2017). The rapport between teacher and student is associated with emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement in the class (Stephens, 2015).

According to the Academic Development Institute (Walberg, 2010), elementary and middle school students linger behind students from other economically advanced countries on achievement tests and fall further behind during the school years (Walberg,

2010). Despite the rising school costs, fewer students graduated on time from high school in 2009 than in 1970 (Walberg, 2010). The 2008 Education Next national survey report showed that the percentage of the public that gave schools a grade of A or B declined from 30% in 2005 to just 18% in 2008. In 2016, the survey only reported a slight increase to 25% of the public giving schools a grade of A or B. American research universities rank second to none in the world, but many colleges and universities must provide remedial programs for ill-prepared high school graduates (Walberg, 2010). These problems are even more important now when high levels of knowledge and skills partially determine national prosperity and quality of life. It is no longer news that large Asian countries have improved their schools considerably. Attributable to rapid advances in manufacturing and services, national incomes in China and India have been growing at as much as three times the rate of those in Europe and the United States. In the field of education, American schools scored poorly on achievement tests despite high costs per student, which are in the upper three of the 25 advanced countries participating in international achievement surveys (Walberg, 2010).

One of the biggest cross-national tests is called the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which every 3 years measures reading ability, math, science literacy, and other key skills among 15-year-olds in dozens of developed and developing countries. The PISA results from 2015 placed the U.S. an unimpressive 38th of 71 countries in math and 24th in science. Among the 35 members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which sponsors the PISA initiative, the U.S. ranked 30th in math and 19th in science (Desilver, 2017).

As shown in Table 1, the school represented has performed below the state and

county in percent proficient in all but 1 of the past 4 years. In 2013-2014, the represented school performed above the state and county in mathematics. Over the past 4 years, there has been inconsistent progress in proficiency in reading or mathematics. While progress was made in 2013-2014, proficiency declined in 2014-2015, increased again in 2015-2016, and decreased in 2016-2017.

Table 1

*EOG Comparison*

	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Subject/ Grade Level	Proficiency School/ County/ State	Proficiency School/ County/ State	Proficiency School/ County/ State	Proficiency School/ County/ State	Proficiency School/ County/ State
Math	45.2	67	61	60	62
3	58.4/ 59.9/ 46.8	67.8/ 67.8/ 60.9	64.79/ 70.7/ 61.7	68.0/ 73.6/ 64.6	65.9/ 71.9/ 63.6
4	41.6/ 53.6/ 47.6	66.7/ 62.5/ 54.3	65.17/ 55.4/ 56.1	52.0/ 63.5/ 57.2	57.3/ 71.5/ 58.6
5	35.1/ 40.3/ 39.5	66.2/ 55.1/ 56.4	53.33/ 56.3/ 57.5	59.3/ 56.9/ 60.4	62.5/ 64.0/ 60.3
Reading	41.2	55	53	48	53
3	46.8/ 53.8/ 45.2	57.8/ 63.6/ 60.2	52.11/ 62.6/ 59.0	48.0/ 61.0/ 57.7	56/ 64.3/ 57.8
4	42.9/ 49.4/ 43.7	54.7/ 63.9/ 55.6	56.18/ 60.3/ 58.8	46.7/ 53.3/ 58.0	49.3/ 60.1/ 57.7
5	33.8/ 40.3/ 39.5	51.4/ 54.8/ 53.8	50.67/ 60.8/ 53.0	49.4/ 56.6/ 55.4	51.4/ 54.6/ 56.6
School Composite	43.5/ 44.9/ 44.7	62.8/ 58.0/ 56.3	58/ 59.6/ 56.6	55.0/ 60.4/ 58.3	60/ 60.5/ 59.2

## **Context of the Problem**

The context of this study is in a rural elementary school in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina. The school is a Title I school with 530 students in grades prekindergarten through fifth grade. Seventy-two percent of the students in this study are below the poverty line, according to the state of North Carolina free and reduced lunch standards. The teachers in Grades 3-5 volunteered to participate in the study. This convenient sample is purposefully chosen, as the cluster of students are the students who are clustered in the classrooms of the 12 classrooms participating in the study.

Students in this study are in Grades 3-5. The classrooms range from 16 students to 24 students per classroom, with a mean of 20.25 students per classroom. There is a total of 12 classrooms in Grades 3-5. Teacher levels of teaching experience range from 0-21 years of experience in a public school classroom. The average teacher experience in years is 9.38 years. As Table 2 shows, the classrooms are made up of more male than female students, with an average of 75% of the students being White. On average, there are double the number of Hispanic students than Black students in each classroom. The classrooms are similar in size in the same grade levels with a range between the smallest and largest classrooms being a difference of eight students.



Table 2

*Demographics of Third- through Fifth-Grade Classrooms*

Class	# students	Teacher Years of Experience	Girls	Boys	White	Hispanic	Black	Other
3A	16	2	6	10	14	1	1	1
3B	18	14	6	12	15	2		1
3C	17	3	6	11	11	4	2	
3D	17	13	9	8	12	3		2
3E	18	0	7	11	13	5		
4A	22	0	9	13	14	6	2	
4B	23	7.5	9	14	16	6	1	
4C	22	11	12	10	18		2	2
4D	24	5	12	11	20	1	1	1
5A	24	21	6	18	17	3	2	2
5B	23	18	8	15	19	1	2	1
5C	20	18	8	12	13		3	4
Average	20.25	9.38	8.2	12.1	15.2	2.6	1.3	1.08

The researcher of this study was the principal at the elementary school where the study took place. The classroom teachers participating all volunteered to participate, and no part of the study was used as an evaluative measure for teachers in the North Carolina Educator Effectiveness System.

**Purpose**

Although there is an emphasis on instructional strategies and improving learning in the classroom, promoting a positive and enjoyable classroom experience is also a predictor of student understanding of content (Wilson & Wilson, 2007). In a classroom where students feel supported and the teacher creates a safe, warm, acceptance for his/her students, engagement is higher. Shaughnesy (1991) recommended an educational climate consisting of communication, consensus, consistency, clarity, coherence, consideration, community, cohesiveness, commitment, concern, care, and cooperation. In this type of environment, students experience the comfort and enjoyment of learning, and more

positive instructional outcomes are likely to occur (Banfield, Richmond, & McCroskey, 2006).

Theorized as student energy and drive to engage, learn, work effectively, and achieve their potential at school, motivation and engagement play a large role in student interest and enjoyment of school (Martin, 2006). Understandably, both energy and drive also play huge roles in academic achievement. Students who are motivated by and engaged in learning tend to perform considerably higher academically and are better behaved than unmotivated and unengaged peers (Stephens, 2015).

Teachers who foster positive relationships with their students create classroom environments more conducive to learning and meet student developmental, emotional, and academic needs (Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2017). Positive teacher-student relationships tend to have reports of low conflict, a high degree of closeness and support, and little dependency. The positive rapport between teacher and student has been shown to support student adjustment to school, contribute to their social skills, promote academic performance, and foster student resiliency in academic performance (Rudasill, Reio, Stipanovic, & Taylor, 2010). This relationship leads to students being less likely to avoid school and appear more self-directed, more cooperative, and more engaged in learning (Decker, Dona, & Christenson, 2007).

Teaching through relationships suggests that teachers who have knowledge about their students will be better able to teach them (Goodman, 2015). Knowing student interests and temperaments allow teachers to construct appropriate learning opportunities of interest for students (Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2017). Positive teacher-student relationships enable students to feel safe and secure in their learning environments and

provide a framework for important social and academic skills (Dearing, O’Conner, & Collins, 2011). When teachers form positive connections with students, classrooms become supportive spaces in which students can engage in academically and socially productive ways (Hamre & Pianta, 2001).

Positive teacher-student relationships are classified as having the presence of closeness, warmth, and positivity (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Students who have positive relationships with their teachers use them as a secure base from which they can explore the classroom and school setting both academically and socially to take on academic challenges and work on social-emotional development (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Students want stronger relationships with teachers, with each other, and with their communities. They want their teachers to know them as people, know how they learn, consider what they understand and what they misunderstand, and use this knowledge as a starting place to guide their continued learning. Students want their teachers to establish learning environments that build interdependent relationships and promote and create a strong culture of learning (Taylor & Parsons, 2011).

Teachers who nurture positive relationships with their students create classroom environments more conducive to learning and meet student developmental, emotional, and academic needs. Positive teacher-student relationships have been shown to support student adjustments to school, contribute to their social skills, promote academic performance, and foster student resiliency (Battistich, Schaps, & Wilson, 2004). Today’s learners want to connect and communicate constantly and want an environment to support these connections. Open, caring, respectful relationships between learners and teachers are essential to develop and support social and psychological engagement in

learning (Taylor & Parsons, 2011). By showing interest and concern, expressing respect, and holding their students to high expectations, teachers can foster emotional and intellectual development and a greater receptiveness to learning (Hayes & Allinson, 1994). According to Goldstein (1999), “caring relationships are a central part of intellectual growth and development” (p. 669). Noddings (1988) suggested that there is more at stake than the intellectual growth of students. She suggested that teachers must be interested in producing acceptable persons and that to do so, they would need to approach their practice from a caring orientation.

Caring and compassionate teachers can turn grim and uncooperative students around. Children who have been rejected or put down in important phases of their lives desperately need an emotional connection to the learning journey. Teachers who listen, assess individual strengths, and create ways for students to express themselves and demonstrate their understanding find that students become more engaged and take more risks in classroom activities (Oregon Quality Education Model, 2000). Caring has immediate benefits, such as a sense of belonging and increased self-regard, and these changes have longer-term impacts such as a stronger sense of well-being. Caring is also central to promoting student engagement and academic learning. Although some students may have a strong intrinsic interest in certain topics, many students are motivated more by relationships with teachers, peers, parents, and the learning environment. For most students to care deeply about learning, students must also feel that adults care deeply about them. Mutual acceptance, understanding, warmth, closeness, trust, respect, care, and cooperation are all aspects of a student and teacher relationship that is more than just academic; it involves humanist values to learn about

life (Leitão & Waugh, 2007). Students who experience sensitive, responsive, and positive interactions with teachers perceive them as more supportive and are more motivated within the academic contexts of schooling (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Research shows that increased motivation leads to improvement in engagement both behaviorally and cognitively, while resulting in an improved understanding as well (Patrick & Yoon, 2004). Those students who have close, positive, and supportive relationships with their teachers will gain higher levels of achievement than those students with more conflict in their relationships. Teachers who foster positive relationships with their students create classroom environments more conducive to learning and meet student developmental, emotional, and academic needs (Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2017).

Knowing that motivation and achievement can be highly connected (DiPerna, Volpe, & Elliott, 2005), it is critical that students maintain an optimal level of motivation. Research has shown a positive correlation between teacher immediacy behaviors and student motivation (Witt & Wheelless, 2001). These teacher immediacy behaviors can be characterized by the psychological availability to students, thereby providing a relationship in which students perceive the instructor as available and welcoming (Mehrabian, 1969). Mehrabian first defined immediacy in 1967 as communication behaviors that diminish the physical and psychological distance between people. Immediacy research is grounded in approach-avoidance theory that suggests “people approach what they like and avoid what they don’t like” (Mehrabian, 1981, p.22). Immediacy and liking are “two sides of the same coin ... liking encourages greater immediacy and immediacy produces more liking” (Mehrabian, 1971, p.77).

Mehrabian (1971) has been credited with defining the concept of immediacy in terms of his “principle of immediacy,” which stated that people are drawn toward persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, or do not prefer. Nonverbal immediacy includes behaviors such as smiling, gesturing, eye contact, and having relaxed body language. Nonverbal teacher immediacy behaviors were found to be highly correlated with positive student attitudes (Andersen & Withrow, 1981). Andersen (1979) defined nonverbal immediacy as eye contact, gestures, relaxed body position, directing a body position toward students, smiling, vocal expressiveness, movement, and proximity. Of these seven identifying nonverbal behaviors of teacher immediacy, subsequent studies identified the nonverbal immediate behaviors most valued by students to be vocal expressiveness, smiling, and a relaxed body position (Gorham, 1988).

Verbal immediacy refers to calling the students by name, using humor, and encouraging student input and discussion (Rocco, 2007). More specific verbal immediacy behaviors include humor, conversing with students outside of class, praise, self-disclosure, asking questions that encourage students to talk and/or solicit different points of view, follow-up on student initiated topics, and encouraging communication through phone calls (Gorham, 1988).

When teachers demonstrate immediacy behaviors, they create through verbal and nonverbal forms of communication a supportive classroom climate in which students feel encouraged and accepted (Li, 2003). Guided by the immediacy principle, students have consistently reported to like teachers who exhibit immediacy behaviors (Burroughs, 2007). Teacher nonverbal immediacy behaviors play a major role in developing and

maintaining student cooperation in the classroom, and students were more willing to comply with teachers who demonstrated immediacy behaviors (Chesebro & McCroskey, 2001). Teachers who exhibit immediacy behaviors tend to keep sustained eye contact, speak with vocal variety, and use positive facial expressions, which are all seen as effective communication attributes (Chanock, 2005). People gravitate toward persons and things they like and avoid or move away from things they dislike (LeFebvre & Allen, 2014). A teacher perceived as immediate, communicates a positive attitude that leads to increased liking, affiliation, and positive affect on the part of the student (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000). Immediacy behaviors reduce distances between people, and greater immediacy indicates greater mutual sensory stimulation. Simply, immediate teachers are liked more than non-immediate teachers (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000).

According to Whitaker (2004), the main variable in the classroom is not the student, but the teacher. Great teachers have high expectations for their students but even higher expectations for themselves. These teachers recognize the importance of connecting with their students; if they are unable to connect with them emotionally, influencing their minds may be impossible (Whitaker, 2004). Whitaker suggested that teachers are the first and perhaps most important point of contact in a student's life. He urged, "it's the people, not the programs" (Whitaker, 2004, p. 9). He also stated, "there are really two ways to improve a school significantly: Get better teachers and improve the teachers in the school" (Whitaker, 2004, p. 9). Teachers need to help students believe they can be successful.

Teachers need to lead students to the belief that they can set higher goals for themselves and, according to Payne (2005), need to help students recognize the costs of

the choices they make. Therefore, in order to facilitate learning, a classroom atmosphere in which the students do not feel threatened or intimidated is needed (Boyle, 2000). An optimal classroom environment that promotes teaching and learning is characterized by enjoyment, engagement, and ownership in learning, along with an atmosphere of mutual respect between teachers and students (Goodrum, Hackling, & Rennie, 2001). A positive classroom environment created by teacher immediacy has been linked to student motivation, which reinforces the idea of effective learning (Littlejohn, 2012).

The communicative student-teacher relationship is critical to the learning-teaching process, and an important component of this relationship is immediacy (Richmond, Gorham, & McCroskey, 1987). Over 30 years ago, Mehrabian (1967) defined immediacy as communication behaviors that diminish the physical and psychological distance between people. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teacher immediacy behaviors and teacher/student rapport on student motivation, engagement, and cognitive learning.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the relationship between student perceptions of teacher verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors and teacher perceptions of their own immediacy?
2. What is the relationship between teacher immediacy and cognitive learning?
3. What is the relationship between teacher immediacy and student motivation?
4. To what extent is teacher immediacy, student engagement, and student motivation combined predictors of learning?



## **Significance**

From 1980 through 2017, there has been an interest in studying student engagement (Behizadeh & Fink; 2015; Finn & Zimmer, 2012). A few reasons for an interest in student engagement are students who are not engaged have a greater chance of dropping out of school, even if they are gifted and have obtained good grades (Landis & Reschly, 2013); students who are not fully engaged can fake their participation and are not really learning (Conner & Pope, 2013); and the engagement of students is a predictor of graduation (Christenson, Reschly, & Wylie, 2012; Skinner & Pitzer, 2012). Additionally, there has been a national effort to focus on school improvement, which has increased the awareness of student disengagement (Fredericks et al., 2011).

For years, critics have argued that the educational system in the United States needs immediate reforming. Each year, 1.2 million students drop out of school before graduating high school (Cooper, 2010); and while students in the United States have made moderate progress on exams, they continue to perform below their peers from other industrialized countries (Glod, 2007).

Albert Mehrabian (1971), a social psychologist, has been credited with defining the concept of immediacy in terms of his “principle of immediacy,” which stated, “people are drawn toward persons and things they like, evaluate highly and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, or do not prefer” (p. 1). According to Nussbaum (1992), there exist specific teacher behaviors that are directly related to increased student learning outcomes and student motivation. Perhaps the most influential teacher behavior researched is teacher immediacy (Richmond, McCroskey, Kearney, & Plax, 1987). The application of immediacy behaviors in educational settings

introduced the idea that a teacher could lessen the distance between herself and her students and thereby influence certain classroom outcomes, namely student learning, through body cues and expressive vocal inflections (Allen, Witt, & Wheelless, 2006).

There is extensive research supporting the effects of teacher immediacy on effective learning and perceived cognitive learning; however, despite findings of meaningful relationships between teacher communication behaviors and student cognitive learning, additional investigation is warranted; for example, as this study does with student perceptions of teacher immediacy. The majority of the teacher immediacy research and perceived cognitive learning has been performed with college students and instructors. Elementary and secondary students are an overlooked population in instructional communication research (West, 1994). Christophel (1990) suggested that a study conducted at an elementary or secondary level may produce even stronger data, since “teachers are seen as a more potent factor in student learning” (p. 339).

An understanding of teacher immediacy behaviors, both from teacher and student perspectives, may help promote effective classroom communication that will impact student motivation to learn and translate into improved student achievement (Cirillo & Herbel-Eisenmann, 2006). The differences in teacher perceptions of teacher immediacy behaviors may necessitate effective professional development opportunities that will equip teachers with the proper techniques to effectively communicate with their students, thereby shedding a new light on the field of teaching and learning.

### **Limitations**

There were several limitations acknowledged in this study. The first limitation exists due to the fact that the results are not generalizable to other classrooms unless they

are in a similar school setting with the same context and population of students. As a result, this research was limited to elementary-level students and teachers in Grades 3-5; therefore, perceptions of other age groups may differ.

A second limitation of this study is teacher self-reported ratings in the survey completed on their classroom immediacy behaviors. A third limitation of the study is the researcher being the principal at the school in which the participants for the study were selected, although the student participants were surveyed anonymously.

Last, a critical limitation of this study could have been the cultural background of the students. Language barriers could have prevented student understanding of the survey questions. In a like manner, culture might have affected how a particular student perceived his or her teacher's behaviors. For example, the nature of the questions could have caused some students to be less likely to provide ratings of their teachers based on the position of the teacher's authority and the respect the student has for that authority.

### **Definitions**

Constructs represented in this study are defined and clarified below.

**Motivation.** The process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained.

**Engagement.** The degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education.

**Extrinsic motivation.** Motivation promoted by factors external to the individual. Individuals who are extrinsically motivated work on tasks because they believe participation will result in desirable outcomes such as a reward or praise.

**Intrinsic motivation.** The doing of an activity for its inherent satisfaction rather than for some separable consequence refers to motivation to engage in an activity for its own sake. People who are intrinsically motivated perform tasks and engage in behaviors because they find them enjoyable. Simply participating in the activity is reward enough.

**Instructional immediacy.** Behavior that brings the instructor and the students closer together in terms of perceived distance. Feelings of warmth, sincerity, approachability, and availability regarding the communicator.

**Nonverbal immediacy.** Includes behaviors such as smiling, gesturing, eye contact, and having relaxed body language.

**Verbal immediacy.** Refers to calling the students by name, using humor, and encouraging student input and discussion. Signaling warmth and a willingness to connect to the receiver of the message.

**Body language or gestures.** Exhibiting conceptual knowledge through bodily movements.

**Classroom environment.** The structure provided by the classroom teacher through showing involvement, supporting freedom of choice, and showing interest in student activities.

**Elementary teacher.** A person whose job is to teach students about certain subjects; one who instructs young children.

**Self-perceptions.** Feelings or thoughts towards oneself.

**Student engagement.** A student's involvement or connection with school events or activities; and likewise, the people, goals, values, and events that take place at school (Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011).

**Teacher-student relationship.** A relationship between students and teachers fostered by teacher involvement, structure, and autonomy support; also promoted by ongoing personal support, candid feedback, and dialogue regarding academic and personal choices.

**Teacher affect.** Measure of the teacher's enthusiasm for the content of learning as a source of student motivation. It includes maintaining a positive attitude in the classroom and in teacher/student relationships.

**Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).** Stressful or traumatic events, including abuse and neglect. They may also include household dysfunction such as witnessing domestic violence or growing up with family members who have substance abuse disorders.

## **Summary**

Many of the children who are not doing well academically are the same ones who have a poor relationship with their teachers (Stipek, 2002); therefore, in order to facilitate learning, a classroom atmosphere in which the students do not feel intimidated or threatened is needed (Boyle, 2000). An understanding of teacher immediacy behaviors, both from teacher and student perspectives, may help promote effective classroom communication that will impact student motivation to learn and translate into improved student achievement (Cirillo & Herbel-Eisenmann, 2006). The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teacher immediacy behaviors and teacher/student rapport on student motivation, engagement, and cognitive learning.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

Albert Einstein in his 1938 commencement address at Swarthmore College remarked that

the real difficulty, the difficulty which has baffled the sages of all time, is this:  
How can we make our teaching so potent in the emotional life of men, that its  
influence should withstand the pressure of the elemental psychic forces in the  
individual? (p. 1)

Many scholars believe that there is a multitude of teaching behaviors that are more “potent” than the next as they relate to learning (Downey, 2008). There have been decades of evidence to support that what and how teachers do and say directly relate to learning outcomes. Hurt, Scott, and McCroskey (1978) are known for arguing that “the difference between knowing and teaching is communication” (p. 3). Both students and teachers enter the classroom with unique individual and cultural expectations of what should happen in terms of teacher-student interaction. Teacher behaviors and student expectations about those behaviors are important factors related to student learning outcomes (Violette, 2002).

Mehrabian (1971) contributed to the immediacy principle which stated that “people are drawn toward persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, or do not prefer” (p. 1). The relationship between teacher immediacy and learning is one of the most relevant and exciting relationships studied by instructional communication scholars. There are over 40 years of documentation in instructional communication literature that suggests a strong positive relationship between teacher immediacy and cognitive learning

(Violette, 2002). Immediacy behaviors are based on the idea that teacher behaviors will promote feelings of incentive, liking, pleasure, and influence. These immediacy behaviors have been shown to increase cognitive learning and student perceptions of teacher effectiveness (Velez & Cano, 2008).

### **Motivation and Achievement**

In an effort to maximize children's educational outcomes, researchers have explored various factors and their influence on student performance. In general, children and adolescents are embedded in a system of overlapping contexts, most importantly the school and family. There is a body of literature that focuses on environment and intrinsic motivation. Gottfried (1985) found that children who reported higher academic intrinsic motivation had significantly higher school achievement and more favorable perceptions of their academic competence. In exploring this motivation in young elementary school children, Gottfried (1990) found that student perceptions of motivation significantly predicted report card grades and teacher ratings of achievement. Furthermore, the results from correlational and regression analyses predicting achievement and motivation showed that both are independent but positively related constructs (Gottfried, 1990).

Sweet, Guthrie, and Ng (1998) examined student motivation for reading, and the results were that student motivation for reading was related to reading achievement. They also found an interaction between achievement and motivation, such that higher achieving students were more intrinsically motivated. Overall, higher achieving students are viewed by significant others in their lives (i.e., parents and teachers) as having greater intrinsic motivation. Gottfried (1990) discovered that in addition to having higher achievement and intellectual performance and more favorable perceptions of their

academic competence, children with stronger self-reported academic intrinsic motivation were perceived by their teachers as being significantly more motivated. From an early age through adolescence, academic intrinsic motivation has been shown to be positively and significantly related to student achievement and perception of their academic competence (Gottfried, 1990; Sweet et al., 1998). In research generalizing across grades, gender, and ethnicity, children with higher levels of intrinsic motivation exhibited significantly higher school achievement, lower academic anxiety, and more favorable perceptions of their academic competence (Gottfried, 1985).

Furthermore, a study of academic intrinsic motivation revealed the continuity of intrinsic motivation across the age span from 9 to 17; therefore, children who develop lower motivation during early childhood are likely to be at a greater disadvantage for academic achievement across the grade levels (Gottfried, Fleming, & Gottfried, 1998). In their longitudinal study on academic intrinsic motivation and parental motivational practices, Gottfried et al. (1998) found that children had significantly lower intrinsic motivation with greater parental use of task extrinsic consequences, whereas children had significantly higher academic intrinsic motivation with greater parental use of task internal motivational practices (i.e., encouraging children's intrinsic motivation). Gottfried (1990) also found a relationship between motivation and achievement; she found that elementary-age children with higher academic intrinsic motivation tend to have higher achievement and IQ and more positive perceptions of their academic competence.

Students whose school-related activity is extrinsically motivated depend on parents and teachers for their motivations. These students are perceived by teachers to be



less motivated and to require more prodding to do their work (Ryan, Connell, & Grolnick, 1992). In addition, extrinsically motivated students have lower confidence and self-esteem (Harter, 1982). Likewise, these students tend to see themselves as less autonomous and less motivated and as having less control over events and outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2000). As a result, extrinsic motivational style appears to be a dominant characteristic of children who become discouraged in school and are at risk for a variety of academic and social difficulties (Grolnick, Ryan, & Deci, 1991).

More specifically, Skinner and Belmont (1993) found strong empirical support for a reciprocal relationship between teacher behavior and student engagement in the classroom. As teacher perceptions of motivation increased, student cognitive engagement increased during the year; conversely, as student cognitive and behavioral engagement increased, teacher perceptions of student motivation increased positively. Nolen and Haladyna (1990) reported findings supporting these effects. According to teacher perceptions, intrinsically motivated students who were cognitively engaged in classwork were more likely to be higher achievers than were less motivated and less engaged students.

Student motivation has been identified as a critical component to student success (Brophy, 2004). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs provided an important perspective of motivation (McLeod, 2017). It stated that each person has basic needs (such as food, shelter, love) that must be met before learning can occur (McLeod, 2017). Maslow looked at the complete physical, emotional, social, and intellectual qualities of an individual and how they impact on learning (McLeod, 2017). Maslow suggested students must be shown that they are valued and respected in the classroom, and the teacher

should create a supportive environment (McLeod, 2017).

The first four levels of Maslow's theory are considered deficiency needs in that their lack of satisfaction causes a deficiency that motivates people to meet these needs. Physiological needs include necessities such as air, food, and water. These tend to be satisfied for most people, but they become predominant when unmet. During emergencies, safety needs such as health and security rise to the forefront. Once these two levels are met, belongingness needs, such as obtaining love and intimate relationships or close friendships, become important. The next level, esteem needs, includes the need for recognition from others, confidence, achievement, and self-esteem. The highest level is self-actualization, or the self-fulfillment. Behavior in this case is not motivated by deficiencies but rather one's desire for personal growth and the need to become all the things a person is capable of becoming (David, 2014).

Self-determination theory examines student learning with a focus on two major types of motivation, extrinsic and intrinsic (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Extrinsic (external) motivation is best described as when the student is driven to do something to gain an external reward; for example, good grades, praise, stars, and prizes. Accordingly, an extrinsically motivated student is very conscious of relevance. Intrinsic (internal) motivation is being used when the student is driven to do something because it is interesting or rewarding to them. It is driven by internal wishes or desires. Intrinsic motivation is derived by four psychological needs: autonomy, competence, relatedness, and relevance. These four needs combine to motivate individuals to behave in ways that help them learn and grow (Ganim & Evely, 2017). Fostering intrinsic motivation encourages students to be engaged at school over the long term and promotes lifelong and

self-sustaining learning. Efforts to build this kind of motivation are also typically efforts to promote student learning (DeLong & Winter, 2002).

A study by Saeed and Zyngier (2012) used the self-determination theory to better understand how student motivation and engagement are linked and the impact intrinsic and extrinsic motivation had on student engagement. According to this study, students who were intrinsically motivated showed more authentic engagement in learning, and extrinsically motivated students developed ritual engagement. This research confirmed that motivated and engaged students learn better and show better outcomes in their academic progress. Additionally, Wigfield and Wagner (2005) confirmed that intrinsically motivated students are more competent and engaged in learning. Motivation and engagement are important factors that guide behavior; and as a result, it is very important to understand and use this knowledge in the classroom.

Knowing how intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and engagement relate to students and learning allows a teacher to provide a more supportive environment for student learning (Marsh, 2000). Engaging students is a complex process and using different strategies to motivate students enhances engagement in learning and will help achieve the best possible student academic and social outcomes. Accordingly, Saeed and Zyngier (2012) was congruent with the research of Deci and Ryan (2008) that found that when student needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy were filled by their teacher, student motivation and engagement were enhanced.

In a meta-analysis of 128 different students, Deci, Koestner, and Ryan (1999) found that a teacher's use of extrinsic rewards often led to an increase in student intrinsic motivation. Learners are most likely to show the beneficial effects of motivation when

they are intrinsically motivated to engage in classroom activities. Intrinsically motivated learners tackle assigned tasks willingly and are eager to learn classroom material, more likely to process information in effective ways, and more likely to achieve at high levels. In contrast, extrinsically motivated learners may have to be enticed or prodded, may process information only superficially, and are often interested in performing only easy tasks and meeting minimal classroom requirements (Gottfried, Fleming, & Gottfried, 2001).

Extrinsic motivation is not necessarily a bad thing; however, many learners are simultaneously motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Cameron & Pierce, 1994). In some instances, extrinsic motivation, perhaps in the form of extrinsic reinforcers for academic achievement or behavior, may be the only thing that can get students on the road to successful classroom learning and behavior; yet intrinsic motivation is ultimately what will sustain students over the long run. It will encourage them to make sense of and apply what they are studying (Ormrod, 2006). Authentic engagement may lead to high academic achievement throughout the student's life (Zyngier, 2008).

Cameron and Pierce (1994) presented a meta-analysis of extrinsic reward effects on intrinsic motivation, concluding that, overall, rewards do not decrease intrinsic motivation, acknowledging that intrinsic motivation is important for learning. Contrarily, Eisenberger and Cameron (1996) determined that tangible rewards do significantly and substantially undermine intrinsic motivation. Deci, Koestner, and Ryan (2001) conducted a meta-analysis to determine which of these studies were relevant. They concluded that verbal rewards (i.e., positive, feedback) tend to have an enhancing effect

on intrinsic motivation; however, verbal rewards are less likely to have a positive effect for young children than for older individuals. Furthermore, they determined that verbal rewards can even have a negative effect on intrinsic motivation if the interpersonal context within which they are administered is controlling. Their conclusions about extrinsic or tangible rewards were that they may control immediate behaviors but have negative consequences for subsequent interest, persistence, and preference for challenge, especially for children. Extrinsic rewards were found to significantly undermine intrinsic motivation.

Cantley (2005) reported that children who reported higher levels of intrinsic motivation had significantly higher school achievement on the English language arts test. The results from this study agree with previous research whose authors found a relationship between motivation and achievement. Cantley determined that a positive relationship between achievement and intrinsic motivation exists; individuals who are more academically intrinsically motivated are also higher achievers. This relationship implies that those students who are lacking in intrinsic motivation do not appear to do as well academically as those who are intrinsically motivated.

A study in 2000 by Guthrie, Wigfield, and VonSecker combined five classroom practices into a classroom intervention that was designed to increase children's intrinsic reading motivation. The five practices have been documented in prior research as important for children's motivation (Brophy, 1998; Guthrie & Alao, 1997; Stipek, 1996). Consistent with self-determination theory that emphasizes support for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, the intervention included instructional characteristics designed to emphasize (a) autonomy support, (b) competence support, (c) collaboration,

(d) learning goals, and (e) real-world interaction (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The intervention entitled Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI) teaches children reading comprehension through the integration of science and reading. The teaching framework for CORI included four phases: (a) observe and personalize, (b) search and retrieve, (c) comprehend and integrate, and (d) communicate to others. The findings of this intervention showed significantly higher curiosity and motivation for reading at the end of the academic year than comparison students who received traditional reading and science instruction. Students receiving CORI scored higher than students receiving traditional instruction in self-reported strategy use and grade effects.

Wentzel (1998) explored the relationship between positive interactions between teachers and students and how these interactions may be related to motivation. The results indicated that increased motivation and greater pursuit of academic goals are associated with more positive interactions with teachers. Student perceptions of their relationship with their teacher are essential in motivating students to perform well. Students who perceive their relationship with their teacher as positive, warm, and close are motivated to be more engaged in school and to improve their academic achievement (Wentzel, 1998).

### **Engagement**

Together with motivation, engagement is viewed in literature as very important for enhanced learning outcomes for students (Woolfolk & Magetts, 2007). Engagement is not an easily defined construct. Skinner, Kindermann, Connell, and Wellborn (2009) noted, “there is, of course, no single correct definition of engagement” (p. 224). They acknowledged that a variety of constructs seem to overlap in meaning and use;

specifically, motivation, engagement, attention, interest, effort, enthusiasm, participation, and involvement. Marzano, Pickering, and Heflebower (2011) examined the following four topics as they attempted to provide research behind improving student engagement: (a) emotions, (b) interest, (c) perceived importance, and (d) perceptions of efficacy. In their book, they translate the research into practical strategies for the classroom.

Engagement is seen at the heart of motivational cycles where the motivationally rich get richer and the poor get poorer as they progress through school (Marzano et al., 2011).

Accordingly, Stephens (2015) concluded that in order to be engaged, students must be behaviorally, emotionally, and cognitively involved in academic activities. Teacher enjoyment in teaching has been shown to positively impact student-teacher relationships, resulting in increased student motivation and engagement. Students who believe their teacher is caring also believe they learn more; and positive social, cognitive, and language development are increased. These positive relationships are associated with emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement in the classroom (Connell & Welborn, 1991).

Skinner et al. (2009) associated the following emotions with engagement:

- Enthusiasm
- Interest
- Enjoyment
- Satisfaction
- Pride
- Vitality
- Zest (p. 227).

In addition, Skinner et al. associated the following emotions with a lack of engagement, or “disaffection” as they referred to it:

- Boredom
- Disinterest
- Frustration
- Anger
- Sadness
- Worry/Anxiety
- Shame, and Self-blame (p. 227).

Children who are engaged in the challenges of ongoing learning activities can be expected to increase their competencies across time and to feel pride and satisfaction in their accomplishments (Kindermann, 1993).

Moore (2016) substantiated previous research that teachers should make students feel welcome and take time to talk to students individually to get to know them and make learning interesting; moreover, teachers need to build quality relationships with students if they want to improve classroom engagement (Lumsden, 1994; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Teachers who practice close relationships with students conveyed students were more engaged and showed better performance on measure of school readiness (Birch & Ladd, 1997).

The research of Cantley (2005) agreed with Skinner and Belmont (1993), who found that there is a reciprocal relationship between teacher behavior and student engagement in the classroom. Specifically, teacher interactions with students predicted student engagement in learning activities. Student engagement influenced teacher



behavior, as teachers responded to students who had higher behavioral engagement with more involvement and autonomy support (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Teacher practices, including student perception of the teacher being supportive and caring, and teacher perception of student motivation were the factors that best predicted student academic intrinsic motivation (Cantley, 2005). It is apparent that student engagement, described as the tendency to be behaviorally, emotionally, and cognitively involved in academic activities, is a key construct in motivation research (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2009).

Compared to less engaged peers, engaged students demonstrate more effort, experience more positive emotions, and pay more attention in the classroom (Fredricks et al., 2004). Fredricks et al. (2004) reviewed over 44 articles, including the work of Finn (1989, 1993), Finn and Rock (1997), Birch and Ladd (1997), and Finn, Pannosso, and Voelkl (1995). In this review, three components of engagement in the research literature were identified: behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. The first component of engagement in school is behavioral; this is evidenced by the academic and extracurricular participation of students. Emotional engagement is marked by feelings of belongingness, frustration, boredom, interest, and satisfaction as well as student-teacher relations and support. The third component is cognitive engagement; this is seen as the investment a student makes to school and its tasks.

Accordingly, Jimerson, Campos, and Greif (2003) reviewed 45 research articles including Battin-Pearson et al. (2000), Johnson, Crosnoe, and Elder (2001), Manlove (1998), and Sinclair, Hurley, Evelo, Christenson, and Thurlow (2002). Jimerson et al. found that school engagement is a multifaceted construct that includes affective

behavioral and cognitive dimensions. Furthermore, in measuring this multifaceted construct, the primary contexts include (a) academic performance, (b) classroom behavior, (c) extracurricular involvement, (d) interpersonal relationships, and (e) school community.

Finn (1989) used a developmental model and found that participation (engagement) in school led to success in school, which increased identification with school and, in turn, influenced further participation in school. Finn (1989) identified the “participation-identification model” which begins with “identification.” Identification is comprised of belonging and valuing. Belonging refers to the idea that students internalize the concept of belonging to their school; that is, they begin to see school as an integral part of themselves and their own experiences, and they feel a sense of connectedness. Finn (1989) referred to valuing, which is the importance students place on their success in school and school-related activities and is closely related to belonging. One might anticipate that as a sense of belonging and connection increases, the more a student would embrace the values associated with success in school.

Finn’s (1989) next dimension following identification in the participation-identification model is “participation.” Participation is guided by four levels of behaviors. Level one, participatory behavior, includes student recognition of the need to attend, be prepared, and respond to directions and/or questions initiated by the teacher. The second level of participation includes student enthusiasm for learning, which may manifest itself in a student initiating questions, participating in dialogue with teachers, spending extra time in academic activities, and perhaps in general doing more than is required at school. The third level of the participation-identification model involves

“autonomy” and participation in extracurricular, social, or athletic school-related activities in addition to the academic work. Students who engage in extracurricular activities in addition to their standard academic demands are considered by Finn (1989) to be demonstrating level three participatory behavior. The fourth level of participatory behaviors includes a greater level of involvement in the school system. These types of behaviors include involvement in school decision-making, academic goal-setting, and partial responsibility for regulating the school rules. It is believed that the more students are involved in decision-making, the more they will feel connected to (i.e., a sense of belonging) the school.

Taken together, Finn (1989) explained that identification (including belonging and valuing) and participation influence student successful performance in school and positive school outcomes in a cyclical pattern. Participation is integral to the definition of engagement, as those students who are successful should demonstrate participatory behaviors at all levels (levels one through four). As students demonstrate more of the participatory behaviors, they will experience more success in school. Subsequently, students will internalize the school experience and begin to define themselves utilizing the experiences they have at school. Additionally, successful students view these experiences at school as important to who they are. Not only will successful students use their school experiences to describe who they are, but they will value those school experiences because they feel they are an important part of their identity. As students identify more with their success at school, they will begin to demonstrate more participatory behaviors. This increase in participatory behaviors leads to greater success and identification with school, and the cycle repeats itself.

In their longitudinal study on the relationship between student-teacher relationships, engagement, and achievement, Hughes, Luo, Kwok, and Loyd, (2008) found that the quality of the student-teacher relationship predicted student achievement; however, they also found that the connection between student-teacher relationship quality and achievement was mediated by student-reported school engagement. They concluded that the quality of the student-teacher relationship in elementary school was important to shaping students' later patterns of school engagement.

Another study with students at-risk for special education referral was conducted by Decker et al. (2007). Their study found that more positive student-teacher relationships predicted the amount of time students spent engaged in class work, teacher-reported student engagement, and student-reported student engagement. Decker et al. also found that as the student-teacher relationship improved, so too did engagement behaviors. Their findings suggest that not only are the student-teacher relationship and engagement related, but that positive growth within the student-teacher relationship may directly predict positive growth in engagement behaviors in those at-risk students.

### **Positive Student Teacher Relationships**

A review of the literature about student relationships with their teachers seems to suggest two major veins of research: the impact that a positive student-teacher relationship has on the behavior and overall experience of the students and the impact that positive student-teacher relationships have on student academic success.

As far back as 1959, Jerome Leavitt found that researchers were beginning to investigate the relationships between teachers and students. Leavitt found that emerging research indicated teachers can be more affective and help develop student potential by

building positive relationships. Moreover, Leavitt called for more research to be conducted, particularly in the areas of teacher-student relationships and what constitutes good classroom climate.

In a 1981 study, Benninga, Guskey, and Thornburg collected teacher self-reported beliefs about student perceptions of their rapport with them as well as student-generated data that indicate how the students viewed the teachers in terms of their interactions with students. The results of the study indicated that there was a strong correlation between teacher perceptions of their relationships with their students and student perceptions of teacher effectiveness. The authors stated that the data showed those teachers who felt that establishing and maintaining a positive relationship with their students was important tended to be regarded more highly by their students.

Through observations and interviews, Baker (1999) investigated how 61 third through fifth graders perceived their relationships with their teachers. The results of the study clearly indicated that those students who reported enjoying school and those who reported disliking school had vastly different experiences with teachers early in their school careers. Through a series of interviews as well as two self-reporting measures that were completed by the students, Baker showed a very high likeness between statements about positive supporting interactions with teachers and student satisfaction with their school experiences. Similarly, Pomeroy (1999) noted in her study of student perspectives about their relationships with teachers that student-teacher relationships was of great importance to student schooling experience and future school life.

Morganett (1991) commented in an article about teacher-student relationships that “in the classroom, students who feel accepted by their teachers are more likely to do what

the teachers ask of them (e.g., assignments) and less likely to do things that make the teachers' lives difficult (e.g., disrupt class)" (p. 261). This idea was echoed by Hamre and Pianta (2001) in a study in which child-teacher relationships between preschool and kindergarten children and their teachers were analyzed as predictors of school success. In this study, the researchers studied how children's relationships with their primary caregivers during their early school days impacted and predicted student success both emotionally and academically later in their schooling. The findings from this quantitative study indicate that there is a strong correlation between positive student-teacher relationships and success in school. This study suggested that teacher-student relationships are predictors of academic and behavioral outcomes in late elementary through middle grades.

Cothran, Kulinna, and Garrahy (2003) studied teacher classroom management and how it relates to a myriad of factors including student perspectives of the relationships their teachers develop with their students. While this interview study focused on secondary school students (Grades 6-12), the results are still imperative in terms of the importance to students of establishing positive relationships with students. In addition to early, clear, and consistent standards, students also reported that effective class managers developed relationships with students. Teachers were named as caring or uncaring.

Brown (2004) found that the relationship between teachers and students is particularly important for urban students. In fact, Brown's study suggested that perhaps the most important factor for success of urban students is the ability of their teachers to form strong relationships. Comparatively, Noddings (1988) wrote that "it is obvious that children will work harder and do things – even odd things like adding fractions – for

people they love and trust” (p. 10). Muller (2007) concluded that at-risk students who perceived teachers as caring showed significantly higher test scores and greater math proficiency than those who reported a lower level of teacher caring. Those at-risk students who perceived teachers as caring put forth more effort than other at-risk students. A correlation study completed by Schaps (2005) determined that a sense of community is positively associated with positive academic outcomes. The strongest correlations are with (a) attitudes toward school, (b) academic expectations, (c) academic motivation and engagement.

Howard (2002) investigated the impact of teacher relationships and the achievement of urban students from second to eighth grade. After conducting interviews with a sample of 30 students, Howard concluded that student participants identified effective teachers as those who had the “ability to structure their classrooms in a manner that mirrored family and community practices, beliefs and values, or, in one student’s words, to ‘make school seem like home’” (p. 431). His research indicated that one of the qualities that endeared students was that their teacher resembled mothers or family members when they interacted with students. This “culturally connected caring” (Howard, 2002, p. 434) was obvious in many of the interviews with students who identified their teachers as effective. In fact, students in the class wanted to do more because of the care the teacher showed. “Culturally connected caring as an ethic in teaching can include explicitly and implicitly showing affective, emotional, and nurturing behavior towards students, and as a result may have a positive influence on students’ desire to learn” (Howard, 2002, p. 436).

This idea that students who feel they have a good relationship with their teachers

will achieve more or work harder is reiterated in several studies. As Wubbels, Brekelmans, and Hooymayers (1991) observed, teachers' interpersonal behavior is one important facet of the classroom learning environment. Teachers' support, friendliness, and facilitation of a cooperative, academically engaging, classroom is associated with improved affective and cognitive learning. Moreover, Mitchem (2005) commented that "in essence building positive relationships with students sets the stage for learning to occur" (p. 188). Mitchem went on to state specifically that students who like their teachers will be more likely to act in accordance with the expectations of the teachers:

Those people with whom you have a relationship characterized by mutual trust, respect, and consideration are usually much more influential than people with whom you spend little time and for whom you have little regard. If a student likes his teacher, he will enjoy spending time with the teacher and will want to please the teacher by doing what is requested. (p. 188)

Various studies throughout the last 40 years have concluded that classroom atmosphere and relationships that can establish a sense of community are linked to student achievement. As determined by Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, and Smith (1979), high levels of achievement were found in schools where three general conditions were in place: (a) the school environment was pleasant, and the school staff was positively disposed towards students, as shown in frequent use of praise and availability; (b) there were numerous shared activities between staff and students; and (c) there were shared student positions of responsibility in the school.

A study by Reeves and Jang (2006) found implications for self-determination theory and for classroom application of the theory. The study used an engagement rating



scale that assessed student engagement during a learning activity and determined that teacher positive interpersonal relationships produce academic and development benefits for students. This study supported that teacher efforts to nurture student inner motivational resources improved student engagement. Praise, feedback, and encouragement, all verbal immediacy skills, produced academic benefits. Teacher qualities such as attunement, the process of sending and reading student states of being and adjusting one's instruction accordingly (De Wolff & Van IJzendoorn, 1997); supportiveness, an affirmation of and contribution to student capacity for self-direction (Ryan & Grolnick, 1986); relatedness, a sense of being close to students including developing a sense of warmth, affection, and acceptance of students (Furrer & Skinner, 2003); and gentle disciplines, a socialization strategy that involve explaining why a particular way of thinking or behaving is right or wrong (Kochanska, Aksan, & Nichols, 2003) were found to help teachers build positive relationships with their students (Reeves & Jang, 2006).

McNeely, Nonnemaker, and Blum (2002) determined that school connectedness, which was defined as feeling a part of one's school and close to people at school, was positively related to grade point average; and absence of this was correlated with a variety of behavior problems. While Goodenow and Grady (1993) determined that while belongingness was found to be strongly related to academic motivation, it was weakly related to grade point average. The support and care teachers give was also associated with greater interest and motivation in school (Wentzel, 1998). Engagement in school and relatedness to teachers were found to be positively associated to achievement by Connell and Welbourn (1991).

Previous studies have determined that rapport affects motivation (Bergström, 2010; Legg & Wilson, 2009). Frisby and Martin (2010) examined student/teacher rapport, student/student rapport, and classroom connectedness to determine their effects on participation and achievement. Their study concluded that of the three, only teacher-students rapport predicted effective and cognitive learning and engagement. Frisby and Myers (2008) used validated evaluation instruments to find a correlation between positive student-teacher rapport and performance scores for instructors and found a direct relationship between student-teacher rapport, learning, satisfaction, and motivation.

In his phenomenological study on relationships in the classroom, Giles (2011) found that teacher-student relationships had the potential not only to affect a student's experience in the course but to alter their academic career. Freiberg and Lamb (2009) conducted interviews to determine why students love school and discovered the following:

Both elementary and secondary students from low-income communities said they that loved school because:

1. they were trusted and respected—people cared about them (social-emotional emphasis);
2. they were a part of a family (school connectedness);
3. they felt their teachers were helpers, encouraging them to succeed and listening to their opinions and ideas (positive climate);
4. they had opportunities to be responsible, with freedom and choices, but not license to do whatever they wished (self-discipline).

The four dimensions are inherent to a person-centered instructional and

management framework, where teachers and students share classroom responsibilities and build meaningful relationships. (p. 101)

The determination was made that when teachers and students share classroom responsibilities and build meaningful relationships, it leads to positive academic success.

Teachers and students see each other as people, as interpersonal relationships are formed. Gruber, Reppel, and Voss (2010) made a similar finding in their study. They determined the importance of building and maintaining good personal interactions between students and teachers and that teachers should also try to create a rapport with their students. They determined a strong need for educators to maintain personal interactions with students, build strong relationships, and treat students with respect. Estepp and Roberts (2013) concluded that when students perceive they have a good relationship with their instructor, they might have greater expectancy for success, which could lead to greater engagement.

Estepp and Roberts (2013) determined that a student can be taught to read; the teacher must establish a teacher-student relationship. Children do not care how much teachers know until they know how much they care. Wright, Horn, and Sanders (1997) noted in their study that the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher. In addition, the results show wide variation in effectiveness among teachers. The critical and apparent indication of this finding is that more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor. Effective teachers appear to be effective with students of all achievement levels, regardless of the levels of heterogeneity in their classes.

There is growing evidence that reinforces that specific teaching characteristics

and behaviors do matter in teaching (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). Examples of characteristics of the teacher that are identified as effective (Stronge, 2002) are caring, listening, understanding, knowing students, being fair and respectful, having social interactions with students, being motivated for learning, promoting enthusiasm, and having a positive attitude toward the teaching profession. Good and Brophy (1997) also found that effective teachers demonstrate a sense of fun, a willingness to play or participate, and a good sense of humor; all characteristics of motivation and enthusiasm for teaching.

One study defined caring as an act of bringing out the best in students through affirmation and encouragement (Kohl, 1984). Caring characteristics include qualities such as trust, patience, honesty, and courage. Specific caring attributes include listening, gentleness, understanding, knowledge of students as individuals, encouragement, and overall love for children (Collinson, Killeavy, & Stephenson, 1999). Evidence that caring is a major factor in the teacher/student relationship is relatively new, because most effective teaching skills focus on teacher behavior and student achievement and not the effective teacher characteristics or social or emotional behaviors (Stronge, 2002). Cotton (1995) showed that the role of caring, of acknowledging students verbally and nonverbally, is interpreted through various immediacy skills including eye contact, facial expression, presence, proximity, the number of times teachers demonstrate interest, formal and informal requesting, timely feedback, motivation through reinforcement/expectation, and time spent with individual students.

Peart and Campbell (1999) identified four areas as important for teachers to address in order to promote student achievement as viewed by 47 African-American

adults. The areas included interpersonal skills, instructional methods, motivational leader, and racial impartiality. Moreover, research indicates that children want to be nurtured, and they value teachers who are gentle and encouraging (Deiro, 1996). Particularly for elementary students, gentleness is an important element in perceived effectiveness.

Several studies cite the importance of a caring teacher in the eyes of the student (Deiro, 1996). A teacher's ability to relate to students and to make positive, caring connections with them plays a significant role in cultivating a positive learning environment and promoting student achievement. Listening, getting to know students, and exhibiting understanding are only a few ways teachers demonstrate caring behaviors. Davis (2003) also found that improved relationships with teachers could complement other relationships and help a child's ability to form relationships with peers and other adults.

Researchers contend that productive social interactions between teachers and students not only contribute to student learning and achievement but also increase student self-esteem by fostering feelings of belonging to the classroom and the school (Cotton, 1995). Aspects of effective teaching related to social interaction include the following (Stronge, 2002): effective teachers consistently behave in a friendly and personal manner while maintaining appropriate teacher-student role structure; effective teachers work with students as opposed to doing things to or for them; effective teachers provide productive interactions with students that involve giving students responsibility and respect; also effective teachers treat secondary students as adults when appropriate; effective teachers pay attention to what students say; students indicate that effective teachers spend more

time interacting and working directly with them than ineffective teachers; and effective teachers demonstrate a sense of fun and a willingness to play or participate.

A positive relationship between students and their teachers is essential for improving overall student performance and enhancing school experience (Maldonado-Carreño & Votruba-Drzal, 2011). Teacher relationships with students are not only fundamental for early childhood but for middle childhood and adolescence as well (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). There is a strong correlation between influential student-teacher relationships and a reduction in aggressive behavior (Meehan, Hughes, & Cavell, 2003) as well as an increase in overall academic performance (Hughes, 2011).

When stress builds up in children, neurobiological factors are affected. In turn, levels of the stress hormone cortisol exceed normal ranges. Researchers have proposed three distinct types of responses to stress in young children: positive, tolerable, and toxic. Cortisol levels in children have been correlated with changes in student-teacher relationships; when the relationship is strained there have been substantial increases in cortisol levels. In their study of preschool students, Lisonbee, Mize, Payne, and Granger (2008) found that teacher-reported relationship conflict predicted cortisol increases during teacher-child interaction and teacher-reported over dependence predicted cortisol increases from morning to afternoon, even after controlling for individual teacher, child, and classroom characteristics. If the brain is exposed to high levels of cortisol at an early age, cognitive processes and the ability to regulate behavior are negatively affected (Lupien, McEwen, Gunnar, & Heim, 2009).

Student-teacher relationships are essential for improving development of children.

A relationship can teach a child the importance of setting goals and influence a child to achieve them. A student-teacher relationship can improve academic success and overall health and repair discord in connections made with others and trust (Davis, 2006; Hughes, 2011). Morganett (1991) showed that positive relationships as indicated by positive student-teacher interactions, student comfort with their teachers, and student feelings of being supported by their teachers can have a profound impact on student behavior.

The impact of teachers on student academic success was also found for lower achieving readers in lower grades in a study by Hughes et al. (2008). In their study of 443 low-achieving readers in first grade, the researchers found that a positive relationship between teachers and students may even mediate the impact of student background in terms of the impact on achievement. In other words, the authors' data indicated that a positive supportive relationship between a teacher and his or her students may be able to rise above a significant barrier to student success, their own socioeconomic status. The study illustrated that although socioeconomic challenges may have a correlation to student abilities to establish a positive supportive relationship with their parents, a student's socioeconomic background does not appear to have an impact on the student's ability to establish positive relationships with teachers. Therefore, the authors suggest that the positive that can result for students from constructive, supportive relationships with teachers can occur even when students come from more challenging socioeconomic situations. As Hughes et al. (2008) stated, "These findings add to the rapidly accumulating evidence that social relatedness is critical to children's engagement and academic success or, conversely, to disaffection and failure" (p. 46).

While relationships between teachers and students are not the only indicator of success in the classroom, it appears that a positive relationship can be powerful for both the teacher and the student.

### **Teacher Immediacy**

Immediacy has its roots in the study of interpersonal attraction; and more specifically, it is associated with approach-avoidance theory. The basics of this theory are that humans are more attracted to or approach individuals who appear more “immediate” than others and are not attracted to or avoid people who are less “immediate.” Immediacy, then, includes communication behaviors, both verbal and nonverbal, that reduce physical and psychological distance between people (Mehrabian, 1969).

Teaching and learning are basically interpersonal interactions between the teacher and student. Andersen, Anderson, and Jensen (1979) hypothesized that the main purpose of these interactions is to make a particular subject “attractive” to students. Therefore, Anderson et al. (1979) believed that being more immediate with students would allow teachers to “attract” student interests, increase their attentions, and ultimately increase learning. In the classroom environment, specific verbal teacher immediacy behaviors include teachers asking students questions, encouraging students to talk, using humor, calling students by name, praising student work, and providing feedback to students. Examples of nonverbal teaching immediacy behaviors include teachers smiling at students, providing eye contact, gesturing, moving around the classroom, and using a variety of vocal expressions while teaching.

One group of researchers argued that student motivation mediates the relationship



between teacher immediacy and student cognitive learning (Christophel, 1990; Christophel & Gorham, 1995; Frymier, 1994). They found that immediate teachers increase student motivation to study, which increases their time on a task; and consequently, this increases their cognitive learning. Rodriguez, Plax, and Kearney (1996) suggested that teacher immediacy actually increases student affective learning, which then increases student cognitive learning. Rodriguez et al. concluded that affective learning, not motivation, is the mediating variable in this relationship. The researchers provided the following three reasons in support of their theory: the affective learning model produces the lesser amount of error, is the more reasonable model, and is more theoretically sound. Further, they argued that student motivation is actually a subset within affective learning.

Kelley and Gorham (1988) investigated the teacher immediacy and cognitive learning relationship in an experimental situation which removed student perceptions of learning. Specifically, the researchers argued that cognitive learning is dependent primarily on the recall of information (Bloom, 1956). In turn, recall depends on one's memory, both short- and long-term. Further, Kelley and Gorham stated that memory is improved through increased attention to some stimulus, precipitated by an arousal toward this stimulus. Finally, they linked these arguments by citing that immediacy is related to arousal. The following is a summary of their argument:

Immediacy is related to arousal, which is related to attention, which is related to memory, which is related to cognitive learning. The presence or absence of affect is extraneous to this model. While immediacy does influence liking it also influences arousal and that link alone has the potential of affecting learning

outcomes. (Kelley & Gorham, 1988, p. 201)

In other words, Kelley and Gorham argued that a highly immediate teacher arouses and captures the attention of his/her students and thus improves their learning because they pay attention and remember the information.

Considerable research has shown teacher immediacy has a positive effect on student outcomes such as student learning and motivation (Baringer & McCroskey, 2000), willingness to talk (Menzel & Carrell, 1999), and recall of information (Kelley & Gorham, 1988). The demonstrated effectiveness of teacher immediacy on student outcomes has resulted in increased calls for (a) teachers to be more immediate in their classrooms, and (b) training efforts designed to increase levels of teacher immediacy (Cooper & Simonds, 1999; Richmond, 2002).

Nonverbal immediacy behaviors are nonlinguistic behaviors that (a) communicate approach, as opposed to avoidance; (b) signal availability for communication; (c) increase sensory stimulation; and (d) communicate liking, warmth, and closeness (Andersen & Andersen, 1982). These behaviors are useful because they allow teachers to communicate relational messages of liking and closeness to students while leaving verbal channels open to communicate course material (Comstock, Rowell, & Bowers, 1995).

Nonverbal behaviors that communicate immediacy and reduce perceptions of distance include (a) proxemics (e.g., distance between interactants); (b) haptics (e.g., touch); (c) vocalics (e.g., paralanguage); (d) kinesics (e.g., body movement/orientation); (e) oculusics (e.g., eye contact); (f) classroom environment (e.g., seating arrangements); and (g) chronemics (e.g., time; Andersen & Andersen, 1982). Teachers use a variety of nonverbal behaviors to communicate closeness, liking, and warmth to students.

Approximal immediacy behaviors include standing closer to students rather than behind a desk (Andersen & Andersen, 1982), using face-to-face or direct body orientation while teaching (Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Andersen et al., 1979; Mehrabian, 1971), and interacting on the same physical plane by squatting or sitting on student levels (Andersen & Andersen, 1982). Other immediacy behaviors appropriate to use with students include handshakes and pats on the back (Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Mehrabian, 1971, 1979). Vocalic immediacy behaviors include variations in pitch, tempo, and loudness (Andersen & Andersen, 1982); vocal expressiveness (Andersen et al., 1979; Mehrabian, 1971); positive head nods (Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Mehrabian, 1971); open body positions (Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Mehrabian, 1971); directing body posture toward students (Andersen, 1979; Sanders & Wiseman, 1990); relaxed body posture (Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Witt & Wheelless, 2001); overall bodily movement (Andersen et al., 1979); forward leans (Witt & Wheelless 2001); hand and arm gestures (Andersen, 1979; Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Witt & Wheelless, 2001); enthusiastic voices (Andersen & Andersen, 1982); and laughing (Andersen & Andersen, 1982). Kinesthetic immediacy behaviors include smiling (Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Andersen et al., 1979; Mehrabian, 1971) and increased eye contact with students (Andersen et al., 1979). Teachers can convey immediacy via classroom environments by reducing physical barriers that hinder communication and setting up alternative seating arrangements (i.e., circles versus rows; Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Mehrabian, 1971). Other immediacy behaviors include spending more time with students (Andersen, 1979) and arriving to class on time (Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Andersen et al., 1979).

Verbal immediacy refers to linguistic expressions that signal open communication or signal avoidance during interaction (Gorham, 1988; Mehrabian, 1969, 1981; Sanders & Wiseman, 1990). Wiener and Mehrabian (1968) proposed that verbal immediacy reflects closeness between those interacting and is based on the receiver's perception of the sender's behavior. In other words, the only way the sender's verbal behaviors can be characterized as immediate is if the receiver perceives them as immediate. Immediate verbal expressions in conversations convey greater liking and desire for continued interaction (Sanders & Wiseman, 1990) and communicate positive affect (Bradac, Bowers, & Courtright, 1979).

In the educational setting, verbal immediacy behaviors are "messages that bring the student and teacher together" (Rocca, 2004, p. 21). Gorham (1988) argued that expressions of verbal immediacy are communicated via variations in (a) adjectives ("This student has a question" versus "That student has a question"), (b) verb tense (present versus past), (c) inclusivity ("we" versus "I"), (d) mutuality ("My students and I had a good class discussion" versus "I had a good class discussion with my students"), (e) implied voluntarism ("I want to do course evaluations next class period" versus "I have to do course evaluations next class period" or "I should do course evaluations next class period"), (f) probability ("I will have a study guide for you next week" versus "I may have a study guide for you next week"), (g) conditionality ("I would like to have time to pass out grades" versus "I will have time to pass out grades"), and (h) responsibility ("I do not think you are reading before class" versus "Your lack of participation leads me to conclude that you are not reading before class"). Additional verbal cues that signal teacher immediacy include the use of personal examples, student first names, praise, self-

disclosure, and humor (Frymier, 1993; Gorham & Zakahi, 1990).

Table 3

*Instructor Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy Behaviors*

Verbal Behaviors (Gorham, 1988)	Nonverbal Behaviors (Richmond, Gorham et al., 1987)
Uses personal examples or talks about experiences she/he has had outside of class.	Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Asks questions or encourages students to talk.	Does not sit behind a desk while teaching.
Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up even when this doesn't seem to be part of his/her lecture plan.	Gestures while talking to class.
Uses humor in class.	Does not use monotone-dull voice while talking to class.
Addresses students by name and is addressed by his/her name by the students.	Looks at the class while talking.
Gets into conversations with individual students before, after or outside of class.	Smiles at the class as whole, not just individual students.
Refers to class as "our" class or what "we" are doing.	Has a very relaxed body position while talking to the class.
Provides feedback on individual student work through comments on papers, oral discussions, etc.	Touches students in the class.
Asks questions that solicit viewpoints or opinions. Only calls on students to answer questions if they have indicated that they want to talk. Asks how students feel about an assignment, due date, or discussion topic.	Moves around the classroom while teaching.
Invites students to telephone or meet with him/her outside of class if they have questions or want to discuss something.	Does not look at board or notes while talking to the class
Praises students' work, actions, or comments	

Researchers propose "effective teachers" get better results with students because they convey positive affect via immediacy behaviors (Andersen, 1979). Findings suggest teacher immediacy positively influences student perceptions of teacher credibility (McCroskey & Young, 1981; Teven & Habson, 2004; Thweatt & McCroskey, 1998),

ratings of teachers and quality of instruction (Moore, Masterson, Christophel, & Shea, 1996), student motivation (Christophel, 1990; Christophel & Gorham, 1995), student attendance (Rocca, 2004), and student participation in class and willingness to talk (Rocca, 2004).

The most prominent work regarding teacher immediacy focuses on student learning outcomes (Anderson, Bechara, Damasio, Tranel, & Damasio, 1999). Results from these studies indicate a positive relationship between teacher immediacy and (a) student attitudes toward the course, subject matter, and instructor (i.e., affective learning; Andersen, 1979; Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Witt & Wheelless, 2001); (b) recall, comprehension, and retention of information (i.e., cognitive learning; Andersen, 1979; Andersen, Norton, & Nussbaum, 1981; Rodriguez et al., 1996; Witt & Wheelless, 2001); and (c) intentions to engage in behaviors taught in the course (i.e., behavioral learning; Andersen, 1979; Andersen & Andersen, 1982; Christophel, 1990).

Rodriguez et al. (1996) reviewed and tested three models explaining the relationships between teacher nonverbal immediacy and student learning. The Learning Model (Andersen, 1979; Andersen & Andersen, 1982) concluded that there is a direct causal relationship between teacher immediacy and student affective learning. Kelley and Gorham (1988) extended this thinking with a four-step model to demonstrate the relationship between immediacy and learning. They suggested a linear relationship between the presence of immediacy behaviors and learning: (a) cognitive learning is linked with memory, (b) attention is a necessary precursor for recall, (c) arousal affects attention, and (d) immediacy is related to arousal. Frymier (1994) offered a different explanation, the Motivation Model. This describes teacher immediacy as a mediating

variable on student motivation to learn and consequently concluded that there was no direct causal relationship between nonverbal immediacy and learning but that motivation is actually linked to learning. The third attempt to explain the relationship between teacher immediacy and learning is the Affective Learning Model. It was developed and testing by Rodriguez et al. (1996); and they argued that the mediator between immediacy and cognitive learning is affective learning, not motivation.

A fourth model was introduced by Violette (2002), the Interaction Effects Model. This model added considerations of gender influences both of the teacher and student on affective, behavioral, and cognitive learning. Violette claimed that there is an indirect relationship between teacher immediacy and cognitive learning much like both the Motivation Model and the Affective Learning Model. Furthermore, it displays a direct relationship between teacher clarity, teacher and student gender, and affective and cognitive learning with cognitive learning serving as the mediator to behavioral learning.

Teachers who have immediate behaviors create an approach-oriented behavior signaling accessibility, involvement, arousal, and interest (Anderson et al., 1999). The status between the teacher and student is reduced, not meaning the teacher is on the same level as the student but simply meaning the student will not be intimidated by the teacher's higher status. Students might be more willing to ask questions about content without fear of the teacher (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000). Murray (1997) showed that enthusiastic teachers move around, make eye contact, and use more gestures and vocal variation.

A set of scales which can directly identify special traits such as smiling, vocal expressiveness, and a relaxed body position have been developed by immediacy

researchers (Gorham, 1988). These immediacy variables can be directly taught to teachers for the purpose of improving the student-teacher relationship, student motivation, engagement, and cognitive learning (Velez & Cano, 2008). Preparing teachers to increase immediacy require trainees to understand that not all teachers will select and use the same immediacy behaviors. A teacher who utilizes a behavior that seems uncomfortable appears awkward to students rather than immediate. False immediacy becomes evaluated as worse than low immediacy (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000).

At its foundation, teacher immediacy is based on elements of motivational theory (Gorham, 1988). Brophy (2004), referring specifically to factors which increase student motivation, stated that teachers need to “learn to use timing, nonverbal expressions and gestures, and cueing and other verbal techniques to project a level of intensity that tells students that material is especially important and deserves close attention” (p. 276).

## **Conclusion**

The research concerning student engagement focuses on relationships and social interaction between the students and teachers and the academic activities, disciplinary practices, and organization structure that shape these relationships. Engagement is central in motivational development because it influences learning and performance. Those students who are motivated are engaged and those who are engaged give rise to not only learning but also to bonding, commitment promoting self-regulated learning, and allowing students to take responsibility for their own academic progress and development. To be effective, teachers must recognize their ability to either positively or negatively affect student motivation. Teacher immediacy is based on elements of



motivational theory; therefore, the purpose of this research was to determine the relationship between teacher immediacy behaviors and the effects it has on student engagement, motivation, and academic growth.

In teacher education, it is imperative that professors continue to examine ways to identify important teacher traits and effectively prepare future teachers. Are there certain teacher qualities that can be developed through coursework or modeling? As education continues to seek ways to motivate students, perhaps teacher preparation faculty should consider the effect of immediacy. All participants in the educational process should be encouraged to evaluate and reflect on their verbal and nonverbal communication methods. If teachers intend to facilitate an optimal classroom environment, they must send supportive, caring communication messages to all students (Velez & Cano, 2008). Perhaps teacher immediacy, linked directly with student motivation and learning, can provide insight.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teacher immediacy behaviors and teacher/student rapport on student motivation, engagement, and cognitive learning. This chapter describes the methodology used to examine the research questions by addressing the following: participants and sampling technique, research design, instrumentation, procedures, data collection, and data analysis. First, the researcher describes the participants of this study. Second, the instruments used to measure the variables are discussed. Finally, the researcher describes the instruments used and the analysis to measure the variables.

### **Participants**

The research was conducted in a rural elementary school in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina. The school is a Title I school with 530 students in prekindergarten through fifth grade. Seventy-two percent of the students in this study are below the poverty line according to the state of North Carolina free and reduced lunch standards. The average daily attendance is 95.5%.

Students in this study were in Grades 3-5. The classrooms range from 16 students to 24 students per classroom. There is a total of 12 classrooms in Grades 3-5. Teacher levels of teaching experience range from 0-21 years of experience in a public school classroom.

The researcher of this study is the principal at the elementary school where the study took place. The classroom teachers who participated all volunteered to participate, and no part of the study was used as an evaluative measure for the North Carolina

Educator Effectiveness System teacher evaluation instrument. The convenience sample was purposefully chosen, as the students used were clustered into the classrooms of the 12 teachers in Grades 3-5 who volunteered to participate.

### **Research Design**

This study sought to add to the body of research surrounding the effects of teacher immediacy on student engagement, motivation, and cognitive learning. The study is a quantitative correlational research design. This research attempted to determine the extent of a relationship between student engagement, motivation, teacher immediacy, and student learning using statistical data. The following questions guided this study:

1. What is the relationship between student perceptions of teacher verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors and teacher perceptions of their own immediacy?
2. What is the relationship between teacher immediacy and cognitive learning?
3. What is the relationship between teacher immediacy and student motivation?
4. To what extent are teacher immediacy, student engagement, and student motivation combined predictors of learning?

### **Instrumentation**

Reliability is defined as the consistency of a measure (Huck, 2007). Validity is the degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretation of the test scores and how well the test fulfills its functions founded on scientific basis (NCDPI, 2015). The instruments used in this study are both reliable and valid.

The AIMS (Atmosphere, Instruction, Management, Student Engagement) classroom measure was developed as a comprehensive approach to evaluating multiple

domains associated with effective teaching practices. Items were identified from analyses of teachers who were successful in maintaining high levels of student engagement and literacy gains. The four categories can be reported individually or together. For this study only, the engagement category will be used. The four engagement items are part of the larger AIMS observation instrument designed to quantify teacher quality. Engagement is measured with three items which focus on staying on task (at least 80% of students are consistently on task and highly engaged in class activities; students are so self-regulated that disciplinary encounters are rarely seen); participating in class (students eagerly raise their hands and participate); and expressing excitement (students vocalize/express excitement about content/ activities—lots of “oohs” and “aahs”).

Scoring/reporting engagement items are rated using a scale ranging from 1 (poor/rare use) to 3 (exemplar/consistent use). The developer provides interpretative guidelines for overall results: Teachers who score more than one standard deviation below the mean are characterized as “poor”; teachers who score over one standard deviation above the mean are characterized as “exemplar”; and teachers who score within one standard deviation of the mean are characterized as “typical” (Roehrig & Christesen, 2010). There was reliability across samples analyzed by the developer and her colleagues. The Cronbach alphas for the student engagement scale ranged from .62 to .79 across 125 teachers observed by two people (9,350 unique observations); the developers reported exact agreement on 58%; and another 37% of ratings were off by only a point. In a study of secondary teachers, interrater reliability for individual items was 65% (Stanulis & Floden 2009), and internal consistency of scales was .60-.95.

Roehrig and Christesen (2010) reported evidence of construct validity of the engagement scale through significant correlations with the three other categories of teacher practice. Confirmatory factor analyses by Roehrig and Christesen provided support for the four overarching categories.

Student and teacher perceptions of teacher verbal immediacy were measured using the VIS, verbal immediacy scale (Gorham, 1988). The 17-item Likert-type scale has been commonly used to measure student perceptions of instructor immediacy. Students were asked to respond to verbal immediacy items using a 5-point scale: 0=never to 4=very often. The split-half reliability from Gorham's initial use of the scale in the on-ground classroom setting has been reported as .94, with succeeding studies in the conventional setting having recorded high reliability coefficients ranging from .77 to .94 (Christensen & Menzel, 1998). The verbal immediacy scale is verified as trustworthy with reported Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of 0.8 (Christophel, 1990) and .94 (Gorham & Christophel, 1992).

Teachers completed the Teacher Rating of Academic Achievement Motivation (TRAAM; Stinnett, Oehler-Stinnett, & Stout, 1991) to measure teacher ratings of children's academic motivation. The TRAAM consists of 44 descriptive statements that indicate aspects of academic achievement motivation using a 5-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Each statement is scored with a numeric value from 1 to 5. Some statements are worded so as to reflect motivated behavior, and some are worded to reflect unmotivated behavior. Factor scores as well as the total score are computed by summing the appropriate items. A high score reflects motivated behavior. Factor analysis of the TRAAM indicated that the scale is a four-factor instrument

(Stinnett et al., 1991). Factor 1 reflects the student's tendency to work to the best of his or her ability, to complete assignments without prompting, and to give good effort on school tasks. Factor 2 reflects the student's behavior in relation to mastery. This includes the tendency to maintain effort when approaching a difficult task and level of curiosity. Factor 3 reflects the child's preference for competitive versus cooperative educational tasks. Factor 4 reflects the student's history of school success and ability to keep up with the pace of classroom instruction. Internal consistency estimates for the four factors were acceptable (coefficient alphas ranged from .79 to .98).

Nonverbal Immediacy Scale Self Report and Observer Reports (Richmond, McCroskey, & Johnson, 2003) were used as the data collection instrument. The Nonverbal Immediacy Scale (Richmond et al., 2003) is a norm-based scale including 26 items that measure nonverbal immediacy behavior. Thirteen of these items are positively worded (1, 2, 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, and 25) and the other 13 are worded negatively (3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15, 18, 20, 23, 24, and 26). Each of the 26 items is scored using a 5- point Likert-type response format, and the degree of agreement is from 1 (rarely) to 5 (very often). The Nonverbal Immediacy Scale was designed to develop a measure of nonverbal immediacy which could be used as a self-report or an observer report in a variety of communication contexts (instructional, organizational, interpersonal) with a high reliability and validity (Richmond et al., 2003, p. 515). Although the earlier versions of the scale were developed for the observations of teachers, this scale can be used for any target person, which makes the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale an appropriate instrument to be utilized with students and teachers. Alpha reliability estimates around .90 should be expected. The content validity was

proved to be very strong since the instrument contains 13 different nonverbal components (Richmond et al., 2003). This measure has more face validity than other instruments because it has more and more diverse items. Its predictive validity also is excellent. In the norming of the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale, Richmond et al. (2003) found a maximum composite score range of 79-109 for men and women combined. Teachers completed this as a self-report of their perceived immediacy. Students then completed the survey on their observations of their teacher's nonverbal immediacy behaviors.

To measure learning, the North Carolina end-of-grade tests (EOG) in mathematics and reading were used. This test is given within the last 10 days of school. NCDPI uses the state tests to monitor student growth and student performance (NCDPI, 2015).

According to NCDPI (2015),

When properly administered and interpreted, EOG's provide reliable and valid information that enables;

students to know the extent to which they have mastered expected knowledge and skill and how they compare to others;

parents to know if their children are acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in highly competitive job market;

teachers to know if their students have mastered grade-level knowledge skill in the curriculum and if not, what weaknesses need to be addressed;

community leaders and lawmakers to know if students in NC schools are improving their performance over time;

citizens to assess the performance of public schools. (pp. 6-7)

The raw score is converted to a developmental scale score. The scale score

depicts growth in reading comprehension and mathematics achievement from year to year. Growth is determined by comparing the scale scores on the EOG of the previous school year and the EOG given during the current school year to determine your child's growth in reading comprehension and mathematics. According to NCDPI (2015), "test scores must be reliable if any valid inferences are to be made on examinees' performances. The North Carolina Statewide Testing Program meets or exceeds industry norms for reliability" (p. 1). The procedure uses coefficient alpha. The North Carolina Statewide Testing Program maintains a reliability coefficient of at least 0.85 on multiple choice tests (NCDPI, 2015). The North Carolina Statewide Testing Program meets or exceeds industry norms for reliability. The indices below in Table 4 and Table 5 are measures of internal consistency as calculated by Cronbach Coefficient Alpha.

Table 4

*EOG English Language Arts/Reading Reliabilities*

Grade	Form		
	A	B	C
3	0.91	0.92	0.91
4	0.89	0.90	0.88
5	0.90	0.88	0.89

NCDPI (2015).

Table 5

*EOG Mathematics Reliabilities*

Grade	Form		
	A	B	C
3	0.91	0.92	0.91
4	0.92	0.92	0.92
5	0.91	0.92	0.91

NCDPI (2015).



## **Procedures**

Following IRB approval, a parental consent form was sent home to parents of all students in the 12 classrooms being used in the study. After all permissions were granted, data were collected during an 8-week span. This time was chosen to ensure that teachers and students had adequate time together to provide valid data related to immediacy.

During the research process, the researcher used strict confidentiality. All identifying information was removed from surveys, so privacy and confidentiality were maintained for both students and teachers throughout the study. The study required that academic data, motivation data, engagement data, and immediacy data be synchronized based on individual students and teachers. Names were not used; therefore, a coding scheme was devised to protect the participants. The researcher identified the research classrooms as 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 3E, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 5A, 5B, and 5C. Students in each classroom were randomly given a code to identify and connect the students to their cognitive scores, survey results, and classroom. The randomly generated codes are not identifiable to any specific student in the classrooms. The code identifiers were kept in a secure location with only the researcher having access. Following the completion of the study, the codes were destroyed.

After permission was granted by parents, students were given two surveys spread out over 2 weeks. The surveys were administrated to students by a proxy in order to maintain confidentiality of student identifiers. Administering surveys did not impede academic learning. The data collection was a part of a normal classroom meeting time already in student daily schedules. Students completed the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale,

rating their teachers on a 5-point Likert scale, 1 being never and 5 being very often. A week later, the students were given the Verbal Immediacy Scale. This scale is a 4-point Likert scale. This scale was completed during class at the beginning of the day during class meeting time. The proxy gave students the survey while the teacher was not in the room in order to maintain anonymity.

The researcher gave teachers the Nonverbal and Verbal Immediacy scales in order to get a self-reported immediacy score. Teachers were asked to complete the surveys within a week's time. Teachers completed the TRAAM on each of the students in their classrooms who had parental consent. Within a 2-week period, the engagement portion of the AIMS (Academic, Instruction, Management, Student Engagement) instrument was used by the researcher and a colleague to obtain a level of engagement for students in each class. Each classroom was observed two times in order to increase the reliability of the data. Following the collection of all four data sources, the data were analyzed to correlate the relationship among the constructs.

### **Data Collection**

Data for the proposed study were collected on several occasions over a period of 8 weeks. Data collection was utilized to gather engagement information via first-hand observations, which enabled the researcher the opportunity to record engagement levels of students in the classroom. Student data were collected by a proxy in the classroom setting while teachers were not in the classroom in order to maintain autonomy. Students completed the Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy Scales rating their teacher's immediacy behaviors. Teachers also completed both the Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy Scales to obtain a self-rated immediacy level. The average immediacy score obtained from

students and the teachers self-rated immediacy scale scores was used to give each teacher an overall verbal and nonverbal immediacy rating.

Teachers completed the TRAAM rating on each of the students in their classrooms. These rating gave students a motivation score. The motivation levels were used to obtain an overall classroom motivation score. Finally, the researcher collected data using the engagement portion of the AIMS to show the overall engagement level of the students in the classrooms participating.

### **Data Analysis and Procedures**

Quantitative data sources to address the research questions included observations using the AIMS classroom observations tool, TRAAM motivation scale, verbal and nonverbal immediacy surveys by students and teachers, and achievement data using the EOG. Data were collected in a timely manner and analyzed by an inductive analysis of data collection. The expected effort of the data analysis allowed the researcher to discover important theme patterns and inter-relationships by confirming findings. A descriptive statistical analysis of each variable allowed the researcher to show the correlations among immediacy and the other three variables being analyzed.

The Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy Scales completed by teachers and students were used to give each teacher an immediacy rating. The self-reported immediacy ratings and the average of student immediacy ratings were used to give teachers an overall immediacy rating that ranges from 1-5. Immediacy ratings were used to correlate the relationship between verbal immediacy, nonverbal immediacy, and motivation; and verbal immediacy, nonverbal immediacy, and cognitive learning. The correlation between all four variables was compared to answer the proposed research questions.

**Summary**

This study was designed to explore both teacher and student perceptions of teacher immediacy, student engagement, student motivation, and cognitive learning. Data from surveys and observations in the study support the findings of previous research which identified specific factors affecting student learning and motivation. Effective teachers understand that every student has the ability to learn and that building relationships with students is precarious in recognizing the motivational needs of each student (Theobald, 2006).

## **Chapter 4: Results**

### **Restatement of the Purpose**

This study examined the relationship between teacher immediacy behaviors and teacher/student rapport on student motivation, engagement, and cognitive learning. According to Mehrabian (1971), the concept of immediacy states that people are drawn toward persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike or evaluate negatively. This study followed a quantitative correlation research design. As described in detail in Chapter 3, the target population for this study includes third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students and 12 teachers from a rural elementary school. The purpose in selecting these students was to determine the perspective of students in elementary school. Students with parental permission and who signed the student assent form were asked to complete a survey on their teachers' verbal and nonverbal immediacy in class. There was a total of 146 students who participated in the study.

### **Data Collection Process**

In this quantitative correlational design, the researcher collected data utilizing three different methods which included a student survey, teacher survey, and student reading and math EOG scores. A survey is a technique of data collection which utilizes questionnaires to collect data from a sample representation of a population to which the findings of the data analysis can be generalized. Utilizing statistical quantitative data related to the study's purpose helped the researcher understand and explain student perceptions of their teacher's verbal and nonverbal immediacy as well as teacher perceptions of student motivation and their own immediacy levels and correlate that with

their EOG test results in reading and math. To begin with, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and requested permission to conduct research from the district superintendent. The researcher then received permission to conduct research from the IRB committee at Gardner-Webb University. Students received a parent consent letter (see Appendix A). The letters stated the purpose of the study and provided students the opportunity to opt out with no consequences. Students were given surveys by a proxy with a script to maintain consistency (see Appendix B). Surveys were given to teachers to complete (see Appendices C, D, E, & F). The timeline for research data collection had a starting date of April 2018 and conclusion date of June 2018. This time frame allowed the researcher to administer the student surveys and teacher surveys and gather EOG score data. The response rate for students participating was 59% with 146 of 246 students participating in Grades 3, 4, and 5.

Creswell (2015) referred to this sampling technique as convenience sampling because the respondents were “chosen based on their convenience and availability” (p. 158). Table 6 shows the number of students who participated in each grade level.

Table 6

*Percent of Students Participating by Grade Level*

Grade Level	Percent Students Participating	Number Students Participating
3	59%	51
4	65%	57
5	53%	38

Fourth-grade students had the most participants in the study with 65% (N=57) of the fourth-grade students participating. In third grade, 59% (N=51) of students participated; and in fifth grade, 53% (N=38) of students participated.

Once the student surveys were administered and results collected, the mean and

standard deviation were analyzed to provide single numerical values that were used to describe the correlation between student analyses of teacher verbal and nonverbal immediacy and teacher self-selected results of their own verbal and nonverbal immediacy. The numerical data produced were utilized to establish statistical themes. Table 7 lists the distribution of participants by teaching experience.

Table 7

*Distribution of Teacher Participants: Experience by Grade Level*

Grade Level	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25
3	3			1	1
4	1	2	1		
5				2	1
Total	4	2	1	3	2

**Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy Scale**

The self-selected teacher Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy Scale scores for each teacher were calculated based on teacher responses to individual questions on each survey. The Verbal Immediacy Scale consisted of 18 questions ranging from never to very often. According to the scale, each of the questions had a Likert-type scale response, and each response was assigned a numerical value range from 0-4. The 18 questions and prospective numerical values were added together for each teacher to give teachers a verbal immediacy score. Prospectively, each student participating in the study also completed the Verbal Immediacy Scale and student individual scores were averaged together to determine an average verbal immediacy score for each teacher. Tables 8-10 display individual teacher class mean, standard deviation, the teacher's self-reported score, and the *t* test for equality showing significant or insignificant differences ( $\alpha=.05$ ) in teacher and student ratings of verbal immediacy. The test value refers to the teacher's

self-selected score of their verbal immediacy score. The mean is the mean score of the teacher's student responses on the Verbal Immediacy Survey.

Table 8

*Third Grade Verbal Immediacy Statistics*

Teacher	Statistics			One Sample <i>t</i> test			
	N	Mean	SD	Test value	<i>t</i>	Df	Sig
3A	9	33.22	10.49	44	-3.084	8	.015
3B	10	40.50	4.74	44	-.2.333	9	.045
3C	11	31.36	8.06	51	-8.075	10	.000
3D	9	38.22	8.42	48	-3.483	8	.008
3E	12	43.17	9.45	56	-4.706	11	.001

Table 8 shows the one sample *t* test to determine whether there was a statistical difference between student mean scores and teacher scores in third grade. All third-grade classes showed negative results when determining the difference in student and teacher ratings of verbal immediacy. All third-grade teachers rated themselves significantly higher than their prospective students.

Table 9

*Fourth Grade Verbal Immediacy Statistics*

Teacher	Statistics			One Sample <i>t</i> test			
	N	Mean	SD	Test value	<i>t</i>	df	Sig
4A	15	44.80	6.17	56	-7.034	14	.000
4B	11	43.36	10.75	44	-0.196	10	.848
4C	16	35.63	4.72	48	-10.494	15	.000
4D	15	49.13	6.52	50	-0.515	14	.615

Table 9 shows negative results when determining the one sample *t* test comparing teacher self-selected scores and student mean verbal immediacy scores in fourth grade. Only two of four classes showed a significant difference between teacher scores and student mean scores.



Table 10

*Fifth Grade Verbal Immediacy Statistics*

Teacher	Statistics			One Sample <i>t</i> test			
	N	Mean	SD	Test value	<i>t</i>	df	Sig
5A	14	39.43	7.51	52	-6.262	13	.000
5B	12	41.42	8.64	50	-3.442	11	.006
5C	12	40.00	4.11	55	-12.636	11	.000

Table 10 also shows a negative differential when comparing teacher scores and student mean scores in fifth grade with all three teachers showing significant differences.

The nonverbal immediacy scores were determined through a 26-question Likert scale ranging from never to very often. Each response was assigned a numerical rating ranging from 0 to 5. This norm-based scale included 13 items that are positively worded (1, 2, 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, and 25), and the other 13 are worded negatively (3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15, 18, 20, 23, 24, and 26). Table 11 shows the norms for the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale (Richmond et al., 2003).

Table 11

*Nonverbal Immediacy Norms*

	Mean	SD	High	Low
Females	96.7	16.1	=>112	=<81
Males	91.6	15.0	=>106	=<77
Combined	94.2	15.6	=>109	=<79

Tables 12-14 display per grade level individual teacher means, standard deviations, and the *t* test for equality showing significant or insignificant differences in teacher and student ratings of nonverbal immediacy.

Table 12

*Third Grade Nonverbal Statistics*

Teacher	Statistics			One Sample <i>t</i> test			
	N	Mean	SD	Test value	<i>t</i>	Df	Sig
3A	9	92.67	7.52	88	1.863	8	.100
3B	10	104.00	5.52	115	-6.304	9	.000
3C	11	88.18	9.88	111	-7.662	10	.000
3D	9	88.44	3.32	117	-25.797	8	.000
3E	12	111.25	9.52	117	-2.093	11	.060

Table 12 shows the one sample *t* test to determine whether there was a statistical difference between student mean scores and teacher scores in third grade on the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale. Four of five third-grade classes showed negative results when determining the difference in student and teacher ratings of nonverbal immediacy. This indicates that student mean scores were lower than teacher scores. Three of five classes showed significant differences.

Table 13

*Fourth Grade Nonverbal Statistics*

Teacher	Statistics			One Sample <i>t</i> test			
	N	Mean	SD	Test value	<i>t</i>	Df	Sig
4A	15	101.20	5.00	125	-18.425	14	.000
4B	11	102.55	8.94	98	1.687	10	.123
4C	16	88.75	8.19	115	-12.815	15	.000
4D	15	106.47	9.52	118	-4.690	14	.000

Table 13 displays the fourth grade *t*-test results to determine the statistical difference between student and teacher ratings on the nonverbal immediacy scale. Three of four teachers' class means showed negative *t* value between teacher and student ratings of nonverbal immediacy and those three teachers' score differences were determined to be statistically significant.

Table 14

*Fifth Grade Nonverbal Statistics*

Teacher	Statistics			One Sample <i>t</i> test			
	N	Mean	SD	Test value	<i>t</i>	df	Sig
5A	14	87.29	12.49	120	-9.803	13	.000
5B	12	97.25	11.66	113	-4.678	11	.001
5C	12	93.92	7.68	98	-1.842	11	.093

In Table 14, two of three fifth-grade teachers' classes showed to be statistically significant; however, all three classrooms showed a negative *t* value between student and teacher ratings in nonverbal immediacy indicating the teacher scored themselves higher than the student.

**Reading Statistical Analysis**

The following statistical analyses correlate the reading EOG scores with the verbal and nonverbal immediacy scales and the TRAAM. Creswell (2012) described correlational research as a study where researchers use a correlation statistic method to measure and define the degree of association or relationship between two or more variables. According to Cohen (1988),  $0.1 < |r| < .3$  yields small or weak correlations,  $0.3 < |r| < .5$  yields medium or moderate correlations, and  $|r| > .5$  yields large or strong correlations.

The TRAAM scale scores were calculated by teachers completing an individual scale on each of their participating students. The TRAAM consists of 44 descriptive statements that indicate aspects of academic achievement motivation using a 5-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Each statement is scored with a numeric value from 1-5. Some statements are worded so as to reflect motivated behavior, and some are worded to reflect unmotivated behavior. Factor scores as well as the total

score are computed by summing the appropriate items. A high score reflects motivated behavior.

### Assumptions

For reading, the independence of observation can be assumed in two ways. First, the student data points were independently collected. Second the Durbin-Watson statistic for reading which measures the independence of residuals was 1.531. The assumption for multicollinearity was satisfied because all collinearity statistics indicated that there was collinearity. It is further supported by correlation coefficients in Table 15 that indicated that none of the variables were correlated with an R-value greater than 0.7.

Table 15 shows the results of the Pearson correlation analysis between student achievement (EOG reading test scores), teacher nonverbal immediacy score, teacher verbal immediacy, and student academic motivation.

Table 15

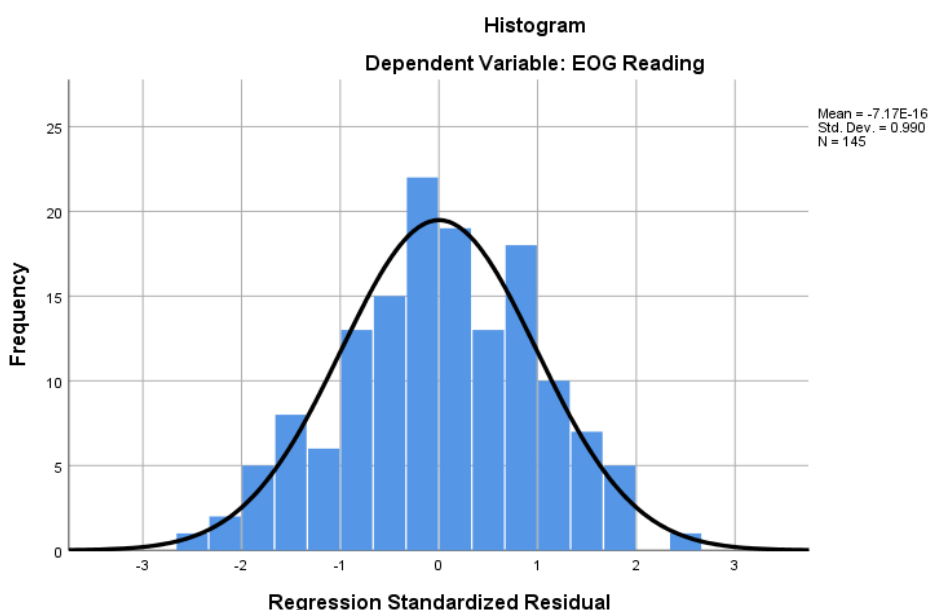
#### *Correlations Coefficients for Reading*

		Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy Scale Score	Teacher Verbal Immediacy Score	TRAAM Score
Pearson Correlation	EOG Reading	.317	.366	.423
	Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy Score		.514	.289
	Teacher Verbal Immediacy Score			.208

As shown in Table 15, the Pearson correlation coefficient shows a moderate positive linear relationship among student achievement (average reading EOG scores) and verbal and nonverbal immediacy as well as student academic motivation. The

correlation between verbal and nonverbal immediacy and student academic motivation is positive but weak.

The assumption of normality is illustrated by Figure 1, which clearly shows that the distribution of the residuals approximates normality.



*Figure 1.* EOG Reading Multiple Regression.

Figure 1 shows the model summary of the multiple regression procedure for the reading EOG. According to Creswell (2012), “multiple regression is a statistical procedure for examining the combined relationship of multiple independent variables with a single dependent variable” (p. 350).

Normality can be further supported by Figure 2, the Normal P-P graph (Figure 2), which shows that the residual points follow the diagonal line. The researcher determined that the residuals were normally distributed because they formed along the diagonal line.

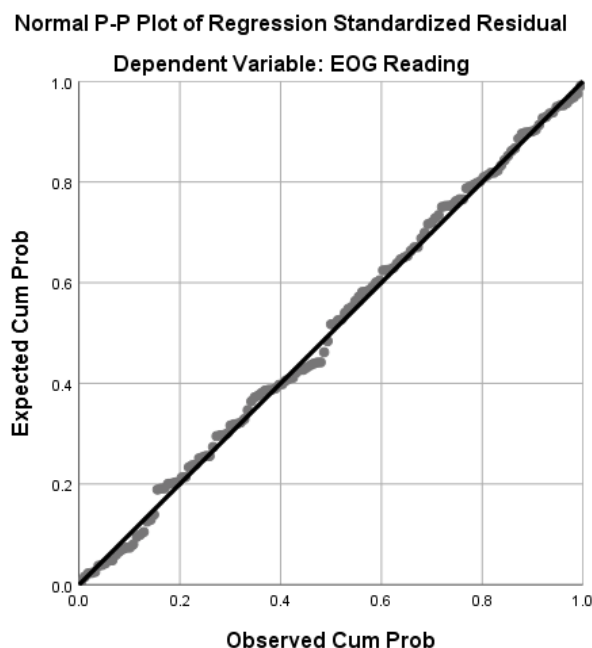


Figure 2. EOG Reading Regression Residual.

The significance of the model was shown by the ANOVA statistics. Table 16 shows that the verbal immediacy, nonverbal immediacy, and TRAAM statistically significantly predict the EOG in reading,  $F(3,141)=16.971$ ,  $p<.001$ , meaning that the regression model is a good fit for the data.

Table 16

*ANOVA Reading<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4949.263	3	1649.754	16.971	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	13706.696	141	97.211		
	Total	18655.959	144			

a. Dependent Variable: EOG Reading

b. Predictors: (Constant), TRAAM Score, Teacher Verbal Immediacy Score, Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy Score

Table 17 shows the model summary of the multiple regression procedure.

According to Creswell (2012), “multiple regression is a statistical procedure for examining the combined relationship of multiple independent variables with a single dependent variable” (p. 350). Table 17 shows the regression coefficients and standard errors of the independent variables. In Table 17, the dependent variable was student achievement as measured by the reading EOG scale scores. The independent variables were teacher verbal immediacy scores, teacher nonverbal immediacy scores, and student academic motivation using the TRAAM.

### Model Statistics

Table 17

#### *Model Summary Reading<sup>b</sup>*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.515 <sup>a</sup>	.265	.250	9.860	1.531

a. Predictors: (Constant), TRAAM Score, Teacher Verbal Immediacy Score, Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy Score

b. Dependent Variable: EOG Reading

$R^2$  for the overall model was 26.5% with an adjusted  $R^2$  of 25.0%, a medium effect size.

Table 18 shows the regression coefficients and standard errors of the independent variables. The TRAAM, measuring student academic motivation, and teacher verbal immediacy scores were statistically significant to the prediction of student achievement, as measured by reading EOG scores,  $p < .05$ . Nonverbal immediacy scores were found to be not significant in the explanation of the dependent variable.

Table 18

*Coefficients Reading*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	415.118	6.957		59.665	.000	401.363	428.872
	Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy Score	.088	.084	.090	1.047	.297	-.078	.255
	Teacher Verbal Immediacy Score	.322	.110	.248	2.936	.004	.105	.538
	TRAAM Score	.112	.025	.345	4.567	.000	.064	.161

a. Dependent Variable: EOG Reading.

### Math Statistical Analysis

The following statistical analyses are correlating math EOG scale scores with the verbal and nonverbal immediacy scores as well as the TRAAM academic motivation scores. Table 18 shows the results of the Pearson correlation analysis among student achievement (EOG math test scores), teacher nonverbal immediacy score, teacher verbal immediacy, and student academic motivation. There is a positive but weak correlation between verbal immediacy scores and math EOGs, while the nonverbal scores show a moderate correlation. When correlating student academic motivation using the TRAAM and math EOG scores, there is a strong correlation.

### Assumptions

For math, the independence of observation can be assumed in two ways. First, the student data points were independently collected. Second the Durbin-Watson statistic for math which measures the independence of residuals was .862. This is a low number for the Durbin-Watson, but the independence of the collection of data points outweighs this statistic. The assumption for multicollinearity was satisfied because all collinearity



statistics indicated collinearity. It is further supported by correlation coefficients in Table 19 that indicated that none of the variables were correlated with an R-value greater than 0.7.

Table 19

*Correlation Coefficients for Math*

		Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy Score	Teacher Verbal Immediacy Score	TRAAM Score
Pearson Correlation	EOG Math	.335	.182	.632
	Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy Score		.512	.281
	Teacher Verbal Immediacy Score			.203

The assumption of normality is illustrated by Figure 3, which clearly shows that the distribution of the residuals approximates normality. The math data are proportioned, meaning that the mean is a good estimate for the center of the data; therefore, the use of the mean to analyze the data is reliable.

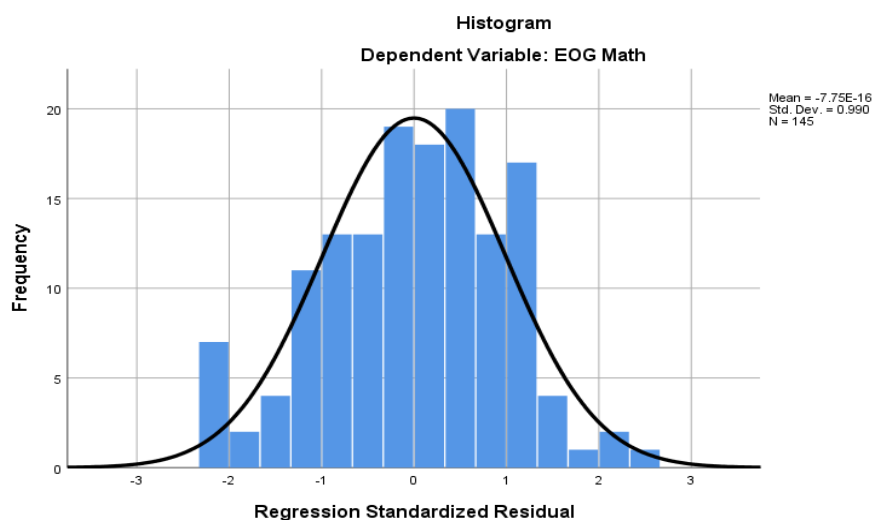
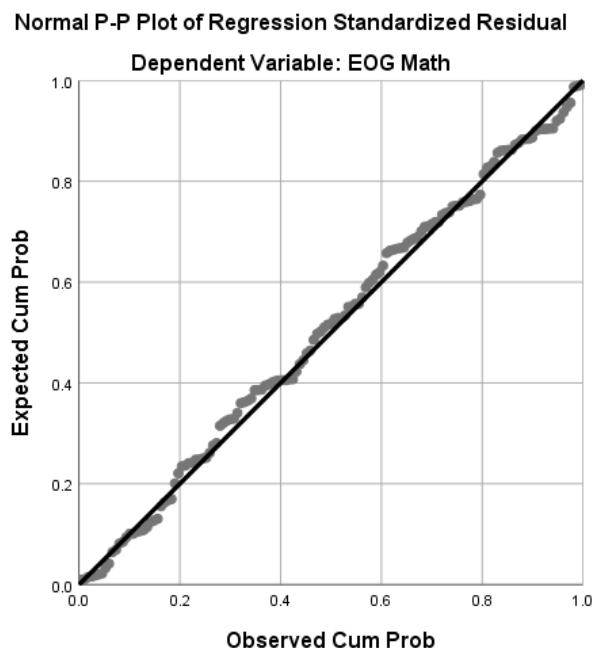


Figure 3. EOG Math Multiple Regression.

Normality can be further supported by Figure 4, the Normal P-P graph (Figure 4), which shows that the residual points follow the diagonal line.



*Figure 4.* EOG Math Regression Residual.

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The ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) test was used to determine if verbal immediacy, nonverbal immediacy, and TRAAM statistically significantly predict the EOG in math. Table 19 shows that the verbal immediacy, nonverbal immediacy, and TRAAM statistically significantly predict the EOG in math,  $F(3,141)=36.070$ ,  $p<.001$ , meaning that the regression model is a good fit for the data.

Table 20

*ANOVA Math<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	5277.499	3	1759.166	35.070	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	7072.750	141	50.161		
Total	12350.248	144			

a. Dependent Variable: EOG Math

b. Predictors: (Constant), TRAAM Score, Teacher Verbal Immediacy Score, Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy Score

**Model Statistics**

Table 21 shows the model summary of the multiple regression procedure. It also shows the regression coefficients and standard errors of the independent variables. In Table 21, the dependent variable was student achievement as measured by the math EOG scale scores. The independent variables were teacher verbal immediacy scores, teacher nonverbal immediacy scores, and student academic motivation using the TRAAM.

Table 21

*Model Summary Math<sup>b</sup>*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.654 <sup>a</sup>	.427	.415	7.082	.862

a. Predictors: (Constant), TRAAM Score, Teacher Verbal Immediacy Score, Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy Score

b. Dependent Variable: EOG Math

R<sup>2</sup> for the overall model was 42.7% with an adjusted R<sup>2</sup> of 41.5%, a medium effect size.

Table 22 shows the regression coefficients and standard errors of the independent variables. The TRAAM, measuring student academic motivation and teacher nonverbal immediacy scores were statistically significant to the prediction of student achievement, as measured by math EOG scores,  $p < .05$ . Verbal immediacy scores were found to be not significant in the explanation of the dependent variable.

Table 22

*Coefficients Math*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	<i>t</i>		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	428.326	5.008		85.523	.000	418.425	438.227
	Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy Score	.149	.061	.187	2.463	.015	.029	.269
	Teacher Verbal Immediacy Score	-.035	.079	-.033	-.442	.659	-.190	.121
	TRAAM Score	.155	.018	.586	8.806	.000	.121	.190

a. Dependent Variable: EOG Math

**Summary**

Chapter 4 provided the results of this research study. Overall, the data collected in this study revealed that generally the teachers self-reported a higher rating of their immediacy both verbal and nonverbal than the students. The data indicated a weak positive correlation between student achievement in math and reading and verbal immediacy but a moderate correlation between nonverbal immediacy and student achievement in reading and math. A correlation between student achievement and student academic motivation was found to be moderate to strong. Chapter 5 discusses the findings of the study, addresses the research questions, and provides recommendations for future study.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

The purpose of this research was to examine and analyze the relationships among teacher immediacy behaviors, teacher-student rapport, student motivation, and academic achievement. Teacher immediacy behaviors were rated using the Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy Scales. Student academic motivation was determined by the TRAAM rating scale. Student achievement was determined by the EOG assessment in mathematics and reading. This chapter draws conclusions and discusses implications from the data in Chapter 4 as well as provides recommendations for further study.

### **Discussion**

This chapter uses the data from Chapter 4 to address the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between student perceptions of teacher verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors and teacher perceptions of their own immediacy?
2. What is the relationship between teacher immediacy and cognitive learning?
3. What is the relationship between teacher immediacy and student motivation?
4. To what extent is teacher immediacy, student engagement, and student motivation combined predictors of learning?

Data from this study provide information on the relationships among teacher verbal and nonverbal immediacy, student academic motivation, and student achievement.

### **Implication of Findings**

**Research Question 1: What is the relationship between student perceptions of teacher verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors and teacher perceptions of**

**their own immediacy?** In order to analyze the relationship between student perception of verbal and nonverbal immediacy and teacher self-perception of their own immediacy, the Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy Scales were given to participating students and teachers. Student mean scores for each teacher's verbal immediacy score were calculated and compared to teacher self-selected scores. Tables 8-10 in Chapter 4 show each grade level's verbal immediacy statistics, and Tables 12-14 in Chapter 4 display each grade's nonverbal immediacy statistics. When analyzing teacher perceptions of their verbal immediacy and student perceptions of teacher verbal immediacy, all 12 teachers rated themselves higher than student mean scores. Andersen (1979) characterized verbal immediacy behaviors in the classroom as teachers asking students questions, encouraging students to talk, using humor, calling students by name, praising student work, and providing feedback to students.

Student ratings of teacher use of these verbal immediacy behaviors were statistically significant in 10 of the 12 classrooms surveyed. Table 8 in Chapter 4 shows the third-grade teacher self-selected scores were at least 3.5 points higher (3B); and in classroom 3C, the teacher rating was 19.4 points higher than the student mean. In fourth grade, Table 9 in Chapter 4, two of the four teachers rated themselves significantly higher than the student mean. Teachers 4A (11.20 points) and 4C (12.37 points) higher than the class mean. In fifth grade, all three teachers rated themselves significantly higher than their class mean score. Table 10 in Chapter 4 shows that teachers rated themselves from 8.58 (5B) to 15.0 (5C) points higher than their students. The analysis of Research Question 1 indicates that students do not see their teachers as having as strong of verbal immediacy as teachers perceive themselves to have. Based on

the perceptions of the students, teachers have overstated their verbal immediacy assessments.

Table 12 in Chapter 4 shows that four of five third-grade teachers rated themselves higher in nonverbal immediacy than the student's mean in their classrooms; three of those were statistically significant with teacher 3D rating themselves 28.56 points higher than the student mean. According to Table 11 in Chapter 4, the student mean score for teacher nonverbal immediacy in third grade falls in the moderate range for all five teachers, while three of the five teachers rated themselves in the high range for nonverbal immediacy.

Student ratings of teacher nonverbal immediacy in fourth grade, Table 13 in Chapter 4, show that in three of four classrooms, the teachers rated themselves significantly higher than the student mean score. Teacher 4C scored themselves 26.25 points higher than their class mean, while teacher 4A rated themselves 4.55 points less than their class mean. Three of the teachers rated themselves in the high range (Table 13), while the mean score for students in all four classrooms was in the moderate range.

The mean score for the students in fifth grade, Table 14 in Chapter 4, also shows a discrepancy in teacher and student ratings. Teachers rated themselves higher in all three of the classrooms, significantly in two of those classrooms. Teachers 5A (32.71 points) and 5B (15.75 points) rated themselves statistically higher, while teacher 5C was only 4.08 points higher. The student mean score fell in the moderate range for all three classrooms, while two of three of the teachers rated themselves in the high range.

Further analysis of the data related to Research Question 1 indicated that teachers in all 12 classrooms rated themselves higher in verbal immediacy than the student mean,

indicating that teachers see themselves as more immediate than students do. These conclusions agree with the research conducted by Wiener and Mehrabian (1968) that suggested verbal immediacy reflects closeness between those interacting and is based on the receiver's perception of the sender's behavior. In other words, as the results of the surveys showed, the only way the sender's behaviors can be characterized as immediate is if the receiver perceives them as immediate.

Taken together, what a teacher thinks he/she does may be of marginal interest, but what is of critical concern is what students think the teacher does and what impact those perceptions have on other meanings stimulated in the mind of the student (Richmond & McCroskey, 1990). In agreement with the findings of this research, West (1994) suggested that teacher immediacy behaviors are critical in student learning because higher levels of perceived immediacy improve student approach behaviors, increase levels of enthusiasm and commitment to the learning task, promote student arousal that enhances motivation, and ultimately increase student learning.

**Research Question 2: What is the relationship between teacher immediacy and cognitive learning?** When analyzing the relationships between teacher immediacy and cognitive learning in reading, the researcher used a Pearson correlation coefficient (Table 15) that shows a moderate positive linear relationship among student achievement (average reading EOG scores) and verbal immediacy ( $r=.366$ ) and nonverbal immediacy ( $r=.317$ ). In agreement with these findings, Andersen (1979) believed that being more immediate with students would allow teachers to entice student interests, increase their attentions, and ultimately increase learning. An analysis of the relationship between teacher immediacy and cognitive learning in math using Pearson's correlation coefficient



(Table 19) shows a moderate positive linear relationship among student achievement in math and nonverbal immediacy ( $r=.335$ ), while the linear relationship among verbal immediacy and math achievement is positive but weak ( $r=.182$ ).

Frisby and Myers (2008) found that immediate teachers increase student motivation to study, which increases their time on a task and consequently increases their cognitive learning. The analysis of regression coefficients indicates that teacher verbal immediacy was statistically significant in predicting reading EOG scores. In agreement with these findings, a study by Reeves and Jang (2006) supported the theory that a teacher's ability to give praise, feedback, and encouragement, all verbal immediacy skills, produced academic benefits.

Teacher nonverbal immediacy was statistically significant in predicting math EOG scores. These findings were consistent with previous studies that found highly immediate teachers use communication behaviors such as close proximity, eye contact, vocal expressiveness (voice inflection), smiling, leaning toward a student, appropriate touching, and gesturing (Andersen, 1979) to communicate positive feelings which in turn create acceptance for students. In agreement with the findings, Kelley and Gorham (1988) argued that a highly immediate teacher arouses and captures the attention of his/her students and thus improves their learning because they pay attention and remember the information. Likewise, Rodriguez et al. (1996) suggested that teacher immediacy actually increases student affective learning, which then increases student cognitive learning. In contrast, the impact that nonverbal immediacy had on reading EOG scores and verbal immediacy had on math EOG scores was statistically nonsignificant.

**Research Question 3: What is the relationship between teacher immediacy and student motivation?** The relationship between verbal and nonverbal immediacy and student academic motivation using the TRAAM was correlated in Table 15 in Chapter 4 and has a positive correlation. In agreement to these findings, Wentzel (1998) determined that positive interactions between teachers and students increase motivation and a greater pursuit of academic goals. Student perceptions of their relationship with their teacher are essential in motivating students to perform well. Accordingly, students who perceive their relationship with their teacher as positive, warm, and close are motivated to be more engaged in school and to improve their academic achievement (Wentzel, 1998). From an early age through adolescence, academic intrinsic motivation has been shown to be positively and significantly related to student achievement and perceptions of their academic competence (Gottfried, 1990; Sweet et al., 1998).

A Pearson correlation coefficient was performed that showed that nonverbal immediacy had a positive but weak correlation in predicting academic motivation ( $R=.289$  for reading, and  $.281$  for math). The correlation was positive yet weak ( $R=.208$  for reading and  $.203$  for math) when using verbal immediacy to predict academic motivation as well. These results show that the correlation between verbal immediacy and nonverbal immediacy was positive when correlating with academic motivation.

Research has indicated that verbal immediacy behaviors are positively correlated with student motivation (Christensen & Menzel, 1998; Christophel, 1990). Moreover, Skinner and Belmont (1993) found that as teacher perceptions of motivation increased, student cognitive engagement increased during the year; conversely, as student cognitive and behavioral engagement increased, teacher perceptions of student motivation

increased positively. Nolen and Haladyna (1990) also reported findings supporting these effects. According to teacher perceptions, intrinsically motivated students who were cognitively engaged in classwork were more likely to be higher achievers than were less motivated and less engaged students.

In a 1-year study of 443 first-grade students, Hughes et al. (2008) suggested that when students experience a sense of belonging and supportive relationships with teachers and classmates, they may become more motivated to actively participate in the classroom. Students who enjoy a close and supportive relationship with a teacher experience greater academic achievement because they are more engaged in the classroom and they work harder.

In their longitudinal study on the relationship between student-teacher relationships, engagement, and achievement, Hughes et al. (2008) found that the quality of the student-teacher relationship predicted student achievement. According to Kennedy (2006), in order for students to be motivated to learn, they must want to learn. The wanting generally comes from an emotional connection between the student and the new material. Kennedy found that emotional reactions tell us what is important to learn and what to remember. Furthermore, emotion drives attention, which drives learning and memory. Several studies have indicated that an emotional connection is needed to learn cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally (Kennedy, 2006).

In opposition of the findings in this study, the Affective Learning Model was an attempt to explain the relationship between teacher immediacy and learning developed and tested by Rodriguez et al. (1996); and they argued that the mediator between immediacy and cognitive learning is affective learning, not motivation. In contrast to this

study, Pogue and AhYun (2006) predicted that when teachers practice high levels of immediacy, students will report high levels of motivation and affective learning. Their study revealed that students perceived highly immediate teachers to be credible, which in turn showed positive results in affective learning, showing a significant positive correlation between student motivation and teacher immediacy.

Gottfried (1985) found that children who reported higher academic intrinsic motivation had significantly higher school achievement and more favorable perceptions of their academic competence. While exploring this motivation in young elementary school children, Gottfried (1990) found that the results from correlational and regression analyses predicting achievement and motivation showed that both are independent but positively related constructs (Gottfried, 1990) corresponding with the results of the current study.

**Research Question 4: To what extent are teacher immediacy, student engagement, and student motivation combined predictors of learning?** Table 17 in Chapter 4 shows the model summary of the multiple regression procedures. The R represents the multiple correlation coefficient which generalized the correlation coefficient  $r$  (found in Pearson correlation).  $R$  is considered one measure of the quality of the prediction of the dependent variable and ranges from 0-1. The higher the value of  $r$ , the better the independent variable is at predicting the dependent variable (Lund Research Group, 2013). In the reading portion of this study, the  $R$  value was .515, which indicates a high quality of prediction of the dependent variable (reading EOG). The  $R^2$  represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (reading EOG) that could be explained by the independent variables (verbal immediacy and TRAAM) (Lund Research

Group, 2013). In this study verbal immediacy, nonverbal immediacy, and academic motivation scores explained 26.5% ( $R^2=.265$ ) of the variability of EOG reading scores with an adjusted  $R^2=25.0\%$ ; however,  $R^2$  is based on all independent variables and assumes that all explain the variation, which can be considered a biased estimate, meaning it can be larger than it should be when generalizing to a larger population. In this study the adj.  $R^2$  is 25.0% (adj.  $R^2=.250$ ), which explained 25% of the variability reading EOG scores can be attributed to the verbal immediacy and academic motivation scores. The closer the value is to 100% (1) the better the fit it is to the model. This study indicates that at 25.0%, it is a moderate fit to the regression model.

Table 20 in Chapter 4 shows the model summary of the multiple regression procedures. In the math portion of this study, the R value was .654, which indicates a high quality of prediction of the dependent variable (math EOG). The  $R^2$  represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (math EOG) that could be explained by the independent variables (nonverbal immediacy and TRAAM). In this study, verbal immediacy, nonverbal immediacy, and academic motivation scores explained 42.7% ( $R^2=.427$ ) of the variability of EOG math scores with an adjusted  $R^2=41.5$ . Therefore, 41.5% of the variability in math scores can be attributed to nonverbal immediacy and academic motivation scores. Christophel and Gorham (1995) found that immediate teachers increase student motivation to study, which increases their time on a task and consequently increases their cognitive learning.

Teacher verbal immediacy and academic motivation were statistically significant to the prediction of student achievement in reading, as measured by reading EOG scores,

$p < .05$  (Table 18). Contrarily, nonverbal immediacy and academic motivation were statistically significant to the prediction of student achievement in math, as measured by math EOG scores (Table 22). While nonverbal immediacy did not significantly predict reading EOG scores and verbal immediacy did not predict math NCEOG scores, academic motivation was shown to be statistically significant in predicting reading and math EOG scores. Just as Cantley (2005) reported, children who reported higher levels of motivation had significantly higher school achievement on the English language arts.

The results from this study agree with this research and found a relationship between motivation and achievement. Cantley (2005) confirmed that a positive relationship between achievement and motivation exists; individuals who are more academically motivated are also higher achievers. This relationship implies that those students who are lacking in intrinsic motivation do not appear to do as well academically as those who are motivated. Christophel (1990) successfully demonstrated the direct effects of teacher immediacy on student state motivation and of state motivation on student learning, clearly supporting the interconnected nature of immediacy, motivation, and learning.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

The purpose of this study was to identify teacher immediacy behaviors that impacted student motivation to learn from student perceptions as well as explore initial differences and relationships within or between teacher immediacy behaviors and student motivation to learn. This present study suggests verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors of teachers may be related to certain aspects of student motivation. As a result, the perceptions students have of teacher immediacy levels have a positive impact on

overall learning.

This study on the relationship between academic motivation, teacher verbal and nonverbal immediacy, and the predictability of EOG assessments was a smaller scale study with limited generalizability due to the sample size, but its results do impact daily instruction and interventions. Based on the results of the study and the literature review, several recommendations for future research have been made. It is recommended that future studies occur to determine how student and teacher perceptions of immediacy change over time and how to determine verbal and nonverbal behaviors that contribute to student increases in motivation. Another suggestion would be future replications of this study across different schools in other districts in a variety of grade levels to provide generalizability of the findings. It would also be recommended that this study be duplicated in a high performing school to see if teacher immediacy has played a role in the high performance status of the school. A longitudinal study is recommended following a cohort of earlier grade levels to determine the impact of academic growth over time based on the immediacy levels of teachers. The demonstrated effectiveness of teacher immediacy on student outcomes has resulted in increased calls for (a) teachers to be more immediate in their classrooms, and (b) training efforts designed to increase levels of teacher immediacy (Cooper & Simonds, 1999; Richmond, 2002).

Results of this study should be of interest to all educators. The results, in part, reveal the importance of building relationships and immediacy levels being predictors of performance on high stakes assessments like the EOG in order to inform educational decisions. The study findings also provide opportunities for educators to adjust their interaction with students on a daily basis to improve student outcomes. It is easy for

teachers to spend so much time and energy focused on student progress that they forget to consider their own performance. Self-reflection can be a valuable tool that helps make teachers aware of how they are teaching, which in turn makes them better teachers. Teaching without reflection is teaching blind – without any knowledge of effectiveness. Reflection will allow educators to gather feedback to improve instruction. Reflection should be a key proponent in all teacher effectiveness models.

A recommended way to improve teaching and learning is through reflection. This reflection can be done by surveying students on a regular basis to obtain student perceptions of teacher behaviors. Student perception surveys offer a number of advantages to school districts, as they are cost and time efficient, can be collected anonymously, require minimal training, enable tracked changes over time, and provide valuable feedback to teachers. Teachers have reportedly found survey results extremely valuable, citing their ability to identify strengths and weaknesses and develop new, effective teaching strategies. Wilkerson, Manatt, Rogers, and Maughanm (2000) conducted a study of nearly 2,000 K-12 students and found that student ratings were significantly more accurate in predicting student achievement than teacher self-ratings, principal ratings, and principal summative ratings. This was true in both reading and mathematics.

The results of this study should also add strength to the educational field and urge researchers to continue with the recommendations for building relationships with students to improve learning. Although a multitude of other variables may affect the communication between students and teachers, immediacy behaviors could be useful tools in motivating these students, thereby enhancing teacher effectiveness.



As a result of teachers becoming more effective, an increase in learning will result.

This study sought to ascertain if and to what extent teacher immediacy behaviors directly or indirectly affected student academic outcomes. The awareness of the influence of immediacy behaviors will assist in the development of in-service programs to teach educators how to provide and promote proper immediacy behaviors targeted at specific gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic classes. If educators are aware of student perceptions of their immediacy behaviors, perhaps teachers will adjust their behaviors in their interaction with students. It is recommended that professional development programs be designed and implemented to help teachers better understand that through the use of their positive levels of immediacy, they will have better chances of developing more positive student-teacher relationships. Perhaps teachers will acknowledge the importance of their immediacy behaviors directly or indirectly influencing student academic growth and achievement at all academic levels.

### **Conclusions**

Several studies including Wright et al. (1997) suggested that the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher. The critical indication of this finding is that effective teachers appear to be effective with students of all achievement levels, regardless of the levels. Dr. Haim Ginott (1972), a renowned psychotherapist, psychologist, parent educator, and writer, concluded that the teacher is the decisive element in the classroom. A teacher possesses a tremendous capacity to make a child's life miserable or joyous, to humiliate, hurt, or heal (Ginott, 1972).

Considerable research has shown that teacher immediacy has a positive effect on student outcomes such as student learning and motivation (Baringer & McCroskey,

2000). Increased teacher immediacy can result in a desire to learn, which has been connected with a positive outcome of student understanding and recall (Allen et al., 2006). This study provides a valuable insight into the role of immediacy behaviors, albeit verbal or nonverbal. The perceptions of students as found in this study are important factors in the motivation to learn and achieve. The results of this study reveal that teacher immediacy has a statistically significant relationship and is predictive of the high stakes test in reading for North Carolina, EOG, in Grades 3-5.

Overall, this study found an interesting statistical significance between teacher immediacy and student achievement scores. Nonverbal immediacy is a significant predictor to math and verbal immediacy is a predictor of reading proficiency. Further, this study found that student academic motivation was a predictor of student achievement in reading and math. According to this study, the improved teacher immediacy should improve student achievement scores.

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Appendix A  
Parent Consent Form

### **Parental Permission for Children Participation in Research**

**Title:** Does Teacher Immediacy Matter? The relationship among Teacher Immediacy, Student Motivation, Engagement, and Cognitive Learning

**Principal Investigator:** Rene Stilwell

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this form is to provide you (as the parent of a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to let your child participate in this research study. The person conducting the research will describe the study to you and answer all your questions. Read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to give your permission for your child to take part in the study. If you decide to let your child be involved in this study, this form will be used to record your permission.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

If you agree, your child will be asked to participate in a research study about teacher immediacy. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship teacher immediacy, which is verbal/nonverbal communication, and teacher/student rapport has on student motivation, engagement and academic growth. The researcher, a doctoral student at Gardner-Webb University, is conducting this study.

#### **What is my child going to be asked to do?**

If you agree for your child to participate in this study they will be asked to complete a questionnaire rating their teachers level of verbal and nonverbal immediacy (teacher/student communication) Teachers will also complete a rating of students' academic motivation in class and to determine classroom engagement levels, the researcher will perform engagement observations.

#### **What are the risks involved in this study?**

There are no risks to students in this study. All information is confidential and no person or school will be identified in the study. The guidance counselor will be administering the survey to students and will be available during and after the administration of the survey in the event that there is a student need.

#### **What are the possible benefits of this study?**

This study might help teachers understand which immediacy behaviors can help foster students' social, emotional, and academic learning. This study may generate social change by informing professional development with regard to strategies for identifying immediacy behaviors to aid teachers in better addressing student needs.

#### **Does my child have to participate?**

No, your child's participation in this study is voluntary. Your child may decline to participate or to withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal or refusing to participate will not affect

their schooling, grades, etc. You can agree to allow your child to be in the study now and change your mind later without any penalty.

**What if my child does not want to participate?**

In addition to your permission, your child must agree to participate in the study. If your child does not want to participate they will not be included in the study and there will be no penalty. If your child initially agrees to be in the study they can change their mind later without any penalty.

**Will there be any incentives for participation?**

Neither you nor your child will receive any type of incentive for participating in this study.

**How will your child's privacy and confidentiality be protected if s/he participates in this research study?**

Your child's privacy and the confidentiality of his/her data will be kept anonymous.

**Whom to contact with questions about the study?**

The researcher's name is Rene Stilwell. The researcher's faculty advisor can be contacted at dshellman@gardner-webb.edu. You may ask any questions you have now or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via e-mail at rstilwell@alexander.k12.nc.us.

**Signature**

You are making a decision about allowing your child to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you are 18 years or older and have read the information provided above and have decided to allow them to participate in the study. Please discuss participation with your child; their signature is also required. If you or your child later decides that you wish to withdraw your permission to participate in the study you may discontinue his or her participation at any time. You will be given a copy of this document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Child

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Parent(s) or Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent(s) or Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

April 24, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Enclosed you will find the protocol and consent form for the study, *“Does Teacher Immediacy Matter? The relationship among Teacher Immediacy, Student Motivation, Engagement, and Cognitive Learning”*. I am conducting this study in compliance with the requirements for the Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Gardner-Webb University. Please review the enclosed protocol outlining the purpose and reason for the study. I ask that you discuss your child’s participation in the study with him/her and both sign indicating participation. Participation in the study is not a requirement but is appreciated as the data gathered will be helping in improving learning for students. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

J. Rene Stilwell



## Appendix B

### Script for Proxy

Script for Proxy administering the Verbal and Nonverbal  
Immediacy Scales to students.

Thank you for taking time to participate in this study. I want to be sure that you get something out of this experience; for example, I would like you to learn what we are trying to study and what we expect to find. This study is entitled: *Does Teacher Immediacy Matter? The relationship among Teacher Immediacy, Student Motivation, Engagement, and Cognitive Learning.*

Teacher immediacy is the verbal and nonverbal communication that your teachers have with you as students.

To help give your teachers an immediacy level we ask that each of you complete a verbal and nonverbal immediacy rating of your homeroom teacher. This survey will not identify whom you are and will not be shared with your teacher, so please be honest when answering the questions.

If your participation in this survey causes you to feel uncomfortable in any way, or if the survey prompted you to consider personal matters that you are concerned about, please let me know, as the counselor, I will be happy to discuss those with you.

Do you have any additional questions?

## Appendix C

### Nonverbal Immediacy Scale - Observer

### Nonverbal Immediacy Scale-Observer Report (NIS-O)

**This is the most up-to-date measure of nonverbal immediacy as an other- or observer-report. Earlier measures have had problematic alpha reliability estimates. This instrument may be used for any target person (most earlier measures were designed only for observations of teachers). Alpha reliability estimates around .90 should be expected. This measure also has more face validity than previous instruments because it has more and more diverse items. Its predictive validity is also excellent.**

**When using this instrument it is important to recognize that the difference in these observer-reports between females and males is not statistically different. Hence, it is unnecessary to employ biological sex of the person completing the instrument in data analyses involving this instrument. It is recommended that the COMBINED norms be employed in interpreting the results employing this instrument. However, sex differences of the target persons on whom the instrument is completed may be meaningful. This possibility has not been explored in the research to date (September, 2003).**

**DIRECTIONS:** The following statements describe the ways some people behave while talking with or to others. Please indicate in the space at the left of each item the degree to which you believe the statement applies to (fill in the target person's name or description). Please use the following 5-point scale:

**1 = Never; 2 = Rarely; 3 = Occasionally; 4 = Often; 5 = Very Often**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. He/she uses her/his hands and arms to gesture while talking to people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. He/she touches others on the shoulder or arm while talking to them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. He/she uses a monotone or dull voice while talking to people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. He/she looks over or away from others while talking to them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. He/she moves away from others when they touch her/him while they are talking.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. He/she has a relaxed body position when he/she talks to people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. He/she frowns while talking to people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. He/she avoids eye contact while talking to people.

- \_\_\_\_ 9. He/she has a tense body position while talking to people.
- \_\_\_\_ 10. He/she sits close or stands close to people while talking with them.
- \_\_\_\_ 11. Her/his voice is monotonous or dull when he/she talks to people.
- \_\_\_\_ 12. He/she uses a variety of vocal expressions when he/she talks to people.
- \_\_\_\_ 13. He/she gestures when he/she talks to people.
- \_\_\_\_ 14. He/she is animated when he/she talk to people.
- \_\_\_\_ 15. He/she has a bland facial expression when he/she talks to people.
- \_\_\_\_ 16. He/she moves closer to people when he/she talks to them.
- \_\_\_\_ 17. He/she looks directly at people while talking to them.
- \_\_\_\_ 18. He/she is stiff when he/she talks to people.
- \_\_\_\_ 19. He/she has a lot of vocal variety when he/she talks to people.
- \_\_\_\_ 20. He/she avoids gesturing while he/she is talking to people.
- \_\_\_\_ 21. He/she leans toward people when he/she talks to them.
- \_\_\_\_ 22. He/she maintains eye contact with people when he/she talks to them.
- \_\_\_\_ 23. He/she tries not to sit or stand close to people when he/she talks with them.
- \_\_\_\_ 24. He/she leans away from people when he/she talks to them.
- \_\_\_\_ 25. He/she smiles when he/she talks to people.
- \_\_\_\_ 26. He/she avoids touching people when he/she talks to them.

**Scoring:**

## Appendix D

### Nonverbal Immediacy Scale – Self-Report

### Nonverbal Immediacy Scale-Self Report (NIS-S)

This is the most up-to-date measure of nonverbal immediacy as a self-report. Alpha reliability estimates around .90 should be expected. This measure has more face validity than previous instruments because it has more and more diverse items. Its predictive validity also is excellent.

When using this instrument it is important to recognize that the difference in these self-reports between females and males is statistically significant and socially significant (that is, substantial variance in the scores on this instrument can be attributed to biological sex). Whether these differences are "real" (that is, females may actually be more nonverbally immediate than males) or a function of social desirability (that is, females think they should be more immediate than males think they should be) or a function of actual behavior has not yet been determined (as of September, 2003).

**DIRECTIONS:** The following statements describe the ways some people behave while talking with or to others. Please indicate in the space at the left of each item the degree to which you believe the statement applies **TO YOU**. Please use the following 5-point scale: 1 = **Never**; 2 = **Rarely**; 3 = **Occasionally**; 4 = **Often**; 5 = **Very Often**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I use my hands and arms to gesture while talking to people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I touch others on the shoulder or arm while talking to them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I use a monotone or dull voice while talking to people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I look over or away from others while talking to them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I move away from others when they touch me while we are talking.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I have a relaxed body position when I talk to people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I frown while talking to people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I avoid eye contact while talking to people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I have a tense body position while talking to people.

- \_\_\_\_10. I sit close or stand close to people while talking with them.
- \_\_\_\_11. My voice is monotonous or dull when I talk to people.
- \_\_\_\_12. I use a variety of vocal expressions when I talk to people.
- \_\_\_\_13. I gesture when I talk to people.
- \_\_\_\_14. I am animated when I talk to people.
- \_\_\_\_15. I have a bland facial expression when I talk to people.
- \_\_\_\_16. I move closer to people when I talk to them.
- \_\_\_\_17. I look directly at people while talking to them.
- \_\_\_\_18. I am stiff when I talk to people.
- \_\_\_\_19. I have a lot of vocal variety when I talk to people.
- \_\_\_\_20. I avoid gesturing while I am talking to people.
- \_\_\_\_21. I lean toward people when I talk to them.
- \_\_\_\_22. I maintain eye contact with people when I talk to them.
- \_\_\_\_23. I try not to sit or stand close to people when I talk with them.
- \_\_\_\_24. I lean away from people when I talk to them.
- \_\_\_\_25. I smile when I talk to people.
- \_\_\_\_26. I avoid touching people when I talk to them.

### Scoring:

Step 1. Add the scores from the following items: 1, 2, 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, 18, 17, 19, 21, 22, and 25.

Step 2. Add the scores from the following items: 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15, 18, 20, 23, 24, and 26.

Total Score = 78 plus Step 1 minus Step 2.



## Appendix E

### Teacher Rating of Academic Motivation (TRAAM)

# Teacher Rating of Academic Achievement Motivation

## TRAAM

Terry A. Stinnett and Judy Oehler-Stinnett Eastern Illinois University  
For Research purposes only

Stinnett, T.A. & Oehler-Stinnett, J.J. (1992). Validation of the Teacher Rating of Academic Achievement Motivation (TRAAM). *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 276-290.

Student Identifier \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Please read each item carefully and think about the student's behavior during the past month or two. In some cases you may not have observed the student perform a particular behavior. Make an estimate, which you think would be the most accurate description of the student. Circle only one letter from A to E for each item. Do not skip any items.

A = strongly agree  
B = agree  
C = don't agree  
D = disagree  
E = strongly disagree

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Enjoys learning new things.  | 1. A   B   C   D   E |
| 2. Continues to work on a problem until he/she understands the problem.                                       | 2. A   B   C   D   E |
| 3. Prefers easy assignments to more difficult tasks.  | 3. A   B   C   D   E |
| 4. Often prefers to repeat a task that has already been mastered, rather than attempt a difficult novel task. | 4. A   B   C   D   E |
| 5. Often does not work to the best of his/her ability.  | 5. A   B   C   D   E |
| 6. This child will occasionally work a persistence, but often does not give good effort unless supervised.    | 6. A   B   C   D   E |

7. This student is able to keep up with the pace of instruction in my classroom.	7. A	B	C	D	E
8. This student gives up easily on tasks that are difficult or challenging.	8. A	B	C	D	E
9. This child often must be supervised to get his/her best performance on schoolwork.	9. A	B	C	D	E
10. The child works on problems until they are solved or understood.	10. A	B	C	D	E
11. This student does only the minimum that is required for task completion.	11. A	B	C	D	E
12. This child demonstrates mastery of work that has been previously completed.	12. A	B	C	D	E
13. This student needs improvement in organization and work habits.	13. A	B	C	D	E
14. This student becomes bored easily.	14. A	B	C	D	E
15. This child is not discouraged easily even after failures.	15. A	B	C	D	E
16. This child will try a new task again even if he/she was not successful the first time.	16. A	B	C	D	E
17. When this child does poorly on an assignment it is usually due to a lack of understanding rather than to a lack of effort.	17. A	B	C	D	E
18. This student often makes efforts to learn more about topics that have been introduced in class.	18. A	B	C	D	E
19. The child likes to do new work in school.	19. A	B	C	D	E
20. This student doesn't like to do a more schoolwork than is required.	20. A	B	C	D	E

21. This student shows pride in his/her a work.	21. A B C D E
22. The child almost always completes a his/her homework in a timely manner.	22. A B C D E
23. This child prefers to figure out problem independently rather than to be helped by others.	23. A B C D E
24. This student prefers to work on a assignments in social studies.	24. A B C D E
25. The student often does not complete a his/her assignments.	25. A B C D E
26. This child completes his/her a reading assignments without teacher prompting.	26. A B C D E
27. This child completes his/her math a assignments without teacher prompting.	27. A B C D E
28. This child completes his/her a science assignments without teacher prompting.	28. A B C D E
29. This child completes his/her a social studies assignments without teacher prompting.	29. A B C D E
30. This student has good overall a motivation to achieve.	30. A B C D E
31. This student has poor motivation a to achieve in reading.	31. A B C D E
32. This student has poor motivation a to achieve in math.	32. A B C D E
33. This student has poor motivation a to achieve in English/spelling.	33. A B C D E

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| 34. This child completes his/her a English/spelling assignments without teacher prompting.                                    | 34. A B C D E |
| 35. This student tries to avoid work a in English/spelling.   | 35. A B C D E |
| 36. This child works cooperatively with other students on group projects.   | 36. A B C D E |
| 37. This child enjoys doing academic work in a competitive setting.   | 37. A B C D E |
| 38. This child has had little success in school.  | 38. A B C D E |
| 39. This child attributes his/her success in academics to hard work.  | 39. A B C D E |
| 40. This child attributes his/her failure in academics to outside sources (e.g., teacher, inappropriate assignment, weather). | 40. A B C D E |
| 41. This child values education and learning  | 41. A B C D E |
| 42. This child expects to do well in school.  | 42. A B C D E |
| 43. This child indicates that he/she feels his/her successes and failures are under his/her own control.                      | 43. A B C D E |
| 44. This child enjoys improving his/her own personal best on academic tasks.  | 44. A B C D E |

## Appendix F

## Verbal Immediacy Scale

### Verbal Immediacy Scale

Gorham, J. (1988). The relationship between verbal teacher immediacy and student learning. *Communication Education*, 37, 40-53.

Student Identifier \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Below are a series of descriptions of things some teachers have been observed saying in classes. Please respond to each of the statements in terms of the way you perceive your teacher communicating towards you or others in your class. For each item, indicate how often your teacher responds this way when teaching. Use the scale:

0 = never; 1 = rarely; 2 = occasionally; 3 = often, 4 = very often.

- |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Uses personal examples or talks about experiences she/he has had outside of class.   | 1. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Asks questions or encourages students to talk.   | 2. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Gets into discussions based on something a student brings up even when this doesn't seem to be part of his/her lecture plan. | 3. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Uses humor in class.   | 4. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Addresses students by name.  | 5. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Addresses me by name.  | 6. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Gets into conversations with individual students before or after class.  | 7. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Has initiated conversations with me before, after or outside of class.   | 8. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. Refers to class as "our" class or what "we" are doing.   | 9. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

10. Provides feedback on my individual work through comments on papers, oral discussions, etc.	10.	0	1	2	3	4
11. Calls on students to answer questions even if they have not indicated that they want to talk.	11.	0	1	2	3	4
12. Asks how students feel about an assignment, due dates or discussions topic.	12.	0	1	2	3	4
13. Invites students to telephone or meet with him/her outside of class if they have questions or want to discuss something.	13.	0	1	2	3	4
14. Asks questions that solicit viewpoints or opinions.	14.	0	1	2	3	4
15. Praise students' work, actions or comments.	15.	0	1	2	3	4
16. Will have discussions about things unrelated to class with individual students or with the class as a whole.	16.	0	1	2	3	4
17. Is addressed by his/her first name by the students.	17.	0	1	2	3	4