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A STUDY OF THE JOB SATISFACTION OF NEBRASKA SCHOOL
SUPERINTENDENTS

By

Troy L. Unzicker

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska
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For the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major: Educational Administration

Under the Supervision of Professor Jody Isernhagen

Lincoln, Nebraska

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A STUDY OF THE JOB SATISFACTION OF NEBRASKA SCHOOL
SUPERINTENDENTS

Troy L. Unzicker, Ed.D

University of Nebraska, 2012

Advisor: Jody Isernhagen

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of job satisfaction of superintendents in the state of Nebraska. The study investigated the relationship between levels of job satisfaction with gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size. This study replicated the work of Dr. Kenneth Nelson (1987) to determine the degree of job satisfaction for current superintendents working in the state of Nebraska.

This study answered the degree to that superintendents in Nebraska are satisfied with their jobs. The study also determined the areas which bring the greatest satisfaction to superintendents. These factors of satisfaction will help predict areas that will contribute to the success of the superintendent and provide valuable information for boards, colleges and universities in recruiting and retaining superintendents.

A total of 178 of the 225 Nebraska school superintendents contacted responded to the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1977). The responses of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire were compiled and analyzed. A multiple regression procedure was used to predict the effect of six factors upon job satisfaction. Findings of the study revealed the general satisfaction scores of Nebraska school superintendents were increased since the 1987 study. The 2012 data indicated that Nebraska school superintendent's scores were in the upper tier of norm groups

established by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1977). The analysis of the 20 constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire indicated that Nebraska school superintendents scored highest in the areas of social service, variety, ability utilization, and activity. The Nebraska school superintendents scored lowest in the areas of co-workers, advancement, recognition, and authority. Social service remained the highest area of satisfaction for Nebraska school superintendents.

Salary was the lone variable that appeared to have any level of significance in the study. The multiple regression procedure for salary accounted for 5 of the 12 constructs where significance was found. The factor with the highest correlation to satisfaction was salary at .209.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One—Introduction to the Study	1
Statement of the Problem.....	1
Background	3
Purpose of the Study	5
Research Questions	5
Methods.....	6
Definition of Terms.....	7
Assumptions.....	8
Delimitations of the Study	9
Limitations	9
Significance of the Study	9
Need for Study	10
Chapter Two—Review of the Literature	11
Introduction.....	11
Perceived Job Satisfaction	11
Outcomes	17
Compilation of Job Characteristics.....	17
Related Studies.....	19
Summary of the Literature Review	24
Chapter Three—Methodology	26
Introduction.....	26
Research Questions.....	26

Research Design.....	27
Population	27
Survey Instrument and Procedures	28
Construct Validity.....	29
Data Analysis	30
Chapter Four—Presentation of the Findings	32
Chapter Five—Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations	53
Overview.....	53
Purpose and Methods Employed in the Study	53
Procedure	54
Review of Literature	55
Summary of Findings.....	56
Research Question 1	56
Research Question 2	56
Research Question 3	57
Conclusions.....	57
Implications.....	59
Future Study Recommendations.....	60
Conclusions.....	60
References.....	62
Appendices.....	66

List of Tables

Table 1	The General Job Satisfaction Scores of Nebraska School Superintendents as Measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire	33
Table 2	Means and Standard Deviations for Factors Related to the Job Satisfaction of Nebraska School Superintendents.....	34
Table 3	Means and Standard Deviations of General Satisfaction Scores for Normed Occupational Groups as Measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire	35
Table 4	Descriptive Information Related to the Size of Schools Represented by the Sampled Nebraska Superintendents	36
Table 5	Descriptive Information Related to the Age of the Sampled Nebraska School Superintendents.....	37
Table 6	Descriptive Information Related to the Degree Attainment of the Sampled Nebraska School Superintendents	38
Table 7	Descriptive Information Related to the Salary of the Sampled Nebraska School Superintendents.....	38
Table 8	Descriptive Information Related to the Experience of the Sampled Nebraska School Superintendents.....	39
Table 9	Descriptive Information Related to the Gender of the Sampled Nebraska School Superintendents.....	40
Table 10	Correlations between the Specific Factors (Superintendent Age, School Size, Salary, Experience, and Gender) Identified in this Study.....	40
Table 11	Results of a Multiple Regression Analysis of the Effect of Age, School Size, Salary, Experience, and Gender upon the Job Satisfaction of Nebraska School Superintendents as Measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire.....	42
Table 12	Ranking of the Constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire from High to Low as Developed from the Responses of Nebraska Superintendents in Comparison with 1987 Rankings and Norm Group Rankings for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire	43

Table 13	t-Test Measuring the Significant Difference of the General Satisfaction Score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire of Nebraska Superintendents Grouped by Age.....	45
Table 14	t- Test Measuring the Significant Difference of the General Satisfaction Score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire of Nebraska Superintendents Grouped by Size of School	46
Table 15	t-Test Measuring the Significant Difference of the General Satisfaction Score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire of Nebraska Superintendents Grouped by Experience.....	47
Table 16	t-Test Measuring the Significant Difference of the General Satisfaction Score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire of Nebraska Superintendents Grouped by Salary	48
Table 17	t-Test Measuring the Significant Difference of the General Satisfaction Score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire of Nebraska Superintendents Grouped by Gender.....	49
Table 18	Results of a One-Way Analysis of Variance of the Relationship between Degree Attainment and the General Job Satisfaction of Nebraska School Superintendents.....	51
Table 19	Multiple Regression Analysis of the Relationship between the Scores of the Constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and Six Factors as Reported by Nebraska School Superintendents.....	52

List of Appendices

Appendix A	Letter Requesting Permission to Use the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire	66
Appendix B	Permission Letter from University of Minnesota	68
Appendix C	Institutional Review Board Permission Letter	70
Appendix D	Cover Letter/Informed Consent	72
Appendix E	Follow up Letter.....	74
Appendix F	Demographic Information.....	76
Appendix G	Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire	78

Chapter One

Introduction to the Study

Statement of the Problem

Glass (2002) identified four crises in the superintendency: a lack of qualified applicants; a frequent turnover rate; deteriorating board relationships; and a lack of gender and racial diversity. Other research has also found crisis in the superintendency. Carter and Cunningham (1997) identified community politics, initiatives, fiscal cutbacks, conflict with school boards, and daily crisis. State and federal mandates have become an increasing concern for administrators. Health, family life, and an individual's capability to perform his or her job as a superintendent are matters of concern. The superintendency is in crisis due to all of these concerns.

Executives walk a fine line between success and failure. Superintendents are no exception to this unyielding fact. According to Carter and Cunningham (1997) superintendents face a complex and threatening job environment that varies daily. Glass and Franceschini (2007) identified many areas to be studied within a superintendent's job on the national level, but the emphasis of Board relationships with a superintendent sets the tone for the entire school district. The stress in the superintendency is a part of the job that can have serious consequences on an individual's mental and physical health (Faelton & Diamond, 1988). Little research is available about the career choice, preparation, and path of superintendents and how they feel about their choice. Educational issues such as No Child Left Behind (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) and other state and federal mandates can create immense challenges for superintendents to face. There is a need to better understand the increased demands of the

superintendency within the state of Nebraska and the satisfaction with those within the position. The exploration of board relationships, stress, career satisfaction, and the influence of mandates on the position within Nebraska will contribute to an understanding of the national crisis effecting the position of the superintendent. This study will help to inform future superintendents of possible issues to explore and be aware of and question before entering the profession.

Schools are also workplaces where individuals who work there often experience stress. Employees at all levels in a school district deal with their own types of stress. Superintendents are in a position that can bring about high levels of stress, as they are the primary individual who represents the district. Caught between the local community and federal mandates, the superintendent feels stress originating from distinct local needs and governmental requirements (Sternberg, 2001). Issues dealt with daily include budgets, transportation, staff, boards, policy, and human relations (Silverman, 2005). National politics has added to the issues that superintendents face.

Superintendents, as well as other executives, walk a fine line between success and failure, making stress a big part of life that can have serious consequences on an individual's mental and physical health (Faelten & Diamond, 1988). An obvious strategy to combat stress is to avoid the situation. While some superintendents may be able to delegate stressful responsibilities to assistant superintendents or principals, superintendents of smaller school districts do not have that luxury. Although superintendents may be able to change the situation, they will not be able to avoid the situation entirely (Faelten & Diamond, 1988).

Background

An unpublished qualitative study conducted by this researcher in 2009 focused on the career satisfaction of six superintendents in the state of Nebraska. At the time of the qualitative study, there were 240 superintendents in Nebraska of which 24 were female. The six superintendents were chosen from districts of varying size. Five of the superintendents were male and one was female. Data collected were based on the superintendent's own experiences and personal opinions. The findings from the data resulted in four themes: board relationships, stressors, career satisfaction, and mandates.

The first theme, board relationships, yielded descriptors such as great, excellent, professional when the superintendents were asked to describe their relationships with board members. Many of the superintendents spoke of the close friendships that had been developed over the years and stated that open communication was an ideal that they strived to obtain with their boards. It was commonplace to hear about a good board or even "the best board I've worked with," from the six superintendents. It was apparent that overall the six superintendents were very satisfied with the superintendent-board relationship in their district.

For the second theme, stressors, financial issues came up in the majority of the interviews. Money, taxes, and state aid were topics of stress reported by all six superintendents. Other stressors discussed were the informational requirements placed on superintendents; time for reporting and meeting deadlines, personnel issues, and looming cutbacks that place a large amount of stress on the decision maker. One superintendent mentioned as a stressor the fact that school "stuff" was always in her

head. There were a large number of stressors conveyed in each of the six superintendent's daily lives.

The third theme identified was that of career satisfaction. The overall consensus of the superintendents was general satisfaction with their own career choices. Responses included phrases such as: "correct choice," "rewardable experience," and "generally happy." However, when posed with this being a career path for others, a different tone was expressed. The conversation turned to the high turnover, challenges faced, long hours, requirements, and the loneliness of the position. The thoughts were clear, however, that if you cared for children and knew what you were getting into, it was a good career.

The fourth theme focused on mandates assigned to public schools especially those centered on finance. One superintendent mentioned how the mandates were always there so you might as well get use to it. Other mandates included the state standards, state aid, and the Nebraska State Accountability (NDE, n.d.), which is a system of criterion-referenced tests in reading, mathematics, science, and writing. These mandates included both positives, such as making data driven decisions and having better information, as well as negatives, like the long paper trail created by the need for accountability.

Glass and Franceschini (2007) stated that the most important choice a board makes is the hiring of its superintendent. Their research on the national level for schools size 1-999 found 90.9% of superintendents rated their current relationships with their current school boards as very good or good as did the superintendents in the 2009 Nebraska study. Each of the Nebraska superintendents responded with good, very good, great, professional, or excellent, which matches very closely with the national results.

Therefore, due to crises being identified by Glass (2002) and no up to date research in the superintendency, a study to examine the superintendency in the state of Nebraska was conducted.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of job satisfaction of superintendents in the state of Nebraska. The study investigated the relationship between levels of job satisfaction with gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size. The researcher has identified this problem as a result of the increased demands and pressures on the position. This study replicated the work of Dr. Kenneth Nelson (1987) to determine the degree of job satisfaction for current superintendents working in the state of Nebraska.

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1977) is a self-administered measure of job satisfaction. The results of this study will be beneficial to superintendents and school boards. This study answered the degree to which superintendents in Nebraska are satisfied with their jobs. The study also determined the areas that bring the greatest satisfaction to superintendents. These factors of satisfaction will help predict areas that will contribute to the success of the superintendent and provide valuable information for boards in recruiting and retaining superintendents. Colleges and universities will also gain insight from this study for use when preparing superintendent candidates for the job pool.

Research Questions

The three research questions for this study replicate questions by Nelson (1987):

1. As measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1977), what is the degree of satisfaction of school superintendents in Nebraska?
2. As measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1977), in what areas are Nebraska superintendents finding satisfaction with their work and in what areas are they finding dissatisfaction?
3. What is the relationship of the job satisfaction of school superintendents in Nebraska and the selected factors of gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size?

Methods

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of job satisfaction of superintendents in the state of Nebraska. The study investigated the relationship between levels of job satisfaction with gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size. This was accomplished by utilizing the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, which was developed by the work adjustment project industrial relations center at the University of Minnesota (Weiss et al., 1977). The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire is gender neutral and can be administered to groups. The questionnaire uses a 5-point Likert scale to measure general job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction, and extrinsic job satisfaction.

Creswell (2002) distinguished between the qualitative and quantitative research based on the steps in the research process. In identifying a research problem, quantitative research shows a description and was “explanation oriented” (p. 52) while qualitative research was exploratory and “understanding oriented” (p. 52). The literature review

showed quantitative research played a major role while qualitative research played minor role. In specifying a purpose, quantitative research is much more specific and narrow than qualitative research. In data collection, quantitative research uses numeric data while qualitative research uses text or images. The analysis and interpretation of data utilized statistical information for quantitative research and text analysis for qualitative research. The final step in the process of research is reporting and evaluating research. In this category the quantitative research is characterized by being standard and fixed while qualitative research is flexible and emerging. The quantitative research shows the researcher's role as interpretation of results of the instrument. Quantitative research was chosen for this study.

Definition of Terms

All of the following terms and definitions for this study replicate the terms and definitions used by Nelson in 1987:

Career—The sequence of occupations, jobs, positions, as all of these are defined throughout a person's working life. The structured sequence of events in the life of a person as he or she progresses in a job or as he or she changes from one job to another in the occupational structure (p. 3).

Experience—The number of years that the respondent has served as a superintendent (p. 3).

Extrinsic rewards—Those rewards coming from outside of self, usually provided by others, and often tangible in nature (p. 3).

Factors—Conditions such as age, tenure, degree attainment, compensation, and school size, which are perceived by administrators to affect their job satisfaction (p. 4).

Intrinsic rewards—Those rewards that are inherent to the activity itself and come from the work itself (p. 4).

Job Satisfaction—Results from the interaction between the worker and his or her job situation. The worker possesses values and needs that may not be fulfilled by his or her job activities. The degree to which the worker's needs are met determines the level of satisfaction. Job satisfaction is not a single dimension but rather a complex set of variables (p. 4).

Motivation—A process that guides individual choices among different forms of voluntary activities (p. 4).

Self-concept—Individuals' perception of themselves as persons, which includes their abilities, appearance, performance in their job, and other phases of daily living (p. 4).

Superintendent—An individual who holds the position of chief executive in a school system (p. 4).

Tenure—The amount of time that a respondent has held his or her current position (p. 4).

Assumptions

As an acting superintendent in the state of Nebraska the researcher works closely with other superintendents in multiple districts across Nebraska. There are two primary assumptions made in this study. The first is the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire is an appropriate instrument to measure job satisfaction. The second assumption of the study is the response of the superintendents to questions concerning job satisfaction on

the questionnaire used in the study are accurate reports of perceptions held by the respondents.

Delimitations of the Study

The delimitations of this study are those characteristics that limit the scope. Delimitations were determined by the conscious exclusionary and inclusionary decisions that were made throughout the development of the proposal. The first limiting step was the choice of the problem itself, therefore eliminating other related problems that could have been chosen but were rejected or screened off from view. A final delimitation of this study is the restriction to the topics addressed in the satisfaction questionnaire.

Limitations

This study includes four limitations: The first limitation was the perceived nature of the job satisfaction shared by each superintendent. There is no measure of job performance. The second limitation was the constraints shared based on the findings yielded by the satisfaction questionnaire. The questionnaire was dependant on voluntary participation and those who responded may not have responded with candor. The third limitation was the study focused only on applicable Nebraska superintendents. The fourth and final limitation was the distinct possibility of type 1 errors on the t-tests.

Significance of the Study

Hall and Difford (1992) observed that a high level of stress was found to be associated with the superintendency yielding an average turnover rate of 13.5% nationally for the superintendency. By the 2000-2001 school year that turnover rate was reported as approximately 15% (Glass, 2002). Cooper (2000) reported:

How satisfied are superintendents with their careers, and would they recommend the job to younger, up-and-coming educators? Respondents indicate great concern about the position, not so much in this generation but for the next. As the cohort of current leader's ages, those surveyed worry about where the next generation will come from. (p. 4)

However, few studies were found regarding job satisfaction of Nebraska school superintendents. This study of Nebraska superintendents provides information statewide about job satisfaction. The study explored gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size as variables affecting job satisfaction.

Need for the Study

The research on job satisfaction has no standard measurement. It is difficult to compare different studies on job satisfaction without a standard measure. It has been found that numerous job satisfaction surveys have been conducted but rarely repeated. There are few recent studies concerning superintendent job satisfaction. The 1987 Nelson study is the only one found with research on Nebraska superintendents. Therefore, this study will examine the job satisfaction of Nebraska superintendents in 2011 to determine if any changes have occurred in the level of job satisfaction for Nebraska superintendents over the past 20+ year.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

Introduction

Educational research has emphasized the importance of effective leadership in the administrative ranks (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). It is surprising how little is known about the role of the superintendent (Cooper & Fusarelli, 2002). Superintendents are faced with pressures of student achievement, high stakes testing, rising costs, and shorter tenures, just to name a few. Challenges in public education continue to mount.

According to Luthans (1998) there are three important areas related to job satisfaction. The first is perceived job satisfaction being an emotional response to a job situation. The second source of satisfaction is how well the outcomes meet or exceed expectations. The third source of satisfaction is the compilation of job characteristics such as the work itself, pay, promotion opportunity, supervision, and coworkers. Glass and Franceschini (2007) shared that working conditions are variable based on circumstances such as the size of the district, financial status, and community support.

Perceived Job Satisfaction

The first important area identified by Luthans (1998) was perceived job satisfaction being an emotional response to a job situation. The only constraints on the findings noted were the result of the questionnaire utilized and how participants responded to it. The questionnaire was dependent on voluntary participation and those who responded may not have responded with candor. The truthfulness of the responses is an important factor in determining the perceived job satisfaction of Nebraska superintendents.

According to Kirsta (1986) stress, which is an emotional response, has been apparent since the beginning of time and appears to be an unavoidable condition of life. The challenges of modern life have increased drastically. Kirsta indicated that job stress was believed to be the leading cause of adult health problems in the United States today. This stress comes from individual perceptions of an event; however, an event itself may be stressful to some individuals and not as stressful to others.

Job stress has become a leading threat to the well-being of all workers and it has become a costly problem in today's workforce. "One-fourth of employees view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives" (Northwestern National Life, 1991, p. 5). The Northwestern survey results indicated that 40% of workers view their job as "very or extremely stressful."

According to research from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH, 2004), certain job conditions can lead to job stress. One condition is the design of the task. This includes heavy workloads, infrequent breaks, long hours, and lack of control. A second condition is management style. This includes lack of communication and lack of shared decision-making. An interpersonal relationship, including lack of support and a poor social environment, is the third job condition leading to stress. Work roles such as conflicting or uncertain job roles along with too much responsibility can cause job stress. Career concerns including job insecurity, lack of advancement opportunities, and unforeseen changes also cause stress. Finally, environmental conditions including unpleasant or dangerous job conditions cause stress in the work environment.

Studies by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (2004) conducted on work hours show a dramatic increase in both time and stress with the average American working 47 hours a week. This was an 8% increase from the previous generation. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (2004) survey shows 40% of workers indicated they felt their office environment was strenuous. Responses from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health surveys, of those absent from work, indicated that stress was a major factor; one million workers called in sick each day due to stress. This number tripled from 1996 to 2000. The survey indicated that job security is of great concern, with nearly half of all workers surveyed feared losing their jobs.

Faelton and Diamond (1988) pinpointed four factors top executives face that cause stress. The first factor is helplessness. Executives are hampered by restraints within their organization. The second factor is uncertainty. This occurs when the executive is unsure of the facts. The third factor relates to the number of tasks in an executive's day that demand immediate attention. The fourth factor is overwork, which is the workload piled upon the executive.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (2004) defined job stress as "the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker" (p. 6). Because of their job responsibilities, school superintendents have placed themselves in a position of possible stress (Sternberg, 2001). They are placed between the community and the governmental agencies whose demands are placed on the school districts. Czaja and Harman (1997) reported:

Many of the issues relevant to superintendents who enter district positions full of hope, energy, and vision only to leave abruptly in subsequent years before the actual planned exit date. Sometimes they are recruited to larger districts with attractive salary and benefit packages. Other times they leave frustrated, discouraged, and disillusioned. (1997, para. 2)

Gmelch (1996) felt stress “intrigues and plagues” superintendents (p. 1). He reported a four-stage cycle of stress that confronts superintendents. The first stage is that of stress traps which include the actual sources of stress. Each superintendent needs to identify what his or her personal stressors are. This can be very different from superintendent to superintendent.

The second stage is perceived stress. “This definition is based on the perception of one’s ability to meet the challenges of the superintendency” (Gmelch, 1996, perceived stress section, para. 1). Gmelch believed superintendents impose much of the stress on themselves. “While demands on the superintendent cannot always be lessened, our perception, attitude, and approach are under our control and are the deciding factors in whether or not we get trapped in the stress” (Gmelch, 1996, perceived stress section, para. 1).

The third stage includes coping responses and the various techniques superintendents use to deal with their stress (Gmelch, 1996). These techniques must be as individual as each superintendent. No one technique will fit all superintendents.

The fourth stage is consequences (Gmelch, 1996). “A moderate amount of stress helps them [superintendents] reach peak performance, but when stress reaches excessive proportions, their performance significantly declines, resulting in burnout” (p. 61).

Gmelch (1996) spelled out six popular myths associated with stress. The first was that stress is harmful. However, a moderate amount of stress can be advantageous.

Success can cause stress.

The second myth was that stress should be avoided. “Stress is a natural part of life and helps individuals respond to a threat or rise to a challenge. It cannot and should not be avoided because without stress one could not live” (Gmelch, 1996, para. 1).

The third myth was that the higher up in the organization, the greater the stress. Gmelch (1996) placed in his study a summary of a study conducted by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company of the 500 largest industrial corporations and found middle level managers to be at a higher risk for stress.

The fourth myth shared by Gmelch (1996) was that stress is a male-dominated occurrence. He found that female superintendents perceived less stress than their male counterparts. The female superintendents did however encounter stress.

The fifth myth was that superintendents experience excessive stress. Recent studies have found a moderate amount of stress in the superintendent position (Gmelch, 1996).

Finally, the sixth myth found by Gmelch (1996) was that there is one correct way to cope with stress. However, Gmelch found there is no consistent solution regarding stress. Each individual will find his or her own ways to deal with their perceived stressors.

According to research commissioned by the American Association of School Administrators, Glass and Cooper reported different conclusions regarding stress in the superintendency. Glass (2000) in his “Study of the American Public School

Superintendent” indicated that stress levels were increasing in the superintendent position. Glass found superintendents believed their districts were under-financed and special interest groups were becoming more of an issue. Furthermore, high stakes testing and standards added to the increased difficulty of being a superintendent. Cooper (2000) in his “Career Crisis in the School Superintendency?” found a shortage of applicants for superintendent positions. Many view the superintendent’s position within the district as unappealing. Others view the time commitment to be too great.

Chapman (1997) listed several job related stressors for first time superintendents. This included high visibility, diverse constituents, incompetent employees, and political groups; who to trust, whom to confide in and becoming acquainted with district. Carter and Cunningham (1997) added negotiating to the their list.

Federal and state mandates have increased the workload of school employees over the last several years. Each school district faces its own unique circumstances. According to Franz (2004) many rural superintendents were faced with filling other roles within the district. Some items that contributed to the need to fill many roles included tight budgets, tax limitations, mandates, and consolidation. “It’s not a matter of if they face stress, but how they face it. School superintendents face stress every day. When it gets to be too much, some take sick time or opt for a leave of absence” (Franz, 2004, para. 1).

Areas of stress that create burnout included work overload, lack of control, inadequate compensation, breakdown in community, unfair treatment, and conflicting values (Maslach, 2003). Burnout can result in depression and fatigue, and in negative attitudes towards students, staff, and the educational system. The quality of work also

drops off drastically. Franz (2004) suggested cleaning off the desk, taking a break, slowing down, and developing a sense of humor.

Outcomes

The second source of satisfaction according to Luthans (1998) is how well the outcomes meet or exceed expectations. Superintendents may feel they are working harder than other superintendents but receiving less compensation both intrinsically and extrinsically. They will probably show less job satisfaction in this scenario. They are apt to show a positive job satisfaction rating if they feel they are being adequately compensated for the work performed.

Kowalski, McCord, Petersen, Young, and Ellerson (2011) found superintendents worked with politically empowered individuals rather than coalitions or unions. The larger the district the more likely this was to occur. They also found superintendents wanted community involvement, staff involvement, and student involvement to create district mission and vision. A stronger culture is established with the involvement of each group. Superintendents in the study also found state and federal mandates to be more of a liability than an asset. Inadequate funding was viewed as a major problem by the superintendents.

Compilation of Job Characteristics

According to Luthans (1998) the third source of satisfaction was the compilation of job characteristics such as work itself, pay, promotion opportunity, supervision, and coworkers. Glass and Franceschini (2007) showed working conditions were variable based on circumstances such as the size of the district, financial status, and community

support. Nelson (1987) viewed age, experience, school size, salary, and degree attainment as variables.

The superintendent position requires experience. This experience is usually in the educational system, but not always. Cooper (2000) found that the complexity of the job has increased and the number of applicants has dwindled. In his "Career Crisis in the School Superintendency?" he found 88% of superintendents reported a shortage of applicants for superintendent positions. He viewed this shortage of applicants as a crisis. Many educators are beginning to view the superintendent's position within the district as unappealing, while others view the time commitment to be too great. Some view stress to be a factor in the low numbers available to fill these positions.

How can any one professional handle all the competing expectations: the need to be an ace administrator, competent manager, and somehow an instructional leader; to carry the torch for children and their teachers, while playing politics before the school board and community; to reassure staff inside the system while being spokesperson for public education outside in the community and state; and to respond to the demand for change while championing traditional education values? (Cooper & Fusarelli, 2002, p. 5)

The national rate for turnover in the superintendency was reported by Hall and Difford (1992) at 13.5%. In the 2005-06 school year, 2,244 of the nation's 13,835 superintendents left their jobs for a new position, including retirement and non-renewal, amounting to a 16% turnover rate (Glass, 2007). Czaja and Harman (1997) reported the Texas Education Agency for 1994-1995 stated nearly one-third of the superintendents who left the superintendent position in one district went to another district. Almost another one-third retired. The remaining one-third was split between leaving education, leaving the superintendency, or listed unknown causes for leaving the superintendent's position. Kranz (2004) reported superintendents were retiring in record numbers and the

number of applications for superintendent positions was shrinking. The demand placed on superintendents today has shrunk the pool of qualified candidates. Kranz interviewed Karen Mantia, an Ohio superintendent, who stated,

The complexity and time demands, the conditions of the work itself cause some talented people not to enter the profession. For instance, stress, low pay, increased demands from unfounded mandates, higher student performance requirements, greater public expectations, board turnover, diminishing prestige, fear of poor superintendent/board relationships, and inadequate school funding are just a few of the issues that may be discouraging viable candidates from entering the field. (Kranz, 2004, para. 2)

According to Ossian (2010) the Nebraska turnover rate for the 2009-2010 school year was 15.1%, which was down from the previous year's 18.9%. The superintendent median tenure rate was increasing in the same years from 3.50 to 3.55. Ossian shared that the average tenure rate in Nebraska was increasing from 5.63 to 5.75 years, which corresponds to national averages. Ossian also found 116 of 253 superintendents (45.8%) would be in their first three years in their current district.

Related Studies

Brown's (1978) study investigated the relationship between the job satisfaction of 136 Georgia school superintendents and the perceived leader behavior of Georgia school board presidents. Brown utilized the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (1977) to obtain job satisfaction scores for superintendents and he utilized the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire with school board presidents to obtain their perceptions of expected behavior. Brown found a significant relationship between job satisfaction and leader behavior. Extrinsic satisfaction of the superintendents was significantly related to both behavior variables (consideration and initiating structure).

Nelson (1987) completed a study of job satisfaction with 125 Nebraska school superintendents. Nelson received responses from 109 of the superintendents contacted. Superintendents responded with demographic information and responses to the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (1977). The findings showed the general satisfaction of Nebraska superintendents were comparable to the average scores of the norm groups. Nebraska superintendents found the least satisfaction in the opportunity for advancement, the ability of the board to make good decisions, and the lack of recognition they received for a job well done. The most satisfaction for Nebraska superintendents came from the ability to serve others, the opportunity to be able to do things that did not go against their conscience, and the ability to do things on their own time. A statistical difference existed between salary of Nebraska superintendents and the general satisfaction score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. However, little practical significance was established.

Dose's (1994) study compared job satisfaction levels of superintendents in Iowa. Four groups of superintendents were studied. The four groups were shared superintendents in 1993, non-shared superintendents in 1993 serving less than 1,950 students, non-shared superintendents in 1993 serving more than 1,950 students, and shared superintendents from 1988. The Job Descriptive Index (JDI) was used in the areas of work itself, pay, promotion, supervision, and coworkers. The findings showed that shared superintendents were less satisfied with their work than the other groups. The 1993 shared superintendents were significantly less satisfied with their salaries than the 1988 shared superintendents.

Malanowski's (1999) study used the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire on 63 urban superintendents in New Jersey. Malinowski's findings included a satisfaction level falling between satisfied and very satisfied. He found the urban superintendents had a high intrinsic job satisfaction level. He also found the extrinsic job satisfaction level to be high.

Kuncham (2008) conducted research on the overall job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction, and extrinsic job satisfaction in New York. The research was conducted with 125 superintendents in Suffolk and Nassau counties. Kuncham found the superintendents greatly satisfied with all three areas of job satisfaction. The variables of age, gender, salary level, experience, level of education, and district size had no significant impact on job satisfaction.

A qualitative study was conducted in 2009 by this researcher focused on the career satisfaction of six superintendents in the state of Nebraska. The characteristics of qualitative research conducted in 2009 included a natural setting, with participant perspective, and the researcher as a data gathering instrument. The researcher extended firsthand engagement, centrality of meaning, wholeness and complexity, subjectivity, emergent design, inductive data analysis, and reflexive as per Hatch (2002).

The six superintendents were chosen from districts of varying size and represented both genders. The data collected was based on the superintendent's own experiences and personal opinions. The findings from the data were organized into four themes: board relationships, stressors, career satisfaction, and mandates. The questions were generated and then organized into themes by the responses. The first question posed of the six superintendents was: what type of relationship do you have with the

individual members of the Board? This was presented to get a deeper understanding of the relationships developed. The majority of the responses were again very positive. Many close friendships were mentioned. Great and excellent relationships were discussed. One response was not quite as positive, as the relationship he tried to maintain was professional.

A second question asked was: How does your current Board of Education compare with other boards you may have worked with? This question brought about positive comments towards their board relationships as well. A couple of the superintendents mentioned their current board worked together better than any board they had worked with. One board was described as the best board they had worked with.

The next question was: What types of stressors do you encounter as a superintendent? Glass and Franceschini (2007) listed the amount of stress rising in the superintendency. Their 1980 figures showed the number of superintendents reporting as “very great, considerable or moderate stress” in the job was 91%. In 2006 they showed that percentage had risen to 93.3%. The six Nebraska superintendents responded similarly. The stressors the respondents listed were many. They included items such as money, information overload, interruptions, negotiations, personnel issues, endless forms, and time.

Superintendents were next asked: How do you feel about the politics of the community and their effects on the school district? State aid and the community’s reaction to the implications of losing state aid were hot topics. The influence of a few on the many also came to light. A couple of the superintendents thought this was not an issue in their districts.

The next question also brought about topics of stress for the superintendents interviewed. What effects has the economic downturn caused your district? Responses to this question included, increased taxes, cut backs, feeling of isolation, and hesitancy to proceed with plans.

Superintendents were then asked: What is your opinion of choosing the superintendency as a career choice? All six responded favorably towards their career choice. The comments included, "I couldn't imagine a better job for me." The national research by Glass and Franceschini (2007) found in schools from 1-999 students, that only 80.2% of superintendents would choose the career again.

What does the future of the superintendency look like to you? Qualified applicants? Turnover? Gender diversity? Racial diversity? These questions were answered with comments ranging from "time will tell" to other comments like "having many retirements in the future." The majority talked about the challenges they see in the future for superintendents to address. The majority felt gender diversity would improve but the racial diversity would be addressed only minimally.

When superintendents were asked: What would you say to someone considering the superintendency about their career possibilities? The answers were focused on the challenges and difficulties of the position. Stress, long hours, and loneliness reflected the difficulties. The answers also focused on education and the students as being the focus of the vision.

The next question asked was: What is your opinion of mandates and outside influences you deal with as a superintendent? The research by Glass and Franceschini (2007) showed 19.5% of superintendents in schools of 1-999 students listed state and

federal mandates as a factor that inhibited superintendent effectiveness. This was reflected in the Nebraska responses. One response was, “I don’t like mandates.” The financial considerations were a negative in the majority of the interviews. Many of the superintendents thought the mandates were many times focused inappropriately.

What mandates have effected education in a positive manner? How? The positive responses for these questions included work on curriculum, data driven decisions, and improved instruction. The final question was: What mandates have effected education in a negative manner? How? The responses here included, state aid, loss of control, and added requirements.

Summary of the Literature Review

According to Luthans (1998) there were three important areas related to job satisfaction. The first is perceived job satisfaction being an emotional response to a job situation. The truthfulness and openness of the responses was an important factor in determining the perceived job satisfaction of Nebraska superintendents. The second source of satisfaction was how well the outcomes exceeded expectations. The third source of satisfaction is the compilation of job characteristics such as work itself, pay, promotion opportunity, supervision, and coworkers. Nelson (1987) in his study used age, experience, school size, salary, and degree attainment as variables. Kowalski et al. (2011) identified areas which superintendents viewed as important to job satisfaction which included district level variables, compensation, and technology.

The literature review of recent studies showed a general satisfaction displayed by superintendents towards their jobs. Kowalski et al. (2011) found 69.3% of superintendents were very satisfied with their career choice, but only 63.2% would

definitely follow the career path again. There was a trend showing a lower degree of satisfaction than in the past. There was little significance found in the research on Nebraska superintendents between factors identified and overall job satisfaction in 1987.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of job satisfaction of superintendents in the state of Nebraska. The study determined the relationship between levels of satisfaction with gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size. The researcher had identified this problem as a result of the increased demands and pressures on the position. This study replicates the work of Dr. Kenneth Nelson (1987) to determine the degree of job satisfaction for current superintendents working in the state of Nebraska.

This study explored the increased demands and pressures of the superintendency at the state level. There is a need to understand the superintendency within Nebraska and the satisfaction with those within the position. The exploration of board relationships, stress, career satisfaction, and the influence of mandates on the position within Nebraska will be vital to understand the national crisis effecting the position of superintendent. This will help to inform future superintendents of possible issues to explore and be aware of before entering the profession. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1977) is a self-administered measure of job satisfaction that will be utilized within the study.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to answer and compare the following three research questions based on the results obtained in a 1987 study of Nebraska superintendents by Dr. Nelson:

1. As measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, what is the degree of satisfaction of school superintendents in Nebraska?
2. As measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, in what areas are Nebraska superintendents finding satisfaction with their work and in what areas are they finding dissatisfaction?
3. What is the relationship of the job satisfaction of school superintendents in Nebraska and the selected factors of gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size?

Research Design

This study was designed to survey practicing Nebraska public school superintendents and compare the results to the 1987 results achieved by Dr. Nelson. Nelson (1987) utilized the five factors of age, degree attainment, experience, salary, and school size to ascertain the degree of job satisfaction of Nebraska superintendents. The factor of gender was added to this study for comparability to job satisfaction.

Population

The population studied consisted of all 225 public schools superintendents in the state of Nebraska active during the 2011-2012 school year. Participants were sent a mailing on April 6, 2012 consisting of the nature of the survey combined with the informed consent (Appendix D), a copy of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Appendix G), a copy of the other demographic questions composed by the researcher (Appendix F), and a stamped self addressed return envelope. After two weeks, 150 responses had been received. Those individuals who did not return the questionnaire within two weeks of the mailing were sent a follow-up letter on April 20, 2012 to remind

them to return the questionnaire (Appendix E). Twenty-eight (28) more responses were received for a total of 178 responses or 79.1% of the initial mailings.

Survey Instrument and Procedures

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1977) is a self-administered measure of job satisfaction. The researcher was granted permission to use the form by Vocational Psychology Research at the University of Minnesota (Appendix E). The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire has been utilized far more frequently than any other instrument in the last 30 years (Malinowski, 1999). The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire yields 20 responses scored using a 5-point Likert scale: very satisfied (5-VS), satisfied (4-S), neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3-N), dissatisfied (2-DS), and very dissatisfied (1-VDS). The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire short form takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. The 20 items measuring job satisfaction are:

1. Ability Utilization. The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities
2. Achievement. The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job.
3. Activity. Being able to keep busy all the time.
4. Advancement. The chances for advancement on this job.
5. Authority. The chance to tell other people what to do.
6. Company Policies and Practices. The way the company policies are put into practice.
7. Compensation. My pay and the amount of work I do.
8. Co-workers. The way my co-workers get along with each other.
9. Creativity. The chance to try my own methods of doing the job.
10. Independence. The chance to work alone on the job.

11. Moral Values. Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience.
12. Recognition. The praise I get for doing a good job.
13. Responsibility. The freedom to use my own judgment.
14. Security. The way my job provides for steady employment.
15. Social Service. The chance to do things for other people.
16. Social Status. The chance to be "somebody" in the community.
17. Supervision-Human Relations. The way my boss handles his or her subordinates.
18. Supervision-Technical. The competence of my supervisor in making decisions.
19. Variety. The chance to do different things from time to time.
20. Working Conditions. The working conditions.

As Nelson did in his 1987 study, the scores of the Nebraska superintendents on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire were compared with the mean scores that have been developed for other occupational groups.

Construct Validity

The Manual for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1977) included documentation regarding the questionnaire's construct, concurrent, and content validities. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire short form has a high reliability coefficient ranging from .87 to .92. The intrinsic median reliability is .86, the extrinsic median reliability is .80, and the general satisfaction reliability median is .90. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire also provides additional evidence of validity. The construct validity was derived from its performance according to theoretical expectations as specified by the Theory of Adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). The study also compared results with the findings in *The American School Superintendent, 2010*

Decennial Study (Kowalski et al., 2011). The American Association of School Administrators has provided an extensive data base for over 80 years, with their study conducted every 10 years. The data base includes demographics, board relations, professional development, districts, and career paths (Glass & Franceschini, 2007). The American School Superintendent 2010 Decennial Study (Kowalski et al., 2011) reported: “After potential items were selected for inclusion in the initial survey instrument, content validity was assessed by a panel of experts” (p. 12).

Data Analysis

Data were obtained through completion of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire by Nebraska superintendents. This study replicated the work of Dr. Kenneth Nelson (1987) to determine the degree of job satisfaction for current superintendents working in the state of Nebraska so no pilot study was conducted.

Once data from the final questionnaire were retrieved, scores were recorded ranging from a high of 5 to a low of 1 (5 very satisfied, 1 very dissatisfied). Mean, median, and standard deviations were compiled. The scores of the variables were rank ordered. Data from Dr. Nelson’s 1987 study analysis were replicated and checked for significant differences. A correlation analysis was run to identify the relationship between the six factors gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size with levels of job satisfaction. A multiple regression procedure was run to determine if the six factors are predictors of job satisfaction. A t-test was run on each factor using a median split to determine if there is a significant difference. A one-way analysis of variance using job satisfaction as the dependent variable and degree attainment as the independent variable was conducted. A multiple regression procedure

was completed to compare the constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and the six factors being studied in this research.

Chapter Four

Presentation of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of job satisfaction of superintendents in the state of Nebraska. The study investigated the relationship between levels of job satisfaction with gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size. The study also determined the construct areas which bring the greatest satisfaction to Nebraska school superintendents.

The demographic data and the job satisfaction data obtained from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1977) that were collected from the 225 public schools superintendents in the state of Nebraska active during the 2011-2012 school year are presented in this chapter.

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Appendix G) and demographic questions (Appendix F) were sent to the 225 superintendents in Nebraska on April 6, 2012. After two weeks, 150 responses had been received. A follow up letter (Appendix E) was sent on April 20, 2012. Twenty eight (28) more responses were received for a total of 178 responses or 79.1% of the initial mailings.

Table 1 reports the general satisfaction scores on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire for the Nebraska superintendents that were compiled with the mean, median, standard deviation, and maximum and minimum scores. The range of scores was 55. Table 1 also contains the results from the 1987 study conducted by Dr. Nelson for comparative purposes.

Table 1

The General Job Satisfaction Scores of Nebraska School Superintendents as Measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

Year	Number Sent	Number Received	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Maximum	Minimum
2012	225	178	82.11	83	8.698	100	45
1987	125	109	76.835	78	10.418	98	21

Table 2 reports the means and standard deviations for each of the six factors studied are shown with comparative data from Dr. Nelson's 1987 study. There were 178 Nebraska superintendents who returned the questionnaire. The mean number of students in each school appeared skewed just as the 1987 survey was by a few larger school districts. The degree attainment score was based upon a weight of 1 for all persons who had a master's degree, a value of 2 for superintendents with a specialist degree or its equivalent, and a value of 3 for those superintendents with a Ph.D. or Ed.D. There were five superintendents who had a master's degree, 124 superintendents had a specialist degree, 46 superintendents with a Ph.D. or Ed.D., and 3 with no response.

Table 3 reports a comparison of the mean score of the 178 Nebraska school superintendents and the mean score of several occupational groups that had been normed for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. The mean scores computed for the Nebraska superintendents was derived solely from the survey for this study. The norms for the other groups were developed by the Computer Center at the University of Minnesota and reported in the Minnesota Satisfaction Manual (Weiss et al., 1977, p. 38-91).

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Factors Related to the Job Satisfaction of Nebraska School Superintendents

Factor	1987 Mean	Standard Deviation	2012 Mean	Standard Deviation
Size of School	870.838	2629.675	1100.17	3494.150
Age of Respondents	47	7.9	52.75	8.34
Degree Attainment	2.11	0.487	2.23	0.488
Salary	40,034	7,709	117,848	28,111
Yrs as Superintendent	11.53	8.47	9.81	8.131
Yrs Current School	6.49	5.368	5.56	4.425
Gender	N/A	N/A	1.10	0.304
Satisfaction	76.835	10.418	82.11	8.698

The 1987 Nebraska superintendent score was near the middle of the occupational grouping. The data from this study were well above the original data from 1987 and very similar to teacher satisfaction data of 82.12. The magnitude of difference between the two studies had an effect size of .57. The norm group of 2,955 satisfaction score was 75.6. It should be noted the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire was normed in 1977. Most of the literature reviewed on job satisfaction shows a general decline in job satisfaction over the time frame. This data should give the reader an indication of the satisfaction of Nebraska superintendents to the occupational groups identified. Nebraska superintendents scored higher than the norm group and nearly identical to teachers from 1977.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of General Satisfaction Scores for Normed Occupational Groups as Measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

Occupational Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Retail field representative	53	83.53	9.72
Retail manager	135	82.37	9.34
Teachers	191	82.12	7.82
Nebraska superintendents (2012)*	178	82.11	8.70
Licensed practical nurse	42	81.52	10.34
Engineers	38	78.97	7.99
Retail buyer	39	78.54	7.33
Truck driver	118	78.25	10.41
Secretaries	118	77.64	10.00
Social workers	166	77.22	7.54
Nebraska superintendents (1987)**	109	76.83	10.42
Accountants	53	76.51	12.20
Norm Group	2955	75.60	9.46
Full-time nurses	415	75.40	7.99
Nurse supervisors	197	75.38	8.73
Bookkeeper	45	74.91	9.68
Part-Time nurses	293	74.74	8.53
Office clerks	99	72.89	10.08
General laborer	55	68.36	12.28

* The Nebraska superintendent score was established in April 2012 as part of this study.

** The Nebraska superintendent score was established in February 1987 as part of Dr. Nelson's study.

The descriptive information which was compiled for this study is summarized and compared to the 1987 data in Tables 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. Information related to the size of the school in which the superintendent works is in Table 4. A difference between the mean size (1100.2 students) and the median size (363.5 students) shows the larger schools skewed the data. There were four superintendents who failed to indicate the size of school in which they were currently employed.

Table 4

Descriptive Information Related to the Size of Schools Represented by the Sampled Nebraska Superintendents

	1987	2012
Mean	856.654	1100.17
Median	290.00	363.50
Mode	225.00	300.00
Standard Deviation	2602.807	3494.150
Variance	6795442.49	12209086.00
Range	25541.00	36405.00
Maximum	25576	36500
Minimum	35	95
Valid Cases	107	174
Missing Cases	2	4

Table 5 reports the descriptive information concerning the age of the respondents is presented. The age of Nebraska public school superintendents shows a wider range than 1987. The data in 1987 shows a range of 34 years old to 63 years old, while the data

Table 5

*Descriptive Information Related to the Age of the Sampled Nebraska School**Superintendents*

	1987	2012
Mean	47.13	52.75
Median	45.50	54.00
Mode	38.00	57.00
Standard Deviation	8.011	8.34
Valid Cases	108	176
Missing Cases	1	2

from 2012 shows a range from 31 years of age to 72 years of age. The median has risen above the mean since 1987. The mean age has risen from 47.13 to 52.75 since 1987. The median age has risen from 45.5 to 54 over the same time period. Two superintendents did not respond to the current age question on the demographic information.

Table 6 reports the number of respondents in each of the degree levels is listed and compared to the 1987 data. There were 5 respondents with a Master's degree, 124 respondents held a specialist degree, 46 respondents had received either their Ed.D. or Ph.D., and 3 superintendents did not respond to the degree question.

Table 7 reports the information related to the salary of the sampled superintendents is listed and compared to the 1987 data. Salaries in 2011-2012 ranged from \$73,500 to \$270,000 for the respondent superintendents. The mean salary has increased from \$40,020.17 in 1987 to \$117,848.40 in 2012 according to the data

Table 6

Descriptive Information Related to the Degree Attainment of the Sampled Nebraska School Superintendents

	1987	Percent	2012	Percent
Master's Degree	7	6.5	5	2.8
Specialist Degree	82	75.2	124	69.7
Ph.D. or Ed.D.	20	18.3	46	25.8
Missing Cases	0	0	3	1.7
Total	109	100.0	178	100.0

Table 7

Descriptive Information Related to the Salary of the Sampled Nebraska School Superintendents

	1987	2012
Mean	40020.17	117848.40
Median	39175.00	110350.00
Mode	35000.00	105000.00
Standard Deviation	7674.00	28110.914
Range	51850	196500
Maximum	77000	270000
Minimum	25150	73500
Valid Cases	106	170
Missing Cases	3	8

retrieved. Eight superintendents failed to respond to the salary question on the demographic questionnaire.

Table 8 reports the information relative to experience of the sampled Nebraska superintendents is listed. There were no comparative data listed in Dr. Nelson's 1987 study concerning description of years of experience. Years of experience ranged from 1 year to 40 years. Years at the current school ranged from 1 year to 27 years.

Table 8

Descriptive Information Related to the Experience of the Sampled Nebraska School Superintendents

	Years Experience	Years Experience at Current School
Mean	9.81	5.56
Median	8	4
Mode	4	4
Standard Deviation	8.131	4.425
Range	40	27
Maximum	40	27
Minimum	1	1
Valid Cases	175	175
Missing Cases	3	3

Table 9 reports the information relative to gender of the sampled Nebraska school superintendents. There was no comparative data concerning gender in the 1987 study; this variable was added.

Table 9

Descriptive Information Related to the Gender of the Sampled Nebraska School Superintendents

Gender	Number	Percent
Male	158	88.8
Female	18	10.1
Missing Cases	2	1.1
Total	178	100.0

Table 10 reports the information from the correlational study. A correlational study was completed to identify the relationship between the factors measurable which the study focused on. These factors are age, salary, size of school, experience, and gender. The sixth factor of degree attainment was not measurable due to the three options listed in the questionnaire.

Table 10

Correlations between the Specific Factors (Superintendent Age, School Size, Salary, Experience, and Gender) Identified in this Study

	Age	Salary	Size	Experience	Gender	Satisfaction
Age	1.000	0.116	0.096	0.549	-0.085	0.084
Salary	0.116	1.000	0.781	0.248	-0.008	0.209
Size	0.096	0.781	1.000	0.218	-0.029	0.122
Experience	0.549	0.248	0.218	1.000	-0.196	0.068
Gender	-0.085	-0.008	-0.029	-0.196	1.000	0.115
Satisfaction	0.084	0.209	0.122	0.068	0.115	1.000

The highest correlation with age was years of experience as a superintendent with a correlation of .549, which was significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). The highest correlation with salary was size of school, with a correlation of .781 which was significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Salary and experience with a correlation of .248 was also found significant. Size of school and experience with a .218 correlation is also significant. The correlation between experience and salary at .248 is also significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Overall the highest correlation was .781 between salary and size of school. The 1987 study conducted by Dr. Nelson found experience and age were the highest correlation at .741. The factor with the highest correlation to satisfaction was salary at .209. This factor was also the only factor found to be significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 11 reports the results of the multiple regression analysis. A forward inclusive multiple regression procedure using the general satisfaction score of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire was completed to determine if age, experience, degree attainment, salary, school size, and gender were significant predictors of job satisfaction for Nebraska school superintendents. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Salary was the only factor in which the multiple regression procedure displayed any significant relationship to job satisfaction. Salary was entered into the regression equation on step 1. Salary was used as the constant with job satisfaction the dependent variable. No other variables added significantly to the regression model. The correlation between job satisfaction and salary was at the .210 level. This would indicate salary was significant but other variables not studied could also be significant to the job satisfaction of Nebraska school superintendents.

Table 11

Results of a Multiple Regression Analysis of the Effect of Age, School Size, Salary, Experience, and Gender upon the Job Satisfaction of Nebraska School Superintendents as Measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

Variable entered on step number 1 was salary.					
R	.210	R square	.044	Adjusted R square	.038
Std. Error	8.120	R square change	.044	F change	7.699
df1	1.0	df2	167.0	Sig. F Change	.006

Table 12 reports the rankings and comparisons of the constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. The constructs as reported by Nebraska superintendents, were ranked from high to low and compared to the 1987 results.

A comparison from the 1987 rankings finds social service continues to be the top area of job satisfaction for Nebraska superintendents. The rankings find variety as the highest upward move from 8th place on the 1987 rankings to 2nd place on the 2012 rankings for a gain of 6 steps. Security and Supervision-Human Relations also moved up 5 steps. On the downside since 1987 in the Nebraska superintendents rankings were authority (10 steps) and moral values (6 steps). In comparison to the norm group it appears Nebraska superintendents in 2012 have a higher satisfaction ranking in variety with an 8 step increase. Nebraska superintendents are less satisfied by 12 steps in the rankings from the norm group in the area of co-workers.

The variables of age, salary, size of school, experience, and gender were divided into two groups using a median split. A t-test, using the median split for age, salary, size of school, experience, and gender are displayed in Tables 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17. The

Table 12

Ranking of the Constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire from High to Low as Developed from the Responses of Nebraska Superintendents in Comparison with 1987 Rankings and Norm Group Rankings for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

Construct Rankings	Nebraska Superintendents 2012 (N = 178)	Standard Deviation	Nebraska Superintendents 1987 (N = 109)	Norm Group (N = 2,955)
01 Social Services	4.62	.542	01	02
02 Variety	4.52	.648	08	10
03 Ability Utilization	4.48	.640	05	09
04 Activity	4.42	.710	07	03
05 Responsibility	4.36	.733	03	07
06 Achievement	4.34	.647	06	05T
07 Creativity	4.34	.713	04	14T
08 Moral Values	4.33	.719	02	01
09 Security	4.31	.817	16	04
10 Working Conditions	4.30	.735	09	13
11 Company Policies and Practices	4.01	.717	12	18
12 Social Status	3.99	.752	13	16
13 Supervision Human Resources	3.95	.952	18	11T
14 Supervision Technical	3.94	.937	15	11T
15 Independence	3.88	.761	11	08
16 Compensation	3.86	.955	NR	19
17 Co-workers	3.84	.890	14	05T
18 Advancement	3.60	.866	19	20
19 Recognition	3.53	.975	17	17
20 Authority	3.49	.715	10	14T

results are an effort to further examine overall job satisfaction of Nebraska superintendents.

Table 13 reports the results of the median split which was used to measure the significant difference between two groups that were split by age of the respondent. The 1987 survey was split at age 45. The 2012 survey was split at age 54. Group 1 includes the median age and younger. Group 2 is older than the median age. The 2012 t-test with the median split at 54 and younger placed 95 respondents in Group 1 and 81 respondents in Group 2. Two Nebraska superintendents did not respond to the age question on the survey. The results of the t-test in 1987 found no significant difference ($t = 0.68$, $df = 108$) at the .050 level of significance. The results of the t-test in 2012 also showed no significant difference ($t = .483$, $df = 174$).

Table 14 reports the mean general satisfaction scores on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire for Nebraska school superintendents by size of school indicated a significant difference. The 1987 median split was 290 students. The 2012 median split was 363.5 students. Group 1 consisted of 54 respondents with less than 290 students in 1987. The mean score for this group was 75.88. Group 2 consisted of 53 respondents with more than 290 students in the same year. The mean score for this group was 78.20. No significant differences existed between the two groups in 1987 at the .050 level ($t = -1.16$, $df = 105$). Group 1 in 2012 consisted of 87 respondents with less than 363.5 students. The mean score for Group 1 was 80.93. Group 2 consisted of 87 respondents with more than 363.5 students in the same year. The mean score for Group 2 was 83.60. No significant difference was found ($t = -2.137$, $df = 172$).

Table 13

t-Test Measuring the Significant Difference of the General Satisfaction Score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire of Nebraska Superintendents Grouped by Age

	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Group 1 (1987)	54	77.71	8.335	1.114
Group 2 (1987)	54	76.38	11.957	1.627
Group 1 (2012)	95	82.57	8.297	0.851
Group 2 (2012)	81	81.96	8.280	0.920

	Pooled Variance t-Value	df	2-Tailed Probability
1987	.68	108	.500
2012 Equal Variance Assumed	.483	174	.630
2012 Equal Variance Not Assumed	.483	169.737	.630

Note: Group 1 in 1987 consisted of 54 respondents who were less than or equal to 45 years of age; Group 2 consisted of 54 respondents who were greater than or equal to 46 years of age. Group 1 in 2012 consisted of 95 respondents who were less than or equal to 54 years of age; Group 2 consisted of 81 respondents who were greater than or equal to 55 years of age. No significant difference was found between the two groups on either study. In 1987, one superintendent did not respond. In 2012, two superintendents did not respond.

Table 14

t- Test Measuring the Significant Difference of the General Satisfaction Score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire of Nebraska Superintendents Grouped by Size of School

	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Group 1 (1987)	54	75.88	8.66	1.17
Group 2 (1987)	53	78.20	11.86	1.62
Group 1 (2012)	87	80.93	8.311	0.891
Group 2 (2012)	87	83.60	8.148	0.874

	Pooled Variance	t-Value	df	2-Tailed Probability
1987		-1.16	105	.250
2012 Equal Variance Assumed		-2.137	172	.034
2012 Equal Variance Not Assumed		-2.137	171.933	.034

Note: Group 1 in 1987 consisted of 54 respondents from schools with less than 290 students; Group 2 consisted of 53 respondents from schools with more than 290 students. Group 1 in 2012 consisted of 87 respondents from schools with less than 363.5 students; Group 2 consisted of 87 respondents from schools with more than 363.5 students. No significant difference was found between groups in either study. In 1987 two superintendents did not respond to this question. In 2012 four superintendents did not respond.

Table 15 reports the mean general satisfaction scores on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire for Nebraska school superintendents by experience to show a significant difference. In the 1987 study Group 1 consisted of 54 superintendents who had 9 years or less experience. Group 2 consisted of 55 superintendents with 10 or more years of experience. The 2012 study median was 8 years. Group 1 consisted of 98 superintendents with 8 years or less experience. Group 2 was composed of 77 superintendents with 9 years or more experience. The 1987 study had a mean score for

Table 15

t-Test Measuring the Significant Difference of the General Satisfaction Score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire of Nebraska Superintendents Grouped by Experience

	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Group 1 (1987)	54	77.88	9.74	1.32
Group 2 (1987)	55	76.20	10.92	1.48
Group 1 (2012)	98	81.70	7.724	0.780
Group 2 (2012)	77	83.03	8.966	1.022

	Pooled Variance t-Value	df	2-Tailed Probability
1987	0.85	106	.400
2012 Equal Variance Assumed	-1.047	173	.297
2012 Equal Variance Not Assumed	-1.028	150.397	.305

Note: Group 1 in 1987 consisted of 54 respondents with 9 years or less experience; Group 2 consisted of 55 respondents from schools with 10 years or more experience. Group 1 in 2012 consisted of 98 respondents with 8 years or less experience; Group 2 consisted of 77 respondents with 9 years or more experience. No significant difference was found between groups in either study. In 2012 three superintendents did not respond to the experience question.

Group 1 of 77.88 and for Group 2 76.20. There was no significant difference at the .050 level of significance ($t = .85$, $df = 106$). The 2012 study had mean scores of 81.70 for Group 1 and 83.03 for Group 2. There was no significant difference found ($t = -1.047$, $df = 173$).

Table 16 reports the mean general satisfaction scores on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire for Nebraska school superintendents by salary to show a significant difference. In the 1987 study, Group 1 consisted of 53 superintendents who

Table 16

t-Test Measuring the Significant Difference of the General Satisfaction Score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire of Nebraska Superintendents Grouped by Salary

	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Group 1 (1987)	53	78.48	11.652	1.586
Group 2 (1987)	53	75.81	8.853	1.168
Group 1 (2012)	85	80.29	7.911	0.858
Group 2 (2012)	85	84.13	8.202	0.890

	Pooled Variance	t-Value	df	2-Tailed Probability
1987		-1.35	106	.179
2012 Equal Variance Assumed		-3.103	168	.002
2012 Equal Variance Not Assumed		-3.103	167.781	.002

Note: Group 1 in 1987 consisted of 53 respondents with a salary less than \$39,000; Group 2 consisted of 53 respondents with a salary larger than \$39,000. Group 1 in 2012 consisted of 85 respondents with a salary less than \$110,350; Group 2 consisted of 85 respondents with a salary larger than \$110,350. No significant difference was found between groups in either study. In 1987 three superintendents did not respond to the salary question. In 2012 eight superintendents did not respond to the salary question.

had a salary less than \$39,000. Group 2 consisted of 53 superintendents who had a salary larger than \$39,000. The 2012 study median was \$110,350. Group 1 consisted of 85 superintendents who had a salary less than \$110,350. Group 2 was composed of 85 superintendents who had a salary more than \$110,350. The 1987 study had a mean score for Group 1 of 75.81 and Group 2 of 78.48. There was no significant difference at the .050 level of significance ($t = -1.35$, $df = 106$). The 2012 study had mean scores of 80.29 for Group 1 and 84.13 for Group 2. There was no significant difference found

($t = -3.103$, $df = 168$). It should be noted the groupings in the 1987 study were reversed between more than and less than to maintain consistency.

Table 17 reports the mean general satisfaction scores on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire for Nebraska school superintendents by gender to show a significant difference. The 1987 study did not include gender. The 2012 study had 158 male respondents and 18 female respondents. Group 1 consisted of 158 male superintendents. Group 2 was composed of 18 female superintendents. The 2012 study had mean scores of 81.97 for Group 1 and 85.11 for Group 2. There was no significant difference found ($t = -1.533$, $df = 174$).

Table 17

t-Test Measuring the Significant Difference of the General Satisfaction Score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire of Nebraska Superintendents Grouped by Gender

	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Group 1 (2012)	158	81.97	8.215	0.654
Group 2 (2012)	18	85.11	8.464	1.995
		Pooled Variance t-Value	df	2-Tailed Probability
2012 Equal Variance Assumed		-1.533	174	.127
2012 Equal Variance Not Assumed		-1.497	20.819	.149

Note: Group 1 consisted of 158 male superintendents; Group 2 consisted of 18 female superintendents. No significant difference was found. Two superintendents did not respond to the gender question.

In 1987 one-way analysis of variance was completed using job satisfaction as the dependent variable and the degree attained as the independent variable. This ANOVA procedure was repeated in 2012. Table 18 reports the results of the ANOVA procedure and comparison. In 1987 there were seven respondents with master's degrees, 82 respondents with a Specialist Degree, and 20 superintendents with a Doctoral Degree. In 1987 the degree of satisfaction increased by degree level but was not found significant ($F(2,109) = 68.39$). The 2012 procedure had five respondents with a master's degree, 124 respondents with a specialist degree, and 46 respondents with a Ph.D. or Ed.D. In 2012 the degree of satisfaction did not increase by degree level and was not found to be significant ($F(2,172) = .155$).

A multiple regression procedure was completed to compare the relationship between the constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and the six factors being studied. The previous multiple regression procedure in this study compared the general satisfaction score on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and the six factors studied. Table 19 reports the results and comparison of this procedure from 1987 to 2012. The results noted significance at the .050 level in only a few constructs in 1987 and in 2012.

The multiple regression procedure measured the relationship between the 20 constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and the six factors studied. Five of the 12 constructs that showed significance were associated with salary. It should be noted that the variable can grab the same portion of the variance. The highest correlation ($R = .292$) was found between salary and the compensation construct. This mirrored the results of the 1987 study where it was reported as the highest correlation ($r = .5379$).

Table 18

Results of a One-Way Analysis of Variance of the Relationship between Degree Attainment and the General Job Satisfaction of Nebraska School Superintendents

	Number (1987)	Mean (1987)	Number (2012)	Number (2012)
Master's Degree	07	72.85	05	83.20
Specialist Degree	82	77.18	124	82.06
Ph.D. or Ed.D.	20	78.02	46	82.78

	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
Between groups (1987)	2	144.458	72.229	68.39	.5069
Within groups (1987)	107	11302.096	105.627		
Total (1987)	109	11446.554			

	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between groups (2012)	2	21.604	10.802	.155	.856
Within groups (2012)	172	11950.110	69.47		
Total (2012)	174	11971.714			

Note: No two groups were significantly different at the .050 level.

Only three of the constructs showed significance in both 1987 and 2012 to the variables being studied. These constructs/variables were Advancement/Salary, Compensation/Salary, and Variety/Degree Attainment. Seven constructs had no significance in either study to the factors being studied. Those seven constructs were achievement utilization, moral values, recognition, social status, supervision-human relations, supervision-technical, and working conditions.

Table 19

Multiple Regression Analysis of the Relationship between the Scores of the Constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and Six Factors as Reported by Nebraska School Superintendents

Dependent Variable	Individual Variable	1987			2012		
		Sig of F	Multiple Regression (R)	R Squared	Sig.	R	Adjusted R Square
Achievement	Salary				.009	.278	.043
Activity	Degree Attainment	.0380	.2009	.0437			
	Gender				.035	.240	.023
Advancement	Salary	.0097	.2512	.0631	.022	.255	.030
	Experience	.0010	.2085	.0429			
	Gender				.043	.255	.030
Authority	Experience	.0333	.2059	.0424			
Company Policies	Salary	.0366	.2023	.0409			
Compensation	Salary	.0000	.5379	.2893	.004	.292	.051
	Size of School				.022	.292	.051
	Experience				.038	.292	.051
Co-Workers	Age	.0040	.2762	.0763			
Creativity	Degree Attainment				.034	.237	.021
Independence	Experience	.0324	.2070	.0428			
	Age				.049	.246	.026
Responsibility	Salary				.027	.222	.014
Security	Salary	.0117	.2427	.0589			
Social Service	Salary				.015	.279	.043
Variety	Degree	.0396	.1993	.0397	.007	.253	.029

Note: 1987 study used R squared. 2012 study used Adjusted R Square.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Overview

This chapter will present the answers and compare the three research questions based on the results obtained in a 1987 study of Nebraska superintendents by Dr. Nelson:

1. As measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, what is the degree of satisfaction of school superintendents in Nebraska?
2. As measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, in what areas are Nebraska superintendents finding satisfaction with their work and in what areas are they finding dissatisfaction?
3. What is the relationship of the job satisfaction of school superintendents in Nebraska and the selected factors of gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size?

A summary of the purposes of and the methods employed in the study, findings acquired from a review of applicable literature, and a summary of the findings of this study; conclusions based upon the findings; and recommendations for additional study are presented in this chapter.

Purpose and Methods Employed in the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of job satisfaction of superintendents in the state of Nebraska. The study investigated the relationship between levels of job satisfaction with gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size. The researcher identified this problem as a result of the increased demands and pressures on the position. This study replicated the work of Dr. Kenneth

Nelson (1987) to determine the degree of job satisfaction for current superintendents working in the state of Nebraska.

The results of this study will be beneficial to superintendents and school boards. This study answered the degree to which superintendents in Nebraska are satisfied with their jobs. The study also determined the areas which bring the greatest satisfaction to superintendents. These factors of satisfaction will help predict areas that will contribute to the success of the superintendent and provide valuable information for boards in recruiting and retaining superintendents. Colleges and universities will also gain insight from this study for use when preparing superintendent candidates for the job pool.

Procedure

Data was obtained through completion of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire by Nebraska superintendents in April of 2012. This study replicated the work of Dr. Kenneth Nelson (1987) to determine the degree of job satisfaction for current superintendents working in the state of Nebraska so no pilot study was conducted.

Once data from the final questionnaire was retrieved, scores were recorded ranging from a high 5 (very satisfied) to a low 1 (very dissatisfied). Means, medians, and standard deviations were compiled. The scores of the variables were rank ordered. Data from Dr. Nelson's 1987 study analysis was replicated and checked for significant differences. A correlation study was run to identify the relationship between the six factors gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size with levels of job satisfaction. A multiple regression procedure was run to determine if the six factors were predictors of job satisfaction. A t-test was run on each factor using a median split to determine if there was a significant difference. A one-way analysis of variance

using job satisfaction as the dependent variable and degree attainment as the independent variable was conducted. A multiple regression procedure was completed to compare the constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and the six factors being studied in this research.

Review of Literature

There were three important areas related to job satisfaction according to Luthans (1998). The first is perceived job satisfaction being an emotional response to a job situation. The truthfulness and openness of the responses was an important factor in determining the perceived job satisfaction of Nebraska superintendents. The second source of satisfaction was how well the outcomes exceeded expectations. The third source of satisfaction was the compilation of job characteristics such as work itself, pay, promotion opportunity, supervision, and coworkers. Nelson (1987) in his study used age, experience, school size, salary, and degree attainment as variables. Kowalski et al. (2011) identified areas which superintendents viewed as important to job satisfaction which included district level variables, compensation, and technology.

The literature review of recent studies showed a general satisfaction displayed by superintendents towards their jobs. Kowalski et al. (2011) showed 69.3% of superintendents were very satisfied with their career choice but only 63.2% would definitely follow the career path again. There was a trend showing a lower degree of satisfaction than in the past. There was little significance found in the research on Nebraska superintendents between factors identified and overall job satisfaction in 1987.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to answer and compare the three research questions based on the results obtained in a 1987 study of Nebraska superintendents by Dr. Nelson:

Research question 1. As measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, what is the degree of satisfaction of school superintendents in Nebraska?

The 1987 Nebraska superintendent score was near the middle of the occupational grouping. The 2012 data is well above the original data from 1987 and near the top of the rankings. Nebraska superintendents scored higher than the norm group and nearly identical to teachers from 1977. It should be noted the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire was normed in 1977. This data should give the reader an indication of the satisfaction of Nebraska superintendents to the occupational groups identified.

Research question 2. As measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, in what areas are Nebraska superintendents finding satisfaction with their work and in what areas are they finding dissatisfaction?

The 2012 Nebraska school superintendents scored highest in the areas of social service, variety, ability utilization, and activity. The top four areas in 1987 were social service, moral values, responsibility, and creativity. Social service was the only construct to remain in the top four, ranking number one in both studies. The 2012 Nebraska school superintendents scored lowest in the areas of co-workers, advancement, recognition, and authority. The bottom four areas in 1987 were advancement, supervision-technical, compensation, and recognition. Both advancement and recognition ranked in the bottom four constructs in both studies.

Research question 3. What is the relationship of the job satisfaction of school superintendents in Nebraska and the selected factors of gender, age, compensation, experience, degree attainment, and school size?

Salary was the only factor found to be significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This was also the only significant factor found by Dr. Nelson in his 1987 study of Nebraska school superintendents. Factors not included in this study may have a more significant effect upon the satisfaction of Nebraska school superintendents, but the 2012 study was in agreement with Dr. Nelson's study finding only salary as significant.

Conclusions

The relationship between job satisfaction and the factors that affect job satisfaction of Nebraska school superintendents has received little study. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire was the instrument used to measure Nebraska school superintendent job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is still a key factor in determining attitudes toward work. The effect of age, degree attainment, salary, experience, and school size were compared to Dr. Nelson's 1987 study. The effect of gender was added to this study.

The results of the 2012 comparison study to the 1987 study were similar, although the overall satisfaction of Nebraska school superintendents was reported much higher in 2012 than 1987. These results were in the upper tier compared to the norm groups established in 1977 for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1977).

The Nebraska school superintendents scored highest in the areas of social service, variety, ability utilization, and activity. The top four areas in 1987 were social service, moral values, responsibility, and creativity. The Nebraska school superintendents scored

lowest in the areas of co-workers, advancement, recognition, and authority. The bottom four areas in 1987 were advancement, supervision-technical, compensation, and recognition. Social service, which was defined as the chance to do things for other people, remained the highest area of satisfaction for Nebraska school superintendents. In 2012, Nebraska school superintendents found satisfaction is keeping busy while utilizing their abilities and changing tasks from time to time. The Nebraska school superintendents found dissatisfaction in advancing in the job, gaining praise for good work, telling people what to do, and co-workers ability to get along.

Salary was the lone variable that appeared to have any level of significance in the study. The multiple regression procedure for salary accounted for 5 of the 12 constructs where significance was found. The factor with the highest correlation to satisfaction was salary at .209. This factor was also the only factor found to be significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The median split of groups was performed for age, degree attainment, school size, experience, salary, and gender. A t-test showed no significant difference at the .05 level between any of these groups. An ANOVA was run for degree attainment with no significance found in this procedure.

The results of the multiple regression procedure found salary accounted for 5 of the 12 constructs where significance was found. The multiple regression procedure compared the 6 variables to the 20 constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire.

Implications

The following implications were derived from this study.

1. Concerns continue to be expressed by Nebraska superintendents in the area of advancement. Advancement was defined as the chances for advancement on this job.
2. Concerns continue to be expressed by Nebraska superintendents in the area of recognition. Recognition was defined as the praise I get for doing a good job. School boards need to be aware of the negative sense of satisfaction being reported.
3. Salary does have an effect on the job satisfaction of Nebraska school superintendents. The results of this study indicated an increased satisfaction of Nebraska school superintendents with their job satisfaction since 1987.
4. Nebraska school board members need to be aware of the high satisfaction reported by the Nebraska school superintendents in the areas of social service (the chance to do things for other people), variety (the chance to do different things from time to time), ability utilization (the chance to do something that makes use of my abilities), and activity (being able to keep busy all the time).
5. Nebraska school board members need to be aware that Nebraska school superintendents found the least satisfaction in the areas of co-workers (the way my co-workers get along with each other), advancement (the chances for advancement on this job), recognition (the praise I get for doing a good job), and authority (The chance to tell other people what to do).

Future Study Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested based upon the comparative findings of the 1987 and 2012 job satisfaction studies of Nebraska school superintendents.

1. Replication of this study with an updated instrument should be conducted with the inclusion of various groups including principals.
2. A comparison of this study should be made to the national study of school superintendents across the United States.
3. A comparison of this study to chief executive officers of companies in the business world should be conducted.

Conclusions

This study was undertaken as a replication of Dr. Nelson's 1987 study on job satisfaction of Nebraska school superintendents using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1977). The 1987 Nebraska superintendent score was near the middle of the occupational grouping when overall satisfaction scores were compared. The 2012 data is well above the original data from 1987 and near the top of the rankings in conjunction with job satisfaction.

Dr. Nelson's 1987 study was compared to the 2012 data. The constructs of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss et al., 1977) was compared to the factors being studied found that social service was the only construct to remain in the top four, ranking number one in both studies. Both the advancement and recognition constructs ranked in the bottom four constructs in each study.

Dr. Nelson in a 1987 study found salary to be a significant predictor of job satisfaction for Nebraska school superintendents. His study also indicated that size of school, age, degree attainment, and experience were not significant factors in predicting job satisfaction. This study was undertaken with the addition of gender as a factor. The 2012 study found all of Dr. Nelson's conclusions in these areas to remain consistent.

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Appendix A

Letter Requesting Permission to use Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

Vocational Psychology Research
University of Minnesota
N657 Elliott Hall
Minneapolis MN 55455-0344

To whom it may concern:

I am requesting permission to use the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire for my dissertation. I will be using the short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. The topic to be researched will be the factors that affect the job satisfaction of Nebraska school superintendents.

I have completed all of the course work for the Ed. D. at the University of Nebraska. My advisor is Dr. Jody Isernhagen.

Please contact me with any questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Troy L. Unzicker
710 E. 8th
Kimball, NE 69145
(308) 235-3135 Home
(308) 235-2188 Work

Appendix B

Permission Letter from University of Minnesota

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

Department of Psychology
College of Liberal Arts

N218 Elliott Hall
75 East River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Office: 612-625-2818
Fax: 612-626-2079
www.psych.umn.edu

February 24, 2012

Troy Unzicker
901 S Nadine
Kimball, NE 69145

Dear Troy Unzicker:

We are pleased to grant you permission to use the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire 1977 short form version in your research project.

Vocational Psychology Research is currently in the process of revising the MSQ manual and it is very important that we receive copies of your research study results in order to construct new norm tables. Therefore, we would appreciate receiving a copy of your results including 1) demographic data of respondents, including age, education level, occupation and job tenure; and 2) response statistics including scale means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, and standard errors of measurement. If your tests are scored by us, we will already have the information detailed in item #2.

Your providing this information will be an important and valuable contribution to the new MSQ manual. If you have any questions concerning this request, please feel free to call us at 612-625-1367.

Sincerely,



Dr. David J. Weiss, Director
Vocational Psychology Research

Appendix C

Institutional Review Board Permission Letter

Your project has been approved by the IRB.

Project Title: A STUDY OF THE JOB SATISFACTION OF NEBRASKA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Approvers Comments:

Mr. Unzicker and Dr. Isernhagen,

Your project has been certified as Exempt. You are authorized to begin data collection.

1. The approved informed consent form has been uploaded to NUgrant (file with -Approved.pdf in the file name). Please use this form to distribute to participants. If you need to make changes to the informed consent form, please submit the revised form to the IRB for review and approval prior to using it. I have placed this on official letterhead and also added Dr. Isernhagen's name. Please make sure to use the stamped version to distribute.

Your official approval letter will be uploaded to NUgrant shortly.

Good luck with your research!

Becky Freeman
472-8127
bfreeman2@unl.edu

=====
This message has been sent to you through NUgrant. To view project/form you can click the link below.

Link: <https://nugrant.unl.edu/nugrant/orr/irb/projectDetails.php?ProjectFormID=17278>

Appendix D

Cover Letter/Informed Consent



Dear [name],

My name is Troy Unzicker. I am conducting a study on the job satisfaction of superintendents in Nebraska. You are invited to participate in this study as an individual who has knowledge and background in the desired field. This research is being conducted as a quantitative research project with intent of publication.

Participation in this study will require approximately 15 minutes of your time. The survey consists of 9 demographic information questions and 20 questions on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire short form. Participation will take place in the privacy of your office.

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

If interested, you will receive a copy of this study's findings by contacting researcher. You may find the learning experience enjoyable and the information may be helpful to you in understanding job satisfaction in Nebraska superintendents.

Any information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. The data will be stored in the investigator's password protected computer and will only be seen by the investigator during the study. All personally identifiable information will be removed from the study narrative and aliases will be used to protect your privacy. The survey has a code number for the purposes of a follow-up to non-respondents. The code will be removed once responses are received.

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. You may call the investigator at any time, office phone, (308) 235-2188, or my Graduate Advisor, Dr. Jody Isernhagen, at (402) 472-1088. If you would like to speak to some else about the research, you may contact UNL's Research Compliance Services office at 402-472-6965.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. By completing and submitting your survey responses, you have given your consent to participate in this research. You should keep this page for your records.

Your answers will be kept in strict confidence. I would appreciate your returning the demographic information and questionnaire within two weeks. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Troy L. Unzicker Ed.S., Principal Investigator
901 S. Nadine
Kimball, NE 69145

Office: (308) 235-2188

Encl: Demographic Information Questionnaire, Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, Return Envelope

Appendix E

Follow up letter



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SCIENCES
Department of Educational Administration

4/20/2012

{Addressee}

Dear Mr./Ms. Superintendent

I wanted to drop you a note and hopefully encourage you to participate in the study on superintendent satisfaction that I had sent to you earlier this month. I am happy to report that I have received over 66% of the surveys that have been sent out. If you have misplaced the material please feel free to request another copy by e-mailing me at tunzicker@kpslonghorns.org.

Due to the many demographic categories that are being considered in this study every response is very important to the validity of the study. I hope that if you haven't responded to the survey you will reconsider and complete it. If you have completed the survey please disregard this letter and accept my thanks.

Sincerely,

Troy L. Unzicker
901 S. Nadine
Kimball, NE 69145
(308) 235-2188

Appendix F

Demographic Information

Demographic Information

Name _____

1. What is the total number of students (K-12) in your school district? _____
2. What is your gender?
 Male
 Female
3. What is your current age? _____
4. Indicate the highest educational degree attained:
 Master's degree
 Specialist degree or equivalent
 Ed.D. or Ph.D.
5. Indicate your salary for the 2011-2012 school year. \$_____
6. In relationship to the compensation of superintendents from schools of comparable student count, which best describes your compensation?
 Above average
 Average
 Below average
7. Including this year, how many years have you been a superintendent? _____
8. Including this year, how many years have you been a superintendent in your current school? _____
9. How many schools have you served as a superintendent? _____

Comments:

Please consider any reference to supervisor or boss (in the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire) to mean your board of education.

Please consider any reference to company (in the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire) to mean your school district.

Your answers to the questions and all other information you give will be held in strictest confidence.

Appendix G

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

minnesota satisfaction questionnaire

(short-form)



Vocational Psychology Research
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Copyright 1977

minnesota satisfaction questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to give you a chance to tell **how you feel about your present job**, what things you are **satisfied** with and what things you are **not satisfied** with.

On the basis of your answers and those of people like you, we hope to get a better understanding of the things people **like and dislike about their jobs**.

On the next page you will find statements about your **present** job.

- Read each statement carefully.
- Decide **how satisfied you feel about the aspect of your job** described by the statement.

Keeping the statement in mind:

—if you feel that your job gives you **more than you expected**, check the box under **"Very Sat."** (Very Satisfied);

—if you feel that your job gives you **what you expected**, check the box under **"Sat."** (Satisfied);

—if you **cannot make up your mind** whether or not the job gives you what you expected, check the box under **"N"** (Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied);

—if you feel that your job gives you **less than you expected**, check the box under **"Dissat."** (Dissatisfied);

—if you feel that your job gives you **much less than you expected**, check the box under **"Very Dissat."** (Very Dissatisfied).

- Remember: Keep the statement in mind when deciding **how satisfied you feel about that aspect of your job**.
- Do this for **all** statements. Please answer **every** item.

Be frank and honest. Give a true picture of your feelings about your **present job**.

Ask yourself: How **satisfied** am I with this aspect of my job?

Very Sat. means I am very satisfied with this aspect of my job.

Sat. means I am satisfied with this aspect of my job.

N means I can't decide whether I am satisfied or not with this aspect of my job.

Dissat. means I am dissatisfied with this aspect of my job.

Very Dissat. means I am very dissatisfied with this aspect of my job.

On my present job, this is how I feel about	Very Dissat.	Dissat.	N	Sat.	Very Sat.
1. Being able to keep busy all the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The chance to work alone on the job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The chance to do different things from time to time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The chance to be "somebody" in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The way my boss handles his/her workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The competence of my supervisor in making decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The way my job provides for steady employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. The chance to do things for other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. The chance to tell people what to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. The way company policies are put into practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. My pay and the amount of work I do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. The chances for advancement on this job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. The freedom to use my own judgment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. The chance to try my own methods of doing the job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. The working conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. The way my co-workers get along with each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. The praise I get for doing a good job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Very Dissat.	Dissat.	N	Sat.	Very Sat.

Name _____ Today's Date _____ 19____
Please Print

1. Check one: Male Female

2. When were you born? _____ 19____

3. Circle the number of years of schooling you completed:

4 5 6 7 8
Grade School

9 10 11 12
High School

13 14 15 16
College

17 18 19 20
Graduate or
Professional School

4. What is your present job called? _____

5. What do you do on your present job? _____

6. How long have you been on your present job? _____ years _____ months

7. What would you call your **occupation**, your usual line of work? _____

8. How long have you been in this line of work? _____ years _____ months