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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPALS’ SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT AND TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PRINCIPALS’ LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPALS’ SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT AND TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PRINCIPALS’ LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

by

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ABSTRACT

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPALS’ SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT AND TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PRINCIPALS’ LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS

By Javaid Siddiqi, Ph.D.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2012

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The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. This was determined by examining job satisfaction of principals and leadership style using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) and the School District’s Climate Survey.

The population for this study was teachers and principals in a large suburban school district in the Richmond, VA area. Participating schools were selected using a convenience sample based upon those in the school district’s annual school climate survey rotation. Of the district schools scheduled for the climate survey, only those that had their principal in place for a minimum of 1 year were chosen to participate. There were nine schools on the cycle for the 2011-2012 school year that met this criteria, yielding 9 principals and approximately 500 teachers.
Data were collected from 5 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, and 2 high schools. The principals were asked to complete the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire Sense of Achievement subscale survey. Teachers in the selected schools had recently participated in the School District’s Climate Survey. Data for this study came from the Leadership subscale of the survey.

Descriptive statistical analysis revealed that principals generally are satisfied with the sense of achievement they have in their jobs. Data suggest they are most satisfied with having the opportunity to do something worthwhile and less satisfied with seeing the results of their work. Descriptive statistical analysis revealed that teachers generally are satisfied with their principals’ leadership behaviors.

A Pearson correlation was run to determine the relationship between the mean scores of the principals’ sense of achievement and the teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. The data revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors and principals’ sense of achievement.

While no significant relationship between the two data sets was found, analysis supports the need for principals to be satisfied with their jobs in order to create the open climate necessary for teachers to cultivate a collaborative approach to their craft. Teachers in an open climate are more likely to cooperate and are more committed to their job and each other.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

School systems across the country are facing greater challenges every year. These challenges include such things as greater accountability with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, teacher shortages due to retirement, novice teachers leaving the profession within the first 5 years, and a need for qualified superintendent and principal leadership due to retirement and fewer candidates aspiring to take the role (Grayson & Alvarez, 2007; Wood, 2005; Xiaofu & Qiwen, 2007).

Since the beginning of the 21st century, several articles regarding educational leadership have suggested that the number of principals in this country will be significantly reduced within the next few years due to retirements from the current pool of principals (Connelly & Tirozzi, 2008). Adding to that is literature that suggests that many eligible educators are disinterested in the position because of the incentives for pursuing the job are outweighed by numerous disincentives (Howley, Andrianaivo, & Perry, 2005). Recruiting and retaining principals will be critical as the country places more demand for academic achievement on school leaders (Norton, 2003). With the demands of teaching, higher standards, closing the achievement gap, and greater diversity in our schools, how does one address these issues while creating and maintaining effective schools for our nation's children?

Principal leadership style and school climate are two constructs that have an impact on student achievement. Deal and Peterson (1999) found that school climate is greatly affected by
the leadership style of the building principal. Hannay and Ross (1997) believe that the direct involvement by principals is essential while others contend that instructional leadership has waned due to conceptual and practical limitations. Instructional leadership drifts to the background as principals dig out from under the paperwork and managerial tasks imposed by the focus on accountability. In a study by Mitchell and Castle (2005), principals expressed discomfort serving as instructional leaders because they had been out of the classroom for some time and they equated instructional leadership with curriculum expertise. That leads to the dynamic that exists between school principals and their teachers. The goal of this study was to determine the relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors.

**Background**

The school principal is one of the oldest positions in education. According to Goldman (1966), early public school principals were responsible for clerical and bookkeeping duties. Effectively managing the building used to be good enough. Principals mostly were expected to comply with district-level edicts, ordering supplies, balancing budgets, and creating and maintaining a safe school. These requirements are still expected, but now principals must regularly observe and evaluate teachers’ instructional practices. Principals are also expected to solicit and provide feedback on instructional best practices. Now more than ever, there is a greater complexity with principals using data to focus attention on improving curriculum or instructional approaches to maximize student achievement. All of this is to be managed while maintaining high visibility and creating a positive school culture (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000). The principal’s job is complex and demanding; however, thoughtful examination of the principalship and the variables that contribute to job satisfaction are
important because a job is not merely life sustaining, but positively life enhancing, and enriching (Darboe, 2003).

The principal is accepted as the educational leader of his/her school and community. The leader is accountable for the supervision of instruction as well as implementation of administrative functions (Hoerr, 2008). The secondary school principal is challenged by a frequently overwhelming multitude of responsibilities, stress, anxiety, and expectations (Balfanz, Legters, West, & Weber, 2007). The principal, as the educational administrator of the school, is expected to satisfy many tasks ranging from student discipline to addressing mandates of both the federal and state government. The principal is additionally positioned to set the climate and the pace of his/her institution, to assure that the school program runs securely, with ease, and professionally (Brazer & Keller, 2006). The assumption is that principals, as managers, have the aptitude to work successfully with people to guarantee their cooperation. The leaders are insistent in securing identification of the needs of their schools, and as such are excited as principals, accepting their responsibilities as those of a calling rather than as those of an occupation. Ultimately, the school leaders appear loyal to education, and especially competent to distinguish between long and short-term educational aims (Cohen & Pickeral, 2007).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. This was determined by examining job satisfaction of principals and leadership style using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) and the School District’s Climate Survey, respectively. Many studies have been conducted to examine leadership style and school climate, but there is limited research examining the relationship between the principals’ sense of achievement and their
teachers’ perceptions of their performance. The researcher hypothesized that the current study would find that principals with a high sense of achievement would have teachers in their schools that had positive perceptions of their leadership behaviors. In addition, it was predicted that the study would add research results for those who seek to prepare future principals, enter into educational leadership, and would support current principals in their positions.

**Brief Overview of the Literature**

Today’s principal faces the complex task of creating a school-wide vision, being an instructional leader, planning for effective professional development, guiding teachers, handling discipline, coordinating pupil transportation, and attending school events, co-curricular events, and athletic events (Goldberg, 2001). As a result of the many complex tasks, leaders of public educational programs are having difficulties filling the vacancies of the principalship. Erosion of authority to effect change, escalating expectations of accountability, a perceived lack of support, and a stressful political environment have caused high school principals to consider leaving the field (Adams, 1999).

**Job Satisfaction**

Schultz (1982) defines job satisfaction as “the psychological disposition of people toward their work—and this involves a collection of numerous attitudes or feelings” (p. 287). Thus, job satisfaction or dissatisfaction depends on many factors ranging from where employees have to eat their lunch to the sense of self-fulfillment they may receive from their job (Newby, 1999). Usually, job satisfaction involves a delineation of those factors that an employee perceives to foster either a positive attitude about work, or a negative attitude about work. Herzberg, Mausener, and Snyderman (1959) found that “job attitudes are a powerful force and are functionally related to the productivity, stability, and adjustment of the industrial working force
In addition, “the positive effects of high attitudes are more potent than the negative effects of low attitudes” (Herzberg et al., 1959, p. 96). Thus, a delineation of the factors that produce a positive attitude about work is important to the improvement of job performance.

Job satisfaction studies began to emerge in the United States in the early 1900s (Hoppock, 1977). Industrial psychologists conducted an array of studies on industry workers in an attempt to study employee behaviors at work and to determine the extent of job satisfaction. The findings produced data relevant to specific job factors and to the employee perceptions of these factors. Managers found these findings useful when dealing with motivation issues. While studies of industry workers provide meaningful data on job satisfaction, it is potentially misleading to generalize these data for all occupations (Hoppock, 1977). People differ in the extent to which they report job satisfaction; and the explanation for these differences lies in the nature of the jobs, which various employees perform. For this reason, researchers began investigating other occupations in order to bring more diverse findings to the literature.

Beginning in the mid-1960s and continuing into the end of the century, studies were being conducted on various positions in education. Job satisfaction of teachers (Sergiovanni, 1995), elementary school principals (Dupree, 1989; McQueen, 2007; Ward, 1977), secondary school principals (Newby, 1999; Stemple, 2004; Watson, 1991), and guidance counselors (Kirk, 1990) were some of the positions that were studied in the state of Virginia and other states across the country. Findings from the literature conclude that when results are compared across these various positions, there are similarities as well as differences in how people in the field of education perceive their jobs. Also, studies reveal that variables pertaining to school demographics and personal data (e.g., size of school, age, tenure, and gender) influence these perceptions (Barry, 2002; McQueen, 2007; Sodoma, 2006).
Sodoma (2006) and Stemple (2004) suggest that job satisfaction among high school principals can reduce turnover and increase aspirations of future school leaders. Job satisfaction is generally considered the one factor critical to those employed in any workforce, including principals. Principals typically work over 60 hours a week on administrative duties, not including student activities and special events. Moreover, principals spend a great deal of time attending to parent issues, community-related tasks, discipline, and facilities management (George, 2001).

**School Climate**

Teachers make up the largest percentage of staff within a school district. Further, they have the most contact with students and thus have immense power to influence school climate (MacNeil, Prater, & Busch, 2009). Halawah (2005) stated that principals are primary agents in creating healthy school climates that are conducive to student learning.

Hoy and Miskel (2005) described organizational climate as “the set of internal characteristics that distinguish one school from another and influence the behaviors of each school’s members” (p. 185). Early on, school climate was interpreted as open or closed (Halpin & Croft, 1963). Later, two additional descriptors for school climate were identified, engaged or disengaged (Hoy, Hoffman, Sabo, & Bliss, 1996). These terms are used to describe ways in which interactions among group members can influence the climate of the school.

An open school climate is defined as a school that is safe and orderly, students are enthusiastic and motivated to work hard, and student work is celebrated (Hoy & Tarter, 1992). The principal is supportive of teachers, does not burden them with busy work, and fosters teamwork (Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002). Further, teachers are respectful of each other and are committed to helping students succeed (Hoy, Hannum, & Tschannen-Moran, 1998). An
engaged climate describes a school in which the principal closely supervises teachers but does not provide them with a great deal of support (Hoy et al., 1996). Teachers in this climate still strive to work collaboratively and are committed to the students.

On the other hand, in a closed climate the principal is viewed as being rigid, controlling, and unsympathetic. The faculty is uncaring toward students and collaboration is not encouraged. The principal in a disengaged climate is supportive, but teachers do not work together and do little to help students reach their potential (Hoy et al., 1996).

**Leadership Style and School Climate**

A positive school climate rarely occurs by chance but is shaped, primarily, by the building principal. Over the past several decades, many researchers have identified a positive correlation between the principal's leadership style and school climate (Bailey, 1988; Chirichello, 1997; Hallinger & Murphy, 1987; Hawkins, 2002; Hoy & Miskel, 1991; Kelley, 1980; Lane, 1992; Rubio, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1995). For example, Bulach and Corvers (cited in Bulach, Boothe, & Pickett, 2006) investigated six Louisiana schools to examine the relationship between the principals’ leadership style and the school climate. All six participating schools had failed to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP). The two schools with the highest culture and climate scores had the highest leadership scores on the supervisory climate survey, whereas the two schools with the lowest culture and climate scores had the lowest leadership scores on the survey. Bulach and Corvers concluded there is a definite relationship between the culture and climate of a school and the way the principal interacts with the teachers. This conclusion reinforces the need to further study the relationship that exists between principals’ job satisfaction and teachers perceptions of their leadership.
The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their leadership behaviors. The specific questions that guided the research are below.

**Research Questions**

1. What is the general job satisfaction level of principals in a larger suburban school district as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) Sense of Achievement subscale?

2. What are teacher perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey?

3. What is the relationship between principals’ job satisfaction as measured by the MSQ Sense of Achievement subscale and teachers’ perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey?

**Design and Methods**

The researcher conducted a quantitative research study using a correlational design to examine the relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. Participating schools were selected based upon their place on the School District’s Climate Survey rotation. Of the district schools scheduled for the climate survey, only those that had their principal in place for a minimum of 1 year were chosen to participate.

Data were collected using two survey instruments. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was used to identify the principals’ sense of achievement, whereas the School District’s Climate Survey was used to identify teacher perceptions of leadership. The researcher used descriptive and correlational data analysis techniques to examine the findings.
Definition of Terms

*Job satisfaction.* The psychological disposition of people toward their work

*Leadership.* The set of behaviors defined by the School District’s Climate Survey.

*Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire.* The MSQ is a survey designed to measure an employee's satisfaction with his or her job. The MSQ provides more specific information on the aspects of a job that an individual finds rewarding.

*School climate.* The set of internal characteristics that distinguish one school from another and influence the behaviors of each school’s members.
CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The strategy used for searching the literature began with a broad search for critical, recent research and publications regarding job satisfaction of school principals and school climate using the EBSCO database with particular attention to Education Research Complete, ProQuest Central, and ProQuest Dissertations. Search terms included job satisfaction of school principals, theories of job satisfaction, and school climate. All of the terms yielded relevant results. The literature was further refined by looking for correlational studies involving school climate and leadership style. The reference lists of documents of most significance were then carefully reviewed. This led to further resources for exploration of this topic.

Job satisfaction is one of the most widely studied constructs in the social sciences (Dorman & Zapf, 2001). The study of job satisfaction has evolved significantly since its inception in the early part of the 20th century. Early studies in industry were performed under the premise that job satisfaction and worker production were related. In the world of satisfaction literature, the only area where researchers tend to find some level of agreement is the definition of job satisfaction.

According to researchers, job satisfaction is generally considered to be the overall feeling that a worker has about a job (Siegel & Lane, 1982; Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969; Spector, 1997). These feelings are based on the individual’s perceptions of the differences between what is expected as a fair return and what is actually experienced. Dawis and Lofquist (1984)
defined job satisfaction as “the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of the extent to which the work environment fulfills an individual’s requirement” (p. 47). Schultz (1982) defined job satisfaction as “the psychological disposition of people toward their work—and this involves a collection of numerous attitudes or feelings” (p. 287). With this in mind, theorists and practitioners seem to accept the assumption that nearly everybody seeks satisfaction in his or her job (Jepson, 2003).

**Theories of Job Satisfaction**

Maslow (1943), Herzberg (1968), and Vroom (1964) provided a foundation for the evolution of job satisfaction research. Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, and Weik (1970) divided the theories of job satisfaction into two groups: (a) content theories, which give an account of the factors that influence job satisfaction; and (b) process theories that try to give an account of the process by which variables such as expectations, needs, and values relate to the characteristics of the job to produce job satisfaction. Maslow’s (1943) needs hierarchy theory and Herzberg’s (1968) two-factor theory are examples of content theory. Equity, fulfillment, and Vroom’s (1964) expectancy theory are examples of process theory. These are discussed in greater detail below.

**Content Theories**

Content theories of motivation focus on the factors within the person that energize, direct, sustain, and stop behavior. Maslow (1954) explained job satisfaction as a hierarchy of needs. The lowest level needs are the physiological needs, and the highest level needs are the self-actualization needs. These needs are defined to mean the following:

- Physiological - the need for food, drink, shelter, and relief from pain.
- Safety and security - the need for freedom from threat, that is, the security from threatening events or surroundings.
- Belongingness, social, and love - the need for friendship, affiliation, interaction, and love.
- Esteem - the need for self-esteem and for esteem from others.
- Self-actualization - the need to fulfill oneself by making maximum use of abilities, skills, and potential.

Maslow’s (1943) theory assumes that a person attempts to satisfy the more basic needs before directing behavior toward satisfying upper level needs.

Herzberg used Maslow’s needs hierarchy to formulate the motivator/hygiene theory of motivation. In 1968, Herzberg wrote about two different needs of humans. The two factors are called the dissatisfiers-satisfiers.

First, there is a set of extrinsic conditions, the job context, which results in dissatisfaction among employees when conditions are not present. If these conditions are present, this does not necessarily motivate employees. These conditions are the dissatisfiers or hygiene factors, since they are needed to maintain at least a level of “no dissatisfaction.” They include: salary; job security; working conditions; status; company procedures; quality of technical supervision; quality of interpersonal relations among peers, with superiors, and with subordinates.

Second, a set of intrinsic conditions, the job content, when present in the job, build strong levels of motivation that can result in good job performance. If these conditions are not present, jobs do not prove highly satisfying. The factors in this set are called the satisfiers or motivators. They include: achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, the work itself, and the possibility of growth. Because of the complexity of Herzberg’s two-factor motivator-hygiene theory, he thought it prudent to describe the concept of the two distinct feelings of job
satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. Since separate factors need to be considered, depending on whether job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction is being examined, it follows that these two feelings are not opposite of each other. The opposite of job satisfaction is not job dissatisfaction but, rather, no job satisfaction; and similarly, the opposite of job dissatisfaction is not job satisfaction, but no job dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1968, p. 7).

Herzberg (1968) believed motivators are internally generated drives, not externally simulated incentives. It was determined that intrinsic factors or motivators influence job satisfaction and external factors or the hygienes contributed to overall job dissatisfaction of workers (Herzberg, Mausener, Patterson, & Capwell, 1957). When workers reported they felt good about their work, they usually described work-related incidents where their performance was successful, and the opportunity existed for professional growth.

On the other hand, workers described periods of job dissatisfaction based on the conditions that surrounded doing the job. The hygienes or context of the environment contribute to poor attitudes about the work, and ultimately poor performance from workers (Herzberg et al., 1957). Herzberg’s work demonstrates that achievement or quality performance is the most frequent factor leading to job satisfaction.

Herzberg’s two-factor theory was tested by Schmidt (1976), who conducted a study using 74 educational administrators in Chicago, IL. Schmidt collected data using a modification of Herzberg’s interview technique. Each principal was asked to think of an incident that made him feel exceptionally good or exceptionally bad about his job as an administrator. Participants were limited to four events: two positive and two negative. Schmidt found that achievement, recognition, and advancement were perceived to be major determinants of his subjects’ overall
satisfaction. Interpersonal relations with peers and supervisors were perceived to be major determinants of overall dissatisfaction.

**Process Theories**

The content theories focus mainly on the needs and incentives that cause behavior. They are concerned primarily with which specific things motivate people. Process theories of motivation are concerned with answering the questions of how individual behavior is energized, directed, maintained, and stopped. Equity theory, fulfillment theory, and Vroom’s expectancy theory are three examples of process theories and are described in greater detail below.

Equity theory originated around 1965, and was most heavily influenced by James Adams (Pinder, 1998). Equity theory is based upon three main assumptions. First, that people develop beliefs about what constitutes a fair and equitable return for their contributions to their jobs. Secondly, it assumes that people tend to compare what they perceive to be the exchange they have with their employers to that which they perceive coworkers have with their employers. Thirdly, it holds that when people believe that their own treatment is not equitable, relative to the exchange they perceive others to be making, they will be motivated to do something about the inequity (Pinder, 1998). Equity exists when employees perceive that the ratios of their inputs (efforts) to their outcomes (rewards) are equivalent to the ratios of other employees. Inequity exists when these ratios are not equivalent; an individual’s own ratio of inputs to outcomes could be greater than, or less than that of others.

Equity theory suggests a number of alternative ways to restore a feeling of equity. Some examples include changing inputs or working less time on the job, changing the reference person, or simply leaving the field due to frustration. One main criticism of equity theory is that issues of fairness and justice can be a matter of “in the eye of the beholder.”
Fulfillment theorists believe that people’s satisfaction is a function of how much of a reward or outcome they are receiving for their work. Satisfaction is directly linked to how much of a given outcome or group of outcomes a person receives (Lawler, 1994). However, the weakness of fulfillment theory studies has been the failure to take into account the individual-difference factors of a person. The individual-difference factor is the relationship between what people receive and what they feel they should receive. For example, a person who expects to be paid more for his or her work is more likely to be dissatisfied than someone who feels that he or she is paid adequately (Lawler, 1994). This theory is clearly evident in teacher salaries. Teachers who feel their salaries are below the state or regional level become dissatisfied with their employer.

Vroom (1964) defines motivation as a process governing choices among alternative forms of voluntary activity. In his view, most behaviors are considered to be under the voluntary control of the person and consequently are motivated. He declares that positive attitudes toward the job are conceptually equivalent to job satisfaction and negative attitudes toward the job are equivalent to job dissatisfaction. Expectancy refers to the individual’s belief regarding the likelihood or subjective probability that a particular behavior will be followed by a particular outcome. This means a perceived chance of something occurring because of the behavior.

**Variables of Job Satisfaction**

Little consistency is apparent in the findings of the research completed on principals’ job satisfaction and the relationship to specific variables. A variety of variables have been researched as to the affect on job satisfaction of the school principal. Some of these variables are also considered in the theoretical literature and are discussed below.
Age

Age is often considered a variable of job satisfaction within an organization because employees of any organization usually vary in age. Herzberg et al. (1957) stated, “The phenomenon of aging pervades all of human [researcher’s emphasis] activities. The role we play and the status we enjoy are often determined by age” (p. 5). Herzberg et al. (1957) considered the relationship between age and job satisfaction and found that job satisfaction for a younger worker started high at the beginning of the career, declined, and then started to rise again with increased age. A similar study conducted by Kacmar and Ferris (1989) supported these findings. In a job satisfaction study of educational administrators, Lim (1985) found that older, more experienced administrators were more satisfied than younger, less experienced school administrators. Similarly, Loscocco and Roschell (1991) asserted older workers were more involved in the job, more committed to work, and more satisfied. Gruenberg (1979) theorized that job satisfaction of older workers was influenced by adaptation to work conditions and higher job status or better positions. With attrition, older teachers were less likely to leave teaching than younger teachers; however, teachers age 51 or older were more likely to leave than teachers younger than age 50—most likely due to retirement (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Thus age, as an independent variable, is not consistent with being a determining factor of teachers’ level job satisfaction.

Gender

Gender has been a factor in many aspects of the human existence such as child rearing, voting rights, military participation, and in the workforce (Stemple, 2004). It appears to be the most frequently cited barrier to job satisfaction in the research literature (Hardman, 1996). Recently, technological and industrial change has played a major role in what kinds of jobs are
One view of job satisfaction holds that women are satisfied with jobs in which they can interact with others in a supportive and cooperative way (Newby, 1999). The basis for this view is that women are socialized into values, attitudes, and behaviors that are communal in nature, whereas men’s socialization reflects agentic values and behaviors. A communal orientation involves concern for others, selflessness, and a desire to be at one with others, whereas agentic orientation is manifested in self-assertion, self-expansion, and the urge to master (Eagly, 1987). Gender issues have recently come to the forefront of research due to the increased likelihood of females securing administrative positions in education. Eckman (2002) conducted a study that suggests that in order for schools to recruit and retain female principals, the schools must give consideration to the role conflict, role commitment, and job satisfaction of high school female principals. In Kan’s study (2007), career satisfaction, an overall sense of fulfillment in one’s career, was measured to determine work preferences by gender. The overall conclusion of this article was that the relationship between gender-role attitudes and women’s employment participation is endogenous, not exogenous. In other words, employment choices are not just influenced by gender-role preferences, but preferences are also affected by employment experience; this suggests an indirect link to the subjective evaluation of that experience (workplace satisfaction).

The consensus concerning gender differences in job satisfaction is that there is little practical significance between the two genders (Hulin & Smith, 1964). While most studies use gender as a predictor variable, they report little or no significance as related to job satisfaction (Newby, 1999).
Salary

According to Vroom (1995), people who work expect payment in return for services. Salary is often linked to one’s level of achievement and success. Hoppock (1977) suggested that a significant difference exists in the average salaries of the most satisfied and the least satisfied teachers. Teachers who earned higher salaries were more satisfied than those who had low-income earnings. Hoppock’s findings were supported by Porter and Lawler (1968). They concluded that job satisfaction reflects the rewards the employees get for the type of work they do. Barry (2002), in his study of Michigan high school principals, reported that among those principals studied, principals who were paid higher wages were more satisfied with their work. Sablatura (2002), who reinforced these findings in his study of the job satisfaction of urban, suburban, and rural principals, found that principals were not satisfied with their compensation, thus salary was determined to be a factor in job satisfaction.

School Size

School size refers to the number of students enrolled in the identified school. It is important to point out that with an increase in school size comes more extra and co-curricular activities and thus more supervisory responsibilities and more activities to monitor. In his dissertation, Armstrong (2001) hypothesized that as school size increases, levels of job satisfaction among principals decrease. He found that the principals of schools with student populations from 188 to 1,026 were the most satisfied with their jobs and the principals of the schools in the largest class size (1,027 and above), were the least satisfied.

Barry (2002) conducted a survey of 173 high school principals in Michigan during the 2001-2002 school year. He reported that principals in large high schools were more satisfied with promotion opportunities and more satisfied overall than principals in smaller high schools.
Another assumption surrounding school size is that school size affects the quality of interpersonal relationships one experiences in the school setting (Newby, 1999). Specifically, Barker (1986) summarized one of the advantages of small schools is that relationships among students, teachers, administrators, and school board members tend to be closer. Interpersonal relations were identified by Herzberg and the authors of the MSQ as being a measure of satisfaction; therefore, school size should be examined for its influence on the principal’s job satisfaction.

**Number of Assistant Principals**

There is limited research that supports the idea that principal job satisfaction can be attributed to the number of assistant principals at the school. Logic would tell us that the more help a principal has to run the building and to assist with the operation of the school, the more likely the principal will have a higher level of job satisfaction. Finley (1991), for instance, studied demographics and job satisfaction among 180 high school principals in Tennessee. Among other things, he found that principals with two or more assistants had higher levels of job satisfaction than principals who had zero or one assistant. In a study of principals in Virginia, two-thirds of the principals who responded to the survey reported that they had neither sufficient time or personnel to fulfill the mandated expectations of an instructional leader (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003).

**Years of Experience**

Years of experience, as it is commonly known, is an important topic to consider as far as the job satisfaction of the principal is concerned. Tenure has been judged a legal and defensible basis for distributing organizational rewards and making staffing decisions (Gordan & Johnson, 1982). Brady (2001) found in her study of California principals that the length of years in
current position related to principals’ perceived job performance and overall job satisfaction. Brady theorized that principals who stayed in their current positions the longest most likely stayed due to high job satisfaction and perceived job performance. Sodoma (2006) found a difference in years of experience and job satisfaction. The author stated that the highest level of job satisfaction was between 11 to 15 and 16 to 20 years of experience.

The Cytrynbaum and Crites (1989) model of job satisfaction and life stages found satisfaction to be highest at entry into the profession when initial expectations are high. Satisfaction drops sharply as early barriers are encountered; then satisfaction recovers strongly as confidence and success build. These authors concluded that in the final stage, satisfaction tapers off after one’s career becomes established.

**School Socioeconomic Status**

Socioeconomic status (SES) refers to the number of students receiving free and reduced price lunches. For the most part, studies of job satisfaction among principals avoid the variable of school location or school socioeconomic status. Instead, most studies choose to focus on issues like age and gender. However, in a study conducted by Derlin and Schneider (1994), they surveyed 326 urban and suburban principals to determine their level of job satisfaction. They found that job satisfaction for principals in a suburban setting was higher than their counterparts in an urban setting. According to Stemple (2004), as the level of students on free and reduced lunches increased, the level of job satisfaction decreased. However, Stemple did not find this to be statistically significant.

**Adequate Yearly Progress**

More than ever in the history of education, schools are being required to meet standards and levels of accountability for educating students. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
requires states to set annual objectives for increasing student achievement with the goal of ensuring that all children have an opportunity to obtain a high-quality education. Schools, school divisions, and states that meet these objectives make what the law refers to as adequate yearly progress (AYP). Principals are being asked to know the standards, align instructional programs, know the state assessments, and analyze and disaggregate data to ensure their schools meet the requirements of the state and federal government (Thomas, 2002).

In Virginia, the Virginia Standards of Learning tests have given rise to new stress on principals. Principals must not only lead professional development opportunities for teachers, but also ensure that their schools maintain test scores and make AYP (Ross, 2003). School principals today must be able to balance the individual requirements that each school presents. NCLB requires a constant collection of data that administrators must constantly observe and analyze with the ultimate goal of increasing the overall student outcomes (Clayton & Johnson, 2011).

**Level of Assignment**

Level of assignment refers to having an elementary or secondary school assignment as principal. Of all the variables of principal job satisfaction that have been studied, this one is the by far the least investigated factor. Now there is ample research around each level as it refers to the other factors. In her study of job satisfaction of elementary school principals in central Virginia, McQueen (2007) concluded that job satisfaction did not vary significantly by gender, age, salary, experience, number of assistant principals, school SES, school size, or accreditation status. This conclusion was not surprising as Stemple (2004) reported similar findings in his study of high school principals. Similar conclusions were also found for middle school principals in Indiana (Lehman, 1991) and Virginia (Newby, 1999).
Measurement of Job Satisfaction

Wanous and Lawler (1972) concluded there was not an identified best method for identifying job satisfaction. An extensive review of the literature indicated the Herzberg two-factor theory (Herzberg et al., 1959) as a prominent model for identifying the satisfiers or intrinsic factors and the dissatisfiers or extrinsic factors of the job. Friesen, Holdaway, and Rice (1983) conducted one of these studies in education using Herzberg’s theory. Friesen et al. (1983) surveyed 410 principals from Alberta, Canada through their research. The principals were given a questionnaire that asked them two main questions: (a) what two factors contribute most to your overall satisfaction with the principalship, and (b) which two factors contribute most to your overall dissatisfaction with the principalship? Friesen et al. (1983) reported that the major characteristics of satisfaction for the principals they studied were: (a) interpersonal relationships, (b) achievement, and (c) responsibility/job autonomy. They also reported that student attitudes and performance, job challenge, recognition and status, and job importance had secondary significance in terms of satisfaction. It was reported that relationships with parents, amount of work, and working conditions were characteristics of job dissatisfaction.

The Job Descriptive Index (JDI), developed by Smith et al. (1969), is the most used and researched measure of job satisfaction. The JDI measures five facets of job satisfaction using words or phrases to determine if the word or phrase matches the respondent’s assessment of the job satisfaction of that particular facet. The total score on the JDI is supposed to measure total job satisfaction; however, it is now hypothesized that total job satisfaction is more than the sum of facets satisfaction (Scarpello & Campbell, 1983).

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was developed by Weiss, Dawis, England, and Lofquist (1967) to measure an individual’s satisfaction with 20 different aspects of
the work environment and is the second most popular measure of job satisfaction. The MSQ is based on the following rationale: (a) employees have a set of expectations concerning their work environments, derived from their histories, individual abilities, and interests; (b) employees have a set of work attitudes that emerge from the fulfillment of these expectations; and (c) these attitudes make up employees’ evaluation of their work environment or job satisfaction.

The MSQ is available in both a long form and a short form. The long form measures 20 job facets using 100 items and the responses can be converted to a respondent’s satisfaction on each of the facets. The short form contains only 20 items and measures only intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. Both forms are able to report a measure of general job satisfaction. Table 1 shows a comparison of the facets that are measured on each of the three forms of measurement described above.

**Studies in Education Where the MSQ was Used**

Using the MSQ as her research instrument, Newby (1999) randomly selected 188 middle school principals in Virginia to answer the survey on job satisfaction. Newby reported that middle school principals in Virginia were generally satisfied with their jobs. She reported that the mean satisfaction score was 3.65 on a scale of 1.00 (not satisfied) to 5.00 (extremely satisfied). She also reported similar results for each of the 20 dimensions measured by the MSQ.

Kirk (1990) explored the job satisfaction of elementary school counselors in Virginia. The results of the study indicated that 82.04% of the population was satisfied with their jobs while 11.35% were very satisfied. Of the respondents, 6% and .37% rated themselves as dissatisfied and very dissatisfied, respectively. Kirk concluded that the majority of the school counselors in Virginia were satisfied with their jobs. Kirk further reported that the principals indicated that they were satisfied with all 20 subfactors measured on the MSQ.
### Table 1

*Comparative Job Facets*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herzberg 2-Factor Model</th>
<th>Facets</th>
<th>Job Descriptive Index</th>
<th>Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire</th>
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<td>Technical supervision</td>
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Lehman (1991) found the overall satisfaction level of middle school principals in Indiana to be high as measured by the MSQ. On a continuum of 0 to 100, these principals scored slightly over 70. Although this score was considered high, it was found to be lower in comparison to other white-collar workers found in the *Minnesota Satisfaction Manual* (Weiss et al., 1967).

Sutter (1994), using the MSQ, conducted a study of 632 secondary school assistant principals employed in Ohio during the 1993-1994 school year. Sutter found that assistant principals who believed they were accomplishing much on the job reported a higher level of satisfaction compared to assistant principals who believed they were accomplishing less. Sutter also found that assistant principals who believed there would be opportunities for advancement within their school system were found to have significantly higher levels \( (p = 0.01) \) of job satisfaction compared to those who did not believe that opportunities existed. Assistant principals who felt their talents and skills were being utilized on their jobs had a higher level of job satisfaction compared to the assistant principals who believed that their talents and skills were not utilized. Assistant principals who wanted to become school principals were found to have significantly higher levels of job satisfaction compared to assistant principals who wanted to remain assistant principals for the remainder of their careers.

Brogan (2003) studied the job satisfaction of high school principals in the state of Idaho. Descriptive profiles indicated a small level of gender difference in general job satisfaction among high school principals. Male principals were found marginally to have higher levels of general job satisfaction than female principals. Consequently, research has been completed on principals’ job satisfaction and the relationship to specific characteristics such as age, gender, salary, number of assistant principals, tenure, education, and school socioeconomic status (Stemple, 2004).
Chen (2000) conducted a study using the MSQ in which he studied 245 assistant principals in Mississippi to determine the degree of general, intrinsic, and extrinsic job satisfaction among high school assistant principals. His results showed a high degree of general, intrinsic, and extrinsic job satisfaction among the assistant principals. Compensation and workload were the only factors receiving a less than 50% satisfaction rating. Chen also reported no significant relationship in two specific variables examined in the study: (a) length of time worked as an assistant principal, and (b) school size in terms of student enrollment.

In 1990, Profitt conducted a study that tested the relationship between locus of control and job satisfaction of Appalachian principals of West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Profitt hypothesized that the Appalachian principals with predominantly internal loci of control would have significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than those principals with external loci of control. Profitt also hypothesized that these same principals with predominantly internal loci of control would have significantly higher levels of extrinsic job satisfaction than those same principals with external loci of control. Profitt found a statistically significant relationship between internal loci of control and intrinsic job satisfaction of Appalachian principals in the states of West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Profitt also reported that female principals of the Appalachian counties experienced significantly higher levels of intrinsic job satisfaction than their male colleagues. He also reported that those same principals who made in excess of $40,000 annually experienced a high level of extrinsic job satisfaction.

Smith (1976) studied job satisfaction of Connecticut public senior high school principals as related to school location and school size. Smith’s purpose for this study was to determine the level of job satisfaction among current Connecticut public senior high school principals, to
determine if job satisfaction of these principals differed according to location or size of school, and to ascertain if certain personal demographic variables could be used as predictors of principals’ job satisfaction. Using the MSQ along with a demographic data sheet, Smith surveyed 143 high school principals of which 93% responded. Smith (1976) found that Connecticut public school senior high school principals could be described as very satisfied with their jobs. Smith also reported that with regard to school size these same principals could be described as very satisfied with their overall job situations regardless of school size. Smith’s results showed that all groups of principals unanimously ranked social service, moral values, activity, and achievement at the high end of the satisfaction continuum.

School Climate

Leadership is extremely complex and often perceived to be the most vital component of an organization (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Another multifaceted concept is school climate. The concept of organizational climate was first identified in the late 1950s, as social scientists studied the differences in the quality of work environments (Hoy & Tarter, 1997). Halpin and Croft (1963), who are considered pioneers in school climate research, investigated the influence of a leader’s behavior on the organizational climate in elementary schools. They found that each school had characteristics and qualities that made it unique, distinguishing it from other schools. They maintained that each school had a different feel or personality and went on to describe school climate as the personality of the organization (Halpin, 1966). Soon after, researchers began to identify relationships between school climate and student achievement (Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer, & Wisenbaker, 1979). This led to additional research studies that attempted to identify variables having the most impact on student achievement.
Despite the many school climate studies, researchers have not been able to come to a consensus on its definition (Coral & Castle, 2005). Hoy and Hannum (1997) believed that the concept of school climate could be defined in a myriad of ways and is often merely a slogan. Researchers have agreed, however, that school climate is unique to each school and that it involves the quality and consistency of social interactions among the school’s members (Furlong et al., 2005).

Various definitions of school climate exist in the literature. Moos (1979) interprets climate as the social atmosphere or relationships among members of a learning community. According to Peterson and Skiba (2001), school climate is the feeling that students and staff have about the school environment over a period of time. Hoy and Miskel (2005) define school climate as the set of internal characteristics that distinguish one school from another and influence the behaviors of each school’s members. This definition encompasses the total environment of the organization (physical, social, and relational) and includes all members of the organization, not just the students and teachers. School climate is the end result once all the organizational members are working together toward a common goal or vision (Hoy & Miskel, 2005).

Halawah (2005) examined the relationship between effective communication of high school principals and school climate. Approximately 90 students from six high schools in the Abu Dhabi District of the United Arab Emirates completed a climate survey. Thirty-five teachers from each of the six schools completed a survey to measure the communication effectiveness of their principals. School climate was assessed by averaging student responses while principals’ communication effectiveness was determined by averaging teacher responses. Halawah found that positive school climate was related to good communication skills of the
principal. Principals in healthier schools were more sociable compared to principals in schools with closed climates that were not as sociable and open in their interactions.

While researchers struggle to find consensus around one definition for school climate, they have agreed that school climate consists of certain common elements. Poole (1985) developed the following list of elements that most researchers have agreed are common to school climate:

- Climate is a characteristic of the entire organization.
- Climate is based on collective perceptions of members.
- Climate evolves from routine behaviors that are important to the organization’s members.
- Climate influences members’ behaviors and attitudes.

Early on, school climate was defined as “open” or “closed” (Halpin & Croft, 1963). Later, two additional descriptors for school climate were identified: engaged or disengaged (Hoy et al., 1996). These terms are used to describe ways in which interactions among group members can influence the climate of the school.

The following definitions describe the four contrasting school climates possible:

Open climate - The distinctive characteristics of the open climate are cooperation, respect, and openness that exist within the faculty and between the faculty and principal. The principal listens and is receptive to teacher ideas, gives genuine and frequent praise, and respects the competence of faculty [high supportiveness]. Principals also give their teachers freedom to perform without close scrutiny [low directiveness] and provide facilitating leadership devoid of bureaucratic trivia (low restrictiveness). Likewise, the faculty supports open and professional behavior [high collegial relations] among teachers. Teachers know each other well and typically are close personal friends [high intimacy]. They cooperate and are committed to teaching and their job [low disengagement]. In brief, the behavior of both the principal and teachers is genuine and open. (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991, p. 39-41)

Engaged climate - The engaged climate is marked, on one hand, by ineffective attempts of the principal to lead, and on the other hand, by high professional performance of the
The principal is rigid and authoritarian [high directiveness] and respects neither the professional expertise nor personal needs of the faculty [low supportiveness]. In addition, the principal is seen as burdening faculty with unnecessary busy work [high restrictiveness]. Surprisingly, however, the teachers simply ignore the principal’s unsuccessful attempts to control, and conduct themselves as productive professionals. They respect and support each other, are proud of their school, and enjoy their work [high collegiality]. They not only respect each other’s professional competence but they like each other as friends [high intimacy]. The teachers come together as a cooperative unit engaged and committed to the teaching learning task [high engagement]. In brief, the teachers are productive in spite of weak principal leadership; the faculty is cohesively committed, supportive, and engaged (p. 39-41).

Disengaged climate - The disengaged climate stands in stark contrast to the engaged climate. The principal’s leadership behavior is strong, supportive, and concerned. The principal listens and is open to teachers’ views [high supportiveness]; gives teachers the freedom to act on the basis of their professional knowledge [low directiveness]; and relieves teachers of most of the burdens of paperwork and bureaucratic trivia [low restrictiveness]. Nevertheless, the faculty reacts badly; teachers are unwilling to accept responsibility. At best, the faculty simply ignores the initiatives of the principal; at worst, the faculty actively works to immobilize and sabotage the principal’s leadership attempts. Teachers not only dislike the principal but also do not especially like each other as friends [low intimacy] or respect each other as colleagues [low collegiality]. The faculty clearly is disengaged from their work. Although the principal is supportive, flexible, and non-controlling (i.e., open), the faculty is divisive, intolerant, and uncommitted (i.e., closed) (p. 39-41).

Closed climate - The closed climate is the antithesis to open. The principal and teachers simply go through the motions, with the principal stressing routine trivia and unnecessary busywork [high restrictiveness] and teachers responding minimally and exhibiting little commitment to the tasks at hand [high disengagement]. The principal’s leadership is seen as controlling and rigid [high directiveness] as well as unsympathetic and unresponsive [low supportiveness]. These misguided tactics are accompanied not only by frustration and apathy, but also by suspicion and a lack of respect of teachers for their colleagues as well as the administration [low intimacy and noncollegiality]. In sum, closed climates have principals who are non-supportive, inflexible, hindering, and controlling, and a faculty that is divisive, apathetic, intolerant, and disingenuous (p. 39-41).

Hoyle, English, and Steffy (1985) concluded that if a school does not have an open school climate it is almost impossible to obtain high student achievement. Therefore, if a principal wants to implement school reforms to improve student achievement, he or she must
identify the existing school climate. Doing so will help the principal pinpoint what needs to be targeted for change.

**School Culture**

Deal and Peterson (1999) noted that school climate and school culture are often used interchangeably; however, earlier research by Hoy et al. (1991) found key differences between the two concepts.

School climate refers to the physical and psychological characteristics of the school, which are more prone to change but necessary for teaching and learning to take place (Tableman & Herron, 2004). Some examples of school climate include the physical appearance of the school building, temperature inside the building, how teachers interact with each other and with students, and how safe people feel when they are on school grounds (Sweeney, 1992).

School culture, on the other hand, reflects the shared ideas—assumptions, values, and beliefs—that give an organization its identity and set the standard for expected behaviors (Tableman & Herron, 2004). School culture is evident in the way the district's buildings are maintained, the way administrators and staff interact, and the beliefs that are taken for granted by all employees. Sackney (1988) explained the differences between culture and climate. Culture deals with how the work of the organization gets done, whereas climate deals with the feeling or tone of the school. Changes to climate are considered more achievable than changes to culture because climate deals with the everyday, transactional-level interactions of people (Tableman & Herron, 2004).

**Leadership Style and School Climate**

The literature on school effectiveness frequently refers to the necessity for strong leadership from the principal. The principal has received particular interest in the literature of
educational administration and in the media. The basis for this awareness in the scholarly literature stems mainly from the concentrated attention from the perspective of educators in realizing enhanced understanding of the dynamics of school effectiveness. Additionally, the educational reform movement and the pursuit for conditions and causes on effective schools have encouraged broader public awareness in the principalship (Gewertz, 2007).

A positive school climate rarely occurs by chance but is shaped, primarily, by the building principal. Over the past several decades, many researchers have identified a positive correlation between the principal's leadership style and school climate (Bailey, 1988; Chirichello, 1997; Hallinger & Murphy, 1987; Hawkins, 2002; Hoy & Miskel, 1991; Kelley, 1980; Lane, 1992; Rubio 1999; Sergiovanni, 1995). For example, Bulach and Corvers (cited in Bulach et al., 2006) investigated six Louisiana schools to examine the relationship between the principals’ leadership style and the school climate. All six participating schools had failed to meet AYP. A Pearson correlation of +.984 was found between the overall school climate and the leadership style of the principal, indicating a strong, positive relationship. The two schools with the highest culture and climate scores had the highest leadership scores, whereas the two schools with the lowest culture and climate scores had the lowest leadership scores. Cheng (1991) also identified a strong relationship between leadership style and school climate in his study that examined 64 secondary schools in Hong Kong. In yet another study, Cey (1992) found a strong, positive relationship between leadership style and school climate in 20 secondary schools in Michigan.

Good quality rapport with the principal is identified as a way to motivate teachers to make the additional effort to react to principal leadership actions, but there is also the issue that people who are personally associated will frequently do something in order to satisfy a person for whom one feels a strong affection (Gewertz, 2007).
Brown and Wynn (2009) conducted a qualitative study of 12 principals attempting to identify common leadership practices used to retain teachers. They selected 12 schools (8 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, and 2 high schools) with low attrition and low transfer rates among beginning teachers. Using constant comparative analysis and coding, several common themes emerged: shared values, shared vision, an umbrella of support for the teachers, and building learning communities. The one common approach of the 12 principals was the use of the situational leadership practice. The analysis revealed lower attrition and transfer rates due to administrative support for teachers, less student discipline problems, and higher levels of faculty decision making, influence, and autonomy.

Denton’s (2009) qualitative study of leadership styles and practices influencing teacher satisfaction and retention found similar results when he interviewed 12 teachers, elementary through high school, in South Carolina. His study focused on teacher perceptions of principal leadership styles, and what principals could do to improve teacher job satisfaction and retention. Seven themes emerged from Denton’s study. He found that principals should:

1. Encourage positive and respectful relationships between teachers and students.
2. Treat teachers as professionals.
3. Offer opportunities for professional growth.
4. Provide positive feedback.
5. Be accessible and listen to teachers.
7. Support teacher efforts.

Denton (2009) found the primary link to be between teachers’ job satisfaction and teachers’ relationship to their students. To create an atmosphere that fosters job satisfaction,
principals must create a safe and secure school and encourage positive and respectful teacher-student relationships.

The 28th Annual Metlife Survey of the American Teacher, released in March 2012, revealed that teacher job satisfaction is at the lowest it has been in more than two decades (Markow & Pieters, 2012). The last time teacher job satisfaction dropped this low was in 1989. In fact, teacher job satisfaction has dropped 15 percentage points in the past 2 years. The survey reported 90% of teachers with high job satisfaction rated their principals as excellent or good (Markow & Pieters, 2012). Low morale has a detrimental effect on a teacher’s professional skills, is associated with increases in teacher burnout, and increases the rate exodus of qualified teachers from the classroom (Margolis & Nagel, 2006). The key factors for their departures were dissatisfaction with administration and lack of opportunity for professional growth (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2004).

Teachers' perception of the efficacy of the principal leadership in changing school climate is often based on personal reasons. A teacher perception of leaders is possibly cultivated by inferences. This inferential processing is reliant on the chance of teachers to observe occurrences where the leader is included, assess the product of the actions, and formulate conclusions about the involvement of the leader to those events. Perceptions of someone as a leader comes from the subordinate's opinion that events have advantageous results, and the leader is influential in bringing about those outcomes (Barnett & Fallon, 2007).

On the other hand, several researchers have found no relationship between school climate and leadership style (Anderson, 1993; Dickson, 1991; Hardin, 1995; Nichols, 1991). For instance, Wiggins (1969) surveyed teachers and principals in 35 urban California elementary
schools and found no significant relationship between leader behaviors and school climate. School climate did not change even when certain school principals were removed and replaced.

Ballard (2008) conducted a study in which 96 participants completed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X) to identify principal leadership style in order to correlate to the school climate survey. After analyzing the data, the researcher concluded there was no statistically significant correlation between a principal's leadership style and school climate. In addition, Bulach, Lunenburg, and McCallon (1995) examined the influence of the principal's leadership style on school climate and found no significant difference in perceptions of school climate related to leadership style.

Identifying approaches to effective leadership has been the subject of a plethora of research studies. A 6-year study commissioned by the Wallace Foundation (Seashore-Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010) summed up the prevailing literature concerning the effects of principal leadership style on educational environment. They studied 180 schools in 43 school districts in 9 states and found that successful schools have principals who engage in collegial collaboration, data-based decision making, and some degree of shared leadership. What tends to be absent from the research are the specific actions or behaviors that the principal uses to engage teachers and students in the learning environment (Haynes, 2011). According to Deal and Peterson (2009), the most significant role of school principals was the creation of the symbolic activities that conferred meaning within the school culture.

Principals must fully understand curriculum, instruction, vision, and organizational change in order to create a positive school culture. The characteristics of school culture are complex, and a leader must understand these complex variables before they create change within the school (MacNeil et al., 2009). Engels, Hotton, Devos, Bouckenooghe, and Aelterman (2008)
conducted a study that explored different values that affect school culture through principal leadership. These include goal orientation, participant decision making, attitude towards change, engagement of leadership, and formal and informal teacher cooperation. The study concluded that schools that had leadership fostered a vision, exhibited effective communication, provided a supportive collaborative teacher initiative, and fostered high levels of school culture (Engels et al., 2008).

A positive school culture will increase the level of teacher engagement, and this can have a direct effect on student achievement (MacNeil et al., 2009). There are many different areas of the educational process that affect school culture. The principal essentially plays an important role in choosing the leadership style and practices that will dictate the level of teacher engagement and student achievement within the school building and these elements will be linked to the level of school culture (Engels et al., 2008).

A case study by Kellner (2008) examined the culture of an effective elementary school in the midwestern United States focusing on five aspects of school culture: leadership, vision, shared decision making, collaboration, and caring and respect. The interview data revealed that the shared vision by principal and staff to have “all students succeed” was critical to success (p. 117). Leadership was found to be the key factor in shaping this culture.

The principal’s leadership within the school setting has significant effect on school culture and student effectiveness (Halawah, 2005). Halawah (2005) and MacNeil et al. (2009) suggested a relationship between school culture, principal leadership characteristics, and student achievement. A positive connection to the school community tends to create more effective principals and teachers while also supporting student achievement (Halawah, 2005). Conversely, schools with poor community connections tend to have ineffective leaders, dissatisfied teachers,
and students that are not motivated to achieve academically (MacNeil et al., 2009). Effective principal leadership appears to support a positive culture, which in turn appears to lead to effective teachers and students that are more successful. Schools with strong established cultures and connections to the community may have better motivated teachers, and these teachers may have greater success motivating and producing student academic achievement (MacNeil et al., 2009).

The review of research suggests that teachers’ perceptions of their work environment and principals’ perceptions of their work environment are in part contingent upon their perceptions of each other. There has been no evidence in the research attesting to the relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their leadership behaviors. By understanding how a principal’s sense of achievement can affect school climate, the principal can lead his or her school into becoming more effective. My belief is that this research will shine a light on the importance of principals’ satisfaction with their achievement as it relates to teachers’ perceptions of their leadership, ultimately impacting student achievement.
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. This was determined by examining job satisfaction of principals and leadership style using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) and the School District’s Climate Survey, respectively. This chapter will begin by restating the research questions for the study. Chapter 3 also includes pertinent information regarding population and sample, instrumentation, and procedures for data collection and analysis.

Research Questions

1. What is the general job satisfaction level of principals in a large suburban school district as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) Sense of Achievement subscale?

2. What are teacher perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey?

3. What is the relationship between principals’ job satisfaction as measured by the MSQ Sense of Achievement subscale and teachers’ perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey?

The researcher predicted that results of this study would identify a positive relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their leadership behaviors.
That is to say, principals who hold high sense of achievement would have teachers that have praise for their leadership behaviors.

**Research Design**

A quantitative study was preferred for several reasons. First, the instruments that were used to measure sense of achievement and teacher perceptions of leadership were readily available and had already been tested for validity and reliability. Secondly, identifying correlations between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors could be accomplished through statistical analysis, a quantitative method. Third, the researcher was able to remain objective regarding findings given feelings, opinions, and biases would not come into play while analyzing results.

This quantitative study used two separate surveys. The first was a 5-question, web-based survey administered to selected principals through a web-based survey tool. According to Stemple (2004), respondents’ delivery and response time is decreased when using web-based research. In addition, data were more accurate because human coding was not an issue. The second survey had been administered by the participating school district to all teachers in schools in the 2011-2012 school improvement plan cycle.

A correlational study was used to identify possible relationships between variables or to predict an outcome (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 2000). The Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to describe the relationship between at least two continuous variables. The value for a correlation coefficient may range from -1.00 (perfect negative correlation) to 1.00 (perfect positive correlation). Other factors such as group size determine if the correlation is significant.
Population

The population for this study was teachers and principals in a large suburban school district in the Richmond, VA area. The district is educating more than 58,000 students in 62 schools. Currently there are 38 elementary schools (grades K-5), 12 middle schools (grades 6-8), 11 high schools (grades 9-12), and 1 technical center. Participating schools were selected using a convenience sample based upon those in the school district’s annual school climate survey rotation. Of the district schools scheduled for the climate survey, only those that had their principal in place for a minimum of 1 year were chosen to participate. There were nine schools on the cycle for the 2011-2012 school year that met this criteria, yielding 9 principals and approximately 500 teachers.

Instrumentation

Two instruments were utilized in this study. The first instrument was a web-based survey directed toward the participating school principals. The 5-question survey was taken from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) long form. Permission to use the MSQ survey was obtained from Pat Hanson with the University of Minnesota School of Psychology. The second instrument was the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey, which had already been administered. Permission was obtained from the participating school district to access the school climate survey data.

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

The MSQ survey was used to obtain data from the principals who participated in this study. Specifically, a modified version of the long form of the MSQ (1977 revision) was utilized.
The MSQ is a classic research tool in job satisfaction research and has been used in many research studies (McQueen, 2007; Newby, 1999; Smith, 1976; Sutter, 1994). The Work Adjustment Project of the Industrial Relations Center at the University of Minnesota developed the MSQ. Weiss et al. (1967) based the MSQ on the theory of work job satisfaction adjustment that began in 1957, and was first published in 1964. The tool was revised in 1968 with David Weiss and then revised again in 1969 and 1977.

The studies that began in 1957 had two objectives: the development of diagnostic tools for assessing the work adjustment potential of applicants for vocational rehabilitation, and the evaluation of work adjustment outcomes (Weiss et al., 1967). The authors utilized the original instrument to collect normative data for 21 MSQ scales for 25 occupations including bookkeepers, laborers, typists, engineers, managers, and teachers (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984).

The MSQ is designed to measure a level of 20 needs dimensions. The instrument contains 100 items with 5 items comprising each of 20 different subscales and is self-administered in 15 to 20 minutes. The MSQ scales, which represent the 20 dimensions of the job, are described below (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984):

- Ability utilization - the chance to do something that makes use of abilities.
- Achievement - the feeling of accomplishment one gets from the job.
- Activity - being able to keep busy all the time.
- Advancement - the chances for advancement on this job.
- Authority - the chance to tell other people what to do.
- Company policies and procedures - the way company policies are implemented.
- Compensation - feelings about pay in contrast to the amount of work completed.
- Coworkers - how one gets along with coworkers.
• Creativity - the opportunity to try one’s own methods.
• Independence - the opportunity to work autonomously.
• Moral values - the opportunity to do things that do not run counter to one’s beliefs.
• Recognition - being recognized for a job well done.
• Responsibility - the freedom to implement one’s judgment.
• Security - the way a job provides for steady employment.
• Social service - being able to do things in a service to others.
• Social status - having respect for the community.
• Supervision - the relationship between supervisors and employees.
• Supervision-technical - the technical quality of supervision.
• Variety - the opportunity to do different things.
• Working conditions - physical aspects of one’s place of employment.

Only one component of the MSQ was used for this study. Specifically, the items of the MSQ survey used focused on principals’ sense of achievement. These specific items are located in the Appendix A. The survey design required principals to use a 5-point Likert Scale to record responses. These are described in Table 2. A total satisfaction score for sense of achievement was computed using this instrument (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984).

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Scale option</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Slightly satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Extremely satisfied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School District’s Climate Survey

The School District’s Climate Survey was used to obtain data for the teachers participating in this study. The climate survey measured teachers’ perceptions in the following areas: curriculum expectations, instruction, leadership, challenging goals and feedback, assessment, collegiality and professionalism, student motivation, learned intelligence and background knowledge, safe and orderly environment, and parent and community involvement.

Only one component of the climate survey was used for this study. Specifically, the questions of the climate survey that focused on leadership. These specific items are located in the Appendix B. The survey design required teachers to use a 5-point Likert Scale to record responses. These are described in Table 3. A total leadership score for teachers was computed using this instrument.

Table 3

*Likert Scale for School District Climate Survey*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Scale option</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No opinion/does not apply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Seldom or never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Always or almost always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reliability

Reliability is the measure to determine that if the same MSQ is applied to the same individual in the same manner, then it should yield the same value from moment to moment, provided nothing has changed in the meantime (Guilford & Fruchter, 1978). The MSQ has undergone extensive analysis and has been found to be a reliable measure of general satisfaction (Weiss et al., 1967). Two measures of reliability were used: internal consistency and stability.
Internal consistency was measured by using Hoyt’s method of analysis of variance, which showed a reliability coefficient for 83% of the groups at .80 or larger and only 2.5% lower than .70. These data suggested that the MSQ scales have internal consistency reliability (Weiss et al. 1967).

The School District’s Climate Survey has been used by the entire district and was created by the school district’s office of accountability. The survey tool has experienced several iterations for purpose and clarity. According to the district’s manager for school improvement, there has been no formal reliability study administered for the school system climate survey, however, the school district continues to use this tool due to the consistent findings provided.

Validity

Evidence for the validity of the MSQ is derived mainly from its performance according to expectations, or its construct validity. Construct validity is the extent to which an instrument can be shown to measure the construct being studied (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). Evidence of concurrent validity of the MSQ was collected from 25 occupational groups (n = 2,955). The analysis revealed group differences were statistically significant at .001 levels for both means and variances on all 20 dimensions of the MSQ (Weiss et al., 1967).

The School District’s Climate Survey has been used by the entire district to obtain data from students, parents, teachers, and administrators and was created by the school district’s office of accountability. The tool has face validity given the large number of individuals who have used the survey over several years (K. Hughes, personal communication, May 30, 2012).
Procedures

After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board, the publisher of the MSQ was contacted in order to purchase the appropriate number of surveys. The author for the MSQ survey granted permission to modify the survey to meet the needs of this study.

Permission was granted to analyze the climate survey data collected by the district in November, 2011. The school district’s office of accountability was contacted to request the data from the teachers in the participating schools. A current list of schools in the local school district that are on the climate survey cycle were obtained. This list determined the participants of this research project.

Each qualifying school principal was sent an email requesting his or her voluntary participation in the study. Specifically, the principals were informed that they were being asked to complete a 5-question sense of achievement survey. The email provided each participant with a code to ensure confidentiality (see Appendix C). A follow-up email along with a telephone call was made to principals that did not complete the survey in a timely fashion.

The MSQ survey data was inputted into a Microsoft Excel file. The climate survey data were delivered in a Microsoft Excel format via the school district’s office of accountability. Both data sets were saved on a password-protected drive.

Method of Analysis

For each of the research questions, there was a method of analysis. The following paragraphs state the research questions, along with the method of measurement and the method of analysis.
1. What is the general job satisfaction level of principals in a larger suburban school district as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) Sense of Achievement subscale?

To answer the first research question, a table was developed by displaying mean, standard deviation, and a frequency distribution of responses to questions shown as percentages for the five specific items on the MSQ. Each respondent had five options in which to choose as a response to the items on the MSQ. These five items were analyzed using the 5-point Likert Scale. The five options and the values were 1 (not satisfied), 2 (slightly satisfied), 3 (satisfied), 4 (very satisfied), and 5 (extremely satisfied). Given the 5-point scale, a mean general achievement score for principals fell in the range of 5 to 25.

2. What are teachers’ perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey?

To answer the second research question, a table was developed displaying the mean, standard deviation, and a mean score reported question by question for the 11 specific items on the School District’s Climate Survey. A second table was developed to display a mean score on a question-by-question basis. These 11 items were analyzed using the 5-point Likert Scale. Each respondent had five options from which to choose a response to the items on climate survey. The five options and the values are: 1 (no opinion/does not apply), 2 (seldom or never), 3 (sometimes), 4 (often), 5 (always or almost always). Given the 5-point scale, a mean leadership score of the teachers’ principals will fall in the range of 11 to 55.

3. What is the relationship between principals’ job satisfaction as measured by the MSQ Sense of Achievement subscale and teachers’ perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey?
To answer the third research question, a Pearson correlation was run to determine the relationship between the mean scores of the principals’ sense of achievement and the teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. The methods are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4

The Relationship Between Research Questions and the Corresponding Statistical Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is the general job satisfaction level of principals in a larger suburban school district as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) Sense of Achievement subscale?</td>
<td>Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire - Principals in participating schools will complete this 5-question Sense of Achievement subscale of MSQ. Descriptive statistics-mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution of responses to questions shown as percentages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What are teacher perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District Climate Survey?</td>
<td>School District Climate Survey - Researcher accessed data previously collected by school district and only analyzed the Leadership Behavior section of the survey. Descriptive statistics-mean, standard deviation, and a mean score reported question by question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What is the relationship between principals' job satisfaction as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire Sense of Achievement subscale and teachers' perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District Climate Survey?</td>
<td>Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and School District Climate Survey. Pearson correlation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Delimitation**

This study will be limited to large suburban school districts.
Institutional Review Board

The Institutional Review Board at Virginia Commonwealth University is responsible for reviewing all research involving human subjects to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations. The IRB must review and approve all activities that meet the definitions of human subject research before work can begin. For the purposes of this survey research, a review from the IRB at VCU was sought and granted by the IRB review panel (see Appendix D).
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

The purpose of the current study was to examine the relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. Two sets of data were collected. The first set of data consisted of information regarding the sense of achievement for the building principal for each participating school. The data were collected using the Sense of Achievement subscale of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). The second set of data consisted of teachers’ perceptions of their building principals’ leadership behaviors. The data were collected from the participating teachers using the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey.

Data Collection

Data were collected from 5 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, and 2 high schools. Only schools whose principals had been in their current positions for 1 year were invited to participate in the study. The 1-year stipulation was imposed because it was reasonable to assume that if the building administrator had been working within a particular building for at least 1 year, teachers would have established their perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors.

After approval was granted from the Institutional Review Board, the nine school principals that were identified in this study were sent an email invitation to participate in an online survey. The principals were asked to complete a portion of the MSQ via a web link embedded in an email invitation. A reminder email was sent to 2 of the 9 principals after
1 week. The researcher secured 100% response rate after the email reminder went out. Survey responses for each participating principal were coded and entered into SPSS (SPSS Inc., 2007) so that the data could be analyzed.

Teachers in the selected schools had recently participated in the school district’s climate survey. This secondary data set were housed in the school district’s office of accountability. The researcher was granted permission from the district’s superintendent to access the teacher responses from the leadership behavior subsection. Survey responses for each teacher were coded and entered into SPSS (SPSS Inc., 2007) so that the data could be analyzed.

**Analyses and Findings**

This section contains the research questions that guided this study. Each question is followed by a description of the analysis used and then a review of the findings for each question is presented.

**Question 1**

What is the general job satisfaction level of principals in a large suburban school district as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) Sense of Achievement subscale?

The Achievement subscale is comprised of five questions taken from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. Table 5 depicts the mean and standard deviation for the Achievement subscale. It also depicts a question-by-question level of satisfaction by percentages.

The possible range of scores for this survey falls between 1 and 5. The mean scores reported in Table 5 were calculated for each respondent by summing the ratings for all five questions and dividing by the number of questions. The overall mean was 3.8
Table 5

*Job Satisfaction as Measured by MSQ Sense of Achievement Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSQ items/valid percent</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Extremely satisfied %</th>
<th>Very satisfied %</th>
<th>Satisfied %</th>
<th>Slightly satisfied %</th>
<th>Not satisfied %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being able to see the results of the work I do.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to take pride in a job well done.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to do something worthwhile.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chance to do my best at all times.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
based on the Likert Scale of 1 to 5, and standard deviation for the achievement subscale was 0.38. This suggests that respondents generally are satisfied with their level of achievement in their jobs. The highest mean score reported was 4.8 and the lowest mean score reported was 2.6. While principals are generally satisfied with their jobs, this suggests there are varying levels of satisfaction with the participating principals.

The percentages were determined based on the number of principals that reported in each of the five options of the Likert Scale. With the exception of “feeling of accomplishment I get from the job,” nearly 89% of principals expressed at least a level of satisfied with aspects of sense of achievement. Again, data suggest that principals are generally satisfied with their sense of achievement.

About 22% of principals reported being slightly satisfied with the feeling of accomplishment they get from the job. While there may not be a statistically significant difference between the reported percentages of these two items, the fact that nine principals comprise the entire population of the study suggests that there are differences in the level of satisfaction between these two items.

Being able to do something worthwhile had the highest mean score and the highest percentages of principals reporting at the very satisfied and extremely satisfied levels. In fact, 100% of principals reported being satisfied to extremely satisfied with being able to do something worthwhile. Data suggest that being able to do something worthwhile gives principals the most sense of achievement.

**Question 2**

What are teacher perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey?
The Leadership subscale is comprised of 11 questions taken from the School District’s School Climate Survey. Teachers are able to respond no opinion, seldom or never, sometimes, often, or always or almost always. Respondents would score 1 for no opinion through 5 for always or almost always. The means were calculated by aggregating all teacher responses in each participating school for all 11 questions and dividing by the number of questions. Table 6 depicts the mean and standard deviation for the teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>47.91</td>
<td>10.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>41.58</td>
<td>8.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>41.00</td>
<td>6.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>43.06</td>
<td>5.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>37.91</td>
<td>7.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>44.10</td>
<td>6.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>41.14</td>
<td>9.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>41.61</td>
<td>7.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>41.49</td>
<td>6.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>42.28</td>
<td>7.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The possible range of scores for this survey falls between 11 and 55. The overall mean was 42.28 and standard deviation for the Leadership subscale was 7.96. This indicates that
respondents have a positive perception of their principals’ leadership behaviors. The range of mean scores was from 37.91 to 47.91.

Table 7 displays the mean score for teachers question by question and provides an aggregate mean score for all teachers in each participating school. This table allows the researcher to take a closer look at the teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. Teachers responded favorably to those behaviors that deal with communication with staff and parents. Teachers reported mixed views on their involvement with making decisions that impact the entire school community.

**Question 3**

What is the relationship between principals’ job satisfaction as measured by the MSQ Sense of Achievement subscale and teachers’ perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey?

To answer the third research question, a Pearson correlation was run using SPSS to determine the relationship between the mean scores of the principals’ sense of achievement and the teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. The Pearson's correlation coefficient is used to describe the relationship between at least two continuous variables. The values for a Pearson’s correlation coefficient range from -1.00 (perfect negative correlation) to 1.00 (perfect positive correlation).

The relationship between the mean principal score and the mean teacher score was not significant (r = -0.041; p < 0.05). The scatter plot seen in Figure 1 depicts the lack of relationship between the mean principal sense of achievement score and the mean score for teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors.
Table 7

*Teachers' Perceptions of Their Principals' Leadership Behaviors as Measured by the School District's Climate Survey*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>School 1 (n = 31)</th>
<th>School 2 (n = 51)</th>
<th>School 3 (n = 47)</th>
<th>School 4 (n = 33)</th>
<th>School 5 (n = 22)</th>
<th>School 6 (n = 92)</th>
<th>School 7 (n = 85)</th>
<th>School 8 (n = 70)</th>
<th>School 9 (n = 47)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Students consider diverse views in classroom activities.</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Climate is conducive to learning.</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Effective communication among teachers.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.70</td>
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<td>4. Goals used for future planning.</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
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<td>5. All views considered by administrators in decision making.</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Diverse groups included in decision making.</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Teachers involved in school improvement efforts</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Minority students treated well by other students.</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Thorough and timely communication from administrators.</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.90</td>
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</table>
Table 7 – continued

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>School 1 (n = 31)</th>
<th>School 2 (n = 51)</th>
<th>School 3 (n = 47)</th>
<th>School 4 (n = 33)</th>
<th>School 5 (n = 22)</th>
<th>School 6 (n = 92)</th>
<th>School 7 (n = 85)</th>
<th>School 8 (n = 70)</th>
<th>School 9 (n = 47)</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. Shared commitment to vision.</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Parents provided with information that supports student success.</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>47.91</strong></td>
<td><strong>41.58</strong></td>
<td><strong>41.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>43.06</strong></td>
<td><strong>37.91</strong></td>
<td><strong>44.10</strong></td>
<td><strong>41.14</strong></td>
<td><strong>41.61</strong></td>
<td><strong>41.49</strong></td>
<td><strong>42.28</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Teacher participants (n = 478).
Figure 1. Scatter plot of principal and teacher mean scores.
A closer look at the data compelled the researcher to run the Pearson correlation without two data points that were considered outliers. Specifically, the data points for the principal with the highest sense of achievement score along with the principal with the lowest sense of achievement score were removed. A Pearson correlation was run on the remaining data set and determined there was a significant correlation between the mean principal score and the mean teacher score ($r = 0.56; p < 0.05$). The scatter plot seen in Figure 2 depicts the presence of a positive correlation between the mean principal sense of achievement score and the mean score for teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors.

\[ \text{Principals' Mean Score} \quad \text{Teachers' Mean Score} \]

*Figure 2. Scatter plot of principal and teacher mean scores—two outliers removed.*

While the removal of the outliers provide an interesting view of a possible relationship, this will not be considered in the analysis due to the existence of a small sample.
Summary

Chapter 4 has presented the data derived from both teacher and principal participants from one large suburban school district in Virginia. Data were collected using the Achievement subscale of Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey. According to the MSQ data, principals are generally satisfied with their sense of achievement. The School District’s Climate Survey indicated that generally teachers in the participating schools were satisfied with their principals’ leadership behaviors. However, the Pearson correlation determined that there was no significant relationship between the principals’ sense of achievement and the teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. Although the significant relationship was found by removing the two outliers, the small sample size prohibits the researcher in reporting the data in that light.
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

Purpose of Study

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. Many studies examining leadership style and school climate have been conducted, but there is limited research that examines the relationship between the principals’ sense of achievement and their teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors. The following research questions were used to guide the current study:

1. What is the general job satisfaction level of principals in a large suburban school district as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) Sense of Achievement subscale?
2. What are teacher perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey?
3. What is the relationship between principals’ job satisfaction as measured by the MSQ Sense of Achievement subscale and teachers’ perceptions of school climate as measured by the Leadership subscale of the School District’s Climate Survey?

Conclusions

Principals’ Satisfaction Based on Achievement

The mean leadership scores of the principals’ sense of achievement range between 1 to 5, where 1 represents not satisfied and 5 represents extremely satisfied. The overall observed mean
score was 3.8, and standard deviation for the Sense of Achievement scale was 0.38.

The findings revealed that school principals reported that they were satisfied with their sense of achievement as determined by the Sense of Achievement subscale of the MSQ. This conclusion was not surprising given similar results yielded by Stemple (2004) in his study of high school principals, and McQueen (2007) with her study of elementary principals, which found principals to be satisfied.

Further, it reinforces Herzberg’s theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), specifically the idea of achievement being a satisfier. Friesen et al. (1983) conducted a study in education using Herzberg’s theory that surveyed over 400 principals. They reported that the major characteristics of satisfaction for the principals they studied were: interpersonal relationships, achievement, and responsibility/job autonomy.

With the exception of “feeling of accomplishment I get from the job,” nearly 89% of principals expressed at least a level of satisfied with aspects of sense of achievement. Again, data suggest that principals are generally satisfied with their sense of achievement.

About 22% of principals reported being slightly satisfied with the feeling of accomplishment they get from the job. In fact, the two principals that reported being slightly satisfied were the two with the lowest sense of achievement score. This outcome is supported by Sutter (1994), who found that assistant principals who believed they were accomplishing much on the job reported a higher level of satisfaction compared to assistant principals who believed they were accomplishing less.

Being able to do something worthwhile had the highest mean score and the highest percentages of principals reporting at the very satisfied and extremely satisfied levels. In fact, 100% of principals reported being very satisfied or extremely satisfied with being able to do
something worthwhile. Data suggest that being able to do something worthwhile gives principals the most sense of achievement. The principal’s job is complex and demanding; however, thoughtful examination of the principalship and the variables that contribute to job satisfaction are important because a job is not merely life sustaining, but positively life enhancing, and enriching (Darboe, 2003).

**Teachers’ Perceptions of Leadership Behaviors**

The mean leadership score of the teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors ranged between 11 to 55 on the School District’s Climate Survey. The overall observed mean score was 42.28 and standard deviation for the Leadership subscale was 7.96. This suggests that respondents were often satisfied with their principals’ leadership behaviors. The mean range was from 37.91 to 47.91.

The 28th Annual Metlife Survey of the American Teacher, released in March 2012, reported 90% of teachers with high job satisfaction rated their principals as excellent or good (Markow & Pieters, 2012). This suggests that the teachers that participated in this study are themselves satisfied in their professional space. In fact, low morale has a detrimental effect on a teacher’s professional skills, is associated with increases in teacher burnout, and increases the rate exodus of qualified teachers from the classroom (Margolis & Nagel, 2006). The key factors for their departures were dissatisfaction with administration and lack of opportunity for professional growth (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2004).

A closer look at Question 5, “Views of all staff members (new/experienced teachers, department or grade level chairpersons, grade levels, etc.) are considered when my administration makes decisions,” allows us to compare schools. Given the fact that teachers reported a mean score of 3.5 with a range of 2.4 to 4.2, the participating principals are laying the
foundation for an open school climate. The distinctive characteristics of the open climate are cooperation, respect, and openness that exist within the faculty and between the faculty and principal. The principal listens and is receptive to teacher ideas, gives genuine and frequent praise, and respects the competence of faculty (Hoy et al., 1991, p. 39-41).

The notion of listening being a necessary attribute for principals that desire to create an open school climate was apparent in the principals who participated in this study. Question 3, “effective communication among teachers,” reported a mean of 3.7; and Question 9 “thorough and timely communication from administrators,” reported a mean of 3.9. Question 11, “parents provided with information that supports student success,” reported a mean of 4.2. All three of these questions get to the idea of the communication pipeline within the school community. Given the mean scores, it does suggest that the principals have built an essential component of creating an open school climate.

Question 10 on the School District’s Climate Survey, “There is a shared sense of commitment to our vision (excellence), mission (competence), and guiding beliefs in our school,” speaks to the idea of having a shared vision for the school. Teachers reported a mean score of 3.9 with a range of 3.5 to 4.7, which indicates the participating principals have created a shared vision for their school community.

These data are supported by Halawah (2005), who examined the relationship between effective communication of high school principals and school climate. Halawah found that positive school climate was related to good communication skills of the principal. Principals in healthier schools were more sociable compared to principals in schools with closed climates that were not as sociable and open in their interactions. Hoy et al. (1991) referred to this type of climate in which principals listened to their teachers as an open climate. The idea of
communicating and including teachers in the decision-making process is reinforced with the data reported.

A case study by Kellner (2008), which examined the culture of an effective elementary school in the midwestern United States, examined five aspects of school culture, namely leadership, vision, shared decision making, collaboration, and caring and respect. The interview data revealed that the shared vision by principal and staff was critical to success.

Based on the description of an open school climate, the data suggest that the principals in this study have created a school climate that would be considered more open than closed given the cooperation, respect, and openness that must exist for shared decision making to occur (Hoy et al., 1991).

**Correlation of Principals’ Sense of Achievement and Teachers’ Perceptions of Leadership Behaviors**

The main finding of the study was that there was no statistically significant relationship between teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors and principals’ sense of achievement. Despite the lack of a statistically significant relationship, some interesting observations were apparent upon a close inspection of the scatter plot. The principal scoring lowest on the MSQ Sense of Achievement subscale received a leadership behavior score close to the mean. Of further interest, the principal scoring highest on the MSQ Sense of Achievement subscale received the lowest leadership behavior score. With these two data points removed from the scatter plot, a positive linear relationship was apparent. Likewise, the statistical analysis suggests a significant positive relationship ($r = 0.56, p < 0.05$) between the teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviors and principals’ sense of achievement.
The data suggest that if the principals have a high sense of achievement in their job than their teachers will likely think highly of their leadership behaviors. Further, it could be inferred that this would equate to an overall positive school climate for all stakeholders.

Bulach and Corvers (as cited in Bulach et al., 2006) investigated six Louisiana schools to examine the relationship between the principals’ leadership style and the school climate. A Pearson correlation of + .984 was found between the overall school climate and the leadership style of the principals, indicating a strong, positive relationship. The two schools with the highest culture and climate scores had the highest leadership scores, whereas the two schools with the lowest culture and climate scores had the lowest leadership scores.

Sodoma’s (2006) findings with high school principals suggested that satisfaction with the job reduces turnover and increases aspirations of future school leaders. With the time demand on principals, it is important that they enjoy their place of work as we know the impact the principal can have on the climate of a school. A positive school climate can be cultivated by a strong principal.

A closer look at principal data provides insight to what motivates the participants in this study. “Being able to do something worthwhile” yielded the highest score from principals while “seeing the results of the work I do” yielded the lowest score. These data are supported by Schmidt’s (1976) study using Herzberg’s two-factor theory on 74 educational administrators in Chicago, IL. Schmidt found that achievement, recognition, and advancement were perceived to be major determinants of his subjects’ overall satisfaction.

The idea of achievement is critically important to an individual’s level of satisfaction. Specifically, the population surveyed enjoys the call to public service, but policymakers and
superintendents could better define outcomes in order for principals to see the impact they have on a school community.

It is imperative that principals enjoy their work in order to build a positive climate for their teachers. Low morale for teachers has a detrimental effect on classroom instruction, which will directly impact student achievement.

The principals’ leadership within the school setting has significant effect on school climate and student achievement (Halawah, 2005). While the data reported in this study do not yield a correlation between the principals’ sense of achievement and their teachers’ perceptions of their leadership behaviors, there is reason to explore the relationship further.

**Implications and Recommendations**

The following recommendations are suggested for educators, policymakers, and other researchers who are interested in future investigations of the relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and their teachers’ perceptions of their leadership behaviors.

Given the data indicated, there was not a significant relationship and it is difficult to suggest there are any implications to the findings. However, the impact of removing the outliers does warrant strong consideration for superintendents and policymakers to play close attention to the school principals’ sense of achievement. Creating opportunities for school principals to develop meaningful plans of school improvement in concert with their teachers with the intention of evaluating and reflecting on their impact on the school community could pay huge dividends on school climate. This could take shape in the form of introducing the concept of **SMART** goals in the school improvement planning process. **SMART** goals are by nature designed to be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. This would afford every school principal the opportunity to take time to develop improvement goals for the school in
partnership with teachers. The data suggest that principals are more satisfied when they are able to do something worthwhile. Therefore, implementing SMART goals thoughtfully could yield a more satisfied principal workforce. Superintendents should be thoughtful to ensure there are school specific goals in order to ensure the attainment and the realistic criteria are met.

State policymakers along with State Board of Education members might consider revisiting the current accountability system. The data suggest principals want to take pride in a job well done; however, this is often difficult to do in a system that only assesses against a set of static standards.

The current system does not recognize student growth so a principal’s efforts may not necessarily be rewarded. The creation of a growth model would allow for principals to set realistic targets for their students and teachers in a given academic year. This would allow for their efforts to be worthwhile as there would be a realistic growth measure associated with their efforts.

It is also important to point out the relationship between the principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their leadership behaviors as it relates to student outcomes. Denton (2009) found that principal leadership style can impact student achievement and teacher performance. Hoyle et al. (1985) concluded that if a school does not have an open school climate it is almost impossible to obtain high student achievement. Therefore, if a principal wants to implement school reforms to improve student achievement, he or she must identify the existing school climate. Given the call for school reform across the country, this is an area for policymakers to closely consider.
Future Research

The current research study was limited to a sample of one school district, which included 9 principals and approximately 500 teachers. This study should be conducted with the inclusion of more school districts, following the same methods and analysis. Populations from across the nation should be analyzed to determine the results on a national level. Further, it would be beneficial to collect demographic data that would allow for a replication study to see the impact of level of school assignment, experience of principal, and length of time in the school to be studied.

The outlier that resulted with the principal having the highest sense of achievement score while teachers reported the lowest leadership behaviors score really brought this issue to light. Qualitative data could determine why the principal with highest sense of achievement score felt that way about his/her achievement. Further, it could also provide more information around the principal with the lowest sense of achievement score had teachers who reported leadership behavior score closer to the mean. The disconnect that these outliers offered could only be determined through a qualitative study.

Without additional data, it could not be determined if the principal was trying to implement major reforms with an inherited staff or if the principal was completely unaware of his or her staff’s perceptions. The addition of qualitative methods in which participants are given the opportunity to express their opinions could result in a deeper understanding of leadership style and principals’ sense of achievement and allow for inclusion of additional participants such as parents, students, and community members.
Limitations

All studies have their limitations and the findings from this study have potential limitations. The most obvious limitation is generalizability. The study surveyed only public school principals and teachers in a large suburban school district in the Richmond, VA area. While the researcher received 100% response rate from principals, the study did not include all principals in the school district due to the nature of the School District Climate Survey rotation.

Using two data sets that were collected in different windows of time is also of concern. Specifically, the School District’s Climate Survey was administered for the schools on the 2011-2012 cycle in the fall of 2011, while the MSQ survey was administered on the participating principals during the summer of 2012.

Summary

While it cannot be reported that a statistically significant relationship existed, it can be suggested that the research informs us that there is need for future research of this relationship. The two outliers provide for a rich conversation around the importance of principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their leadership behaviors. Given the finding that the principal with the highest sense of achievement score on the MSQ had the lowest leadership behavior score, there is an interest to explore the impact other factors might have on this relationship. This outcome coupled with the principal that reported the lowest sense of achievement score left the researcher wondering what specifics issues would impact these outcomes. It is apparent that this study would have benefited from a qualitative approach due to the complexity of the relationship between principals and teachers.
List of References
List of References


APPENDIX A

Components Used From the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire - Principals

Five descriptive statements are listed below. Use the following Likert Scale when selecting the answer that best describes your position.

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<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not satisfied</td>
<td>Slightly satisfied</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>Extremely satisfied</td>
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<th>2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Being able to see the results of the work I do.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Being able to take pride in a job well done.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Being able to do something worthwhile.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The chance to do my best at all times.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Components Used From the School District’s Climate Survey – Teachers

1. I encourage my students to consider the views of different races, genders, and religions as they participate in classroom activities.

2. The overall climate in this school is conducive to learning.

3. Procedures are in place that ensure effective communication among teachers, grade levels, and departments within our school.

4. Performance on school-wide goals is used to plan for future actions.

5. Views of all staff members (new/experienced teachers, department or grade level chairpersons, grade levels, etc.) are considered when my administration makes decisions.

6. My school includes teachers of all represented race, ethnic, and gender groups participate in decision-making.

7. Our administrative staff involves teachers in school improvement decisions and activities.

8. Students in minority groups are treated well by other students.

9. Administrators communicate with teachers and staff in a thorough and timely manner.

10. There is a shared sense of commitment to our vision (excellence), mission (competence), and guiding beliefs in our school.

11. Our parents are provided with the information they need to help their children achieve academic success.
Appendix C

Invitation Email – Principals

As a doctoral student at Virginia Commonwealth University, I am conducting research regarding the sense of achievement of school principals in your school district. The purpose of the proposed study is to examine the relationship between principals’ sense of achievement and teachers’ perceptions of their leadership behaviors.

Your superintendent has given permission to survey principals in your district that recently participated in the district’s school climate survey process. While your school district has been chosen to participate, your participation is voluntary. If you choose to participate, please do so only once and do not share this invitation with others.

This web-based survey will take principals about 10 minutes to complete. There are no risks associated with this survey and individual participant responses will be confidential. Responses will not be shared with other principals or administrators.

You may access the survey on-line at _____________ from any computer with Internet access. You may choose to stop or not participate at any time and for any reason without penalty. If you have questions before or after participating, you may contact me at the number or email provided below.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Javaid Siddiqi, Doctoral Student
Virginia Commonwealth University

Jsiddiqi7@verizon.net
804-721-2188
APPENDIX D

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL
VITA

Javaid Edward Siddiqi was born in Columbia, South Carolina. He attended Chesterfield County public schools from kindergarten through high school, graduating from Matoaca High School in Ettrick, VA. He received his undergraduate degree from Virginia Commonwealth University and his master’s degree from Virginia State University. Currently, he is pursuing his doctorate in Educational Leadership from Virginia Commonwealth University. He spent 12 years with Chesterfield County Public Schools. During his time in Chesterfield, he served as a high school teacher, middle school assistant principal, and high school assistant principal. His last assignment was the principal of Robious Middle School where he led the implementation of Expeditionary Learning, a nationally recognized school reform model. Currently, he is serving as the Deputy Secretary of Education for Governor Bob McDonnell.