A CASE STUDY COMPARISON OF NOVICE AND VETERAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF JOB SATISFACTION

by

James Mitchell Bailey, Jr.

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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ABSTRACT

American schools, like nations across the world, are faced with the challenge of recruiting and

retaining highly qualified teachers. The purpose of this case study was to discover and compare

the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to

longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. This research study followed a qualitative

research design using a case study framework from data collected through focus groups, one-on-

one interviews, and participant journaling. Participants included a total of 16 teachers within two

groups who had either a maximum of five years or a minimum of 11 years of teaching

experience with at least five of those years teaching in a middle school. The first group consisted

of eight novice teachers, those with less than five years of teaching experience, working in

middle schools located within Coweta County, Georgia. The second group consisted of eight

veteran teachers, those with more than 11 years of teaching experience, working in middle

schools located within Coweta County, Georgia. A total of eight participants, four from each

group, participated in a one-on-one interview and participant journaling. The other eight

participants, four from each group, participated in two separate focus group sessions and

participant journaling. Data were collected and analyzed by assigning a pseudonym to each

participant in the study and by classifying responses as a result of emerging themes. Findings

revealed eight essential themes that correlate to literature related to job satisfaction and school

climate, school leadership, and a teacher's working condition.

     Keywords: burnout, job satisfaction, novice teacher, retention, school climate,

     school leadership, self-efficacy, stress, veteran teacher, working conditions

Dedication

To my wife for all of your support during this and all of the challenges we have faced together over the years. I love you and could not have achieved this accomplishment without you.

To my wonderful children. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

To my father for always being a model of hard work and dedication. Thank you for helping me become the man I am today.

To my mother in Heaven. Thank you for always guiding me on the right path.

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List of Abbreviations

American Psychological Association (APA)

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)

Georgia College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI)

Instructional Review Board (IRB)

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)

Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educators Survey (MBI-ES)

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF)

Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF)

Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES)

The Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (TAPP or GaTAPP)

U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The purpose of this research study was to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction between novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. This chapter presents an introductory overview of the dissertation. Included is a background, situation to self, a statement of the problem, purpose statement, and the significance of the study. Additionally, research questions for this study are presented as well as a list of pertinent definitions.

Background

Teaching is a profession that some would say is a calling (Shedd, 2012). Educational reforms have shaped the classrooms of today with the implementation of Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), high stakes testing, and the state of Georgia has implemented the Georgia College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) to track teacher and school growth. School districts across the nation have been under close scrutiny to ensure the academic success of students.

Historical

Since 1994, teacher attrition rates have been steadily increasing, and it is estimated that 30 percent of teachers leave the profession within the first five years, resulting in high cost and negative impacts on student success (NCTAF, 2003). New teachers and veterans alike have become dissatisfied with teaching for a variety of reasons and teacher turnover is high (Hanushek, Rivkin, & Schiman, 2016). Previous studies on employee motivation led to Herzberg's theory relating to job satisfaction in 1959, further leading to his construct of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. By understanding how these motivators impact job satisfaction,

educational leaders could potentially increase retention of teachers (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Student success is negatively impacted due to teacher turnover because there is a lower quality of instruction (Hanushek et al., 2016). Additionally, turnover has negative impacts on school morale due to a lack of professional cohesion and creates a negative impact on the surrounding community as society's expectations are not being met (Sedivy-Benton & Boden-McGill, 2012). New teachers stated that it is difficult to focus on their new career because they feel abandoned, there is a lack of administrative support, and they receive no mentor collaboration (Beck & Kosnik, 2014).

Research on student success in high poverty schools revealed that schools in high-income communities usually had the advantage of working with a team of highly qualified teachers with years of experience and low turnover rates (Berry, Petrin, Gravelle, & Farmer, 2011). On the other hand, administrators in low-income schools routinely hired new teachers from universities who had little or no training in classroom management, curriculum standards, and district policies (Berry et al., 2011). As a result, the researchers found that 33% of teachers with less than three years of experience quit the profession completely, and this number was a third higher in high-need urban schools (Shuls & Maranto, 2014).

The United States will need approximately 2.7 million new teachers in the next 20 years, but these positions may go unfilled by experienced teachers due to the attrition rate of 50%. (Simos, 2013). According to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), "Students in high-poverty or high-minority schools are in desperate need of expert, high-quality teachers if their achievement and attainment levels are to improve" (as cited in Watlington, Shockley, Guglielmino, & Felsher, 2010).

Social

Shaha and Ellsworth (2013) reported that retaining highly qualified teachers is important to student academic success. Schools nationwide have implemented strategies and resources to support teacher development and increase job satisfaction. "Teachers with high self-efficacy devote themselves to their work and desire to remain in their position for as long as possible" (Gkolia, Belias, & Koustelios, 2014, p. 330). A study by Kraft and Papay (2014) found that teachers with 10 years of experience working in trusting, respectful, safe, and orderly school environments were 20% more effective than teachers working in schools that had fewer of these characteristics. These results were determined by student attendance, discipline, and test scores.

Salary has been a determining factor that has contributed to teachers' decisions to remain or leave the profession.

> With the current climate of the 2012 Presidential administration, an intense focus has been placed on the premise that money will be a significant factor in the improvement of student achievement. The thinking seems to be that with the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), teachers will stay in the profession longer. However, alluded to in the literature was that incentive pay does not influence the decision to stay in the profession. Rather, salary is significant only when it is not attached to any type of student achievement. (Sedivy-Benton & Boden-McGill, 2012, p. 78)

Working conditions, more than any other factor, have been cited as the determining cause that impacts a teacher's decision to stay or leave the profession. When teachers feel that they have control and influence in their school, they are more likely to stay (Sedivy-Benton & Boden-McGill, 2012). Administrators can include teachers in school decisions and give them some control over the curriculum and classroom environment. When schools create an environment

that supports teachers, teachers are empowered and demonstrate a commitment to student success (Lesaux, Jones, Bock, & Harris, 2015).

Theoretical

Due to the increased attention to recruitment and retention of teachers with a highly qualified status, literature must define the concept of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is described as "the perception of the person towards his or her job, job related activities, and environment. Job satisfaction is a combination of psychological and emotional experiences at work" (Mehta, 2012, p. 54). Generally speaking, job satisfaction encompasses the individual's perceptions of pleasurable experiences that include their attitudes towards specific aspects of the job: working conditions, autonomy, feelings of self-worth, individual work tasks, colleagues, and pay (Lu, While, & Barriball, 2005).

Recent literature described school climate, burnout, student discipline, and salary as critical indicators of teachers' perceptions and job satisfaction. Collie, Shapka, and Perry (2012) related school climate to a predictor of a teacher's job satisfaction and efficacy. Studies indicated that if teachers perceived that students had better behaviors and motivation, the teachers reported less stress and greater job satisfaction. Accordingly, if perceptions were positive, then the teacher's overall satisfaction, motivation, and confidence level increased (Collie et al., 2012).

Teacher levels of burnout and reasons for burnout can impact a teacher's perceptions of job satisfaction. Research has indicated that although teachers of every level of their career experience some form of burnout, those remaining in the profession experienced lower levels than those who left the profession (Marinell & Coca, 2013). Causes of burnout included workload, school environment, school leadership practices, low achievement,

coordination/mentoring, discipline, and emotional factors (Helou, Nabhani, & Bahous, 2016).

Additionally, a teacher's expectations as compared to the reality of the profession influenced

burnout. Many enter the teaching profession with high expectations of making a difference in a

child's academic, social, and emotional success, but when these standards are not achieved, they

take it personally, leading to guilt and depression (Helou et al., 2016). Discipline problems,

"especially in boys' classes, and physical tiredness resulting from non-instructional duties

leaving no time for rest led to burnout" (Helou et al., 2016, p. 561).

Recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers is an increasing epidemic in schools

worldwide. Identifying the reasons that contribute to a teacher's decision to remain or leave the

profession is critical in developing solutions to the problem. The existing literature highlighted

commonly reported problems concerned with teacher job satisfaction, student discipline, salary,

and issues with school administration (Helou et al., 2016). However, there are many underlying

themes that contribute to the problem and further research can possibly create a better

understanding of how schools can move forward in keeping teachers in the profession.

Situation to Self

My career path did not start in education as I have been a member of the military and

worked as a manager in the corporate world for several years. Now in my third career I have

served as a professional educator for 11 years in the public school system. I began my career as

a fourth grade teacher in a Title I elementary school in Florida where I taught for three years.

For the past eight years, I have been a middle grades science teacher in a Title I public school in

Coweta County, Georgia. During my 11 years as an educator, I have seen many colleagues in

my own and other school systems come and go, some new to teaching and others, veterans who

either retired or traded careers. Each year has brought new educational policies, different

perceptions and attitudes towards teaching, and opportunities for growth and reflection. Through the experiences of my colleagues and my own, I was interested in discovering the reasons and motivating factors that have led some to leave the profession while others remained. This interest was the foundation for my research.

There seems to be a consensus among my colleagues that the contributing factors to poor job satisfaction are lack of administrative support for teachers, excessive workload, and student characteristics that include discipline problems and low achievement. Although these issues impact the work environment, I have found that often it is the perceptions and attitudes of teachers that affect the reality of the situation and determine whether one stays or leaves the school. In reflecting on this, I thought about my own experiences dealing with the aforementioned factors and how my perceptions and attitudes impacted the outcomes.

I am currently a grade level team leader, member of the school council, and member of the school leadership team; these have provided me with several responsibilities and opportunities to discuss school-wide issues that concern both teacher and students. I serve as the go-between with teachers and administrators and ensure fairness and professionalism in all communications. Because of this, I have questioned some of the reasons given for negative job satisfaction from the leadership perspective. Often, teachers report that there is very little support from administration, but it is usually a general statement and not specific. This led me to consider if this lack of support is warranted or possibly an individual's perception of the circumstances. In many instances, I have brought an issue to the attention of administration who was unaware of a situation.

Excessive workload has been a recurring theme among teachers, and there is no doubt that teachers have a great deal of responsibilities. I agree that as an educator, I often find myself

extremely taxed with a heavy workload and when not at school, I am always thinking about ways to ensure my students' success. However, I also find ways to effectively manage my time and resources so that I can keep a positive outlook on my profession. Again, upon reflecting on my own behaviors, I have considered if possible contributors to the decision of one staying in the profession or leaving might have a correlation with individual attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions. These questions have caused me to research answers in literature to determine if a teacher's perceptions impact longevity.

The purpose of this research study was to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. Because I interviewed a total of 16 different educators, my philosophical assumption was ontological as I "embraced the idea of multiple realities" (Creswell, 2013, p. 20). Each participant had a different perspective, and I used this study to "report on these individual experiences as themes develop in the findings" (Creswell, 2013, p. 21). I used a constructivist paradigm in my proposal as I sought further comprehension of the field of education in which I work and relied on the perceptions of the participants to further guide the discussion of the study (Creswell, 2013). Because I have an investment in education as a veteran teacher, I was interested in understanding what causes some teachers to leave within their first few years while others become veterans. As I was considering stepping into a higher leadership role, I was motivated to glean a deeper understanding of these contributing factors in an effort to find solutions to retain highly qualified teachers.

Problem Statement

Job satisfaction, with regards to retention of novice and veteran elementary teachers, has been the focus of many researchers (Sun, Saultz, & Ye, 2016); however, few have provided an

in-depth comparison and understanding of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle

school teachers that lead to career longevity. Job satisfaction often leads to teachers vacating the

profession completely, and teacher shortages in American schools are not new. Historically, job

vacancies in low-income city schools have been difficult to fill (Martin & Mulvihill, 2016).

However, over the past several years, school districts are finding it more challenging than ever to

fill teaching positions (Cowan, Goldhaber, Hayes, & Theobald, 2016). Schools have been

creative in implementing incentives to recruit teachers that include bonuses, housing assistance,

loan forgiveness, and credentialing assistance (Yaffe, 2016). Some districts have been so

desperate to place a teacher in a classroom that they hire teachers with alternative certificates,

full-time substitutes, or student teachers (Engel & Finch, 2015). Shifts in the economy caused

many vacancies to fill. However, as the economy grew again, teachers fled the profession for

other positions, creating a plethora of vacancies (Yaffe, 2016). Although shortages affect all

school districts in America, high poverty districts suffer the most. The U.S. Department of

Education reported that these districts are twice as likely to fill vacancies with uncertified

temporary teachers not ready for the profession. According to the National Commission on

Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF, 2016), students served in these high poverty schools

have a disproportionate number of black students, and these students are being taught by at least

one of five teachers who do not meet state certification requirements. Many factors reportedly

cause teachers to leave the profession, including lack of autonomy, working conditions, job

dissatisfaction and respect. In 2008, Ingersoll noted that "working conditions are the main set of

factors causing teachers to leave" (as cited in Yaffe, 2016, p. 15).

Although the literature documents a critical need for teacher retention, there is a lack of

empirical evidence that investigates the perceptions of job satisfaction as it relates to novice and

veteran middle school teachers. Research into the relationship between workplace conditions

and teachers' intentions to leave may reveal how to increase the chances of retaining teachers

over the course of their careers (You & Conley, 2015). Another limitation to this research,

reported by Collie et al. (2012), is that a majority of the data have been collected from teachers

through questionnaires and not personal interviews. The possibility remains that only high

functioning teachers agreed to complete the questionnaire resulting in overly positive results

compared with the actual population. An additional limitation is that, with the use of

questionnaires, "it was not possible to know exactly how participants interpreted the questions,

and if they, in fact, viewed the constructs as the researchers intended" (Collie et al., 2012, p.

1200). The problem is that veteran teachers who once remained until retirement are leaving the

profession early, and a third of new teachers are leaving before their third year of teaching while

half leave before year five (NCTAF, 2016).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to discover and compare the perceptions of

job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one

county in the state of Georgia. You and Conley (2015) defined a novice teacher as a certified

teacher with five or less years of combined teaching experience and a veteran teacher as a

certified teacher with 11 or more years of experience. This research study utilized a case study

approach as the researcher "explore[d] a real-life, contemporary bounded system over time

through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information" (Creswell,

2013, p. 97).

During this research study, perceptions of job satisfaction included school climate,

influences of school leadership, and working conditions. This study considered workforce and

self-efficacy issues which might be prompting highly qualified novice and veteran middle school teachers to leave the profession before retirement, therefore, impacting student achievement.

The selected location for this research study was the Coweta County School District which is located in the state of Georgia approximately 30 miles southwest of Atlanta, Georgia. The Coweta County School system currently serves over 22,500 students and currently employs over 2,900 employees (Coweta County Schools Overview, 2017). The target population for this research study was a total of 16 teachers within two groups who had either a maximum of five years or a minimum of 11 years of teaching experience with at least five of those years teaching in a middle school. The first group consisted of eight current novice teachers, those with less than five years of teaching experience, between four different middle schools located within Coweta County, Georgia. The second group consisted of eight current veteran teachers, those with more than 11 years of teaching experience, between four different middle schools located within Coweta County, Georgia. Four teachers from each group, for a total of eight teachers, participated in a one-on-one interview with the researcher and each teacher also partook in participant journaling. Four different participants from each group, for a total of eight teachers, participated in two separate focus group discussions which were facilitated by the researcher and also completed participant journaling. One of the two focus group sessions consisted of four novice teachers and the other focus group discussion consisted of four veteran teachers.

Significance of the Study

This study sought to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. A review of literature revealed that there are numerous research studies that identify multiple factors of teacher burnout and stress and discuss how the term job satisfaction can mean

different things to different people. Limited research was found that examined middle school teachers and their job satisfaction, and more research is needed in this area (Marinell & Coca, 2013).

Due to the critical shortages of highly qualified teachers, school leaders need more understanding of teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction in order to improve teacher and student outcomes (Ash, Hodge, & Connell, 2013). Several documented studies have demonstrated that the teaching profession loses too many of its new educators (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011a; Haynes, 2014; Ingersoll, Merrill, & Stuckey, 2014; Keigher & Cross, 2010). Understanding the unique job satisfaction similarities and differences of both novice and veteran middle school teachers could benefit administrative personnel in Coweta County to reduce personnel retention levels. This information may also be beneficial to other counties in the state of Georgia struggling with teacher retention as well as schools across the nation.

This research study can possibly add to the existing literature as there is much focus on new teacher versus veteran teacher retention. Second, factors that shape the perceptions of job satisfaction can be beneficial to school administrators and policymakers when considering ways to recruit and retain all teachers to improve student achievement and decrease teacher turnover. By exploring the unique needs of novice and veteran middle school teachers and identifying factors that lead to job satisfaction, stakeholders can develop ways to meet the needs of these teachers which, in turn, may improve student achievement (Kraft & Papay, 2014).

Research Questions

Central Question: What are the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers?

Sub Question 1: How did perceptions of job satisfaction differ among novice and veteran middle school teachers?

Sub Question 2: How did years of service influence teacher perceptions of job satisfaction?

Sub Question 3: What did teachers perceive as the most influencing factor that led to job satisfaction?

The central question pertains to the positive or negative judgments that people make about their jobs (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). During their research, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) classified a teacher's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with his/her job into the areas of intrinsic rewards of teaching, school leadership, and school-based factors including workload and disruptive student behavior. The central question was also designed to focus on the overall job satisfaction of middle school teachers exclusively because Helou et al. (2016), who did not focus on separate grade levels as an independent cause of job dissatisfaction, discovered that teachers who taught in middle grades reported higher levels of job dissatisfaction than those who taught in higher grades. An additional study by Sezer (2012), which did not focus on separate grade levels as an independent cause of job dissatisfaction, found that middle school teachers experienced lower levels of job satisfaction than elementary school teachers.

Sub questions one and two are related to career stage theories by Steffey (1989), Huberman (1993), You and Conley (2015), and Sun et al. (2016). According to Steffey, although a teacher may or may not demonstrate all the characteristics of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction at each stage, they will move through each stage if they remain in the profession long enough. Additionally, teachers undergo changes in their overall job satisfaction with regard to their roles as educators, their orientation toward work, and their enthusiasm which may be identified at a particular time in their careers (Steffey, 1989).

Sub question three pertains to the individual factors that teachers perceive have the most influence on their overall job satisfaction. This question is framed in Maslow's (1959) hierarchy of needs which is related to an individual's pursuit of their own highest point of happiness.

Definitions

1. *Burnout* – To fail, wear out, or become exhausted by making excessive demands on energy, strength, or resources. A staff member in an alternative institution burns out for whatever reasons and becomes inoperative for all intents and purposes (Freudenberger, 1974, p. 160).

2. *Job satisfaction* – The perception of the person towards his or her job, job related activities and environment. Job satisfaction is a combination of psychological and emotional experiences at work (Mehta, 2012, p. 54).

3. *Novice teacher* – A certified teacher with five or less years of combined teaching experience (You & Conley, 2015).

4. *School climate* – The quality and character of school life, including the norms, values, and expectations that a school accepts and promotes (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016, p. 292).

5. *Stress* – An imbalance between risk and protective factors. When a risk outweighs a person's protective mechanisms, the person's perceived or actual ability to endure a negative situation is diminished (Prilleltensky, Neff, & Bessell, 2016).

6. *Teacher attrition* – The permanent movement of teachers out of the classroom either due to retirement or into another profession (Djonko-Moore, 2016).

7. *Teacher mobility* – The movement of teachers to another teaching position not in the same school (Djonko-Moore, 2016).

8. *Veteran teacher* – A certified teacher with 11 or more years of combined teaching experience (You & Conley, 2015).

Summary

The first chapter of this research study presented an overview of relevant literature and described the gaps in the existing literature. Discussion included common themes in the literature that provided factors contributing to job satisfaction among teachers. These factors relating to job satisfaction, in turn, provided insight into teacher turnover and reasons why teachers left the profession. Also included were a problem statement, a purpose statement, and research questions. Researcher motivations were included along with limitations. Chapter two will include an outline of the literature review that will increase current knowledge of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the theoretical framework guiding this study which sought to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers leading to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. A review of relevant literature related to the phenomenon of perceptions of job satisfaction including school climate, school leadership, and teacher working conditions is also included. The study is grounded in Maslow's (1959) hierarchy of needs which is related to an individual's pursuit of their own highest point of happiness. Additionally, the study is grounded in Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory which relates to an individual's self-perception.

Theoretical Framework

There is a well-established link between employees' satisfaction and the diverse aspects of the organization where they work, and a teacher's overall job satisfaction is critical to a school's success (Stearns, Banerjee, Moller, & Mickelson, 2015). Additionally, there is a relationship between job satisfaction and the retention of teachers (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). The theoretical frameworks guiding this study are grounded in Maslow's (1959) hierarchy of needs and Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory which relates to an individual's self-perception. According to research by Snyder and Fisk (2016), teachers who reported higher job satisfaction also reported persistence when dealing with difficult challenges, higher levels of planning and organization, and a stronger commitment to both the teaching profession and their schools.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's (1959) hierarchy of needs theory provides a foundational model that can assist schools in creating an environment conducive to meeting the needs of teachers which, in turn,

improves job satisfaction. Maslow theorized that a person's basic needs are organized by a level of motivation with the basic physiological needs and safety at the bottom, the psychological needs of love and esteem next, and self-actualization at the top. When a person reaches the self-actualization state, or a "high level of maturation, health, and self-fulfillment, they have so much to teach us that sometimes they seem almost like a different breed of human beings" (Maslow, 1959, p. 43). This peak experience is a moment inside the hierarchy of needs theory where a person reaches the highest point of happiness and self-fulfillment during the basic cognitive happenings in rare but exciting moments. This moment is euphoric and "is felt as a self-validating, self-justifying moment which carries its own intrinsic value with it" (Maslow, 1959, p. 49).

Maslow's (1959) hierarchy of needs theory is relevant to this study as it is associated with the novice and veteran middle school teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction. A study by Takaki, Taniguchi, and Fujii (2016), which utilized Maslow's theory, suggested that feelings of contribution and acceptance in the workforce were associated with higher work engagement and lower psychological distress. The research by Takaki et al. found that when a sense of contribution and acceptance at the workplace is low, the subject's psychological distress becomes high. However, when the two factors of contribution and acceptance were high, work engagement was also increased which confirmed Maslow's level of motivation theory (Takaki et al., 2016).

Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory

Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory states that appraisal of a performance and the subsequent outcome is an inferential process in which all factors must be weighed. People will also alter their own perceived self-efficacy by "the difficulty of the task, the amount of effort

they expend, the amount of external aid they receive, the situational circumstances under which they perform, and their mood and physical state at the time" (Bandura, 1986, p. 363). For the purpose of this theory, a "performance is conventionally defined as 'an accomplishment' or 'something done,' and an 'outcome' as 'something that follows as a result or consequence of an activity'" (Bandura, 1986, p. 361).

Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory is relevant to this study as it is associated with the novice and veteran middle school teachers' self-efficacy and perceptions of job satisfaction. According to research by Snyder and Fisk (2016), a teacher's perception of self-efficacy is paramount because of its relationship to job satisfaction factors which include student achievement, teaching behaviors, and teacher persistence. Teachers' self-efficacy also affects their accomplishments in goal setting and achieving their aspirations (Snyder & Fisk, 2016).

Related Literature

Research conducted by Haynes (2014) revealed that approximately 13% of the 3.4 million public school teachers in America either transfer to a different school or completely abandon the profession each year. Haynes stated that "this high annual turnover rate seriously compromises the nation's capacity to ensure that all students have access to skilled teaching" (p. 2). Ingersoll et al. (2014) reported that the percentage of new teachers leaving the teaching profession after five years ranged from 40 to 50 percent, with most teachers leaving high-poverty, high-minority, urban, and rural public schools.

> The cumulative costs of attrition of those leaving teaching altogether are high.
> Researchers estimate that states spend between $1 billion and $2.2 billion per year on
> teacher attrition and turnover. Studies suggest that the price tag for recruitment and
> replacement seriously underestimates the cumulative costs of eroding the caliber and

stability of the teacher workforce, particularly in chronically underperforming schools

serving the neediest students. (Haynes, 2014, p. 3)

In November of 2015 the Georgia Department of Education surveyed over 53,000

teachers in the state on possible reasons that 44% of their teachers leave within the first five

years of employment (Owens, 2015). This survey was evenly distributed with 26,603

elementary responding, 11,989 middle responding, and 13,773 high school teachers responding.

The Georgia Department of Education also reported that the responses were in line with the

teacher workforce in Georgia based on geography and years of experience (Owens, 2015). Of

the over 53,000 teachers that responded, over 10,500 had less than five years of experience while

more than 31,800 had 11 or more years of teaching experience.

From this survey, results indicated that regardless of years' experience or grade levels

taught, fewer than three percent of the participants stated that they would recommend the

teaching profession to future graduating students (Owens, 2015). According to the participants,

the departing teachers ranked the top reason for leaving as the "number and emphasis of

mandated tests" (Owens, 2015, p. 3). Teachers in the survey shared that assessments, and the

time spent planning for these assessments, have become the primary focus in education rather

than teaching. Participants stated that these assessments, coupled with additional responsibilities

outside of the classroom, added to the time away from actual teaching and time with their own

families (Owens, 2015). Further, teachers reported that lack of respect, autonomy, and support

caused overwhelming stress that led to job dissatisfaction (Owens, 2015).

The results of the Georgia Department of Education survey clearly substantiate a need for

further research into teacher attrition in Georgia. Owens (2015) stated that the high school

dropout rate in Georgia has finally received needed attention, and teacher attrition should receive

the same attention. The Georgia Department of Education reported that 44% of teachers leave

within the first five years of employment, and Georgia teachers reported that those with more

experience are less likely to recommend the teaching profession to future candidates (Owens,

2015).

Over the past 20 years, analyses of studies and statistics reflect that teacher attrition and

retention continue to be critical issues that face American schools (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011b).

Much research exists to examine the issues related to teacher attrition and retention and general

categories have emerged related to the reasons why teachers leave education. The conclusions

are not surprising: low compensation, changes in life situation, lack of administrative support,

little input to school policy, and challenging students (Torres, 2012). Better understanding of

why teachers leave and why others remain in the profession is important to finding solutions to

the epidemic (Haynes, 2014). High teacher turnover is expensive and impacts the schools, the

students, and their communities (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011b; Haynes, 2014).

Studies have indicated that a teacher's lack of control and input has caused many to feel

more like technicians versus professionals. This has caused frustration as it limits a teacher's

creativity and influence in the classroom and undermines the intellectual aspects of teaching

(Santoro, 2011). High stakes testing and accountability measured by legal policies have also

contributed to a demoralization of teachers (Santoro, 2011). Santoro (2011) further noted that

positive interactions between teachers and students have a great impact on a teacher's job

satisfaction but can become hindered due to a standardized, narrow curriculum that does not

reflect the actual happenings in the classroom.

Career Stages

The profession of teaching has gone beyond the traditional concept of a classroom filled with students ready and willing to learn. Those who are in the profession consider it more than just a profession; rather, they regard it as a way of life (Neller, 2015). Over the years, several theories have developed to describe different career stages that are common among most teachers. Huberman (1993) refers to these as professional life cycles, while other researchers may refer to them as stages or phases. Regardless of the name, researchers agree that most teachers go through these phases, or as Steffey (1989) referred to them as career stages, at some point in their careers (Huberman, 1993; Steffey, 1989; You & Conley, 2015). Steffey described these career stages as having identifiable and changeable characteristics that educators experience during the course of their career. The premise of the career stage theory is founded in Maslow's (1959) self-actualization theory that suggests that humans must have different levels of need met prior to reaching the stage of self-actualization. For teachers, once they move through these hierarchy levels of need in their career, they become more confident and feel as though they are contributing to the work environment (Steffey, 1989). The career stage theory provides a possible rationale for teachers' feelings, behaviors, and emotions leading to job satisfaction throughout their teaching careers.

According to Steffey (1989), the five career stages are anticipatory stage, expert/master stage, renewal stage, withdrawal stage, and exit stage. Specific characteristics are often related to each stage; however, they can vary from person to person and the timing may vary depending on the support system and the extent to which reinforcement is available (Steffey, 1989). Even though teachers go through these stages at different times and may or may not demonstrate all the characteristics of each stage, most will move through each stage if they remain in the

profession long enough. These multiple career stages, according to Steffey, provide a continuum that reflects a teacher's career from start to retirement. Beginning teachers, for example, often enter the profession with excitement and enthusiasm ready to change the world while teachers in the final stages of their career may be experiencing burnout and emotional exhaustion that leads to an exodus of the profession. The career stages described by Steffey could provide an explanation for why some teachers base their motivation on internal factors versus exclusively focusing on external rewards. Additionally, these stages may better explain why teachers are more motivated at different point in their careers. The longer a teacher stays in the profession, the greater the chance that the teacher will exhibit characteristics of each career stage. Veteran teachers, those defined by You and Conley (2015) as having taught for 11 or more years, have been shown in the literature as progressing through these career stages. According to Steffey, teachers undergo changes with regard to their roles as educators, their orientation toward work, their self-perception, their vibrancy, and their enthusiasm, which can be identified at a particular time in their careers.

Steffey (1989) stated that as teachers become aware of the stage they are in, they can change their orientation and, depending on the levels of support from administrators and coworkers, are able to change their own orientation towards their job. A teacher's orientation is internal and, according to Steffey, is not stable. Instead, the orientation is fragile, permeable, regenerative and expandable, and can be renewable. The career stages model is based on the concept of an internal orientation and affects one's perceptions about his/her job.

Anticipatory stage. This first career stage is described using characteristics of idealism and creative energy. Teachers in the anticipatory stage are often new teachers exiting college, prepared and enthusiastic about the profession. They believe that they hold the power to make

an impact on education, are often the first to arrive and the last to leave, and often volunteer for committees, clubs, and various other extra assignments within the school.

> This stage is characterized by high motivation for attaining knowledge; the individual attempts to improve his/her teaching methods, to develop work skills and become acquainted with different teaching materials. This stage is also perceived as a crossroad as teachers who succeed enter the growth phase, while others may encounter career frustration or instability. (Milica & Bojana, 2015, p. 167)

Also included in the anticipatory career stage are those who arrive from a previous school district ready for a change; they exemplify similar characteristics to a new teacher, full of energy and idealistic views (Steffey, 1989).

Huberman (1993) refers to the first few years of a new teacher's career as a stage of survival and discovery as "many teachers describe their first three years as a period during which they felt exhausted and overburdened with work" (as cited in Samuelsson, Samuelsson, & Autio, 2015, p. 31). Many new teachers also shared that they "had difficulties with the schedule and the constant process of trial and error" (Samuelsson et al., 2015, p. 31). Cowan et al. (2016) argued, as did Sammons et al. (2007) and Sun et al. (2016), that teachers are at a high risk of attrition during the first years of their career and must be supported by their administration until they are stable in their chosen profession. The subsequent stabilization means, according to Huberman (1989), that the teachers are established and begin to deepen their membership of the teaching profession and to develop their instructional skills.

Expert/Master Teacher stage. In the second career stage, the expert teacher is considered by Steffey (1989) to encompass all ages, genders, races and to be the "best in their fields" (p. 66). Teachers in the expert/master teacher stage actively seek responsibility and are

receptive to new ideas and, according to Steffey, are partaking in learning and professional development programs to improve their craft. These professionals are working to become the best in their field and continually striving for success to reach the pinnacle of Maslow's theory of self-actualization (Steffey, 1989). Although Steffey did not specify the actual years of experience it takes a teacher to reach the expert/master teacher stage, You and Conley (2015) noted that this stage may include "both mid-career and veteran teachers who were expected to feel more secure with the rudimentary elements of survival and show greater concern with the core task" (p. 564). According to Steffey, once a teacher peaks in the expert/master teacher stage, they begin to become dissatisfied with the profession and move into the renewal stage of their career.

  Renewal stage. As teachers continue in the profession, most reach a point in their career when boredom and routine cause feelings of frustration about teaching. When this happens, teachers must persist by taking some form of action to renew themselves (Steffey, 1989). This stage of the career is described by Steffey (1989) as a process of rebirth for teachers and is a time of renewed energy and maintaining a positive attitude. According to Steffey, this renewal process encompasses growth, risk taking, thinking, and improving; thus, it is a transition process.

  During this renewal stage process, teachers become problem solvers and willing to offer solutions to unresolved issues. Additionally, they view teaching from a different perspective and actually believe that the work they do will impact student success (Steffey, 1989). These teachers have a new sense of energy and passion and become a source of motivation for others. Common among teachers in the renewal stage are long periods of sustained high energy and the positive view they hold on education. Steffey (1989) described these teachers as "farmers who find every spring filled with the same promise as the first one" (p. 86). Teachers in the renewal

stage are driven and focused on personal growth and seek out opportunities for professional development, but also exhibit a sense of humor about themselves and others. For these teachers, perceptions of how people are treated in the organization are an important factor; they are not patient with those conditions that contribute to prejudice, ignorance, and intolerance, and are advocates for humanity. Steffey refers to these teachers as "childlike for they shut out the world and teach" (p. 86). Teachers in the renewal stage require a personal commitment to their career which cannot be enforced by administration. According to Steffey, teachers are the first to recognize the signs of burnout from stress and become aware of their progression towards withdrawal. Veteran teachers, especially, who have become "renewed" while teaching the same thing year after year will begin to notice changes in their attitude and motivation levels. These teachers are aware of feelings of boredom, lack of job satisfaction, and a sense of need to change. Some teachers at this stage actively seek out ways to motivate their teaching and may take a college course, professional workshop, or join a professional organization to increase their engagement and try a variety of new models in the classroom. In doing so, teachers gain a new sense of creativity and energy that can be infused into their profession and increase their job satisfaction. Steffey warns that as teachers are rejuvenated, administrators may not be supportive or understand the process of the teacher. It is important that the teacher in this renewal stage is not interrupted by lack of support from administration as it could lead to a halt in the efforts of the teacher.

Withdrawal stage. Steffey (1989) claimed that the withdrawal career stage is the most neglected phase and that administrators need to be aware and ready to provide interventions and support to teachers in this stage, which is subdivided into three areas: initial withdrawal, persistent withdrawal, and deep withdrawal. Teachers in this first stage are usually described as

adequate, predictable, and dependable teachers. However, they are also referred to as being dull, unimaginative, and steady in their beliefs (Steffey, 1989). These teachers do not have a desire for further training and will not attend workshops or other professional development opportunities. Those teachers in the persistent withdrawal stage are usually associated with the phrase *burned out* and often spend much time criticizing the school system, administration, and everyone involved in the school community. Instead of working to solve the problems, these teachers resist change and according to Steffey, are no longer productive contributing professionals.

Deep withdrawal is the next stage and includes teachers who are perceived as being incompetent and may be impossible to re-train by administration. These teachers may not even be able to recognize their faults and instead blame others for their mistakes. Administrators may view these teachers as the most difficult to work with and prefer options such as early retirement, a career change, or a buyout of the teacher's contract as the only means to move these teachers out of their classrooms.

Exit stage. In this stage of one's career, teachers are debating leaving the profession for a variety of reasons. While some may be questioning if teaching was the right profession to begin with, others may be exploring other career options. Steffey (1989) noted that although all teachers progress through these career stages at some point of their career, the most influential of these stages for a veteran teacher is the renewal stage. Due to the nature of the renewal stage process, veteran teachers can determine if their motivation is in decline; then they are able to make adjustments and act accordingly to reclaim their excitement and commitment to the profession. The renewal stage is described as a link between the anticipatory and expert/master teacher stages and the withdrawal and exit stages (Steffey, 1989). Administrators need to be

aware that whatever the teacher chooses to do in the renewal stage can lead to either a new journey in their career or a downward slope to exiting the profession (Steffey, 1989).

Stress and Burnout

During a 2012 study by the American Psychological Association (APA) at the University of Miami School of Education and Human Development, researchers interviewed teachers in all stages of their career in regard to the stress they experience and ways to alleviate stress in the workplace (Prilleltensky et al., 2016). Research conducted by Roeser et al. (2013) found that negative stress in the workplace is a common complaint and is associated with both personal and professional consequences. Stress not only provides a negative impact on a teacher's job satisfaction and health, but it also adds to the increasing teacher attrition rate (McCarthey, Lambert, & Reiser, 2014). While conducting research on teacher stress, interviewees shared with Prilleltensky et al. (2016) that, "I'm getting drained of all my energy," "I'm overeating," "Everything feels out of control," and "I feel so isolated" (p. 104).

> One of the most difficult, stressful occupations today must surely be that of the classroom teacher. Who else is charged with the awesome responsibility of preparing our children for the future? And who else is expected to fulfill this critical responsibility in the face of so many roadblocks? (Clement, 2017, p. 135)

Prilleltensky et al. (2016) defined stress as an imbalance between risk and protective factors. When a risk outweighs a person's protective mechanisms, the person's perceived or actual ability to endure a negative situation is diminished (Prilleltensky et al., 2016). According to Reglin and Reitzammer (1998), stress is defined as a person's reaction to a threatening situation, which may lead the individual to a reduction in personal health, depression, and lack of productivity at work. Reglin and Reitzammer stated that people in service professions such as

doctors, nurses, and especially teachers, are exposed to higher levels of stress than professionals in other careers. Reglin and Reitzammer also noted that teachers are often required to take on too many responsibilities in their professional lives and this overload often contributes to stress. This stress, also referred to as occupational stress or job strain (Rosenthal & Alter, 2012), is usually displayed by the teacher in the form of adverse feelings towards students, coworkers, and administration through negative behaviors and thoughts (Prilleltensky et al., 2016).

Rosenthal and Alter (2012) suggested that occupational strain or stress results from a "combination of high demands with low decision latitude in the workplace" (p. 2). Workplace demands can comprise both "job and human related variables" (Rosenthal & Alter, 2012, p. 2). These job-related variables can consist of work schedules, including work completed outside of the office, time pressures, contact with the public, and solitary or interactive tasks. Occupational strain may involve "hierarchical status, involving different degrees of responsibility, decision authority and latitude, and prestige within the organization" (Rosenthal & Alter, 2012, p. 2). Additional forms of stress may also branch from "uncertain relationships with co-workers or superiors, such as conflicts or unfair treatment, ambiguous or contradictory work demands, and role overload" (Rosenthal & Alter, 2012, p. 2). The human-related variables that may lead to occupational strain or stress are "personal job satisfaction, the organization of the work, and whether the job offers security and flexibility, recognition and reward, and possibilities for advancement" (Rosenthal & Alter, 2012, p. 2).

The expression *burnout* was first researched and defined by the psychiatrist Dr. Herbert J. Freudenberger when referring to an employee who was overwhelmed with stress in the workplace (Freudenberger, 1974). Freudenberger (1974) noted that "the dictionary defines the verb 'burn-out' as 'to fail, wear out, or become exhausted by making excessive demands on

energy, strength, or resources'" (p. 159). Freudenberger modified this definition when referring to an employee and stated that "a staff member in an alternative institution burns out for whatever reasons and becomes inoperative to all intents and purposes" (p. 160). The burnout phase of an employee's relationship with his/her career will manifest itself in many different ways, which will vary in scale between different personalities and careers. Freudenberger declared that burnout usually occurs within the first year of employment as certain factors, including the loss of faith in the leader and an overall let-down in the system, add to the employee's personal stress.

Beginning in 1976, Dr. Christina Maslach, a social psychologist, expanded on Freudenberger's work and conducted research over a period of 25 years on numerous professionals, including teachers, in regard to their emotional stress, professional identity, and quality of work (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Maslach (as cited in Rumschlag, 2017) utilized a qualitative method of research by observing, interviewing, and reviewing case studies of teachers and their working environments. Maslach's study (as cited in Rumschlag, 2017) found that teachers did not feel rewarded to the level they felt was appropriate and were displeased with factors in their working environment which included class size, teaching assignments, and school leadership.

Rumschlag (2017) stated that other researchers began observing an employee's emotional depletion in his/her career, and as a result, Maslach and Jackson created the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) questionnaire which used a qualitative questionnaire method of research. The first researchers utilized the MBI for service occupations (such as doctors and nurses), but a second version, known as the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (MBI-ES), was created just for use in educational research (Rumschlag, 2017). Khezerlou (2017) utilized the

MBI-ES to measure and determine the professional self-esteem, emotional exhaustion, and personal accomplishment of 203 Iranian and 156 Turkish educators. Khezerlou (2017) discovered that professional self-esteem had a strong correlation to a person's individual level of burnout related to emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment. In a separate study of 92 teachers, Helou et al. (2016) utilized the MBI-ES as part of their research and discovered that the major cause of burnout for teachers included the classroom environment, workload, school environment, lack of mentoring, and emotional factors.

Occupational stress has seen a dramatic rise over the past decade, and burnout is presumed to be highest in the teaching profession compared to other professions (Aloe, Amo, & Shanahan, 2014). Independent research by Ingersoll and Perda (2014) and Riggs (2013; as cited in Rumschlag, 2017) showed that the teacher turnover rate of 30% is higher than other professionals including architects at 23%, engineers at 16%, lawyers at 19%, nurses at 19%, pharmacists at 14%, and police at 28%. The high attrition rate of teachers is not limited to those who have already graduated as Riggs (2013) reported that "40% of undergraduate students who were once education majors change their majors before graduating" (as cited in Rumschlag, 2017, p. 22).

Occupational stress and subsequent burnout in American schools are likely the leading cause for veteran teachers, who once remained until retirement, to leave the profession early. Stress and burnout are also likely to blame for a third of new teachers leaving before their third year of teaching, while half leave before year five (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2016). The disturbing phenomenon of teacher burnout is not limited to the United States as occupational stress among professional educators is a "global concern" (Aloe et al., 2014, p. 102). Counties including Australia and the United Kingdom (Parker, Martin,

Colmar, & Liem, 2012), Finland (Pyhältö, Pietarinen, & Salmela-Aro, 2011), and South Korea

(Ha, King, & Naeger, 2011) have all reported on the relationship between various school factors

including a lack of job satisfaction, lack of administrative support, and excessive workload

leading to teacher burnout and subsequent attrition.

Job Satisfaction

According to Herzberg et al. (1959), job satisfaction is comprised of two separate factors:

intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic factors include the work itself, recognition from peers or

superiors, and responsibilities. Herzberg et al. (1959) described these components as job

satisfiers which deal with the factors involved in performing the actual job. The extrinsic

factors, which are not related to the actual job, are known as the dissatisfiers and can be

comprised of company policies, quality of supervisors and supervision, and relationship with

others (Herzberg et al., 1959).

Chovwen, Balogun, and Olowokere (2014) investigated the possible intent of 200

private and public employees to leave their companies due to stress on the job. During their

research Chovwen et al. found a need for management to create favorable environments that help

to retain good employees. Bonn and Forbriger (1992; as cited in Chovwen et al., 2014)

portrayed employee turnover as critical and costly, concluding that a large degree of turnover can

have adverse effects on both the organization and the employees. Further research on employee

job satisfaction by Thite and Russell (2010) noted that "the voices of employees have largely

been ignored" (p. 4).

> The survival of any organization depends largely on the individuals working within the
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> organization. Retaining valuable employees is one of the most crucial issues for today's
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> competitive organizations as employees are considered as the most valuable asset and

precious resource, which helps to sustain in the dynamic environment. It is usually in the

organizations best interest to put its energy and time in retaining the quality employees

that they already have instead of recruiting new ones. Quality organizational

performance largely depends on the presence of satisfied and committed employees.

(Chovwen et al., 2014, p. 114)

Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) conducted a study on job satisfaction and work-related

stress with 30 working and four retired teachers. Although all of the participants in the study

were either current or retired elementary or middle school teachers, Skaalvik and Skaalvik did

not limit the study by the participant's years of actual teaching experience. The focus for the

study was teacher job satisfaction in regard to the positive or negative judgments people make

about their jobs (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). For the purpose of their research, Skaalvik and

Skaalvik classified job satisfaction or dissatisfaction into the areas of intrinsic rewards of

teaching, factors extrinsic to the school, and school-based factors. All teachers reported their

primary sources of job satisfaction were related to the intrinsic rewards of teaching, including

working with children, the actual process of teaching, and seeing their pupils learn and develop.

All teachers experienced a high degree of stress related to a number of school-based factors

including workload, disruptive student behavior, and time pressure (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015).

Those teachers who were under 34 years of age reported that managing everything required of

them by their administration to properly teach was difficult, and some stated that the "working-

hard-strategy" morphed into a "lower-the-ambition-strategy" (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015, p.

187). Teachers over the age of 35 revealed a growing motivation to leave the teaching

profession, either temporarily or permanently. Many of the teachers over the age of 35, and

those who had already retired, admitted actively using one to two weeks of sick leave to escape from the stress and workload brought on by the school system (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015).

In a recent study, Helou et al. (2016) utilized a combination of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with 99 current and former teachers in regard to their overall job satisfaction as educators. Although multiple studies do not support the belief that female teachers experience a dissatisfaction with their jobs more than men (McCarthey, Lambert, O'Donnell, & Melendres, 2010; Purvanova & Muros, 2010; Zhouchun, 2011), Helou et al. (2016) made a personal choice to focus mostly on females but did not limit the study by the grade level taught by the participants or their years of actual teaching experience. The results of the study indicated that the teachers who were still teaching displayed lower levels of burnout than those who left the profession within five years, but all of the participants listed increased workload and the school environment, including relationship with the administration and absence of mentors, as their two top reasons for job dissatisfaction. Although the study by Helou et al. (2016) did not focus on separate grade levels as an independent cause of job dissatisfaction, those teachers who taught in middle grades reported higher levels of overall dissatisfaction than those who taught in higher grades. This data was also confirmed in a study by Sezer (2012) who found that secondary school teachers experienced lower levels of job satisfaction than elementary school teachers.

Self-Efficacy

There has been confusion in past research between the concepts of teacher efficacy and teacher self-efficacy. Teacher efficacy is concerned with the teachers' personal beliefs about their ability to have an overall influence on their student's personal development in the

classroom. On the contrary, teacher self-efficacy is concerned with a teacher's personal judgement about his/her overall capabilities to teach (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016).

Acknowledged by research, the relationship between a teacher's self-efficacy and job satisfaction are very important, and those with a higher self-efficacy are often more devoted to their career as an educator (Coladarci, 1992; Reyes & Shin, 1995). Additionally, teachers who reported having a supportive administration and felt a sense of comfort in their environment also had a higher sense of self-efficacy (Lewandowski, 2005). Tiplic, Brandmo, and Elstad (2015) completed a study of 277 first year teachers, those with less than one full year of experience, and reported that "beginning teachers who trust their principal are less likely to have thoughts about leaving their profession or workplace" (p. 465).

During a research study of 220 secondary school teachers, Akomolafe and Olatomide (2013) revealed an important correlation between a teacher's self-efficacy and their overall job satisfaction. The participants in the study were randomly selected from 11 different schools in the Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State, Nigeria; their average age was 40 years old, and their average teaching experience exceeded 13 years (Akomolafe & Olatomide, 2013). Akomolafe and Olatomide found that individuals with a high self-efficacy portrayed themselves in a more positive manner, thought more creatively, and were more satisfied in their careers than those that reported a low self-efficacy.

> Teachers who exhibit high self-efficacy and use it in their daily routines with their students, are more likely to have students who achieve and are more likely to remain in the profession. When a teacher offers ongoing support and encouragement he or she conveys faith in a student's ability, which in turn increases the student's confidence and willingness to learn. (Pedota, 2015, p. 54)

Satisfaction in one's chosen career, especially for teachers, is important because job satisfaction correlates with commitment to the students, the school, and the community (Akomolafe & Olatomide, 2013).

The state of Georgia offers an alternative certification program for individuals who have a full degree in a qualified area, but not an education degree. The Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (TAPP or GaTAPP) is a collection of classes which lead to a Georgia certified teaching certificate for individuals who have no prior teaching experience. Wagner and Imanel-Noy (2014) completed a self-efficacy study of novice educators who had a previous career before entering the teaching field through GaTAPP. Most of the participants in the study had either served or retired from military service or entered the teaching profession after working in a technical field. Wagner and Imanel-Noy discovered that many of the new educators shared the same ambition of challenging their students and reaching the more difficult pupils. The participants also shared that they did not feel that the GaTAPP program had adequately prepared them for the level of paperwork and other working conditions, including after school duties, that many schools require (Wagner & Imanel-Noy, 2014). This study was only completed with novice teachers who had a previous career and only studied those who had been in education for no more than two years. Although the overall results of the study showed that the participants exhibited high self-efficacy, Wagner and Imanel-Noy recommended additional studies to determine if a previous career had any effect on these teachers' self-efficacy.

Leadership

A study by Thibodeaux, Labat, Lee, and Labat (2015) sought to identify relationships between and among school leadership and high stakes testing as possible factors leading to the teacher's decisions to remain in the profession. The researchers revealed that, above all, the

school principals' leadership styles and behaviors were the strongest predictor of teachers'

decision to stay (Thibodeaux et al., 2015). An additional study of 362 teachers by Nikolic,

Terek, Glusac, Gligorovic, and Tasic (2016) identified that the professional treatment of the

teachers by their administration had the strongest influence towards job satisfaction with school

culture and communication with co-workers as the next highest responses. Based on their

empirical research, Nguni, Sleegers, and Denessen (2006) stated that in most workplaces,

including schools, the leadership style of the manager or administrator greatly influences the

overall job satisfaction of the employees. In regard to the differentiated styles of managers,

Eliophotou-Menon and Ioannouz (2016) stated that leadership styles have been narrowed to two

main types: instructional and transformational.

The practice of instructional leadership was first developed in American schools as

evidence accumulated that administrators could also have a positive outcome on student learning

(Bush, 2015). Hallinger (1992) noted that the instructional leadership was born out of necessity

as the responsibilities of school leaders changed dramatically over the course of just a few

decades.

Curriculum reform took off in the early 1960s as an infusion of federal dollars gave

impetus to widespread innovation in mathematics and science education. Curriculum

revisions soon followed in other subject areas and eventually reached most schools and

principals. By the mid-1970s, relatively few American principals could avoid the

responsibilities that came with program and curriculum management. (Hallinger, 1992, p.

36)

By the 1980s the school principal's role as just a program manager was in jeopardy as the

American public took a renewed interest in educational improvement. Hallinger (1992) shared

that "professional norms deemed it unacceptable for principals to focus their efforts solely on maintenance of the school or even on program management. Instructional leadership became the new educational standard for principals" (p. 37). The instructional leadership style focuses more on the teacher and classroom support including supervision of classroom instruction, co-ordination of the school's curriculum, and close monitoring of student progress (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannouz, 2016). By utilizing an instructional leadership approach, the administrators show that they are there to work with their teachers, and teachers who feel valued and respected will likely have increased job satisfaction and higher perceptions of the occupation (Dou, Devos, & Valcke, 2017).

The second style of leadership is transformational leadership, and Burns (1976; as cited in Bass & Riggio, 2006) first introduced the term and described it as a leadership approach that causes positive change in individuals with the end goal of developing followers into leaders. Enacted in its authentic form, transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. The transformational leadership style provides an organizational vision, supports and motivates followers, fosters collaboration and cooperation among members, and respects the needs of employees while being mindful of differences (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannouz, 2016).

> Transformational leaders are those who stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity. Transformational leaders help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization. More evidence has accumulated to demonstrate that transformational leadership can move

followers to exceed expected performance, as well as lead to high levels of follower

satisfaction and commitment to the group and organization. (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 3)

According to the study conducted by Dou et al. (2017), principal leadership directly

impacted teacher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The study by Dou et al. was

conducted and data collected from secondary schools in seven different cities in China.

Researchers wanted to use a large geographic distribution in order to view a comprehensive

picture of the concept of school autonomy reforms in China, and the researchers used both

cluster and convenience sampling. The study aimed to include schools in more developed

coastal cities and also the less developed cities. All schools had a variety of differences that

included student population size, teaching staff size, and teachers with varying degree levels. A

survey was conducted that included teachers and principals. The leadership also varied in size,

age, years of experience as a leader, and degree levels. The results of this study indicated that

teachers who reported a higher level of school climate as the result of leadership that included

collaboration, innovation, and participation, had a direct positive effect on their job satisfaction.

In turn, the teachers' self-efficacy was improved indirectly, as reported, through the positive

school climate (Dou et al., 2017). This study also compared the principals' perceptions of

autonomy as it related to the school climate and teacher outcomes. Dou et al. reported that

schools with transformational leadership had more influence on school climate versus the

instructional leadership style with respect to large autonomy gaps. In schools with a larger

autonomy gap, principals are encouraged to adopt a transformational leadership model to

improve school climate, which in turn, improves teacher efficacy, job satisfaction, and

organizational commitment (Dou et al., 2017). The study resulted in a pattern among the groups

studied. The schools with a larger autonomy gap demonstrated stronger leaders, higher levels of

teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy and job satisfaction, in addition to a more positive school culture. On the other hand, schools with less autonomy showed a weaker leadership, fewer positive perceptions of school culture, and lowered teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and commitment to stay. The results demonstrated a significant correlation to school leaders' leadership and their leadership style. There were no significant differences among teachers' perceptions of autonomy as it related to this study (Dou et al., 2017).

When considering teachers' perceptions of working conditions, teachers reported high stakes testing, student discipline, and excessive paperwork as the three most detrimental factors to their satisfaction of working conditions (Thibodeaux et al., 2015). Thibodeaux et al. (2015) focused on the relationship between high stakes testing and effects of leadership on teacher retention. Teachers reported that with the pressures mandated to focus on testing, many felt the obligations to meet these requirements were unattainable. Additionally, paperwork and student behavioral issues limited their effectiveness in the classroom (Thibodeaux et al., 2015). Many teachers in the study reported the pressures of state-testing and that school administrators tended to apply more pressure to ELA, math, and science teachers versus teachers of non-tested areas including band, art, or other elective courses. Although this was a frequent concern, state-testing did not have a significant impact on a teacher's decision to stay in the profession (Thibodeaux et al., 2015). Rather, Thibodeaux et al. (2015) reported that school leadership ranked as the number one indicator of a teacher's decision to leave or stay in the profession.

Another study by Cancio, Albrecht, and Johns (2013) yielded similar findings. Their research found relevant correlations between administrative support and a teachers' decision to stay. Teachers in the study reported several characteristics that impacted their perceptions, including a positive school culture, the amount of administrative support, job satisfaction, trust

and appreciation by administration, and growth opportunities in their schools (Cancio et al., 2013).

School administration has been reported as having a critical impact on teachers' perceptions of their working conditions, job satisfaction, and reasons contributing to retention. When teachers feel appreciated, valued as professionals, and supported by administration, their perceptions of job satisfaction are increased (Bolliger & Wasilik, 2009). For increased job satisfaction resulting in higher retention of teachers, school administrators should improve working conditions, provide effective support, and address teachers concerns (Knox & Anfara, 2013).

School Climate

School climate is defined by one group of researchers as "the quality and character of school life, including the norms, values and expectations that a school accepts and promotes" (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016, p. 292), while another researcher added that "school climate is conceptualized by the interactions of school culture, school organizational structure, and the background characteristics of the students" (Sulak, 2016, p. 674). Both groups of researchers stated that the climate of a school is a major factor that can affect and influence school improvement including teacher retention and student achievement, while influencing efforts for positive change (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016; Sulak, 2016).

School climate plays an important role in teachers' job satisfaction. Collie et al. (2012) conducted a study to examine the school climate and social-emotional learning to determine how these affect job satisfaction among teachers. The study included 644 teachers from several school districts in Canada. The results of the study showed that of all the variables in the study, the most prominent indicator of a teacher's perception to job satisfaction was the concept of

student's behaviors and motivation. Those teachers who perceived better behaviors and greater

student motivation reported a higher level of job satisfaction and self-efficacy. Naturally,

teachers who perceive students to be highly motivated will feel a greater confidence in their

teaching ability, leading to higher perceptions of self-efficacy (Collie et al., 2012).

Teacher Mentor Programs

Teacher mentoring, described in The Education Commission of the States (1999; as cited

in Wasburn, Wasburn-Moses, & Davis, 2010), refers to a formal relationship between a master

and a beginning teacher, with an overall goal of evaluating and sustaining teaching skills.

Mentoring programs, according to Pogodzinski (2015), can improve the teacher effectiveness of

novice teachers and help reduce attrition. However, Pogodzinzki stated that the quality differs

among these programs when comparing them between individual schools and the groups of

teachers.

In a research study, Hoy and Miskel (2013) found that school leaders are the key factor in

successful collaboration between administrators and teachers, and among groups of teachers.

Hoy and Miskel (2013) also found that if school administrators design mentor programs that

alleviate the burden of organizational paperwork for novice teachers, these teachers were more

likely to participate in more meaningful collaboration with their mentors (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

Teachers reported a more positive school culture when collaboration is fostered among

administration and colleagues, which, in turn, caused teachers to feel valued and respected as

professionals (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

Wasburn et al. (2010) recommended that mentoring programs should be a requirement

for all teachers with fewer than two years of teaching experience because, as noted, often new

teachers feel isolated, unprepared due to lack of training on state curriculum, and unfamiliar with

school procedures. Salgür (2014) reiterated the importance of mentor programs as new teachers will be encouraged to remain in the profession if they are assisted by a mentor because they will feel like someone cares about them. Additionally, Salgür shared that these teachers are more likely to become highly qualified professionals who stay in the profession and remain dedicated to their students and their schools.

In their research, Mathur, Gehrke, and Kim (2012) found that the success of schools with mentoring programs were due to effective school leadership. Strong leadership resulted in the careful implementation and maintenance of the program. School principals in the study reported benefits of the program for both the novice teacher and the experienced mentor teachers. While novice teachers found that the mentorship was beneficial in understanding assessment practices and school procedures, the experienced mentor teacher reported an increased opportunity to guide new teachers and feel as if they were benefiting the school beyond their own classroom (Mathur et al., 2012).

Working Conditions

The working conditions in a school environment can have significant impacts on a teacher's job satisfaction and effectiveness with student achievement (Burkhauser, 2017). Johnson (1990) defined working conditions as those "shaped" by the school's physical features, rules and procedures, social, cultural, political, psychological, and educational features of the school. For teachers, this would include class size, teaching assignments, professional development, materials and supplies, and school leadership of a particular school (Cucchiara, Rooney, & Robinson-Kraft, 2015).

A study examining how a school's working conditions impacted teachers in their first years of a turnaround school revealed the importance of leadership in the role of positive

working conditions (Cucchiara et al., 2015). Cucchiara et al.'s (2015) study relied on data from early implementation of school-turnaround initiatives for failing schools and included previous data from a larger study and on focus groups, interviews, and observations. Research from this study found that teachers who reported positive working conditions identified organizational stability and clear instructional focus and supportive culture as key factors to their perceptions. Organizational stability refers to the stability of schedules and programs as well as the degree of clarity about curriculum and school expectations (Cucchiara et al., 2015). Supportive culture was defined as having clearly defined norms and expectations in an environment of sharing where teachers felt valued as professionals (Cucchiara et al., 2015).
When teachers perceived their working conditions as "good" or favorable, they felt supported and capable of being effective (Cucchiara et al., 2015, p. 282).

Working conditions, as perceived by teachers, play a major role in job satisfaction, self-efficacy and retention (Burkhauser, 2017). In Massachusetts, a statewide survey was conducted to glean the teachers' perspectives of working conditions (Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012). The survey found that teachers felt the most important working conditions included school culture, leadership of the school, and coworker relationships (Johnson et al., 2012). The research indicated that teachers who perceived their working conditions as positive were more likely to stay, regardless of student demographics, and demonstrated higher job satisfaction (Johnson et al., 2012).

According to a study conducted by Pogodzinski (2014), novice teacher workload is an important aspect of a school's working conditions due to the stress and job satisfaction experienced by the new teacher. Pogodzinski classified novice teachers as those with less than three years of teaching experience and gathered data from 184 participants from both elementary

and middle schools, in 11 school districts, and across two states. Kennedy (2005) and Lorte

(1975) reported that the teaching profession is often marked by a "sink or swim" reality as the

administration expects novice teaches to endure the same workload as teachers with years of

experience (as cited in Pogozdinski, 2014, p. 470). Pogodzinski found that those novice teachers

who had a supportive administration and support from their colleagues, either through a formal

mentoring program or informal relationships, reported better working conditions and less stress

than those that did not have the support of their administrators or colleagues.

> Kardos and Moore Johnson (2007) analyzed survey datum from 486 first- and second-
>
> year teachers across four states and reported that 44 % of respondents indicated that they
>
> were expected to be as effective as their experienced colleagues. Additionally, they
>
> reported that 52% of respondents indicated that they did not have enough time for
>
> planning and preparation and 36% indicated that their workload was too heavy, while
>
> only 23% indicated that they had fewer official responsibilities than their more
>
> experienced colleagues. (Pogodzinski, 2014, p. 470)

Teachers' perceptions of their work environment can be the determining factor for a

teacher to leave or stay (Burkhauser, 2017). In a study of teachers' perceptions of working

conditions, Burkhauser (2017) found evidence to support the literature that the school principal is

important in a teacher's perceptions. When teachers were surveyed to analyze factors that

influence perceptions of positive or negative working conditions, the school principal was found

to be a key correlate. Based on this research, the implications were drawn that districts with

poorly rated working conditions develop professional development plans for school principals.

The plans could benefit teachers' working conditions by providing principals with tools such as

effective communication, developing leadership skills, and how to provide effective teacher

feedback. Overall, the study linked the important role of school leaders to the perceptions of working conditions and how it impacts teacher turnover rates (Burkhauser, 2017).

Summary

This chapter reviewed relevant literature related to the phenomenon of perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. Emerging themes in the research proposed that working conditions, school climate, school leadership, and teacher self-efficacy impact perceptions related to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction among teachers has been noted as an underlying factor leading to retention. The theories explored in this chapter revealed the correlation between one's feelings, motivations, and self-efficacy and an overall sense of job satisfaction. The literature on job satisfaction and retention is critical in understanding the depth and breadth of the problems related to teacher turnover. The high rates of teacher turnover are not only costly to school systems but negatively impact the education of students. From the literature, it is clear that there is an urgent need for schools to understand the reasons why teachers leave the profession and ways to retain them. While the research focused on issues concerned with teacher job satisfaction and retaining teachers, the literature demonstrates a need for an in-depth analysis of the perceptions of job satisfaction in regard to middle school teachers.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to discover and compare the perceptions of

job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one

county in the state of Georgia. The theoretical frameworks guiding this proposed study are

grounded in Maslow's (1959) hierarchy of needs and Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory,

which relates to an individual's perceptions of self. Data were collected from 16 middle school

teachers in Coweta County, Georgia, in the form of one-on-one interviews, participant

journaling, and focus groups. A thematic analysis method was utilized to analyze the data and

examine them for meaningful patterns and emerging themes (Thomas & Harden, 2008).

In this chapter, the proposed research design will be discussed along with the research

questions, site, participants, procedures, and researcher's role. Following those sections, data

collection and analysis are discussed. In conclusion, details of trustworthiness and ethical

considerations to increase credibility of the proposed study will be explored. The purpose of this

chapter will be to further explain the proposed research study by providing a thorough

description of the methods and procedures of the study.

Design

This research study followed a qualitative research design. Marshall and Rossman

(2006) stated, "Qualitative research is pragmatic, interpretive, and grounded in the lived

experiences of people" (p. 2). By using qualitative data, the researcher was able to precisely

identify which events led to which consequences, and the stories shared by participants had a

concrete meaning that often proves more convincing to a reader than a list of summarized

numbers (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This study was qualitative because the researcher utilized

focus groups, personal interviews, and participant journaling to collect data about the lived experiences of the participants.

This research study utilized a collective case study approach as the researcher "explored a real-life, contemporary bounded system over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information" (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). A case study design allowed the researcher to examine "the particularity and complexity of the cases to understand their activity within important circumstances" (Stake, 1995, p. xi). A case study design was justified because a contemporary phenomenon, such as the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia, were investigated in-depth and in its real-world context (Yin, 2014). The collective case study, also referred to as a multiple-case study design (Yin, 2014) was selected because this proposed research study explored the perceptions of job satisfaction from multiple case studies to show different perspectives and clarify the issue (Creswell, 2013). The collective case study is most appropriate for identifying what constitutes job satisfaction among teachers, novice and veteran, while uncovering factors that impact perceptions. By using individual interviews and participant journaling, the research was guided by first-hand lived experiences (Creswell, 2013). The study also included focus groups that allowed for collaborative discussion among the participants to discover if there were differences between the perceptions of novice teachers and veteran teachers with respect to job satisfaction. Upon collection of the data, the researcher examined the correlations between years of experience and perceptions of job satisfaction while discovering the most influential factors that led to job satisfaction.

Research Questions

Central Question: What are the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers?

Sub Question 1: How did perceptions of job satisfaction differ among novice and veteran middle school teachers?

Sub Question 2: How did years of service influence teacher perceptions of job satisfaction?

Sub Question 3: What did teachers perceive as the most influencing factor that led to job satisfaction?

Site

The selected location for this proposed collective case study was the Coweta County School District, which is located in the state of Georgia approximately 30 miles southwest of Atlanta, Georgia. The population of Coweta County, Georgia, exceeds over 120,000 residents (United States Census Bureau, 2010). At the time of this research, the Coweta County School system served over 22,500 students in 19 elementary schools, six middle schools, three high schools, two alternative schools, and one technical school for grades 8–12. Of the 22,500 students in the Coweta County, 2% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 22% were Black, 9% were Hispanic, 4% were Multi-racial, and 63% were white; a total of 44% of these students received free or reduced price lunches. The Coweta County School System employed over 2,900 employees with an average student to teacher ratio of 20:1 in grades K–3, 24:1 in grades 3–5, and 29:1 in grades 6–12 (Coweta County Schools Overview, 2017).

The state of Georgia individually ranks each public school according to a single College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) score for the school. This CCRPI score is based on standardized test scores, student growth on these tests, graduation rates, and other factors.

According to the Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement's (2016) report, the

Coweta County School System overall performance was higher than 62% of the districts.

Coweta County's middle school students' academic growth was higher than 62% of the districts

with 81.2% of its 8th grade students reading at or above the target grade level. The four-year

graduation rate in Coweta County was 84.7%, which was higher than 48% of districts, and

72.3% of graduates were considered college ready (Governor's Office of Student Achievement,

2016).

The researcher selected 16 middle school teachers from four of the six middle schools,

one of the alternative schools, and the one technical school in Coweta County for this collective

case study. To protect the identities of the research participants and to make certain that the final

case report would not affect the subsequent actions of those that were examined, the name of the

participant's school was not given (Yin, 2014).

While this site was selected for convenience, the researcher was also employed as an

educator in Coweta County at the time of this research study. The selection of this site served to

reduce time and expenditures for certain aspects of data collection (Marshall & Rossman, 2006)

and allowed the researcher to build trusting relationships within the county as he studied his own

kind (Kanuha, 2000).

Participants

This collective case study utilized a purposeful sampling because the participants who

were selected were able to "purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and

central phenomenon" (Creswell, 2013, p. 156). Additionally, this research study utilized a

criterion sampling strategy because all cases met a predetermined criterion, which is favorable

for quality assurance (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

The target population for this collective case study was a total of 16 teachers within two groups who had either a maximum of five years or a minimum of 11 years of teaching experience with at least five of those years teaching in a middle school. The researcher chose the participants randomly in a fair and impartial manner, "so that no groups of people are unfairly included or excluded from the research" (Yin, 2014, p. 78). The participant's elective teaching subject, degree level, age, marital status, race, and sex had no bearing on the research.

The first group of research participants consisted of eight current novice teachers, defined by You and Conley (2015) as a certified teacher with five or less years of combined teaching experience. The second group of research participants consisted of eight veteran teachers, defined by You and Conley (2015) as a certified teacher with 11 or more years of combined teaching experience. These eight novice teachers and eight veteran teachers were chosen from four of the six middle schools in Coweta County, Georgia. One of the middle schools was not utilized in this research as the researcher was a teacher at this school and, according to Creswell (2013), studying within one's own organization may raise concerns of power to the participants at the location; the other middle school was not used in this research as there were no participant volunteers from this school.

The researcher then randomly divided the group of eight novice teachers into two subgroups of four teachers each for data collection purposes. One of the groups of four novice teachers participated in both a one-on-one interview and participant journaling with the researcher. The other group of four novice teachers participated in one focus group discussion, which was conducted by the researcher, and took part in participant journaling.

The researcher also randomly divided the group of eight veteran teachers into two subgroups of four teachers each for data collection purposes. One of the groups of four veteran

teachers participated in both a one-on-one interview and participant journaling with the

researcher. The other group of four veteran teachers participated in one focus group discussion,

which was conducted by the researcher, and took part in participant journaling. Additionally, to

make certain that this final case report did not affect the subsequent actions of those that were

examined, each of the participants was assigned a pseudonym to protect their identities (Yin,

2014).

Procedures

The 16 participants in this study were all state of Georgia certified middle school teachers

working in four of the six middle schools located within Coweta County, Georgia. Once the

researcher submitted the proposal to the Liberty University Instructional Review Board (IRB)

and obtained permission to proceed with the study, a letter explaining the study along with a

copy of the list of questions the interviewer would be asking the teachers was sent to the Coweta

County school superintendent's office for approval. The researcher also requested one list of

middle school teachers with less than five years of experience and a separate list of middle

school teachers with more than 11 years of experience from the Coweta County school

superintendent's office.

Although the researcher did receive permission from the Coweta County school

superintendent's office to conduct the research and contact possible research candidates, the

superintendent's office was unable to provide the researcher with the two lists of teachers. The

researcher then acquired the email addresses of most of the middle school teachers in Coweta

County, Georgia, from the county or individual school websites and randomly picked 150

teachers from five of the six middle schools and the one alternative school and sent each a

teacher an introductory email letter. This email letter explained the purpose of the research, the

selection process, assignment of a pseudonym to each participant in the study, letter of consent, a copy of the list of questions, a detailed description of the journal instructions, and a timeline for those who volunteered to participate in the research. A total of nine teachers responded to this email which included five veteran and four novice teachers. As this was not enough participants, the researcher then randomly picked another 100 teachers from five of the six middle schools and the one alternative school and sent each teacher an introductory email letter. A total of six teachers responded to this email which included four veteran and two novice teachers. Because this research required a total of eight novice teachers, and only six had responded, the researcher networked through colleagues in the Coweta County, Georgia, school system to recruit two additional participants.

As soon as each participant responded to the researcher's first email letter, the researcher either wrote back or called each volunteer to make an introduction and answer any questions. Participants were then sent a letter of consent as well as another letter explaining the purpose of the research, the selection process, assignment of a pseudonym to each participant in the study, a copy of the list of questions, a detailed description of the journal instructions, and a timeline for those who volunteered to participate in the research. The letter of consent was returned in a self-addressed stamped envelope provided by the researcher. All nine of the veteran and all eight of the novice participants returned the letter of consent and because this research only required a total of eight veteran teachers to participate, one participant was randomly removed from the research.

Data were collected for this collective case study by means of three different methods, including one-on-one interviews, participant journaling, and focus groups. The researcher completed one-on-one interviews with four novice teachers who had less than five years of

teaching experience, with all those years being in a middle school environment. The researcher also completed one-on-one interviews with four veteran teachers who had more than 11 years of teaching experience, with at least five of those years being in a middle school environment. The researcher made an appointment to meet and interview each participating teacher individually at a time most convenient to the interviewee. To ensure personal comfort, all one-on-one interviews took place in a setting of the interviewee's choice including his/her classroom, a conference room at the participant's school, local restaurants, or the interviewee's home. As in-depth interviews can provide a deeper reflection on the topic (Creswell, 2013), the researcher not only utilized a digital audio-recording device to record the conversation but also made notes on non-verbal responses during the interview. Each of the eight teachers who participated in the one-on-one interview was also asked to keep a participant journal of his/her daily job satisfaction perceptions for a total of 10 work days. The use of participant journaling added to the sources of evidence in this qualitative case study to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers and allowed the researcher to "address a broader range of historical and behavioral issues" (Yin, 2014, p. 120) that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia.

The eight participants who were selected for the focus groups were current middle school teachers and all currently taught in the same school. The eight focus group participants were separate from the other eight teachers in this proposed research study who participated in a one-on-one interview. The researcher completed one focus group discussion with four novice teachers who had less than five years of teaching experience, with all of those years being in a middle school environment. The researcher also completed one focus group discussion with four veteran teachers who had more than 11 years of teaching experience, with at least five of those

years being in a middle school environment. The two, separate focus group sessions took place

in a setting of the researcher's choice and included a classroom and local restaurant to ensure

personal comfort from all participants, a supportive environment, and a more relaxed atmosphere

than a one-on-one interview (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Each of the eight teachers who

participated in the focus group discussions was also asked to keep a participant journal of his/her

daily job satisfaction perceptions for a total of 10 work days. The one-on-one and focus group

sessions were each recorded utilizing a digital audio-recording device and then transcribed by the

researcher verbatim.

The Researcher's Role

As the human instrument who accumulated and interpreted the data, I transcribed each

one-on-one and focus group discussion interview word-for-word and did not have a

preconceived notion of the responses from the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). To

maintain a high-quality case study, I remained cautious to avoid potentially biased procedures,

taking advantage of unexpected opportunities, and remained aware of the "continuous interaction

between the theoretical issues being studied and the data being collected" (Yin, 2014, p. 72).

As an educator with over 11 years of experience, I have developed my own theories

regarding the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers.

However, I do not have middle grades teaching experience outside of my own school. In

addition, although I served as a veteran middle grades teacher in the county where the research

was conducted, I did not interview any of the teachers I worked with in my school and did not

have a previous personal or professional relationship with any of the research participants in this

study. To further minimize any bias, I depended on case study protocols and current literature

research to guide this collective case study.

Data Collection

Data were collected for this proposed collective case study by means of three different methods, including one-on-one interviews, participant journaling, and focus groups. By conducting three different types of data collection, the researcher utilized a triangulation method to bring more than one source of data together on a single point of topic (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). According to Yin (2014), when based on several different sources of information which follow a similar convergence, the outcome of any case study is likely to be more authentic and convincing.

The data collection process for this collective case study followed an established order to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction among 16 novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. First, one-on-one interviews were conducted with four novice teachers who had less than five years of teaching experience, with all of those years being in a middle school environment. The researcher then conducted one-on-one interviews with four veteran teachers who had more than 11 years of teaching experience, with at least five of those years being in a middle school environment. At the conclusion of each of the eight one-on-one interviews, the researcher requested that each of the eight teachers also complete an individual participant journal of his/her daily job satisfaction perceptions for a total of 10 work days. The eight participants who were selected for the one-on-one interviews and participant journaling were all current middle school teachers who did not all teach at the same school.

Along with eight of the teachers completing one-on-one interviews and participant journaling, a separate group of eight teachers participated in two separate focus group sessions and participant journaling. The eight participants who were selected for the focus groups were

current middle school teachers who did not all teach at the same school. The researcher completed one focus group discussion with four novice teachers who had less than five years of teaching experience, with all of those years being in a middle school environment. The researcher also completed one focus group discussion with four veteran teachers who had more than 11 years of teaching experience, with at least five of those years being in a middle school environment. The one-on-one interviews and two, separate focus group sessions were each recorded utilizing a digital audio-recording device and then transcribed by the researcher verbatim.

Interviews

The first method of data collection for this qualitative case study was one-on-one interviews with eight of the 16 middle school teachers. Although all 16 teachers in this research study were interviewed, the other eight participants participated in focus group sessions. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), interviews are important because they focus on the individual's lived experiences and assist the researcher in capturing the deep meaning of experience in the participant's own words.

The first set of one-on-one interviews was conducted with four novice teachers who had less than five years of teaching experience, with all of those years being in a middle school environment. The researcher then conducted one-on-one interviews with four veteran teachers who had more than 11 years of teaching experience, with at least five of those years being in a middle school environment. The researcher made an appointment to meet and interview each participating teacher individually at a time most convenient to the teacher. To ensure personal comfort, all one-on-one interviews took place in a setting of the interviewee's choice including a classroom, a conference room at the participant's school, local restaurants, or the interviewee's

home. As in-depth interviews can provide a deeper reflection on the topic (Creswell, 2013) the researcher not only utilized a digital audio-recording device to record the conversation but also made notes on non-verbal responses during the interview.

The questions for the one-on-one interviews followed the standard open-ended approach as the "participant's perspective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it, not as the researcher views it" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 101). Each question was also designed to gain a detailed description from each participant and avoid the simple yes or no response (Stake, 1995).

Open-Ended Interview Questions

Professional Background

1. How long have you been teaching?

2. What is the primary reason that you chose teaching over other professions?

3. At what schools have you taught and how long did you teach at each of these schools?

Job Satisfaction

4. What are the most rewarding aspects of the teaching profession?

5. What are the least rewarding aspects of the teaching profession?

6. When you have encountered professional challenges, whom have you turned to for support?

7. How likely would you be to encourage a former or current student to pursue a teaching career?

Administration

8. Describe the leadership practices of administrators who have had a positive impact on your teaching profession.

9. Describe the leadership practices of administrators who have had a negative impact on your teaching profession.

10. How has the school administration or school system helped you in meeting your personal and professional goals?

Retention

11. What special needs and issues do you perceive as being unique to teachers with your level of experience?

12. Why do you believe that 44% of the teachers in Georgia leave the profession within five years?

The first question pertained to the professional background of the research participant and established whether the teacher was a novice educator with less than five years of experience or a veteran educator with more than 11 years of experience. Question two sought to find the reason participants chose to enter the teaching profession, which revealed their own personal belief about their capabilities to teach (Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Question three was related to the number of years the participant had been teaching as there is a significant positive relationship between tenure and organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Questions four through six pertained to the aspects of job satisfaction for educators at each level of their career. During their research, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) classified job satisfaction or dissatisfaction into the areas of intrinsic rewards of teaching, factors extrinsic to the school, and school-based factors. Question seven was designed to inquire about the participant's overall job satisfaction in regard to encouraging former or current students to pursue a career in education. Owens (2015) reported that "66.9% of teachers in the state of Georgia answered that they are either unlikely or very unlikely to encourage graduates to pursue teaching" (p. 2). As school leadership has been

regarded as an important element of a teacher's job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Hallinger, 2003), questions eight and nine related to the leadership practices of the participant's school administration and the participant's perception of job satisfaction. Question 10 was related to a research study by Cancio et al. (2013) which found relevant correlations between an administrator's support and a teacher's decision to stay in the field and pursue growth opportunities in his/her school. Question 11 was designed to inquire about possible needs and issues unique to teachers at different levels of experience. An improvement in our understanding of the differences among novice and veteran teachers may assist in clarifying the transformations that evolve as teachers acquire expertise (Wolff, Van den Bogert, Jarodzka, & Boshuizen, 2015). Finally, question 12 was specific to the state of Georgia as it is directly from a survey by the Georgia Department of Education asking respondents why they "believe 44% of the teachers in Georgia leave the profession within five years" (Owens, 2015, p. 6).

Participant Journaling

The second method of data collection for this qualitative case study was participant journaling with all 16 of the participants. Marshall and Rossman (2006) argued that participant journaling allows the phenomenon to uncover itself through a self-professed explanation rather than an outsider's manipulation, such as in an interview or focus group setting. Additionally, research participants who participated in journaling did not need to feel confined to a structured or guarded perimeter when conveying their personal thoughts (Borg, 2001).

At the conclusion of each interview session, either one-on-one or focus group, each educator was given a small journal and asked to make additional notes on their own perceptions of job satisfaction which leads to longevity. During a 10-day work period, participants were asked to write about personal and professional challenges they faced in their own schools.

Specifically, each participant was asked to add additional observations or perceptions relating to the questions asked during the one-on-one interviews or focus group sessions and a copy of the interview questions was provided to each educator. The researcher also recommended that the participants consider writing about the working conditions in their school, school climate, school leadership, and teacher self-efficacy as these impact perceptions related to job satisfaction. At the end of the 10-day journal period, each participant was asked to mail the journal back to the researcher in a self-addressed stamped envelope provided by the researcher.

Focus Groups

Focus group interviews come largely from marketing; the participants in the group may be unfamiliar with each other but will share certain characteristics relevant to the research study (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The final method of data collection for this collective case study included two separate focus group sessions with eight of the 16 middle school teachers, consisting of four teachers per group. As the researcher, I created a supportive environment for each participant in the focus group to encourage discussion, differing opinions, and expression of views in regard to the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

The eight participants who were selected for the two separate focus group sessions were current middle school teachers working at various middle schools within Coweta County. The first focus group consisted of four novice teachers, those with less than five years of teaching experience. The second focus group consisted of four veteran teachers, those with more than 11 years of teaching experience. The two, separate focus group sessions took place in a setting of the researcher's choice and included a classroom and local restaurant to ensure personal comfort

from all participants, a supportive environment, and a more relaxed atmosphere than a one-on-one interview (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

As these eight focus group participants did not participate in the one-on-one interviews, they were asked very similar questions during the two separate sessions. The questions for the focus group sessions followed the standard open-ended approach, as the "participant's perspective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it, not as the researcher views it" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 101). Each question was also designed to gain a detailed description from each participant and avoid the simple yes or no response (Stake, 1995).

Open-Ended Focus Group Questions

Professional Background

1. How long has each of you been teaching?

2. What is the primary reason that each of you chose teaching over other professions?

3. At what schools has each of you taught and how long did you teach at each of these schools?

Job Satisfaction

4. What are the most rewarding aspects of the teaching profession?

5. What are the least rewarding aspects of the teaching profession?

6. When you have encountered professional challenges, whom have you turned to for support?

7. How likely would you be to encourage a former or current student to pursue a teaching career?

Administration

8. Describe the leadership practices of administrators who have had a positive impact on your teaching profession.

9. Describe the leadership practices of administrators who have had a negative impact on your teaching profession.

10. How has the school administration or school system helped each of you in meeting your personal and professional goals?

Retention

11. What special needs and issues does each of you perceive as being unique to teachers with your level of experience?

12. Why do you believe that 44% of the teachers in Georgia leave the profession within five years?

The first question pertained to the professional background of each of the focus group participants to establish whether the teacher was a novice educator with less than five years of experience or a veteran educator with more than 11 years of experience. Question two sought to find the reason the focus group participants chose to enter the teaching profession, which was concerned with their own personal beliefs about their capabilities to teach (Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Question three was related to the number of years that each focus group participant had been teaching as there is a significant positive relationship between tenure and organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Questions four through six pertained to the aspects of job satisfaction for educators at each level of their career. During their research, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) classified job satisfaction or dissatisfaction into the areas of intrinsic rewards of teaching, factors extrinsic to the school, and school-based factors. Question seven was designed

to inquire about each of the focus group participants' overall job satisfaction in regard to encouraging former or current students to pursue a career in education. Owens (2015) reported that "66.9% of teachers in the state of Georgia answered that they are either unlikely or very unlikely to encourage graduates to pursue teaching" (p. 2). As school leadership has been regarded as an important element of a teacher's job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Hallinger, 2003), questions eight and nine related the leadership practices of the participant's school administration and the participant's perception of job satisfaction. Question 10 was related to a research study by Cancio et al. (2013) which found relevant correlations between an administrator's support and a teacher's decision to stay in the field and pursue growth opportunities in their schools. Question 11 was designed to inquire about possible needs and issues unique to teachers at different levels of experience. An improvement in the understanding of differences among novice and veteran teachers may assist in clarifying the transformations that evolve as teachers acquire expertise (Wolff et al., 2015). Finally, question 12 was specific to the state of Georgia as it was taken directly from a survey by the Georgia Department of Education asking respondents why they "believe 44% of the teachers in Georgia leave the profession within five years" (Owens, 2015, p. 6).

Data Analysis

Each of the one-on-one interviews and the focus group meetings was recorded with a digital audio-recording device providing the researcher with a verbatim recording of the conversation. The researcher also made notes on non-verbal responses provided by the participants during the interview and focus group process. Each of the one-on-one interview and focus group participants was asked very similar questions during these sessions, allowing the researcher to compare these two sets of data as well as the participant journals.

Once all of the interviews were completed, the researcher transcribed the interviews and responses from each of the journal participants to familiarize himself with the data. The researcher followed the thematic analysis method to synthesize the data (Thomas & Harden, 2008). A thematic analysis method has three stages which include line-by-line coding of the text, the development of descriptive themes, and the generation of analytical themes (Thomas & Harden, 2008).

The researcher began the data analysis by assigning a number to each individual in this collective case study and classifying his/her responses by themes. Themes, or categories, are "broad units of information that consist of several codes aggregated to form a common idea" (Creswell, 2013, p. 186). Each individual participant's verbal and written transcripts, as well as any notes the researcher took on non-verbal responses, were reviewed and the researcher followed an open coding method to establish a theme for each individual participant (Creswell, 2013). The researcher did not set any predetermined themes and only allowed the research participant's responses to develop themes for data.

The researcher created nine tables with each participant's assigned number on the left side and several blank spaces to the horizontal right of this number. A summary of these responses is located in Appendix G. The researcher then reviewed each individual's verbal and written transcripts again. Any multiple responses, or codes, were transferred to the table by the participant's assigned number. After adding the responses, or codes, from all 16 participants to the table, the researcher then organized these codes into related areas by the number of individual responses to construct descriptive themes (Thomas & Harden, 2008). The researcher utilized these descriptive themes to develop analytical themes of common job satisfaction parameters along with the number of times each was referred to by the participants. Finally, the researcher

replaced the number assigned to each individual with a pseudonym to protect the identities of all

the participants in this study. The name of the participant's school was not given. These

pseudonyms were completely random and in no way connected to the participant's given name,

sex, or race. Each participant was randomly assigned one of the first 16 letters of the alphabet

and then each was given a common name beginning with that letter. The novice teachers were

Anna, Brenda, Charles, Danielle, Edison, Frank, Gene, and Helen. The veteran teachers were

Ivy, Julie, Kevin, Lucy, Mary, Nancy, Olivia, and Paula.

Trustworthiness

According to Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, and Walker (2013), "The researcher has an

obligation to represent the realities of the research participant as accurately as possible and must

provide assurances in the report that this obligation was met" (p. 532). As the researcher I

utilized Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four standards of trustworthiness including credibility,

dependability, confirmability, and transferability to evaluate the data in this proposed qualitative

research study. Each participant was allowed to review the data that he or she provided to the

researcher to determine the substance and precision prior to the defense of this research study. I

also took the necessary steps to limit my own personal prejudice from manipulating the results of

this study.

Credibility

As credibility is the most important criterion of the study (Connelly, 2016), I ensured that

I was practicing a prolonged engagement by speaking with a wide range of participants during

the research process. I also allowed participants to review their comments after each one-on-one

interview or focus group session to develop trust and rapport with members of the culture group.

To increase the reliability of the findings, the research followed a triangulation method including

one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and participant journaling. This triangulation method brought more than one source of data together on a single point of topic (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability within this proposed collective case study was maintained by asking each one-on-one interviewee and focus group participant the same series of questions on the topic of perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. None of the questions asked of any of the participants were misleading, and as the researcher, I did not share my own opinion on the topic to avoid influencing a participant's comments. The proposed use of multiple sources of information served to "strengthen the construct validity of the case study" (Yin, 2014, p. 121).

In order to maintain confirmability, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend that a researcher check and recheck the obtained data throughout the study. An additional proposal by Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that the researcher can take a devil's advocate role with respect to the results by searching for and describing any negative instances that disagree with prior observations.

Transferability

Transferability is the usefulness of a study to persons in other settings (Connelly, 2016). To assist the generalization of this collective case study to other school settings, the researcher utilized multiple sources of data including literature research, participant interviews, and participant journaling (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The researcher also described the participants in rich detail and reported the data in thick description enabling readers to make decisions in regard to the shared characteristics of the data (Creswell, 2007).

As this research study was conducted in one out of the 159 counties in the state of Georgia,

which is one of 50 states in the nation, which is one of the over 190 countries in the world,

the data obtained from this research may readily be transferred to many different school

systems as these educators shared particular characteristics with their peers.

Ethical Considerations

To provide for a thorough interview of each teacher, the researcher proceeded with a

predetermined list of questions. As the questions were being documented, the researcher ensured

that the responses were clear, concise, and what the interviewee intended. The researcher did not

ask leading questions or offer responses or assume, in writing, what the interviewee reported.

All information will remain confidential, and the researcher will not divulge any actual names in

this research report. To ensure an ethical interview or response from each participant, the

researcher first ensured that each participant had completed a participant consent form. Each of

the participants in this qualitative study, as well as the name of school where he/she was

employed, was given a pseudonym to protect his/her identity and to make certain that this final

case report will not affect the subsequent actions of those that were examined (Yin, 2014).

During the research phase of this collective case study all information including digital copies of

interviews, notes taken by the researcher during interviews, written transcripts of interviews, and

copies of participant journals were locked in a key entry safe in the researcher's home. At the

conclusion of this collective case study, all written information was scanned into separate PDF

files and the written portion of the information was shredded. All digital voice recordings and

PDF files were stored on a password-protected flash drive and will remain locked in a key entry

safe in the researcher's home for three years. At the end of three years the researcher will shred

the password-protected flash drive containing all digital voice recordings and PDF files from this

research. From the very beginning of the research study until the time the password-protected flash drive is shredded, the researcher is the only person who will have access to the data.

Summary

This chapter provided detailed procedures and methods for conducting this collective case study, which sought to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. The case study approach used for the research provided emerging themes to consider what could impact both novice and veteran teachers' decisions to remain in the profession. This approach followed a qualitative research design as it was interpretive and grounded in actual lived experiences of the participants. The collective case study was appropriate as it explored perceptions of job satisfaction from multiple case studies to provide different perspectives of the issue. Extensive literature exists that provided reasons for new teachers to leave the profession, but there is a lack of attention paid to veteran teachers in the current literature. For schools to become vigilant in solving the issues of retention, they must understand the underlying perceptions of job satisfaction among all teachers.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this research study was to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction between novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. The purpose for this chapter is to briefly discuss the participants of the study and examine themes that emerged from the data. Thorough descriptions provide insight into the lived experiences of the participants involved in this study. This study analyzed the experiences of 16 participants including eight veteran and eight novice teachers who were teaching in a Georgia public middle school. Results are included in this chapter that utilize data collected from the one-on-one interviews, participant journaling, and the focus groups. From the data collected, there is a presentation of themes followed by a discussion which addresses the research questions.

Participants

The first group of research participants for this study consisted of eight novice teachers, defined by You and Conley (2015) as a certified teacher with five or less years of combined teaching experience. These eight novice teachers represented four of the six middle schools within Coweta County, Georgia; one of the middle schools was not utilized in this research as the researcher was a teacher at this school and there were no participants from the other middle school. The second group of research participants consisted of eight veteran teachers, defined by You and Conley (2015) as a certified teacher with 11 or more years of combined teaching experience. These eight veteran teachers also represented four of the six middle schools within Coweta County, Georgia; one of the middle schools was not utilized in this research as the researcher was a teacher at this school, and there were no volunteer participants from the other

middle school. Of the novice teachers, four had been teaching middle school for over four years, while the other four had three or less years of middle school teaching experience. At the time of this study, one of the novice teachers was completing her second full year as a professional educator. Of the veteran teachers, three had more than 20 years of middle school teaching experience, and two of these teachers stated that they would be retiring within the next three years. When combined, the teachers in this study had 172 years of middle school teaching experience. Although it had no bearing on the research, the participants in this study included four males and 12 females, all of the teachers held a bachelor's degree, two of the participants held a doctorate in education, and the remaining participants already earned or were working towards their master's or education specialist degrees. These participants had previously taught students ranging from grades K to the college level. At the time of the research, some of the participants taught multiple subjects and grade levels from 6th to the 8th grade. Finally, all the participants were certified in regular education, with some holding additional certifications in gifted education, special education, and/or administration. A brief overview of each participant is listed below, and this information was acquired from the first three interview questions which pertain to the participant's professional background, the primary reason teaching was chosen as a profession, and the number of years each participant had been teaching. To protect the identities of all the participants in this study, the name of the participant's school was not given. The assignment of pseudonyms was completely random and in no way connected to the participant's given name, sex, or race. Each participant was randomly assigned one of the first 16 letters of the alphabet and given a common name beginning with that letter.

Anna

Anna is completing her fifth year of teaching. She has experience teaching in two different middle schools during these five years. Anna stated that she left her first school because a position was open at her current school, but she misses the family atmosphere of her previous school. Anna shared that she knew in second grade that she wanted to be a teacher. "My fourth-grade teacher, Mrs. Rush [pseudonym], was amazing. I have always had a love of learning and she fueled that fire even more. Her lessons were engaging and challenging. I remember her turning many lessons or topics into games. I wanted to inspire others and make a difference in their lives, as she had done for me." Anna is currently working on her master's degree in education and explained that although she enjoys her time in the classroom, she is considering a position in school administration.

Brenda

Brenda's inspiration to become a teacher came from her mother. "I can't remember not wanting to be a teacher. My mother would take me to school and I would help her put bulletin boards together or organize papers. We still talk every day and support each other." Brenda has two years of middle school teaching experience and also taught in a high school for two years. "The high school was very supportive, and the students were great, but I did not feel that I was really reaching the students. Now that I am teaching middle school I feel more connected to my students."

Charles

Charles has been teaching in the same middle school since he was hired almost five years ago, but also taught in another school during his career. He explained that he was hired by a small charter school at the end of his senior year of college to teach an advanced fifth-grade

class, but by the time school started, the entire administrative staff had been replaced and they made him teach a regular education second-grade class. Charles shared, "I was told the very first day of pre-planning that I would not be teaching the subject I spent all summer preparing for. I worked very hard that year, but I knew that elementary school was not for me." During the past few years, Charles has also completed his master's degree in education and earned his certification in Gifted Education.

Danielle

Danielle stated that she has not only been teaching in the same school since she was hired four years ago, but she is also still teaching the same subject in the same classroom. "I have friends that graduated with me who are on their second or third school, and others have already left teaching." Danielle explained that some of her friends accepted positions in counties that offered hiring bonuses but regretted this decision due to a complete lack of administrative support or student discipline. She added that she has mixed feelings about those that left teaching. "I understand their frustrations, but children need us, and we need to show them that we can handle difficult situations."

Edison

Edison has been a middle school educator for four years and shared that he became a teacher because of a series of events during his own time in middle school. "I was already an awkward and confused adolescent and then my parents went through a bad divorce. I just gave up because, hey, no one seemed to care. Then I was assigned to Mr. Stephens' [pseudonym] math class and my world changed." Edison described Mr. Stephens as a teacher who cared about the students and the subject he taught. "He knew what I was going through at home and told me that that was something I could not control, and my focus should be on those things I could

control." With help from Mr. Stephens, Edison explained that his grades improved, and he was able to participate in different school sports which gave him another outlet for his emotions. "I still keep in touch with Mr. Stephens and hope that one day I can be half the teacher and mentor he was to me."

Frank

Frank is a novice teacher with four years of middle school teaching experience. Frank stated, "I would not consider myself a novice teacher because I have been working part time in the schools for years." He explained that after college he worked for a retail corporation, but "I needed extra money and started working as a substitute teacher a few days per week. During that time, I fell in love with the profession." Frank's family supported his decision to return to college and earn a master's degree in education, and he continued to work as a substitute teacher as often as he could because he "loved being with the students."

Gene

Gene is in her second year of teaching and, at the time of her interview with the researcher, had only completed one full year of teaching. Gene was hired at her school directly out of college and shared that she teaches to serve the Lord. "I have been blessed with parents and a family who love and supported me, and I want to share this love and support with others."

Helen

Helen has four years of teaching experience and laughed when she was referred to as a novice teacher because "I am so much older than the average student leaving college today." Helen earned her degree in education, but while she was interviewing for a teaching position, a friend offered her a short-term opportunity to work in their company. According to Helen, "Short-term suddenly became 12 years and I realized that I was not where I needed to be." Her

family and friends were very supportive, and she was able to find a position teaching her favorite

subject within a few months. Helen revealed, "I enjoy sharing my love of education but there are

also times that I miss working in a more professional and team-oriented environment."

Ivy

Veteran teacher Ivy revealed that "teaching was not my first profession as I was a nurse.

Due to my husband's job we moved, and I decided to look for a career where I could be more

involved with my children's lives." Ivy went back to school to earn her degree in education and

has since spent the past 16 years teaching middle school across various grades and subjects

including math and science. Ivy shared that she loves working with children who are just

beginning to discover who they are and what they may want to be in life.

Julie

Julie is a veteran teacher who started her career teaching students in elementary school

and then moved up to serving middle school students 20 years ago. Julie admitted that teaching

was not her first calling as she felt that she was led to the profession by a higher power. She

added that although there were some very inspiring teachers throughout her elementary and high

school years, it was not until the second year of business school that she ever thought about

becoming a teacher. "I was doing very well in my classes but did not feel as if I was

accomplishing anything. One day I was teaching my youth Sunday school class and realized that

I was wasting my time in business school and realized that the Lord had a different mission for

me." Over the years Julie has added multiple degrees and certifications to her credentials and

stated that she kept improving herself to be the best teacher for her students.

Kevin

Although Kevin has 14 years of middle school teaching experience, he shared that teaching was not a first career choice. Kevin stated, "My older sister was in her last year of college and she was studying elementary education while I was in high school dreaming of becoming a lawyer." Kevin added that he had the chance to meet with a few lawyers and conduct in-depth interviews leaving him less satisfied with his career choice. "Then my sister invited me to meet with a few teachers who changed my perceptions about education." Since that time Kevin has served in a few different middle schools and added, "I never left a school because I was upset with anyone and still keep in touch with several old friends. I moved when opportunities presented themselves." Kevin explained that teaching offers those that are motivated the chance to constantly challenge themselves and their students.

Lucy

Lucy is a veteran teacher with 15 years of combined experience teaching in middle school, but she also took a break for a few years to teach college. Lucy explained that while she was working on her own advanced degree, an instructor at her college suggested that she use her new degree and classroom experience to teach college students. "I enjoyed teaching at the college level, but also missed my babies. I would share my experiences with the college students and then become emotional because I missed a real classroom." Lucy shared that when she taught middle school students, she had the opportunity to really work with and mentor them, but she would only see college students for a few hours per week.

Mary

As a veteran middle school teacher with 28 years of experience, Mary laughed when asked why she chose teaching over other professions and answered, "Oh, I am here for the

money and free pencils." Mary stated, "Seriously, I always wanted to be an elementary school teacher because there were so many that touched my life, but 28 years ago I was hired to teach sixth grade." Mary explained that she taught sixth grade for a few years, then moved up to seventh grade, then moved to a different school where she was offered a position teaching eighth grade. Mary revealed, "I have seen a lot of changes over the years but one thing that has not changed is the love and support our students need."

Nancy

Nancy has been in education for over 20 years and served as a middle school teacher for 16 years. She started out teaching in an inner-city middle school and then moved to a different city where she taught in a very large high school. Nancy shared, "This school was so big that I felt more like a number than a teacher. The principal would only smile at me because I knew that she did not know my name." Nancy moved again and was able to return to middle school and declared that "this is where the Lord wants me to be." She explained that when she was younger, "I was debating a career as a full-time youth minister and met with my pastor for advice. He said that this was a great choice, but then asked me why I did not consider going outside of the church and reach more children." Nancy stated that she chose to become a teacher because the Lord guided her into teaching to help shape the future and make a difference in someone's life.

Olivia

Olivia started her career in education as a kindergarten teacher and slowly transitioned to a position as a middle school teacher 12 years ago. She explained that she enjoyed teaching at every level but could not turn down an opportunity to keep challenging herself. Olivia remarked, "I have taught almost every grade from kindergarten to eighth and I don't have a favorite level. I

kept telling my students to challenge themselves, so I really just took my own advice." Olivia added, "Every teacher is important in a child's life. I did not want to be a teacher until I had a great teacher in ninth grade so we never know when we might change someone's life."

Paula

Paula is a veteran teacher with 25 years of middle school experience, but she also has experience teaching high school and college level students. Paula shared that her inspiration to become a teacher came from the Lord. She said, "I knew at an early age that I wanted to find a way to serve the Lord and my mother, who was also a teacher, guided me into teaching." Paula smiled and said, "I really didn't have a chance. My friends were the children of teachers, we played at the school, we took summers off together, and when I was in high school I could take half-days and volunteer in different classrooms." Paula explained that she worked with all types of teachers during her high school and college years and all of them had one thing in common: "A true love of education and their students."

Results

The purpose of this research study was to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction between novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. The data collected from the interviews, focus groups, and participant journaling were analyzed and coded. Upon careful review of the data collected, the researcher decided to organize the data into tables and analyze data without the assistance of a computer program. This chapter will describe the steps used to analyze the data and discuss the development of themes. Following the theme development is a discussion of participants' responses to the research questions.

Theme Development

Qualitative research is unique in that it requires a process of analyzing data from the lived experiences of the participants in the study. For this study, interviews, focus groups, and participant journals were analyzed, and themes were developed to explain how the participants view job satisfaction that leads to longevity. The following information details the steps used to analyze the data and the development of the themes.

Interviews

A majority of the data analyzed for this study was obtained from interviews with the participants. For the one-on-one interviews, the researcher interviewed eight of the total 16 participants. The questions were designed based on a standard open-ended approach to gain a detailed description and avoid the simple yes or no response (Stake, 1995). The interview questions included open-ended responses to inquiries about professional background, job satisfaction, administration, and retention. The researcher interviewed each participant at a location that was comfortable to each and most interviews took place at participants' schools. The interviews ranged in duration from 35 minutes to over 70 minutes depending on the conversations. The researcher utilized a digital audio recorder to record the conversations and also kept a notebook to write down any non-verbal responses during the interview.

Focus Groups

Of the 16 participants in this study, eight were interviewed in one-on-one sessions with the researcher. The remaining eight participants were divided into two focus groups: one group consisting of novice middle school teachers and the other group consisting of veteran middle school teachers. The researcher conducted one focus group session in a participant's classroom and the other focus group session at a local restaurant. For each focus group, the researcher

ensured that participants were comfortable and at ease with one another before beginning the questioning. The researcher used the same open-ended questions for the focus groups that were utilized during the one-on-one interview sessions as this allowed for a variety of discussion within the groups. Focus group one, with the novice teachers, was conducted in one of the participant's classrooms and took almost two hours due to open discussions. Each participant offered differing perspectives on his/her experiences, and it was interesting to hear related concerns and issues with teaching. The second focus group, with the veteran teachers, was held at a local restaurant, and discussions took place before and after the meal. It was interesting to find that both focus groups, the novice and veteran teachers, revealed similar perspectives of job satisfaction, and the factors that lead to satisfaction and dissatisfaction were in alignment with one another in their responses to the research questions.

Participant Journaling

In addition to one-on-one interviews and focus groups, each of the 16 participants were asked to participate in documenting daily experiences in a participant journal. Journaling allows for participants to share experiences in an unconfined platform which can reveal a phenomenon through self-professed explanation (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). The participants were asked to make notations in the journal for a duration of 10 work days and write about personal and professional challenges they faced and any observations relating to the research questions. Data were collected and analyzed from each journal submission.

Themes

The results of this qualitative research study, which sought to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction between novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia, included eight essential themes: sharing in a

student's success, professional treatment by administration, lack of administrative support, professional growth, student discipline, excess assessments, excess paperwork, and personal support and professional mentors.

To identify these themes, the researcher created 12 tables with each participant's assigned number on the left side and several blank spaces to the horizontal right of this number. A summary of these responses is located in Appendix G. The researcher then reviewed each individual's verbal and written transcripts again. Any multiple responses, or codes, were transferred to the table by the participant's assigned number. After adding the responses, or codes, from all 16 participants to the table, the researcher then organized these codes into related areas by the number of individual responses to construct descriptive themes (Thomas & Harden, 2008). The researcher utilized these descriptive themes to develop analytical themes of common job satisfaction parameters along with the number of times each was referred to by the participants. The themes that were identified are consistent with the literature related to the phenomenon of perceptions of teacher job satisfaction which include school climate, school leadership, and teacher working conditions.

Sharing in a student's success. This theme, which is an intrinsic reward, was expressed by all of the participants in this study and relates to the work itself (Herzberg et al., 1959). During their research, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) classified job satisfaction or dissatisfaction into the areas of intrinsic rewards of teaching, factors extrinsic to the school, and school-based factors. Although a few of the participants humorously commented that the main intrinsic reward for teachers is the high pay and long lunches, the participants all agreed that witnessing a student's growth in knowledge is the greatest reward. This positive reward of teaching was reported by the participants as the moments they witness a student's "light bulb" or "a-ha"

moment. Danielle explained, "I have friends that work in jobs outside of school and will brag that they earned a Christmas bonus, but I earn bonuses every time a student understands a lesson." According Brenda, "Teaching is so much fun. I am sharing my love of education with children every day." Kevin added, "There is an old advertisement for the U.S. Army that claims the Army is the toughest job you will ever love. The person who wrote that ad must have been a teacher."

Professional treatment by administration. A study by Bolliger and Wasilik (2009) discovered that perceptions of job satisfaction are increased when teachers feel appreciated, valued as professionals, and supported by administration. Most of the participants in this study stated that professional treatment, including equal treatment, respect, and trust, was the main leadership practice that had a positive impact on their teaching profession. A leader who sets clear expectations was also shared by most participants and other responses included positive feedback and being treated as equals.

The participants provided three main responses with respect to positive leadership practices: clear expectations, meaningful feedback, and being treated as a professional. The participants described current and past administrators whose positions ranged from assistant principals to principals. Veteran teacher Julie indicated, "My best principal always kept his relationship professional with those whom he worked with. He was always very supportive, but he never tried to be our friend." Novice teacher Anna shared, "I appreciate administrators that provide meaningful feedback because I, like my students, am here to improve." Paula remarked:

I appreciate an administrator that lets me take chances in my classroom even if I fail. Last year I wanted to teach a lesson using a different piece of technology that I had not used before. I completed all the research and presented the project to my administration and immediately one of them crossed their arms and started to shut down. I kept going

and the other administrators gave their approval and the lesson was a success. Sure, it

could have been a flop as I have written other lessons that the students completed in a

few minutes or ended up being way over their heads, but I appreciate that my

administrators trusted me as a professional.

According to Danielle and Ivy, their administrators ask the staff for their opinions when

solving problems and bring difficult issues to the school leadership team, which is made up of a

collection of teachers within the school. As a novice teacher, Gene added that administrators

who explain themselves and their decisions, along with clear and positive feedback, are very

important to someone who is new to the profession. Helen stated, "I appreciate a leader that

treats me as an equal member of the team and doesn't hide anything from me; this not only

builds trust but also sets me up to be successful."

Lack of administrative support. A lack of administrative support is an extrinsic factor

that can be comprised of the quality of a person's supervisors and supervision (Herzberg et al.,

1959). A study by Thibodeaux et al. (2015) sought to identify relationships between and among

school leadership and high stakes testing as possible factors leading to the teacher's decisions to

remain in the profession. The researchers revealed that, above all, the school principals'

leadership styles and behaviors were the strongest predictor of teachers' decision to stay

(Thibodeaux et al., 2015). Most of the participants in this study stated that a hands-off leader who

ignores certain teachers and praises others had a negative impact on their teaching profession.

Additionally, those leaders who are indecisive, irrational, and ignore student discipline were also

negative impacts on the participant's overall perception of job satisfaction.

When she was asked who she turned to during professional challenges, Olivia shared, "I

go to my colleagues because they have a clear understanding of what I am dealing with. I would

not go to an administrator because they would either be too busy, or they would not relate."

Nancy, a veteran teacher, shared:

I do not want to brag but I have multiple certifications and degrees, but I am treated like a fourth-class passenger on a ship. The administration never asks for my advice, we have to sign-out if we are leaving 15 minutes early for a doctor's appointment, and if we are late to a morning or afternoon duty we have to explain where we have been. My latest duty is eating lunch in the cafeteria next to the bathrooms to monitor the students. Please show me another profession that treats its workers like this.

Other participants listed administrators who are too hands-off, those who are too indecisive, the micromanager who checks everything and shows a complete lack of trust, and those who seem oblivious to the school climate and student discipline. Brenda elaborated and explained:

I feel overwhelmed and don't think that my administration really cares. I do not get any feedback on my lesson plans, I haven't been observed in weeks, and the only time I see my assistant principal is at afternoon duty. I need help and they don't seem to care.

According to Anna, "I have had two administrators whom I felt were just nodding their heads when I talked to them and were not listening to my concerns." Brenda discussed:

I have an administrator who always appears to be very busy in their office and acts as if I am bothering them if I have a question. Yes, they tell everyone that their door is always open, but there is a difference between open and welcoming and open and the cold shoulder treatment. When they do come to my room for an observation, which only last a few minutes, and I try to ask them questions they are very hands-off and either ignore my

question completely or give a short answer. This administrator is almost useless as they

are never there for me or anyone else.

Gene added that the administration spent more time getting to know him during the interview

process than after being hired. "Yes, I can go see my administrators if I have a question, but they

never seek me out and have completely stopped asking how I am doing."

The novice and veteran teachers both agreed that one of the largest negative impacts on

their teaching profession, in relation to administrators, is those who are too friendly with certain

teachers. Veteran teacher Kevin asked:

Who monitors the administrators? I had a principal who went on vacation with certain

teachers and they would post their pictures on Facebook. We had staff members who

would stay late to tutor students and take on extra duties, while others would show up

late, leave early and sometimes go off campus during their planning for extended lunches

and were never reprimanded. And, if we tried to complain then we would be under the

microscope for any little thing we may have done wrong.

Novice teacher Helen mentioned that they quickly noticed that their administrators had a

little group of favorite people in the building and everyone else was treated like an employee.

Danielle revealed:

At our faculty meetings, when it is time for the administration to recognize teachers and

staff for going above and beyond, we already know which handful of teachers will be

praised. I am not here for an award or to be placed upon a pedestal for all to see, but it is

disheartening to work so hard and be ignored while someone who covers one afternoon

duty is applauded in a faculty meeting.

Additional responses in relation to school administrators included descriptions of leaders who run their schools like a dictatorship with quick yes and no answers as well as micromanagers who check everything and display a lack of trust in their teachers. Finally, a few of the veteran teachers stated that they just wanted a leader who would make logical decisions because they were tired of working with an indecisive person who was not only irrational but also made petty decisions. Nancy disclosed:

> I was told that I needed to model my curriculum management after another teacher, although we did not teach students who were on the same level. I wasn't confrontational, but I did ask why I should change when my scores were consistently better than this teacher and my students were showing growth. My administrator just said "okay" and the idea faded away.

Professional growth. A research study by Cancio et al. (2013) found relevant correlations between an administrator's support and teachers' decisions to stay in the field and pursue growth opportunities in their schools. The novice and veteran teachers agreed that the county does more for them to support their professional growth than their own individual administrators. Two of the participants, Charles and Paula, both stated that the support they appreciate is that their administration stays out of their way and does not force unnecessary courses on them.

The main response from all participants with respect to the school administration helping the participants meet their personal and professional goals is the fact that the Coweta County School System offers many free courses for educators, and if a course is not free, many schools will pay for these teachers to attend. Most of the veterans and two of the novice teachers appreciated all the courses offered by the Coweta County School System. Ivy explained that

there are still several counties in Georgia that charge their staff members for training if it is not held in the school. Contrary to these responses, veteran teacher Nancy asked:

> Why are most of the trainings we attend put on by teachers who recently attend a workshop and are then just passing this information on to us? Our county praises itself for being in great shape financially so why can't the lead trainer conduct the presentation which would be more effective?

Mary added, "I have worked in other school systems that constantly advertised and encouraged us to attend conferences and trainings outside of the county, but unless I beg and offer to pay for myself, I am not allowed to attend."

Four of the novices and one of the veteran teachers stated that their administrators were very encouraging and supportive as these participants worked on enhanced training, additional certifications, and even their next degree. According to Lucy, "My administration knows that I am currently taking classes online and are supportive of my time, but they also invite me into meetings that pertain to the courses I am studying." Gene praised the county curriculum coordinator and the school department chair: "They have been very supportive and make sure that I am only taking the trainings I need right now."

Edison enthusiastically stated, "I appreciate our administration guiding us to certain courses but not forcing us to take them. Yes, we have a few courses that are directed at the entire staff, but most of the time I am able to pick and choose what I need to grow as a teacher." Novice teacher Charles and veteran teacher Paula both stated that the best way the school administration has helped to support their personal goals is by staying out of their way. Paula explained:

I don't want that to sound derogatory towards our administration, but I know what I am
doing and know what needs to be done for the school and our students. Yes, I am always
open to suggestions, but I am also closer to my subject and students and like to think that
I know their needs better than an administrator.

Student discipline. Student discipline is an extrinsic factor that can be comprised of a
person's relationship with others (Herzberg et al., 1959). When the researcher asked each
participant about the least rewarding aspect of teaching and why they believe 44% of the
teachers in Georgia leave within five years, student discipline was the second highest answer for
both questions. Julie, a veteran teacher, explained:

I have been teaching middle school for 20 years and I have seen a lot of changes, but the
most frustrating change has been the loss of control in our classrooms. Just ten years ago
teachers were respected by students and their parents, but this has changed. Just last
week two of my students were playing and this turned into a fight which I had to break
up. The next day I am in a parent meeting with the administration explaining what I did
wrong and what I was going to do in the future to correct my actions. Really? I have 30
students in the room and these two are fighting over something silly, but I have to explain
my actions?

Charles, a novice teacher, remarked:

I don't expect my students to be perfect little angels, but many of them act like they are
the adult in the room and can do whatever they want to do. There are days I can't blame
other teachers for leaving the profession.

Other participants shared stories of students who have not only taken the joy out of teaching but
also the joy out of learning for the other students in their classes. Nancy shared:

I love all of my students like they were my own children. But, if I found out that one of

my own children ever spoke to an adult the way these children are allowed to talk to me,

they would have been in a military school the next day.

Edison admitted, "I don't want to leave my school and I am definitely not going to quit teaching,

but I am not sure how much longer I can handle the vulgar language and constant lack of

respect."

Many of the veteran participants shared that student discipline, or lack thereof, seems to

be growing each year and some even stated that their administrators are afraid of the parents.

Veteran teacher Olivia admitted to having strong classroom management, but exclaimed:

I should not be punished because I am good at something. They keep giving me more of

the discipline students and expect me to be a miracle worker. This is not fair to me or the

other students in my classroom.

Novice teachers Charles and Frank both stated that their administrators are either oblivious to the

student discipline problems in their school or they pick and choose which students they want to

punish and which ones are sent back to class. Frank added, "If a parent complains loud or often

enough, then their child's behavior is overlooked. We have some students here that continuously

break the rules, and nothing is ever done. This is beyond frustrating."

Excess assessments. Excess assessments is an intrinsic factor that is related to

responsibilities and the work itself (Herzberg et al., 1959). Helen asked, "Am I a teacher or a

tester?" Danielle remarked:

We are over-testing our students. It may not seem like much in my classroom but do the

math, these students are taking six classes per day. Now that the connections classes (art,

music, physical education, technology) are giving the students an end of course

assessment, we are not creating independent learners but test takers.

Ivy explained that testing is necessary in education, but there must be a limit. "When I first

started teaching the state only gave a few standardized assessments at the end of the year. Now

we spend all year preparing for several days of testing which puts unnecessary stress on

everyone." Kevin asked, "Why are people who have never taught in a classroom making

decisions based off of my student's test scores? How can such a large portion of my yearly

evaluation come from one assessment?" Veteran teacher Lucy declared:

> I am not saying that we need to take away the end of year exams, but there is no reason
>
> for the students to take multiple benchmarks, in class assessments, practice quizzes, and
>
> then spend additional class time learning how to properly take a test. These are middle
>
> school students, they know how to take a test because we have been teaching these same
>
> skills since kindergarten. If we took away half of the practice assessments this would
>
> reduce our paperwork by at least 30 to 40%.

Excess paperwork. The novice and veteran teachers in this research study reported that

the overwhelming amount of paperwork is one of the least rewarding aspects of the teaching

profession. Gene stated:

> When I was in the education program some of the teachers mentioned that we had to keep
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> up with a little bit of data on our students, but I am overwhelmed. I am not a special
>
> education teacher, but I am expected to track the daily behavior of several of my students
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> and track the growth scores on all of my students. I do not mind doing this if it helps the
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> children, but I feel like my time could be spent doing something more beneficial.

Frank indicated that although he had only been teaching for a few years, the amount of paperwork seems to keep expanding: "I am not talking about the assignments I need to grade, but the detailed lesson plans, student data sheets, parent contact forms, and assessment tracking sheets. It is just overwhelming." Olivia disclosed that there is more paperwork now with the recent Georgia Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES), the teacher evaluation system, than the systems utilized in the past:

> There are now greater expectations in so many areas than before and this is taking away from my actual lessons. I am a professional and understand the needs of my students, I do not need to waste my time filling out a sheet of paper that will just sit in some file.

> When asked why 44% of the teacher in Georgia leave the profession within five years, novice teacher Danielle explained:

> It is the paperwork. When I give my students an exam I have to track all of their scores, then compare these scores to the previous exams, then rank the questions from most-to-least missed, then fill out additional data on this information. I do not have time to teach.

Personal support and professional mentors. Bressman, Winter, and Efron (2018) completed an interpretive-qualitative study of early to late career stage teachers regarding mentoring and teacher support systems. The study revealed that although teaching involves in-depth interaction with students, a teacher's work is often done in isolation from colleagues and this isolation, unfortunately, can also lead to teacher apathy or disengagement resulting in a lack of enthusiasm for new teachers and those well into their careers. Bennett, Brown, Kirby-Smith, and Severson (2013) reported that those teachers who maintain a commitment to the profession and plan on remaining for a full career are supported by family, peers, and their administration.

The participants' responses in this research study were similar to those in the study by Bennett et al. as they listed family, friends, and the Lord as their main forms of professional support.

Nancy shared, "My husband and children love the fact that I am a teacher and tell people how proud they are of me." Brenda and Paula have parents that are also teachers and talk to them daily about different aspects of teaching. Charles regarded the relationships with the school staff to be the most beneficial support system. "I usually turn to whatever colleague I feel can help me the most and this could be another teacher, administrator, custodian, or someone in the front office." Two of the novice teachers mentioned that their schools did have a teacher mentor program, and this was beneficial during their first few years. These teachers also stated that they appreciated the support of their mentor and the administration. Helen mentioned that their school did have a teacher mentor program for new teachers, but it quickly diminished, and these teachers had to find support on their own. According to novice teacher Helen:

> Yes, this will be my fifth full year of teaching but that does not mean I magically know everything. When I worked for a corporation we made sure that a person was well trained because our job depended on how well they performed their job. That isn't the case here and a mentor would be beneficial.

The veteran teachers were mixed in their responses as some stated that being treated like a professional was unique to teachers with their level of experience, while others would just like to be appreciated for all they do and have done over the years.

Some of the novice teachers explained that they did have colleagues in their school that they could go to for advice but often feel as if they are a burden on this person because they have their own responsibilities. Five of the novice teachers stated that they would appreciate a true

mentor to continue guiding them with classroom management, discipline, and paperwork. Edison explained:

> I am expected to know everything I am doing, but I am still trying to figure out several things myself. Every year it seems as if there is more paperwork and multiple forms of data to track each student's progress, and I am overwhelmed. How hard would it be for an administrator to offer a one-hour class per week to go over everything? When my students are struggling, one of the options I offer is tutoring, how is this any different?

Nancy, a veteran teacher, shared:

> All teachers need a mentor. Our county recently incorporated Chrome Books (personal computers) into grades 3rd to 12th and then took away our textbooks. Not only were we expected to start using these with our students our TKES evaluation is also checking on our proper use of technology in the classroom. I am not opposed to the Chrome Books, but the students are much smarter than me when it comes to technology. I would appreciate working with a teacher who understands computers and can show me the correct way to implement these in my classroom.

Anna, a novice teacher, did not mention a mentor, but she did state, "At my level of experience I would appreciate it if the administration would just keep checking on me. I may have been teaching for a few years, but I still have a lot of questions." Nancy indicated, "Our new teachers are working 70 to 80 hours per week trying to build the same portfolio that those with 15 years of experience already have." Novice teachers Brenda, Edison, and Gene all shared that the education courses they took in college did not prepare them for the reality they faced in a real classroom and would appreciate the guidance of someone with experience. Frank remarked, "I was never taught how to handle group of students who get into a fight in my class, and then

get sent back to me after a stern lecture from the administration." Olivia asked, "How do I explain to a new teacher that they will get used to belligerent children?" According to veteran teacher Lucy:

> New teachers are disillusioned to what the classroom will really be like compared to what they have experienced in college classes or their practicum. Keep in mind, the practicum teachers are all strong veterans who usually have excellent classroom management and the capability of teaching their students and a new teacher at the same time. These practicum teachers show the new teachers as much as possible, but it is only a glimpse of reality. Then these new teachers are suddenly alone and standing in front of their own students for the first time and this is why so many become burned out and leave.

Some of the participants compared new teachers to new employees and explained that a new employee hired right out of college is trained by their company for months or even years. Mary added:

> At our school we have always ensured that new teachers have at least one mentor to guide them during their first few years. Even if someone with 20 years of experience at another school is hired or transfers into our school, they will still have a mentor assigned to them to acclimate them into our school's environment.

Kevin revealed that times have changed for new teachers as 10 to 15 years ago everyone, including the administration, supported each other. "We used to be one big happy family, then with the added pressure of assessments, TKES, and larger class sizes everyone is overwhelmed, and it is hard to support someone else when you are already drowning."

Research Question Responses

     Central research question. "What are the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers?" In order to answer this question, it was important to understand the teachers' lives and experiences that contributed to perceptions made about job satisfaction and how it leads to longevity in teaching. The participants in this study included novice and veteran middle school teachers with experiences ranging from five to 25 years of teaching experience. The insights from these participants are valuable in research relating to retention and longevity of middle school teachers.

     According to Herzberg et al. (1959), job satisfaction is comprised of two separate factors with the first being intrinsic factors which are the work itself, recognition from peers or superiors, and responsibilities. The extrinsic factors, which are not related to the actual job, are known as the dissatisfiers and can be comprised of company policies, the quality of supervisors and supervision, and relationship with others (Herzberg et al., 1959).

     The novice and veteran participants' overall positive response to the intrinsic factors of job satisfaction included witnessing the moment a student connects with the lesson and watching the students develop and grow, professional treatment by administration, professional growth, and personal support and professional mentors. According to Gene, a novice teacher, "The look on my student's face when they understand a lesson is priceless and always makes my day."

     The negative responses to the intrinsic factors of job satisfaction differed between the participants as the novice teachers stated that excess paperwork and disrespectful students were the least rewarding aspect of their career. The veteran teachers expressed their frustration with assessments and student discipline. According to Mary, a veteran teacher, "All we do is test the

students to track their data and then test them again to obtain more data. I can't blame the students for acting out."

Sub question 1. How did perceptions of job satisfaction differ among novice and veteran middle school teachers? According to Akomolafe and Olatomide (2013), satisfaction in one's chosen career, especially for teachers, is important as job satisfaction also correlates with commitment to the students, the school, and the community. Although the overall response from all participants was excess paperwork, other participants including Charles and Julie shared that student discipline was very frustrating and could be managed if the administration offered more support to the teachers.

The novice and veteran teachers in this research study reported that the overwhelming amount of paperwork is the least rewarding aspect of the teaching profession. Gene stated:

When I was in the education program some of the teachers mentioned that we had to keep up with a little bit of data on our students, but I am overwhelmed. I am not a special education teacher, but I am expected to track the daily behavior of several of my students and track the growth scores on all of my students. I do not mind doing this if it helps the children, but I feel like my time could be spent doing something more beneficial.

Olivia disclosed that there is more paperwork now with the recent Georgia Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES), the teacher evaluation system, than the systems utilized in the past. "There are now greater expectations in so many areas than before and this is taking away from my actual lessons. I am a professional and understand the needs of my students, I do not need to waste my time filling out a sheet of paper that will just sit in some file."

Testing and test scores were the second highest response regarding the least rewarding aspect of the teaching profession. Helen asked, "Am I a teacher or a tester?" Danielle remarked:

> We are over-testing our students. It may not seem like much in my classroom but do the
> math, these students are taking six classes per day. Now that the connections classes (art,
> music, physical education, technology) are giving the students an end of course
> assessment, we are not creating independent learners but test takers.

Ivy explained that testing is necessary in education, but there must be a limit. "When I first started teaching the state only gave a few standardized assessments at the end of the year. Now we spend all year preparing for several days of testing which puts unnecessary stress on everyone." Kevin asked, "Why are people who have never taught in a classroom making decisions based off of my student's test scores? How can such a large portion of my yearly evaluation come from one assessment?" One participant, Brenda, listed a lack of support from the administration as the least rewarding aspect of the teaching profession. Brenda elaborated and explained:

> I feel overwhelmed and don't think that my administration really cares. I do not get any
> feedback on my lesson plans, I haven't been observed in weeks, and the only time I see
> my assistant principal is at afternoon duty. I need help and they don't seem to care.

Sub question 2. How did years of service influence teacher perceptions of job satisfaction? Owens (2015) reported that "66.9% of teachers in the State of Georgia answered that they are either unlikely or very unlikely to encourage graduates to pursue teaching" (p. 2). Of the 16 participants in this research study, only 37% stated that they would encourage a former student to purse a teaching career while 63% said they would not. The data were split between the novice and veteran teachers as 63% of the novice teachers would encourage a former student to purse a teaching career, but just 13% of the veteran teachers agreed with them. Kevin commented:

I have helped and encouraged a few former students who told me they were interested in becoming teachers, but I would not recommend this profession to my own children. This is a different profession than it was just 10 years ago, and today's new teachers need to know that they will not be treated with the same level of respect by students, parents, and administrators as we were in the past. Yes, I would recommend teaching as a profession, but I would also be very honest with whomever asked for my assistance.

Other veteran teachers including Ivy stated, "I would not encourage a student to become a teacher as the curriculum guides have stripped away our chance to be creative and teach outside of the box." Olivia revealed, "My fellow teachers and I are friends and I would not willingly invite a new friend into this hostile environment where we have a lack of discipline and support from the administration and parents." Mary disclosed, "Nowadays, no. I know that our students need us, but I would explain that they are going to feel very frustrated and work harder than anyone else for very low pay." Lucy shared, "My daughter thought about becoming a teacher, but I have not influenced her one way or the other. Then, the other day she told me that she witnessed everything I go through and changed her mind about becoming a teacher." Nancy explained:

No, and I know that seems a bit harsh, but I would definitely not. The intrinsic rewards are to the moon and back, but extrinsically I feel that middle school teachers are treated like middle school children. The TKES evaluation program has created a lack of respect for well-seasoned professionals and when I started teaching I looked up to my experienced, master level peers. But with TKES the administration looks at everyone on a level playing field and we recently had a teacher who has over 27 years of experience earn a less than proficient TKES score in content knowledge. This teacher has written

some of the content for the state, has served as the curriculum chair of their department, mentors all of us and then earns less than proficient scores. Something is wrong with our system and this is why seasoned teachers are wanting to leave.

Unlike the veteran teachers, most of the novice teachers shared that they would encourage a current or former student to pursue a teaching career. Several of these participants expressed many of the same concerns as the veteran teachers regarding frustrations with TKES, excess testing, and the lack of parent support regarding student discipline, but the novice teachers also accepted these challenges as part of the profession. Edison discussed working for other professions before becoming a teacher and admitted that there are some bad days as a teacher, but none compare to a corporate career. While attending college to earn a degree in education, Frank worked in a retail setting for several years. "I am now in a positive environment where I feel accepted by everyone and if I have a question I am not afraid to ask a peer or my administration." Charles admitted:

> I have mixed feelings but right now I would encourage someone to become a teacher. I have friends in other schools that tell me that they are more supported than I feel here, so instead of changing careers I may just change schools.

The three novice teachers who stated that they would not encourage a former or current student to pursue a teaching career were Brenda, Danielle, and Helen. Each of these teachers stated that they enjoy teaching, but according to Helen, "After a difficult year with student discipline, I could not encourage someone to become a teacher right now. I hope this changes next year." Danielle had mixed feelings with a response of "No and yes," also sharing that "it would depend on the person and if I thought they could handle themselves in some of the difficult situations we must endure."

Finally, when comparing how years of service influence the teacher's perceptions of job satisfaction, the veteran teachers expressed concerns with the TKES evaluation system, excess testing, and lack of parent support regarding student discipline, but the novice teachers shared that they accepted these factors as part of the profession. The veteran teachers also stated that they had special needs including a higher level of trust and a desire to be more appreciated. Paula declared:

> Yes, you can hire a new teacher right now that will cost you a lot less and you can save some money, but they will not have the wisdom and experience in the classroom, in the school, and in our county that a lot of us possess. There are a handful of older teachers that are watching the calendar until retirement but the rest of us are working harder and harder every day. I have helped numerous teachers and administrators and guess what, I am not trying to be an administrator, but I can help you too.

Julie mentioned:

> Trust me, I know what I am doing even if I don't use all of the latest technology or rearrange my classroom after someone shows me the latest research. I am not opposed to change, but I can show you yearbooks full of successful students.

Sub question 3. What did teachers perceive as the most influencing factor that led to job satisfaction? The overall response, given by all participants, is witnessing students' "a-ha" or "light bulb" moments when they make connections and are proud of their understanding. Charles stated, "Just the other day a student thanked me and told me that I was a good teacher, and that is the only reward I need." Lucy loved watching the students develop and grow, and "because we are a community school I will continue to see these students for years at school events or the store and they always give me a hug." Julie explained:

It goes beyond the light bulb moment for me as I know that I am serving the Lord in my classroom. No, I am not allowed to pray with my students but that does not stop me from praying for them. Times may change but children do not as they need someone to support them both in and out of the classroom, and that is why I am here. I work with a great group of educators who also support our students and when they leave us to go on to the high school and beyond, I know we have changed many lives.

Helen and Olivia both indicated that although they did not like standardized tests, they enjoyed sharing in their students' excitement as they increase their standardized test scores. Edison commented that his favorite part of teaching was when the students had real conversations about the curriculum and how it related to their own lives. Mary declared that even after retiring she would not stop teaching. "I will not come back to school as a substitute, but I will be here as a volunteer. I love my students and enjoy being part of their lives."

Summary

This chapter detailed the research design model, participants included in the study, and results of the study. For this research, a collective case study model was utilized that included one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and participant journaling to gather data related to job satisfaction leading to longevity among novice and veteran teachers. The researcher reviewed the data and identified eight essential themes that include sharing in a student's success, professional treatment by administration, lack of administrative support, professional growth, student discipline, excess assessments, excess paperwork, and personal support and professional mentors. Each of these themes correlates to literature related to job satisfaction and school climate, school leadership, and a teacher's working condition.

Professional growth and sharing in a student's success are themes that relate to one's intrinsic motivation and are viewed as internal rewards to teachers. Professional treatment by administration, lack of administrative support, student discipline, excess assessments, excessive paperwork, and personal support and professional mentors all relate to factors that can lead to job dissatisfaction. As the findings from this study demonstrated, all teachers enjoy sharing in their students' success but become frustrated when dealing with student discipline, a lack of administrative support, and excess paperwork and assessments. The results indicated that more than any other factor leading to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction were the excessive paperwork and assessments that cause frustration for teachers. In considering the theme of lack of administrative support and student discipline, both are related to relationships with others. Chapter 5 presents a summary and conclusion of the research as well as suggestions for improving practice.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction between novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. Chapter 5 presents a summary of findings, discussion of the findings, implications of the study, the delimitations and limitations, and recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

This study explored the perceptions of job satisfaction between novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia and how Maslow's (1959) hierarchy of needs theory related to an individual's pursuit of his/her own highest point of happiness. Additionally, the study was also related to Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory which relates to an individual's self-perception which was associated with the novice and veteran middle school teachers' self-efficacy and perceptions of job satisfaction. The central research question for this study pertained to the positive or negative judgments that people make about their jobs (Skaalvik & Skallvik, 2015). The central research question for this study was: What are the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers? Based on the data collected through one-on-one interviews, focus groups interviews, and participant journaling, the participants in this study perceived that witnessing a student's "a-ha" or "light bulb" moment, sharing a love of education with others, serving the Lord in their classroom, and being treated professionally by administrators increased their job satisfaction. The participants listed a lack of administrative support, administrators who do not treat them

with respect as a professional, student discipline, and excess paperwork and student assessments as factors that diminish their job satisfaction.

In addition to the central research question, this study also explored three sub questions. Sub questions one and two were related to career stage theories by Steffey (1989), Huberman (1993), You and Conley (2015), and Sun et al. (2016). According to Steffey, although a teacher may or may not demonstrate all the characteristics of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction at each stage, they will move through each stage if they remain in the profession long enough. Additionally, teachers undergo changes in their overall job satisfaction with regard to their roles as educators, their orientation toward work, and their enthusiasm which may be identified at a particular time in their careers (Steffey, 1989). The first sub question was: How did perceptions of job satisfaction differ among novice and veteran middle school teachers? Analysis of the data revealed that there were no differences in the perceptions of positive influences among novice and veteran middle school teachers as both groups shared that a student's light bulb moment and being treated professionally by administrators increased their job satisfaction. Regarding the negative influences, both groups of participants agreed that student discipline and administrators who pick certain teachers as their friends while ignoring others leads to reduction in overall job satisfaction. But, while the novice teachers shared that excess paperwork was also a factor that led to a decline in their job satisfaction, the veteran teachers stated that excess student assessments and testing were a negative influence.

The second sub question was: How did years of service influence teacher perceptions of job satisfaction? The novice teachers' experience levels ranged from a total of one full year to over five years of teaching. The veteran teachers' experience ranged from 14 to 28 years in middle school, but several of these participants had additional years of experience as they also

taught in elementary schools, high schools, and college. The years of service did not have an influence on these teacher's positive perceptions of job satisfaction as all the participants listed a love of their students, love of teaching, and supportive administrators as favorable conditions. Seven of the eight novice teachers in this study also shared that they would encourage a former or current student to pursue a teaching career; however, when the veteran teachers were asked this same question, all but one stated that they would not encourage a former or current student to pursue a teaching career due to burn out, excess student assessments, and a lack of appreciation and respect from their administration.

Sub question three pertained to the individual factors that teachers perceive have the most influence on their overall job satisfaction. This question was framed in Maslow's (1959) hierarchy of needs which is related to an individual's pursuit of his/her own highest point of happiness. The third sub question was: What did teachers perceive as the most influencing factor that led to job satisfaction? Most of the novice and veteran teachers in this case study shared that their love of teaching and witnessing a student's "a-ha" or "light bulb" moment was the most influential factor leading to job satisfaction. Additional responses which are also related to the participants' love of teaching included watching a student learn and grow and witnessing when a student relates a lesson to his/her own life.

Discussion

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction between novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. This section will discuss the results of this study in relationship to the hierarchy of needs theory, self-efficacy theory, a survey conducted by the Georgia Department of Education, career stages, stress, burnout, self-efficacy, and leadership. The

responses provided by the 16 novice and veteran participants in this study support, expand, and diverge from the research in the literature review.

Theoretical Literature

There is a well-established link between an employee's satisfaction and the diverse aspects of the organization where he/she works, and a teacher's overall job satisfaction is critical to a school's success (Stearns et al., 2015). Additionally, there is a relationship between job satisfaction and the retention of teachers (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). This study of 16 novice and veteran middle school teachers extends the theoretical research on job satisfaction as the participants reported less stress and greater job satisfaction when they did not have to focus on student discipline. Additionally, those participants who reported positive interactions with their administrators were more motivated in their current positions and had a higher level of job satisfaction than those who reported negative interactions with their administrators. The theoretical frameworks guiding this study were grounded in Maslow's (1959) hierarchy of needs and Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory which relates to an individual's self-perception.

Hierarchy of needs. Maslow (1959) theorized that a person's basic needs are organized by a level of motivation with the basic physiological needs and safety at the bottom, the psychological needs of love and esteem next, and self-actualization at the top. When a person reaches the self-actualization state, or a "high level of maturation, health, and self-fulfillment, they have so much to teach us that sometimes they seem almost like a different breed of human beings" (Maslow, 1959, p. 43). Maslow's (1959) hierarchy of needs theory is relevant to this study as it is associated with the novice and veteran middle school teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction. The participants in this case study confirmed a separate study by Takaki et al. (2016) utilizing Maslow's theory, which suggested that feelings of contribution and acceptance

in the workforce were associated with higher work engagement and lower psychological distress. The research by Takaki et al. (2016) showed that when a sense of contribution and acceptance at the workplace is low, the subject's psychological distress becomes high. While interviewing the 16 novice and veteran participants for this qualitative case study, the researcher witnessed distress when the teachers discussed a lack of support from their administration, overwhelming amounts of paperwork they deemed as unnecessary, an overload of student assessments, and disrespectful students. These factors all extend the previous research as the participants reported higher psychological distress and lower job satisfaction; for instance, 10 of the 16 teachers reported that they would not encourage a current or former student to pursue a teaching career, and 12 of the 16 teachers mentioned burn out, a lack of support, and feeling overwhelmed as the main reason 44% of teachers in Georgia leave the profession within five years.

This study confirms the literature on higher acceptance and job satisfaction as the participants reported that administrators who trust them as professionals gave them the confidence to take on new challenges in their classrooms. The participants also revealed feelings of acceptance when the school system, as well as their own administrators, encouraged and paid for the teachers to take additional trainings towards new certifications or degrees. Some of the teachers also mentioned that their school assigned them a mentor teacher for guidance and support which lowered their psychological distress.

Self-efficacy. Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory states that appraisal of a performance and the subsequent outcome are an inferential process in which all factors must be weighed. For the purpose of this theory, a "performance is conventionally defined as 'an accomplishment' or 'something done,' and an 'outcome' as 'something that follows as a result or consequence of an activity'" (Bandura, 1986, p. 361). According to research by Snyder and Fisk

(2016), a teacher's perception of self-efficacy is paramount because of its relationship to job satisfaction factors which include student achievement, teaching behaviors, and teacher persistence. This study extends Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory as the teachers stated that their love of teaching and witnessing a student's "a-ha" or "light bulb" moment was the most influencing factor that led to job satisfaction. The participants also shared that their love of teaching included watching a student learn and grow, witnessing when a student relates a lesson to his/her own life, and making plans to return to the classroom as a volunteer educator after retirement just to work with the students.

Snyder and Fisk (2016) reported that a teachers' self-efficacy also affects their accomplishments in goal setting and achieving their aspirations. This study of 16 novice and veteran middle school teachers confirms Snyder and Fisk's research as the participants displayed positive self-efficacy accomplishments by working on and earning advanced degrees, completing additional teaching certifications, designing new lessons, and staying in the profession. Lu et al. (2005) described job satisfaction as the individual's perceptions of pleasurable experiences that include their attitudes towards specific aspects of the job including feelings of self-worth and individual work tasks. The teachers in this study set and met goals for themselves to achieve a higher level of personal accomplishments and job satisfaction.

Empirical Literature

Over the past 20 years, analyses of studies and statistics reflect that teacher attrition and retention continue to be critical issues that face American schools (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011b). Much research exists to examine the issues related to teacher attrition and retention and general categories have emerged related to the reasons why teachers leave education. The empirical literature guiding this study included a study by the Georgia Department of Education, career

stages, stress, burnout, self-efficacy, and leadership. The conclusions are not surprising: low compensation, changes in life situation, lack of administrative support, little input to school policy, and challenging students (Torres, 2012). This study of 16 novice and veteran middle school teachers adds to the empirical research on job satisfaction as the participants also reported frustrations with excess testing and excess paperwork as additional factors that lowered their overall job satisfaction. The veteran teachers in this study also shared that the updated teacher evaluation system had a critical input on their working conditions and left them feeling unappreciated.

 Georgia Department of Education Survey. In November of 2015 the Georgia Department of Education surveyed over 53,000 teachers in the state with responses from 26,603 elementary educators, 11,989 middle school teachers, and 13,773 high school teachers. Of the over 53,000 teachers that responded, over 10,500 had less than five years of experience while more than 31,800 had 11 or more years of teaching experience. From this survey, results indicated that regardless of years' experience or grade levels taught, fewer than 3% of the participants stated that they would recommend the teaching profession to future graduating students (Owens, 2015). Teachers in the survey shared that assessments, and the time spent planning for these assessments, as well as a lack of respect, autonomy, and support caused overwhelming stress that led to job dissatisfaction (Owens, 2015). This study of 16 novice and veteran middle school teachers in one county in the state of Georgia confirmed the results from the study as both groups agreed that assessments and a lack of administrative support led to job dissatisfaction. However, this study of 16 participants diverged from the state of Georgia study as they also reported student discipline as one of the major factors that leads to job dissatisfaction.

The Georgia Department of Education study also reported that those teachers with more experience are less likely to recommend the teaching profession to future candidates (Owens, 2015). The 16 novice and veteran teachers in this research study confirmed this research as 63% of the novice teachers would encourage a former student to purse a teaching career but just 13% of the veteran teachers agreed with them. The veteran teachers shared frustrations with TKES, excess testing, and lack of parent support regarding student discipline, but the novice teachers accepted these challenges as part of the profession. The novice teachers who worked in corporate and retail careers before becoming teachers shared that they feel more appreciated than they did in previous careers.

Stress. Reglin and Reitzammer (1998) defined stress as a person's reaction to a situation they feel could be considered threatening which may lead to a reduction in personal health, depression, and lack of productivity at work. Rosenthal and Alter (2012) referred to occupational stress or job strain, which results from a "combination of high demands with low decision latitude in the workplace" (p. 2). Additional forms of stress may also branch from "uncertain relationships with co-workers or superiors, such as conflicts or unfair treatment, ambiguous or contradictory work demands, and role overload" (Rosenthal & Alter, 2012, p. 2). This study of novice and middle school teachers confirms that administrators who ignore or micromanage their teachers adds to the person's occupational stress. Furthermore, administrators who make friends with certain teachers and ignore others, or those that force teachers to take on additional duties in the school, also increase the teacher's stress.

During a 2012 study by the APA at the University of Miami School of Education and Human Development, researchers interviewed teachers in all stages of their career in regard to the stress they experience and ways to alleviate stress in the workplace (Prilleltensky et al.,

2016). The participants in the APA study reported personal organization, proper sleep, mindful meditation, and workload clarification as the leading factors that alleviated stress in the workplace. The participants in this study of novice and middle school teachers diverged from this research as 55% reported that support from family and friends lowered their stress when they encountered professional challenges. Further responses included collaboration with colleagues and faith in the Lord as guiding these teachers through difficult times and subsequently lowering their individual stress levels.

Burnout. When referring to an employee, Freudenberger (1974) described burnout as occurring when "a staff member in an alternative institution burns out for whatever reasons and becomes inoperative to all intents and purposes" (p. 160). Over a period of 25 years Dr. Christina Maslach, a social psychologist, conducted research on numerous professionals, including teachers, in regard to their emotional stress, professional identity, and quality of work (Maslach et al., 2001). Maslach's study (as cited in Rumschlag, 2017) found that teachers did not feel rewarded to the level they felt was appropriate and were displeased with factors in their working environment which included class size, teaching assignments, and school leadership. Although the novice and veteran teachers in this study did not mention class size or teaching assignments, they did corroborate that they were burned out by state mandated testing and a lack of support from their administration.

In a study of 92 teachers, Helou et al. (2016), utilized the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (MBI-ES), which was created just for use in educational research (Rumschlag, 2017). Helou et al. (2016) used the MBI-ES as part of their research and discovered that one of the major causes of burnout for teachers was a lack of mentoring. This result was confirmed by the novice teachers in this research study as 75% stated that they would appreciate a mentor

teacher to guide them through the proper procedures including assessment data and paperwork. Only 13% of the veteran teachers in this research study mentioned that the support of a mentor teacher would be beneficial.

Self-efficacy. Acknowledged by research, the relationship between a teacher's self-efficacy and job satisfaction is very important, and those with a higher self-efficacy are often more devoted to their career as an educator (Coladarci, 1992; Reyes & Shin, 1995). Satisfaction in one's chosen career, especially for teachers, is important as job satisfaction also correlates with commitment to the students, the school, and the community (Akomolafe & Olatomide, 2013). The middle school teachers in this study confirmed this research as they shared that when they are treated as professionals by the administration and their students, they felt respected and part of the learning community. Additionally, when these teachers experienced a higher level of self-efficacy, they also took on additional learning opportunities in and outside of their classrooms.

Leadership. A study by Thibodeaux et al. (2015) revealed that, above all, the school principals' leadership styles and behaviors were the strongest predictor of teachers' decisions to remain in the profession (Thibodeaux et al., 2015). An additional study by Nguni et al. (2006) stated that in most workplaces, including schools, the leadership style of the manager or administrator greatly influences the overall job satisfaction of the employees. When the novice and veteran teachers in this research study were asked to describe the leadership practices of administrators who had a positive impact on their teaching profession, the top responses among all the participants included being treated as a professional and an administrator that sets clear expectations. These responses extend the previous research as these teachers feel that equal and professional treatment leads to an increase in their overall job satisfaction.

Implications

This study of the perceptions of job satisfaction between novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia revealed specific implications for district leaders, school administrators, and classroom teachers at any stage of their career. This section discusses theoretical, empirical, and practical implications of this study. The information provided by this qualitative study was designed to be utilized in other school districts regardless of a district's location, size, and the demographics of the students or teachers.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of this qualitative research study are that district and school leaders maintain open lines of honest communication with all their teachers to build trusting relationships and lower the teacher's psychological distress. In addition, the district and school leaders should implement mentor programs specifically directed at teachers of all career levels, encouraging everyone to share their unique skills and building a community of trust within the district and schools. Although the teachers in this study shared that their self-efficacy stemmed from a student's "a-ha" moment, teachers need to feel this same sense of satisfaction outside of the classroom as well. School administrators need to share these "a-ha" moments with the student's parents by calling home and congratulating the student for doing well on an assignment and ensuring that the teacher is given credit for the lesson and student support. The teacher should also be praised in front of their peers for creative lessons, student accomplishments, and surpassing expectations in the school.

Empirical Implications

The results of this case study are important for administrators as the novices and veteran teachers shared similar and different responses regarding their perceptions of job satisfaction. Both groups of teachers stated that an overwhelming amount of paperwork, student assessments, a lack of administrative support, and student discipline led to job dissatisfaction. One difference in the participants' responses is that 87% of the veteran teachers in this research study confirmed that they would not encourage a former student to purse a teaching career, but 63% of the novice teacher would. District and school administrators should meet with their veteran teachers to conduct further research on their frustrations with TKES, excess testing, and lack of parent support regarding student discipline and collaborate on a successful plan to increase the teachers' job satisfaction. The administrators should also meet with their novice teachers to confirm the hypothesis that these teachers accept TKES, excess testing, and lack of parent support regarding student discipline as part of the profession and discover areas of positive and negative job satisfaction related to these teachers.

Practical Implications

The first practical implication of this research study is directed to the school administrators who should focus on treating all of their teachers and staff members as professionals. This implication is a result of both the novice and veteran teachers reporting that their administrators are too hands-off, give quick yes and no answers without an explanation, or make friends with some teachers while ignoring others. These administrators should also spend time meeting with their veteran teachers to listen to their concerns as well as seeking their advice in regard to managing the school. Finally, the school district should reduce the amount of student assessments and grades which will give the teachers more time to focus on the

curriculum. This implication is a result of the teachers from the four different middle schools sharing that each individual school requires that the teachers record a different number of student participation and assessment grades each period.

Delimitations and Limitations

The first delimitation of this qualitative case study, which was the purposeful decision made by the researcher to limit or define the boundaries of this study, was that the volunteer participants be either current novice or veteran middle school teachers. You and Conley (2015) defined a novice teacher as a certified teacher with five or less years of combined teaching experience and a veteran teacher as a certified teacher with 11 or more years of experience. The reasoning behind the researcher's decision to delimit participation to novice and veteran middle school teachers was that a review of literature revealed that there are numerous research studies that identify multiple factors that cause teacher burnout and stress and discussed how the term job satisfaction can mean different things to different people. However, limited research was found that examined middle school teachers and their job satisfaction, and more research is needed in this area (Marinell & Coca, 2013).

Another delimitation of this study was to select teachers who were currently teaching and exclude any teachers that had either retired or left the profession before retirement. The researcher made this decision as retired teachers may not have the same classroom experiences due to the TKES evaluation system and student assessments as current teachers. The researcher did not want to include teachers who left the profession before retirement as these former teachers may have negative feelings towards several aspects of the teaching profession.

The first limitation of this qualitative case study was that the participants only represented four of the six middle schools in Coweta County, Georgia. One of the middle

schools was not utilized in this research as the researcher was a teacher at this school and, according to Creswell (2013), studying within one's own organization may raise concerns of power to the participants and the location. The other middle school was not used in this research as there were no participant volunteers from this school.

The second limitation of this study was that the sample size of 16 participants only represented a small portion of the novice and veteran middle school teachers in Coweta County, Georgia. Although this sample size was acceptable for this case study, the eight novice and eight veteran participants may have only provided a limited view of the perceptions of job satisfaction that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia.

The third limitation of this study is that the participants were all from one out of the 159 counties in the state of Georgia, which is one of 50 states in the United States of America. Novice and veteran middle school teachers from similar schools and counties in Georgia may corroborate the themes in this research; on the other hand, the teachers in these counties may offer different perceptions of job satisfaction that lead to longevity in their own county.

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Recommendations for Future Research

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Due to the limitation of this qualitative case study only being conducted in four out of the six middle schools in one county in the state of Georgia, the researcher recommends that future versions of this study be conducted in multiple and larger school systems. By conducting this research study in multiple school districts, the perceptions of job satisfaction may be compared across different types of school system leadership. Additionally, by conducting this research study in larger school systems, the sample size may also be increased to compare responses of a larger group of novice and veteran teachers.

The second recommendation for future research is to conduct the interviews for this study at the beginning of the school year, not at the end. Due to the middle school students taking their year-end state mandated assessments, the researcher conducted most of the interviews during the last few months of the 2017–2018 school year. By conducting the interviews at the beginning of the year, the participants' perceptions of job satisfaction may be different as they have just returned from a summer break and are still becoming familiar with their students.

The third recommendation for future research is to conduct this study with novice and veteran middle school teachers in the state of Georgia who have completed the GaTAPP program. Participants in the TAPP or GaTAPP program enter the teaching profession after working in professional or technical fields or serving in or retiring from military service. A study of GaTAPP teachers by Wagner and Imanel-Noy (2014) found that the participants did not feel that the program had adequately prepared them for the level of paperwork and other working conditions, including after school duties, that many schools require. As the study by Wagner and Imanel-Noy was only completed with novice teachers with just two years of teaching experience, a state-wide study of these teachers may display different perceptions of job satisfaction as these participants have previously held professional and technical positions.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction between novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. The data sources for this research study included one-on-one interviews, participant journals, and focus group interviews with a total of 16 novice and veteran middle school teachers who served in four of the six middle schools in this county. By conducting three different types of data collection, the researcher utilized a triangulation method

to bring more than one source of data together on a single point of topic (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). According to Yin (2014), when based on several different sources of information which follow a similar convergence, the outcome of any case study is likely to be more authentic and convincing. Eight essential themes developed from the participants' responses including sharing in a student's success, professional treatment by administration, lack of administrative support, professional growth, student discipline, excess assessments, excess paperwork, and personal support and professional mentors.

Relevant literature related to the phenomenon of perceptions of job satisfaction (including school climate, school leadership, and teacher working conditions) was also reviewed. The study was grounded in Maslow's (1959) hierarchy of needs which is related to an individual's pursuit of his/her own highest point of happiness. Additionally, the study was grounded in Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory which relates to an individual's self-perception.

This chapter presented a summary of findings and answered the central research question and three sub questions. It also presented a discussion of the findings including the theoretical and empirical literature, the theoretical, empirical, and practical implications of the study, the delimitations and limitations, and recommendations for future research. This research study revealed that both the middle school novice and veteran teachers enjoyed sharing in their student's success but became frustrated when dealing with student discipline, a lack of administrative support, and excess paperwork and assessments. However, the results also indicated that regardless of years teaching, these teachers shared a sense of responsibility and intrinsic motivation to continue in their commitment to educate.

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APPENDIX A: IRB Application

APPLICATION FOR THE USE OF HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

February 7, 2018

James Mitchell Bailey, Jr.
IRB Approval 3122.020718: A Case Study Comparison of Novice and Veteran Middle School Teachers' Perceptions of Job Satisfaction

Dear James Mitchell Bailey, Jr.,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year from the date provided above with your protocol number. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
The Graduate School

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APPENDIX B: Sample Recruitment Letter

A CASE STUDY COMPARISON OF NOVICE AND VETERAN MIDDLE SCHOOL
TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF JOB SATISFACTION
James Mitchell Bailey, Jr.
Liberty University
School of Education

Date

Mr. John Doe
7th Grade Teacher
Anywhere Middle School
123 Education Blvd
Anywhere, GA 12345

Dear Mr. Doe,

As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education degree. The purpose of my research study is to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia, and I am writing to invite you to participate in my study.

You were selected as a possible participant because you are either a novice teacher with five or less years of middle school teaching experience or a veteran teacher with 11 or more years of overall teaching experience, including five or more years of teaching experience in a middle school. If you are a novice or veteran middle school teacher, are 18 years of age or older, and are willing to participate, you will be asked to do the following:

1. Participate in either a one-on-one interview with the researcher or a focus group session with three other teachers. Both the one-on-one interviews and focus group sessions will be recorded with an audio recording device to assist the researcher later when compiling all of the data. Each one-on-one interview and focus group session should take about one hour to complete and the focus group participants will be randomly selected.
2. For 10-15 minutes each day, during a 10-day work period, write in a participant journal about the professional challenges you may face in your school. Specifically, you will write about additional observations or perceptions relating to the questions asked during the one-on-one interviews or focus group sessions and about the working conditions, school climate, school leadership, and teacher self-efficacy as these may or may not impact your perceptions related to job satisfaction.

Your name and/or other identifying information will be requested as part of your participation, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please complete the enclosed participant consent document and return it to the researcher, James Mitchell Bailey, Jr. The participant consent document contains additional information about my research. Please sign the consent document and return it to the researcher in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided.

Sincerely,

James Mitchell Bailey, Jr.

APPENDIX C: Participant Consent Form

A CASE STUDY COMPARISON OF NOVICE AND VETERAN MIDDLE SCHOOL
TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF JOB SATISFACTION
James Mitchell Bailey, Jr.
Liberty University
School of Education

You are invited to be in a research study to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia. You were selected as a possible participant because you are either a novice teacher with a maximum of five years of middle school teaching experience, or a veteran teacher with 11 or more years of teaching experience with at least five of those years teaching in a middle school. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

James Mitchell Bailey, Jr., a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to discover and compare the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers that lead to longevity in one county in the state of Georgia.
The research questions for this study are:
Central Question: What are the perceptions of job satisfaction among novice and veteran middle school teachers?
Sub Question 1: How did perceptions of job satisfaction differ among novice and veteran middle school teachers?
Sub Question 2: How did years of service influence teacher perceptions of job satisfaction?
Sub Question 3: What did teachers perceive as the most influencing factor that led to job satisfaction?

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:
1. Participate in either a one-on-one interview with the researcher or a focus group session with three other teachers that will be led by the researcher. Both the one-on-one interviews and focus group sessions will be recorded with an audio recording device to assist me later when compiling all of the data. Each one-on one interview and focus group session should take about one hour to complete and the focus group participants will be randomly selected.

2. During a 10-day work period, write in a participant journal about the professional challenges you may face in your school. Specifically, you will write about additional observations or perceptions relating to the questions asked during the one-on-one interviews or focus group sessions and about the working conditions, school climate, school leadership, and teacher self-efficacy as these may or may not impact your perceptions related to job satisfaction.

Risks and Benefits of Participation: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report, I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

Include the following in this section:
- All information will remain confidential and researcher will not divulge any actual names in the final research report. To ensure an ethical interview or response from each participant the researcher will first ensure that each participant has completed a consent form. Each of the participants in this qualitative research study, as well as the names of the schools where they are employed, will be given a pseudonym to protect their identities and to make certain that the final case report will not affect the subsequent actions of those that were examined.
- All information including a list of pseudonyms of participants will remain locked in a key entry safe in the researcher's home during the research phase of this study. At the end of this case study, all written information will be scanned into separate PDF files and the written portion of the information will be shredded. All digital voice recordings and PDF files will be stored on a password protected flash drive and locked in a key entry safe in the researcher's home for three years. At the end of three years I will shred the password protected flash drive containing all digital voice recordings and PDF files from this study. From the very beginning of the research study until the time the password protected flash drive is shredded, the researcher will be the only person who will have access to the data.
- All focus group participants will be reminded that the information shared in the focus group is personal and confidential and they will be asked not to share any information outside of the group. As the researcher I cannot assure participants that other members of the focus group will not share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is James Mitchell Bailey, Jr. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at jmbailey@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Gary Smith, at gsmith61@liberty.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 1887, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____

Signature of Participant   Date

_____

Signature of Investigator   Date

APPENDIX D: Open-Ended One-On-One Interview Questions

Professional Background

1. How long have you been teaching?

2. What is the primary reason that you chose teaching over other professions?

3. At what schools have you taught and how long did you teach at each of these schools?

Job Satisfaction

4. What are the most rewarding aspects of the teaching profession?

5. What are the least rewarding aspects of the teaching profession?

6. When you have encountered professional challenges, whom have you turned to for support?

7. How likely would you be to encourage a former or current student to pursue a teaching career?

Administration

8. Describe the leadership practices of administrators who have had a positive impact on your teaching profession.

9. Describe the leadership practices of administrators who have had a negative impact on your teaching profession.

10. How has the school administration or school system helped you in meeting your personal and professional goals?

Retention

11. What special needs and issues do you perceive as being unique to teachers with your level of experience?

12. Why do you believe that 44% of the teachers in Georgia leave the profession within five

   years?

APPENDIX E: Open-Ended Focus Group Questions

Professional Background

1. How long has each of you been teaching?

2. What is the primary reason why each of you chose teaching over other professions?

3. At what schools has each of you taught and how long did you teach at each of these schools?

Job Satisfaction

4. What are the most rewarding aspects of the teaching profession?

5. What are the least rewarding aspects of the teaching profession?

6. When you have encountered professional challenges, whom have you turned to for support?

7. How likely would you be to encourage a former or current student to pursue a teaching career?

Administration

8. Describe the leadership practices of administrators who have had a positive impact on your teaching profession.

9. Describe the leadership practices of administrators who have had a negative impact on your teaching profession.

10. How has the school administration or school system helped each of you in meeting your personal and professional goals?

Retention

11. What special needs and issues do each of you perceive as being unique to teachers with your level of experience?

12. Why do you believe that 44% of the teachers in Georgia leave the profession within five

     years?

APPENDIX F: Journaling Prompt Questions

Along with the prompt questions listed below, the researcher also recommends that the participants consider writing about the working conditions in their school, school climate, school leadership, and teacher self-efficacy as these impact perceptions related to job satisfaction. The researcher will request that each participant writes for approximately 10 to 15 minutes each day during a 10-day work period.

Job Satisfaction

1. What were some of the most rewarding aspects of the teaching profession you experienced today or this week?

2. What were some of the least rewarding aspects of the teaching profession you experienced today or this week?

3. If you encountered a professional challenge or challenges today or this week, whom did you turn to for support?

4. How likely would you be to encourage a former or current student to pursue a teaching career?

Administration

5. In regard to your administrators, what were some of the most rewarding leadership practices you experienced today or this week?

6. In regard to your administrators, what were some of the least rewarding leadership practices you experienced today or this week?

7. How has the school administration or school system helped each of you in meeting your personal and professional goals?

Retention

8. What special needs and issues do you perceive as being unique to teachers with your level of experience?

9. Why do you believe that 44% of the teachers in Georgia leave the profession within five years?

APPENDIX G: Tables

The following 12 tables are a summary of each participant's response to the one-on-one

interview questions or comments from participant journaling. The researcher utilized these

descriptive themes to develop analytical themes of common job satisfaction parameters along

with the number of times each was referred to by the participants. To protect the identities of all

the participants in this study, their names and the names of the participant's schools were not

given. The assigned pseudonyms were completely random and in no way connected to the

participant's given name, sex, or race. Each participant was randomly assigned one of the first

16 letters of the alphabet and then each was given a common name beginning with that letter.

Table 1

Interview Question # 1: How long have you been teaching?

Teacher	Status	Response in Years
Anna	Novice	5
Brenda	Novice	2
Charles	Novice	4
Danielle	Novice	3
Edison	Novice	4
Frank	Novice	3
Gene	Novice	1
Helen	Novice	4
Ivy	Veteran	16
Julie	Veteran	20
Kevin	Veteran	14
Lucy	Veteran	15
Mary	Veteran	28
Nancy	Veteran	16
Olivia	Veteran	12
Paula	Veteran	25

Table 2

Interview Question # 2: What is the primary reason that you chose teaching over other professions?

Teacher	Status	Response	Code
Anna	Novice	Influenced by former teacher	1
Brenda	Novice	Family member is a teacher	3
Charles	Novice	Influenced by former teacher	1
Danielle	Novice	Enjoy working with students	4
Edison	Novice	Influenced by former teacher	1
Frank	Novice	Started as a substitute teacher and fell in love with the profession	5
Gene	Novice	Serving the Lord	2
Helen	Novice	I enjoy teaching (certain subject) and want to share my love of (certain subject) with others	6
Ivy	Veteran	Changed professions after moving and wanted to be more involved in my children's lives	7
Julie	Veteran	Serving the Lord	2
Kevin	Veteran	Enjoy working with students	4
Lucy	Veteran	Influenced by former teacher	1
Mary	Veteran	Influenced by former teacher	1
Nancy	Veteran	Serving the Lord	2
Olivia	Veteran	Influenced by former teacher	1
Paula	Veteran	Serving the Lord	2

Top response by novice teachers:

1. Influenced by former teacher

Top responses by veteran teachers:

1. Influenced by former teacher

2. Serving the Lord

Top responses / combined:

1. Influenced by former teacher

2. Serving the Lord

Table 3

Interview Question # 3: At what schools have you taught and how long did you teach at each of these schools?

Teacher	Status	Response	Code
Anna	Novice	Although each of the participants for this	
Brenda	Novice	research study did answer this question,	
Charles	Novice	these answers were very detailed with	
Danielle	Novice	both years and locations which	
Edison	Novice	may corrupt the anonymity	
Frank	Novice	of the participants.	
Gene	Novice		
Helen	Novice		
Ivy	Veteran		
Julie	Veteran		
Kevin	Veteran		
Lucy	Veteran		
Mary	Veteran		
Nancy	Veteran		
Olivia	Veteran		
Paula	Veteran		

Table 4

Interview Question # 4: What are the most rewarding aspects of the teaching profession?

Teacher	Status	Response	Code
Anna	Novice	A student's light bulb moment	1
Brenda	Novice	When the student understands the lesson (light bulb)	1
Charles	Novice	A student's light bulb moment	1
Danielle	Novice	A student's light bulb moment	1
Edison	Novice	When students' learning grows to where they can relate our lessons to their own lives	4
Frank	Novice	A student's a-ha moment	2
Gene	Novice	Share my love of education and the look on my students' faces when they are learning	3
Helen	Novice	Excitement of student learning	2
Ivy	Veteran	A student's light bulb moment	1
Julie	Veteran	A student's a-ha moment	2
Kevin	Veteran	A student's a-ha moment	2
Lucy	Veteran	Watching the students develop and grow	3
Mary	Veteran	When the student understands the lesson (light bulb)	1
Nancy	Veteran	A student's light bulb moment	1
Olivia	Veteran	A student's a-ha moment	2
Paula	Veteran	When the learning light bulb comes on	1

Top responses by novice teachers:

1. A student's light bulb moment

2. A student's a-ha moment

Top responses by veteran teachers:

1. A student's light bulb moment

2. A student's a-ha moment

Top responses / combined:

1. A student's light bulb moment

2. A student's a-ha moment

Table 5

Interview Question # 5: What are the least rewarding aspects of the teaching profession?

Teacher	Status	Response	Code
Anna	Novice	Paperwork and data collection	1
Brenda	Novice	Lack of support from administration	4
Charles	Novice	Disrespectful students / student discipline	3
Danielle	Novice	Paperwork and over-testing	1
Edison	Novice	Disrespectful students	3
Frank	Novice	Paperwork, student data sheets, assessment tracking sheets, student discipline	1
Gene	Novice	Overwhelming amounts of paperwork	1
Helen	Novice	Testing	2
Ivy	Veteran	Testing or over-testing	2
Julie	Veteran	Student discipline	3
Kevin	Veteran	Constant assessments and preparing for standardized assessments	2
Lucy	Veteran	An overload of assessments	2
Mary	Veteran	Excess grades and assessments, student discipline	2
Nancy	Veteran	Student discipline	3
Olivia	Veteran	Paperwork, data collection, student discipline, and lack of parent involvement	1
Paula	Veteran	Excess amount of paperwork and assessments	1

Top responses by novice teachers:
1. Paperwork
2. Disrespectful students

Top responses by veteran teachers:
1. Assessments / Testing
2. Paperwork and Student Discipline

Top responses / combined:
1. Paperwork
2. Assessments / Testing

Table 6

Interview Question # 6: When you have encountered professional challenges, whom have you turned to for support?

Teacher	Status	Response	Code
Anna	Novice	Friends	2
Brenda	Novice	Parent is a teacher	5
Charles	Novice	School staff members	4
Danielle	Novice	The Lord	3
Edison	Novice	Family	1
Frank	Novice	Friends	2
Gene	Novice	The Lord	3
Helen	Novice	Colleagues	4
Ivy	Veteran	Friends	2
Julie	Veteran	The Lord	3
Kevin	Veteran	Family	1
Lucy	Veteran	Friends and family	2
Mary	Veteran	Family and colleagues	1
Nancy	Veteran	Family (spouse and children)	1
Olivia	Veteran	Colleagues	4
Paula	Veteran	Parent is a teacher	5

Top responses by novice teachers:

1. friends

Top responses by veteran teachers:

1. family
2. friends

Top responses / combined:

1. family
2. friends

Table 7

Interview Question # 7: How likely would you be to encourage a former or current student to pursue a teaching career?

Teacher	Status	Response	Code
Anna	Novice	Yes	1
Brenda	Novice	No, not right now	2
Charles	Novice	Yes, but with mixed feelings	1
Danielle	Novice	No and Yes, but more no, it would depend on the person	2
Edison	Novice	Yes, I definitely would	1
Frank	Novice	Yes	1
Gene	Novice	Yes, I look forward to teaching with my former students one day	1
Helen	Novice	No, not right now, but this has been a difficult year and I may change my mind next year	2
Ivy	Veteran	No, not likely	2
Julie	Veteran	No, I would not	2
Kevin	Veteran	Yes, I would	1
Lucy	Veteran	No, I would not	2
Mary	Veteran	No, not likely	2
Nancy	Veteran	No, definitely not	2
Olivia	Veteran	Not likely	2
Paula	Veteran	No	2

Top responses by novice teachers:
1. Yes (Total of 5 responses)
2. No (Total of 3 responses)

Top responses by veteran teachers:
1. No (Total of 7 responses)
2. Yes (1 response)

Top responses / combined:
1. No (Total of 10 responses)
2. Yes (Total of 6 responses)

Table 8

Interview Question # 8: Describe the leadership practices of administrators who have had a positive impact on your teaching profession.

Teacher	Status	Response	Code
Anna	Novice	Those who have provided me with meaningful feedback	2
Brenda	Novice	Being treated professionally	1
Charles	Novice	Supporting and respecting me	1
Danielle	Novice	I appreciate those administrators who have clear expectations	3
Edison	Novice	Those who respect me and treat me professionally	1
Frank	Novice	Being treated as a professional even though I am still new to the profession.	1
Gene	Novice	I appreciate the clear and positive feedback especially since so many things are still new to me	2
Helen	Novice	Setting clear expectations for everyone including the teachers and the students	3
Ivy	Veteran	Setting me up to be successful and treating me professionally	1
Julie	Veteran	Professional and supportive	1
Kevin	Veteran	My favorite administrator always told the truth and their feedback was very supportive	2
Lucy	Veteran	Those who have treated me professionally and as an equal and not looked down on me	1
Mary	Veteran	Staying flexible with actual teaching practices while keeping their expectations clear	3
Nancy	Veteran	Treat everyone equally and professionally	1
Olivia	Veteran	Those who are not afraid to do what they ask me to do (clear expectations)	3
Paula	Veteran	Trust me as a professional	1

Top responses by novice teachers:
1. Treated as a professional
2. Clear expectations / Meaningful feedback

Top responses by veteran teachers:
1. Treated as a professional
2. Clear expectations

Top responses / combined:
1. Treated as a professional
2. Clear expectations

Table 9

Interview Question # 9: Describe the leadership practices of administrators who have had a negative impact on your teaching profession.

Teacher	Status	Response	Code
Anna	Novice	Those who just nod their heads but do not really listen to their teachers	1
Brenda	Novice	Too hands-off and not there for me	1
Charles	Novice	I am bothered by administrators who seem oblivious to school climate and/or student behavior	3
Danielle	Novice	Those that ignore certain teachers and over-praise others	2
Edison	Novice	The dictator who gives quick yes or no answers without an explanation	1
Frank	Novice	Those who pick and choose how they are going to handle student discipline and are afraid of parents	3
Gene	Novice	Being left alone or forgotten	1
Helen	Novice	Not being part of their little group of favorite people	2
Ivy	Veteran	Those who do not deal with student discipline and ignore the repeat offenders	3
Julie	Veteran	Those who only listen to a select group of teachers when making decisions	2
Kevin	Veteran	Those who make friends with certain teachers and if you are not their friend then you are treated badly	2
Lucy	Veteran	The micromanager who checks everything and does not trust that their teachers are professionals	4
Mary	Veteran	An indecisive person	5
Nancy	Veteran	Being told I have to teach like others in the building who have lower scores and are not teaching on the same level	6
Olivia	Veteran	Expecting me to be a miracle worker with all of the discipline students because I have been successful with classroom management	3
Paula	Veteran	Irrational and petty decisions	7

Top responses by novice teachers:
1. Hands-off leader who does not listen
2. Those who pick teachers as friends / Those who ignore student discipline

Top responses by veteran teachers:
1. Those who pick teachers as friends / Those who ignore student discipline

Top responses / combined:
1. Hands-off leader who does not listen
2. Those who pick teachers as friends / Those who ignore student discipline

Table 10

Interview Question # 10: How has the school administration or school system helped you in meeting your personal and professional needs?

Teacher	Status	Response	Code
Anna	Novice	Very encouraging and supportive as I work towards my next degree	2
Brenda	Novice	I have attended some free trainings that other school systems charge their teachers to attend	1
Charles	Novice	By staying out of my way	3
Danielle	Novice	The county is always offering different educational courses for teachers	1
Edison	Novice	By not forcing me to take too many different courses and letting me pick others	1
Frank	Novice	Encouraging me to work on additional certifications	2
Gene	Novice	My department chair and the school system curriculum instructor have been very supportive with different lessons and trainings	2
Helen	Novice	By supporting me as I work towards my next degree	2
Ivy	Veteran	Paying for different courses and certifications	1
Julie	Veteran	Either paying for or offering free courses at the county office that meet my needs	1
Kevin	Veteran	Paying for different courses and certifications	1
Lucy	Veteran	Very supportive and understanding if I need to leave school for a class or ask questions	2
Mary	Veteran	Previous schools helped quite a bit, but this schools and county have done very little	4
Nancy	Veteran	My school paid for some individual professional learning, but we don't seem to have much provided by the county	1
Olivia	Veteran	Paying for different trainings and conferences	1
Paula	Veteran	They mostly stay out of my way and know what I am doing is for the school and our students	3

Top responses by novice teachers:

1. Encouraging and supporting additional training
2. County offers free courses or school may pay for these courses

Top responses by veteran teachers:
1. County offers free courses or school may pay for these courses

Top responses / combined:
1. County offers free courses or school may pay for these courses
2. Encouraging and supporting additional training

Table 11

Interview Question 11: What special needs and issues do you perceive as being unique to teachers with your level of experience?

Teacher	Status	Response	Code
Anna	Novice	I may have been here a while, but I still have a lot of questions	5
Brenda	Novice	I am overwhelmed and don't think we should be forced to take over a club	4
Charles	Novice	I would like a mentor teacher	1
Danielle	Novice	I need a true mentor to properly walk me through all of the paperwork	1
Edison	Novice	Expected to know what I am doing, but I am still trying to figure it out myself. Need a designated mentor	1
Frank	Novice	I would appreciate a mentor to help me my classroom management and discipline	1
Gene	Novice	Not prepared enough for all of the paperwork and would appreciate a mentor to guide me	1
Helen	Novice	Even at this stage I would appreciate a mentor to guide me along the correct path	1
Ivy	Veteran	Being experienced but also being ignored	6
Julie	Veteran	Trust me if I don't decide to use all of the latest technology or follow the current research	2
Kevin	Veteran	At my level of experience, we are burned out because no one will listen to us	7
Lucy	Veteran	Trust that I am a professional and know what I am doing in my classroom	2
Mary	Veteran	I would like to be needed and appreciated	3
Nancy	Veteran	All teachers still need mentors especially when we are given new technology and our older curriculum is taken away	1
Olivia	Veteran	Just because we are experienced does not mean we want to take on extra responsibilities.	4
Paula	Veteran	I would like to be appreciated	3

Top responses by novice teachers:
1. Request a mentor

Top responses by veteran teachers:
1. Trust that I am a professional
2. I would like to be appreciated

Top responses / combined:
1. Request a mentor
2. Appreciate me and treat me like a professional

Table 12

Interview Question # 12: Why do you believe that 44% of the teachers in Georgia leave the profession within five years?

Teacher	Status	Response	Code
Anna	Novice	Burnout	1
Brenda	Novice	Burned out from a lack of support from administration	1
Charles	Novice	Burned out from paperwork and disrespectful students	1
Danielle	Novice	Burned out from constant paperwork and lack of support	1
Edison	Novice	Not prepared for real teaching	4
Frank	Novice	Student discipline	2
Gene	Novice	Burned out, overwhelmed, and not supported	1
Helen	Novice	Lack of one-on-one support from a mentor or caring administrator	3
Ivy	Veteran	Burned out from low pay and a lack of respect	5
Julie	Veteran	Disrespectful students	2
Kevin	Veteran	Overwhelmed with larger class sizes and higher expectations from the state	6
Lucy	Veteran	Burned out and overwhelmed /student teaching is not real life	1
Mary	Veteran	Lack of support from administration and lack of a mentor teacher	3
Nancy	Veteran	Burned out trying to keep up with more experienced teachers	1
Olivia	Veteran	Disrespectful students	2
Paula	Veteran	Burned out from a lack of support from administration	1

Top responses by novice teachers:
1. Burned out from a lack of support
2. Burned out from excess paperwork

Top responses by veteran teachers:

1. Burned out from a lack of support
2. Disrespectful students

Top responses / combined:
1. Burned out from a lack of support
2. Disrespectful students