Student Perspectives on Classroom Community in a Career Technical Center

Laura Robinson

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Student Perspectives on Classroom Community in a Career Technical Center

Laura Robinson
Concordia University - Portland

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Student Perspectives on Classroom Community in a Career Technical Center

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Concordia University–Portland
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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the College of Education
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in
Transformational Leadership

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Concordia University–Portland

2019
Abstract

This paper researches how to build community from a students’ perspective, in a criminal justice program in a career technical education center. It is not known how students perceive community building as happening in a criminal justice classroom. Four components of the Lamica model contributed to a model of classroom community or social and emotional learning: experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring. A case study design was utilized to study this problem through interviews, and questionnaires, from both students and instructors. Analysis of the interviews, both student and instructors, and questionnaires was hand coded and then run through NVivo software to search for any additional codes. Descriptive coding was used to summarize themes. These themes were then categorized to search for over arching themes. Findings demonstrated that from a students’ perspective the four areas of Lamica’s model do contribute to classroom community. Implications for traditional classroom instruction around the use of a military command structure or a leadership structure to develop student leadership may be ground-breaking area for traditional education instructors versus student roles in a classroom.

Keywords: classroom community, criminal justice, student perspective, experiential learning, circle processing, affirmations, career technical education, SEL in CTE, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, peer mentoring, student leadership, student ownership, Career Technical Education
Dedication

“this” is His
Acknowledgements

To God be the glory!

To the Ross Jr. and Ross III: Thank you for supporting me through this journey. Love you both!

Mom and Dad: Thank you for the encouragement and teaching me how to work even though I hated working out in the orchard!

To Tom: Thank you for the inspiration and discussions. To Gregg for sharing your classroom and ideas. To Kelly: Thank you for your gifts to those around you. You helped me understand community at the deepest levels. To all three of you—you provided my inspiration!

Dr. Nicholas Markette: Thank you for not leaving me floating in the ever-lasting sea!

John Bryan: My friend I have never met. When I was exhausted you helped me! I never knew the importance of an editor. I think I still owe you some money!

Kris Kuhn: Thank-you for your unending patience when I was starting to learn to re-write. You are Gold!

To Char, Mary, and Marcia: My three graces, you released me . . . thank-you for your encouragement and support! It means more to me than you will ever know!

Meg DuMez: Wish we could actually meet for coffee! Thank-you for your help in crossing the finish line!
# Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. ii

Dedication ............................................................................................................................. iii

Acknowledgements ............................................................................................................... iv

List of Tables .......................................................................................................................... x

List of Figures ......................................................................................................................... xii

Chapter 1: Introduction ......................................................................................................... 1

  Background, Context, and History for the Problem .......................................................... 2

  Statement of the Problem .................................................................................................. 4

  Despite the abundance of education research ................................................................. 4

  Purpose of the Study ......................................................................................................... 5

  Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study ....................................................... 5

Definition of Terms ............................................................................................................... 6

  Career Technical Education .............................................................................................. 6

  Community ....................................................................................................................... 7

  Decision-making ............................................................................................................... 7

  Experiential education. ....................................................................................................... 8

  Military command structure (vertical functional approach). .......................................... 8

  Noncognitive .................................................................................................................... 8

  Relational skills ................................................................................................................ 8

  Self-awareness. .................................................................................................................. 8

  Self-management. ............................................................................................................. 8

  Social and emotional learning .......................................................................................... 9

  Social awareness. .............................................................................................................. 9
Chapter 3: Methodology .......................................................................................................................... 50
Research Questions ................................................................................................................................. 51
Purpose of the Study ................................................................................................................................. 51
Population and Sampling .......................................................................................................................... 52
Case Study Design ................................................................................................................................. 53
Instrumentation ......................................................................................................................................... 58
  Student semistructured interviews. ........................................................................................................ 59
  Student questionnaires .......................................................................................................................... 59
Instructors as informed expert semistructured interviews. ................................................................. 60
Data Collection .......................................................................................................................................... 61
  Student interviews................................................................................................................................. 64
  Student questionnaires .......................................................................................................................... 65
  Instructor semistructured interviews .................................................................................................... 66
Identification of Attributes ..................................................................................................................... 66
  Experiential Education .......................................................................................................................... 66
  Decision-making .................................................................................................................................... 67
  Noncognitive .......................................................................................................................................... 67
  Self-awareness ....................................................................................................................................... 67
  Self-management ................................................................................................................................... 67
  Relational skills ...................................................................................................................................... 67
  Social awareness .................................................................................................................................. 67
Data Analysis Procedures ....................................................................................................................... 68
Limitations and Delimitations of the Research Design ............................................................................. 69
Internal Validity and Reliability ............................................................................................................... 71
Expected Findings ..................................................................................................................................... 73
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Issues</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of the Sample</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student questionnaires</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor interviews</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Methodology and Analysis</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor interviews</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Results</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Interview Themes on research question 1</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the Results</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of the Results</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research question 1: Ropes course or experiential education</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research question 1: Capturing Kid’s Hearts</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research question 1: Military command structure</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research question 1: Peer mentoring</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research question 2: Connections</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research question 2: Spirit</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research question 2: Trust</td>
<td>.................................................................</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Tables

Table 1. Data Collection Process: Source 1, Student Interviews .................................................. 62
Table 2. Data Collection Process: Source 2, Questionnaires ....................................................... 63
Table 3. Data Collection Process: Source 1, Instructor Interviews ............................................... 63
Table 4. Interview Participant Demographic Information .............................................................. 78
Table 5. Number of Occurrences of Codes in the Interview Data after hand coding ................. 79
Table 6. Frequency of Word Occurrence from Student Interviews from NVivo ....................... 80
Table 7. Student Interviews Comparison of Top Hand Codes with Top results from NVivo, RQ1 .................................................................................................................................................. 81
Table 8. Student Interviews Comparison of Top Hand RQ Codes with Top results from NVivo, RQ2 .................................................................................................................................................. 81
Table 9. Student Interviews Comparison of Top Hand Additional Codes with Top results from NVivo, RQ2 .................................................................................................................................................. 82
Table 10. Number of Occurrences of Codes in the Questionnaire Data (12 respondents) after hand coding ........................................................................................................................................ 83
Table 11. Frequency of Word Occurrence from Student Questionnaires from NVivo .......... 85
Table 12. Additional Questionnaire Codes ......................................................................................... 86
Table 13. Student Questionnaires Comparison of Top Hand Codes with Top results from NVivo .................................................................................................................................................. 86
Table 14. Number of Occurrences of RQ Codes in the Instructor Interviews after hand coding 87
Table 15. Number of Occurrences of Additional Codes in the Instructor Interviews after hand coding ........................................................................................................................................ 88
Table 16. Frequency of Word Occurrence from Instructor Interviews from NVivo .......... 89
Table 17. **Student Interview themes: RQ1 How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a CTE Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community?** 93

Table 18. **Student Interview Data: Number of occurrences in hand coding of research question areas out of a possible 480 meaning units** ................................................................. 93

Table 19. **Student Questionnaire: RQ1: How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community?** ........................................................................................................ 97

Table 20. **RQ1 Student Questionnaire Data: Number of occurrences in hand coding of research question areas out of a possible 120 possible meaning units** ................................................................. 97

Table 21. **Instructor Interviews: RQ1: How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community?** ........................................................................................................ 101

Table 22. **Instructor Interview Data: Number of occurrences in hand coding of research question areas out of a possible 180 meaning units** ................................................................. 101

Table 23. **Student Interview themes: RQ2 What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an influence on classroom community?** ................................................................. 105

Table 24. **Instructor Interview Data: Number of occurrences in hand coding of research question areas out of a possible 180 meaning units** ................................................................. 105

Table 25. **Student Questionnaires Themes: RQ2 What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an influence on classroom community?** ................................................................. 109

Table 26. **Instructor Interview Themes: RQ2 What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an influence on classroom community?** ................................................................. 111
List of Figures

Figure 1. The four components of the Lamica model .......................................................... 16
Figure 2. Student Interview Data: Number of Occurrences in Handcoding ......................... 94
Figure 3. RQ1 Graph of Student Questionnaire Results ...................................................... 98
Figure 4. Graph of Instructor Interview Data: Number of Occurrences in Handcoding .......... 102
Chapter 1: Introduction

The importance of student success is an important consideration in classrooms across the country. Student success is not just a measure of test scores (Blad, 2017). School leaders across the country are beginning to recognize the importance of educating the whole child in school settings (Osher et al., 2016). Education of the whole child: academically, socially and emotionally is rapidly gaining momentum (CASEL, 2017). One model supporting the development of the whole child began in a career technical center in a Criminal Justice (CJ) program, called the Lamica model. The Lamica model was developed organically through a process of continuous improvement is a single practitioner model.

There is preliminary evidence that the Lamica model has positively influenced the sense of community and academic outcomes. In a classroom, development of community is essential (Hennessey, 2007) because the feeling of belonging answers the most basic of human needs (Maslow, 1943); that of belonging or feeling a part of the greater community and of emotional safety. Just as a student cannot learn unless physically safe, in the same way, students must experience emotional safety (Taylor, Oberle, Durlak, & Weissberg, 2017). Community and emotional safety contribute to increased academic gains (Dymnicki, Sambolt, & Kidron, 2013). In a career technical center in the Midwest, Lamica has developed a model of four competencies that anecdotaly led to community development in CJ classrooms. Lamica’s model corresponds to five competencies from the premier authority on social and emotional learning, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Researchers at CASEL identified five competencies of social and emotional learning (SEL). These five areas are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making skills (CASEL, 2017).
Anecdotal evidence around the Lamica model suggests it produces a model of classroom community; however, the model has not been formally researched, so it is not known if community has developed from a student’s perspective. The purpose of this research is to understand classroom community in a CJ program from a student’s perspective. If this initial study demonstrates the development of classroom community, then further studies on this model will be warranted.

**Background, Context, and History for the Problem**

Career and Technical Education are the very foundation of the United States. The founding fathers realized the importance of a solid educational foundation for its citizens. The right to a free and public education was recognized as an important tool for future leaders. In the early 19th century, administrators in the national school system acknowledged the need for greater diversification of tradesmen adept at jobs reflecting the country’s movement toward manufacturing (ACTE, 2017a). School officials began to answer this need by creating trainings, often, these trainings were modeled on field apprenticeships, that is, mechanics. Incorporating workforce training in schools was the birth of career and technical education. The first training school was established in St. Louis in 1879 with a focus on hands-on learning alongside more traditional classes. More vocational classes in schools developed and legislation passed to support training schools. The Smith-Hughes vocational Act of 1917 furthered supported students seeking work in agriculture. After the recognition of the U.S. Congress to the workforce supporting World War I, vocational education was established and supported across the nation (Gordon, 2014).

World War II created a need for skilled trade workers and related trainings. The federal government supported these efforts and later authorized the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and
Technical Education Act in 1984. The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 provides billions of dollars to secondary and postsecondary institutions to support career and technical education (ACTE, 2006). The 2006 reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Act also solidified a shift from the term *vocational education* to a broader label of *career and technical education*. Nationwide, in 2016, 94% of high school students (U.S. Department of Education, 2016) were affected by some type of career technical course in their high school careers. In modern CTE, courses are arranged according to 16 career clusters, such as Health and Human Services, Law, Manufacturing, and Business Management to name a few (Perkins, 2013). These courses may be taught in a traditional high school setting, or in a specialized regional career technical center. Through CTE courses, instructors and school districts are working on individual student success just as in traditional schools.

In a joint effort between the White House, U.S. Departments of Education (ED), Health and Human Services (HHS), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and Justice (DOJ), the Obama administration in 2015 launched: *Every Student, Every Day: A National Initiative to Address and Eliminate Chronic Absenteeism*. Although this initiative was targeted at reducing chronic absenteeism in students, it creates the potential for every school to address individual student challenges to learning. Using a continuous improvement cycle, leaders in school districts across the country are trying to improve student success. Trying to understand the classroom conditions that create ideal learning conditions is challenging for schools and educators. In trying to improve student success one potential path may lie in understanding the classroom conditions from a student’s or customers’ perspective. In a CTE center located in the Midwest, anecdotal evidence pointed to a CJ class that seemed to have created a tightly woven, emotionally safe, classroom community. This led to discussions with staff and students about
the conditions that prompted this environment to develop. The initial CJ instructor, T. Lamica, incorporated four components designed to create emotional safety and community in a classroom—experiential education, *Capturing Kid’s Hearts*, military command structure, and peer tutoring. For this study, these four integrated ideas that compose the Lamica model serve as the theoretical framework for this study. What is not understood, is how these components create classroom community from a student’s perspective. Lamica’s model has never been studied and has the potential to affect not only classroom community on the CTE campus previously indicated; but also, across the Midwest.

**Statement of the Problem**

Despite the abundance of education research, it is not known how Criminal Justice students in a CTE center, in the Midwest of the United States, perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community. The Lamica model is comprised of four components: experiential education, *Capturing Kid’s Hearts*, military command structure, and peer mentoring. Classroom community is defined as a sense of the feeling of belongingness, acceptance, and emotional safety in a classroom group (Hawkins, Smith, & Catalano, 2004; Korpershoek, Harms, de Boer, van Kuijk, & Doolaard, 2016; Rovai, 2002; Rovai, Ponton, & Baker, 2008). Since the Lamica model incorporates components of social and emotional learning (SEL), one can infer it is an example of an SEL program. Pointing to the need for SEL and CTE research, the Lamica model is an example of an SEL program for career and technical education. Quality SEL programs provide opportunities for learners to contribute to their class, school, and community and experience the satisfaction, sense of belonging, and enhanced motivation that comes from such involvement (Hawkins et al., 2004; Korpershoek et al., 2016). The Lamica model and other approved SEL programs encourage students’ social-emotional development by establishing
emotionally safe, caring, learning environments, and improving classroom management and
teaching practices. Each contributes to the success of students academically and socially
(Durlak, Domitrovich, Weissberg, & Gullotta, 2015; Fleming et al., 2005; Greenberg,

RQ1: How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a Career Technical
Education (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom
community?

RQ2: What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an
influence on classroom community?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore how eight to 12 (or until
saturation) CJ students in a CTE center perceive the influence of Lamica’s’ model on classroom
community in a midwestern U.S. school. In Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, classroom community
is an emotionally safe environment within which students’ basic need of safety is met and
addressed allowing for an optimal learning space. Exploring how the Lamica model contributes
to an emotionally safe CJ environment in a CTE center has not been formally understood from a
student’s perspective and warrants undertaking.

Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study

The rationale for conducting this research study developed because of an increasing
emphasis since the early 1990s on understanding educational concepts from a student perspective
(Cook-Sather, 2006). As Toshalis and Nakkula (2019) noted, student voice places them at the
center of their own learning and allows for education to become truly student-centered. It makes
understanding community development from a teachers’ perspective important, but not nearly as
important as understanding it from the customers’ or students’ perspective. A student’s voice holds the potential of creating a partnership with the adults in the educational environment (Fielding, 2001). Fullan (2007) asked, “What would happen if we treated the student as someone whose opinion mattered in the introduction and implementation of reform in schools?” (p. 170). Anecdotally, this appears to be the case in the participant CTE environment. Evidence suggests students are co-creators with the instructors of their learning environment (McCombs & Whistler, 1997) and further exploration merits research. The results of this study may stimulate additional research in understanding CTE concepts from a student’s perspective. While there is much educational research available, there is a paucity of research available in the CTE field from the student’s perspective.

In this qualitative study, the researcher seeks to understand how the Lamica model has created a classroom community from the student’s perspective. There may be potential for these findings will be transferrable to other CTE programs across the state. In this paper, the SEL model developed by CASEL is referenced, as a model of social and emotional learning as the Lamica model has potential for other CTE programs. This study has the potential of providing validation for the Lamica model and a deeper understanding of how students view the components of the model. The phenomenon, Lamica model, has never been studied so this research provides initial research, and the intention of this researcher is to continue adding on to research periodically.

**Definition of Terms**

**Career Technical Education.** Career Technical Education (CTE) is an experiential educational model to teach students academic and technical skills, with the hope of future employment in a career field (ACTE, 2017b). Some degree of workplace emphasis within
classrooms of career and employability, that is, soft skills, or noncognitive skills) is usually employed.

Community. For the purposes of this study, the community is found in a classroom, and relates to a student’s sense of the level of “connectedness, cohesion, spirit, trust, and interdependence” (Rovai, 2002, p. 206). In a classroom, this relates to the shared values of learning within the peer group (Rovai et al., 2008) and to a feeling of belonging and being a part of the greater group.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) provided foundational work on community. Since community is such an important element to the understanding of the Lamica model, it is important to understand each of the Lamica model four parts. Their first aspect is membership. Membership is the feeling of belonging or personal relatedness. The second item is a sense that individuals matter to the group and the group to the member. The third aspect is the reinforcement of the integration and gratification of needs. This relates to the feeling that individual needs will be met through their membership in the group. The last aspect is a shared emotional connection, the belief that members have shared and will share group understandings and experiences. To synthesize, McMillan and Chavis (1986) identified a Sense of community as a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together.

Decision-making. Decision-making is “the ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others (CASEL, 2015).
**Experiential education.** Experiential education as defined by the Association of Experiential Education is “Challenge and Experience followed by Reflection leading to Learning and Growth” (AEE, 2017, para. 1).

**Military command structure (vertical functional approach).** In a typical military command structure, that is, army reserves, individuals or groups receive orders or directions from superiors above. Related terms for this leadership or decision-making structure are a chain of command or a top-down approach (Daft, 2010).

**Noncognitive.** Noncognitive skills also referred to as soft skills or employability skills. These are the skills that serve students well in life but are traditionally not measured in the normal school standardized tests (Dweck, Walton, & Cohen, 2011). Specifically, these skills are self-efficacy, grit, perseverance, relationships, and self-awareness, which contribute to life successes beyond the classroom (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007; Dweck et al., 2011).

**Relational skills.** Relational skills afford the ability to maintain healthy and sustainable relationships, in diverse situations. Communication, team, and conflict resolution are all components of relationship development (CASEL, 2015).

**Self-awareness.** Self-awareness is the ability to recognize how one’s thoughts and behaviors influence behaviors. It is the capacity to know the strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of oneself. It also involves the ability to understand how one must improve to grow (CASEL, 2015).

**Self-management.** Self-management is the ability to adjust one’s thoughts and emotions according to situational demands (CASEL, 2015). Benefits associated are the achievement of personal goals.
Social and emotional learning. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is a term that originated with Elias et al. (1997) who defined SEL as the process of obtaining competencies to manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, value multiple perspectives, establish and maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle interpersonal situations constructively. All of which are important in positive classroom community development. CASEL’s goals of SEL programs are the development of five related sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (CASEL, 2015).

Social awareness. Social awareness is the capacity to look at situations from the perspective of others and utilize empathic skills. Utilizing another’s viewpoint includes an understanding of diverse backgrounds and circumstances. It also includes an understanding of social cues and norms for behaviors. Social awareness also involves the ability to recognize community resources and supports (CASEL, 2015).

Social emotional learning. In social and emotional learning (SEL), children and adults acquire and effectively apply knowledge, attitudes, and skills for understanding and managing emotions, setting and achieving positive goals, feeling and showing empathy for others, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, and making responsible decisions (CASEL, 2017, para1).

Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations

This study does have initial assumptions in the research. Assumptions such as instructors understanding the role of community in a classroom, and how to develop that. Assumptions on the part of the researcher also are part of the research study. The researcher made assumptions that the students were open and honest with sharing their perceptions. Delimitations are
boundaries set by the researcher for any given study. In this case, delimitations include the Criminal Justice class and the fact that the originator of the Lamica model is no longer on the campus sustaining the model Lamica developed the model.

The intention of qualitative research is to obtain a deep, rich, detailed understanding of the research question, but limitations to qualitative research exist (Anderson, 2010). Even though this study has limitations because of the methodology, participants, and researcher experience and biases, the study provides information from a student perspective on strategies that affect community development in a CTE classroom. The methodology of research may have limitations itself. For example, small participant participation in a single CTE may not be transferrable (Polit & Beck, 2010) to traditional high schools or even other CTE centers; to the same certainty level as quantitative research may be transferrable. The correlational study design will not allow for causation to be drawn due to a lack of an experimental and control group.

Another limitation is that of the participants. Potentially, there might be reluctance on the part of the instructors to participate in the research, feeling as though this may affect their status on the CTE campus, or they may have felt internal pressure to accept the invitation to allow research on this subject. All participants will be reminded that their contribution to this research is voluntary. The researcher does not hold a supervisory role over the instructors or student participants. Additionally, student participation may have been limited by the fact that the study was completed in the fall after the students had completed their first year, so the participants needed to recall all contributing factors from the previous school year. Important information may have been lost or forgotten over the summer months. Whenever possible the questions were created to first spark the memory of past events and then proceed into the research questions.
Finally, researcher bias may also pose a limitation to this study. Several strategies from both Yin (2011) and Merriam and Merriam (2009) were employed to avoid biasing study results. Contradictory evidence is noted and expected as it presents itself (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2011), responses are kept confidential during the questionnaire process (Creswell, 2014), and avoidance of leading questions. The hope is to look at the research study with a flexibility of thinking (Costa & Garmston, 2016) looking for biases, and understanding classroom community from the student perspective.

**Summary**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore how CJ students in a CTE center perceive the influence of Lamica's’ model on classroom community in a Midwestern U.S. school. This research studies student perceptions of the four components of the Lamica model. The hope is that by understanding classroom community from a student perspective, other CTE and high school instructors may learn to create emotionally safe learning environments.

The subsequent chapter demonstrates the literature as it relates to the four components of the Lamica model. The Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is used throughout the paper as seminal research in the area of social and emotional wellbeing of students. CASEL has identified five components of social and emotional safety which support the four components of the Lamica model. Additionally, the components of the Lamica model are linked to Hattie’s (Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, 2016) analysis of successful factors affecting student success. Ultimately a justification for the research is established and the previously mentioned methodology preformed. Responses from the data will be coded in Chapter 4, and results communicated in the final chapter. The hope is that the results of this research can be used to support classroom community in additional CTE programs across the county and state.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Although in the educational systems, much remains the same, for example, day length, year length, 12 years of regular classroom progression, inside the classroom, learning has been evolving with research-based learning strategies helping instructors to meet the challenge of understanding student success. One area, previously not considered by educators, is in Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). CASEL has identified SEL as the last missing piece in the educational system (CASEL, 2017). One potential example of SEL in a Career Technical Education (CTE) center may be found in Lamica’s model.

Two topics intricately interwoven in this area of educational research are CASEL and SEL. Both terms emerged out of a meeting at the Fetzer Institute in Kalamazoo, Michigan in 1994 (CASEL, 2017). Educators and researchers came together to discuss the topic of promoting positive development in children throughout the educational system. These SEL visionaries came together jointly with a vision of helping children to develop positive noncognitive skills within the educational system (Fetzer Institute, 2017). Daniel Goleman and Roger P. Weissberg, served as CASEL’s co-founders, and developed the mission of CASEL, which is “to ensure all students become knowledgeable, responsible, caring and contributing members of society” (CASEL, 2017, para 1). When students feel acceptance in a classroom community, they are then able to learn and grow and serve as contributing members of society; one possible way to achieve this may be found through the Lamica model.

Moving from a vision of implementation of noncognitive skills to classroom-level implementation takes time. Educational reforms move slowly in an entrenched system. New research demonstrates that our nation is on the cusp of dramatic educational changes in SEL (Blad, 2017; Schonert-Reichl, Kitil, & Hanson-Peterson, 2017). SEL implementation in the
classroom (CASEL, 2017) is responsible for dramatic changes in areas such as improved academic scores (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011), graduation rates (Johnson & Weiner, 2017), school climate improvement (Hough, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2017) and suspension decline (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2017). Currently, extensive research exists, for example, randomized control groups, longitudinal follow-ups, and multiple replications, that support SEL classroom gains (CASEL, 2017), but there is no research on student perspectives of classroom community that has developed utilizing the Lamica model.

CASEL has examined and developed models of SEL; for high schools. Currently, there are 10 SESelect Programs, Eight Complementary Models, and Two Promising Programs (CASEL, 2017). One promising model that has developed organically is found in a Criminal Justice (CJ) class in a Career Technical Education center (CTE) located in the Midwest of the United States. This model was developed by the initial instructor in the CJ program and is called the Lamica model. The Lamica model is comprised of four components: experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring. Based on research from this paper, this CJ program may be able to apply for nomination to the program review process and receive CASEL endorsement for an SEL-approved program model option in a CTE center. Currently, there are no available SEL programs identified for CTE centers.

The initial instructor and subsequent CJ instructors have worked rigorously to develop emotionally safe classroom environments (Durlak et al., 2015; National Center for Safe Supportive Learning Environments, 2017); but a gap exists in understanding how students in a CJ class, in a CTE center, perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community. The four areas of Lamica’s model aligns to CASEL’s (2017) competencies. These five SEL competencies have research that supports the not only the development of emotional safety, but
also how emotional safety can lead to academic increases, improved mental health, and social skills (Taylor et al., 2017). While researchers have focused SEL research in primary and middle schools, there is a paucity of research in CTE settings (Zheng & Hamedani, 2015). This research contributes not only to SEL knowledge in general but also to SEL research in high schools, and specifically to CTE settings.

In the role as an instructional coach for the identified CTE center, this researcher has observed many of the CJ classes in action. The initial program developer and this researcher have worked and reflected together numerous times, with many discussions on the nature and makeup of these particular classes. The noncognitive skills within the classroom developed organically, that is, without a set curriculum, which is an important consideration in this process. Some of the identified practices are experiential learning, along with deep reflective practices, Capturing Kid’s Hearts (Flippen & White, 2007), military command structure (i.e., leadership development), and peer mentoring. These practices codified into what the instructor codified into the Lamica model. The ancestral lines of this model align to SEL foundations. Since there is a paucity of research available on SEL in CTE centers, a program that has developed organically, will contribute to knowledge in this area. Consequently, it is not known how CJ students in a CTE center perceive how the Lamica model, which includes experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring, influences classroom community.

Research Questions

To examine this classroom, Lamica’s model of four competencies are utilized as a theoretical framework in the literature review process. The Lamica model is comprised of four components: experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and
peer mentoring. The research problem is that it is not known how CJ students in a CTE center perceive how programs, such as Lamica’s model, effect classroom community. Lamica’s model holds potential as a CTE SEL model. SEL, as identified by CASEL, has five components, each of these components joins together to create an emotionally safe classroom environment.

RQ1: How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community?

RQ2: What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an influence on classroom community?

The organization of the Literature Review includes sections that align with the theoretical framework around the four components of the Lamica model and the importance of these skills for high school students. Next, an explanation and description of the programs utilized by the CJ course developer in the Lamica model (experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring). Finally, the literature will explore how and why the development of community is crucial for students today.

**Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical frameworks are frameworks that help to explain and provide structure for a model being researched. The author of the Lamica model identified the four fundamental components of his model (T. Lamica, personal communication, November 19, 2017), which were: elements of experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring. He and subsequent instructors believed these created an emotionally safe communal environment. Although Lamica developed and worked on this particular model, and trained his successors, he ultimately left the CTE center where he initiated the model. Before
Lamica left, he carefully mentored and passed on the model to his mentees. His two successors have carefully maintained the vision of the Lamica model and adherence to the model, but it is not known how students perceive the influence of these four components. The literature review also aligns the Lamica model to CASEL’s model of SEL as a potential model of SEL in a CTE center. The model in Figure 1 (created by the author of this study) demonstrates the passing of the model from the original creator to his two successors. The model also demonstrates the four components of Lamica’s model.

Figure 1. The four components of the Lamica model.

For a classroom community to develop emotional safety, attention must center on relationships and relationship building (Lorence, 2017). Anecdotally, good teachers seem to know automatically how to develop relationships with students and create community. They
appear to recognize instinctively that learning is always a social process (Dewey, 2012; Palmer, 2004), and that students are not simply containers into which to pour knowledge. As research progresses, every detail concerning classrooms, learning, and relationships will continue to be researched topics of study.

The Lamica model competencies of experiential education, *Capturing Kid’s Hearts*, military command structure, and peer mentoring; compose a framework that developed, through a continuous improvement cycle, to promote emotional safety in classrooms. In a classroom, a skilled facilitator can help students navigate different competencies in an emotionally safe and supportive environment (Blenkinsop, Telford, & Morse, 2016; Blum, 2005). For example, some students may experience anxiety when placed in a leadership role. The role of teacher, as a facilitator of emotional safety, may help students learn the complexities and competencies associated with leadership. These competencies also referenced as noncognitive skills, social and emotional competencies, 21st Century skills, soft skills, or in the case of CTE centers, as career and employability skills. These skills are predictors of positive life outcomes (Gabrieli, Ansel, & Krachman, 2015).

Although positive life outcomes are important to school districts, a more immediate benefit to incorporating social and emotional skills may be found in school districts that have implemented these skills and found a correlation to academic achievement. For example, since SEL implementation in 2012, graduation rates in Washoe County, Nevada; graduation rates have increased 20 points to 75% (CASEL, 2017). They have also tracked differences in students with higher social and emotional skills. Students with higher social and emotional skills are twice as likely to stay in school, less suspensions, higher math assessment scores, that is, 45% versus previous 23% on Smarter Balanced math assessment, higher English language scores, that is,
61% versus 40% previous on Smarter Balanced Language Arts assessment, and more 11th-grade students graduating, from 73% to 89% (CASEL, 2017).

CASEL identified five processes through which adults and students can develop these needed competencies. These five areas are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relational skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2017). Self-awareness is the ability to understand how ones’ thoughts and emotional state can affect your behavior. Self-awareness involves knowing your own strengths and challenges and having the capacity to use both in the appropriate context (Espelage, Low, Anderson, & De La Rue, 2014; Goleman & Senge, 2014; Schonert-Reichl et al., 2017). Self-management is a competency that allows a person to control their words, behaviors, and actions, in a multitude of settings. Self-management includes self-directed learning, goal setting and achievement, and stress management (Nelsen, Lott, & Glenn, 2000). Social Awareness is the ability of flexible thinking and understanding situations from multiple perspectives. Social awareness also the component of diversity and understanding cultural and social norms (CASEL, 2017). Relational skills encompass the ability of the individual to be able to establish and then maintain relationships within a group. It involves communication skills of listening and speaking clearly. It includes conflict resolution and helping peers in social situations (CASEL, 2017). The last area is responsible decision-making, involving the ability to make decisions about personal behavior decisions, while still holding onto how these choices may affect the team or community (CASEL, 2017). Each of these five areas relates directly to emotional safety and classroom community. For example, in classrooms where students that have developed relationships and relational capacity there exists the potential for a better classroom environment; when all students feel safe and accepted. The Lamica model holds the potential to deliver this emotional safety in a classroom for CTE centers.
The Lamica model uses four strategies to deliver classroom content that emphasizes emotional safety in the curriculum. These four strategies are related to CASEL model of five competencies, which has research behind to prove increased academic success (i.e., 13 percentile points higher for SEL classrooms) and life skills (Taylor et al., 2017). The desire is to demonstrate community and emotional safety through the Lamica model can be achieved by listening to the customer—the student.

**Background of Model Context**

In trying to understand how instructors in a given CJ program worked to develop an emotionally safe classroom environment, an understanding of the underlying structure is essential before understanding student perception of the Lamica model on their classroom community. The CJ course framework developed organically from the first CJ instructor at a CTE center in the Midwest. This class began in 2006 with a CJ instructor hired directly out of law enforcement. As with any instructor at the center, the identified CJ instructor began to take professional development courses to grow and develop his teaching practices. The instructor identified four core practices as foundational to his teaching practice (T. Lamica, Personal Communication, 2017); these practices, identified as the Lamica model, were deliberately and intentionally passed on to the other instructors he mentored. The next section will lay out the four core areas-and note the relationship to SEL core competencies (CASEL, 2017).

**Experiential education.** According to the Association for Experiential Education (AEE, 2017), the definition of experiential education (EE) is “challenge and experience followed by reflection leading to learning and growth” (para. 1). There are many forms of experiential education as it can cut across philosophies, disciplines, and subject area. Project-based learning, reflective practices, environmental education, challenge course, service learning, expeditionary
learning, adventure education, low ropes, high ropes, initiatives, experiential activities, are but to name of few of the practices that identify themselves as experiential education. For the purposes of this paper, the definition of EE is a Ropes or Challenge Course activities that incorporates reflective practices. The intention in these activities is to provide a challenge, that is, mental and physical, to groups of learners, so that, through reflection of self and team, they can apply skills learned to another setting.

Facilitating learning through EE is a complex, relational process that balances student emotional needs, alongside subject matter. The teacher/facilitator balances reflective practices and application of the reflection into learning goals (Kolb, Kolb, Passarelli, & Sharma, 2014). This process of learning, reflecting on the learning, and applying the knowledge is the realm of a true facilitator (Blenkinsop et al., 2016). This facilitator of classroom learning is an architect of classroom dynamics and emotional safety rather than simply a sage on the stage.

On challenge courses, facilitators experience training on the physical elements, for example, challenge pole or zip line, and more importantly, in facilitating the emotional safety of participants (Resources, 2014). As Maslow (1943) has demonstrated, for learning to occur emotional safety must be present. More recently, Hammond (2015) demonstrated that emotionally un-safe environments create an atmosphere where students are less likely to retain information and be able to employ higher-order thinking. Whether a threat is social or physical, it triggers the amygdala, which in turn releases cortisol. Cortisol, in turn, blocks high order thinking skills (Arnsten, 2009).

As they grow, facilitators become adept at caring for all aspects of the community within their care. A safe classroom community is composed of the emotional safety of all students. When trained facilitators become teachers and educators, real emotional safety in a classroom
happens, and research has demonstrated emotional safety as a precursor to beneficial environments (Dollard & Bakker, 2010) including learning environments.

The identified CJ instructor trained on an Odyssey Course, for example, adventure course, by a skilled course facilitator. He grasped the significance of the elements, that is, physical and emotional safety, and not only employed them in his classroom (T. Lamica, Personal Communication, 2017) but also passed the method on to the subsequent instructors. This transition created a sustainable system, which the subsequent instructors are still utilizing.

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The main components of EE relate to the five SEL competencies (CASEL, 2017). The AEE (2017) identified the following gains: reflection, critical analysis, decision-making abilities, personal accountability, problem-solving, leadership development, and relational to name a few.

Each experiential activity may be different, as each facilitator brings different skills and abilities to the activity, so it is difficult to identify every potential outcome. Additionally, physical and emotional benefits were identified, such as improved self-esteem, communication, and problem-solving (Goldenburg, Russell, & Soule, 2011; Sibthorp, Paisley, Gookin, & Furman, 2008).

These identified benefits directly connect to the five competencies of SEL: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relational skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2017); therefore, depending on the type of experiential education selected, and the delivery method, EE may be part of the model for SEL delivery specifically for CTE.

Capturing Kid’s Hearts. Capturing Kid’s Hearts was a program developed by Flip Flippen in his work with at-risk teenagers. Flippen and White’s (2007) approach developed on a foundation of relationship building. Specifically, Flippen and White considered the adult role to be crucial in the development of emotional health, for at-risk students, and additionally, for all students. The idea of the teacher as having a central role in the life of the classroom, aligns with
Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2016) research around the pivotal role of the instructor in the development of classroom culture and community--- student/teacher relationships .052–.072 effect size on student learning (see Appendix H; Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2011).

Flippen and White’s (2007) work was two-fold, to strengthen protective factors around the student through relationship development and social contracts of behavior; and secondly, through the targeting of challenging behaviors, such as inappropriate behaviors and poor social skills. The research cited by his company as undergirding his work is Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) and SEL’s five key competencies (Durlak et al., 2011). The problem with this identification of research is that his company started in 1990, and Durlak’s et al. (2011) research was not available until 2011. This shows the research came after his concept development; it was not the theoretical foundation. As earlier with the identified CJ instructor’s work in the classroom, organic development may be desirable. It may be worth noting that Flippen and White first developed his concept and later supported it with SEL competencies through CASEL. Either way, the SEL competencies, from the CASEL research group, relate to the Capturing Kid’s Hearts curriculum.

**Military command structure.** With the establishment of Military Academy at West Point, New York in 1802, the idea of a systematic view of teaching military structure began. Since this launching, numerous schools and departments have used parts of the structure not only to teach classes but also leadership. The class structure in the identified CJ program aligned intentionally to a military command structure or hierarchy, similar to the structure found in the criminal justice workplace. For example, student collaborative work groups organized into squads, each of the squads had a captain, each of the captains reported to a sergeant, each sergeant reported to a class commander. Even though corporate leadership may look toward
flattened hierarchy structures, in this situation, leadership rotates among the students. This rotational structure allows students to not only understand their criminal justice hierarchy, but students can develop essential leadership skills, in a supportive learning environment.

The command structure also supports a model of a successful classroom environment, as noted by the Center for Educational Leadership (CEL, 2019). Highly effective classroom instruction is a classroom where students are assuming a leadership position, holding each other accountable for their actions, and taking ownership of their learning (CEL, 2017). The CJ classroom structure allows leadership activities to take place, within an environment where reflection takes place daily. In the CJ reflection structure, trust and emotional safety are deep, and students hold peers accountable for their actions (CEL, 2017). The CJ classes employ emotionally safe reflections within the class structure to provide feedback to fellow peers; this targeted feedback promotes self-awareness, management, social awareness, relationships, and decision-making (CEL, 2017). Additionally, because this feedback happens in an emotionally safe environment it promotes trust and classroom community.

**Peer mentoring.** The CJ instructor identified four components to his original mentoring plan (T. Lamica, Personal Communication, 2017). These four areas of mentoring include peer mentors in the form of field professionals, for example, previous CJ students, coming in once a week to lead students in career development activities and relationship building. Second, intentional collaborative learning partners in the classroom, to support core CJ content. Next, new program intern mentoring, the identified CTE center has a system of program visitors from the local high schools coming in to intern in the CJ classroom. CJ students pair up with incoming interns to develop supportive relationships and promote discussions around potential CJ careers. Finally, first and second-year students occasionally paired up to provide leadership
and curriculum support across the entire CJ program. Thus, the peer-mentoring program consisted of four different types of peer mentoring.

Holt and Lopez (2014) noted that peer-to-peer mentoring groups have been under-studied in an understanding of what makes an effective versus ineffective mentor/mentee relationship. Holt and Lopez (2014) pointed to seminal research conducted by Nora and Crisp (2007). Crisp, Baker, Griffin, Lunsford, and Pifer (2017) identified a theoretical framework for mentoring around four roles of a mentor. The first role of a mentor is to provide psychological and emotional support, which involves a high degree of listening skills and emotional safety for the mentee from the mentor. Second, the mentor contributes, career support, where a mentor helps the mentee with specific career/industry related skills, that is, police officers coming into the class provided supports for high school students seeking career advice such as where to obtain specific trainings. Academic support/Core Content knowledge support, whereby a mentor helps with content knowledge, that is, helping a peer with supports in a content specific area, and Role modeling, where the mentor provides modeling for a newer peer to the classroom, that is, a new intern coming into a class, or a second to the first-year cadet.

The identified CJ instructor supported all these mentoring areas in his classroom, because they were the right things to do for students, not necessarily, because he identified these as part of a successful mentoring model. It has been noted through research (Nora & Crisp, 2007) that mentorship, in general, has increased noncognitive skills, and specifically, in the identification of enhanced interpersonal skills. Interpersonal skills are competencies, identified through research as communication, listening, and advocating for peers (Kiyama & Luca, 2013; Reyes, 2011). The research of Nora and Crisp (2007) around the four areas peer mentoring, for example,
psychological/emotional support, career support, academic support, and role modeling, may be seen as additional models to building relationships and community in a CJ classroom.

CASEL (2017a) has identified five competencies in SEL that are predictive of academic and career achievement, even more so than IQ levels (Duckworth & Gross, 2014). Students involved in SEL programs demonstrate an 11%-point gain in grades and test scores (Durlak et al., 2011). The identified CJ instructor initiated a CJ program that demonstrated community development through experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, a military command structure, and peer mentoring. Enabling classroom community and emotional safety align closely with other SEL models in the United States.

Community. The researchers’ role as an instructional coach, in working with new instructors, there are two critical areas for teacher growth, pedagogical skills (including content mastery) and secondly, classroom environment and culture or community. These two areas are documented through countless researched-based teacher evaluation models such as Marzano’s Teacher Evaluation Model, Charlotte Danielson’s Framework for Teaching, and the Five Dimensions of Teaching and Learning.

Explicitly teaching emotional safety in the classroom is important because it increases academics, it helps to manage stress, but it helps students and teachers develop and live in community (CASEL, 2017). In my experience, classrooms that have developed deeper community are better able to guide students through the academic challenges and frustrations inherent in school life. Students learn how to give and receive feedback (social awareness, relational skills) and teachers can listen and adjust instruction to individual learning needs.
Review of Literature

Throughout the review of the literature, connections to Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017) educational research will be linked to the Lamica model. In the educational world, *Visible Learning for Teachers* (Hattie, 2012) is foundational research. His analysis of 800 meta-studies, which included over 50,000 individual studies, representing over 250 million students, and 20 years of research has resulted in numerous classroom insights. Currently, research is continuing with over 1,200 meta-analyses, 70,000 studies and over 300 million students (Fisher et al., 2016). Hattie’s research is considered the world’s largest evidence base, on how to improve learning in schools (Professional learning, 2017). In noting his research throughout this literature review, it will be demonstrated how the components introduced through the Lamica model that were initially used in the CJ classroom, connect to Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2016) seminal educational research practices.

Hattie’s (Killian, 2017) research identified the use of effect size, as it relates to different influencers. Effect size is the magnitude of impact any given strategy has on, in this case, a classroom. In Hattie’s (Killian, 2017) research anything above 0.40 represents more than a year’s worth of learning in a school year. Anything above 0.40 would have a greater positive effect on student learning. The actual significance of Hattie’s (Killian, 2017) research is that his research considers both the effect size, which in some cases has small sample sizes, and the size of the studies. In combining *effect size* with *study size*, a real and significant picture of best practices emerges, effect on student learning. The information on effect size helps teachers in selecting strategies best suited to improve learning in their classroom.

**Experiential education.** The seminal and founding thinker in Experiential Education is John Dewey. Dewey (2012) explained that learning, and thereby education, needed to be
experienced, as opposed to a receptive form of understanding. He was an opponent of the delivering of educational content for the sake of content. For example, Dewey opposed curriculum delivered in neatly laid out classroom rows of desks and chairs, and in strict narrowly defined terms. Instead, he was a proponent of learning that develops naturally through student interests and inquiry methods. Dewey (2012) noted that experiencing concepts and the students’ reflection on that learning was authentic education. Dewey (2012) is considered the founding father of vocational education, or, as it is currently referenced, Career Technical Education (CTE). In CTE settings, students can, for example, experience how an engine fits together and works by using a hands-on approach to learning., Dewey’s (1938) philosophy on learning and the use of reflection are at the core of the philosophy of Experiential Education; Challenge and Experience followed by Reflection leading to Learning and Growth (AEE, 2017).

Experiential education is utilized in the identified CJ classroom, first through challenge course activities, then reflective activities, and finally in the utilization of the reflections to direct classroom growth. Challenge course activities range from high-rope activities, for example, jumping off a pine pole 25 feet in the air, used to create an atmosphere where group goals, challenges, trust-building, and critical thinking skills are experienced in a safe environment to low rope activities. Low rope activities, for example, wires and cables supporting a system that may be two feet off the ground, focus on team skill development. Group initiative activities are activities used to explore group problem-solving abilities and interactions. In the identified CJ classroom, these challenge activities, develop trust, that is, the trust-fall, and leadership potential. The instructors or facilitators have the ability to scrutinize classes and observe group dynamics in an experiential environment. Finally, challenge course activities in experiential education, as opposed to those that are just for an experience, that is,
zip-lines, always have reflection as central to the experience (Zmudy, Curtner-Smith, & Steffen, 2009). Skilled facilitators paraphrase words and actions to the group to promote group reflection (Costa & Garmston, 2016). Possible reflection questions may include “How did the group do this activity? What helped or hindered the goal achievement? Where do you see those same situations show up in the classroom? How might we want to confront these concerns here? How might we want to address these concerns in the classroom? Facilitators can help to lead groups to define a coherent vision. Student reflection on experience is embedded deeply, both within experiential education paradigms and in the identified CJ classroom (AEE, 2017; Dewey, 1938; Dollard & Bakker, 2010; Estes, 2016).

One method of student-directed reflection is in circle processing. The roots of utilizing circle processing are deeply rooted in Native American traditions, where the circle form holds deep natural energy; in the reflection of the earth, moon, and circular movement of the seasons. Everyone around the circle is equal, that is, King Arthurs’ round table. Each person has a voice and respect given to each in turn (Neihardt, 1932; Open-circle, 2017). Much of these traditions continue in the CJ classroom. Students begin and end, with reflection. Through reflection, each students’ voice is important and acknowledged. Students, that is, learner-centric, choose quotes for the day based on classroom dynamics and needs, and others within the circle respond to the student (again, student-centric leadership versus a more traditional approach of teacher-centric). Within the circle, students use positive affirmations with each other (Flippen & White, 2007) to build culture, and develop a deeper level of trust where they can share and receive critical feedback on classroom performance.

Additionally, is the recent development in 2017 where AEE developed a site Learning through Experience) to broaden EE into related experience-based areas, for example, project-
based learning, service learning, job shadowing. His site developed to begin the transformation of experiential education from being viewed as simply an outdoor adventure site, to the idea that experience and learning from that experience can happen anywhere. For example, service-learning projects (Billig, 2000) where students are working on a site could fit into experiential learning guidelines, if the learning has relationship development or reflection associated with the experience. *Learning through Experience* (Learn through Experience, 2017) has three identified values of experiential learning which are: (a) Use of activity, challenge, experiment, or experience, engages the learner and supports deeper learning, (b) Experiential learning promotes ownership of learning by the students, and (c) Experiential learning creates a positive climate by developing relationships and reflection (Learn through Experience, 2017). Interestingly, the identified CJ classroom has utilized each of the three indicated guidelines. The classroom uses a challenge course with initiatives, low rope activities, trust building, and culminating in a high ropes experience. Additionally, the entire classroom is a CTE experience, for example, students practice criminal justice skills similar to events in the field, such as criminal takedowns, crime scene investigations, and prison scenarios (problem-based learning relates to effect size of 0.15; Killian, 2017).

In conclusion, with challenge activities (low ropes, high ropes, trust activities, and team building initiatives) students experience the *challenge and experience* of EE (AEE, 2017). With circle processing techniques (effect size, 0.82, [Killian, 2017]) students lead themselves, for example, self-direction, through reflective processes leading to classroom growth; all of which identifies that EE is indeed present in the identified CJ classroom.

In noting alignment of EE aligns to SEL competencies, ropes courses (including the low ropes, group initiatives, and trust activities) have demonstrated higher-level outcomes similar to
SEL competencies. These include increases in self-efficacy, efficiency, relationship development, goal setting, and task accomplishment (Goldenberg et al., 2000). Schonert-Reichl and Roeser (2016) identified that EE activities align to SEL practices and bolster the effectiveness of each of the programs. In fact, programs they have developed, intentionally develop both practices, EE and SEL, simultaneously. Finally, Hattie (Killian, 2017) noted an effect size of 0.52 in applications utilizing adventure/outdoor programming ranking it 43 of 100 top researched based classroom improvement strategies.

**Capturing Kid’s Hearts.** *Capturing Kid’s Hearts* was a program developed by Flip Flippen in the 1990’s. Flippen’s work began on the mission of “building relationships and processes that bring out the best in people” (Flippen Group, 2019, para. 1). Flippen and White’s (2007) program came out of his work with at-risk teenagers and development of a systematic process of relationship building. Adults, for example, teachers, are paramount in the relational development process; this idea aligns with Hattie’s (Killian, 2017) research on the importance of teacher efficacy in the classroom (1.57 effect size) and the importance of teacher-student relationships (effect size of 0.72, [Killian, 2017]).

Flippen and White’s (2007) work originated on several principles, the development of teacher effectiveness in the classroom, addressing of challenging behaviors (classroom management, effect size of 0.60 (Fisher et al., 2017), personal accountability, and self-management (self-reported grades and student expectations, effect size of 1.44, (Fisher et al., 2017) Flippen and White’s (2007) EXCEL model helps teachers develop classroom skills to acquire relational capacity. The EXCEL model outlines five basic steps: *Engage* students in relationship upon entering class (effect size 0.59, [Killian, 2017]). *X-plore*, students’ individual learning needs (effect size of 0.54, [Killian, 2017]). *Communicate-Empower*, student ownership
of learning. Finally, Launch, send the students out with a positive emotion, a quote, story, or inspiring thought.

Flippen and White’s (2007) model was first, to enable the teacher through the development of relational capacity, and secondly through the systematic attention to challenging behaviors. His work on classroom social contracts utilizes a systematic use of a continuum of response to behavior using the power of both positive and negative reinforcement. The final components of Capturing Kid’s Hearts are student personal accountability and self-management (Flippen & White, 2007). Flippen and White’s (2007) system addresses accountability and self-management through a communal development of classroom norms or a social contract in which teachers and students hold each other accountable to the contract. This is identified in the CJ classroom by an approach to classroom discipline where both the CJ instructor and students co-create the classroom norms and hold each accountable for adherence to the norms. Anecdotally, there seems to be a difference between the identified CJ classrooms, versus other classrooms utilizing a social contract. This difference may be due to how the contract is sustained and enforced in the classroom. In some CTE classes, although a contract is developed and co-created, use of the contract may tend to fall off throughout the class year, where the contract simply becomes another paper on the classroom wall. In the identified CJ classroom, the sustaining of the contract happens throughout the year. In other words, students know that they will continue to be accountable for the contract, the instructors recognize its value, and peer-to-peer accountability upheld and expected. The research has noted that better student engagement and classroom community develop because of this enforcement (CEL, 2017).

The system also utilizes a four-step process of questioning for responsible thinking (Ford, 2003); based on Perceptual Control Theory (Powers, 1973) and Social Control Theory (Bandura,
What are you doing? What should you be doing? Are you doing it? What are you going to do about it? (Sherwood, 2003). When teachers can give students control over their decisions in a calm environment, then these theories note that students will usually make a more sensible decision about problematic behaviors.

In relating Flippen and White’s (2007) work to the identified SEL competencies (CASEL, 2017), there is direct alignment with several of the five CASEL competencies: self-management (contribution to and adherence to the classroom social contract); social awareness (understanding the social norms of behavior and its consequence on group relations), relational skills, and responsible decision-making. Consequently, the topic of how Flippen and White’s work related to the five CASEL competencies, in a CJ classroom, in a CTE center needs to be done.

**Military command structure.** Most small military or police agencies operate according to a hierarchical structure called the chain of command, similar to traditional businesses structures with a top-down approach to managerial responsibilities. In a conventional police unit, hierarchy flows from the sergeants to lieutenants, and finally up to the commanders. Although some military structures may have followed business into flattened leadership models, for the most part, the hierarchy still exists within most police and law enforcement structures. Therefore, for the students in an identified CJ classroom to experience what that structure may feel like to operate in, is, an experiential practice. Students in the identified CJ class are experiencing how a chain of command works, and at the same time undergoing leadership development. Having a chain of command and leadership system fall under Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017) research on classroom management structures with an effect size of 0.52 (see Appendix H).
In the identified CJ classroom, students are in teams or squads; each squad has a leader called the team sergeant. Depending on class sizes, there may be another layer of lieutenants, or simply one to two commanders. Each of the students moves in and out of leadership roles throughout the duration of the class. As these leadership roles rotate, students receive peer-to-peer feedback, aligned to Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017) peer tutoring effect size of 0.55 and peer influences 0.53; based on their job performance of the day or week. Early in the year, instructors intentionally structure experiential activities to establish trust, so that, students can achieve a high degree of emotional safety in the giving and receiving of constructive feedback to improve job performance. Each of these reflective feedback sessions constructed within a processing system of circle processing, where students can hold each other accountable for classroom actions and decisions. In the role as instructional coach the researcher noted that personal observations demonstrated classroom interactions where students have provided feedback that most adults would find unpleasant, but because the interactions are on such a deep level and come from a level of caring, criticism is accepted, and action taken.

In thinking about how the military command structure relates to leadership development in the identified CJ classroom. A comparison to the identification of transactional and transformational leadership may be helpful. In a traditional classroom setting, a teacher holds the potential as being viewed as the classroom commander. He/she doles out the work and expectations similar to a transactional leadership model. Transactional leadership is a model where the supervisor is the authority figure that transacts with the employees, that is, students, to afford compliance toward a goal, that is, grades, by using rewards and punishments (Bass, 1990). Transformational leadership, a term originally coined by Downton in 1973, and further developed by Burns, is a style of leadership whereby leaders, that is, a teacher, inspires a
classroom towards transformational learning. Together teacher and students can co-create a vision and then develop accountability, for example, in circle processing, towards that shared vision. These CJ instructors are transformational leaders still working in a transactional school system.

The CJ classroom demonstrates transformational leadership qualities, such as the instructor and students co-creating a vision and inspirational goals. As an example, I have witnessed a situation where the instructor provided a view of why students should not date while still in high school and save themselves for a future where they are more able to handle mindful decisions regarding the opposite sex. Students have responded to this challenge because of the connection to the instructor. According to Bass (1990), transformational leadership engenders respect and admiration from subordinates. Although, there is a deep relational connection, there may still exist a benefit to students, to know and understand transactional leadership systems.

Much of the criminal justice world revolves around a transactional worldview. For example, parking tickets, speed limit laws, jails, and prisons are all examples of a world of rewards, punishments, and following a set standard of protocols.

Two additional theories related to leadership theories are McGregor’s (1960) two leadership theories; *Theory X* and *Theory Y*. *Theory X* refers to transactional leadership where managers or teachers rule by fear, consequences, strict supervision, and a system of reward and punishment. In a classroom, this may be the fear of grades, performance, held back, or discipline procedures. *Theory Y* relates to transformational leadership where managers or teachers, encourage workers or students to fully develop their gifts. The role of the manager/teacher is one of motivation and development. In the identified CJ classroom, it may not be *Theory X* or *Theory Y*, rather a combination dependent on situational needs that yield the best leadership
development. This relates to the work of Fred Fiedler's (1994) research in the *Contingency Theory*, where situational leadership is determined in each unique situation. His theory developed around three ingredients: leadership based on relationships, tasks, and positional power (Kerr, Schriesheim, Murphy, & Stogdill, 1974).

It is possible for leadership to display both transformational and transactional qualities (Bass, 1990) or as Fiedler (1994) identified, a type of leadership that is contingent on the situation. What is not known, however, is how students in the identified CJ class, understand the role of leadership and leadership development on community development in their classroom, and this aspect needs to be studied.

**Peer mentoring.** Since man began to learn, mentoring in some form, has been around—from peers, family, or workplace elders. Educator and theorist Paulo Freire fostered peer mentoring in education during the 1960s. Freire, a Brazilian educator (1921–1997) who built on the work of John Dewey believed that students should assume ownership of their learning thus allowing the teacher to become more of a facilitator of learning (Freire, n.d.). He promoted not only peer mentoring but also the active engagement of students. His work closely parallels previous discussions in *Experiential Education*. Hattie (Fisher et al., 2017) also identified peer mentoring as having an effect size of 0.55 and cooperative learning with an effect of 0.42. Fisher et al. (2016) noted, “students learn more deeply when they are engaged in complex tasks that involve collaboration” (p. 23). In the CJ classroom students spend much of their learning time in learning partnerships called learning partners; a form of peer mentorships in which each student supports the learning of others within the classroom. Learning partners fulfill the roles outlined by both Freire (n.d.) and Hattie (Fisher et al., 2017) of cooperative and peer mentoring, which allows for deep connected learning.
Anecdotally, in the identified CJ classroom, peer mentoring takes on several forms. First, is the role of the mentor as an instructional or curriculum specialist, in aiding the teacher in content or performance related tasks, that is, learning to handcuff a prisoner. As discussed in the previous section, second-year students in the classrooms may be identified in the CJ classroom as possessing unique and specific knowledge and leadership, that is, in the military command structure, skills. These relationships create a unique blend of relationships in the classroom that contribute to the overall success of the entire classroom goals (Fisher et al., 2016). Hattie (Fisher et al., 2017) noted the influence of peer influences and classroom cohesion as both having an effect size of 0.53.

The second mentoring occurs, in the identified CJ program, when new students from the surrounding district come into intern to try out the CJ program. Instructors are intentional about creating relationships with new incoming students. Relationships with incoming students support enrollment purposes and bring new students quickly into the tight-knit CJ community. Sometimes, for students leaving the security of their home high schools, going to a new large campus, can become a complicated and anxiety-laden process. If when arriving at the CTE Center, a student quickly feels part of community, this may serve to combat anxiety anecdotally, noted among first year students.

The importance of peer connections is important in school: “the student’s peer group is the single most potent source of influence on growth and development” (Astin, 1993, p. 398). As noted earlier, EE research has also documented multiple benefits to social group including connections to peers, social adjustment (Bobilya, Akey, & Mitchell, 2011), interpersonal relationships (Gass, 1987), friendship formation, strong social support network, sense of fitting in, and leadership. All these contribute to relational development in the classroom by creating a
cohesive sense of community and thereby a place for the child to thrive. Students possessing these connections of belonging and trust in an emotionally safe environment may be able to weather the complexities of life easier because of the social supports that these peers provide. Hattie (Fisher et al., 2017) noted an effect size of 0.15 for mentoring. The purpose of this research study is to explore how CJ students in a CTE center perceive the influence of peer mentoring on classroom community in a school district in the Midwest U.S.

**CASEL competencies.** In this literature review, the influences of professional development are noted in regard the identified CJ instructor, in a CTE center, in the Midwest of the United States. Although there may be multiple factors contributing to the development of community in the classes he held, and subsequently passed on, in conversations with the initial instructor (T. Lamica, Personal communication, 2017); he identified four contributing factors to the development of SEL. These four areas are experiential education, Capturing’s Kid’s Hearts, military command hierarchy, and peer mentoring. These four areas connect to SEL five competencies and may serve as evidence for adoption as a CASEL model. In the next section of the literature review, CASEL’s competencies will align to these four areas, and support additional CJ classroom procedures.

SEL is the process through which students gain knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to manage their emotions, set goals, demonstrate empathy and develop positive relationships (Dusenbury, Calin, Domitrovich, & Weissberg, 2015). CASEL has conducted extensive research, for example, over 200 meta-analyses, that demonstrate positive student outcomes including increased test scores and an 11-percentile advantage in academic gains (Durlak et al., 2011) and reduction of problem behaviors (Durlak et al., 2015; Fleming et al., 2005; Greenberg et al., 2003; Zins et al., 2004).
Although research has been conducted in elementary classrooms, and is just beginning to emerge in secondary classrooms, there is paucity of research on SEL, classroom community and emotional safety implementation, available either in CTE centers or in CJ classrooms. Dusenbury et al. (2015) identified four approaches that have been successfully implemented in schools to promote SEL in traditional classes, that is, elementary, secondary, special education. The first is freestanding lessons like stand-alone lessons developed for classrooms, for example, a lesson on managing anxiety. The second approach uses general teaching practices to create and sustain SEL competencies. Third, is an approach that develops SEL skills within a core curriculum area. The last method guides school administrators in developing a systematic approach utilizing administrative leadership. For this section, this paper will focus on the second approach and demonstrate how the SEL identified teaching skills relate anecdotally to classroom procedures that are in place in the identified CJ program. The section titles are the topic identifiers, which are the general teaching practices, identified by Dusenbury et al. (2015).

**Classroom environment.** The use of positive reward system, as opposed to negative response, is documented in research (Horner et al., 2009). Development of a shared expectation system (Flippen & White, 2007) and collective accountability to the system creates classroom cohesion. The identified CJ classroom uses a system of norms development, and adherence to a social contract. Teachers explicitly model accountability procedures, and quickly use a gradual release model that allows student ownership of the norms (CEL, 2019).

Classroom practices that reflect and communicate high expectations for student personal best (Dusenbury et al., 2015) are repeatedly communicated to students in the identified CJ program. For example, several times weekly military-style lineups communicate short
inspirational messages communicating expectations. Additionally, Hattie (Fisher et al., 2016) identified high expectations as having an effect size of 0.43.

Relationship development. Routines and structures in a classroom provide for students a sense of security and reduce anxiousness, as students can predict how classrooms will operate (Wong & Wong, 2009). The identified CJ classroom teachers explicitly classroom routines as part of standard classroom beginning-of-the-year procedures. These practices support the use of a center-wide system of research-based strategies called the Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS) that teaches classroom techniques to instructors. The idea behind MTSS is that teachers cannot assume that students know how to teach each other respectfully, or demonstrate initiative and students need explicit teaching of these skills, that is, direct instruction, monitored, positively reinforced, and then intermittently reinforced. Additionally, are practices that promote positive relationship building. The CJ instructors intentionally deliver activities every day that are relationship building. These activities include positive affirmations (Flippen & White, 2007), circle reflections, beginning of the day welcoming and greeting by the instructors, connector activities, which are similar to icebreakers, Good things (Flippen & White, 2007), and inspirational stories, quotes, and the intentional development of trust activities. In the identified CJ classroom, trust activities administered through a set of experiential/challenge course activities, work on gradually increasing trust and connectedness within the class. These activities range from a Blind Trust walk, through The Wall, for example, a military wall hurdle, to a Trust Fall. These activities build trust incremental steps and promote positive classroom interactions. Hattie (Fisher et al., 2016) identified classroom management with an effect size of 0.52, relationships with a 0.72, and classroom behavioral strategies as 0.68. Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017) research identified the use of effect size, as it relates to different influencers. Effect
size is the magnitude of impact any given strategy has on, in this case, a classroom. In Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017) research anything above 0.40 represents more than a year’s worth of learning in a school year. The actual significance of Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017) research is that his research considers both the effect size, which in some cases has small sample sizes, and the size of the studies. In combining effect size with study size, a real and significant picture of best practices emerges.

**Specific instructional practices.** The last area that Dusenbury et al. (2015) identified was in providing ongoing instructional practice to support SEL development. First, is in the use of questioning to support student’s voice. Hattie (Fisher et al., 2016) identified questioning techniques as a .048 effect size, and classroom discussions with a .082 size. This may be an area of potential growth for the current CJ instructors; they are just beginning to use deeper levels of questioning with their students. Secondly is identifying areas of curriculum where students can explore their interests and strengths, for example, student ownership of learning. The Center for Educational Leadership (CEL, 2019) a leader in teacher evaluation systems, determined student ownership is the highest level of learning. The identified CJ instructors’ curriculum covers a broad range of criminal justice potential career choices. They have made community connections with CJ officers in various areas that come in for classroom presentations. These may vary from courtroom visitations to Department of Natural Resources, to crime scene investigators. Hattie (Fisher et al., 2016) identified student-centered teaching with an effect size of 0.54, career interventions with a 0.38, and individualized instruction with a 0.22. Third, is the use of authentic feedback. Hattie (Fisher et al., 2016) identified formative feedback with an effect size of 0.90. The CJ classroom uses a technique called DIGA (Describe, Investigate, Generalize, and Apply) as a reflective practice. After a classroom activity, that is, a classroom
presentation, has occurred, a DIGA takes place. This is a circle of students that process and reflect on the activity (Marzano, 2016; Naidoo & Kirch, 2016) by providing support, discourse (Lloyd, Kolodziej, & Brashears, 2016) and positives to the different classroom actions that occurred. Fourth, is classroom events or traditions that create a sense of community. The CJ program has many activities that align to this practice such a pinning ceremony, open houses, and peer mentorships. Finally, are classroom practices that align to project-based learning and service learning, because the CTE center is career oriented most of the activities in the classroom already for these categories. Hattie (Fisher et al., 2016) noted an effect of 0.15 for problem-learning. In addition, CJ instructors promote several activities a year to connect to the greater community, such a cold weather apparel drive and book drive for younger students in need of these items in the local community. The items are not dropped off at a local shelter, but there is a connection made with children, a special cookie decorating event with a child and a book reading take place. CJ students dress in their police attire to help the entire police force develop positive community relations.

The overarching four-implementation strategies (Dusenbury et al., 2015) designed to promote teachers and administrators with options in SEL delivery. These strategies used to promote and develop positive classroom environments and support positive school climate to ensure academic, future career, and overall well-being. These gains are also large (Fisher et al., 2016; effect size increases of 0.2–0.6) and statistically significant (Durlak et al., 2011 Dusenbury et al., 2015; Heckman & Kautz, 2012; Sklad, Diekstra, Ritter, Ben, & Gravesteijn, 2012; Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013).

**Five competencies.** Numerous studies have shown the benefits of teaching noncognitive, soft, or social-emotional skills as predictors of success in the areas of academics, career, and over
well-being and avoidance of problematic behaviors (Weissberg, 2017). SEL “is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (CASEL, 2015, para. 4). SEL skills hold promise for schools and CTE centers to assist students in developing their potential as successful society contributors.

Through extensive research, CASEL has identified five over-arching competencies predictive of social and emotional success. These are Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making (CASEL, 2017). These five areas align to both intrapersonal and interpersonal domains as identified by the National Research Council (2012) and speak to an education of the whole child, not just cognitively but socially and emotionally (Kolb et al., 2014). The best identified SEL practices happen when SEL sustained and reinforced throughout a classroom, a school, through district policies, and community partners (CASEL, 2017).

**Community.** In summary, it has been noted that a CJ instructor in a CTE center in the Midwest has organically developed a system for cohesive classroom community. Additionally, he has passed his practice on through mentoring to two additional CJ instructors. Due to his work in experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, development of a command hierarchy, and peer mentoring; he has created the Lamica model for building community, which also aligns to CASEL’s (2017) five competencies. CASEL (2017b) has identified these five areas as leading to increased academic, career, and overall emotional well-being. Additionally, it has anecdotally been noted that in the identified CJ classrooms there is a deep sense of community and emotional safety.
The framework of a *Sense of Community Theory* was first laid out by McMillan and Chavis (1986). This framework from social psychology became foundational throughout the educational entities to understand classroom community. Through highlighting of social connectedness and shared communal responsibilities this theory connects with social constructivist theories. Rovai (2002) identified that the key element of classroom community is the collaboration between learners as an essential element, since learning, occurs through the learners’ active participation in class activities. These elements of connectedness and shared responsibilities have anecdotally been noted in the identified CJ classroom.

In the identified CJ classroom, creating connections has been of paramount concern. Baumeister and Leary (1995) proposed that humans have a fundamental drive for human attachment and the need to belong. This deep desire to live and move in communal relations was noted Palmer (2004). The teacher as a central figure in a classroom has the potential to facilitate belongingness, community, and emotional safety. They hold the knowledge and ability to support and scaffold positive student interactions (Anderman & Anderman, 2014; Zins et al., 2004). As noted earlier, emotional safety holds the potential to increase academic achievement and lifetime skills and the way to create this emotional safety may be in creating connections.

The satisfaction noted in CJ students, once community is established, is what makes this an interesting study in the classroom. Anecdotally, students have spoken of the deep connections they have made to each other. This research as to how CJ students perceive the influence of community on their classroom has not be conducted and needs to be, so that we can utilize this in additional classrooms in CTE centers and regular high schools.

**Methods.** In research, there are many research methodological approaches possible, and an initial determination of qualitative or quantitative research methodologies (McMillan &
Wergin, 2010). The use of quantitative research contains numerical calculations to evaluate, explore, and describe the studies’ phenomena (McMillan & Wergin, 2010). Quantitative research focuses on a control of variables, measurable data, and adherence to strict statistical calculations to identify reliability of outcomes generated. In qualitative research, the research identifies as either experimental or non-experimental. In experimental research, the researcher has control over identified variables in the experiment, in a non-experimental; the researcher has no control over the variables (McMillan & Wergin, 2010). In comparison, qualitative research is conducted through stories and case studies, human perceptions, and social and historical contexts (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research can provide a naturalistic setting from which to understand phenomena and the meaning people assign to them (Fontana & Frey, 2000).

Qualitative research is rooted in extensive, natural, interpretive descriptions of the studied research, as opposed to statistical numbers, where each contextual setting is unique and holds importance (Creswell, Hanson, Plano, & Morales, 2007). Creswell et al. (2007) identified nine characteristics of qualitative research these are: 1. the natural setting, 2. researcher as principal instrument, 3. multiple sources of data, 4. inductive data analysis, 5. participant’s meaning and interpretation of events, 6. emergent design, 7. theoretical lens, 8. interpretive inquiry, and 9. holistic accounts (Creswell et al., 2007).

In exploring CJ classroom community, the understanding the development of community is important to study from the perspective of the student and of the instructors’ perception of student perceptions, on site. This understanding is obtainable through three methods of research design: student interviews, short questionnaires, and interviews with informed experts (in this case the initial CJ instructor, and the subsequent instructors).
Merriam and Merriam (2009) identified interview designs as allowing for an investigation of data in a natural setting. In the identified CTE, setting this would be interviews allowing for CJ students and teachers’ perspectives; this allows for thick, rich descriptions that enable researcher understanding (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Merriam & Merriam, 2009). The semistructured interview also allows the researcher to ask follow-up questions that in this situation may help to clarify student and teacher thinking (Galletta, 2013). Merriam and Merriam (2009) also noted the usefulness of qualitative studies in educational studies because education is a dynamic field of study. For example, seminal research conducted by Bridgeland, Bruce, and Hariharan (2013) for CASEL, noted the use focus groups, surveys, and interviews for their research into identifying the compelling documentation behind SEL in the classroom.

The second form of qualitative methodology suited for this research is qualitative surveys. Qualitative surveys are surveys that ask open-ended questions to understand participant, that is, student, thoughts, in this case about the classroom (Creswell, 2014). Bridgeland et al. (2013) also used a survey tool in 2012 for 605, preschool through twelfth-grade teachers. They demonstrated, with weighting, a representation of public-school teachers in America that support the need for social and emotional learning in their classrooms.

The third study suggested for the identified CJ classroom is utilization of informed experts in semistructured interviews, which serve a focus group. Focus groups have increased in popularity since their inception during WWII as a method of determining the effectiveness of radio programming (Berg & Lune, 2011). Since that time, they have been widely used for market research (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Although in the Literature review conducted there are few references to the utilization of focus groups, this instance they may hold value. As Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, and Ormston (2013) noted, focus groups hold value because of the
dynamics of the interaction between members. Additional memories or information may be prompted by group interactions (Ritchie et al., 2013). For this study, many activities enacted by the original CJ instructor, and then, passed on to the next generation of CJ instructors. The hope is to learn about original intentions of the first instructor. Additionally, it will be noted how those original ideas have morphed and grown and morphed into the CJ class of 2018.

**Synthesis of research findings.** In a CJ classroom in a CTE center in the Midwest, a model for classroom community, known as the Lamica model, has developed organically. This means there is no research available on the Lamica model; but when identifying the four components of the model several themes emerged from the review. The literature review looked at the four areas that the initial CJ instructor noted as important in the development of the classroom community. These four areas are experiential education, *Capturing Kid’s Hearts*, military command structure, and peer mentoring. These themes included the alignment of teaching practices originated by an initial CJ instructor and the classroom community that developed out of the use of the Lamica model.

**Experiential education.** The research on experiential education points to several components that contribute to emotional safety and community building. The activities and reflection are all done communally thereby building community (Schenck & Cruickshank, 2015). Experiential learning integrates different neural networks during the learning event, resulting in multiple memory pathways and connections between abstract concepts through multiple modalities produces higher retention rates” (Schenck & Cruickshank, 2015).

**Capturing Kid’s Hearts.** *Capturing Kid’s Hearts* is a model of student engagement developed by Flip Flippen. Flippen and White’s (2007) work originated on several principles, the development of teacher effectiveness in the classroom, addressing of challenging behaviors
(classroom management, effect size of 0.60, [Killian, 2017]), personal accountability, and self-management (self-reported grades and student expectations, effect size of 1.44, [Killian, 2017]). Flippen and White’s model not only addresses classroom behaviors but also aligns to SEL research. Flippen and White commissioned their own research on their model which utilized the CASEL 5 competency model.

**Military command structure.** In conversations with all the CJ instructors this particular area is always one identified by instructors as an important component to the classroom environment. It has become a transformational piece of leadership development. In reference to leadership development the literature review looked at McGregor’s (1960) two leadership theories; *Theory X* and *Theory Y*. *Theory Y* was noted in this CJ classroom as it relates to transformational leadership where managers or teachers, encourage workers or students to fully develop their gifts. In the CJ classroom both instructors and student leaders take on transformational roles, different from traditional classroom roles.

**Peer mentoring.** One important aspect of the CJ classrooms can be found in the peer to peer supports that are built into the classroom environment. Second-year students in the classrooms identified as possessing leadership, that is, in the military command structure, skills are responsible for their units or teams. I have personally witnessed instances of peer to peer academic and emotional support. Hattie (Fisher et al., 2016) noted the importance these relationships create. They noted this unique blend of relationships in the classroom contributes to the overall success of the entire classroom goals, which in this case is student success.

Additionally, are notations throughout the review of how the organic development parallels Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017) research on best educational practices that have demonstrated the most impact in classrooms. This connection to Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017)
research demonstrates the impact of Lamica’s four areas to educational concepts that have strong, meta-analysis research backing.

Summary

In a CJ classroom in a CTE center in the Midwest a model for classroom community, called the Lamica model, has developed organically. Upon conducting a literature review surrounding the Lamica model, several themes emerged from the review. These themes included the alignment of teaching practices originated by an initial CJ instructor and the classroom community and emotional safety that have developed out of it. Additionally, are notations throughout the review of how the organic development parallels Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017) research on best classroom practices, which have demonstrated the most impact in classrooms.

The literature review looked at the four areas that the initial CJ instructor noted as important in the development of the classroom community. These four areas are experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring. Identification of the supporting research explained, correlations to SEL research, and finally, the research on community examined regarding classroom community.

*The Handbook of Social and Emotional Learning* was written and edited by Durlak, Domitrovich, Weissberg, and Gullotta (Durlak, Domitrovich, Weissberg, & Gullotta, 2015). These seminal researchers and authors developed a handbook for SEL and listed the following areas/chapters: SEL practices for: preschool, elementary, middle school, high school, higher education, high-incidence special education, student-teacher relationships, school-family partnerships, after-school programming, and juvenile justice programming. Their chapter topics are shared to demonstrate that there is no mention of career and technical educational settings, which shows a gap in the literature and the need for additional research. Researchers have
focused most SEL research in primary and middle schools, some in high schools (Zheng & Hamedani, 2015). Additionally, there is no research in CTE settings, nor research on the Lamica model. No research is available in how the Lamica model conforms to Dusenbury et al.’s (2015) identified four models (free standing lessons, general teaching practices, SEL within core curriculum, guidelines for administration) to promote SEL in classrooms. A gap exists in understanding how students in a CJ class (in a CTE center) perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community. This research will contribute to how students perceive the Lamica model, knowledge in general, to further the knowledge of how to build community in high school settings, and specifically to career technical settings.
Chapter 3: Methodology

A new focus on classroom community and emotional safety has reached critical mass across the United States (CASEL, 2017). In 2011, three school districts with 171,000 students began to implement social and emotional work in their districts. Today, there are 10 major, that is, large and complex, districts with 900,000 students (CASEL, 2017; Education Week, 2017; Schonert-Reichl et al., 2017) implementing social emotional learning (SEL) practices across the country. SEL implementation in the classroom is responsible for dramatic changes in areas such as improved academic scores (CASEL, 2017; Durlak et al., 2011), graduation rates (Johnson & Weiner, 2017), school climate improvement (Hough et al., 2017), and suspension decline (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2017). Currently, there exists extensive research, for example, randomized control groups, longitudinal follow-ups, and multiple replications, that support SEL classroom gains (CASEL, 2017); but there is a paucity of literature available that identifies SEL practices in either CTE centers, or in criminal justice (CJ) programs from a student’s perspective. One model that may serve to bridge the gap between SEL practices in general and SEL practices in a CTE setting is the Lamica model. The Lamica model developed as a single practitioner model through continuous improvement. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how eight to 12 Criminal Justice (CJ) students in a CTE center perceive the influence of Lamica’s model on classroom community in a school district in the Midwest United States.

This research explores this issue through semistructured interviews with three expert criminal justice instructors, eight to 12 CJ second-year students (Latham, 2013), and an online questionnaire to all the CJ students. For both semistructured interviews and the questionnaire, parental and student consent was acquired. Included in this chapter is a statement of the problem, the research questions, the methodology, and study design that influenced this research.
This chapter also will explain the population that was studied and the sources of data to be used. Additionally, this research document will share the data collection measures, analysis procedures, ethical considerations, and study limitations.

**Research Questions**

The research questions (RQ) for the study originated out of an understanding of the Lamica model and distilling the major components of the model. Additionally, there were previous discussions with the instructor to understand the essential necessary components of the creation of an emotionally safe environment.

**RQ1:** How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community?

**RQ2:** What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an influence on classroom community?

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how CJ students in a CTE center perceive the influence of Lamica’s model on classroom community in a school district in the Midwest U.S. This study examines student and teacher perceptions of how these four areas have affected classroom community development. Currently, there is no research available on the Lamica model in CTE centers, or in criminal justice classes.

In the 2016–2017 school year, 8,322,182 students were enrolled in CTE centers across the United States (Perkins, 2012). CASEL (2017b) demonstrated through multiple studies how these competencies demonstrated an 11% increase in academic gains, mental health, social skills, and positive classroom behaviors (CASEL, 2017b; Taylor et al., 2017). Since there is no
research on the Lamica model in CTE centers and in CJ programs, it is imperative to study an example of organic development of CJ classroom community in a CTE center in the Midwest. The descriptive case provided a unique student perspective of the Lamica model and added to SEL discussion in career and technical education, and, potentially, CTE classrooms across the nation.

**Population and Sampling**

The setting for this paper was a single secondary CTE center located in the Midwest of the United States. There are 41 statewide CJ high school programs found within 55 CTE or Regional Education Service Areas (RESA). The CTE center draws students from approximately 20 local districts, not including parochial and charter schools. The career center services approximately 2300 students daily in different career technical classes. Within the center, there are approximately 120 CJ students, with the research target of eight to 12, drawn from approximately 30 second-year, that is, seniors, CJ students. From these 30 students, 12 were invited to participate in the semistructured interviews; the remainder of the class participated in the on-line questionnaires. The intent is to interview students from this class every year to continue to add on to the research knowledge base.

Several influencers determine how many interviews to conduct, but for the purposes of this paper, the intention was to interview until saturation is reached. Since the first use of the term *saturation* by Glaser and Strauss (1967), the meaning remains unclear (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). The goal is to seek saturation of knowledge as to the understanding of student perceptions as related to the research questions. Bertaux (1981) noted that once the interviewer notes patterns in the experience’s saturation may be reached. Failure to reach saturation has an influence on the data collected and obstructs research validity (Bowen, 2008). Guest et al.
(2006) found that approximately 12 interviews may be the point of saturation, although saturation may start as early as 6 interviews. Therefore, 12 students were interviewed these 12 students were based on CJ teacher recommendations. Morrow (2005) noted that participants can be chosen for “information richness” (p. 259). For the sake of accurate saturation, any member of the target population that understands the research and feels they want to contribute, that may be a voice to include in the interviews.

The interviewing of these select second-year students is an example of purposive sampling. In qualitative research, participants are selected or deliberately chosen to achieve the goal of understanding the data or information sought (Yin, 2011). In this case, the data sought is from a select group of students that have experienced the CJ class, with instructors that employ specific Lamica model strategies. This purposive sampling allowed the researcher to obtain the needed information for this study on student perspectives.

Yin (2011) noted that one of the goals of case studies is to be able to generalize how research can apply to other situations in addition to the one studied. Since this study has a small sample size, results may not be generalizable beyond the study area, although, results may be applicable to other CTE programs throughout the state. The district may be able to apply to CASEL for program evaluation of the Lamica model, leading to accreditation as an approved method of SEL delivery model.

Case Study Design

Qualitative research design is a logical sequence that connects the data collected to the initial research questions and, finally, to shareable conclusions (Yin, 2011). In this research setting, tracing the sequence of sustaining the Lamica model is part of the study. The study noted how classroom community has developed and continued to grow. This development has
been a gradual process as opposed to a one-time or static event. Qualitative or case study research is best suited to the study of phenomena that includes development over time. In research design, case studies are one of the most frequently used qualitative research methodologies (Trochim, 2006). However, sometimes there may be difficulty because of the terminology surrounding the term case studies. This term is not well defined and can be somewhat ambiguous across researchers (Yin, 2014). Case studies is confusing to researchers “as to what a case study is and how it can be differentiated from other types of qualitative research” (Merriam & Merriam, 2009, p. xi). Seminal authors on case studies are Yin, Merriam and Merriam, and Stake. Yin (2011), Merriam and Merriam (2009), and Stake (2010) provided direction to those new in case study research (Creswell et al., 2007).

Yin (2011) defined research by utilizing five areas of focus: creation of meaning in real-world context, from the perspectives of the participants, with a setting in contextual conditions, explaining social behaviors, and allowing for multiple sources of evidence. From Yin’s (2014) perspective, the case study is an empirical inquiry that studies the phenomenon by looking at the manner and method behind the case. His case study allows for many aspects of interest, data collection, or analysis of the given subject matter especially for triangulation purposes (Yin, 2014).

Stake (1995) argued that it is difficult to arrive at a precise definition for case study since there are so many definitions and disagreement across disciplines. Stake believed that researchers should delve into studies as integrated systems and as “objects” rather than “processes” (p. 2). His preference was toward programs and people. Stake (2010) and Yin (2014) both agreed that case studies are best in studying programs.
Merriam and Merriam (2009) noted that the defining characteristic of case study research is of a limited or bounded system, that is, a system that has boundaries, for example, time or space that allows for study on its own. If case studies have boundaries, then there is room for a broader scope than either Yin (2014) or Stake (1995), if researchers are careful to set their limits on the study. Merriam and Merriam’s (1998) approach allows for more flexibility and a deeper understanding for researchers. Merriam noted that qualitative case studies are “intensive, holistic description[s] and analysis of bounded phenomena such as a program, an institution, a person, or a social unit” (p. xiii). Merriam and Merriam’s view parallels the study undertaken in an identified CJ program, it is a bounded phenomenon, occurring at a CTE center and it is a social unit unto itself. Yin’s (2014) five focus areas also align with this; particularly in noting his emphasis on in-depth research in contemporary setting and real-life context within a career technical center and the application of CJ students’ perspectives.

In noting data gathering techniques, Yin (2014) utilized six data gathering tools: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation and physical artifacts. Stake (1995) identified observation, interview and document review as data gathering tools. Finally, Merriam and Merriam (2009) three data collection techniques conducting interviews, observing, and analyzing documents. Considering the views of Yin, Merriam and Merriam, and Stake in conjunction with the problem, semistructured interviews with eight to 12 CJ students best reveal their perceptions. These perceptions are triangulated with questionnaires sent to a broader CJ sample. Finally, informed expert views serve as a third form of data to give greater insight into the phenomena of community development. In noting these three researchers and in hoping to gain an understanding from the students’ viewpoint, these three methods seemed the best method for studying the research questions. These three
methods are student semistructured interviews, questionnaires, and instructors as informed experts.

Merriam and Merriam (2009) presented procedures for the newer researcher to follow for interviews, such as asking good questions, probing for answers, being observant, and mining for data. Neither Stake (1995) nor Yin (2014) concentrate on these details as much as Merriam and Merriam (2009), but in trying to understand community from a CJ students’ perspective (Merriam & Merriam, 2009) these procedures help to guide the interview process. This study is seeking to understand is community from a students’ perspective.

After the scrutiny of the three different perspectives on case study, the determination to utilize semistructured interviews with eight to 12 CJ students supported the theoretical framework around classroom community from student perspective. Next, a questionnaire, shared with all the CJ students, to answer the research question of how the Lamica model contributed to the development of classroom community. Finally, informed expert interviews with the initial identified CJ instructor that began the program and his two succeeding instructors took place. These succeeding instructors have carried on his work with the first-year, that is, high school level juniors, students. Interview questions focused on the four areas of the Lamica model and how these areas created community in the CJ classroom. A case study was chosen for this research to explore the perceptions of students and teachers and an in-depth understanding of this setting (Merriam & Merriam, 2009), but other studies were considered for this topic. Other research designs considered for this topic were ethnography, phenomenology, narrative inquiry and grounded theory. In ethnography, researchers immerse themselves into the culture of a particular community (Merriam & Merriam, 2009). Although community is important for this
study, it was important to distance researcher bias from the students’ perceptions. Another adult in the CJ culture might create a distraction, so, ethnography was not chosen.

Phenomenology, the study of a deep understanding of a certain event (Moustakas, 1994), was a consideration for this study. Merriam and Merriam (2009) identified phenomenology as a study of the structure underlying the phenomena being scrutinized, although phenomenology may have held promise in this study and may be an area of further study, the focus was on the students’ perceptions of the research questions on community development in the CJ classroom, and not in the entire CJ experience. Therefore, a phenomenological study was not chosen for this research study.

Another design considered for this study was a narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry is a research method where researchers gather information from individuals by examining the meaning in stories people tell. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) noted that “narrative is best for capturing the detailed stories of a single individual or lives of a small number of individuals” (p. 74). Then scripting and coding can be employed for in-depth analysis and themes (Merriam & Merriam, 2009). Although, narrative inquiry would be a viable design technique in this study, this method was not chosen because the research was to understand CJ student perspectives from several students’ points of view and not holistic accounts of their stories.

The last design style considered was a grounded theory methodology. Grounded theory is a research method where the researcher develops a new theory from data collected in the study or looking at data for emerging patterns (Glaser, 1992). In other words, the researcher does not come to the research with pre-conceived ideas but allows the theory to develop from the data. New theories emerge and develop as recording of data happens. Since a theoretical framework has already been developed; grounded theory was deemed inappropriate for this study.
While other designs have roles in research, a case study is uniquely suited to address the research problem in this research. Therefore, it was determined that ethnography, phenomenology, narrative inquiry, and grounded theory were not appropriate for this study. Yin (2014), Stake (2010) and Merriam and Merriam (2009) agree that gathering data from multiple sources allows for triangulation and therefore validity of results, so it was determined that a descriptive case study would be the most appropriate design for a single researcher. Semistructured interviews with both staff and students, and a questionnaire tool were considered the best fit for the research to be conducted on the identified CJ classroom. Although it may have been advantageous to include observation of classroom processes, it was determined that observations were unsuitable, because the second-year students are currently with an instructor not trained by the original identified CJ instructor. Questionnaire questions addressed each of the four areas of the Lamica model.

The research study also utilized Yin’s (2014) and Merriam and Merriam’s (2009) accounts for data collection. The plan utilized Merriam and Merriam’s (2009) instructions for data gathering procedures. Yin (2014) helped to focus on the link in data collection between the theoretical framework and the research questions, which provided valid results.

**Instrumentation**

This research explored the organic development of the Lamica model. There are four components to the Lamica model: experiential learning, *Capturing Kid’s Hearts*, military command structure, and peer mentoring. CJ instructors identified these four areas as contributing to the development of classroom community in the CJ classroom. A gap exists in understanding how students in a CJ class, in a CTE center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community. Multiple sources of data assist in understanding this
phenomenon. These sources are semistructured interviews with eight to 12 CJ students (see Appendix B), a questionnaire sent out to the remainder of second-year CJ students (see Appendix D) and semistructured interviews with identified CJ instructors, including the program founder. These three sources of data allowed an in-depth understanding of how community within the CJ classroom has developed. Expert validation using the Validation Rubric for Expert Panel (VREP) provided validation of all student and instructor questions.

**Student semistructured interviews.** The first method of inquiry utilized in this study attempted to understand classroom dynamics from the perspective of the student. Deep, individual, semistructured interviews with eight to 12 CJ second-year students were an integral part of this study (see Appendix B). Creswell (2014), Merriam and Merriam (2009), and Yin (2014) identified interviews are the most common source for data in qualitative case studies. Although the interview questions are available and scripted, allowance for the flow of research to dictate follow-up questions and understandings was available. As Yin (2011) noted in some situations, questions given to participants may differ due to context or setting. Should variations occur these variations appeared in the transcriptions of the interview. The CJ student interview questions began with identified CJ activities, for example, circle processing, and asked follow-up questions to understand student perspectives on how these activities in the CJ program helped to create community.

**Student questionnaires.** First, the CJ students received an invitation and explanation to participate (see Appendix E). All students then obtained the link to complete the questionnaire. The identified questionnaire was developed by basing some of the questions from the survey that districts in California CORE districts that are working on called the MESH (Growth Mindsets, Essential skills, and Habits) to track student social/emotional skills. The CORE districts have
collaborated with TransformED to develop survey—based MESH measures to track student growth. This survey, developed by leading researchers, that is, Angela Duckworth, CASEL, Camille Farrington, Carol Dweck, and analyzed by the Harvard Center for Education Policy Research, for internal reliability and correlation to students’ GPA, test scores, attendance, and suspension rates (Transforming Education, 2017). The survey launched in 2015 with 18 schools, approximately 9,000 students, and 15,500 teacher reports. Therefore, in developing the questionnaire, the starting point began by utilizing some of these areas as a starting point for the questions. Some of the MESH questions are the same as CASEL’s competencies; but the MESH adds in Growth Mindset and does not use Relational skills, Self-Awareness, or Self-Management. For the questionnaire, the questions started opposite of the interviews and began by asking open-ended questions around the five competencies. The students share their perceptions on how these competencies demonstrated in their CJ classroom, and how these created to CJ classroom community. These three sources of data: student interviews, teacher interviews, and student questionnaires support the triangulation of data and deliver a full and deep description of factors within a CJ class at a CTE center that have contributed to classroom community development.

**Instructors as informed expert semistructured interviews.** Semistructured interviews with three informed expert staff members were conducted. First, the original CJ instructor was questioned and then the next two instructors. The initial instructor trained these two instructors, who are currently on staff. Prior to research, permission from administration to interview the instructors during the school day was obtained. Interviews were set for 90 minutes; additional time if needed was set aside for these interviews. See Appendix C for a listing of the questions. These three sources of data: student interviews, student questionnaires, and teacher interviews
supported the triangulation of data and delivered a full and deep description of factors within a
CJ class at a CTE center that have contributed to classroom community development.

**Data Collection**

At the time of data collection, the potential research target was 40 second-year CJ
students from a CTE center in the Midwest of the USA. These students apply for entrance into
the CJ program. The applications come from the approximately 20 high schools within the
participants’ intermediate school district. The research target was eight to 12 students.
Allowance was made for the potential that all 40 students might want to be interviewed, if so, the
researcher prepared time allowances for this possibility. See Table 1 through Table 3 for the
collection process for student interviews, questionnaires, and instructor interviews. Bernard
(2012) noted that saturation was not an identifiable number but that the researcher is willing to
accept all information available. As a novice researcher conducting this research, it has been
noted that there is no *one size fit all* for saturation. Both Yin (2014) and Merriam and Merriam
(2009) noted that there is no formula to determine an interview pool size of participants. Instead,
the researcher must continually make decisions about the data received. An adequate number of
responses to support the research question is necessary, no new themes (Guest et al., 2006),
when saturation is accomplished, it notes to the researcher that capacity is exhausted (Merriam &
Merriam, 2009).
### Table 1

**Data Collection Process: Source 1, Student Interviews**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection</th>
<th>Data source</th>
<th>Initial information given to all potential participants</th>
<th>Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Student Interviews</td>
<td>- Introduction of researcher</td>
<td>1. After initial explanation and permission forms obtained:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Explanation of research and invitation to participate</td>
<td>Identification of potential 8 to 12 CJ students from potential pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Parental/Guardian letter of introduction to research sent home</td>
<td>2. Current CJ instructor to be contacted to set up interview times and location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Permission forms sent out</td>
<td>3. 60-minute allocations for each interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Explanation of ability to withdraw from participation at any time explained</td>
<td>4. Interviews conducted, recorded, and notes transcribed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Notes shared with students for verification and any other information recorded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Researcher will hand code transcripts first, then run through NVIVO software for further verification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Researcher will code information 3 times, looking for broader topics.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

*Data Collection Process: Source 2, Questionnaires*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection</th>
<th>Data source</th>
<th>Initial information given to all potential participants</th>
<th>Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2               | Questionnaires| 1. After initial explanation and permission forms obtained: students will be invited to participate in a student questionnaire  
2. Current CJ instructor to be contacted to set up time and computer location (those wishing not to participate will stay with CJ instructor)  
3. Survey will be conducted using Qualtrics, answers recorded, and notes transcribed  
4. Researcher will hand code transcripts first, then run through NVIVO software for further verification.  
7. Researcher will code information 3 times, looking for broader topics. |

Table 3

*Data Collection Process: Source 1, Instructor Interviews*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collection</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Initial information given to all potential participants</th>
<th>Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3               | Teacher Interviews | 1. After initial explanation, instructors will also be given permission to abstain from the research  
2. Current CJ instructor to be contacted to set up interview times and location, this involves a distance connection with the instructor from another state  
3. 60-minute allocations for interview  
4. Interviews conducted, recorded, and notes transcribed  
5. Notes shared with instructors for verification and any other information recorded  
6. Researcher will hand code transcripts first, then run through NVIVO software for further verification.  
7. Researcher will code information 3 times, looking for broader topics. |
Currently, there are 41 statewide CJ high school programs found within 55 CTE or Regional Education Service Areas (RESA). Since this study has a small sample size, results may not be generalizable beyond the study area. Yin (2014) noted that one of the goals of case studies is to be able to generalize how research can apply to other situations in addition to the one studied. The possibility exists that in the future, the district may be able to apply to CASEL for program evaluation of the Lamica model. Potentially, this may lead to accreditation as an approved model of SEL delivery in a CTE center.

**Student interviews.** All CJ students were invited from the CJ classroom for an introduction to the research, the researcher, and an invitation to participate. The researcher explained the research to the students and a note was sent home to the legal parent/guardian which explained the research, offered an invitation to view the instrumentation, and the permission/consent forms. Eight to 12 students were selected for interviews. This purposive sampling was completed in collaboration with the CJ instructors. Although the researcher is novice, the researcher was aware in purposive sampling to include those subjects that might be able to offer contradictory views to the research. This allows all views consideration in the research and guides against bias (Yin, 2014).

According to district guidelines, the intermediate school district superintendent granted permission to conduct research at the CTE center. Additionally, permission slips were sent to obtain parental/guardian consent, as the students are minors (see Appendix E). This included permission both for the semistructured interview section and for the questionnaire sections of the research. Once the parents or guardians had granted permission to participate, the appropriate forms were collected and secured in a locked box. Interviews were conducted during normal classroom session times, in a meeting room on the campus. The informed consent forms
contained information on how identities are coded and the separated from any other data collected in the study. Participants always had the right to opt out of the research study at any time with no repercussions. All electronic data, such as Google Forms and results, and data collection and coding, was stored on an external hard drive at the researchers’ home. Additionally, the device was stored in a fireproof document storage container, with the combination to the container only known to the researcher. A secure shredding company will shred all written documentation. All data will be saved for three years following the research and then destroyed.

**Student questionnaires.** The rest of the CJ population of students received the questionnaire (see Appendix D). The questionnaire was administered online using Qualtrics. The students completed the questionnaire was be reminded that there is no coercion to take the questionnaire. It is allowable for researchers to identify participants for studies to ensure proper data necessary for their studies (Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Merriam & Merriam, 2009). The 12 CJ student participants interviewed constituted a small research study. Small studies enable qualitative researchers to obtain deep rich participant viewpoints on the phenomena being studied (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Merriam, 2009). Qualtrics was used to construct the student surveys, answers recorded, and notes transcribed by the researcher. Qualtrics did not collect names. The questionnaire allowed one attempt per participant, to avoid the chance of any student taking the questionnaire more than once and weighting the data results. This ensured complete anonymity of student participation and allowed the researcher complete inability to tie answers to particular students in the class. Data results were coded and tabulated. The researcher hand coded transcripts first, then ran the results through NVivo software for further verification. The researcher coded information three times, looking for broader topics.
**Instructor semistructured interviews.** Instructors' invitations were through a personal calendar invitation, the interview process consisted of two instructors from the current CJ program, and the original instructor. The original CJ instructor attended the meeting via phone. All the instructors were interviewed together to be able to understand the origins of the original system, and where the program is at currently. The initial instructor began with answering each question, and then the other two instructors added on to the questions. The interviews were recorded, and the results transcribed and given to the instructors to check for reliability. Semistructured interviews allow researchers to question participants for greater depth of understanding of the phenomena, to ask to follow up questions, and the ability to reflect and remember past events (Galletta, 2013). The semistructured format allowed the researcher to ask follow-up questions and further program reflection (Yin, 2014).

For this study, several forms of data collection were used. First, through student semistructured interviews, next with open-ended student questionnaires, and finally with semistructured interviews with the expert CJ instructors. Before data collection began, permission was obtained from administration at the school district, IRB approval from Concordia University–Portland, and finally permission from parents and/or guardians.

**Identification of Attributes**

**Experiential Education.** “Challenge and Experience followed by Reflection leading to Learning and Growth” (AEE, 2017, para. 1). Experiential education refers to learning through experience. For example, student teaching can be an example of experiential education, when faced with a classroom of noisy students, teachers learn through experience classroom management. In the context of this paper, experiential education refers to an on-campus ropes course used by instructors to teach students core expectations.
**Decision-making.** Decision-making skills are those that allow one to make constructive choices about personal behaviors, based on ethics, physical and emotional safety, and responsibilities. One understands consequences and outcomes for oneself and others.

**Noncognitive.** Noncognitive skills, also referred to as soft skills, or employability skills. These are the skills that hold students well in life but are not measured in the normal school standardized tests (Dweck et al., 2011). These skills may include: self-efficacy, grit, perseverance, relationships, and self-awareness, which contribute to life successes beyond the classroom (Duckworth et al., 2007; Dweck et al., 2011). Traditionally, CTE centers focus on career and employability skills alongside specific career skills. For example, student in a CTE center may be taught team building skills, alongside automotive specific skills.

**Self-awareness.** Self-awareness is the ability to recognize how one’s thoughts and behaviors influence behaviors. It is the capacity to know oneself’ strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. It also involves the ability to understand how one must improve to grow.

**Self-management.** Self-management is the ability to adjust one’s thoughts and emotions according to situational demands. Benefits associated are the achievement of personal goals. It is the ability of students to manage their own behavior or be confronted with evidence of how their actions have affected the community.

**Relational skills.** Relational skills afford the ability to maintain healthy and sustainable relationships, in diverse situations. Communication, team, and conflict resolution are all components of relationship development.

**Social awareness.** Social awareness is the capacity to look at situations from the perspective of others and utilize empathic skills. Utilizing another’s’ viewpoint includes understanding of diversity backgrounds and circumstances. It also includes an understanding of
social cues and norms for behaviors. Social awareness also involves the ability to recognize community resources and supports.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

Merriam and Merriam (2009) noted that data analysis is “the process of making sense out of the data [which] involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read—it is the process of making meaning” (p. 178). Data and the analysis of the data can only be understood using the theory we are applying to the data. Therefore, in this research study the intent was to code all the information obtained on the CJ classrooms activities and code them around the Lamica model. By coding the information around the competencies. The answer to the initial research question of how students in a CJ class in a CTE center understand community in their classroom and what factors have contributed to community building and emotional safety, was understood. Morrow (2005) noted that there should be congruence between the research type, that is, interview, and the research being conducted. In noting this, it was allowed for students to express their viewpoints in the best way they have available to them: talking through the process of their views on classroom safety and community.

A code in qualitative inquiry is typically a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data (Saldaña, 2009). Coding is a way to provide a framework or outline around the analysis of the responses. The intent in this research project was to pause after the first or second interviews to ensure leading questions are not being asked or allowing for incomplete responses. Accurate and correct interviews are paramount to the research. After the initial coding of the interviews, the researcher began to codify the major themes noted as Saldaña
(2009) mentioned “to arrange things in a systematic order, to make something part of a system or classification, to categorize” (p. 8). The researcher did the initial coding with the intent of consolidating the information to derive deeper themes, meaning, and understanding from the codes. The process for doing this was to download the transcription of the interview into a spreadsheet, with numbered lines. Each natural break was codes for a descriptive code, and then in the next column combined codes into overall themes. The responses were then categorized around the research topics, with flexibility for unique emergent themes. After the researcher had conducted coding, the coding was then run through the software NVivo. NVivo is software that supports qualitative research. The software allowed for a backup system to check the researchers’ codes and display a connection missed by a novice researcher. The codes went through three rounds of theme development, so that deeper levels of coding were obtained.

Data from the student questionnaires also followed the same steps as employed above. Descriptive coding techniques were utilized to analyze all transcripts from the expert interviews. Descriptive coding techniques were utilized to analyze all transcripts. Data was analyzed so that the information from these three sources could be triangulated to support a descriptive analysis of the case study. Data obtained from these three sources was synthesized around multiple perceptions and data formats.

**Limitations and Delimitations of the Research Design**

The intention of qualitative research is to obtain a deep, rich, detailed understanding of the research question, but limitations of qualitative research exist. Even though this study has limitations because of the methodology, participants, and researcher experience and biases, still the study provided information from student perspective on strategies that effected community
development in a CTE classroom. Yin (2014) noted that if researchers are open to findings that contradict the initial study and by following ethical considerations, it might help to avoid biases.

The methodology of qualitative research may have limitations itself. For example, small participant participation in a single CTE may not be transferrable to traditional high schools or even other CTE centers, to the same certainty level as quantitative research may be transferrable. Another limitation was that of the participants. The instructors may have been reluctant to participate in the research, feeling as though this may potentially affect their status on the CTE campus, or they may have felt internal pressure to accept the invitation to allow the researcher in to research this subject. All participants were guaranteed that their role of contribution to this research was voluntary. The researcher did not hold a supervisory role over the instructors or student participants. Additionally, student participation may have been limited by the fact that the study was completed in the fall after the students had completed their first year, so the participants needed to recall all contributing factors from the previous school year. Important information may have been lost or forgotten over the summer months. Whenever possible, questions that may first spark the memory of past events, for example, how did the outdoor ropes activities that you participated in contribute to the class community, were asked first.

Finally, researcher bias may also pose a limitation to this study. Several strategies from both Yin (2014) and Merriam and Merriam (2009) were used to avoid biasing study results. Contradictory evidence as it presented itself was accepted (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2014); anonymous responses during the questionnaire process (Creswell, 2014), and the avoidance of asking leading questions with both the students and instructors. The hope was that in the final analysis, the research was studied with flexibility of thinking (Costa & Garmston, 2016) when looking for biases, and understanding classroom community from the student perspective.
Research inherently contains limitations, assumptions and delimitations (Creswell, 2014) in research, these may be desirable traits as they point to ethical honesty of the researcher. Delimitations are boundaries set by the researcher for any given study. In this case, delimitations include the fact of the originator of the Lamica model is no longer on the campus sustaining the model.

Using the Lamica model as a single practitioner instrument, influenced the validity of the study as it was not a peer-reviewed instrument. It was developed by local administrators for a single context. No outside testing has utilized this instrument, beyond this study.

**Internal Validity and Reliability**

A cornerstone of case study research is the utilization of multiple data sources, in this case the student interviews, questionnaires, and informed expert interviews. These three data sources further served to enhance data credibility (Yin, 2014). Case study research facilitates a holistic understanding of the understanding from student perspectives. Each data source is one part with each part contributing to the researcher’s understanding of the whole understanding this convergence adds strength to the findings as the various strands of data are combined to promote greater understanding (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Ensuring both validity and reliability are important consideration in qualitative research. Validity, according to Creswell (2014), “refers to whether one can draw meaningful and useful inferences from scores on particular instruments” (p. 297). Yin (2014) corroborated this by adding that a valid study is one that has properly collected and interpreted the results so that the study is an accurate reflection of the phenomena being studied. Creswell (2014) and Yin (2014) pointed to data collected being true and accurate so findings shared throughout the greater community are reliable.
Researchers need to consider threats to research validity when planning research methodology. Therefore, various methods employed within this study to support validity are triangulation, collaboration, and expert validation. When looking at the data from multiple sources, triangulation of results is one of the means to begin to ensure research validity (Merriam & Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014). Triangulation helps to create deeper, richer, and more robust study results. Furthermore, recommended protocols for collection and documentation of data will be followed (Yin, 2014).

In this research study, collaboration from study participants was important for ethical considerations. Each student and teacher had availability of their transcription available for validity of responses and were able to add to or delete portions of statements (Johnson & Christenson, 2014). Merriam and Merriam (2009) noted the importance of participant reviews of responses to support accuracy of opinions.

Expert validation is another means of ensuring validity. Expert validation with a Validation Rubric through Concordia University contributes to research validity in the interviews and survey. The VREP (White & Simon, 2011) is applied to the interview and questionnaire questions for staff and students. The VREP along with field testing of the interviews ensured face, construct and content validity.

Reliability refers to consistency of obtaining results over time, and in similar situations (Merriam & Merriam, 2009). Research is reliable if the research is duplicable in other similar situations, which is why researchers need to consider precision of documentation in both data and procedures. One method to ensure reliability in this study was member checking (Merriam & Merriam, 2009). Richards (2003) noted that member checking is a way to ensure reliability of participant voice, it “seek[s] [the]views of members on accuracy of data gathered, descriptions,
or even interpretations” (p. 287). Member checks included allowing participants to review the data transcripts for accuracy (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Any corrections to the original transcription were added and corrected. As transcripts are collected, the researcher allowed participants to clarify any errors and note trends that are emerging.

**Expected Findings**

The identified CJ class uses some techniques, which the researcher, had always thought to be important for building classroom community such as the use of experiential education, circle processing, emotional safety, acknowledgement of each student, giving back to community, and leadership development. The researcher never had an opportunity to study their own classroom, so understanding how events happen in this CJ classroom are of deep personal interest. Sharing this information here helps to keep the researcher mindful of always being non-judgmental in the research study.

The expected findings are that some of the identified practices will be determined as having an effect upon the classroom community and thus, contribute to a deep level of emotional safety, which is foundational in a classroom. In education today, the importance of student voice is beginning to be understood, as professionals it behooves us to study how these practices influence classroom dynamics from the viewpoint of the student.

There is a paucity of studies available in high schools, CTE centers, and CJ classrooms. There is also a scarcity of studies available on emotional safety from a student perspective. Therefore, with this study, the hope is to provide an additional model of how social and emotional learning can happen in a CTE center.
Ethical Issues

Prior to initiating research, it is incumbent upon the researcher to consider any probability of ethical violations (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Punch, 2005). Consideration of ethical concerns prior to beginning research demonstrates professional and ethical standards and a concern that these standards are maintained. As a novice researcher, a need to be mindful of the participants and their emotional safety is paramount in conducting the study. Additionally, prior professional experience with the center where the research is conducted has a potential for a conflict of interest. Creswell (2014) echoed this when noting a researchers’ need to protect their research participants, cultivate participant trust, and maintain the integrity of research.

The collection of data for this research study included semistructured interviews with students, student questionnaires, and instructor interviews. Prior to data collection, permission was granted through administration and school board to begin with the research study. Parental/Guardian approval for student participation in the research, was procured prior to research initiation. Opportunity for questions, concerning the research, was available for parents, students and instructors. All participation was informed participation, and the consent of parents, students and instructors was sought.

Additionally, all participants had the right to withdraw from the research at any time and no pressure was exerted on any participants to join the study (Creswell, 2014). Withdrawal was allowed even after an interview was conducted. Finally, an Institutional Review Board (IRB) from Concordia University–Portland reviewed the research for any potential harmful effects. One way to address federal regulations that provide protection against human rights violations is through the review process of an IRB board; this IRB board acts as an oversight to assess any risk to participants of a study.
Each student and instructor participant were issued an identifying number, with only the researcher having the identifier; this is done to ensure confidentiality of the participants. The list is be kept off-campus and in a locked, fireproof storage container. During the research, information obtained was stored on an external hard drive which was password protected. No one in the study received any form of compensation. Instructors selected for the study for purposive sampling (Yin, 2014) because they held the origins and sustaining of the original development of this system. The main intent of the research study was to understand how community has developed in the CJ classroom, and share this information with the greater community. There is no intent to exploit either instructors or students; all actions undertaken kept information and individual data confidential.

Summary

This section of the paper begins to layout the qualitative case study. The purpose of the study is to explore how CJ students in a CTE center perceived the influence of Lamica’s model on classroom community, in a school district in the Midwest U.S. Lamica’s model is built on four core ideas; experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring. This study proposes to study how these areas have affected the CJ classroom from both the student and instructor perspectives.

The population and sampling of the CJ students is discussed, along with the three types of instrumentation: student interviews, student questionnaires, and instructor interviews. Triangulation of these three sources should yield a rich and robust understanding of community from a student’s perspective. Data from the study was coded and analyzed for trends first by the researcher and then through NVivo software. The trends noted by both the researcher and the software are expected to demonstrate that the four components of Lamica’s model together
create an emotionally safe classroom, that is, student to student and student to instructor, environment. This study has not been undertaken previously and needs to be conducted so the understanding can be applied to both CJ classrooms, and other CTE programs.
Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how Criminal Justice (CJ) students in a Career Technical Education (CTE) center perceived the influence of Lamica’s model on classroom community in a school district in the Midwest U.S. The Lamica model is comprised of four components: experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring. Classroom community is defined as a sense of the feeling of belongingness, acceptance, and emotional safety in a classroom group (Hawkins et al., 2004; Korpershoek, et al., 2016; Rovai, 2002; Rovai et al., 2008). The research questions were:

RQ1: How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community?

RQ2: What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an influence on classroom community?

By analyzing face to face interviews with 10 CJ students, 12 CJ student questionnaires, and three teacher interviews, student and instructor perceptions were collected.

A qualitative methodology with a case study design was used for this research study. This methodology allowed the researcher to focus on understanding the phenomenon of classroom community from the perspectives of CJ students. This approach allowed the researcher to collect data, identify themes, and begin to comprehend the classroom as understood by the students. For this chapter, three sources of data, 10 CJ student interviews, 12 student questionnaires, and instructor interviews all provided insight into the understanding of classroom community. This chapter presents the data collected and an analysis of this data. The data is
organized to demonstrate how responses from the sources relates to each of the research questions. The chapter concludes by summarizing the study results.

**Description of the Sample**

Descriptions are likely to be more detailed and in-depth for studies with fewer participants (Yilmaz, 2013). In this study, responses from CJ student interviews, surveys, and instructor surveys were triangulated to demonstrate classroom community as understood from a student perspective. The target population for this study was 12 CJ students for one-on-one interviews, 40 CJ students for surveys, and three CJ instructors for interviews.

**Interviews.** The researcher invited all 40 students from the first-year CJ program to participate in the student interviews. The researcher then interviewed 10 CJ students. Of the interviewed students, seven of the students were female and three of the students were male. All the students in the study were first year, each of the students were assigned a number to maintain confidentiality. Table 4 contains demographic information on the interview participants.

Table 4

*Interview Participant Demographic Information*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American/Asian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interview questions were constructed to explore both the Lamica model and the components of Rovai’s (2002) definition of community. “Community” was identified as the experience found in a classroom, as it related to a student’s sense of the level of “connectedness, cohesion, spirit, trust, and interdependence” (Rovai, 2002, p. 206). The interview protocol is found in Appendix L. The student interviews had a duration between 29 and 55 minutes long. Table 5 illustrates the responses to the research question results from the student interviews, the
codes that emerged, and the number of occurrences in the interview data. The table also illustrates the additional codes (AC) emerging from the student interviews.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Code name</th>
<th>Number of occurrences in the data after hand coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1AEXPED</td>
<td>Experiential Education</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1BCapH</td>
<td>Capturing Kids Hearts</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1CMILComm</td>
<td>Military Command Structure</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1DMentoring</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2AConnect</td>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2BSpirit</td>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2CTrust</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2DInterdependence</td>
<td>Interdependence</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2EBelonging</td>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC1</td>
<td>Instructors</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC2</td>
<td>Emotional Safety (including restorative practices and conflict resolution)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC3</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC4</td>
<td>Family/community</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC5</td>
<td>Opinions/valuing perspective</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC6</td>
<td>Affirmations</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC7</td>
<td>DIGA/Circle/Reflection</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC8</td>
<td>Changed Lives</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC9</td>
<td>Team/Relationships</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC10</td>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC11</td>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC12</td>
<td>Perspective</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC13</td>
<td>Social media--used positively</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC14</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC15</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC16</td>
<td>Responsibility/Role assignment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC17</td>
<td>Self-Aware</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC18</td>
<td>Being Seen</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC19</td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC20</td>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC21</td>
<td>Personalize</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC22</td>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC23</td>
<td>Gratitude</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC24</td>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The words from the interviews were run through NVivo software to identify additional emergent codes. NVivo is a type of computer assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS) software that assists with data analysis, it provides an opportunity to look for additional themes missed by the human researcher. All of the transcribed data from each of the data sources was
entered into *NVivo* for additional code detection. Table 6 is a list of the codes that emerged from the student interviews.

Table 6

*Frequency of Word Occurrence from Student Interviews From NVivo*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusting</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect/Respectful</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everybody</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commanders</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Together</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give (giving)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmations</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To better understand the intersection of data between the hand coding and NVivo software the following table illustrates the top results between the two data sources. Table 7, Table 8, and Table 9 illustrate the top combinations of the two sources and notes from the researcher by research question.
### Table 7

*Student Interviews Comparison of Top Hand Codes With Top results from NVivo, RQ1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hand codes</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
<th>NVivo codes</th>
<th>NVivo top results as aligned to hand coding results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1AEXPED</td>
<td>Experiential Education</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1BCapH</td>
<td>Capturing Kids Hearts</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1CMILComm</td>
<td>Military Command Structure</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Commanders</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1DMentoring</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 8

*Student Interviews Comparison of Top Hand RQ Codes With Top results From NVivo, RQ2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hand codes</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
<th>NVivo Codes</th>
<th>NVivo top results as aligned to Hand coding results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ2AConnect</td>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>Connections/People 369</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2BSpirit</td>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Trusting 87</td>
<td>As combined with Emotional Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2CTrust</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2DInterdependence</td>
<td>Interdependence</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2EBelonging</td>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Caring 49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 9

**Student Interviews Comparison of Top Hand Additional Codes With Top results From NVivo, RQ2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hand codes</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
<th>NVivo codes</th>
<th>NVivo top results as aligned to Hand coding results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AC1</td>
<td>Instructors</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Instructors/Teacher</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC2</td>
<td>Emotional Safety (including restorative practices and conflict resolution)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC3</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Respect/Respectful</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC4</td>
<td>Family/community</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Help Together</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC5</td>
<td>Opinions/value perspective</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Opinions</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC6</td>
<td>Affirmations</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Affirmations</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC7</td>
<td>DIGA/Circle/Reflection</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC8</td>
<td>Changed Lives</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC9</td>
<td>Team/Relations</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10

Number of Occurrences of Codes in the Questionnaire Data (12 respondents) After Hand Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Code name</th>
<th>Number of occurrences after hand coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1AEXPED</td>
<td>Experiential Education</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1BCapH</td>
<td>Capturing Kids Hearts</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1CMILComm</td>
<td>Military Command Structure</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1DMentoring</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2AConnect</td>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2BSpirit</td>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2CTrust</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2DInterdependence</td>
<td>Interdependence</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2EBelonging</td>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC1</td>
<td>Instructors</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC2</td>
<td>Emotional Safety (including restorative practices and conflict resolution)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC3</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC4</td>
<td>Family/community</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC5</td>
<td>Opinions/valuing perspective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC6</td>
<td>Affirmations</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC7</td>
<td>DIGA/Circle/Reflection</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC8</td>
<td>Changed Lives</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC9</td>
<td>Team/Relationships</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC10</td>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC11</td>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC12</td>
<td>Perspective</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC13</td>
<td>Social media--used positively</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC14</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC15</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC16</td>
<td>Responsibility/Role assignment</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC17</td>
<td>Self-Aware</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC18</td>
<td>Being Seen</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC19</td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC20</td>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC21</td>
<td>Personalize</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC22</td>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC23</td>
<td>Gratitude</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC24</td>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC25</td>
<td>Purposeful</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC26</td>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC27</td>
<td>Growth Mindset</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC28</td>
<td>Customer service</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC29</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC30</td>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC31</td>
<td>Decision making</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC32</td>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC33</td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC34</td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Student questionnaires.** The interviews of the CJ students and instructors were conducted, then the remaining 12 first-year CJ students were given questionnaires. The data of the student questionnaires was again hand coded with the same research questions and additional codes applied.
Table 10 demonstrates the questionnaire results after hand coding. The results were again run through NVivo software to look for additional codes. To better understand the intersection of data between the hand coding and NVivo software from student questionnaires, Table 13 illustrates the top combinations of the two sources and notes from the researcher.

Table 11 and Table 12. To better understand the intersection of data between the hand coding and NVivo software from student questionnaires, Table 13 illustrates the top combinations of the two sources and notes from the researcher.

Table 11

*Frequency of Word Occurrence From Student Questionnaires From NVivo*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affirmations</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commanders</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everybody</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone/people</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give (giving)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect/Respectful</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Together</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusting</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 12

Additional Questionnaire Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Number of Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allow/allowed</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belong</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class/classroom</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract (social)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdependence</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner/peers/students</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13

Student Questionnaires Comparison of Top Hand Codes With Top Results From NVivo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hand coding Top codes</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>NVivo top results as aligned to Hand coding results</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1AEXPED</td>
<td>Experiential Education</td>
<td>Commanders</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1CMILComm</td>
<td>Military Command Structure</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1DMentoring</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>Connections/People/partner/p 300 teammate</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2AConnect</td>
<td>Connections</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2BSpirit</td>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2CTrust</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2DInterdependence</td>
<td>Interdependence</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2EBelonging</td>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC3</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC4</td>
<td>Family/community</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC5</td>
<td>Opinions/valuing</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. AC4 also relates to RQ2AConnect or Connections
Instructor interviews. Interviews of the three CJ instructors were conducted after the student interviews and questionnaires were completed. The interviews were transcribed, and hand coded according to the research questions (see Table 14). Additional codes are those noted by the researcher in addition to the research question codes (see Table 15). All of the interviews were then run through NVivo to highlight any additional codes (see Table 16). The three CJ instructors were all male with 6, 7, and 13 years of teaching experience.

Table 14

Number of Occurrences of RQ Codes in the Instructor Interviews After Hand Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Number of Occurrences in the Data after hand coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1AEXPED</td>
<td>Experiential Education</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1BCapH</td>
<td>Capturing Kids Hearts</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1CMILComm</td>
<td>Military Command Structure</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1DMentoring</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2AConnect</td>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2BSpirit</td>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2CTrust</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2DInterdependence</td>
<td>Interdependence</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2EBelonging</td>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15

Number of Occurrences of Additional Codes in the Instructor Interviews After Hand Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Number of Occurrences in the Data after hand coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AC1</td>
<td>Instructors</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC2</td>
<td>Emotional Safety (including restorative practices and conflict resolution)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC3</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC4</td>
<td>Family/community</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC5</td>
<td>Opinions/valuing perspective</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC6</td>
<td>Affirmations</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC7</td>
<td>DIGA/Circle/Reflection</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC8</td>
<td>Changed Lives</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC9</td>
<td>Team/Relationships</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC10</td>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC11</td>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC12</td>
<td>Perspective</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC13</td>
<td>Social media--used positively</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC14</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC15</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC16</td>
<td>Responsibility/Role assignment</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC17</td>
<td>Self-Aware</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC18</td>
<td>Being Seen</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC19</td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC20</td>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC21</td>
<td>Personalize</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC22</td>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC23</td>
<td>Gratitude</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC24</td>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC25</td>
<td>Purposeful</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC26</td>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC27</td>
<td>Growth Mindset</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC28</td>
<td>Customer Service</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC29</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC30</td>
<td>Goal setting</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC31</td>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC32</td>
<td>Vulnerable</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC33</td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC34</td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 16

*Frequency of Word Occurrence From Instructor Interviews From NVivo*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Number of Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affirmations</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commanders</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everybody</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give (giving)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect/Respectful</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Together</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusting</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional items for instructors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belong</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdependence</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Methodology and Analysis**

Analysis of the data took place during the collection process. Merriam and Merriam (2009) suggested researchers need to begin to make sense of the data as it is collected. The protocols of listening, coding, and analyzing provides opportunity for researchers to interpret meaning (Yin, 2014). Data for this study came from student interviews, student questionnaires,
and instructor interviews. The goal of this study is to understand classroom community from a student perspective. The research questions for this study sought to understand this phenomenon.

RQ1: How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community?

RQ2: What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an influence on classroom community?

**Interviews.** The student interviews were recorded, transcribed, and initially analyzed as a way for the researcher to begin to understand emergent themes. These original codes were discarded as they did not follow the outline of the research questions, but they did provide practice for a novice researcher to begin the process of capturing the essence of each unit. This initial coding helped the researcher begin to make sense and organize the student perspectives and provided a beginning thematic analysis (Guest et al, 2012). The researcher provided the opportunity to review and make changes to the participants.

The researcher then created a spreadsheet that laid out each of the Meaning Units from the interviews and the two research questions across the top. Each of the Research question was broken down into its parts. For example, *RQ 1: How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community?* was broken down into the four identified components of the Lamica model: Experiential learning (RQ1AExpEd), Capturing’s Kids Hearts (RQ1BCapH), Military Command Structure (RQ1CMilComm), and Mentoring (RQ1DMentoring). Likewise, with research question 2: *What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive...*
as an influence on classroom community? the question was broken down and coded around the 5 factors identified by Rovai (2002) and Rovai et al. (2008) of connection (RQ2AConnect), spirit (RQ2BSpirit), trust (RQ2CTrust), interdependence (RQ2DInterdep) and belonging (RQ2EBelonging).

Each Meaning Unit was read four times, then hand coded to the research questions, and any additional emergent codes were noted alongside the research questions. Numbers were totaled and are represented on each of the Table 3 through Table 8. Any additional codes that emerged were also counted and placed at the bottom of each of the tables labeled as AC for additional codes. Appendix G represents a codebook of the research question codes initially used and description of the codes.

Quotes from student interviews were selected as to those best representing each of the research questions dimensions and additional codes. These quotes were placed in a table in Appendix J. Although some of the quotes were lengthy the researcher determined to keep these quotes available in the Appendix J because it was hand-noted by the researcher in the interviews that these were especially passionate or exemplary quotes for each of the areas of the research questions.

Questionnaires. The student interviews were conducted in May 2018. Once the interviews were completed, the remaining first-year CJ students who had permission sheets, were invited to participate in the student questionnaires. There were 12 students that completed the questionnaires. The student questionnaires were completed prior to the end of the school year in June 2018. The questionnaires were structured around the research questions, then hand coded to align to the same questions. Finally, results were run through NVivo for word count. Finally, quotes that exemplified each of the research areas were collected in Appendices J, K, and L.
**Instructor interviews.** The CJ instructors were interviewed after the student interviews and questionnaires were completed. First, the initial CJ instructor, who created the Lamica model was interviewed, then the two CJ instructors mentored by the initial instructor were interviewed.

Appendix I is the listing of the instructor quotes as they relate to the two research questions. The meaning units were hand coded, run through NVivo, and then selected for best representation for each of the questions under each research question. Table 14 represents the hand coding, and Table 15 represents the word count by topics through NVivo.

**Data Results**

This section of the paper identifies the results of the data analysis for each of the research questions. The research questions for this paper came from identifying the components of the Lamica model, aligning those components to Rovai’s (2002) model of classroom community and understanding these areas from a student’s perspective. The research questions were analyzed according to the four factors of the Lamica model. The four factors of the Lamica model are: experiential learning (RQ1AEXPED), Capturing Kids’ Hearts (RQ1BCapH), military command structure (RQ1CMILComm), and peer mentoring (RQ1DMentoring). It was also coded to the five factors of Rovai et al.’s (2008) model of community consisting of: connection (RQ2AConnect), spirit (RQ2BSpirit), trust (RQ2CTrust), interdependence (RQ2DInterdep) and belonging (RQ2EBelonging).

**Student Interview Themes on research question 1.** In the student interviews several themes emerged around student perceptions of classroom community. These emerging themes were: Connections, Belonging, and Independence. These codes relate to Rovai et al.’s (2008) model of community. Additional codes also emerged: the influence of the instructor and the
emotional safety of the classroom. Two tables demonstrate the themes from the first research question. Table 17 demonstrates the themes as they arose out of the interview coding and Table 18 demonstrates the numbers of reference from the hand coding.

Table 17

**Student Interview themes: RQ1 How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a CTE Center Perceive the Influence of the Lamica model on Classroom Community?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Emerging ideas</th>
<th>Resulting Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1</td>
<td>RQ1AEXPED</td>
<td>-Connections were started early in the year</td>
<td>Web of Connections are developed first thing in the year. Sustained through reflection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Ropes activities --- created connection and trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Circle or DIGA reflection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1BCapH</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Affirmations</td>
<td>Classroom systems create connections, belonging, and emotional safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Belonging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1CMILComm</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Creates a system of leadership and student ownership</td>
<td>Enabling Student Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1D</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Student to student interaction creates Interdependence</td>
<td>Interdependent system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACInstructor</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Instructor caring</td>
<td>Instructor factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACEmotional Safety</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Life changing room because of the emotional safety</td>
<td>Emotional Safety-like a family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18

**Student Interview Data: Number of Occurrences in Hand Coding of Research Question Areas out of a Possible 480 Meaning Units**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ1AEXPED</th>
<th>RQ1BCapH</th>
<th>RQ1CMILComm</th>
<th>RQ1D</th>
<th>RQ2C</th>
<th>RQ2D</th>
<th>RQ2E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to compare the different results of the three types of research a graph is presented in Figure 2. After each section, the graph will be added on to so that the reader can visually see the results of each section and how the three areas align.

![Figure 2. Student interview data: Number of occurrences in hand coding.](image)

Regarding Connections, students shared how much the Ropes course affected their classroom connections,

We did a kind of little thing with getting across the rope and we had to use someone that we never even met before to get across rope we had to hold hands and like walk across it, and I ended up meeting someone that I never had seen before that day. Before that day I had no idea who they were. Nothing about them no matter where they came from school it came from didn’t know their name didn’t know anything. But we had to accomplish something together. And that just brought it to a whole new level. I think the steps we took to become a family really, really helped us
Additionally, keeping these connections going was achieved through a circle of reflection, or in CJ class a DIGA, that is, reflection circle. One student noted:

[Everyday we stand] . . . in a circle. It makes us like a family like a little family and we all talk to each other and when we get in those circles like we have a topic that we all talk about like everyone’s included. No one’s left out and even if they don’t want to talk, we make them talk because we want them to be included or feel at least included.

The occurrences in both the number of hand-coding occurrences, and occurrences NVivo carry the theme of connection was theme out also. In the hand coding, there were 118 references to Connections, 65 references to Interdependence, and 57 references to Belonging, all out of a potential 480 meaning units.

Many students communicated a deep sense of belonging. “This is definitely where I belong—along with everybody else gets me through the day everybody else you know is there to support me every day.” The feeling of connection was created both through the structured ropes activities, but also throughout the course in instructor interactions, student leadership opportunities, and a group adherence to the social contract. NVivo supported this theme by some of the top occurrences relating to this theme: Family-39, Friends-44, and Together-60, 143 total.

Regarding a feeling of communal focus on work and activities, many of the students communicated a sense of interdependence, or a focus on the community goals and not just the individual.

But we had to work together, and we had to communicate to get over that [the wall]. In regular schools no matter what the case is, there is not a huge—it’s not a huge deal— for you to communicate with someone to do something. You’re not working together to
succeed or get a good grade. You are on your own. It’s completely yourself. [In CJ] you depend on everyone to get a grade. If you fail everyone fails. If you succeed everyone succeeds. I mean you’re only as strong as your weakest link, so you are pushing everybody in the class because if you want to do good. Everybody else has to do it. It’s everywhere. And kids are constantly helping others know think and do things like if you have any issues you go to everybody before you go to the teacher. It’s always we’re always here to help. Everyone’s always willing to help someone else.

*Interdependence* was not a theme noted in NVivo, but it may be a word not commonly used by high school students.

According to the students, the instructors were identified as being of importance in the classroom. This relates to Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2016) reference of teachers being one of the most important influences in a classroom. The students also identified the importance of teachers holding the key to emotional safety in the room.

There is just a way that like you can say anything and still feel safe. The emotional safety is like words just I have never felt so safe in the classroom before. I think the biggest thing is the teachers showing that they care. They care deeply for each one of their students. They want the best for them, and the emotional safety comes along with that.

These same areas were noted by NVivo: Instructors/teachers-111 and Emotional Safety/trust-87. These were in the top 25 occurrences as given through the student interviews. Other than the topic of *Interdependence*, NVivo supported the topics that emerged from hand coding. These topics from student interviews were *Connections, Interdependence, Belonging, Instructors, and Emotional Safety.*
Student questionnaire themes on research question 1. After the interviews were completed, the remaining first-year CJ students were given an open-ended questionnaire to fill out. As with the previous interviews, the results were hand coded, with additional themes noted. Results were also run through NVivo to look for any additional codes. As with the other sources of data, themes emerged such as: Connections, Trust, Accountability, and a deep sense of Team/Family/Community. Two tables demonstrate the themes from the first research question. Table 19 demonstrates the themes as the arose out of the interview coding and Table 20 and Figure 3 demonstrate the numbers of references from the hand coding.

Table 19

Student Questionnaire: RQ1: How do Students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) Classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center Perceive the Influence of the Lamica Model on Classroom Community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Emerging ideas</th>
<th>Resulting Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1</td>
<td>RQ1AEXPED</td>
<td>These activities created bonds to others and trust</td>
<td>Connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RQ1BCapH</td>
<td>Accountability to contract, and peer accountability</td>
<td>Holding each other accountable to social contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RQ1CMILComm</td>
<td>Created a system of interdependence and responsibility</td>
<td>Interdependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RQ1D</td>
<td>Learning partners supported teamwork</td>
<td>Class structure supported team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AC9</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AC4</td>
<td>Family/Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20

RQ1 Student Questionnaire Data: Number of Occurrences in Hand Coding of Research Question Areas out of a Possible 120 Possible Meaning Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ1AEXPED</th>
<th>RQ1B</th>
<th>RQ1C</th>
<th>RQ1D</th>
<th>RQ2</th>
<th>RQ2B</th>
<th>RQ2C</th>
<th>RQ2D</th>
<th>RQ2E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3. RQ1 graph of student questionnaire results.

The results of the student questionnaires align to the student interviews in the following areas: the ropes or experiential course was noted as building trust, bonds, and connections. The military command structure allowed for student leadership to flourish. Finally, the adherence to classroom norms, where student hold each other accountable for social behaviors.

In regard to research question 1 as it relates the student questionnaires, students cited the theme of connections as a result of the experiential activities.

After we worked on the ropes course and did activities out in the woods, I felt closer with the other students, which is what the purpose of it was. We did various team-building activities, so that when we began learning, we were already familiar with each other and not afraid to depend on each other.

As students noted these activities created bonds from a shared experience that lasted throughout the school year and began with the first week of school. These activities bonded the students and created a foundational base that lasted for the rest of the year.
One of the foundational pieces in *Capturing Kid’s Hearts* is a social contract. Adherence to this social contract by the teacher is important, but when teachers enable students to hold each other accountable is where a special dynamic happens in classrooms. “It made each one of us responsible for our actions, and it made our classmates responsible for telling someone when they start ignoring the contract.” Another student noted an important factor in that “[the social contract] made us all depend on each other more than our instructors.”

The military command structure or leadership development created a theme of interdependence.

During the first semester, I had no rank. During the second semester, I was a commander. I like having this structure because it allows the class to be more student-led. As a commander, my partner and I were able to lead in daily activities, be the OIC during flag ceremony, and other things. With this type of structure, if students have questions, they are able to go to their sergeant and then to their commander before going to the teacher. I like this system because it allowed me to engage with my peers. Additionally, a student noted that the command structure “gave the class a more rigid structure, and clearly defined where to go for questions . . . It also gave students responsibility for the success of their teammates.” Many times, students noted how this structure allowed them to rely on each other for information rather than the instructors.

Peer mentoring, or peer supported learning was noted by the students as providing a structure that allowed for deep team bonding to occur. One student noted peer support, when I didn’t understand anything, I can always count on my class to help me out because we all want to succeed together were not all against each other or
competing against each other we have to work as a team and trust your peers to have your back.

Two additional high occurring themes emerged out of the hand coding: Team, and Family/Community. These may be considered similar themes and point to the high significance the students weighted these topics.

**Instructor interview themes on research question 1.** The instructor interviews were conducted to be able to understand the teacher decisions that affect student perceptions. In the instructor interviews several themes emerged around understanding classroom community. These emerging themes were: the intentional use of experiential activities the first days of class to create trust, emotional safety, leadership, and team building. Additional codes also emerged: the creation of emotional safety of the classroom, the role of teacher in the classroom in regard to accountability, and encouraging opinion sharing and acceptance. Two tables demonstrate the themes from the first research question. Table 21 demonstrates the themes as the arose out of the interview coding. Table 22 and Figure 4 demonstrate the numbers of references from the hand coding.
Table 21

Instructor Interviews: RQ1: How do Students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) Classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center Perceive the Influence of the Lamica Model on Classroom Community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Emerging ideas</th>
<th>Resulting Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1AEXPED</td>
<td></td>
<td>Intentionality in using experiential activities to create trust, emotional safety, leadership, and team. Connections</td>
<td>Intentional use of activities to create classroom atmosphere. Connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1BCapH</td>
<td></td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1CMILComm</td>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1D</td>
<td></td>
<td>Classroom system of leadership, learning partners</td>
<td>Interdependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC2Emotional Safety</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional Safety</td>
<td>Emotional Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC2Accountability</td>
<td></td>
<td>Holding students accountable for their actions and opinions</td>
<td>Accountability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The themes that came out of the instructor interviews also align to the themes previously noted in the student interviews and questionnaires. The instructors noted the use of activities on the ropes course or in the classroom to promote trust, community, and teams. They also intentionally used military command structure to promote student leadership and interdependence in the classroom amongst the CJ students.

Table 22

Instructor Interview Data: Number of Occurrences in Hand Coding of Research Question Areas out of a Possible 180 Meaning Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RQ1 AEXP</th>
<th>RQ1B</th>
<th>Mil</th>
<th>RQ1C</th>
<th>RQ1 D</th>
<th>RQ2</th>
<th>RQ2 B</th>
<th>RQ2C</th>
<th>RQ2D</th>
<th>RQ2E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

101
Figure 4. Graph of instructor interview data: Number of occurrences in handcoding.

Regarding research question 1, the instructor interview themes pointed to the highly intentional use of experiential activities in the first week of school to begin immediately teaching the importance of trust, emotional safety, leadership, and team building. For example, one of the instructors explained why the experiential activities were so important:

And I think that probably is the beauty of these activities is them [the students] seeing us [the instructors] actively involved. We’re not hands off—even though S____ is leading . . . we’re very hands on giving specific instruction and watching . . . and they routinely turn around they see G____ and I watching them. They know then that that’s a safe environment because they hear us make small corrections about a person’s words—a person’s body language—a person’s touch. Instructors are creating a safe environment the first hour students walk into the classroom.
Another theme was that of developing leadership within the class, again, there is instructor intentionality behind this work. Leadership is developed throughout the Lamica model: in the experiential activities, in the command structure, and in the peer mentoring or learning partners. An instructor quoted: “And I see a student looking around to look and they are not a captain or sergeant like ‘hey we need to line up for flag’—that’s indirect leadership.” The instructors have gotten the students to the point of noting what needs to be done in the class, and assuming the leadership for this. These students are not “commander[s] or sergeant[s]. The commanders and the squad sergeants should be saying the same line for flag. But another student did and then everyone just filed suit they all lined up. That’s the indirect leadership.”

Another instructor spoke towards the importance of building connections and relationships between the students. “Our expertise is relationships—we build relationships in the community.” The importance of helping students to build relationships through a web of connections is apparent in the way every activity is addressed in the classroom.

Additional themes also emerged: the creation of emotional safety of the classroom, student opinions, and the role of teacher in the classroom regarding accountability. In regard to emotional safety one instructor noted “we do a preparatory set of emotional safety in the classroom. If you don’t have that emotional safety piece, then nobody trusts each other.” Further, the importance of developing relationships with the students “students don’t care what you know until they know that you care.” The role of the instructors to create the atmosphere and then maintain that atmosphere was noted both by the instructors and the students. Instructors noted that they would intentionally intervene in the normal course of events to facilitate further development of skills they wanted to see. For example, removal of a commander, so that the team could further develop their skills;
we put people there because we feel they need to be there. Now it’s not—it doesn’t mean that they have the natural ability and they don’t have the natural ability. [What you] need to do—[is] to help them learn that natural ability [of leadership].

Finally, in regard to sharing of opinions, and acceptance of other opinions. Instructors shared their approach and thoughts behind how they create an accepting community where it is safe to share personal opinions. So, “we give students permission number one to report out.

And number two we talk about the difference between opinions being somewhat like bellybuttons—everyone has one but they’re different doesn’t mean we are preparing the students who are listening to put on the backburner and their biases and just hear the opinion for what it is and then we talk about the opinions as being an opinion, we are not attacking people—you’re not questioning or working through a person or working just through the opinion.

So, I think when we can separate those two then the person who shares the opinion doesn’t feel axed. We can talk about the opinion. But it doesn’t change my relationship with you that’s just that’s just your opinion. That’s big for a 16-, 17-, and 18-year-old to wrap their brain around.

Instructors created a safe environment, so much so, that students in the class felt safe enough to share out their opinions. A safe environment allows for students to express thoughts on subject matter and emotional safety. How student perceive what instructors intended in further demonstrated in the themes in research question 2.

**Student interview.** Themes regarding research question 2 In the student interviews several themes emerged around student perceptions of classroom community. These emerging themes were: Connections, Belonging, and Independence. These codes relate to Rovai et al.’s
(2008) model of community. Additional codes also emerged: the Influence of the Instructor and the Emotional Safety of the classroom. Two tables demonstrate the themes from the second research question. Table 23 demonstrates the themes as the arose out of the interview coding. Table 24 demonstrates the numbers of reference from the hand coding.

Table 23

*Student Interview Themes: RQ2 What Factor(s) do Students in a CJ Classroom in a CTE Center Perceive as an Influence on Classroom Community?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Emerging ideas</th>
<th>Resulting Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ2AConnect</td>
<td>Affirmations <em>(Capturing Kid’s Hearts)</em> help to create bond</td>
<td>Capturing Kid’s Hearts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Activities help to create relationships/family</td>
<td>Ropes activities help to create a family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2BSpirit</td>
<td>We are in this together</td>
<td>Ropes activities developed trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2CTrust</td>
<td>Ropes developed trust</td>
<td>Ropes activities developed trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2DInterdep</td>
<td>Class structure (military command structure) created interdependence</td>
<td>Interdependence by class structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2EBelonging</td>
<td>I belong here, I am seen, I have an opinion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24

*Instructor Interview Data: Number of Occurrences in Hand Coding of Research Question Areas out of a Possible 180 Meaning Units*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ1EXP</th>
<th>RQ1B</th>
<th>RQ1C</th>
<th>RQ1D</th>
<th>RQ2</th>
<th>RQ2B</th>
<th>RQ2C</th>
<th>RQ2D</th>
<th>RQ2E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>CapH</td>
<td>Mil</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>Connect</td>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Interdep</td>
<td>Belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overwhelmingly, the students in the CJ class noted that they felt connected to others in the class. Many examples in research question 2 noted how these connections happened. First, through *affirmations*. *Affirmations* are a part of the *Capturing Kid’s Hearts* training. Students felt strongly about the power of affirmations. Here are a few of the quotes shared by students on this subject. “Mr. B. gave me like a glowing affirmation and I’m like—I can’t even explain it. It
made me feel really good inside. And then I turned around and I realized like I felt like my peers were acting different around me.” Another student noting the power of affirmations: “and like those affirmations they really they like—they hit—deep . . . It made me want to like bring myself up more to that level.”

Numerous quotes also noted that the class felt like a family.

Like we all say this shows that we all consider each other family. . . . like we’ve gotten to know so much about each other . . . there’s a family were there we got each other’s back. A lot of us created a big group chat with all of us in it. And if one of us needs help you know we talk . . . never leaving anybody behind . . . but, all in all, we just considered each other family.

Another activity noted by students that created connections was the class adherence to the social contract, which again is part of Capturing Kid’s Hearts.

I think our social contract . . . I think that’s like it’s something that really holds us up to a standard I think it’s like it sets the bar and then we have to bring ourselves up to meet that bar. It’s an expectation. If we put it in paper, then it’s an expectation you can’t be like well I didn’t know that was a thing. I’m like ours says obviously no bullying on that. And you know if someone’s bullying then it’s like it’s on paper you can’t really. You have no case if you’re trying to defend yourself on that . . . definitely holds you accountable.

As to how students in a CJ class perceive as the spirit of their class, responses were much lower or referenced other class information. The word spirit was never used by any of the students. But, when asked what the spirit of their class might be, students noted “a family” or
“togetherness.” Although there were not many direct references to spirit, this quote from a CJ student seemed to capture the class feeling

Nothing can stand, or nothing will bother us. Nothing will break us apart. Nothing will bring us down. We’ve got I feel that we’re strong together. Something is bothering one of us. It’s bothering all of us we’re all there for each other we’re a family. Something happening to one person it’s happening to all of us. We’re there helping each other out . . . So, I think our spirit lives in just purely helping others and being strong.

In regard to trust as it is perceived by CJ students, students pointed to the experiential or ropes activities, or specifically, the trust activities. In experiential activities there are certain activities that are specifically called: trust activities, although all activities may develop that. For example, the trust fall, the blind trust walk, or a trust wall. One student noted this really got to know him during that because we ended up helping each other out quite a bit throughout the ropes course helping other people out as well. So that’s when our friendship really kicked off during that interesting trusting events . . . I’m going to trust them.

Another student noted that the blind trust walk created this trust for them and it’s like kind ease into a relationship with people we get into the way we did the program from not talking to anyone in the beginning to now. All these friendships that I’ve made because of the activities because of CJ. We got a lot closer. I really do think that what the activities did for us was there was an opportunity to know one another to get to understand how one works how one maybe isn’t at their best moments when they’re like struggling or like facing stress. So those really helped because . . . like
blindfolded we had a walk in the woods, and we had to trust them to know where they’re going and like to take us and make sure that we’re okay.

Regarding interdependence, students noted that the class structure created and supported interdependence. This is the military command structure, that is, commanders, sergeants, and squads, and the peer learning which they call learning partners, “more of getting to know someone than like you say hi to someone you run into the hallway at school because you’re interacting with them because you’re like doing your thinking together. You guys are solving problems together.”

Student perspective on belonging noted many times when I’m here it’s like I’m with family I’m with the people I love. This is this is great. Who wouldn’t want to be with people that you know make them feel good? . . . I’d lay down my life for them since how I feel about them. You know I’ve been through so much with them.

Another student said that the belonging happened because of their deep focus of helping everyone succeed,

maybe you can help them [other students] switch it up and you know what works for you may or may not work for them, but you keep working with them, so we do mentor each other we do help each other we push each other through when someone is struggling. We don’t quit each other we’ve never quit on each other we’ve never walked away we’ve never said a you know ‘I can’t teach this guy’. We’ve never done that we will spend days and days out to figure out something that and works . . . All of us will go all out of our way—a lot of us will go home and do research work outside of this . . . . That’s also why we have a big group [on social media] You know one of them is having a problem.
Hey, I’ll get back with you . . . . It feels great. It’s like you know you have something you can rely on that you can trust that you know is going to get the job done that you know is going to help you. So, it really reduces the stress and the worry and the anxiety that you have.

**Student questionnaires on research question 2.** In the student questionnaires several themes emerged around student perceptions of classroom community. These emerging themes were: Team, Trust, and Support. Table 25 demonstrates the themes as they arose out of the questionnaire coding. These themes aligned with some of the previous themes from the student interviews in the areas of team and family environment through bonds made, the high levels of trust developed, and the supportive environment.

Table 25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Emerging ideas</th>
<th>Resulting Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ2</td>
<td>RQ2AConnect</td>
<td>Team/family environment</td>
<td>Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RQ2CTrust</td>
<td></td>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RQ2DInterdepend</td>
<td>Supportive environment</td>
<td>Supported by students in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC2</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td></td>
<td>Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC2</td>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supportive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In regard to student perspective on the theme of Team, students noted many reasons for the development of Team. First, peer mentoring was one of the ways students noted the development of Team. In the following example, a student mentored another in math but noted it happened in other class areas as well.

I was a math mentor to another student in our classroom, which basically meant that I helped her to understand the different concepts of the math questions. Everyone was
very helpful with helping anyone study for evaluations or posttests. There was a girl in this class who would always text me and ask me questions, if she had them, about the different material we were covering. I really appreciate that the students in here were so supportive of each other (for the most part), and it made the class tighter-more knit as a team.

Another student also noted the classroom team and supports when I didn’t understand anything, I can always count on my class to help me out because we all want to succeed together were not all against each other or competing against each other we have to work as a team and trust your peers to have your back.

Still another noting Team and Belonging, “the feeling of belonging is amazing. Everyone belongs. It’s a family. We are one team.”

In the questionnaires CJ students also noted deep levels of trust in the class. “I have to trust my partner every day when we’re doing partner work that we will work as a team.” Often students pointed to the fact that these feelings of trust lead to a relationship that many referred to as a family. “The class is my family. I don’t make friends often so to have another family means more to me than they’ll ever know.”

Students noted that peer support were important in developing the connections and relationships that creating a supportive environment. “Depending on others is the main part of CJ. You need your peers to help you do everything.” Many students noted the help given and received from others in the class “we always come to each other for anything in the classroom. We know that we can get help from each other and that everyone in the class is willing to help.” This environment, seemed at times to be counter to that experienced in traditional schools. “Wherever I go I am accepted, even in kids from other classes in CJ and also in other sessions no
matter religion or popularity status.” This student noted how unusual it is at traditional high schools to have students’ cross social groups to speak to others outside of their circle. “Being accepted based on popularity status in my actual school doesn’t seem to show in the CJ classroom.” Another student noted this also, “it was interesting to see the people who seemed like nerds to be friends with those who were more popular. Everyone seemed so close in friendship that you also couldn’t tell the Juniors and Seniors apart.” One student seemed to sum up the feeling of team, trust, and support “If you want to feel excepted [accepted] in something being a CJ student is the way to go, I’ve never been in a class that excepts [accepts] you as much as the CJ class.

Instructor interview on research question 2. In the instructor interviews several themes emerged around student perceptions of classroom community. These themes were: the use of ropes or experiential course to create bonds and trust in the classes, emotional safety, and the use of military command structures to promote leadership. Additional themes also emerged: the influence of the instructor and the emotional safety of the classroom. Table 26 demonstrates the themes as the arose out of the interview coding.

Table 26

Instructor Interview Themes: RQ2 What Factor(s) do Students in a CJ Classroom in a CTE Center Perceive as an Influence on Classroom Community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Emerging ideas</th>
<th>Resulting Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ2</td>
<td>RQ2A Connect</td>
<td>Intentional use of ropes/experiential</td>
<td>Ropes/Experiential ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RQ2B Spirit</td>
<td>Emotional Safety</td>
<td>-Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RQ2C Trust</td>
<td>Trust activities promote leadership</td>
<td>-Emotional Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RQ2D Interdepend</td>
<td>Must promote emotional safety</td>
<td>-Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RQ2E Belonging</td>
<td>Leadership through military command positions and learning partners</td>
<td>-Enable opinions in DIGA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Opinions matter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

111
These themes align to student interviews and student questionnaires in the areas of how the ropes or experiential course is used by the instructors to promote trust, teambuilding, and leadership. The students noted these activities created bonds, trust, and a team environment. Similarly, the instructors noted the use of the military command structure to promote leadership, and the students noted how this system created a web of interdependence and connections across the class.

In noting Connections, instructors in the CJ program noted the intentional decision on the part of the instructor to use ropes or experiential education to promote connections and leadership within the CJ community. “It [ropes activities] challenges them so they get to find out who’s strengths and in certain areas we have strengths in certain areas and who has weaknesses in other areas” and the use of ropes to promote: “to do a team effort, collaboration, [and] team building.” Additionally, instructors note the use of these activities to notice and promote leadership and further team development.

And then what we start finding is through all that week as you get some people that become all-stars and they start really showing out of leadership. But you have others who are very shy, and you start seeing the class kind of come alongside of them and helping them express you when they have a fear.

Instructors noted not also direct leadership skills had developed, but also indirect. For example, “I see a student looking around to look and there is not a captain or sergeant like "hey we need to line up for flag " that’s indirect leadership” students begin to assume leadership for activities that normally would be run by a student with promoted leadership, now all students begin to assume leadership or ownership for the class and their own learning. Table 11 also demonstrates that
instructors noted Connections as the most cited theme in their interviews. It was cited 15 times in 180 meaning units.

Instructors also noted that they looked for opportunities to promote leadership opportunities. “As you as you look at that and you start putting these students into positions like being a sergeant or a class commander or doing something at Flag Ceremony like being part of the choir or things like that being part of Skills USA. So, it all filters in to all of these different leadership opportunities.”

Instructors shared that they intentionally create emotional safety in their classrooms. One way they do that is to work to create classrooms with emotional safety.

Most times I think they just being able to say goodbye to somebody as a very natural thing for people that feel like they’re in a place where they belong and they’re feeling loved. I mean we don’t think about it this way. When I leave the house my house in the morning or when I go to bed at night, I always make sure that I say ‘goodnight’ to every person in the family and ‘I love you.’ Same thing in the morning. So why wouldn’t we do that with our students if we’re trying to create the social emotional classroom where students feel cared about and they and they feel supported while you’d want to do the same thing.

Instructors noted that they need to closely observe students to look for and then eliminate emotional anxiety. When starting ropes activities,

You can instantly see anxiety in some students faces because they in their home schools have experienced very negative situations when it comes to that. So, our job is to number one to recognize and see that in the students. And number two then come alongside of them as we’re walking from station to station {different ropes activities}and try to put
them at ease and help them work through that. We’re very purposeful in doing that and I think once the students see that they start to feel a little bit more comfortable or safe and environment.

The curriculum of Capturing Kid’s Hearts is noted as a direct influence on positive affirmations both by instructors and students.

[It is important] we hear from other people in our class that they saw us doing something well . . . they said [it was] immeasurable—you don’t know how important that is for me to hear from someone that I don’t even look at regularly say—‘I noticed you’ there being noticed. It’s not so much what you’re saying but they’re being noticed.

Another area instructors and students noted was the sharing of opinions.

When we can separate those two then the person who shares the opinion doesn’t feel axed. We can talk about the opinion. But it doesn’t change my relationship with you that’s just that’s just your opinion. That’s big for a 16-, 17-, and 18-year-old to wrap their brain around.

The student opinions are valued and encouraged. Oftentimes this sharing of opinions happens in a DIGA or circle reflections. Finally, instructors noted:

say the first thing is teaching the students around you that you people have to feel like you care about them and this has to be genuine. So, it’s like being compassionate and caring about people but also having high expectations for them.
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

Over the past several years the discussion in educational circles has shifted from a conversation about whether social emotional learning (SEL) is valid, to a discussion on how to implement SEL practices. The research is overwhelming on the effects of SEL implementation in the classroom. The five foundational tenets of SEL are: 1) self-awareness, 2) self-management, 3) responsible decision making, 4) social-awareness, and 5) responsible decision-making; of SEL from the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), were identified within the word: community. An identified Criminal Justice classroom in the Midwest was chosen as a study of community, from a student perspective.

Research has been conducted on many aspects of SEL across schools and classrooms, but there is a dearth of research available on CTE centers. Additionally, there is little research available on criminal justice classes, CTE classes, nor understanding community from a student’s perspective. This study seeks to understand how students in criminal justice program in a CTE center understand classroom community. To understand this phenomenon two research questions were developed:

RQ1: How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community?

RQ2: What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an influence on classroom community?

Theoretical frameworks are frameworks that help to explain and provide structure for a model being researched. The author of the Lamica model identified the four fundamental
components of his model, which were: elements of experiential education, *Capturing Kid’s Hearts*, military command structure, and peer mentoring. Lamica and the subsequent instructors believed these create an emotionally safe communal environment. Although Lamica developed, initiated, and worked on this particular model, and trained his successors, he ultimately left the CTE center before this study was conducted. Before Lamica left, he carefully mentored and passed on the model to his mentees. His two successors have carefully maintained the vision and adherence to the Lamica model. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore student perceptions of community in a CJ program, in a CTE center, in the Midwest. This study asked two research questions, that corresponded to the model of community developed by Rovai (2002). This study may contribute to an understanding of classroom community from a student perspective and to how community was formed in a CTE center.

Results from this study demonstrate how instructors intentionally created classroom community and what the perspective of that community was from the students’ understanding. The intentional use of the ropes course by the instructors to create connections and bonds was noted by the students as creating connections that lasted for the rest of the year. The use of *Capturing Kid’s Hearts* curriculum also effected the students by demonstrating the power of affirmations and social contracts. The military command structure or leadership development enabled leadership growth and peer mentoring which created a deeper web of connections within the classroom.

This chapter provides a summary of the study’s findings. This chapter will also discuss the conclusions of the study and implications. Additionally, this chapter will share practical applications of the findings, and how the results might be used in a CJ classroom in a CTE
center, or in traditional classrooms. Finally, it will also provide recommendations for further research.

**Summary of the Results**

The purpose of the case study was to explore student perceptions of classroom community in a Criminal Justice classroom in a CTE center in the Midwest. The Lamica model was used as a framework for this study which is composed of four domains: experiential education, *Capturing’s Kid’s Hearts*, military command structure, and peer mentoring. In this study the four components of Lamica’s model was aligned to community as found in a classroom and relates to a student’s sense of the level of “connectedness, cohesion, spirit, trust, and interdependence” (Rovai, 2002, p. 206). In a classroom this relates to the shared values of learning within the peer group (Rovai et al., 2008) and to a feeling of belonging and being a part of the greater group.

Using a qualitative study design allowed the researcher to understand the intentions of instructors in the classroom arrangement and resources and then to understand how the students perceived these structures. A qualitative design allowed for an open-ended process of meaning-making by the researcher (Merriam & Merriam, 2009) and a deep understanding of student perceptions. This study also allowed for students to be interviewed in a setting that was familiar and naturally occurring (Arghode, 2012). This methodology also allowed for an open-ended discovery process for a novice researcher.

The study allowed for triangulation of data using multiple data sources (Yin, 2014), to support and further understand student perceptions of community in a classroom. Data collection consisted of student semistructured interviews, student questionnaires, and teacher semistructured interviews. Analysis of the data was conducted through coding and thematic
analysis of the interviews and questionnaires. Each of the three sources was reviewed multiple times, hand coded, and run through NVivo for additional codes.

Several themes emerged from the data around student perceptions of community in the classroom. The first research question was: How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a CTE (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community? Four areas of the Lamica model were studied: experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring. These four areas were cross referenced against the five areas of community as defined by Rovai (2002): which are connections, spirit, trust, interdependence, and belonging. The research intent was to demonstrate that by employing these four areas of Lamica model community would be experienced by the CJ students.

Regarding the first research question, how do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a CTE Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community? In the student interviews, several themes emerged: connections, interdependence, and the influence of military command structure (which is a model of leadership). In the student questionnaires, several themes emerged: connections, interdependence in a team through peer mentoring, and trust. In the instructor interviews the focus is somewhat a different focus than the students as they are intentionally using activities to create a community in their CJ students. In reference to the first research question the emerging themes from the instructors were: connections, relationships, and leadership development.

Regarding research question 2, What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an influence on classroom community? In the student interviews several themes emerged. The student questionnaires identified: family, trust and identification of the
military command structure or leadership as creating interdependence. The intentional use of specific activities by the instructors were also noted in their interviews. They noted the ropes course, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring as creating connections, leadership, interdependence, and the student sharing of their opinions.

This study is important because it may help other CJ classes, CTE centers, or general education classes to understand how student perceive certain activities as leading to classroom community. The reason classroom community is important as that when students’ social and emotional needs are met, they are free to learn in safe environments. This chapter will share a summary of the study and conclusions the researcher is hopeful will contribute to understanding of classroom community, and how student perceptions may help to drive future professional learning for teachers and classrooms. Finally, recommendations for future areas of study will be shared.

**Discussion of the Results**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how CJ students in a CTE center perceive the influence of Lamica’s model on classroom community in a Midwestern U.S. school. This research studied student perceptions of the four components of the Lamica model. The hope was that by understanding classroom community from a student perspective, other CTE and high school instructors may learn to create emotionally safe learning environments.

Rich data was obtained from the students and instructors in this study. This data was triangulated through student interviews, questionnaires, and instructor interviews. The data obtained was superimposed over the 5 dimensions of community as identified by Rovai (2002). The data demonstrated that specific and intentional decisions of the teachers affected student perceptions. Many of the students interviewed were in tears when expressing the depth of
feeling they possessed for this class. Anecdotally, the researcher has been an educator for over 30 years and never has such a depth of feeling for a classroom been seen. This is truly a unique classroom that needed to be studied.

**Research question 1: Ropes course or experiential education.** The first research question asked about the students’ perceptions of the Lamica model on their classroom community. The originator of the Lamica model, nor the components of the model, were known by the students. So, the research questions broke down the pieces into words and phrases the students would understand. For example, the first question in the student interviews was: *In thinking about some of the activities from the ropes course, for example, trust fall, the wall, the maple pole, how do you perceive these activities as contributing to the classroom? Can you give some examples?* Questions like this started the exploration of student perceptions on how the ropes course or experiential education affected their perception of classroom community.

Several themes emerged from the data from interviews and questionnaires. The first theme to emerge was one of *connections*. The CJ instructors purposively reserved the on-campus ropes course and facilitator for the first two weeks of school. The instructors were actively involved in activities such as: trust fall, the wall, and a reflection circle to promote deep levels of team, connections among students, relationships, and leadership. Thus, the rhythm, rules, and relationships in the class was established before even beginning class curriculum. Most instructors in traditional education classes would never consider devoting this much time to activities that were not part of the core curriculum. Many teachers feel a weight of needing to attend to all the curriculum for their level. To afford two weeks to outdoor activities would be considered a luxury. In contrast, the CJ students point to this time as being the one that set the tone for the entire year. Regarding the ropes course one student said: “Yeah I think it really
helped us like it forced us to trust them right away. We had to trust them like climbing over a wall and having people push us over. I was I remember I was so scared, but I trusted those people, and I think it really helped us build community a lot in our classroom.” Many students in the interviews noted how the ropes course created the initial bonding that set the vision for the entire year.

Ropes courses are considered safe learning environments. In the district where the study was conducted, even though students are standing at the top of 30-foot pole, because of the safety of the system, insurance companies consider them to be no more of a risk than normal physical education classes. As a trained ropes course facilitator, the researcher has knowledge that ropes courses can be presented to participants as dangerous environments. The element of fear and insecurity can move not only the individual student to higher levels of performance, but also groups and teams can develop deeper levels of connection due to the perceived danger of the events. This relates to the data from student interviews and questionnaires demonstrated. Connections were noted in both sets of data, along with interdependence. The ropes course activities are usually designed so that one person cannot achieve the goal alone. It takes multiple participants to achieve the outcomes, for example, one activity consists of a group climbing over a 12-foot wall. Activities like this cannot be accomplished individually, the only way to achieve the desired goal, is for students to communicate and try out solutions together. The students from the interviews also noted the dimension of leadership that emerged from these activities. One student noted “Well I guess a kind of kind of part of the I feel like part of the reason that they do it is to pick out that people in command positions and stuff. So, like a few people kind of stood out from the crowd . . . like I’m telling everyone what to do and not like you know like telling them or yelling at them like advising—what to do and stuff. I guess we kind of learned to
look up to those people after they received their command positions that we respect to them a little more because we knew that they deserved it.” In debrief circles, students noted the leadership of others in their groups. Instructors also noted that their reasoning for some of the activities was to watch for this leadership to emerge out of groups.

The student questionnaires also noted the themes of connections, team, and interdependence. All these areas are like the to the student and instructor interviews. One additional area that emerged out of the questionnaires was trust. One student noted “after we worked on the ropes course and did activities out in the woods, I felt closer with the other students, which is what the purpose if it was. We did various team-building activities, so that when we began learning, we were already familiar with each other and not afraid to depend on each other.” Another also noted: “I think the challenge course allowed us to build a stronger bond with people right away. Doing something like the challenge course allowed us to trust these strangers almost instantly. You had to trust them all or someone could have been injured.”

In the student interviews and questionnaires, the questions were designed to understand student perspective. In the instructor interviews the instructors repeatedly explained their intentions in creating specific scenarios or activities. The instructors noted the use of the ropes course for creating and then teaching relationships, teambuilding, and connections. They intentionally used the course to create a classroom environment that would set up how the rest of the school year would run, then they consistently reinforced the behaviors with the students. Additionally, they used the course to watch for emerging leadership in students. These students then became the first of their leaders in the command structure in the classroom. By design, ropes courses are designed as a way for a trained facilitator to watch connections. The way
people behave on a course is no different than normal behaviors, but roles become heightened. This allows facilitators to study behaviors and paraphrase them back to individuals or groups.

Finally, the use of the circle, or as CJ refers to it: DIGA, has its roots in experiential education to process information. It is demonstrated out on the course to debrief what occurred in an activity. For the CJ classroom, it becomes the way to start and end a day, and process after activities. One student described the circle as:

it made people look out of their comfort zones to share how they felt . . . pushing us out of our comfort zones . . . I think it really brings us together a lot. We’re free like we’re talking about things like processing . . . we’re not processing it by ourselves so we’re hearing what everyone else was thinking during the circle. Whatever happened and we’re talking about how we could do better next time.

**Research question 1: Capturing Kid’s Hearts.** To summarize, Capturing Kid’s Hearts was a school training developed by Flip Flippen to support students that are in severely traumatized situations. After years of working with these children he developed a philosophy of building relationships. The training offered combines all his knowledge into a duplicatable program for teachers and has much research around the effectiveness of it. Lamica pulled several ideas out of this training to use in his classroom. First the use of greeting each student at the door every morning. Second, the use of a social contract and classroom rules or norms that are held to by the class. Emotional safety in a classroom was and is paramount. Additionally, each student helps to create a connected web by holding other students in the room accountable to the social contract that is signed and enforced by all. Lastly, the Lamica model used the power of affirmations between peers from the program. An instructor may compliment a
student, but the students might dismiss it as “something a teacher has to do” whereas when it is from a peer and truthfully spoken, it carries a lot of weight in peer groups.

Student to student interactions where students keep each other accountable for behaviors, are extremely unusual to see. For this to happen a safe trusting environment has to be in place. CJ students hold each other accountable for behaviors, without instructor prompting. The researcher is in many classrooms every day and only in the CJ classrooms has this been noted. This power of emotional safety and of taking time to build relationships can be felt in this student’s response:

there is just a way that like you can say anything and still feel safe. The emotional safety is like words just I have never felt so safe in the classroom before. I think the biggest thing is the teachers showing that they care. They care deeply for each and every one of their students. They want the best for them, and the emotional safety comes along with that.

**Research question 1: Military command structure.** To summarize, although the Lamica model refers to this aspect of the classroom as a military command structure, what it actually is, is a way to organize the classroom, promote leadership, and develop relationships. This piece of the research may be groundbreaking in educational circles. It promotes leadership skills and in CJ it is launched as captains, lieutenants, and squads; but the instructors have taught this model to others at the center, and it serves as a business model. For example, in a health careers area the room is divided into two head nurses, then four nurse techs, and finally health care workers. This system not only builds leadership skills, but also teaches the hierarchy for a specific career path. Students in the classroom are given duties to perform that ordinarily would be the role of the instructor. These areas include placing the learning targets on the board,
collecting assignments, making sure everyone in the room understands the assignment, talking to students in the room that are being disruptive, and other tasks. This creates an atmosphere where other students learn to respect the leadership of those in charge, and it frees the teacher up to not have to make sure that every aspect of the classroom runs smoothly. It is a great example of shared leadership in a classroom.

The student interviews noted the importance of this structure. One student said “like Mr. B holding us to that standard—that we’re not going to bring it right to him. We have to address it first and try and make it better before it gets worse.” This is another example of instructors setting the expectations and then holding students accountable to that standard. Students must learn interpersonal skills, they have to learn to try solutions before bringing it up to the instructor.

Another student noted how the command positions made them feel about themselves.

Student ownership:

I feel like I hold myself to a higher standard than I did last semester. Because last semester I wasn’t. I didn’t have a command position or anything. And like electing those people as to command positions I think it brings people to hold themselves to a higher standard and expect more from themselves.

Not only does it make students feel more accountable, but they also receive daily feedback on they are accomplishing this in a supportive environment. Feedback is received using a reflective circle throughout the day. The researcher has heard student to student feedback that would be hard for adults to hear due to the blunt nature of the feedback but when delivered in an emotionally safe environment, this feedback is received with positive presuppositions that this
feedback is for growth. This deep level of feedback is rarely seen in CTE or traditional classrooms.

**Research question 1: Peer mentoring.** The CJ classroom has many opportunities for mentoring. The most mentioned form of mentoring in the classroom as identified by the CJ students was called *learning partners*. These are peer to peer interactions, but at a deeper level than normally understood in traditional classrooms. The learning partners are supportive of each other’s learning in the classroom. Since the CTE center studied draws from multiple local high schools, on any given day many home schools may not be transporting students to the tech center. This creates a difficult situation for instructors to reteach almost on a daily basis. Using peer to peer mentoring helps to support ongoing learning in the classroom. Many CJ students pointed to the positive use of social media from the classroom groups. Groups are used on social media platforms such as Instagram to help and support each other in understanding of classroom concepts. For example, to compare a traditional high school class

so just normal geometry class . . . you’re just you—with a bunch of students . . . you only talked to—are’t really friends with . . . you need help, you ask the guy next to you ‘hey you got this?’ and then you’re out of that class. Never see him again. Don’t even think about each other as to the CJ class where students continue to care for each other even after the class is over. . . . You’re thinking about C.J. class. You’re in the back of your mind saying hey I wonder what they’re up to . . . checked the group chat. You go on and then you’re already connected to everybody you’re already there. Anything comes back to mind. Remember these guys needed help . . . If we need anything, we’re not afraid just contact each other randomly . . . But compared to regular school regular Geometry
class . . . it’s definitely not the same as geometry class. In geometry class, you’re just there working alongside of others trying to get to school.

The difference is a deeper connection, and not the traditional high school class operating with everyone out for themselves. Another student noted,

The bonds between squad mates were pretty strong, but the strongest bond was between learning partners [peer mentors]. You needed to trust and depend on your learning partner to succeed in the class, but everyone in the class trusted each other as well.

All the areas of Research Question One contributed in some way to the construction of classroom community. The instructors created the system to enable community development through a reflective trial and error method. The use of the ropes course to create connections and build leadership skills, along with the use of reflective circle and classroom norms, a classroom model of leadership development, and finally peer partnerships created a classroom community from the perspective of CJ students’ perspective.

**Research question 2: Connections.** Across the data, student interviews, questionnaires, and instructor interviews, *connections* were one of the highest rated areas as noted by students as contributing to classroom community. As an example, student interview hand coding resulted in 118 references out of 480 meaning units that referenced connections. *NVivo* also bore this out with connection being one of the highest rated words from the student interviews. When combining the words family, team, and community the results are even larger. This makes sense, if a student feels disconnected, then you would not feel a part of the community. There are many activities in the CJ curriculum to intentionally create connections. Not one of the interviews or questionnaires had the slightest reference to a student feeling disconnected. In fact, in every interview it was the opposite:
when I didn’t understand anything, I can always count on my class to help me out because we all want to succeed together. We were not all against each other or competing against each other. We have to work as a team and trust your peers.

Instructors noted the intentional use of the ropes course to create activities to initiate classroom connections. Students noted that these activities and others sustained throughout the year created connections, leadership, interdependence, and supported student sharing of opinions. The combination of connections, accountability, emotionally safe environment and student growth in leadership all contributed to community from a student perspective.

**Research question 2: Spirit.** This area of the research questions was rated the lowest by students, not in the sense that there was no spirit, but the researcher believes due to the use of the term. Even with explanation given to the students the use of the term spirit seemed to be answered by the students, but weakly. This may have been due to lack of researcher expertise. In anecdotal observations of the CJ class, the class does not lack spirit or soul, but communicating this to students felt awkward, hence the lower codes for this area.

**Research question 2: Trust.** Trust was the highest rated area in the student interviews and questionnaires. In comparison to the previous area of spirit, CJ students seemed much more comfortable with the use of the word *trust*. Instructors constantly worked on creating emotionally safe environments in the rooms. An emotionally safe environment creates a trusting atmosphere as noted by a CJ student:

I think it has a lot to do with the teachers like our instructors here really caring that you know what you know. I can’t think of a word like—impressing it on us, to be a better person . . . our instructors expect a lot from us. I think that helps us hold ourselves to a higher standard. We want to make that classroom safe . . . like if someone says it’s like
‘emotional safety’. . . when someone says something like that [another student calling ‘emotional safety’] they’re obviously not going to do it anymore. And like there’s something like I feel like nobody’s afraid to tell on people in our class.

An atmosphere of such safety has been created, that students are not afraid to call out “emotional safety” on actions of classmates. This is another example of the difference in the CJ class as compared to traditional high school classes. Most high school classes do not have instructors that even take the time to prepare and teach what emotional safety looks like or sounds like. When students are in emotionally safe environments, the level of trust increases, and deeper learning can take place.

**Research question 2: Interdependence.** Interdependence was another of the highest rated categories from the CJ students’ perspectives. They saw many events in the classroom as contributing to the classroom community. As previously identified, the ropes course, reflection circles, affirmations, social contracts, and leadership hierarchy all built upon an interdependent atmosphere. Students identified this feeling as one of everyone counts, everyone matters.

I guess it’s having the same interest in the same thing how much we’ve spent with each other and talk to each other and how much how well we know each other personal and just all the experiences that we’ve been through together . . . like compared to everybody our regular school. We’ve never been through as much experience or as many situations as you’ve been with everybody here. We’ve been through everything together.

Everything we’ve learned they were there it’s like no one else can experience that—unless they here with us.

Some of the interdependence is created through the students’ learning partner or peer supports. The CJ students care about their own grades or attendance, and those of their classmates. It is a
shared vision of goals, versus individual. This degree of communal goals is different than what is found in traditional classes. One student explained the deep levels of community, how the students try to explain for each other a difficult topic taught:

Maybe you can help them [peers] switch it up [the content] and you know what works for you may or may not work for them but keep working with them, so we do mentor each other we do help each other we push each other through someone struggling. We don’t quit each other we’ve never quit on each other we’ve never walked away we’ve never said, “you know I can’t teach this guy.” We’ve never done that we will spend days and days out to figure out something that works. You know we will all go. All of us will go all out of our way a lot of us will go home and do research and work outside of this . . . You know one of them is having a problem. . . . It feels great. It’s like you know you have something you can rely on that you can trust that you know is going to get the job done that you know is going to help you. So, it really reduces the stress and the worry and the anxiety that you have.

The CJ class seems to have a deep interdependent web that supports the learning of all. In comparison to a traditional class, you may see one student that helps another with a question, answer, or problem, but rarely do you find a classroom that has students that go home and struggle to help a classmate understand a nuance of curriculum.

**Research question 2: Belonging.** All the interviews and questionnaires pointed to a deep sense of belonging. It may have been in the words “I belong here” or in a statement like this one:

I feel with our entire CJ program. Nothing can stand, or nothing will bother us. Nothing will break us apart. Nothing will bring us down. We’ve got I feel that we’re strong
together. Something is bothering one of us. It’s bothering all of us. We are all there for each other we are a family. Sometimes being one person, it’s happening to all of us.

We’re there helping each other out.

The words from both the interviews and questionnaires, and from NVivo reflect this. Words noted by students were family, friends, together, and team.

Implication of the Results for Theory, Practice, and Policy

This section of the paper discusses the possible theoretical and practical implications of the study. It provides some immediate potential applications for instructors in CTE centers, or in traditional high schools and after further research may prove to be an additional social and emotional learning (SEL) model for classrooms.

Despite the abundance of educational research, it is not known how Criminal Justice students in a CTE center, in the Midwest of the United States, perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community. The Lamica model is comprised of four components: experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring. Classroom community is defined as a sense of the feeling of belongingness, acceptance, and emotional safety in a classroom group (Hawkins et al., 2004; Korpershoek et al, 2016; Rovai, 2002; Rovai et al., 2008). Since the Lamica model incorporates components of SEL, one can infer it is an example of an SEL program. The Lamica model is an example of an SEL program for career and technical education.

Theoretical Implications. The purpose of this study was to explore student perceptions of classroom community through an examination of four areas of the Lamica model: experiential education, Capturing Kid’s Hearts, military command structure, and peer mentoring. The implications of this research indicate that students do perceive the community the instructors
have created as a positive one. Students did respond favorably on the use of the ropes course, the
tenets of Capturing Kid’s Hearts, a military command structure, and peer mentoring as
containing positive outcomes for the classroom.

Results from the area of experiential education, which demonstrated team building,
student connections, circle reflection, and leadership development may contribute to an
understanding of how experiential education may be used to promote community in not only
CTE classrooms, but also traditional classrooms. School leaders around the country are
beginning to understand the power of developing emotional safety and community in
classrooms. Even though the study demonstrated these outcomes in a CTE center, the study was
limited to a small number of students in a CTE center. Due to the small size of the study the
ability to generalize the results may be limited.

Capturing Kid’s Hearts has had research conducted on it, so the results of this study may
be added to the results already demonstrated. The study may be limited by the fact that the
instructors that are teaching some on the tenets of Capturing Kid’s Hearts have received the
information second hand. The two CJ instructors were not taught by the parent organization,
therefore some of the details of the system may have been lost over the years or in translation.

Military command structure was a term labeled by the originator of the Lamica model.
This label was kept because it was the term originally used in the model. The researcher
suggests that this term is actually a new way to look at leadership development in a classroom. It
is a system based on a hierarchy of positions within a classroom that allow for shared leadership
positions. This area holds potential for additional research as the researcher has never seen this
structured approach in any classroom in over 30 years in education.
Peer mentoring is a system of collaborative learning that relates to many systems used in classrooms across the country. The difference in this mentoring system is the term *learning partners* and how these partners fit into the overall leadership system in the classroom. This classroom has enabled students to focus on collective goals of the class versus individual goals. CJ state certification scores demonstrate that the students at this particular center outperform their peers in other state CJ programs. This may again, be an area for potential further study.

The components of the Lamica model provide further demonstration of some areas of research, but also innovation in the area of student leadership development. This area holds not only potential for student development, but also for shared leadership within the classroom. Many teachers struggle with what this might look like or sound like. Understanding how CJ students perceive these components is innovative. But the study was limited to a small number of students in a CTE center, and due to the small size of the study the ability to generalize the results may be limited.

**Practical Implications.** The data from this study has practical implications for school classrooms. Data from the instructor interviews, and student perspective may be utilized by teachers for classroom application. The first application can be found in the power of experiential education. Experiential education involves an experience, place and coupled with are reflective circle which allows students to socially process the experience and attach meaning to the experience. This study connects to previous studies conducted on the power of experiential education. In addition, reflective circles hold potential power in classrooms, creating an atmosphere of community. The International Institute of Restorative Practices (IIRP; Costello, Wachtel, & Wachtel, 2010) uses a continuum of circles to meet the daily needs of groups of people. Restorative practices are practices which enable people to socially support
each other in community. Circles can be used to forecast, reflect, celebrate, process information, and develop community.

Experiential activities also hold the power to create an experience for groups, and provide team building and problem solving. Using these activities to set the groundwork for the rest of the year may benefit staff and students. These activities provide a safe environment to establish social norms and may provide an avenue to practice conflict resolution prior to the school year starting. Just a new person coming into a new setting needs to determine “who am I” groups also need to process who they are as a group. Experiential activities, especially several days, may provide the setting for groups to determine this.

_Capturing Kid’s Hearts_ is a proven program to help instructors develop relational capacity in their classrooms and between instructor and student. The components most used by the CJ instructors were the social contract and the accountability of student to student interactions. The other item used by the instructors was the power of affirmations. Many students noted how these peers to peer interactions were deeply meaningful and created a sense of family.

The area that may be ground breaking for school leadership is the use of military command structure. Unfortunately, the name has a connotation of military commands which may be aversive to some schools. Instead, thinking of this area as a leadership development in a classroom holds much potential. Teachers are stretched with all that must be covered in a day. Leadership development holds potential to ease the burden on teachers and allow for students to assume leadership responsibilities in the classroom. With the tight structure and emotionally safe environment, leadership development in students can be carefully cultured by all. This may be a path to a student-led classroom. Arranging students in malleable structures of leadership
creates a rich web of connectivity, where all in a classroom are focused on the goals of all instead of self.

Finally, peer mentoring also holds potential. Many classrooms use peer mentoring or collaborative models. In the CJ class it is referred to as learning partners and is incorporated along with the leadership model. This creates an even deeper web of classroom connections. Students begin to depend on each other for learning instead of sole reliance on the instructor.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

In addition to the practical implications of the study, studying student perceptions of community creates future research based on what the study did or did not do. The Lamica model has only been implemented in one CTE center in the Midwest. Further implementation and research may be conducted. Additionally, understanding other models of community may warrant study from a student perspective. This qualitative study allowed for a deep understanding of this CJ classroom and the areas that most affected students personally. Many students were moved to tears during the interviews when asked to explain areas that made this classroom what it was. Rarely, is this emotional level seen as it relates to traditional high school classes. As students shared with the researcher, this CJ class changed their life.

These feelings of the students do not demonstrate causality. These finding only provide the thoughts and statements of the CJ students. Future studies would need to look at additional sites using the Lamica model. Conducting research using both qualitative as well as qualitative data may be useful. The strength of the study came from varied sources of data, student semistructured interviews and questionnaires, as well as instructor semistructured interviews. In the interview’s students were able to express their perceptions of what they thought about a class and the effects of the Lamica model. Data from the students was triangulated with the
questionnaires and instructor interviews to provide a rich understanding of the CJ classroom community.

Findings from this study indicate that students deeply relate to this CJ classroom environment. This may hold promise for other CJ, CTE, or traditional high school classes. Many times, in the research the students noted the difference between this class, where instructors and peers cared about them, in contrast to the classes attended at their home schools. One student explained: “I was walking past, and he knows that I appreciate being seen because I’m not a lot. And I think just being seen was just amazing for me. And he’s [the instructor] like C___” I see you” like “I know you there.” Instructors forget that students can get lost in the crowd. This student explained the power of just being “seen.”

Summary

Instructors are carrying large loads with having to be curriculum specialists and support student personalized learning. Knowing how to encourage and support social and emotional needs of students may feel overwhelming for instructors. Students in a CJ CTE classroom do understand how it feels to be part of a community. Overwhelmingly, students stated that they felt as though this CJ class is different from traditional classes at their home schools.

The intentional direction of their instructors has achieved this feeling of community. The instructors, mentored by the originator of the Lamica model, have encouraged four components of the Lamica model. These are: the use of experiential education to set the tone for the year and develop class reflection. Capturing Kid’s Hearts has been a developed program that taught the instructors the importance of social contracts, emotional safety, holding each other accountable, and the use of affirmations. Military Command Structure has been used in the CJ class to teach student leadership skills. This model holds promise for leadership development in classrooms.
It also may serve as a model for student ownership of learning. Other classes at the studied career center have begun to employ this method of classroom leadership. Finally, peer mentoring or learning partners has allowed for development of deep webs of classroom connections. The Lamica model holds promise for community development in classrooms, not only for CTE centers, but also in traditional school settings.
References


138


doi:10.1348/096317909X470690


doi:10.5193/JEE.31.3.319
Appendix A: Permission to use Lamica model

From: thomas lamica [mailto:thomaslamica1@gmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, November 19, 2017 5:04 PM

To: Laura Robinson [email redacted]

Subject: Re:

Laura Robinson has my full and complete permission to use the Lamica model.

Thomas Lamica
Appendix B: Student Interview Questions

RQ 1: How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community?

1. Experiential education/learning
   a. In thinking about some of the activities from the ropes course, for example, Trust Fall, the Wall, the Maple Pole, how do you perceive these activities as contributing to the classroom? Can you give some examples?
   b. Talk about circle processing . . . what are the important components? What do you think circle processing does for the CJ classroom?
   c. After an activity finishes, the next step is usually reflection. Can you share your thoughts about reflection in the CJ classroom?

2. Capturing Kid’s Hearts
   a. Can you talk about relationships in the CJ classroom.
   b. Talk about emotional safety in the CJ classroom.
   c. What are your thoughts on “respect for others” as it shows up in the CJ classroom?

3. How do CJ students in a career technical center perceive how programs military command structure influence classroom community
   a. What is military command structure? What did that look like in this CJ class?
   b. What does a military command structure do in the CJ class?

4. How do CJ students in a career technical center perceive how peer mentoring Influences classroom community?
a. Do students mentor other students in the CJ classes? In what ways does this happen?

b. What effects does mentoring have on the CJ classroom?

RQ 2: What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an influence on classroom community?

1. Connectedness/Cohesion
   a. Can you tell me about a time when you experienced connectedness or cohesion in the CJ classroom?

2. Spirit
   a. Spirit can reference the soul or heart of an organization, what kind of spirit or heart does CJ have?

3. Trust
   a. Do you experience trust in the CJ classroom? Can you share some ways?

4. Interdependence
   a. Can you give me some examples on how your classroom social contract effects the interdependent relationships in the CJ classroom.

5. Belonging
   a. Do you feel as though you belong in the CJ classroom? What makes you feel that way?
Appendix C: Instructor Semistructured Interviews

RQ 1: How do students in a Criminal Justice (CJ) classroom in a Career Technical Education (CTE) Center perceive the influence of the Lamica model on classroom community?

1. Experiential education/learning
   a. In thinking about some of the activities from the ropes course, for example, Trust Fall, the Wall, the Maple Pole, how do students perceive these activities as contributing to the classroom atmosphere? Can you offer some examples?
   b. Talk about circle processing . . . what are the important components? What might students say that circle processing does for the classroom?
   c. After an activity finishes, the next step is usually reflection. How do you observe students’ reaction to whether reflection helps or hurts community in the classroom?

2. Capturing Kid’s Hearts
   a. Capturing Kid’s Hearts is a curriculum that promotes relationships and social contracts. Can you share some examples of how this curriculum has influenced student behaviors?
   b. Talk about emotional safety in the CJ classroom. Can you share some examples?
   c. What are your thoughts on “respect for others” as it shows up in the CJ classroom?

3. Military Command Structure
   a. What is military command structure?
   b. What did that look like in this CJ class?
c. How do students understand the military command structure? Can you share some examples?

4. Peer Mentoring

a. Do students mentor other students in the CJ classes?

b. How (in what ways) did students mentor each other?

c. If I talked with a random CJ student, what might they say that mentoring delivers to the CJ community?

RQ 2: What factor(s) do students in a CJ classroom in a CTE Center perceive as an influence on classroom community?

1. Connectedness/Cohesion

a. Can you talk about connectedness or cohesion in the CJ classroom?

2. Spirit

a. *Spirit* can reference the *soul* or *heart* of an organization, what kind of *spirit* or *heart* does CJ have?

3. Trust

a. Can you talk about trust in the CJ classroom?

4. Interdependence

a. Can you give me some examples on how your classroom social contract effects the interdependent relationships in the CJ classroom.

5. Belonging

a. Do you feel as though they *belong* in the CJ classroom? What do you do to ensure that?
Appendix D: Student Questionnaire

This questionnaire asks about your experiences and attitudes related to the CJ class experienced. When you take this questionnaire try to think about the CJ class (as opposed to any other high school class you are in). We look forward to using your feedback to try to make schools better. Please note that you do not need to write in complete sentences for these questions, bullet points or short answers are sufficient.

Experiential Education: Ropes or Challenge Course

1. In what ways or in what activities did the first year CJ class ropes or challenge course contribute to the CJ classroom community?

Capturing Kid’s Hearts

1. Did you feel emotionally safe in the first year CJ classroom? What contributed to this?

2. How did accountability to the social contract contribute to the CJ classroom community?

Military Command Structure

1. Most classrooms do not utilize a military command structure; how did a military command structure contribute to classroom community in the CJ classroom?

Peer Mentoring

1. In the CJ classroom there is a lot of peer to peer supports that happen, what peer to peer supports did you experience?

2. How did these peers to peer supports develop classroom community?

Community

1. Describe “connection or cohesion” in the CJ classroom
2. How might you describe the *spirit or soul* of the CJ classroom

3. Talk about trust in the CJ classroom

4. Describe interdependence in the CJ classroom

5. Talk about your feeling of belonging to the CJ community
Appendix E: Parental/Guardian Consent of Student Interviews/Questionnaire and Student Assent

Concordia University–Portland Institutional Review Board
Approved: March 27, 2018; will Expire: March 27, 2019

Research Study Title: Student Perspectives on Classroom Community in a Career Technical Center
Principal Investigator: Laura Robinson
Research Institution: Concordia University–Portland
Faculty Advisor: Nicholas Markette

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY: I am a doctoral student, and I am interested in what creates community, as is found in the Criminal Justice Classes that your son or daughter attends at [redacted]. The purpose of the study is to understand what influences supported community development in the program. Your son or daughter is being asked to participate in the study because they are a student in the Criminal Justice program.

RISKS: The foreseeable risks related to participation in this study are minimal. Students will be discussing experiences related to the classroom atmosphere they experienced in the Criminal Justice program at the [redacted]. It is possible that the discussion of thoughts or feelings about their educational experiences may make them feel sad or uncomfortable. If the student is upset at any point during the interview, they can cease with the process and obtain a referral to the counseling office.

BENEFITS: The results of this study may benefit other teachers of social and emotional classes. It may also offer better comprehension of students enrolled in the CJ programs. There will be no direct benefit to the student from participating from the study; however, the participant, could come to a deeper understanding of the value of their educational experiences and what influenced the decisions made for their careers.

CONFIDENTIALITY: This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. The only exception to this is if you tell us abuse or neglect that makes us seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety. Any information obtained about students from the research including answers to pre-interview questions, interview information, history, or from any discussions will be de-identified. I will protect your confidentiality by coding your information with a number so no one can trace your answers to your name, limiting access to identifiable information, and storing research records in locked files in a locked office or electronic files that have passwords on a laptop stored in a locked office and that are accessible only to the researcher above. Audio recordings will be deleted from any unsecured device once transferred to the researcher’s password protected laptop computer, to occur the same day as the recording is made. Digital files of audio recordings on the researcher’s laptop computer will be destroyed once the study is completed. The data derived from this study could be used in reports, presentations, and publications but there will never be

161
any identifiable information shared. The recording will be deleted as soon as possible; all other study documents will be kept secure for 3 years and then be destroyed.

NEW INFORMATION: Any new information obtained during the course of the research that may affect your willingness to consent to participation in the study will be provided to you.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION: To the student: Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate or would like to end your participation in this research study, there will be no penalty or loss of benefits to you to which you are otherwise entitled. In other words, you are free to make your own choice about being in this study or not and may quit at any time without penalty.

CONTACT INFORMATION: You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions you can talk to or write the principal investigator, Laura Robinson at email [redacted]. If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. Ora Lee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6390).

YOUR STATEMENT OF CONSENT: I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study.

__________________________________________  ______________________
Participant Name                                  Date

__________________________________________  ______________________
Participant Signature                            Date

__________________________________________  ______________________
Investigator Name                                Date

__________________________________________  ______________________
Investigator Signature                          Date

Investigator: Laura Robinson; email: [redacted]
c/o: Professor Nicholas Markette;
Concordia University–Portland
2811 NE Holman Street Portland, Oregon 97221
Appendix F: Teacher Interview Consent Form

Research Study Title: Student Perspectives on Classroom Community in a Career Technical Center
Principal Investigator: Laura Robinson
Research Institution: Concordia University–Portland
Faculty Advisor: Nicholas Markette

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY: I am a doctoral student, and I am interested in what creates community, as is found in the Criminal Justice Classes that you are associated with at [redacted]. The purpose of the study is to understand what influences supported community development in the program.

RISKS: The foreseeable risks related to participation in this study are minimal. You will be discussing experiences related to the classroom atmosphere experienced in the Criminal Justice program at [redacted].

BENEFITS: The results of this study may benefit other teachers of social and emotional classes. It may also offer better comprehension of students enrolled in the Criminal Justice programs. There will be no direct benefit to you from participating from the study; however, you may come to a deeper understanding of the value of students’ educational experiences and what influenced the decisions made for their careers.

CONFIDENTIALITY: This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. The only exception to this is if you tell us abuse or neglect that makes us seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety. Any information obtained from the research including answers to pre-interview questions, interview information, history, or from any discussions will be de-identified. I will protect your confidentiality by coding your information with a number so no one can trace your answers to your name, limiting access to identifiable information, and storing research records in locked files in a locked office or electronic files that have passwords on a laptop stored in a locked office and that are accessible only to the researcher. Audio recordings will be deleted from any unsecured device once transferred to the researcher’s password protected laptop computer, to occur the same day as the recording is made. Digital files of audio recordings on the researcher’s laptop computer will be destroyed once the study is completed. The data derived from this study could be used in reports, presentations, and publications but there will never be any identifiable information shared. The recording will be deleted as soon as possible; all other study documents will be kept secure for 3 years and then be destroyed.

NEW INFORMATION: Any new information obtained during the course of the research that may affect your willingness to consent to participation in the study will be provided to you.
VOLUNTARY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION: To the teacher: Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate, or would like to end your participation in this research study, there will be no penalty or loss of benefits to you to which you are otherwise entitled. In other words, you are free to make your own choice about being in this study or not and may stop at any time without penalty.

CONTACT INFORMATION: You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions you can talk to or write the principal investigator, Laura Robinson at email [redacted]. If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. Ora Lee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6390).

YOUR STATEMENT OF CONSENT: I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study.

Participant Name ____________________________ Date ___________

Participant Signature ____________________________ Date ___________

Investigator Name ____________________________ Date ___________

Investigator Signature ____________________________ Date ___________

Investigator: Laura Robinson; email: [redacted]
c/o: Professor Nicholas Markette;
Concordia University–Portland
2811 NE Holman Street Portland, Oregon 97221
Appendix G: Codebook for Interviews and Questionnaire Analysis

RQ1AexpEd: Experiential Education as defined by the Association of Experiential Education is “Challenge and Experience followed by Reflection leading to Learning and Growth” (AEE, 2017, para. 1). Experiential education in this context would be any sort of Ropes activity, such as climbing a wall, trust fall, circling or DIGA for reflection.

RQ1BcapH: Capturing Kids’ Hearts is a training that helps teachers build relationships with students. Then develop, implement, and maintain a social contract that all will abide by and hold each other accountable to. Person to person affirmations.

RQ1CmilComm: In a typical military command structure, that is, army reserves, individuals or groups receive orders or directions from superiors above. Related terms for this leadership or decision-making structure are chain of command or a top-down approach. In this context words similar to commander, lieutenant, leadership, and system of asking for direction.

RQ1D: Mentoring Peer mentoring is student to student help and support. One example in the CJ setting is learning partners. Learning partners support each other across the class and curriculum.

RQ2AConnect: Students feel part of the classroom community, there is an emotional connection to others in the classroom. Positive social interactions, feeling a part of the family. A strong sense of emotional connection.

RQ2BSpirit: The overall spirit or description of who we are and what we stand for

RQ2CTrust: Confidence in the relationships with those around you, both physical and emotional. It is part of relationship and honest behavior between people.

RQ2DInterd: Relationships between group members. Thick web of connections. I need you to complete my work and you need me.
RQ2EBelongingv: I belong here, I am integral part of this community. When I am gone people miss my contribution. This is part of “who I am” as a person
Appendix H: Hattie’s Effect Size

Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017) research identified the use of effect size, as it relates to different influencers. Effect size is the magnitude of impact any given strategy has on, in this case, a classroom. In Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017) research, anything above 0.40 represents more than a year’s worth of learning in a school year. The actual significance of Hattie’s (Fisher et al., 2017) research is that it considered both the effect size, which in some cases has small sample sizes, and the size of the studies. In combining effect size with study size, a real and significant picture of best practices emerges.
Appendix J: Student Interview Quotes

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<th>Code</th>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Meaning Unit Quote</th>
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| RQ1A | ExpEd     | I think it[ropes] definitely forced us to get along well um . . . and problem solve and learn how to work as a team. We did a kind of little thing with getting across the rope and we had to use someone that we never even met before to get across rope we had to hold hands and like walk across it, and I ended up meeting someone that I never had seen before that day. Before that day I had no idea who they were. Nothing about them no matter where they came from school it came from didn’t know their name didn’t know anything. But we had to accomplish something together. And that just brought it to a whole new level. I think the steps we took to become a family really, really helped us.

It was really beautiful how that you know evolved because it started out with no one really wanted to participate in [ropes activities] and that’s what a regular math class is nobody really wants to produce participate. It’s different when it’s about your personal life. Not about just the class and that’s I think that’s the biggest thing for this is it’s not just about C.J. it’s about you. So, forming a DIGA [circle reflection] and reflecting on things some people bring up hey this didn’t work out or this didn’t go so well for me or hey maybe this worked. Then we see it we’re like oh I didn’t catch that. I didn’t even know that and then I can help them, or the teacher can help them better.

I really think it’s a great way to make sure that hey let’s see where we’re at doing DIGA [circle reflection] every morning. I think everybody looks forward to that. It not only makes you think hard--- but one thing I found was it stuck with me everywhere I went. No matter where I was no matter where I was, I would think ‘hey this could be one good thing’ ‘hey, this could be my thing I’m thankful for on Thursday’ and I always like that and just realize that’s following me everywhere I go. I’m constantly thinking ‘hey, this is this is a good thing’. So, it’s not only in the class and you sharing something that went good. It’s following you everywhere and making sure that ‘hey this was a good thing in your life’.

we were like seated at tables and we kind of only sat with people we know like talk to people we knew. And then after we did it we did like that like training or like erm like team building activities. I noticed like a lot of us were like talking to other tables wanting to
set different people places getting to know other people not just
like in their own group

it’s one big circle that everybody shares their opinion and
nobody’s judged for it. I guess it creates an equal atmosphere for
everybody to share their opinion.

It’s just we feel safe around them. I trust these people . . . right out
of the gate, we all had to open up to each other and be vulnerable
for two weeks [of ropes] we didn’t learn anything [about CJ]. I
was so dumbfounded that I like ‘when is the class going to start?’
‘Why don’t we start doing things?’ and after those two weeks I
felt like I just got reintroduced to all of my best friends.

I bonded with people I never would have thought I would bond
with the first day.
[when we get into] . . . in a circle. It makes us like a family like a
little family and we all talk to each other and when we get in those
circles like we have a topic that we all talk about like everyone’s
included.// No one’s left out and even if they don’t want to talk
we make them talk because we want them to be included or feel at
least included.
I would say it gives us a chance to look back and instead you
know ---of a regular classroom where you learn one thing and
keep moving on and you never look back until it’s test day with
this it gives you the chance to ask questions about what we just
did. It’s a debriefing process. You retain information better.

RQ1B Capturing Kids’Hearts

I think that’s like it’s something that really holds us up to a
standard I think it’s [Social Contract] like it sets the bar and then
we have to bring ourselves up to meet that bar. It’s an expectation.
If we put it in paper then it’s an expectation you can’t be like well
I didn’t know that was a thing. I’m like ours says obviously no
bullying in it. And You know if someone’s bullying then it’s like
it’s on paper you can’t really. Um you have no case if you’re
trying to defend yourself on that. Yes, definitely holds you
accountable.

And being in this class has helped me grow like tremendously.
Like I feel like I hear it like this is where I’m supposed to be. This
is I think this is a great class for me. It definitely has helped me. I
used to stress out a lot. And like a couple of weeks ago my I like
my dress ripped at a school dance and my mom had to bring me
another one. And she I remember her talking to me she’s like ___
‘I remember like two months ago you would have been like
freaking out and crying and everything’ and I was like ‘it’s
cool... I was cool as a cucumber’ like ‘I ripped a dress ripped there’s nothing really wrong with that’. I’ve learned so much about controlling myself a lot. I’ve learned composure like having that composure helps people respect you a lot more. If you yeah like I think part of the way that I’ve grown is like having Mr.___ Mr. ___ like saying ‘I appreciate having you in this class. I’m really glad you’re in this class’. And like those affirmations they really they like they hit . . . . Deep. And they help you and they watch you like they you they want it. Like my affirmation wanted me to. It made me want to like bring myself up more to that level. it saved me . . . and I think yeah just that it’s like I love this class like I don’t. It’s it saved me I don’t know how to how to describe that like this.

I really do think that what the activities did for us was there was an opportunity to know one another to get to understand how one works how one maybe isn’t at their best moments when they’re like struggling or like facing stress

It’s often the beginning honestly I think it all starts from those activities [ropes/experiential]. Everything started from that. It all began from those activities and I think that’s what got us closer.

Like in my for example in my English class I probably don’t talk to half of the people there just because we don’t we don’t they don’t encourage that communication are like Go talk to somebody new. It’s kind of like you sit down you learn and you leave. It’s like in our criminal justice class we were encouraged to talk to everybody make new conversations. Along with that is we do affirmations every Friday.

I’m so excited to share like my one good thing because it actually makes them feel like they care about like what I have to say what I’m doing in my life.

And then on Fridays when we do like affirmations and a circle we so when we like when we affirm someone we like say something like we recognize in them for like a week or two. And so like it makes it makes me feel really good when someone else sees what I do in that class or like they recognize my actions and I kind of just like sets a good positive thought in my mind that. I’m not just like hiding the backgrounds I’m actually like being seen. And like my actions are being seen and like when they see like growth and people like.
I feel like I hold myself to a higher standard than I did last semester. Because last semester I wasn’t. I didn’t have a command position or anything. And like electing those people as to command positions I think it brings people to hold themselves to a higher standard and expect more from themselves.

But also, I do feel that as an entire class we know we’re not commanders there we’re not there to tell them what to do. Commanders are there to serve. Same as sergeants were all there to serve each other and talk about it together and come up with a class opinion. We’re not there to say hey you do this hey you do that. No. . . . Not what being a leader is. . . . it’s not what being a commander is

that power that that can get to their head when really being a leader. . . . You know in most people’s opinions [a leader is] being a servant. You’re there to serve everybody you’re not there to tell them what to do . . . you’re there to or talk with them— serve them. I believe some people don’t always think about the way ---they think about ‘I’m the leader’. You know ‘you follow me, I’m going to tell you what to do’. I have not seen that in this program at all. I have not seen that whatsoever.

So, the one thing that I really think is really great about our program is our instructor could step out and we have a rule where no one is speaking while somebody else is sharing their one good thing. So even if someone is your instructor is not there someone’s sharing the good thing somebody wants to comment on it. There’s always that sergeant or a commander or even one of the normal--- like cadets or members from the classroom. They’re like ‘well they’re sharing so could you please um wait to give your comment at the end?’ And then that it’s yes we’re very mature about everything. And I think we do a good job with some knowing how order looks like and knowing what is expected from us even when the instructor isn’t there like we have. Different level of trust in our in our classroom with our third students just because we’re held to a different standard than a normal class.

I was commander for a semester and Mr. I class I had my partner who was the other commander. So, there’s two commanders we were partners were always together side the same table and we worked together on solving problems getting everybody in charge and making sure everyone’s working efficiently making sure things are getting done and turned in. So we were we worked together a lot and.
everyone just like notices how much this classroom has like made them grow as a person. Made them grows like a speaker and a leader. And it’s just like really cool to recognize those things I like. Just like a short amount of time can change someone for so long or for like growing as a leader and like it’s just like cold like see that people like recognize that because like I recognize so many people in this class and people actually finding their true selves.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>RQ1D</th>
<th>Peer Mentoring</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Maybe you can help them switch it up and you know what works for you may or may not work for them but keep working with them so we do mentor each other we do help each other we push each other through someone struggling. We don’t quit on each other we’ve never quit on each other we’ve never walked away we’ve never said ‘you know I can’t teach this guy’. We’ve never done that we will spend days in and days out to figure out something that works. You know we’ll go. All of us will go all out of our way a lot of us will go home and do research and work outside of this. Just help the class. That’s also why we have a big group chat. You know one of them is having a problem. ‘Hey I’ll get back with you’. Most of the time they send it to your chat. It feels great. It’s like you know you have something you can rely on that you can trust that you know is going to get the job done that you know is going to help you. So it really reduces the stress and the worry and the anxiety that you have.

For example, one day I had something to do with band and I was not able to make it to our class or to our like tc[team captain]So then the next day my friend E_____ is a commander so read right at the beginning of class I asked her hey what did I miss. We went over to the board. The schedule was right there. She talked about each thing day that day they had just reviewed. They did learn a skill and she was able to show me that skill. I practiced that at home and I was good to go for when we knew we needed that. I had already and I knew what we had to do because we have to go on her go on her own and be responsible for what we miss and learn that the teacher he made it clear that he will not be reteaching anything just because that makes the classroom efficient. However, if something is unclear and to that like the class as a whole and we all ask him to go over something like let’s say we are about to have her post to us and he asked us Do you have any questions. We ask him questions. He goes over whenever we need. So, I think that’s very helpful because we don’t waste a lot of time going over thing after thing.

They still came to me for leadership and I think actually like made me feel more important I guess just because I’ve never really
asked for help I’ve never been really like the person to go to if you need to like advice.

relationships: [00:29:25] Sir. Help on like homeworking like and made me feel like I was doing something good in the classroom. And just like being able to see people’s growth and like their schoolwork and help them learn. I think that was one of the most valuable things that I’ve learned in this classroom.

I even like thought about like what if my instructors I went to my home school and like could change the minds of like people at my home school like before this class. I was brave enough or comfortable enough to confront people if I saw like something going on that shouldn’t have been going on. Like now I’ve got that self-confidence I’ve got that maturity where like if I see you doing something wrong I’m not afraid to address it because that potentially essentially like the others in harm’s way are like your own person in harm harm’s way.

Like the commanders can mentor the students like what I said mentoring them in the right direction of like man tying them and like their skills like a and like the right direction are like a good career choice a good career or a good future or even like people have mentored me and like my commanders my just like the commanders like other students without brass on their collar like Mr. I’s class for instance where do you like this math class on math problems like we were able to go up and they show each other like our ways of doing the math problems and like saying how the people’s thought process in mind and like the way they did the math problem like help mentored me and how to do my math problems.

I see mentorship as someone who is not necessarily above you but someone who understands something more than you do and they can help you understand that topic. So for us that mentorship is all the way down to what we call our learning partners. If we’re learning a tactic and you’re learning partner doesn’t understand it is the other learning partners job as a mentor or coach mentor to get them through that process.

RQ2A Connections but like when I’m here it’s like I’m with family I’m with the people I love.

I think a lot of regular schools don’t exactly care about your relationship with others So I mean there’s no negative relationships in that class.
I come from BC. I’m not I don’t really like BC so--- And like I know majority of the people at my school but I’ve never made like the connection I had in CJ in the small amount of time and I’ve been going to BC since kindergarten.

**RQ2B**

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<th>Spirit</th>
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I’m I remember like saying it to Mr. ___ last semester I was like I love class and I love this place because it makes me feel safe. I can I can say what I want and say what I feel. And I’m not going to get judged for it. I think that’s a really big thing. I’m like at my other school. Like I feel like the teachers like do not like care for me at all like they’re just like teaching the class to get me through the class and get me out of the class.

And I feel with our entire CJ program. Nothing can stand or nothing will bother us. Nothing will break us apart. Nothing will bring us down. We’ve got I feel that we’re strong together. Something is bothering one of us. It’s bothering all of us we’re all there for each other we’re a family. Sometimes being one person it’s happening to all of us. We’re there helping each other out there to help each other tips and each other the day.

But overall we definitely have love for each other.

I love these people so much . . . like me . . . everyone has a place. Everyone is accepted. Everybody has something that they do that others see and say you’re good at this. I like you for this. I don’t know. I just. Yeah. It’s a great we will miss it.

It’s like an uplifting spirit because I feel like it’s uplifting because I see these students everyday. And I know that capable of making the world a better place. So like it kind of like reassures me that they will do the right thing in the future. They cut they will make a difference in their community. And I think it’s just like the uplifting thought that they could potentially make our world a better place.

I never liked school. And this made me really like school and I just wish I there were times where I wish this was my home school and school was just like KCTC see just like two hours and I go back here.

I feel like if I was surrounded by this environment every day and every second I feel it would just make me better a better person in general.
| RQ2C | Trust | I feel like because we see that we’ve got closer I think it’s just like in one class like I don’t know a lot about other classes. But in my class is we’ve got to love one another and become closer and become great friends which is awesome because you don’t really get to build those kinds of relationships in other classes. I do feel a trust.

the bond that they had at the beginning of the line is I kind of set my mind at ease and I think it’s set up for success throughout the whole rest of the year because the whole classroom is based on like trusting your partner trusting the peers around you

I think my closest friends I’ve made in my entire life have came from this class------ just because one big thing is up the trusting like I homeschool. Sometimes I don’t have like the trust in people like here I can trust them and I know what their values and morals are in life because they aren’t afraid to share it with me and just knowing that they’ll have my back in any given situation. |
| RQ2D | Interdependence | But we had to work together and we had to communicate to get over that [the wall]. In regular schools no matter what the case is, there is not a huge----- it’s not a huge deal---- for you to communicate with someone to do something. You’re not working together to succeed or get a good grade. You are on your own. It’s completely yourself. [In CJ] you depend on everyone to get a grade. If you fail everyone fails. If you succeed everyone succeeds. I mean you’re only as strong as your weakest link so you are pushing everybody in the class because if you want to do good. Everybody else has to do it.

It’s everywhere. And kids are constantly helping others know think and do things like if you have any issues you go to everybody before you go to the teacher. It’s always we’re always here to help. Everyone’s always willing to help someone else.

guess we just . . . it’s weird but we know who’s good the class and we make it an advantage to us.

It’s not I’m succeeding it’s we’re all succeeding.. I want everybody tin my class to do good. I wish for all their success. [Home school] It’s more competition. I want to be the best and you can’t compete with me. Now, it’s "were the best"
| RQ2E | Belonging | This is definitely where I belong--- along with everybody else everybody else gets me through the day everybody else you know is there to support me every day. It respects everything I do all my decisions on what choices they respect respected all. Maybe some |
of them don’t agree with some of the things I want to do. Some things I have done. But they respect hey you know we reassure everybody yes. You belong here with us. You are part of the family. You are family. This is us and this is this is how we’re going to do things.

We do everything we can to make sure everyone feels comfortable in that every single part of their lives is known.

like somebody noticed. It makes me feel like I have a place. And I don’t see that anywhere else. There’s nobody who I don’t know their name know who they are. We spent the first two weeks learning names and we made sure that nobody was unseen.

AC Instructors

There is just a way that like you can say anything and still feel safe. The emotional safety is like words just I have never felt so safe in the classroom before. I think the biggest thing is the teachers showing that they care. They care deeply for each and every one of their students. They want the best for them and the emotional safety comes along with that.

I think that’s kind of the issue sometimes with other schools um . . . like people become teachers because like this . . . they like that subject and they like wanna teach people that subject but they don’t necessarily know that much about people or how to handle their people emotions.

Like I heard this quote the other day is like yesterday but I don’t remember who said it. Its um people don’t really care how much you know until they know how much you care. And I feel that that deep care that our teachers have for us. Um . . . and they want us to succeed. Yeah that they want us to succeed and I think that’s a really big part of it. Yeah they just are always articulating how much they care for us and like how they want us to succeed. And I think sometimes it just goes without saying. But other times it like I get something that needs to be articulated for you to actually understand that.

Like our instructors are kind of like the heart and soul of our program

So a lot of that and a lot of it I owe to the instructor instructors are the ones that made it---they complete the circle. They made the structure they ----and they put it all they put their own way in this
world. They put everything into it--- their heart, their soul, their compassion, all of it. I feel a lot of the programs here . . . I feel some of the instructors here--- you know like they’re good people. They just don’t know how to articulate that to their students. they don’t know how to bring them all together like the CJ instructors in our class does. The [other instructors]instructors . . . they can all do it [like CJ]. You just got to learn how.

Because how do you get people who don’t care about the class or what’s being taught or don’t care about the friends or anything like that. How do you get them engaged? Humor. Get them to learn who they are. Beginning of the year you learn what they like what they do and you take that and you apply it into every single thing you do because then it gets everybody’s attention . . .

It’s like they joke with them. And I think the humor makes people more comfortable. And once they’re comfortable, they make friends, and once they’re friends they become a family. And we think in the family they work perfect together. I mean honestly we have ups and downs but there’s not a day I don’t want to come to class. It gets me up in the morning. I mean just from the beginning of this year I have changed sooooooooo ssooooo much. It really.

Like I didn’t have a job. I didn’t work out. I didn’t really care about how hard I was working to get to college. I didn’t really care about grades. I didn’t really care about anything. And as soon as he [the instructor]put me . . . like he saw something in me and put me as the commander. And as soon as that happened ----I’m like, I worked my butt off for a lot of things and neeeeeeeever get recognized for it. It’s like finally -----someone did and put me in a spot where I can make a difference soon as I happened I was like -----I can make a difference -----I can help people. And he sees that and he sees something in people that other people don’t.

/ It’s kind of they just have coursework course work coursework and they just need to nail it into us. And for Mr. ____ and Mr. ____ I feel like instead of focusing on just the class work they focus on how to make us a better person and how to prepare us for the real life rather than just some AP test.

AC Family but like when I’m here it’s like I’m with family I’m with the people I love.

I just think it just feels more comfortable it feels like a family here it feels like ---communicating, talking to each other, getting to know one of one another. Building bonds ----building friendships-- for me, I will bond to people by like getting to know them and talking to them and like talking more than just like "hey how’s your day going" like getting to know them like deeply
| AC   | Relationships | I think that with this class we’ve gotten to know each other better. And like we’ve taken our relationships as friends--- like outside the classroom and like I’ve hung out with some of these people. And that’s like brought our relationship closer and like that’s kind of fun. |
| AC   | Emotional Safety | Yeah emotional safety. It’s actually really cool because like we weren’t like Mr.____ really big on emotional safety. He is like . . . He’s like yeah he’s a guy that you don’t want to mess around with emotional safety . . . it is a very supportive classroom. Like if you make a mistake they don’t judge you for it. They don’t harass you for it . . . [For example] Presentations, I beginning like setting what we’re like presentation the first semester. I was like super nervous and I didn’t like presentations at all. And I would get like super jittery and like nervous like that and I would pause--- like my face would get super red, and usually like classes at my old school--- like my home school. People make fun of me for that because I like why you like different things and like I’m sorry I don’t do all that presentations but they all make fun of me for that. And like here, they like they understand, like you’re like nervous, and they respect that you are nervous so they don’t like judge you for it. Like They will be really supported---like you’re doing that. I’ll give you like a 3 on hit is one of our routines. We appreciate someone, so we give them a three on hit. And yeah just like I said I’m more comfortable with these people than I do in my Regular school in my regular school--- like high school-- is very challenging like it’s stressful. There’s a lot of drama there and it’s just like annoying when people like . . . There’s not drama here. but, I don’t think I’ve seen one bully in this class That’s emotional safety where we respect the boundaries of each person and we do our best and we don’t go beyond those boundaries and push further than we should. |
| AC   | Respect | We were able were able to fix them and respect each other we are like get to that level of we’re going to overcome this not going to stay mad at you for the rest of the school year. And like sit away from you in the classroom and not talk to you because we can’t do that. We’re a team and we have to overcome whatever problems we have. We can’t just hide away from each other because everyone’s a team and everyone interacts. Forgiveness was achieved before something was even said . . . Oh there’s big incidents . . . that we’ve had a few dramas go down. Now we’ve had a few download go down and all it took was a few
words and it was **like nothing it never happened.** A lot of communication is that it affirms being valued again. I think a lot of the reason why conflict arises is that somebody feels like ‘‘you pushed me because I’m nothing to you’’. And the sense of reconciling with that person to make them feel like ‘‘hey I do like you are important to me’’. It’s just another thing we build in the class.

As I said everybody’s treated equally and nobody has a foot over the other one. I mean you think there’d be conflict with commanders or sergeants but there’s really not. We know the person deserves it. And it’s just the level of respect we have for each other. I don’t even know how to explain this. It’s just that we all have a role in the classroom and the instructors make sure that we all have a role. And everybody’s is important because of their role.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AC</th>
<th>Opinions</th>
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| I feel like our home school. Sometimes our opinions get like shoved under the rug like we can’t like share our opinions because we don’t want to be like because people probably judge our opinions out like our home schools like here. If you have an opinion you are like obligated to share it just because like your opinion is important.

I think I think has a big role in the community just because I feel like if we did like group sharing at my home school it wouldn’t be as valuable because most probably wouldn’t care they’d just like brush it off. They don’t see like the importance of people’s opinions. They’re just like worried about their own opinions like here. Your opinions is important because that’s what makes our classroom that’s what makes our. That’s what like that’s just that’s just like a big part of our that’s in my opinion that’s a big part of our the bond in our on our classroom.
## Appendix K: Instructor Interviews Quotes

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Meaning Unit quotes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1A</td>
<td>ExpEd</td>
<td>And I think that probably is the beauty of these activities is them seeing us actively involved. We’re not hands off---- even though S____ is leading and we’re very hands on giving specific instruction and watching and they routinely turn around they see G___ and I watching them. They know then that that’s a safe environment because they hear us make small corrections about a person’s words---- a person’s body language----- a person’s touch.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RQ1B</td>
<td>Capturing Kids’Hearts</td>
<td>students don’t care what you know until they know that you care.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RQ1C</td>
<td></td>
<td>And I see a student looking around to look and there are not a captain or sergeant like &quot;hey we need to line up for flag &quot; that’s indirect leadership. They are not a commander or sergeant The commanders and the squad sergeants should be saying the same line for flag. But another student did and then everyone just filed suit they all lined up. That’s the indirect leadership. We’ve done scenarios where I’ll suddenly sergeants and the captains are down they are out of commission. Now the team has to decide what do we do-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1D</td>
<td>Peer Mentoring</td>
<td>Our expertise is relationships we build relationships in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2A</td>
<td>Connections</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Trust</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Interconnectedness</td>
<td>Going I was like you know what we put people there because we feel they need to be there. Now it’s not it doesn’t mean that they have the natural ability and they don’t have the natural ability. What do you as a squad need to do to help them learn that natural ability.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Opinions</td>
<td>that it’s right or wrong it just is based on their life experiences ---who they are as an</td>
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individual. So, we give students permission number one to report out.

And number two we talk about the difference between opinions being somewhat like bellybuttons----everyone has one but they’re different doesn’t mean we are preparing the students who are listening to put on the backburner and their biases and just hear the opinion for what it is and then we talk about the opinions as being an opinion, we are not attacking people -----you’re not questioning or working through a person or working just through the opinion.

So, I think when we can separate those two then the person who shares the opinion doesn’t feel axed. We can talk about the opinion. But it doesn’t change my relationship with you that’s just that’s just your opinion. That’s big for a 16 17 and 18-year-old to wrap their brain around.

| So, we have discovered that we encourage good decision making like that it just happens over and over. Reinforce a lot. |
| You have to fail to succeed because sometimes when we fail we learn quicker. |
## Appendix L: Student Questionnaire Quotes

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Meaning Unit Quote (bold type said with emphasis)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1AExpEd</td>
<td></td>
<td>After we worked on the ropes course and did activities out in the woods, I felt closer with the other students, which is what the purpose if it was. We did various team-building activities, so that when we began learning, we were already familiar with each other and not afraid to depend on each other. The ropes course helped break the ice with the people in our class and helped start our teamwork earlier than it would have started on its own. I think the challenge course allowed us to build a stronger bond with people right away. Doing something like the challenge course allowed us to trust these strangers almost instantly. You had to trust them all or someone could have been injured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1BCapKHearts</td>
<td></td>
<td>It made each one of us responsible for our actions, and it made our classmates responsible for telling someone when they start ignoring the contract. It contributed to CJ because, you should take ownership and responsibility in your actions and just be truthful. made us all depend on each other more than our CTE instructors. the social contract it kept us on track to respect each other’s feelings and thoughts</td>
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<tr>
<td>RQ1CMilComStruc</td>
<td></td>
<td>During the first semester, I had no rank. During the second semester, I was a commander. I like having this structure because it allows the class to be more student-led. As a commander, my partner and I were able to lead in daily activities, be the OIC during flag ceremony, and other things. With this type of structure, if students have questions, they are able to go to their sergeant and then to their commander</td>
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before going to the teacher. I like this system because it allowed me to engage with my peers in a way that I might in, say, a police force. It gave the class a more rigid structure, and clearly defined where to go for questions. It also gave students responsibility for the success of their teammates. A command structure contributed to a classroom community because, it helped us have a stronger affirming voice and better communication.

| RQ1DPeerMent | I was a math mentor to another student in our classroom, which basically meant that I helped her to understand the different concepts of the math questions. Everyone was very helpful with helping anyone study for evaluations or posttests. There was a girl in this class who would always text me and ask me questions, if she had them, about the different material we were covering. I really appreciate that the students in here were so supportive of each other (for the most part), and it made the class more tight-knit as a team. The bonds between squad mates were pretty strong, but the strongest bond was between learning partners. You needed to trust and depend on your learning partner in order to succeed in the class, but everyone in the class trusted each other as well. |
| RQ2A | Connections | peer support when I didn’t understand anything I can always count on my class to help me out because we all want to succeed together were not all against each other or competing against each other we have to work as a team and trust your peers to have your back |
| RQ2B | Spirit | It was interesting to see the people who seemed like nerds to be friends with those who were more popular. Everyone seemed so close in friendship that you |
also couldn’t tell the Juniors and Seniors apart.
I am good with everyone
we formed a unit by just forming a bond
a strong bond which can’t be broken and
will be able to help us show trust and communication
The class is my family. I don’t make friends often so to have another
FAMILY means more to me than they’ll ever know.

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<tr>
<th>RQ2C</th>
<th>Trust</th>
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<td>trust looks like you can tell the class anything and will try out best to help you out or when we are doing building searches I know you have my back so that builds trust</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust is being able to help a person without judgement. Not being rude and gossiping if something happens. It’s being able to be there for our friends during their hard times and lifting them up.</td>
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<tr>
<th>RQ2D</th>
<th>Interdependence</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Depending on others is the main part of CJ. You need your peers to help you do everything.</td>
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<th>RQ2E</th>
<th>Belonging</th>
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<td>I think almost everybody in the CJ class makes people feel like they are wanted around. There’s a lot of diversity and even though each race likes to hang around their race that’s just how it’s become but I also see everyone joining in unity and getting outside their comfort zone to try and that’s what CJ has taught us Best.</td>
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<td>If you want to feel excepted in something being a CJ student is the way to go, I’ve never been in a class hat excepts you as much as the CJ class. we’ll all feel like we belong in that class.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wherever I go I am accepted, even in kids from other classes in CJ and also in other sessions no matter religion or popularity status. Being accepted based on popularity status in my actual school</td>
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</table>
doesn’t seem to show in the CJ classroom.  
The feeling of belonging is amazing.  
Everyone belongs. It’s a family. We are one team.  
Our classroom is very close. We included everyone. We always talk to each other every morning and try our best if someone is having a bad morning to include them in the conversation.  
Once again, we’re all friends and we do our best to include everyone at all times.
Appendix M: Interview Protocols

1. Interviews will be conducted in small quiet room

2. Students will be welcomed in and offered a water, snack. They will have the opportunity to decline the interview, at any point. The researcher will explain the procedure and how questions will be asked, recorded, and notes taken.

3. The researcher will have the list of research questions to be asked. Clarifying questions will be asked to further clarify any student responses.

4. Interviewer’s comments will be noted along with reflective thoughts

5. Thank student for participating in study
Appendix N: Statement of Original Work

The Concordia University Doctorate of Education Program is a collaborative community of scholar-practitioners, who seek to transform society by pursuing ethically-informed, rigorously-researched, inquiry-based projects that benefit professional, institutional, and local educational contexts. Each member of the community affirms throughout their program of study, adherence to the principles and standards outlined in the Concordia University Academic Integrity Policy. This policy states the following:

Statement of academic integrity.

As a member of the Concordia University community, I will neither engage in fraudulent or unauthorized behaviors in the presentation and completion of my work, nor will I provide unauthorized assistance to others.

Explanations:

What does “fraudulent” mean?

“Fraudulent” work is any material submitted for evaluation that is falsely or improperly presented as one’s own. This includes, but is not limited to texts, graphics and other multi-media files appropriated from any source, including another individual, that are intentionally presented as all or part of a candidate’s final work without full and complete documentation.

What is “unauthorized” assistance?

“Unauthorized assistance” refers to any support candidates solicit in the completion of their work, that has not been either explicitly specified as appropriate by the instructor, or any assistance that is understood in the class context as inappropriate. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized notes or another’s work during an online test
- Use of unauthorized notes or personal assistance in an online exam setting
- Inappropriate collaboration in preparation and/or completion of a project
- Unauthorized solicitation of professional resources for the completion of the work.
Statement of Original Work (Continued)

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of the Concordia University–Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.

2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources has been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources has been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association.

Laura J Robinson  
Digital Signature  
Laura J. Robinson  
Name (Typed)  
5/1/19  
Date