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Nimali Matos
St. Catherine University

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The Effect of Teacher Interactions on Classroom Management in a Montessori Environment

An Action Research Report
By Nimali Matos

The Effect of Teacher Interactions on Classroom Management in a
Montessori Environment

By Nimali Matos

Submitted on May 23, 2014

In fulfillment of final requirements for the MAED degree

St. Catherine University

St. Paul, MN

Advisor_____

Date_____

Abstract

The investigation was intended to find the effect of teacher interactions on classroom control and management in a Montessori environment. The research was conducted in three Montessori classrooms of early childhood: two primary and one toddler, in a private school. The participants were the lead teachers of each classroom and selected parents who have had two or more children in different classrooms. The data collection instruments used were observations and interviews with teachers, surveys with parents, analyzing student records and student work samples. The data showed that positive teacher interactions and positive usage of language had a great impact on classroom management and negative interactions and poor communications had a negative effect on classroom management. Further, the teachers had better control and management of the classroom if they had more knowledge of Montessori principles and adhered to those guidelines. The result of the research indicates that teachers who had more training, experience and knowledge may have better classroom management and also the capability to work within Montessori guidelines and principles.

My observations as a teacher and an administrator are that children react in many different ways to teacher interactions: some teachers tend to be warm, relaxed and playful while others are firm, distant and in control. Children respond accordingly. A study of these interactions will greatly help teachers improve their teaching skills. This research studies differences in interaction styles and the effects of the interactions on children in a classroom setting. The study will also identify factors that contribute towards these different interactions. The purpose of this study is to implement a successful approach to teacher-student interactions that preserves the Montessori philosophy.

Recent reports have indicated that there has been an increase in children attending preschool programs and these programs have been viewed as an essential and important part of a child's life in preparation for school. This early intervention in the child's life could lead to success in school, social relationships, focusing and language development. Research has shown that early childhood and preschool education are essential to school readiness and contribute to the development of cognitive and social skills in children. (Pianta, la Paro, Payne, Cox, & Bradley, 2002). The children's ability to gain new skills and knowledge depends on the interactions they are exposed to during the day with teachers, peers and learning activities. The teacher's training, belief system, practices, relationships, behavior, interactions and authenticity contribute toward a positive teacher-child bond. It is also important that teachers be prepared with ongoing professional development, support and resources that will help them be more successful in the potentially stress-filled field of early childhood education (McMullen, 1999). Research has suggested that these interactions can lead to improvements in social and academic outcomes (Pianta, la Paro, Payne, Cox, & Bradley, 2002).

The teacher's belief system and the parent's definition of school readiness are important factors to consider when looking at teacher-child interactions. The quality of classrooms, with either center-based or family based programs and teacher education and training programs especially in early childhood education, contribute towards cognitive and social outcomes of children (Cinisomo, Fuligni, Daugherty, Howes, Karoly, 2009). The types of training programs for teacher education also have an impact on the outcomes. Researchers have found that center-based programs offered a more structured curriculum while family based programs provided more positive adult-child interactions with more flexibility (Cinisomo et al, 2009). Yet another factor that affects the quality of a classroom is teacher beliefs. Evidence has suggested that teacher's practical knowledge based on beliefs take precedence in their decision making, rather than on the theories they have learned. An interesting finding based on studies is that teachers with low efficacy find it hard to maintain discipline based on child-centered practices (Cinisomo et al, 2009). They may also develop different belief systems based on their personal and unique experiences in different settings.

Hayes, Hindle and Withington describe the changes made in a classroom with modified teacher behavior (2007). The teacher's behavior is seen as a reflection of the children's behavior. There is strong evidence that teachers have influenced and shaped the positive attributes of children and have had a great impact on them as significant representatives in their lives. Maintaining and encouraging positive social and academic behavior were identified as suggestions for change. Changes in teacher behavior indicated a corresponding change in the behavior of the children. Thus, establishing

standard behavior such as positive verbal praise and modified behaviors in teachers, may contribute towards consistent behavioral management in schools (Hayes et al., 2007).

Meaningful teacher relationships with children and others do have an impact on a child's early childhood experiences. In a study conducted by Quan-McGimpsey, (2009), relationships with children have been identified as professional, care giving and intimate. Parents' expectation of a teacher is to form a relationship that nurtures and encourages a learning environment which is socially and cognitively stimulating. The quality of relationships with the teacher in the early years determines the success at schools for children. Children who have had positive and warm relationships with teachers and peers demonstrate higher levels of achievements, lower internalizing behavior and higher social relationships in comparison to children who have had conflicts (Booren, Downer & Vitiello, 2012).

Teachers' beliefs and practices will affect their behavior in classrooms and the level of education they have received will affect the overall quality of the classroom. Teachers form exclusive relationships with children based on their constant interactions with each other and other surrounding relationships. These relationships strengthen a teacher's understanding and appreciation of the child. Teachers who have had more teaching experience relied more on interactions than teachers with less experience who tend to rely more on their professional training. It was also noted that teachers with college degrees had more intimate interactions using proactive strategies, relationship maintenance and reparation strategies with children than teachers with teaching diplomas. (Quan-McGimpsey, 2009).

Huxel states that “the pivotal piece of authenticity is the preparedness of the teacher beyond the credential” (2006, p.33). Though the finding is based on Montessori, it is relevant to any context of method of education and teacher. The teacher should be able to observe and respond to each child’s individual needs, act as an educational resource and serve as a role model. The teacher must spiritually prepare her/himself internally, to eradicate defects that will hinder the relationship with the children (Huxel, 2006).

Cossentino looks at the Montessori model of practice as a triangle (2003). The dynamic and stable triangle represents the interactions between three central characters, the student, the teacher and the environment. The love as practiced by Montessorians is an action that is directed toward freedom that is inspired by developing independence and self mastery. The teacher and student perform acts of love when they interact within the Montessori philosophy and rituals which promotes and develops cognitive and social power of the child. The prepared environment helps the child develop a love of respect for the environment and for others in it (Cossentino, 2003).

To research the differences in interactions between teachers and children in a Montessori classroom setting, participatory action research was chosen since it involves investigating reality, which can be changed. The research has helped to identify unproductive teaching practices and introduce more productive and effective practices. The end result would be to improve the practice of teaching and add value to it. The primary research question is: "In what ways do the interactions between the teacher and students (ages 2-6 years) impact classroom control and management in a Montessori

classroom?” The secondary question is:”How to implement a successful approach to teacher interactions that preserves the Montessori philosophy?”

The research was conducted in two Montessori primary classrooms consisting of 42 children ranging from three to six years of age. The data collection methods used were: observations, videotaping, surveys and interviews. The selected participants are teachers and some selected parents at the Montessori school where I work. The Primary teachers were observed, videotaped and their interactions were recorded. They were also interviewed. The criteria for parent selection were: two or more children in different classrooms and children that had graduated from a toddler classroom to a primary classroom. They took part in a brief survey. The purpose of the study was explained and they were asked if they would be willing to be a part of the study.

Description of Research Process

The two primary classrooms were researched for a period of four weeks beginning on March 1, 2014 and concluding on March 30, 2014. My data collection procedures includes: (1) observations (see Appendix A) through notes, journals, checklists, videos on actual teacher interactions and children’s reactions (2) Interviews (see Appendix B) with teachers regarding effect of teacher interactions, discipline, classroom management, social and academic outcomes of children, (3) Surveys (see Appendix C) with parents regarding teacher interactions, feelings of children, progress in work, and (4) Student work based on progress reports, work samples etc. Prior approval was obtained from the Board President of the school to conduct the research. Authorization was obtained from the School Business Manager to access student records.

Consent forms were signed by the faculty members (see Appendix D) and the selected parents (see Appendix E) to conduct observations, interviews and surveys.

The parent survey included 14 questions based on the teacher's disciplinary, academic and management skills. A total of ten parents were asked to take part in the survey. The selected participants were asked individually to participate, the purpose of the study was explained and their consent was obtained. The criteria for parent selection was having had two or more children in different classrooms, with different teachers. Other considered criteria was if their children had graduated from a lower level classroom to a higher level classroom.

The teachers were observed for two hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 8:30am and 3:00pm for four weeks. The observations were regularly carried out and these observations were specifically directed at teacher interactions. In addition, teachers were videotaped during class hours. The teachers are familiar with my duties as the Director of Education and routine observations are often carried out in the classrooms. The children's reactions and behaviors to teacher interactions were recorded during this time. Positive interactions included: positive verbal commands, non-verbal cues, appropriate usage of language, classroom management, praise, disciplinary tactics and skills. The negative interactions included: poor management skills, lack of classroom control, negative verbal commands, and poor usage of language. The observation reports for the teachers were based on their attitude towards children, disciplinary skills, respect for individuals, classroom and materials, communication skills, responsiveness and readiness.

The teachers were individually interviewed for 15-20 minutes during this time period. The interview questions for the teachers were based on their teaching skills, strengths and weaknesses, their opinion on discipline, Montessori principles, management skills and interactions with children.

Student progress reports and work were reviewed for data analysis. Incident reports were reviewed for the past two months to assess if there were more than one incident and why they occurred. The incident reports were reviewed in order to ascertain if the teacher has been careful in controlling and managing her environment. Progress reports and work records were helpful in assessing if the teacher is consistent with her record keeping and monitoring the child's progress, and to assess her organizational skills which affect classroom management.

Analysis of Data

I analyzed the data beginning with the teacher observations, interviews and parent surveys. I compiled the survey results and studied the teacher observation notes. The data gathered was analyzed.

I had the opportunity to observe both primary classrooms for 4 hours weekly. I had to remind them that the observations were meant to improve teaching skills and not to judge or criticize them. I also noted that the teachers were extremely aware of my presence during observations and since the observations were meant for a research they were cautious as to how they interacted with the children. I am afraid this does not indicate the accurate results I anticipated. Nevertheless, I continued to observe them as planned. I noted that one particular teacher is very professional, and is able to implement

the ideas, materials and the techniques of the method when working with the children. She has a beautifully prepared environment, which is updated with new materials and lessons. She is able to model appropriate behavior for the children and guide and discipline them appropriately. She guides and facilitates the children to appropriate activities using clear, concise, appropriate language and tone of voice. Her body language is calm and quiet and she demonstrates a positive attitude towards the children that reflects the principles of the Montessori Method. I did not observe any warmth in her voice but the children nevertheless responded well. The children obviously had great respect for her but I did not see a close bond with the children. Again, as I said the teacher was conscious of my presence in the classroom. She mentioned that I should come at a certain time when the children are all settled down working. I assured her that I am observing her and her interactions with the children and that I wish to do observations at different times of the day. I also observed her interactions unannounced at times.

In the second primary classroom, the teacher was not as firm as the teacher in the first classroom. She did have a very close bond with the children and maintained a warm and loving atmosphere. They obviously love and care for her deeply. She has a loving, caring and carefree nature which I felt the children took for granted at times. She also had a few children that needed constant redirection which made the entire classroom a lot more chaotic than the first classroom. There were times that she had to get firm with them and sit them out repeatedly. She did try to act proactively and consistently, presenting the children with examples of positive behavior and stating consequences. I observed that she had to model her behavior better, for eg, sitting on a rug, holding a

book, carrying a chair etc. She could also use more positive language and be more diplomatic in certain situations.

In the toddler classroom the teacher was extremely warm and loving to the children, always modeling her behavior at the child's level. She always used positive, clear, concise language and carefully chosen words. Her loving nature is extremely important to children of this age group (18 months to 3 years) but, she seems to lack disciplinary skills and tends to be more free and easy with them. She needs to follow through with more firm consequences. She follows Montessori guidelines and maintains a warm, loving, nurturing and beautifully prepared environment

The parents (10) who responded to the survey questions had one or more children in different classrooms.

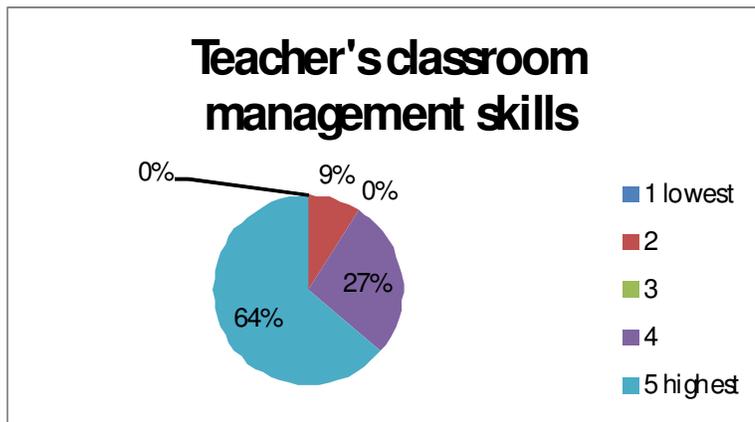


Figure 1. Teacher's Classroom Management Skills

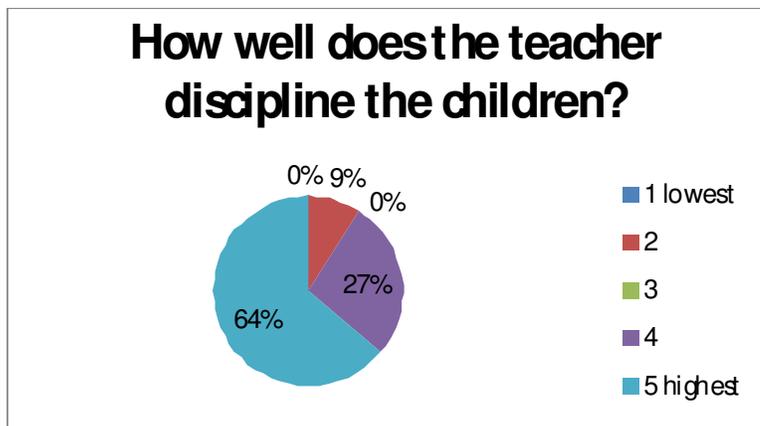


Figure 2. How well does the teacher discipline the children?

The response to the question: “How would you rate your child’s teacher’s classroom management skills?” (See Figure 1) and “How well does your child’s teacher discipline children?” (See Figure 2) had similar results. 64% of the parents thought the teachers had high classroom management skills and had strong disciplinary skills.

When asked how the teacher had contributed towards the children’s discipline, 100% of them thought they had contributed positively.

How well does the teacher follow Montessori Principles?

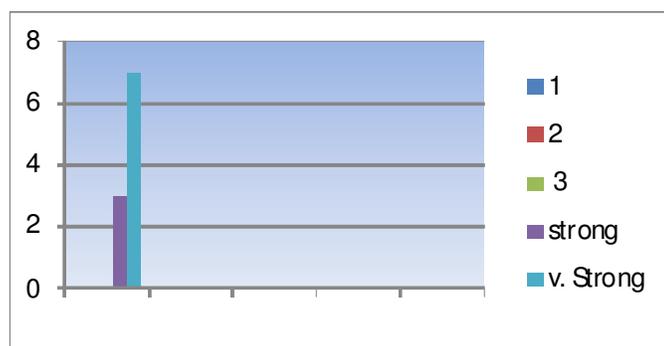


Figure 3. How well does the teacher follow Montessori principles?

How well is the class time used for Montessori work?

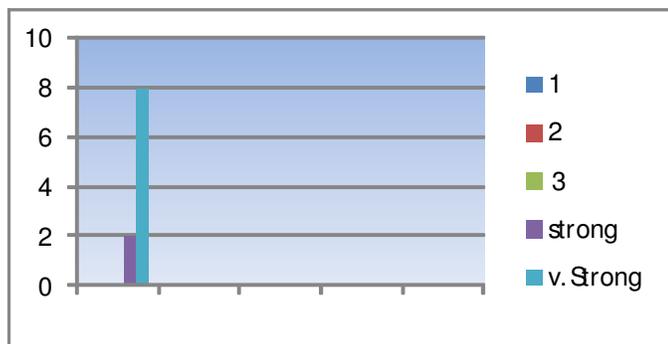


Figure 4. How well is the class time used for Montessori work?

70% of the parents felt that the teachers followed the Montessori principles very strongly and the other 30% strongly (see Figure 3). 80% of the parents very strongly believed the class time was used for Montessori work and 20% of them strongly believed the class time was used for Montessori work (see Figure 4). The results show that the parents had great confidence in the teacher's ability to manage the class well and also discipline the children well while working within the guidelines of the Montessori principles.

100% of the parents felt that their children felt very positively about the teacher. They commented that the children love their teachers. 90% of them thought that the teacher greeted the children very positively.

According to the parents the teacher had contributed academically, socially and emotionally towards their children in a very positive manner, and 90% of them thought the teachers had a tremendous impact on the child overall. They would highly recommend the teachers to others.

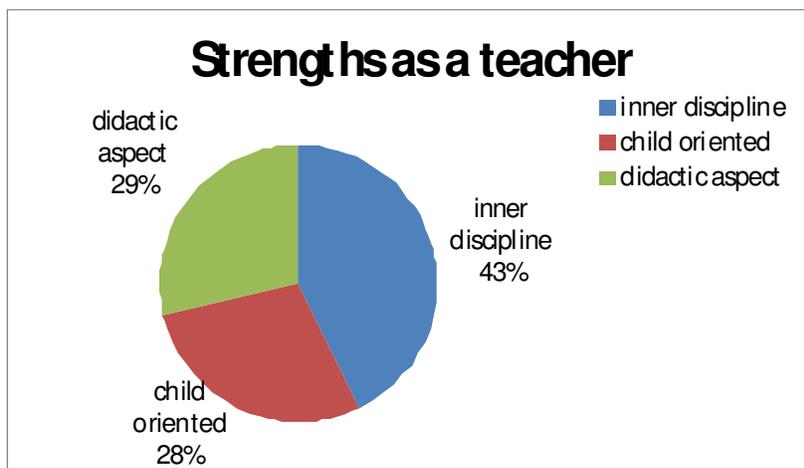


Figure 5. Strengths as a teacher

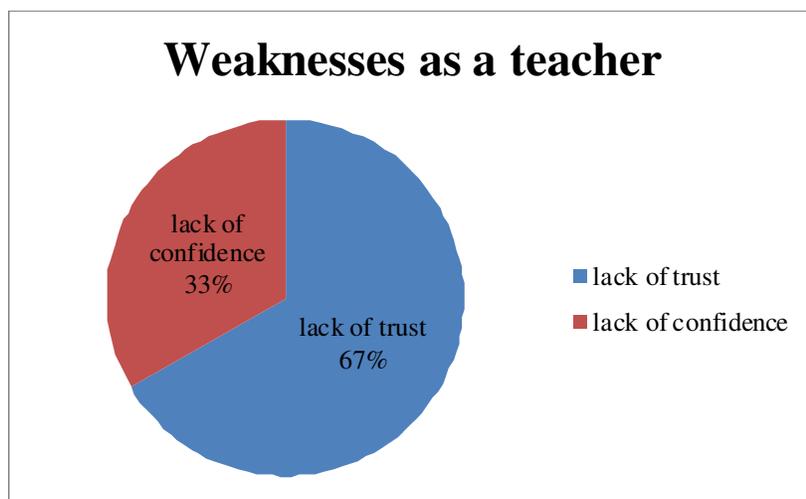


Figure 6 . Weaknesses as a teacher

In analyzing data collected from the interviews with three teachers, the strengths and weaknesses of teachers were analyzed as follows. Their inner discipline, patience, nurturing attitude towards the children were the strengths shown by them. Their respect for the child, and engagement with them were also considered as strengths. Having a deep understanding of the philosophy and being able to observe the children well were the other strengths identified by them (see Figure 5). The weaknesses identified by them

were; the lack of trust in others, being unable to delegate and share responsibilities and lack of confidence in themselves (See Figure 6).

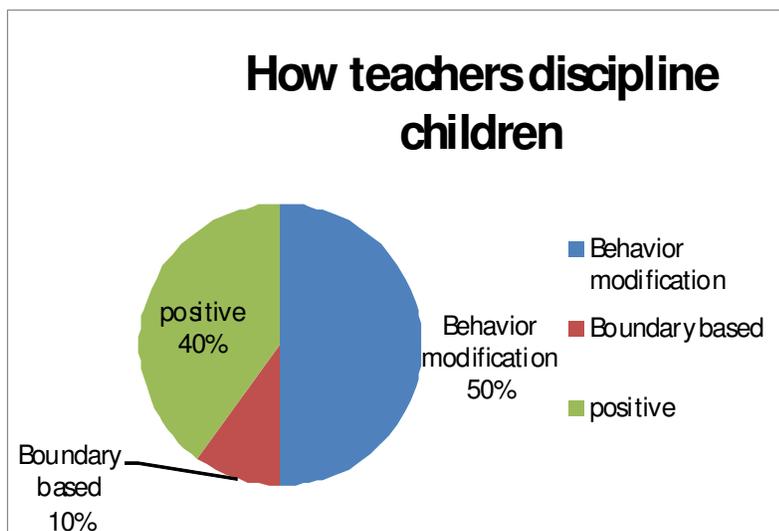


Figure 7._How teachers discipline children

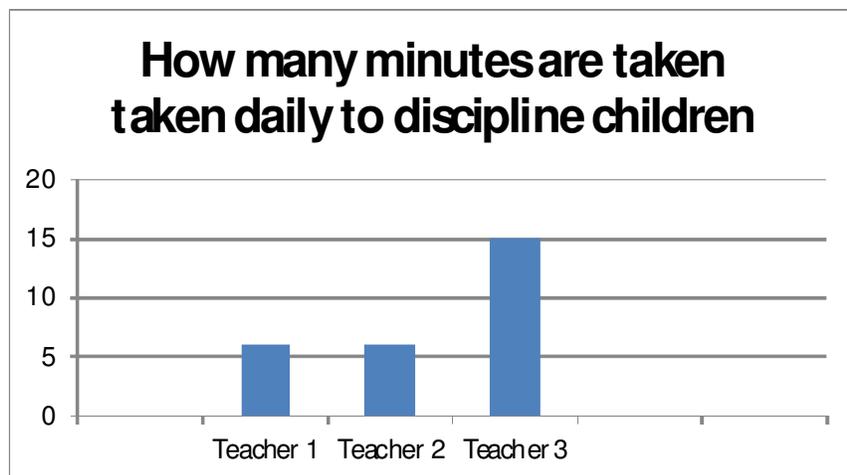


Figure 8. How many minutes are taken daily to discipline children

The teachers' response to disciplining the children indicated these behavior modifications (50%); sitting the children out, redirecting, separating from situations and correcting the behavior, significantly took precedence over other methods of disciplinary actions. Positive discipline (40%); talking to the children and giving them time to figure out were considered as important (see Figure 7). Boundary based discipline was very rarely implemented. Most teachers took less than 15 minutes to daily discipline the children (see Figure 8).

Their classroom management skills were analyzed as follows: all teachers considered themselves to have strong classroom management skills. They also felt that they followed the Montessori principles very well except for a few occasions when they felt they were not staying calm as they should and when being over directive. All the teachers who were interviewed felt that their parents would rate them as strong disciplinarians with their children. They all felt that the parents would rate them as excellent teachers. Their level of confidence varied from "not confident" to "progressively confident" to "very confident." They all thought they needed more skills/development to be better teachers. They were extremely happy to be a part of the school community.

It can be concluded from the above analysis of data that the teachers' interactions contributed to the overall development of the children. The children felt loved and motivated in a warm, loving environment as well as a rigid, firm environment. What really seem to be important to the parents and children were that the teachers were able to interact positively with them. Positive interactions, positive verbal praise and usage by the teachers when interacting with children had a positive effect on discipline and the

children seemed to respond well to behavior modification. The children responded well to positive teacher interactions and bonded well with them and were able to achieve higher levels of social skills. The children responded well to the teacher's calm, quiet tone of voice as well as to the warm, playful interactions. The most important aspect of the study was that the teachers had their unique ways of disciplining and controlling the classrooms within the Montessori principles and the children responded accordingly. It is difficult to assess if the differences in interactions actually affected the children's level of academic achievement but it can be concluded that positive interactions most definitely affected them socially and emotionally. The teacher's ability to devote much of the class time to Montessori work and follow the principles of Montessori with a deep understanding of the philosophy (discipline, following the child, respect for the child, observations) may have a positive academic, social, emotional, physical and spiritual development of the child. The teacher's training, experience, knowledge, confidence, relationships, beliefs, confidence, disciplinary skills, strengths and weaknesses contribute greatly towards the development of the child.

Action Plan

I am pleased with the results of the survey and am thankful to the participants, teachers and parents for their honest responses. I wish to use the results of the research to improve teaching practices and interactions of the teachers and to improve the overall practices of the school. It is not easy to implement changes with teachers who have developed a certain way of teaching. But fortunately, since these teachers are comparatively young and they respect and appreciate my suggestions, it may not be such

a daunting task. I will have to keep in mind that every teacher is unique and children thrive on the uniqueness of teachers.

I do not expect a great change or an impact on the student learning but definitely on their discipline and the teacher's ability to control and manage the classroom. If there are less disciplinary issues in the classroom this may directly affect the learning of some of the children since they will be able to concentrate more in a classroom that is less chaotic and distracting. Further, in the first classroom, if the teacher can demonstrate a more loving, caring atmosphere the children may feel more accepted and comfortable in that environment. This may contribute towards their learning as the setting will be less stressful. The teacher in the second classroom should model her behavior more for the children since the children are constantly watching and imitating the actions they see around them. Further, I would like to recommend attending more professional development training and refresher course for all teachers. My intention is to implement workshops for the teachers based on the knowledge I have gained through my Masters in Education. I would recommend that they read and research more, and develop their spiritual aspect and transfer these qualities to the children by modeling. The peace curriculum will be reviewed, revisited, and be a reminder to the teachers of their commitment to peace.

In the future, I would like to continue my research in the classroom with children who are exposed to the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Program. We have this program in our classrooms and the children attend the atrium weekly. The children are able to work with the materials throughout the week. Some of the children are not given lessons since the parents have specifically asked them to refrain from being a part of this

program. I am currently taking my training for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and will be certified by December 2014. With my added knowledge I intend doing some research based on this. I would like to know if the program has any impact on their day to day learning and life. It will be interesting to find out if it contributes towards a more peaceful and calmer environment.

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APPENDIX A

Observation checklistObservation Form

How does the teacher greet children?

How does the teacher guide children towards work?

How well does the teacher respond to a child's request?

How does the teacher invite a child to a new lesson?

How well does the teacher know her lessons? How well is she prepared?

How does she discipline children individually?

How well does the teacher control and manage the classroom? Overall discipline?

What is the tone of the classroom?

How do children interact with the teacher? With each child?

How well does the teacher use class time?

How does the teacher manage circle time? discipline during circle time?

How does the teacher manage outside time? What kind of discipline is used?

How does the teacher communicate with children? During lessons, when disciplining, general?

How well do the children follow directions and instructions from the teacher?

How well do the children react/interact with the teacher?

Is the teacher respectful of the children/environment/material/other staff members?

What is the teacher's attitude towards children? Individual children? overall class? Personal?

How does the teacher manage and control the classroom as a whole?

APPENDIX B

Interview question for teachers

What made you choose a career in teaching? Why Montessori?

How has Montessori made an impact in your teaching career? Life?

How would you rate yourself as a teacher?

1 2 3 4 5

poor excellent

What are your strengths and weaknesses as a teacher?

How do you discipline your children?

How much of your time is taken during the day to discipline children?

How would you rate your classroom management skills?

1 2 3 4 5

weak strong

How well do you follow Montessori principles in your classroom?

How do you think your parents will rate you as a good disciplinarian of their children?

1 2 3 4 5

weak strong

How do you think your parents will rate you as a teacher?

1 2 3 4 5

poor excellent

Are you confident as a teacher?

Do you think you need more skills/development to be a better teacher?

Do you understand school procedures well?

Are you happy to be a member of the staff in your school?

Any other comments?

APPENDIX C

Survey

How would you rate your child's teacher's classroom management skills?

1 2 3 4 5

lowest highest

How well does your child's teacher discipline children?

1 2 3 4 5

weak strong

How many years has your child being in a Montessori classroom?

1 2 3

How well does your child's teacher follow the Montessori philosophy?

1 2 3 4 5

weak strong

What is the tone of your child's classroom?

1 2 3 4 5

quiet loud

How well is the class time used for Montessori work?

1 2 3 4 5

weak strong

How well is your child's classroom organized?

1 2 3 4 5

poor very well

How does your child's teacher greet your child?

1 2 3 4 5

 negatively positively

How does your child feel about the teacher?

1 2 3 4 5

 negatively positively

How has your child's teacher contributed towards your child's discipline?

1 2 3 4 5

 negatively positively

How has your child's teacher contributed towards your child's social skills?

1 2 3 4 5

 negatively positively

How has your child's teacher contributed towards your child's academic skills?

1 2 3 4 5

 negatively positively

How has your child's teacher affected your child overall in her/his life?

1 2 3 4 5

 negatively positively

Would you recommend your child's teacher to other parents?

1 2 3 4 5

 low high

Any other additional comments

Appendix D

Teacher Interactions

INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Introduction:

You are invited to participate in a research study investigating teacher interactions in Montessori classrooms. This study is being conducted by Nimali I Matos a graduate student at St. Catherine University under the supervision of Amanda Perna, Action Research Advisor, a faculty member in the Department of Education. You were selected as a possible participant in this research because you are one of the staff members at St. Martin's School. Please read this form and ask questions before you agree to be in the study.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to find out in what ways do the interactions between the teacher and students impact classroom control and management. Approximately 8 people are expected to participate in this research.

Procedures:

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to be observed and videotaped in the classroom and interviewed by me. The observations will be done regularly, in the classroom for a period of 2 hours for seven sessions. The purpose of the observations will be to ascertain how teacher interactions are carried out in the classroom environment. The interview will be a 45 minute session. The purpose would be to understand the teachers' awareness of the Montessori principles and the methodology, and how he/she applies it in her day to day management of the classroom.

Risks and Benefits of being in the study:

The study has no direct risks involved. But if there were to be any risk involved based on observations of the teachers: potential embarrassment in communicating negative feedback; harm to interpersonal relationships between teacher and administrator, damage to credibility, etc., the feedback will be given in such a manner to enhance the benefits of the study and as an improvement to the teacher's teaching skills and management of the classroom.

The benefits to participation are; the teachers would directly benefit by improving the quality of their teaching, improved classroom management.

Confidentiality:

Any information obtained in connection with this research study that can be identified with you will be disclosed only with your permission; your results will be kept confidential. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identified or identifiable and only group data will be presented. No one in the school will know the results of the observations/interviews.

I will keep the research results in a locked file cabinet in Bridgewater, NJ and only I, Nimali I Matos and my advisor will have access to the records while I work on this project. I will finish analyzing the data by April 30, 2014. I will then destroy all original reports and identifying information that can be linked back to you. The observation reports, interview records and video tapes will be accessed only by me and my advisor and they will be destroyed as soon as the research results are published.

Voluntary nature of the study:

Participation in this research study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with me, St.Martin's School or St. Catherine University in any way. If you decide to participate, you are free to stop at any time without affecting these relationships.

New Information:

If during course of this research study I learn about new findings that might influence your willingness to continue participating in the study, I will inform you of these findings.

Contacts and questions:

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, Nimali Matos, 908 392 1411. You may ask questions now, or if you have any additional questions later, the faculty advisor, Amanda Perna, amperna@stkate.edu, will be happy to answer them. If you have other questions or concerns regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you may also contact Dr. John Schmitt, Chair of the St. Catherine University Institutional Review Board, at (651) 690-7739.

You may keep a copy of this form for your records.

Statement of Consent:

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that you have read this information and your questions have been answered. Even after signing this form, please know that you may withdraw from the study at any time.

I consent to participate in the study and I agree to be videotaped.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Appendix E

Teacher Interactions INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Introduction:

You are invited to participate in a research study investigating teacher interactions in Montessori classrooms. This study is being conducted by Nimali I Matos a graduate student at St. Catherine University under the supervision of Amanda Perna, Action Research Advisor, a faculty member of the Department of Education. You were selected as a possible participant in this research because your children have been guided by more than one teacher at St. Martin's School. Please read this form and ask questions before you agree to be in the study.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to find out in what ways do the interactions between the teacher and students impact classroom control and management. Approximately 10 people are expected to participate in this research.

Procedures:

You will be asked to take part in a brief survey. The purpose of the survey will be to ascertain how teacher interactions are carried out in the classroom environment and how the Montessori principles are applied.

Risks and Benefits of being in the study:

The study has no direct risks involved.

The teachers would directly benefit by improving the quality of their teaching and management of the classroom.

Confidentiality:

Any information obtained in connection with this research study that can be identified will be disclosed only with your permission; the results will be kept confidential. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identified or identifiable and only group data will be presented. No one in the school will know the results of the survey.

I will keep the research results in a locked file cabinet in Bridgewater, NJ and only I, Nimali I Matos and my advisor will have access to the records while I work on this project. I will finish analyzing the data by April 30, 2014. I will then destroy all original reports and identifying information that can be linked back to you. The survey results will

be accessed only by me and my advisor and they will be destroyed as soon as the research results are published.

Voluntary nature of the study:

Participation in this research study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with St. Catherine University in any way. If you decide to participate, you are free to stop at any time without affecting these relationships.

Contacts and questions:

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, Nimali Matos, 908 392 1411. You may ask questions now, or if you have any additional questions later, the faculty advisor, Amanda Perna, amperna@stkate.edu, will be happy to answer them. If you have other questions or concerns regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you may also contact Dr. John Schmitt, Chair of the St. Catherine University Institutional Review Board, at (651) 690-7739.

You may keep a copy of this form for your records.

Statement of Consent:

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. You will be giving your consent to participate by answering the questions on the survey and clicking "submit".

Thank you

—

Signature of Researcher

Date