LEADERSHIP'S ROLE IN TEACHERS' COMMITMENT AND RETENTION:
A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

by

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A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my research to my loving husband and best friend, Corey Gordon, who remained positive and supportive throughout this journey. You taught me to enjoy the struggle, and your optimism made it possible. Also, to my precious children, Marlena, Corey, and Tori, you are my inspiration, and being your mom is my greatest accomplishment. My Loves, together we made it happen.

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Abstract

Teacher turnover is a systemic problem that negatively impacts student success and contributes to the achievement gaps in hard-to-staff schools. Also, in the United States, teacher attrition is a financial burden that diminishes educational resources. The purpose of this study is to explore three models to provide an in-depth understanding of the precise leadership practices that enhance the commitment and retention of teachers. The research grounded in the Path-goal theory utilized a comparative case study method to explore the teacher attrition phenomenon. The following three research questions guided the investigation of three purposefully selected cases to provide a thorough explanation of the problem: (1) What is the relationship between leadership behavior and retention? (2) What is the relationship between leadership behavior and teacher commitment? (3) What are the specific leadership behaviors that promote teacher commitment and retention? Holistic coding and a cross-case analysis revealed that leadership directly influenced teachers' commitment, and teachers' commitment had a significant impact on retention. Specifically, supportive leadership practices with a focus on emotional support positively affected teachers' commitment and retention. An aggregation of the identified codes prompted the formation of seven themes for supportive leadership practices that contribute to teacher commitment and retention. The thematic descriptions led to the theoretical composition of seven specific situational leadership practices that positively supported teacher retention.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

"If the most precious product developed in education is the student, then our most prized commodity should be the classroom teacher" (Shaw & Newton, 2014, p. 101). Teacher shortages are a national concern facing educational leaders today. The deficit in educators is particularly evident in urban areas. These schools face consistent shortages and frequent turnover. Although the loss of new teachers plays a significant role in the teacher deficit, pouring more new teachers into the system will not solve the retention problem (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Goldring, Tale, & Riddles, 2014). Kraft, Marinell, and Yee's (2016) study showed that improvements in school leadership and teacher relationships independently correspond with increased teacher retention. Educational leaders must prepare themselves to attend to the teacher turnover crisis. To increase the teacher retention rate, we must address the factors that lead to teacher turnover.

The Principal's behavior is a highly researched predictor of organizational commitment and teacher turnover (Billingsley & Cross, 1992). "Committed teachers have greater job effort and involvement, and are less likely to leave their positions and display other withdrawal behaviors, such as absenteeism" (Singh & Billingsley, 1998, p.229). This comparative case study analysis will explore the effects of leadership on teachers' commitment and retention to obtain an understanding of the leadership practices that contribute to teacher turnover. To reduce teacher turnover nationally and to increase the number of inspiring educators, leaders must understand how to motivate educators to remain committed to the organization and profession. In a study by Chan (2005) on leadership behavior and job satisfaction, it showed that principals' behaviors that are transformational and capable of addressing situational contingencies have the potential of increasing job satisfaction and curbing voluntary turnover. House (1971) described these practices as they related to aspects of work and motivation; labeling them as directive

(instrumental), participative, supportive, and achievement-oriented, according to how followers interpreted them as contributing to the satisfaction of a need or enhancing the path to a goal. Bailey (2004), as cited in Larson (2014), asserts that employees' intent to leave an organization, or turnover, is a direct reflection of whether subordinates perceived leaders as efficient and supportive. Principals should adjust their approach to support and motivate teachers to remain in their current teaching assignments.

Background of the Problem

The teacher turnover rate is a systemic problem that costs America $7.3 billion yearly (Paslay, 2013). Over 20 percent of urban teachers quit annually, and over half of America's new teachers, 56 percent, left within five years (Paslay, 2013), which is significantly higher than the national average. "In Philadelphia from 1999 to 2005, the teacher turnover rate, 70 percent was higher than the student dropout rate, 42 percent" (Paslay, 2013, para. 4). The shortage of qualified special educators in rural settings, which make up 40% of the nation's districts, is reported to be as high as 35%, which is 24% higher than the national average (Darling-Hammond, Berry, & Thoreson, 2001).

Consequently, teacher turnover is not only an issue for urban schools, but a national issue. The number of new teachers is dwindling nationwide. According to the Alliance for Excellence in Education Report (2015), the federal new teacher yearly attrition rate is 10 percent (Witt, 2015), which is significantly lower than in urban areas, but still problematic for our nation's educational system. The National teacher shortage crisis has existed for over three decades; therefore, retaining quality teachers for U.S. schools involves multiple supportive efforts by local districts and state education organizations (Sass, Seal, & Martin, 2011). Regardless of culture and settings, once identified, administrators must determine a path

to reducing stressors and fostering effective teacher coping strategies to increase teacher commitment and decrease teacher turnover (Chan,1998, as cited in Sass et al., 2011). Studies indicate that school staffing problems are primarily due to excess demand resulting from teacher turnover, where large numbers of qualified teachers depart their jobs for reasons other than retirement. Moreover, the data showed that the amount of turnover due to retirement is relatively minor when compared to and associated with other factors, such as teacher job dissatisfaction and teachers pursuing other jobs (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

The problem of retaining quality teachers in America presents a daunting challenge, especially in hard-to-staff districts where recruitment difficulties and teacher shortages are most severe (Wilkinson, 2009). To increase academic achievement for American students, educational leaders must focus on how to retain quality teachers in American schools.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher turnover is a widespread problem that greatly contributes to the teacher shortage in America. According to Ingersoll and Smith (2003), approximately 50 percent of novice teachers will leave the profession within five years. Also, Conley and You (2017) assert that teacher turnover is a critical problem in the field of special education. The shortage of qualified special educators in rural areas, which make-up 40 percent of our nation's schools, has been reported to be as high as 35 percent (Berry, 2012). Research shows a strong correlation between leadership behavior and teacher retention (Tickle, Chang, & Kim, 2011; Fisher, 2011; Sass, Seal & Martin, 2010). Tickle, Change and Kim's (2011) study found that "administrators' support was the most significant predictor of teachers' job satisfaction, and teachers' job satisfaction was the most significant predictor of teachers' intent to stay in the teaching profession" (p. 342). Sass, Seal and Martin found that the lack of social support from administrators is a leading

predictor of teacher job dissatisfaction. On the other hand, Fisher (2011) asserts that, if administrators could find ways to increase job satisfaction and reduce burnout, then the stress level of teachers should decline, resulting in fewer teachers leaving the profession. Although many studies address the relationship between leadership behavior and teacher turnover, few studies explain the specific leadership behaviors that influence teacher turnover and retention. Additional research is needed on the specific leadership behaviors that reinforces teacher commitment and encourages retention to gain a thorough understanding of the teacher turnover phenomenon. It is not known how principals who are successful at retaining teachers achieve their success. This study will add to the body of literature on the leadership practices that influence teacher retention to provide future administrators with a conceptual understanding of the specific leadership behaviors that promote the retention and commitment of American teachers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this comparative case study analysis is to explore three models to provide an in-depth understanding of the precise leadership practices that enhance the commitment and retention of teachers. This study, grounded in the Path-Goal Theory, will qualitatively explore the influence leadership behavior has on teacher retention. The inquiry will also compare results from the three targeted case studies to explain the leadership behaviors that promote teacher turnover. Furthermore, the investigation will provide empirical data which will contribute to educational research on the teacher shortage phenomenon. Moreover, this inquiry will add to the body of knowledge on teacher attrition, to provide principals with a model for retaining educators and motivating teacher commitment.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between leadership behavior and retention?

2. What is the relationship between leadership behavior and teacher commitment?

3. What are the specific leadership behaviors that promote teacher commitment and retention?

Need for the Study

The teaching profession, once considered a stable, high-status profession for the American middle-class, has become tenuous and is experiencing a decline (Evans & Leonard, 2013). Job related stressors such as high-stakes testing, retrenchment of tenure and increased pressure to improve student outcomes have contributed significantly to teacher attrition (Moore, 2004, as cited in Evans & Leonard, 2013). However, research shows that leadership support is a reliable predictor of organizational commitment and retention (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Evans & Leonard, 2013; Hughes, Matt, & O'Reilly, 2014). Although the research indicates that leadership support mediated by organizational commitment is a predictor of teacher retention (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Singh & Billingsley, 1998), very few studies identify the specific behaviors that influence the retention and commitment of teachers. Moreover, a comparative analysis into the existing data on this phenomenon is needed to gain a greater understanding of the leadership behaviors that promote teacher commitment and retention. The results of this investigation could provide educational leaders with the knowledge needed to motivate, engage and retain teachers.

"Administrators each year attempt to overcome teacher shortages and staff classrooms with qualified instructors" (Ingersoll, 2001, as cited in Sass et al., 2011, p. 201). While it is important to increase the number of teachers in the workforce, researchers must also study the

troubling phenomenon of teacher burnout and attrition. Educational leaders must identify the factors that contribute to teacher turnover and determine the leadership behaviors that motivate teachers and promotes organizational commitment. "The Path-Goal approach suggests that leaders need to choose a leadership style that best fits the needs of the followers" (Northouse, 2016, p. 121). When teachers are committed to the organization, they are less likely to leave the school. However, when employees experience low support, they may experience a desire to quit (Firth, Mellor, Moore, & Loquet, 2004). This study will identify the leadership behaviors that promote commitment and retention (Firth et al., 2004).

Significance of the Study

Teacher retention is a significant problem because studies have shown that teacher attrition is a contributing factor to the achievement gap in high poverty urban schools (Evans & Leonard, 2013). Ronfeldt, Loeb and Wychoff (2013) studied how teacher turnover harms student achievement. The results suggest that students in schools with high teacher turnover scored lower in English language arts and math, and the results were stronger in schools with lower performing and black students. Also, school leaders must focus their attention on teacher retention because of the financial cost of replacing teachers. Moreover, the demands of the federal law (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2001) place a legal mandate on maintaining highly qualified teachers in every classroom.

There is a considerable amount of data which show that principals play a critical role in teacher retention. Studies have shown a direct correlation between support from superiors and job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Hughes et al., 2014). Teacher work motivation and job satisfaction influence organizational commitment (Tentama & Pranungari, 2016), and commitment has an inverse relationship on turnover intention (Ennis, 2011). Consequently, there

is a significant need to prepare principals with the knowledge to better support

teachers. Principals must work to mentor and engage teachers, so they stay committed to the

organization's goal.

The results from this study will contribute to the literature on teacher retention by

providing an understanding of the specific leadership behaviors that foster teacher organizational

commitment and retention. "Leaders influence students learning directly by coalescing and

supporting teachers' efforts to achieve high expectations for student learning" (Hoyle, Bjork,

Collier, & Glass, 2005, p. 4).

Relevance to Educational Leadership

Practical implications for this study include providing a framework for supportive

leadership practices that increase organizational commitment in leadership training programs,

and aiding principals in creating active learning communities in which teachers are invested and

committed to the organization's goals. Future educational leaders could utilize this research

when choosing a leadership style that best meets the needs of their teachers. Principals must have

the flexibility to adjust their leadership behaviors to support, encourage and enhance the

performance of all teachers. The results from this inquiry may provide administrators and

researchers with the information needed to overcome teacher shortages, and to motivate, support

and retain teachers.

Limitations and Delimitations

Although this study would add to the body of knowledge on teacher retention by

explaining the relationship between leadership behavior, teacher commitment, and retention, the

research is not without its limitations. Two of the three cases utilized in the study are limited by

the size of the focus group. Conducting the studies using a larger population would increase the

generalizability of the cases. Additionally, each case identified in the study used a cross-sectional design, and was conducted within a ten-year period, which limits the researcher's ability to show fluctuating patterns. Conducting the study using a longitudinal analysis or historical cases would identify changes in teachers' perceptions over time. Furthermore, the path-goal theory does not take into account external factors such as high-stakes accountability, which may influence teachers' organizational commitment. Santoro found that "High-stakes accountability renders the moral rewards of the profession inaccessible; it is likely that strong teachers will find little to sustain themselves in the pursuit of good work" (Santoro, 2011, p. 18). Future researchers may want to conduct a study to determine the relationship between high-stakes accountability and teachers' organizational commitment and turnover intentions. Furthermore, the study is limited by its inability to provide personal first-hand accounts of teachers' perceptions of leadership behaviors' influence on their commitment and retention. Recreating the study using first-hand qualitative data would allow the study participants to share their views directly with the researcher and provide detail explanations.

Methodology

The investigation utilized a non-experimental comparative case study design to illustrate multiple perspectives of the teacher attrition phenomena. The comparative case study design will provide an in-depth understanding of the influence principals' supportive behavior has on teacher organizational commitment and retention.

The comparative case study analysis method is an appropriate method to provide comprehensive knowledge of the role principal supportive behavior plays in teacher' organizational commitment and turnover. According to Yin (2014), the comparative case study analysis methodology is relevant when the research seeks to give an extensive description of a

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social phenomenon. Also, the case study analysis method is suitable because the research seeks to answer the question of what principal supportive practices influence teachers' commitment and retention. Yin suggests that the case study method is preferred when the research addresses exploratory questions. Yin suggests that some "what" questions are actually a form of "how" questions and are exploratory in nature (Yin, 2014). The current research seeks to explore the specific leadership practices that influence teacher retention. Multiple cases will be selected to show different perspectives of the issue.

According to Yin (2014), there are three conditions where a case study design is most appropriate: (1) the type of research poses an exploratory question such as who, how and sometimes what questions (2) the researcher has limited extent of control over behavioral events, and (3) the study requires an extensive and in-depth description of a social phenomenon. The current study will meet all three conditions.

<center>**Definition of Terms**</center>

Demoralization

For the purpose of this investigation, demoralization will be defined as a phenomenon that occurs when experienced teachers who are fueled by the moral dimensions of teaching find that they no longer access moral rewards (Santoro, 2011).

Burnout

Santoro suggested that there is a distinction between teacher "burnout" and teachers' demoralization. Santoro describes teacher burnout as, "Cases where individual teacher's personal resources cannot meet the challenge of the difficulties presented by the work" (Santoro, 2011, p. 3).

Teacher Attrition

Teacher attrition is defined as teachers leaving the teaching profession for another profession (Fisher, 2011).

Mobility

Teachers leaving a teaching position for another teaching position at a different location or teachers leaving their grade level position for another grade level from year to year. (Goldring et al., 2014).

Turnover

For the purpose of this study, turnover is defined as teachers leaving their current position and transferring to another location, or teachers leaving the teaching profession altogether for reasons other than retirement (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

Hard to Staff School

Hughes (2012) defines hard to staff schools as "schools who have a higher percentage of students performing below grade level, have a higher level of special education/ behavioral needs and are low income urban areas" (p. 4).

Summary

Although many factors lead to teachers' decisions to migrate or leave the teaching profession, superiors' support shows a direct correlation to teacher job dissatisfaction (Sass et al., 2011). Educational leaders must acknowledge that principals play an essential role in retaining teachers in public schools (Ax, Conderman, & Stephens, 2001). Research indicates that a lack of administrative support and guidance significantly contributes to teacher turnover (Littrell, Billingsley, & Cross, 1994). In many cases, induction programs have been effective in retaining new teachers (Wilkinson, 2009). However, Wilkinson's study shows effective supportive

mentoring has provided the most significant impact on increasing teacher retention and organizational commitment (Wilkinson, 2009). Billingsley and Cross (1992) suggest that work-related factors are better predictors of commitment than demographics, and that measurements of commitment are significant predictors of turnover. This comparative case study analysis aims to explore supportive leadership practices and the role it has in the teacher turnover phenomenon.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In 1994, the Secretary of Education projected that the United States would need to hire 2 million new teachers (Shaw & Newton, 2014). By 2004, the United States employed over 2 million teachers. However, during the same decade, the nation lost 2.7 million teachers. Moreover, out of the teachers who began teaching in the 2007-2008 school year, about 10 percent were not teaching in 2008-2009, and 12 percent left the profession in the 2009-2010 school year (Shaw & Newton, 2014).

A large number of teachers continue to exit the teaching profession, and there is a growing concern on how to retain effective high-quality teachers in the classroom. Research suggests that it takes three to seven years for a novice teacher to become a high-quality teacher. Yet, over one third of the Nation's new teachers will leave the profession within the first five years (Shaw & Newton, 2014).

While studying the literature on the influence of leadership behavior on teacher retention, three themes emerged consistently: (1) a variety of leadership styles; (2) teacher commitment to the school and the internal factors that influence engagement; and (3) retention and turnover intentions. A compilation of literature was reviewed to understand the relationship between the reoccurring themes.

Conceptual Framework

The present study utilizes the Path-Goal theory of leadership behavior, as defined by House (1971), to explain the leadership behaviors that promote teacher commitment and retention. The Path-Goal Theory explains leadership behavior, based on the assumption that leadership styles must interact with characteristics of followers' needs (Northouse, 2016). For

example, House (1996) explains that individuals in positions of authority should complement subordinates' work environment by providing the means to attain work goals and job satisfaction (Phillips & Sianjina, 2014). A leader's behavior is contingent upon the satisfaction, motivation, and performance of the followers and the leader engages in behaviors that complement subordinates (Northouse, 2016). The Path-Goal Theory assumes that the leaders adjust their leadership style to accommodate workers' abilities (Northouse, 2016). The theory, as interpreted by House (1971), uses the expectancy theory of motivation as its foundation (Wofford & Liska, 1993). Path-goal theorists indicate that the major function of a leader is to enhance subordinates' expectancy and instrumentality (Wofford & Liska, 1993; Dawley, Andrews, & Bucklew, 2008). Wofford and Liska state, "Because this psychological state affects satisfaction and motivation, leaders' behavior that enhances them also has a positive effect on subordinates' outcomes" (Wofford & Liska, 1993, p. 857). Leaders adjust to the needs of their followers and may exhibit the following leadership behaviors: directive, supportive, participative, and achievement oriented. In 1996, House published a reformulated path-goal theory that extended his original work to include eight classes of leadership which also include work facilitation, group-oriented decision-making process, workgroup representation and networking, and value-based leadership behavior. However, for this study, the research will focus on the directive (instrumental), supportive, and participative leadership classifications.

Directive or instrumental leaders let the followers know the expectations and tell them how to perform their tasks. A directive style of leadership is most useful in situations where followers are authoritarian, the organization's rules are unclear, and the work is ambiguous or complex (Northouse, 2016). The theory suggests that, under the conditions where followers are authoritarian or directions are vague, a directive approach provides guidance and

structure. Supportive leaders show concern for followers' well-being. Northouse suggests that supportive leaders are friendly and approachable. Leaders using supportive behavior make work pleasant and treat followers as equals. Finally, participative leaders consult with followers and engage them in the decision-making process. Leaders using a participative style involve followers by obtaining their ideas, opinions, and suggestions about organizational goals. Leaders might exhibit any or all of these techniques with followers in different situations.

Figure 1. The Path-Goal Theory of Leadership Behavior

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                    ┌─────────────┐
                    │ Leadership  │
                    └─────────────┘
                 ↖    ┌──────────┐    ↗
                      │ Path-Goal │
                      │  Theory   │
                 ↙    └──────────┘    ↘
     ┌─────────────┐            ┌─────────────┐
     │ Commitment  │  ←──────→  │  Retention  │
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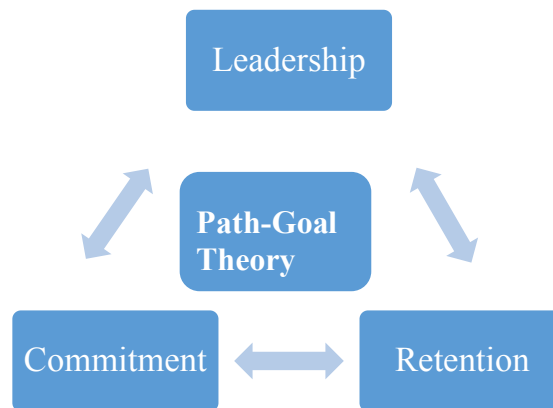
Figure 1. *Conceptual framework model: Figure 1 shows the relationship of the variables identified from the review of literature. See Table 2 for a detailed description of the conceptual model.*

Northhouse defines leadership as "a process whereby individuals influence a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2016, p. 6). For this study, the research will investigate leadership as a flexible process whereby leaders adjust their leadership behaviors to meet the needs of followers.

House (1971) defines Path-Goal Theory of leadership as leaders who engage in behaviors that compliment subordinates' abilities and are instrumental to subordinates' job satisfaction and performance (House, 1996). The theory originated to explain the effects of leader task

orientation and leader personal orientation on followers' performance and job satisfaction. Evans (as cited in House, 1996) found that leadership behavior positively influences followers' path-goal perceptions in the organization, and suggests that the relationship between structure and low satisfaction and motivation is contingent on the degree to which subordinates need clarification of the behaviors required to perform adequately. Evans' model initiated the development of the path-goal theory of leader effectiveness.

Identifying the dimensions of the path-goal leadership theory is necessary to examine the relationship between leadership behavior and teacher turnover (Noland & Richards, 2015). The aspects include directive (instrumental), participative, supportive, and achievement based leadership. Several articles were reviewed to address each dimension and its impact on teacher turnover. Researcher Somech (2005) examines the relative effect of a directive leadership approach as it compares to a participative leadership approach on school-staff teams' motivation and effectiveness. She found "a positive relationship between directive leadership and organizational commitment, as well as a positive relationship between directive leadership and school-staff team in-role performance" (p. 777). Somech found a positive relationship between participative leadership and teachers' empowerment; a positive correlation between participative leadership and school-staff team innovation; and a mediating relationship between empowerment and participative leadership.

Hughes (2014) examined the relationship between administrator support and retention of teachers in hard-to-staff schools to determine the relationship between teacher retention and principal support. The findings in this study showed that support from administrators regarding emotional, environmental and instructional support had a significant impact on a teacher's decision to stay or leave hard-to-staff schools.

Finally, Thibodeaux, Labat, Lee, and Labat (2015) examine whether leadership behaviors and the demands of high-stakes testing had an impact on teachers' retention. The researchers found that the three things that most influenced teachers' decision to remain in the profession are: "student success, subject matter taught, and the art of teaching" (Thibodeaux et al., 2015, p.227). According to the path-goal theory, the leader has a responsibility to help followers reach the goal by directing, guiding and coaching them along the way. The leader should select the appropriate leadership style for the situation or the needs of the follower (Northouse, 2016).

Leadership

Researchers used different approaches to define leadership. Two of the most common methods are leadership as a trait and leadership as a process. The trait perspective views leadership as a set of properties an individual possesses. According to Smith and Foti (as cited in Northouse, 2016), certain personality traits are related to the emergence of leadership. Some of these characteristics included dominance, intelligence, and self-confidence (Northouse, 2016). However; the process approach to leadership assumes leadership can be observed and learned. Despite the many opinions, some concepts remain consistent; leaders engage followers in committing toward accomplishing a common goal.

Northouse identifies four central components of leadership. Northouse states that "(1) leadership is a process, (2) leadership involves influence, (3) leadership occurs in groups and (4) leadership involves community goals" (Northouse, 2016, p. 3). Education reform has again redefined leadership. "Changing school conditions, shifting populations, increasing expectations for student learning, and expanding knowledge on effective leadership have raised the expectations for leaders" (The National Educational Leadership Preparation Committee [NELP], 2015). Now, principals are more than instructional leaders; they are statisticians, charged with

the responsibility of meeting legal and ethical obligations. For this comparative case study analysis, leadership will be defined as a process in which an individual influences a group to achieve and commit to a common goal (Northouse, 2016). Understanding leadership as a process suggests that everyone can exhibit leadership traits and characteristics under the correct set of circumstances. In fact, by the 1960s, most researchers had abandoned the leadership trait definition, and accepted that leadership was situational in origin and specific characteristics could not predict leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008). Nevertheless, research shows that some personality traits improve a leaders' chances for success (Bass & Bass, 2008).

Transformational Leadership

Phillips and Sianjina (2011) conducted a study on the influence of instructional leadership, transformational leadership, and the mediating effects of self-efficacy on students' achievement. The purpose of the study was to quantitatively examine the influence of instructional leadership, transformational leadership, and the mediating effects of teacher self-efficacy while utilizing third to fifth-grade students' math achievement of the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) (Phillips & Sianjina, 2011, abstract). The inquiry set out to answer the question, "To what extent is instructional and transformational leadership mediated by teacher self-efficacy as related to student achievement" (p. 92).

Phillips and Sianjina (2011) utilized a sampling of 55 elementary school administrators and 177 third, fourth and fifth-grade math teachers from the Maryland Eastern Shore area. The examination was conducted using a non-experimental causal design with the use of mediation. Reliability analyses were performed using three survey tools. The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale identified the presence of instructional leadership through the categorization of ten areas (Hallinger, 2011). Kouzes and Posner's (2002)

Leadership Practice Inventory analyzed transformational leadership in five areas: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart. Finally, the researcher utilized the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfork Hoy, 2001) to calculate a teacher's sense of self-efficacy in the areas of student encouragement, instructional strategies, and classroom management (Phillips, & Sianjina, 2011, p. 94). The researchers used a mediated regression to examine the influences of instructional and transformational leadership (independent variables), the mediated effects of teacher self-efficacy (intervening variable) and the third-fifth grade students' math achievement on the Maryland School Assessment (dependent variable) (p. 94).

The research suggested a causal relation between instructional leadership, transformational leadership, teacher self-efficacy, and student academic achievement (Phillips & Sianjina, 2011). "Instructional leadership and transformational leadership did not significantly predict teacher self-efficacy" (p. 102). The data showed

> Instructional leadership positively and significantly predicted achievement (Beta=47, p=.000). Also, transformational leadership significantly and negatively predicted achievement (Beta =.31, p= .002) (p. 96). Finally, teacher efficacy positivity and significantly predicted achievement (Beta=.25, p=.002). Reliability analyses showed a had high internal consistency and exhibited high reliability. The Cronbach's alpha for the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale was .96, the alpha reliability for the Leadership Practice Inventory was .96, and the alpha reliability for the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale was .95. (p. 95)

The research concluded that "self-efficacy did not mediate instructional nor transformational leadership when applied to students' math achievement" (Phillips & Sianjina, 2011, p. 96). Phillips and Sianjina suggested that the lack of mediation between teacher self-efficacy and leadership may potentially reside in the general outcome expectancy strand of teacher self-efficacy. Phillips and Sianjina write "that the basic tenet of the general outcome

expectancy is the belief that one can overcome the external factors, such as home situations, poverty level, etc." (p. 96). This belief may not be directly related to the level of, or type of, leadership that is provided. Researchers suggest that this could be the reason why guidance is not mediated by teacher self-efficacy (p. 96).

The current study helped to establish a greater understanding of how leadership influences students' academic achievement. The findings suggest that leadership style has a direct impact on students' learning outcomes (Phillips & Sianjina, 2011). These results are significant because they emphasize the importance of quality leadership on the overall climate and achievement of schools. To optimize achievement, an educational leader must have the flexibility needed to demonstrate both transformational and instructional leadership qualities. Although the current study suggested that "Teacher self-efficacy did not mediate instructional or transformational leadership when applied to student's math achievement," (Phillips & Sianjina, 2011, p. 103), it is important to note that "Teacher self-efficacy beliefs can have an impact on a teachers' retention, commitment and instructional practices that could alter students learning" (Gibson & Dembo, 1984, as cited in Phillips & Sianjina, 2011, p. 92). As an educational leader, it is important to understand the causal relationship of leadership style, teacher self-efficacy, teacher commitment and student achievement. Future principals must establish a culture and climate that challenge, inspire and motivate both students and teachers.

Additionally, administrators must evaluate and adjust their leadership approach to ensure that their practices promote the success and well-being of all students and staff. House (1996) suggested that effective leaders participate in behaviors that complement the environment in which their subordinates work and provide a path toward obtaining the organizational goal. The Path-Goal Theory, as interpreted by House, states that leaders must adjust to the needs of their

followers and may exhibit the following behaviors: directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented (House, 1996). "A leadership style that is appropriate for a person at one moment in time, may not be appropriate for the same person later on" (Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Zigarmi, 2013, p. 85). Consequently, leaders must have the flexibility to adjust their leadership approach to meet the needs of the situation.

Servant Leadership

Researcher Robert Greenleaf (2002) defines Servant Leadership as a leader who focuses on serving the followers and the community (Shaw & Newton, 2014). Greenleaf writes that servant leaders gauge their success as a leader based on the health, growth, autonomy, and satisfaction of their followers (Greenleaf, 2002, as cited in Shaw & Newton, 2014). The Servant Leadership theory is based on the premise that leaders should set aside their self-interest, and focus on the improvement of the people within the organization (Shaw & Newton, 2014). According to Shaw and Newton, servant leaders share common characteristics. These characteristics include love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment and service. Bennett (2001, as cited in Shaw & Newton, 2014) developed a set of standards that detail successful servant leadership. Bennett (2001) suggests that leaders successfully demonstrate servant leadership when they display the following characteristics: they know their employees; communicate effectively; think outside the box; learn from their subordinates; develop the staff professionally; share knowledge; present information, and communicate effectively; and look for honest and consistent feedback.

Authors Shaw and Newton (2014) conducted a study on teacher retention and satisfaction with a servant leader as a principal. The purpose of the study was to determine whether teachers who perceived their principals to exhibit servant leadership characteristics have an increased job

satisfaction and school commitment. This study examined the relationship between perceived

servant leadership characteristics of principals, and teacher retention and job satisfaction. The

researcher sought to discover ways to influence teachers to remain in the profession.

Shaw and Newton (2014) utilized a quasi-experimental quantitative method to investigate

the relationship between teachers' perceptions of principals as a servant leader, and teacher job

satisfaction. The researchers examined three variables:

 (1) The level of perceived servant leadership characteristics presence in a school
 principal
 (2) The level of job satisfaction among teachers in the schools; and
 (3) The retention rate of those schools. (p. 103)

To collect data on perceptions of servant leaders, Shaw and Newton (2014) utilized

Dennis's (2004) Servant Leadership Assessment Instrument (SLAI). Also, to measure

job satisfaction, the researcher used six questions from a modified version of the Laub (1999)

Organizational leadership Assessment. The teachers surveyed in the study were from 63 of the

largest high schools in the state. The researchers selected 15 out of 50 randomly selected schools

to participate in the study. After selecting the participating schools, the investigators surveyed

1092 teachers. A total of 288 questionnaires were returned; however, only 234 were viable.

Therefore, the subjects for the study consisted of 234 high school teachers. A Pearson analysis

was generated to analyze the survey data, and the correlation between the perceived servant

leadership characteristics of the leader a teacher job satisfaction was determined (Shaw &

Newton, 2014). Also, the researchers used a point-serial correlation coefficient to analyze the

relationship between principals and intended teacher retention.

Shaw and Newton's (2014) findings showed a significant and positive correlation

between teachers' perceptions of servant leadership and teacher job satisfaction. Moreover, the

study revealed a significant and positive correlation in the data set between teacher perceptions of servant leadership and in intended retention. The teachers who expected to remain at their school reported higher perceptions of servant leadership (4.7 mean scores). They also said they had higher levels of job satisfaction (5.1 mean scores). On the other hand, the teachers who did not intend to remain at their school reported lower levels of servant leadership (3.6), and lower levels of job satisfaction (3.9). The results support a strong correlation between perceived servant leadership levels, and job satisfaction, and teacher retention.

Shaw and Newton conclude that principal training programs must teach principals to change their perceptions of the role of a principal from the enforcer to the servant leader (Shaw & Newton, 2014). When principals value and meet the needs of teachers, teachers reciprocate with increased commitment and retention. Although the findings of this study add to the body of knowledge on the role of the principals in teacher retention and job satisfaction, the study is not without its limitations. The investigation focuses on one population and one style of leadership; therefore, it may not be generalizable outside the targeted population. Furthermore, the study only identifies servant leadership traits that contribute to teacher retention and satisfaction. The investigators do not consider other leadership characteristics that may impact teacher retention and satisfaction. Consequently, an additional investigation is needed to gain an in-depth understanding of the leadership behaviors that contribute to teacher retention. However, the study provides a significant amount of evidence to support those training future school leaders in servant leadership attitudes and ideals would be beneficial in the effort to increase teacher satisfaction and retention.

Distribution Leadership

The distribution leadership theory defines leadership as a series of interactions and activities that are distributed among the members of the group in multiple situations (Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003). In distributed leadership, the organization's power is widely shared and equalized among the leader and the followers within the group (Bass & Bass, 2008). Bass and Bass suggested that "with the equalization of power the members of the organization become just as influential as the leader, and their effects on each other become important to the process of interpersonal influence" (p. 292). When employees share in the decision-making, they are more likely to commit to the organization's goals (Tannenbaum and Massirik,1950, as cited in Bass & Bass, 2008, p. 292).

Hulpia and Devos (2010) conducted a comparative analysis of four schools with highly committed teachers with four schools with teachers with low commitment. The study set out to determine how distributed leadership can make a difference in teachers' organizational commitment. The researchers' study was part of a broader qualitative investigation on leadership behavior and organizational commitment. Hulpia and Devos (2010) utilized qualitative, semi-structured, open-ended interviews with principals and teachers from four schools using two sets of variables (high and low potential). The researchers selected the participating schools from a random sample of 46 schools which participated in the previous study. All teacher interviewees were randomly selected by the principals. In total, Hulpia and Devos conducted 34 interviews with 59 respondents. The triangulation of perceptual viewpoints validated the responses of the different subgroups. The researchers set up an interview protocol based on the study objectives. This interview protocol focused on the quality and distribution of the supportive and supervisory leadership function, cooperation of the leadership team, social

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interaction, teachers' participative decision-making, and organizational commitment. All interviews lasted for one hour to 90 minutes (Hulpia & Devos, 2010).

Interview data coding and analysis revealed differences in the leadership practices which influenced organizational commitment. The leadership practices that included the distribution of leadership functions; social interaction, the cooperation of the leadership team, and participative decision-making, resulted in teachers who reported being more strongly committed to the school (Hulpia & Devos, 2010). Hulpia and Devos suggest schools that are led in an ineffective way create major obstacles for teachers' organizational commitment, which results in withdrawal behaviors and eventually turnover. However, leaders who are highly accessible, tackled problems efficiently, empowered teachers to participate and frequently monitored teachers' daily practices promote teachers' organizational commitment and retention. Additionally, Hulpia and Devos' study of the social interaction domain of leadership showed that effective communication of school leadership had a direct influence on organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Centralization at the leadership level, cohesion, shared values, and regular communication resulted in teachers who displayed and reported a higher level of commitment (Hulpia & Devos, 2010).

Situational Leadership

The Situational Leadership model provides the framework to determine what type of leadership style would be most useful based on the followers' ability and willingness to perform the desired task (Blanchard and Hersey, 2012, as cited in Blanchard et al., 2013). Situational leadership based on Reddin's (1967) 3-D management style theory implies that different situations demand different leadership approaches (Northouse, 2016). The situational leadership approach, grounded in the Path-goal leadership theory, suggests that effective leaders adjust their

leadership style to meet the needs of the followers (Northouse, 2016). Northouse defines

situational leadership as an approach to leadership that stresses leadership behavior is composed

of two dimensions, directive and supportive. Leaders assess followers' commitment and

competence and determine the degree of directive or supportive behaviors needed for the

situation. Situational leadership is a dynamic approach and leaders must possess the flexibility to

change the degree to which they demonstrate directive and supportive behaviors. The situational

leadership approach provides leaders with a framework for determining the appropriate

leadership style for the task based on the followers' competence and commitment (Phillips et al.,

2014).

Blanchard, Zigarman, and Zigarman (2013) classified Situational Leadership even further

with the Situational Leadership II model. This model places situational leadership on a

continuum with four distinct categories of directive and supportive behaviors. The first is

directing (S.1), which is a high directive low supportive style. The second style, coaching (S.2),

is a high directive high supportive style. The third approach is supporting (S.3). This method

suggests that the leader takes a high supportive, low directive style. Lastly, the delegating

approach (S.4) is a low supporting low directing approach (Blanchard et al., 2013).

According to Blanchard et al. (2013), the situational model is grounded on the premise

that followers move forward and backward along a continuum, and leaders adjust to the

developmental level of the followers. The followers' developmental level is divided into four

categories, and represents the relative level of competence and commitment. Blanchard describes

D1 as low competence, high commitment individuals. Followers who are D2 display some

competence, but have low commitment. The D3 followers have moderate to high competence,

but have varying commitment. Finally, D4 represents followers with high competence and high

commitment (Blanchard et al., 2013).

A leader must demonstrate the capacity to promote the success of every student and

teacher. Leaders must apply the skills necessary for the development of the learning system,

instructional practices, assessment systems and learning support programs. The administrator

should evaluate the maturity and needs of each follower and adjust their work task behavior to

align with the needs of the followers.

According to the National Educational Leadership Preparation Committee (2015),

principals must have the flexibility, knowledge, and skills to motivate followers to commit to a

shared vision. Also, leaders must model ethical values and professional norms. They must

promote a culture and climate of fairness and respect; to ensure that all instructional needs are

met with high expectations. Additionally, principals should collaborate with the community and

families. Moreover, leaders should manage the operations of the facilities to protect the rights

and safety of students and staff. Finally, leaders are responsible for the recruitment and retention

of competent educators. Blanchard effectively summarized the situational leadership approach

by stating; "there is no one best leadership style, an effective leader changes their leadership

style to meet the needs of the followers" (Blanchard et al., 2013, p. 69).

<div align="center">**Commitment**</div>

Organizational commitment

A substantial body of evidence supports that organizational commitment is a powerful

predictor of teacher effectiveness, turnover and absenteeism (Dee, Jenkins, & Singleton, 2006;

Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Hulpia & Devos, 2010). Committed teachers have demonstrated a

greater job effort and school involvement, and are less likely to leave their positions and display other withdrawal behaviors, such as absenteeism (Billingsley & Cross, 1992).

Organizational commitment is grounded in the social exchange theory. The theory assumes a reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers (Dawley et al., 2008). Employee commitment to an organization can consist of three factors: affective, continuance, and normative (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Meyer and Allen find that affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to the organization. The research also asserts that employees exhibit continuance commitment when they remain because they recognize the cost of leaving the organization. Finally, normative commitment involves an employee's feeling of obligation to the organization. Meyer and Allen suggest that, when leaders provide employees with fair treatment and value their contribution to the workplace, employees reciprocate and perceive high levels of support (Dawley et al., 2008). Educational leaders have an essential responsibility to motivate their staff to remain committed to the organizational goals. A collection of literature was reviewed to understand the complex dynamic of organizational commitment.

Researcher Steven Larson conducted a study using Meyers and Allen's (1991) three-component organizational commitment theoretical model (affective, normative and continuance). The study was designed to quantitatively test the correlation between three generational cohorts' perception of different leadership behaviors, using the path-goal theory to define (instrumental, supportive, and participative behaviors) (Larson, 2014). Larson used House and Dessler's (1974) Leadership Behavior Scale (Meyer & Allen, 1991) Three-Component of Organizational Commitment Scale and O'Driscoll and Beehr's (1994) Intention to Turnover Scale to examine the correlation between the variables. Statistical analysis yielded the

following correlation between cohort and specific perceived leadership scales. Support was found for the relationship between cohort, leadership component, and organizational commitment component. Turnover intention negatively correlated with leadership behavior for all cohorts and positively correlated to all commitment scales for all cohorts (except one). Hierarchical multiple regressions showed a significant correlation between leadership behavior, organizational commitment and turnover intention in nearly all cases (Larson, 2014).

Dawley et al. (2008) examined the relative impact of mentoring, supervisor support, and perceived organizational support on organizational commitment and job search behavior. A survey conducted with 346 employees of a US manufacturing company using the least regression model revealed that organizational support was a stronger predictor of organizational commitment and job search behavior than was mentoring and supervisor support. The researchers concluded, "that while mentors and supervisors can be effective in dedicating the employee to the organization, the perception of organizational support might be more important" (Dawley et al., 2008, p. 235).

Steyrer, Schiffinger and Lang's (2008) study, "Organizational commitment: A missing link between leadership behavior and organizational performance", investigated the effect of executive leadership behaviors on the organizational commitment of subordinate managers, and the influence commitment had on company performance. Based on the study of the available literature, the researchers suggest that there is a relationship between perceived leadership behaviors and subordinates' organizational commitment. Steyrer, Schiffinger and Lang tested the following hypotheses to determine the link between leadership behavior, organizational commitment, and performance. The hypotheses were:

(a) Charismatic/value-based leadership is positively related to subordinates' organizational commitment.
(b) Team-oriented leadership is positively related to subordinates' organizational commitment.
(c) Participative leadership is positively related to subordinates' organizational commitment, and
(d) Human-oriented leadership is positively related to subordinates' organizational commitment. Then the other leadership dimensions examined. (Steyrer et al., 2008, p. 366)

The researcher studied a sample of 88 executives from 78 companies. The study used The GLOBE leadership questionnaire that measured the extent which charismatic/value-based leadership, team-oriented and participative leadership was perceived in administrators by their subordinates, measured on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from ''strongly disagree'' to ''strongly agree''. The result suggested that desirable leadership behavior is positively related to subordinates' organizational commitment and that organizational commitment contributes to performance and job satisfaction (Steyrer et al., 2008).

Dee, Jenkins and Singleton (2006) examined organizational commitment in urban schools and the effects of team structure. The study focused on organizational commitment and investigated three intervening variables: teacher empowerment, school communication, and work autonomy.

Researchers (Dee et al., 2006) conducted path analyses to determine the direct effects of teamwork variables on commitment, as well as their indirect effects through empowerment, communication, and autonomy. The model also included five control variables: gender, age, education level, years in the teaching profession, and years at current school. Data were collected from responses to a questionnaire completed by 210 teachers employed in eight elementary schools in an urban district located in the southwestern United States.

The finding from the investigation (Dee et al., 2006) concluded that Team teaching had both direct and indirect effects on teachers' commitment to the school. Also, teamwork contributed indirectly to higher levels of teacher commitment. Research results indicate the need for organizational designs and procedures that reinforce teachers' connection and involvement in the school organization. Dee, Jenkins and Singleton suggest that teacher empowerment, enhanced organizational communication, and opportunities for professional autonomy are associated with higher levels of commitment and lower levels of teacher turnover.

Communication

Research indicates that effective communication is essential to the satisfaction and retention of teachers (Hulpia & Devos, 2010; Shaw & Newton, 2014; Rajhans, 2012). Author Kirti Rajhans's (2012) study, Effective organizational communication: a key to employee motivation and performance, showed how effective communication influences commitment and performance. The purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between communication and motivation and the overall impact on employee performance. Rajhans set out to determine whether a correlation exists between organizational communication and employee motivation. The author implies that positive perceptions of organization communication will increase employee motivation and advocacy, resulting in strengthened employee satisfaction.

The investigation was conducted using a qualitative research method. Rajhans (2012) interviewed 10 percent of the employees from Vanaz Engineering Ltd. The employees were randomly selected for the study based on department population. The study participants were also asked to complete a Communications Effort Record Sheet. A qualitative method is an appropriate method for the study because it allows the researcher to determine the motivation

behind the employee's decisions. The researchers note that motivation is the key to increasing employee loyalty and performance. Also, it is important to note that the research suggests that effective communication increases motivation. Rajhans hypothesized that there is a correlation between organizational communication and employee motivation.

The results of the study suggested that if an employee feels management is communicating effectively, they will have higher motivation and team spirit (Rajhans, 2012). The data showed that Vanaz had effective communication practices that contribute to the motivation of the employees and increased job performance. The researcher also indicated that effective communication practices allows for a greater understanding, increase organizational commitment, productivity, and retention.

The findings suggest that effective communication practices have a direct influence on employee motivation and an indirect impact on staff productivity (Rajhans,2012). The results are significant in educational leadership because it emphasizes the importance of structure and consistency in schools and district communication practices on the overall climate and achievement of schools. To optimize student achievement and teacher efficiency educational leaders must establish clear and efficient policies for delivering information. As an educational leader, it is important to understand the causal relationship of communication, teacher motivation, and student achievement. Future principals must establish a culture, climate and communication practices that inspires and motivates both students and teachers.

According to the organizational commitment theory, teachers' commitment may be based on a reciprocal relationship between teachers and principals (Dawley et al., 2008). Principals must provide teachers with fair treatment, and value their contribution to the school; the teachers will reciprocate and perceive high levels of support. As a result, a teacher will feel obligated and

invested in the organization. Teacher commitment and investment are demonstrated through increased retention and performance. When teachers are dissatisfied with the organization, they exhibit low commitment and withdraw behaviors**.**

Dissatisfaction and burnout

Cooley and Yovanoff (1996) studied the relationship between job satisfaction, teacher burnout, and turnover intention and determined that there is a high correlation between job dissatisfaction and teacher turnover. "Not every teacher who experiences burnout will leave their position and many will remain to the detriment of the students" (Cooley & Yovanoff, 1996, p. 346). This article is a controlled study of 92 special educators that evaluated the effects of two interventions; a series of stress-management workshops and a peer-collaboration program. The study assessed factors known to correlate with teacher turnover, burnout, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The results indicated that providing on-the-job support for the teacher at risk of burnout would improve burnout and teacher retention.

Studies have shown that improving working conditions of teachers may prove to be more effective and more realistic in retaining teachers than increasing salary (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004). "Included in these working conditions are things such as safety, discipline, and principal leadership" (p. 6).

Sass, Seal and Martin (2011) tested the mediating factors that led to job dissatisfaction and teachers leaving their profession. The researcher used a quantitative approach to analyze the phenomenon of teacher burnout and how it relates to teacher turnover. Three competing models were used to develop a predictive model of teacher burnout. Sass, Seal and Martin (2011) studied this phenomenon to provide administrators and researchers with the information needed to overcome teacher shortages, teacher burnout and to develop a predictive theoretical model to

determine which teachers will struggle in the profession. The focus group consisted of 479 elementary, middle school and high school teachers. The three competing models tested were teacher stress and support to predict job dissatisfaction and, eventually, the intention to quit. The researcher's findings suggested that student stressors mediated the relationship between teacher efficacy as it relates to student engagement and job dissatisfaction. The results also indicated that social support from superiors and student stressors are predictors of job dissatisfaction. Finally, teacher workload stressors and social support from colleagues did not contribute significantly to the model (Sass et al., 2011).

The researchers (Sass et al., 2011) hypothesized that teachers who believe they can inspire and stimulate learning would promote greater student motivation and fewer student stressors, which should yield less job dissatisfaction. This study examined the following variables: student engagement, student stressors, job dissatisfaction, intent to quit, social support superiors, social, support colleagues, workload stressors. Student stressors, workload stressors, teacher efficacy and social support colleagues are the mediating variables. Finally, job dissatisfaction and teacher's intent to quit are the depending variables.

Sass, Seal and Martin (2011) used a quantitative approach to study three competing theoretical models with variables related to teacher stress or support. A structural equation model is used to predict job dissatisfaction and eventual intention to quit. The first model tested teacher self-efficacy as it relates to student engagement. The second model tested superior and college support as a contributing factor to job dissatisfaction. The final model tested workload stress and student stressors as a contributing factor to job dissatisfaction. The researchers used The Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale to measure student engagement, and the Social Support Superior and Colleagues Scale to measure support.

The participants included a sample of 479 certified teachers who taught either at elementary (55.3 percent), middle (33.0 percent) or high (10.6 percent) school levels. (Martin, Sass, Seal, 2011, p. 204). The majority of the focus group, 372 participants, consists of female urban educators. The sample group consists of 251 elementary educators, 150 middle school educators, and 48 high school teachers. Five of the participants taught a mixture of elementary, middle and/or high school (Sass et al., 2011, p. 204). The researchers do a superior job describing the participants in the study. They include the participants' ethnic background, certification status, education level, class size, and years of experience which all play a pivotal role ensuring that the sample adequately represents the population.

Martin, Sass, and Seal (2011) provided a detailed outline of how the data were collected and analyzed. Muthe′n's 1998-2007 Mplus was used to estimate the model parameters confirmatory factor analysis and the three theorized structural models. The models were calculated using a poly-choric correlation matrix and weighted least squares with mean and variance estimator. The factor loading on each model was set to 1.00 for latent variable scaling and statistical identification. Residual was assumed to be independent, and all cross-loadings fixed at zero. Missing data were treated using the full information maximum likelihood estimation procedure within Mplus. Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two-step approach was used to ensure the factual validity of each model evaluated (Sass et al., 2011).

The finding yielded conflicting results; of the three models, one and two showed that student stressors wholly mediated the relationship between teacher efficacies as it relates to student engagement and job dissatisfaction. However, results indicated that social support from superiors and student stressors are the best predictors of job dissatisfaction. Teacher workload stressors and social support from colleagues did not contribute significantly to the model. Due to

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the limited contributions of workload stressors and social support from colleagues both of these factors were removed from model three. Therefore, only a direct relationship between superior support and job dissatisfaction was proposed. Model 3 produced a good model fit, but only after removing Student Stressors and Social Support Superiors, which cannot be justified, was there a significant change in the model. This model further supports that both student and administrative stressors contribute equally to job dissatisfaction, which ultimately leads to turnover intentions (Sass et al., 2011).

Martin, Sass, and Seal (2011) set out to show that teachers who believe they can inspire and stimulate learning will promote greater student motivation and fewer behavioral problems (student stressors), which should yield less job dissatisfaction. The study showed that student stressors had a mediating effect on job dissatisfaction. The researchers found that support from superiors was the best predictor of teacher burnout. This information is vital for future educational leaders seeking to provide the support teachers need. Often teacher burnout is seen as a teacher's inability to cope with the demands of the profession. Researchers suggest support directly impacts teacher job satisfaction that indicates that educational leaders played an enormous role in teacher retention. Although teacher workload does play a role in job dissatisfaction, it is not the primary predictor of whether or not a teacher would choose to leave the teaching profession.

Withdrawal Cognition and Demoralization

The National Commission on Teaching America's Future indicates that one-third of American teachers leave the profession because they feel they have no support from administrators and they are dissatisfied with the work (Shaw & Newton, 2014).

Doris Santoro's (2011) study, Good teaching in difficult times: demoralization in the pursuit of good work, attributes teacher turnover to burnout. She describes teacher burnout as "when teachers' resources cannot meet the challenge of the difficulties presented by the work" (Santoro, 2011, p. 1). This study seeks to understand what happens when experienced teachers who are fueled by moral decisions find that they can no longer access the moral rewards of teaching (Santoro, 2011). Author Doris Santoro used an empirical case study to show that obtaining the moral dimension of teaching is not only about cultivating teachers' dispositions towards good work but structuring the work to enable teachers to do a good job within the profession (p. 1). Santoro seeks to understand the phenomenon of "demoralization" as it relates to "burnout" and how it contributes to teacher turnover. Researcher Santoro sufficiently expands on Herbert Kohl's (2003) case study of an experienced bilingual teacher to understand the effects of demoralization on teacher attrition. Using an empirical case study and philosophical analysis, Santoro describes the moral and ethical dilemmas that lead to teacher attrition (p.1). The qualitative case study moderately explores teacher "demoralization" through the experiences of Stephanie Rosa, a former bilingual teacher and school leader, educating in a multicultural low-income urban environment.

Through philosophical analysis an empirical case study author, Doris Santoro, shows that accessing the moral dimension of teaching is not only about cultivating teachers' dispositions toward good work but structuring the work to enable practitioners to do well within its domain (Santoro, 2011, abstract). The case study results show that teacher turnover does not necessarily reflect a lack of dedication, preparedness, or competence as suggested by the term teacher "burnout" but instead, teacher turnover represents a "demoralization" of the work teachers are expected to perform (abstract).

According to Susan B. Miller's (2010) dissertation, there are three main areas of leadership behaviors which teachers indicated directly influenced their decisions to leave their job placement. These three sectors were: (1) lacking the skills to be supportive, making connections and building relationships, and to transforming the school into a productive community; (2) requiring respect, trust, and consistent behavior; and (3) lacking personal morals.

Miller (2010) states that many variables have contributed to the revolving-door phenomenon known as teacher turnover; this article indicated that principals' support plays a major role in teachers' intent to leave. This study focused on the perceptions of veteran teachers who have migrated from one school to another. These teachers indicated that their primary reason for leaving was leaders' behavior. The results of the study identified three main areas of leadership behaviors which teachers stated directly influenced teachers' decisions to migrate. These are lack of knowledge, lack of professionalism, and lack of morals.

Teacher Retention

Teacher retention is a national concern facing educational leaders today. The New Teacher Center (2015) report indicates that 13 percent of new teachers leave the teaching profession or change schools within the first year of teaching, and over 50 percent leave the education profession within five years (Witt, 2015). To increase the teacher retention rate, we must understand the factors that lead to teacher withdrawal cognition (the desire to quit). Many studies have been conducted to analyze the factors that contribute to the low teacher retention rate. An analysis of the current literature on teacher retention will aid in the understanding of the factors that lead to teacher attrition.

Studies have shown that improving working conditions of teachers may prove to be more efficient and more realistic in retaining teachers than increasing salary (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004). "Included in these working conditions are things such as safety, discipline, and principal leadership" (p. 6).

Incentives

Educational Researcher Susan Moore stated, "Clever incentives may attract new teachers, but only improving the culture and working conditions of schools will keep them" (Moore, 2004, p. 8). Moore studied the traits of principals within Charlotte-Mecklenburg high needs schools who had been successful in retaining teachers. Twenty principals were surveyed to identify traits and strategies used. Results revealed common themes. "Principals who have been more successful in retaining teachers have characteristics of successful entrepreneurs. Successful principals also understand the value of people. They value teachers as individuals and sincerely want them to succeed and grow. The most successful strategies for these principals are those that give direct assistance to teachers" (Moore, 2004, p. 2).

Authors Clotfelter, Glennie, Ladd and Vigdor focused on a program implemented in North Carolina between 2001 and 2004. The policy awarded an annual $1,800 bonus to teachers of Math, Science, and Special Education in middle and high schools serving low-income or low-performing students (Clotfelter, Glennie, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2008). The purpose of this article was to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher bonus programs on teacher retention in low-performing schools. The authors assessed the impact of North Carolina's $1,800 bonus policy on the teacher turnover rate in the eligible schools when compared to ineligible schools and subject areas.

The researchers (Clotfelter et al., 2008) used multiple regression models to quantitatively measure the bonus program (the independent variable) and the impact on retention and

recruitment (the dependent variables). To protect the confidentiality of the subjects, the researchers used multistage blind sampling methods for data collection. The researchers collected disaggregated data to identify trends within the subgroups. The authors conducted telephone surveys of 49 superintendents, assistant superintendents, executive directors and human resource district personnel from 65 eligible schools. Surveys were also distributed by mail to 1,165 principals and teachers and solicited an overall response rate of 73 percent, with 83 percent of principals and 72 percent of teachers voluntarily responding to these questions.

The investigators (Clotfelter et al., 2008) utilized the multi-regression design model; the researchers compared retention rates before and after the program implementation to determine whether the Bonus Program had a positive impact on teacher retention and recruitment. Finally, schools that were eligible for the program were compared to schools that were ineligible. The use of the multiple regression designs allowed the researchers to infer the effectiveness of the policy on teacher retention. The primary purpose of the policy was to increase student achievement through increased teacher retention; however, the results failed to show the effectiveness of the program for improving student achievement.

The results from the first surveys (Clotfelter et al., 2008) showed that the bonus program had an insignificant impact on teacher retention. The data showed an increase in retention of English and Social Studies teachers, from schools receiving the bonus when compared to Math and Science teachers from the same schools. In the second year of the program, the findings show a slight increase in the retention rates of Math and Science teachers and a decrease in retention rates of English and History teachers. By the end of the second year, Math and Science teacher retention rates were consistent with English and History rates. The second survey showed inconsistent results. When comparing teacher retention rates from eligible schools

with ineligible schools, the data also showed no significant variance. Results were almost identical between the two targeted groups. The results suggested that the hypothesis was unsupported; the bonus program as it was designed had minimum impact on retention. The researchers concluded that experimentation and analysis would be needed to pinpoint the most cost-effective ways to motivate teachers to continue teaching, particularly those who teach in schools serving disadvantaged students (Clotfelter et al., 2008).

Support

Hughes, Matt and O' Reilly examined the relationship between principals' support and teacher retention in hard-to-staff schools (Hughes et al., 2014). The purpose of this study was to:

  (a) Determine the relationship between teacher retention and principals' support,
(b) Compare the perceptions of support from teachers and principals and how these perceptions affect teacher retention
(c) Discover if there is a correlation between administrators' support and teacher retention. (p.129)

The researchers (Hughes et al., 2014) used a non-experimental correlational design to examine the relationship between the variables. Principal's support, the independent variable, was divided into four sub-scales, emotional, environmental, instructional and technical support. Teachers' intent to leave (turnover) or remain in their current placement was the dependent variable. The focus group consists of 17 administrators and 40 teachers employed in hard-to-staff schools. The researchers used a non-experimental correlational design to determine the relationship, perceptions, and correlations between principals' support, and teacher retention in hard-to-staff schools. The findings suggest that emotional, environmental, instructional and technical support from administrators had an impact on teachers' decision to stay in hard-to-staff schools. However, support from teachers had the greatest impact on

teachers' decision to remain in hard-to-staff schools (Hughes et al., 2014). Hughes, Matt, and O'Reilly's study suggested principals and teachers in hard-to-staff schools have different perceptions of teachers' support. Principals perceived their support for teachers was greater than the support the teachers felt they received. They suggest that the differences in these views of support could potentially have a negative effect on teacher retention in hard-to-staff schools.

Author Gayle Wilkinson (2009) conducted a qualitative study to explain how supportive induction slows the revolving door phenomenon. Zeichner & Schulte's (2001) study found that traditionally trained teachers showed a greater commitment toward teaching than alternatively trained teachers. Ingersoll & Smith (2004) as cited in Wilkinson (2009) stated that good induction programs resulted in three levels of induction:

> Level 1: mentoring and principal support;
> Level 2: mentoring, principal support, new teacher seminars, and
> Level 3: mentoring, principal support, new teacher seminar, staff collaboration on instruction, external teacher network, a reduction in class preparation, and a teacher's aide. (p.99)

Wilkinson analyzed the support received by cohorts in an Alternative Certification Program (ACP) to better understand the induction practices that increase teacher retention. Wilkinson hoped to identify how such programs might efficiently mentor and retain alternatively trained teachers. The analysis showed that support from mentors, administrators and colleagues had the most significant impact on retention of alternatively prepared teachers (Wilkinson, 2009). The purpose of the study is to analyze the support received by cohorts in alternative certification programs to understand the induction practices that increase teacher retention. In most cases, supporting teachers through induction programs have provided the greatest impact on increasing teacher retention. Effective teacher mentoring programs provided the greatest impact on teacher retention (Wilkinson, 2009, p. 97).

Wilkinson (2009) conducted a Phenomenological study to explain the impact New Teacher Induction Programs have on the retention rate of teachers trained in an Alternative Certification Program. The qualitative method allows for a greater understanding of why teacher induction programs increase alternatively trained teachers' retention rate.

A purposeful criterion sampling (Wilkinson, 2009) was used to determine the participants for the study. The focus group consisted of 168 alternatively trained teachers from seven different cohorts. Each member completed a Bachelor's Degree in a non-teaching field of research and is currently enrolled in an Alternative Certification Program.

Wilkinson and Lichliter's (2005) Program Retention Survey was used to collect data on teacher perceptions about the level of support received during their first year in the alternative certification program. The researchers analyzed thirteen support factors utilizing a series of open-ended questions. The Program Retention Survey obtained a reliability index of (Cronbach's Alpha = .98) and was administered to the different cohorts at the end of their first year in the program.

The results of the interview were coded and categorized into thirteen subcategories. The subcategories were divided into the percentage of support by retention levels. The results were compared to find a significant difference between cohorts with high retention, 81-90 percent and low retention, 65-80 percent (Wilkinson, 2009). Data analysis showed most of the variation in retention resulted from participant dissatisfaction with the level of support received. Wilkinson stated, "The cohort with 65% retention endured a district restructuring which reduces the principal and collegial support for the new teachers" (Wilkinson, 2009, p. 105).

Wilkinson (2009) set out to analyze the support received by cohorts in alternative certification programs to understand the induction practices that increase teacher retention. The

findings show that the support from school colleagues had profound implications on retention. The difference in support that each group received was significant. Those teachers in the high retention group received more support from colleagues in making classroom decisions, learning teaching strategies, and selecting the types of support they received. Each cohort stated that support from their peers was very beneficial. The findings also showed that teachers who did not receive a good mentor and administrator support did not get enough support from colleagues to make them stay in hard to staff schools. Teachers in the low retention group were very dissatisfied with not being able to select the type of support they will receive. They reported that they did not receive much assistance.

Wilkinson (2009) set out to analyze the support received by cohorts in an alternative certification program to understand the induction practices needed to increase teacher retention. Wilkinson stated that alternative certification programs attract new teachers; however, up to 50 percent of urban teachers leave teaching. The districts without comprehensive teacher induction programs have the highest turnover rate; some teachers leave after as little as three months, The National Commission on Teaching America's Future (1996, 2005, as cited in Wilkinson, 2009). The analysis showed that support from mentors, administrators, and colleagues had the greatest impact on the retention of alternatively trained teachers (Wilkinson, 2009). Wilkinson mentioned that many new teacher induction programs fail to provide level three support; mentor, principal support, new teacher seminars, staff collaboration on instruction, external teacher network, a reduction in class preparations, and a teacher's aide. Based on the data, level three support has had the greatest impact on teacher retention.

Teacher attrition is a significant and ongoing problem in America, especially in urban districts (Wilkinson, 2009). Teacher shortages and attrition cost us academically and financially

(Evans & Leonard, 2013). It is important that we understand how to recruit and retain teachers in these hard to staff areas. Alternative Certification programs have increased teacher recruitment However, it is imperative that we provide the necessary support factors to retain alternatively train teachers (Wilkinson, 2009).

A collaborative team is needed to recruit and retain new teachers. Wilkinson finds that school faculty and administrators in districts should be aware of the risk they take in losing the next generation of dedicated teachers. "Directors of alternative certification programs need to find ways to improve the funding, retention, and sustainability of alternative certification programs" (Wilkinson, 2009, p. 106).

One limitation of the study was the size of the focus group. The focus group contains 168 participants, which was significant for qualitative research. Wilkinson (2009) set out to gain a greater understanding of the induction practices that increase teacher retention and to identify how such programs might more efficiently mentor teachers. However, individual teachers need support based on their experiences, dispositions, strengths, and weaknesses. It is essential to gather as much information about each participant as possible to understand how to meet the needs of each teacher. A smaller participant group would have allowed for in-depth interviews and further discussion about needs, challenges, and temperament of each participant.

Figure 2. Literature Review Map
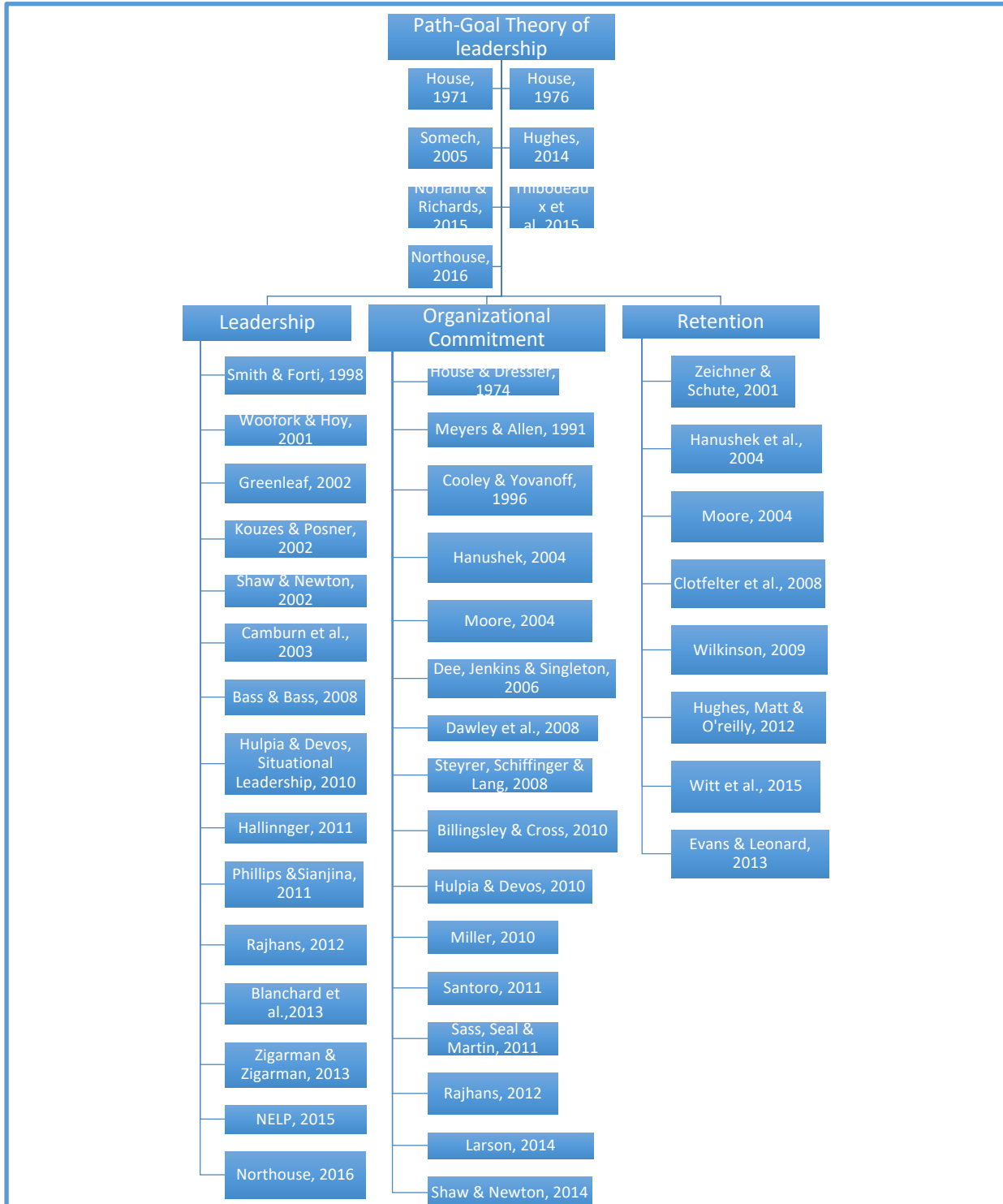
Table 2. *Literature Map: Literature formation of the conceptual framework*

Literature Review Summary

The analysis of the literature yielded consistent results. The literature showed a correlation between perceived leadership behaviors and teacher retention. Other variables that consistently develop from the research were commitment and turnover. The studies also indicate that a leader's behavior impacts on the satisfaction, motivation, and performance of their subordinates (Northouse, 2016). Through the Path-Goal Theory, House (1971) identifies how leaders motivate followers to accomplish a goal (Northouse, 2016). To retain teachers, leaders must enhance teachers' commitment and job satisfaction by focusing on the teachers' motivation and adjusting their leadership style accordingly. This comparative case study analysis will explore three parallel cases that investigate the relationship between leadership behavior, commitment and turnover in educators to further the understanding of how leadership behavior influences teachers' commitment and retention.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

As a research method, the case study is used to contribute to the understanding of a complex social phenomenon by answering the question, how or why does the circumstance occur (Yin, 2014). A comparative case study analysis, also known as the collective or multiple case study analysis, allows the researcher to explain an issue using multiple points of view while maintaining a holistic perspective. Yin defines a case study in two parts. First, Yin states that a case study is an empirical inquiry that provides an in-depth investigation of a phenomenon in a real-world context. Also, a case study inquiry copes with the situations where there are more variables of interest or data points and relies on multiple sources of evidence to converge and triangulate date results (Yin, 2014). Although some fields of research consider the case study method as a distinctive form of the comparative case study analysis, Yin makes little distinction between the variations in case study research methods. He states that single and multiple case studies are two variates of the same design. Creswell (2014) defined a case study as a qualitative research approach in which an investigator explores a single case or multiple cases through detailed, in-depth data collection using various sources of information. In a comparative case study analysis, one issue of concern is explored using multiple cases to illustrate the phenomena.

This comparative case study analysis will review the following contrasting cases to explain how specific leadership behaviors increase teacher retention. The first case study will review the role of the principals in teacher retention (Brown & Wynn, 2009). The second case study will explore the revolving door phenomenon, and how leaders push teacher turnover (Miller, 2010). The final case will study the relationship between principal support and teacher

retention in hard to staff schools (Hughes, 2012). The research will explore the common and conflicting themes in the three purposefully selected cases to show multiple perspectives of the issue.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between leadership behavior and retention?
2. What is the relationship between leadership behavior and teacher commitment?
3. What are the specific leadership behaviors that promote teacher commitment and retention?

Case Study I: Brown and Wynn (2009) Finding, Supporting and Keeping: The Role of the Principal in Teacher Retention Issues

Case Study I: Description

Brown and Wynn (2009) conducted a case study to understand the leadership styles of principals who have schools with low rates of teacher attrition. The findings indicated that principals with an awareness of issues that affect new teachers, who were proactive supporting teachers and who are committed to professional growth for themselves, their students and their teachers retain teachers at a higher rate.

Case Study I: Purpose

The purpose of the investigation (Brown & Wynn, 2009) was to obtain a better understanding of the leadership behaviors of twelve principals who lead schools with low teacher attrition and migration rates.

Case Study I: The Significance of the Study

Finding supporting and keeping: the role of principals in teacher retention issues (Brown & Wynn, 2009) is significant to the current study on teacher retention because the goal of the

inquiry is to address the teacher retention problem by identifying some common characteristics and successful practices principals use to support and retain teachers. The researchers used semi-structured interviews to collect the data for interpretation. Brown and Wynn's study seeks to broaden the understanding of the teacher turnover phenomenon. The study expects to provide a greater understanding of how to find, support, and keep quality educators. The research is needed because teacher turnover creates a deficit in quality teachers and instruction, causes a loss of continuity and commitment, and diverts time and funds to recruitment rather than support.

Case Study I: Methodology

Brown and Wynn (2009) conducted semi-structured interviews with twelve school administrators to identify common strategies used to retain teachers. The qualitative and exploratory interview questions focused on four primary themes: (1) leadership style; (2) characteristics of school climate and culture; (3) the role of the principal in recruiting, retaining and mentoring teachers; and (4) specific teacher support systems. The study was conducted in a Southern, small, urban school district that services 32,000 students in 45 schools. The researcher selected the identified district because it experienced a high teacher turnover rate, especially first-year teachers. The researchers noted that 28.2 percent of teachers left the district their first year of teaching. Data collected from 2000-2004 showed that 42 percent of teachers in their initial three years of teaching left the district. Based on the data, twelve schools within the district with the lowest teacher attrition and transfer rates were selected to participate in the study. The purposefully selected schools included eight elementary, two middle schools and two high schools. The elementary schools included in the study had an attrition rate of 0-10 percent, the middle schools participating in the study had an attrition rate of 0-20 percent and the participating high schools had an attrition rate of 15 percent or less. The authors noted that all

three of the attrition rates were significantly lower than the district rate of 42 percent. The researchers used a constant comparative analysis and coding of common themes to process and analyze the data. The researchers conducted multiple reading of the interview responses to ensure proper identification of emerging topics. Next, the investigators triangulated the interview data to maintain validity and reliability.

Brown and Wynn (2009) analyzed three tenets to provide insight into some common leadership traits of principals with high teacher retention rates process: finding shared values, supporting needed resources, and keeping bending and building.

First, when hiring teachers, the principals mentioned the importance of finding a good fit. Personality is essential for determining the proper placement of new teachers and nurturing teacher bonds. The administrators encourage the staff to embrace the new educators and support them. The leaders concentrate on creating a family-like atmosphere and welcomes new teachers' ideas. One of their primary goals is to welcome, motivate and help new teachers feel positive about the organization. Moreover, leaders indicated that when hiring new teachers, they looked for educators who are knowledgeable and eager to reach every child. The administrators state that new teachers must be knowledgeable with a passion for educating the whole child (Brown & Wynn, 2009).

Next, the study showed that all participating principals agreed that their main role and responsibility is to be supportive. Being an advocate, protector, mentor, and visible is important to retain teachers (Brown & Wynn, 2009). The administrators claim that several things fall under the umbrella of support. According to the leaders, the support includes discipline, organization, affirmation, resources, curriculum, and instruction. "All twelve of the principals agreed that

spending more time providing resources, and building capacity is a critical component in retaining good teachers" (p. 51).

Lastly, the study explored the Keeping Bending and Building tenet. When Brown and Wynn asked the principal about the role in general, and their leadership style specifically as it pertains to retaining teachers one of the participants referred to the "Gumby philosophy." The Gumby philosophy suggests that leaders need to bend, mold and twist themselves in whatever direction needed for the circumstances. "Another principal described the multiple roles of a marriage counselor, town lawyer, sounding board, financial advisor" (Brown & Wynn, 2009, p. 54). Brown and Wynn assert that "regardless of the specifics, each of the participants highlighted situational leadership as a common approach to meeting the needs of all teachers" (p. 54).

Case Study I: Summarized Findings

The triangulation of the data revealed the following themes: finding the perfect fit, hiring teachers who put students first, providing the umbrella of support, and situational leadership. The researchers cite that the results indicate that administrators with a higher rate of retention show an awareness of issues that affect new teachers, are also proactive in supporting teachers, and committed to professional growth (Brown & Wynn, 2009).

Case Study I: Limitations

The study's (Brown & Wynn, 2009) findings supporting and keeping: the role of the principal in teacher retention is limited by its generalizability. The size and location of the participant group limit the researcher's ability to apply conclusions into another population. Replicating this study using a large participant group from diverse demographic areas might increase generalizability.

Case Study I: Summary

Brown and Miller's (2009) inquiry into the issue of teacher retention supports the current study for three reasons. The research provides an in-depth understanding of specific leadership styles of principals who lead schools that have low attrition and transfer rates. Also, the researchers effectively show that high teacher turnover rates result in a deficit in teaching and instruction, diminished commitment and continuity, and the divergence and attention from support to recruitment. Furthermore, the principals participating in this inquiry shared several strategies that they used to achieve their schools' successful retention rates.

The administrators agreed that teachers need to be informed, renewed and inspired. Leaders in the study provided resources necessary to support teachers' growth and professional development. They also encouraged collegiality among teachers to decrease teacher isolation and to improve teachers' satisfaction morale and commitment (Brown & Wynn, 2009). The results indicate that principal support is essential to retaining teachers. Teachers seem to value principals that provided direction without stifling their autonomy. The principal must be able to recognize and differentiate support based on the needs of the teachers. Lowered levels of attrition and migration have consistently been found in schools with administrators that show flexible, supportive practices (Brown & Wynn, 2009)

Case Study II: Suzanne B. Miller (2010) The revolving door: how leaders push teacher turnover

Case Study II: Description

The next case study takes the opposite approach to explain the role of the principal in the teacher turnover phenomenon as perceived by educators. Researcher Suzanne B. Miller (2010) conducted a qualitative inquiry to gain a greater understanding of the revolving door

phenomenon. The study focused on the teacher attrition problem in American public schools. Miller collected interview, email and focus discussion data from veteran teachers who have chosen to migrate from one school to another, and who have indicated that their primary reason for leaving their school was leadership behavior. The qualitative data were analyzed and the study identified three main areas of leadership behavior that directly influenced the teachers' decision to migrate. The leadership behavior identified by the study included: (1) Lack of knowledge or skills needed to be supportive, to build relationship or to transform schools into effective learning communities; (2) Lack of professionalism, respect, trust and consistent behavior; and (3) Lack of professional morals. Miller's study set out to reveal the specific leadership behaviors that contribute to teacher turnover (Miller, 2010).

Case Study II: Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to research and identify leadership behaviors as perceived by the teacher that contribute to teacher turnover. The study focused on identifying specific actions that pushed teacher migration. Miller's primary objective was to elaborate on the administrators' behaviors and how they negatively impact teacher retention. Miller feels that the problem of teacher attrition cannot be addressed until more is understood about the specific conduct that affects teacher retention and attrition (Miller, 2010).

Case Study II: Methodology

The researcher (Miller, 2010) started with a pilot study to compile data about teacher attrition and migration. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine if teachers involved in the mentoring program felt supported, and to ascertain why teachers would leave their school to go to a new school or to leave teaching altogether. The result from the pilot survey showed three main reasons why teachers leave; student discipline problems, school climate and lack of

administrative support. Class size, lack of planning time, salary and lack of recognition were

mentioned as minor reasons. The finding from the pilot study helped to form the research

questions for the inquiry. Miller asked all the participants to discuss their personal stories of

migration to determine a common theme. The investigation utilized a research method to collect

and analyze the data. Results from interviews, informal discussions and focus group

meetings form a holistic picture of the teacher attrition problem. The research used a constant

comparative method to analyze the data. Miller identified the common themes after conducting a

cross-case analysis and triangulating the data. The information gathered from the pilot study

guided the inquiry and determined the research questions for investigation.

Miller used the following research questions to investigate how migrating teachers' perceptions

of administrative behaviors impacted turnover intentions:

   (1) What are the perceptions of migrating teachers regarding the leader's behaviors,
   qualities and attributes at his/her former?
   (2) How did perceptions influence teachers desire to migrate to another school?
   (3) Was there anything that the leader could have done differently that would have made
   the migrating teacher stay? (Miller, 2010, p. 50)

Case Study II: Study Participants

The participants for the study included 16 veteran public school teachers from

elementary, middle and high schools that have all indicated that they transferred to their current

school because of their perceptions of the previous leader's leadership qualities (Miller, 2010).

Miller used a snowball sampling method to identify 22 potential participants, and a criterion

sampling narrowed down the 16 participants for the study. Miller conducted one-on-one

interviews with six of the 16 participants, and the remaining educations participated in a focus

group discussion. The six participants used for the in-depth interviews consisted of four females

and two male teachers. The interviews allowed the researcher to identify themes across the participants' experiences. The focus group consisted of seven females and three male teachers. The focus group participants analyzed themes from the interview stories and used their own experiences to verify the authenticity of the themes.

Miller (2010) wrote a personal story from the notes of each interview encounter. Before sending the interview summaries to individual participants, a peer debriefed the notes and synthesized data to ensure that summaries depict a non-biased and accurate account of the interviews. The focus group reviewed the interview data for six weeks, and later met to discuss and reflect on the interviews and their individual experiences. While the focus group talked, the researcher took detailed notes of their discussion. Also, Miller analyzed the transcribed data by identifying every statement relevant to the research questions and topic. The notes were analyzed for common and reoccurring themes to determine the categories of inquiry. The identified theme aided in the development of the description of the participant's experiences. Reliability and validity were assured through the use of triangulation, and the use of multiple methods or sources to secure an in-depth and accurate understanding of the data and results.

Case Study II: Significance of the Study

This case (Miller, 2010) is significant to the study on leadership behaviors that promote teacher commitment and retention for three reasons. The inquiry set out to identify qualities and attributes of leaders, as perceived by migrating teachers that contribute to turnover intentions. First, Miller addressed the perceptions of migrating teachers regarding their former administrators' leadership qualities using teachers' stories of migration. Second, she described how perceptions of leadership behavior pushed teachers to migrate. Third, through the process of

triangulation of the narratives and reoccurring themes, Miller analyzed what the leaders could

have done differently to encourage teacher commitment and retention.

Case Study II: Summarized Findings

Miller's (2010) study began by conducting teacher interviews and discussions that

revealed that migrating teachers perceived that their former administrators lacked the knowledge

and skills to run the building and handle school-related issues efficiently. The data also showed

that teachers felt that their former leaders lacked the professionalism needed to effectively

manage the school. Furthermore, teachers perceived that leaders lacked the personal ethics and

morals necessary to be an effective leader. The majority of teacher participants agreed that these

areas were the most important issues in their decision to leave.

Also, Miller (2010) effectively showed that leadership supportive behaviors impacted the

schools' overall culture and climate. The teachers participating in the study suggested that the

leaders did not support them or know how to build relationships to turn the school into an

effective learning community for all. Studies indicated that the teachers needed to feel respect

and trust from their administrators to remain committed to the school. The teachers also stated

that some behaviors, such as favoritism, inconsistency, belittling and sarcasm, hindered trust and

commitment. The research showed that leaders who lack professionalism as perceived by

teachers and who treat teachers with a lack of professionalism push teacher turnover.

Finally, the study (Miller, 2010) indicates that the relationships between leaders and their

teachers are important to the success of the organization and the commitment of

educators (Duke, 1986; Einstein, 1995; Einstein and Humphry, 2001; Kelly, 1992; as cited

in Miller (2010). Teachers stated that they needed to feel respect and trust in their leader to

remain in the school. Miller identified servant leadership as the type of leadership the teachers in

the study desired. "A leader is considered a servant leader when he/she is selfless and strives to create a school setting where people work towards a shared vision and honor the collective commitment to themselves and others" (p. 119).

Case Study II: Limitations

The following were potential limitations to the study (Miller, 2010). One limitation was the willingness, honesty, bias, and participation of the teachers in the interview and focus group. The reliability and validity of the survey are contingent on the complete honesty and participation of the teachers in the participant group. Additionally, Miller was an administrator in the county where the study was conducted. Miller's position and proximity to the teachers involved in the research may have inadvertently and negatively affected the amount of information and details provided by the participants. Lastly, the study was conducted in one county and used 16 participates; therefore, the results may not be generalizable in other populations.

Case Study II: Summary

Miller's (2010) study, how leaders push teacher turnover, is relevant to the current study on leadership and teacher retention because it identified the specific leadership behaviors that teachers felt motivated their decision to leave their former schools. Moreover, the study revealed issues school administrators must address if the problem of teacher turnover is going to decrease. Miller feels that our children will pay the price if leadership behaviors that push teacher turnover are allowed to continue. The investigation efficiently supports that teacher turnover is rising, due to increasing demands for accountability and student achievement. The retention of competent, highly qualified teachers is essential to the success and well-being of students. Also, with the growing diversity of the school population, the need for differentiated instruction and the focus

on narrowing the achievement gap, make retaining efficient, and experienced teachers are paramount for student success.

Miller (2010) asserts that it is both fortunate and unfortunate that leadership behavior plays an essential role in teacher commitment and turnover. She feels it is fortunate because leaders can change and adjust their practices to increase teacher retention; other contributing factors such as socioeconomic status, family issues, and retirement are more challenging to control. However, it is unfortunate because a person must acknowledge and want to change their behavior to change. Miller noticed that in schools where teachers left, it appears that the leaders did not want to recognize the problem behaviors. Additionally, when looking at the different leadership behaviors that increase teacher turnover, knowledge of the school organization would be easier to teach than professionalism and personal morals. Likewise, in efforts to become world-class schools, make AYP and close achievement gaps, school systems and states have become competitive, seeking funds and notoriety, while leaders and teachers have become data analysis machines and our students, have been reduced to test scores. Schools' leaders must confront and accept their contribution to teacher turnover, if the ultimate goal is to ensure the success and well-being of every child.

Case Study III: Amy Hughes (2012) The Relationship Between Principal Support and Teacher Retention in Hard to Staff Schools

Case Study III: Description

The final case selected for the study provides an analysis of the relationship between principal supportive behaviors and teachers' commitment and retention using a quantitative approach. Researcher Amy Hughes (2012) set out to determine which areas of

perceived principal support is essential to increasing teacher retention by addressing the

following research question and assumptions:

>   (Q1) What is the relationship between a principal's supports for teachers and the actual retention of teachers who work in high risk placements or hard to staff environment?
>   (Q2) What is the relationship between support scores on the Administrative Support Survey of teacher and principals?
>   (H1) Principal supportive skills are related to teacher retention.
>   (H2) The principals' scores on how they give support will be higher than the teachers' scores on how principals give support. (Hughes, 2012, p. 2)

Case Study III: Purpose

The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between teacher retention and

principal support. The research examined the perceptions of support between teachers

and principals and how these perceptions affect teacher retention, and to determine if there is a

correlation between the principal's support and teacher retention (Hughes, 2012)

Case Study III: Methodology

The methodology of this study was designed to obtain information of how principals and

teachers perceive support, and how the perceptions affect retention in hard-to-staff

schools (Hughes, 2012). The study utilized a non-experimental quantitative survey design to

obtain information about participants' behavior attitude and beliefs. The subjects' responses to

the survey provide the researcher with data on teachers and principals perceptions of support,

and how they felt support affects teachers' retention. For this study, researchers define support as

efforts to take an active role in assisting, encouraging, and displaying approving attitudes

towards teachers. Additionally, Hughes questioned the participants about the type of support that

promotes teacher attrition and retention.

First, Hughes (2012) conducted a pilot study to reveal participants' understanding, the plausibility of the experiment, and the clarity of the questions asked. Acadia, Montana served as the location for the pilot test site because it fits the criteria for the research parameters and accreditations. However, Hughes excluded Acadia from the main study, because the researcher's employment by the Acadia Education Department may cause a potential bias. The pilot study consisted of a survey, data collection, and review, followed by a focus group meeting to discuss any changes that need to be made. Hughes wrote that the pilot provided insight into the quality and validity of the instrument.

Then, Hughes (2012) conducted the initial investigations with a stratified random sample population sample from 21 special purpose schools in Montana. The principals at each school provided a list of teachers that the specified criteria for the investigation. A total of 80 subjects consisting of 21 administrators and 59 teachers participated in the study.

The investigation utilized a cross-sectional design for data collection. The instrument used in the study was Administrative Support Survey, by C. Yvonne Balfour (2001) (Hughes, 2012). Hughes (2012) used a pilot study to determine the most accurate and reliable version of the instrument, before administrating the survey to the investigated population. The survey tested expected and received support based on emotional, environmental, instructional, and technical support variables. Emotional support was based on administrators' behavior that focused on feelings and emotion. The environmental support subscale was leadership behaviors that were based on physical characteristics and how administrators managed the work conditions for teachers. Instructional support was defined as support around teaching and educational issues. Finally, technical leadership support was described as support for special education and specific school compliance issues (Hughes, 2012).

Case Study III: Summarized Findings

Research Question 1 focused on determining the relationship between principal support and the retention of teachers, specifically in hard-to-staff schools. The findings show that teachers who were expected to stay in their teaching assignment for the following year perceived high levels of emotional, environment, instructional and technical support (Hughes, 2012). Hughes indicated that "the area of support that had the highest correlation was emotional support, the second highest was environmental support, followed by technical, and finally instructional support" (Hughes, 2012, p. 76). The data also revealed that a strong correlation between retention and four areas of support, and principal support whether the teacher was planning to stay in their current teaching assignment. Hypothesis 1, principal supportive skills are related to teacher retention was substantiated through the data analysis and the results that were found.

Research question 2 addressed the relationship between support score of principals and teachers on the Administrators Support Survey. The teacher was asked to answer the questions based on the perceived support from their principals. The survey requires principals to answer the questions based on the support they felt they provided their teachers. Hughes (2012) analyzed the responses, and the finding showed administrators perceived they supported their teachers better than the teachers perceived their support. The evidence supported the hypothesis for research question 2. Principals perceived their level of support higher than teachers' perceptions of principal support in all four sub-scales. The study showed that principals perceived their emotional support was 5.76 points higher than teachers' perceptions. Also, leaders perceived their environmental support to be 6.94 points higher than teachers' perceptions of leadership environmental support; and principals' perceptions of technical support was 7.31 points higher

than teachers' perceptions. Finally, administrators viewed their instructional support to be 12.41 points higher the teachers' perceptions. Based on the data, there is a statistical significance in the relationship between how principals perceive the support they give and how teachers perceive leadership support (Hughes, 2012).

Case Study III: Summary

Hughes (2012) efficaciously supports the assumption that leadership supportive behaviors have a substantial impact on teacher retention. The teachers participating in the study provided insight into the supportive behaviors they valued most from their administrators. Besides, the research indicated that both teachers and principals rank emotional support as the main contributor of a teacher wanting to stay in their current teaching assignment. Hughes declared that, although salary increases served as a temporary motivator if a teacher is truly unhappy with their job, no amount of money would satisfy the dissatisfaction they feel. However, the participants shared that individual recognition for a job well done served as a powerful incentive to remain at their teaching assignment. Many teachers also indicated that they value effective communication and advanced notification of events in their building. Ultimately, the study revealed that teachers and principals have a different view of leadership support. Additionally, principals viewed their level of support significantly higher than teachers' perceptions of support. Moreover, the differences in these opinions of support may have a negative impact teacher retention.

Summary

The three cases selected will provide comprehensive data to explain the specific leadership practices that push teacher turnover and reduce teacher commitment. In contrast, the studies will provide relevant data to determine the precise leadership behaviors that support

teachers' commitment and retention. First, a within-case analysis (Creswell, 2013) will be

conducted to holistically interpret and identify critical issues in each case. Next, the study will

utilize Atlas ti to conduct a cross-case analysis to identify reoccurring themes in each sample. To

further illustrate the problem, the researcher will code and graph the reoccurring themes to

establish well-formulated assertions and interpretations. The final analytical stage will consist of

a detailed explanation of the descriptions and assertions uncovered through systematic analysis.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to research and identify specific leadership behaviors and attributes, which contribute to teacher commitment and retention. Teacher turnover and attrition is a significant problem impacting school systems across the country. The teacher turnover crisis is costly and negatively impacts student achievement. The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the relationship between leadership behavior and retention?

2. What is the relationship between leadership behavior and teacher commitment?

3. What are the specific leadership behaviors that promote teacher commitment and retention?

Data Analysis

A comparative analysis was conducted using the Atlas Qualitative Data Analysis System on three purposefully selected case studies to provide conclusive data that identified the specific leadership practices and attributes that support teachers' commitment and retention. The analysis also provided evidence to support the relationship between leaders' behaviors and teacher organizational commitment and retention. First, the cases were segmented and coded. Next, the study utilized Atlas.ti to conduct a holistic analysis of the results from the three targeted case studies to identify the density of the codes within each sample. Then a cross-case analysis enabled a comparison of the reoccurring codes between all three cases. The creation of network identifying the relationship between the codes allowed for a visual representation of the emerging themes. Seven distinct themes evolved from the semantic linkages within the codes. To further illustrate the emerging theory, the categories were graphed to establish a visual

representation of the density and the relative density. The theorist utilized the data to develop well-formulated assertions and interpretations. The final analytical stage consisted of a detailed explanation of the descriptions and assertions uncovered through systematic analysis.

Table 1. Density index

Themes	Case Study 1	Case Study 2	Case Study 3	Density Analysis
Burnout	1	3	0	4
Collaboration opportunities	7	2	0	9
Colleague Support	9	3	1	13
Commitment	3	3	3	9
Communication	2	6	1	9
Consistency	0	5	0	5
Demoralization	3	10	0	13
Dissatisfaction	0	2	0	2
Distributive Leadership	4	1	0	5
Emotional Support	18	11	4	33
Environmental Support	9	1	1	11
Flexible	4	0	0	4
Hiring practices	8	2	0	10
Instructional Support	15	5	2	22
Knowledgeable	8	9	1	18
Leadership	10	11	2	23
Leadership support	10	12	4	26
Mentoring	5	2	0	7
Mobility	0	6	0	6
Morale	0	5	0	5
Motivation	2	3	1	6
Provide feedback	2	1	1	4
Recruitment	2	0	0	2
Respect	2	14	0	16
Retention	3	2	3	8
Role model	1	0	0	1
Satisfaction	1	1	2	4
School climate and culture	12	7	1	20
Self-efficacy	2	2	0	4
Servant Leadership	18	4	0	22
Shared vision	4	1	0	5
Situational Leadership	19	3	1	23
Stress	2	5	0	7
Student Achievement	0	2	0	2
Student behavior	0	3	0	3
Technical support	3	6	1	10
Transformational Leadership	18	3	1	22
Trust	3	11	0	14
Turnover	1	5	1	7
Visible and accessible	5	11	1	17

Table 1. *Holistic Analysis and Cross-case Analysis Density Table*

Table 2. Relative Density Index

Themes	Case Study 1	Case Study 2	Case Study 3	Cross-Case Synthesize
Burnout	3%	5%	0%	4%
Collaboration opportunities	19%	3%	0%	8%
Colleague Support	25%	5%	9%	12%
Commitment	8%	5%	27%	8%
Communication	6%	10%	9%	8%
Consistency	0%	8%	0%	5%
Demoralization	8%	16%	0%	12%
Dissatisfaction	0%	3%	0%	2%
Distributive Leadership	11%	2%	0%	5%
Emotional Support	50%	18%	36%	31%
Environmental Support	25%	2%	9%	10%
Flexible	11%	0%	0%	4%
Hiring practices	22%	3%	0%	9%
Instructional Support	42%	8%	18%	20%
Knowledgeable	22%	15%	9%	17%
Leadership	28%	18%	18%	21%
Mentoring	14%	3%	0%	6%
Mobility	0%	10%	0%	6%
Morale	0%	8%	0%	5%
Motivation	6%	5%	9%	6%
Provide feedback	6%	2%	9%	4%
Recruitment	6%	0%	0%	2%
Respect	6%	23%	0%	15%
Retention	8%	3%	27%	7%
Role model	3%	0%	0%	1%
Satisfaction	3%	2%	18%	4%
School climate and culture	33%	11%	9%	19%
Self-efficacy	6%	3%	0%	4%
Servant Leadership	50%	7%	0%	20%
Shared vision	11%	2%	0%	5%
Situational Leadership	53%	5%	9%	21%
Stress	6%	8%	0%	6%
Student Achievement	0%	3%	0%	2%
Student behavior	0%	5%	0%	3%
Technical support	8%	10%	9%	9%
Transformational Leadership	50%	5%	9%	20%
Trust	8%	18%	0%	13%
Turnover	3%	8%	9%	6%
Visible and accessible	14%	18%	9%	16%

Table 2. *Cross-case Analysis Relative Association Table*

Findings

The relationship between leadership behavior and teacher retention

A holistic analysis of the three case studies was conducted to provide a qualitative explanation of the relationship between leadership and retention based on the attributes of each source. Then a cross-case study was conducted utilizing the identified connections and the density of the reoccurring themes. The findings from Case Study I (Brown & Wynn, 2009) revealed that leadership plays a significant role in teacher retention. Leaders who create a collaborative school culture and community increased teachers' motivation. Also, leaders who demonstrate distributed leadership qualities such as shared leadership responsibilities and fostering leadership in others increased teachers' dedication and commitment to the organization. Furthermore, when leaders showed an awareness of the staff's talents and strengths and provided opportunities for the staff to explore these strengths, the teachers reciprocated with increased normative commitment. Another theme identified in the study was the culture and climate of the school was crucial to the retention of teachers. Leaders who show Servant leadership characteristics such as building collaborative relationships and creating a family atmosphere where teachers are committed to the shared vision of the organization increased teachers' emotional investment in the organization. The data also showed Transformational Leadership qualities influences teachers' decision to stay in the organization. The data showed that teachers demonstrated increased self-efficacy and job satisfaction when administrators were visible, accessible, and created an atmosphere where teachers were comfortable giving and receiving constructive feedback. The results suggested that principals with Situational Leadership styles have a positive association with teacher retention.

In Case II (Miller, 2010) the findings suggested that leadership behavior has a direct influence on teacher retention. After a thorough analysis of the case study data, the interview data supported an indirect relationship between leaders' behavior and teacher retention. The teachers surveyed in the case study reported that the principals' lack of knowledge, lack of professional morals and lack of personal morals led to their decision to leave the school (Miller, 2010). However, the teachers did not leave right away. According to Miller, one teacher considered waiting to see if the administrator would leave first. Another teacher mentioned that she remained in one school for nine years before deciding to leave. The teachers indicated that the principal showed a lack of morals, trust, and support (Miller, 2010). They reported that there was a lack of camaraderie among the staff, and there was an overall lack of communication and consistency in their buildings (Miller, 2010). The educators described feeling disrespected and distrusted. Also, the teachers explained feeling nervous, emotional discomfort and dissatisfied. They discussed feelings of frustration with student achievement and behavior issues, and they indicated that teachers were often in tears (Miller, 2010). The data showed that leadership behavior led to teacher dissatisfaction and demoralization. The demoralization of teachers led to withdrawal behaviors and reduced commitment.

An analysis of Case III (Hughes, 2012) showed that principal support played a substantial role in teacher retention because principals are crucial to teachers' job satisfaction. The study quantitatively analyzed emotional support (based on feelings and emotions), technical support (support with compliance issues and special education), environmental support (managing the work conditions of teachers), and instructional support (curriculum, resources, and instructional practices) subsets using Balfour's (2001) Administrators Support Survey. The survey was given to the teachers and the principals to allow for a comparative analysis of perceptions. The teachers

that participated in the study indicated that emotional and environmental support had the greatest impact on their decision to remain at their school (Hughes, 2012). The teachers indicated that being recognized for a job well done and receiving feedback was a factor in how well they felt supported (Hughes, 2012). Hughes (2012) suggested that administrators valued emotional and technical support as the greatest indicator of whether a teacher stayed or left the organization. Also, principals viewed their level of support higher than teachers felt they were supported (Hughes, 2012). A holistic, qualitative analysis of the recurring themes revealed that both teachers and leaders felt perceptions of emotional support had a significant role in teachers' job satisfaction, and job satisfaction was associated with teacher retention. Also, principals perceived their level of support was higher than teachers felt they were supported. The discrepancy in perceived support was a barrier to principals' ability to support teachers.
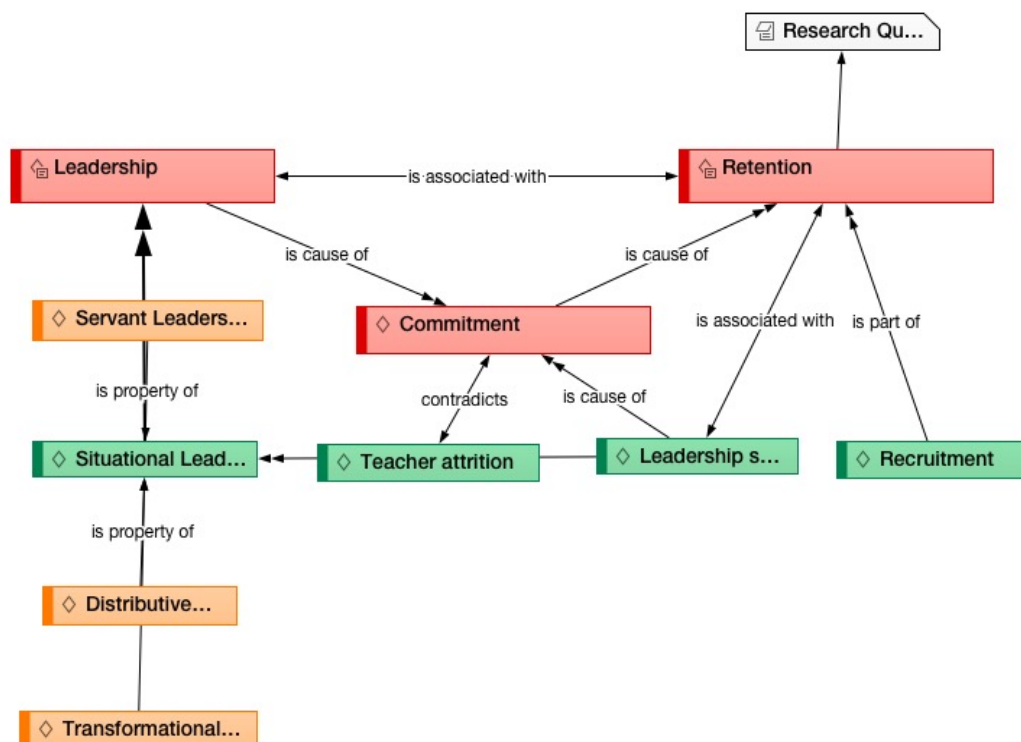
Figure 3: Retention

Figure 3. *The Relationship Between Leadership and Retention*

A cross-case analysis of the data revealed that leadership indirectly influences teacher retention. Specifically, supportive administrator practices had a substantial influence on withdrawal-cognition or turnover intentions. The data showed a progressive emotional process where teachers experienced frustration, dissatisfaction, stress, and a loss of commitment before demonstrating withdrawal behaviors. The teachers often remained in the organization for years before deciding to leave the school. Also, the teachers demonstrated frequent mobility in search of the moral rewards of teaching and job satisfaction.

The relationship between leadership behavior and teacher commitment

To address research question two, the three cases were interpreted holistically and with a cross-case analysis to determine the relationship between leadership and teacher commitment based on Meyer and Allen's (1991) organizational commitment subsets: affective, continuance, and normative. Affective commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment to the organization. Continuance commitment occurs when employees remain in the organization because they recognize the cost of leaving. Finally, an analysis of the normative commitment subset was evaluated to determine the leadership practices that resulted in teachers investing in the school's vision and goals.

In Case I, Brown & Wynn (2009) conducted a semi-structured open-ended interview with twelve principals who were successful at retaining teachers in a district with high teacher turnover. The results showed that the leaders reinforced all subsets of commitment with a high concentration of emotional support. The cross-case synthesis of data showed a 33-point density and 31 percent relative association of emotional support and teacher commitment and retention. The data showed a 22-point density and a 20 percent relative association between instructional

support and the commitment and retention of teachers. The environment support subset revealed an 11-point density index and 10 percent relative association with commitment and retention. Finally, the technical support subset indicated a 10-point density and a nine percent relative association with teachers' organizational commitment and retention. The results indicated that leadership supportive practices had a density index of 76 and an 84 percent relative association with the commitment and retention of teachers. Additionally, the leaders indicated that their goal was to create a supportive school environment that was an extension of a family (Brown & Wynn, 2009). Leadership support in all subsets resulted in an improvement in the climate and cultural dynamics of the school, and collaboration and mentoring opportunities helped teachers feel positive about being a part of the school. The findings also suggest that leadership support increased teachers' motivation and satisfaction, and motivation and satisfaction increased affective and normative commitment. The teachers reciprocated the leader's supportive practices with increased dedication, and a high degree of motivation, self-efficacy, and commitment.

In the second case, Miller's (2010) data showed that teachers recognize the demands of teaching, and the teacher may begin with a high degree of motivation and commitment. However, if the leader fails to demonstrate an awareness of the demands of teaching and is not knowledgeable of the teachers' and students' needs, teachers will often experience frustration, stress and dissatisfaction. Additionally, if the principal shows a lack of supportive behaviors such as recognition, feedback, visibility, accessibility and caring behaviors, the teachers' commitment and motivation diminish. A lack of support in all four domains resulted in dissatisfaction and demoralization that led to teacher turnover. The interpretation of the results showed that a lack of adequate communication practices diminished trust, increased stress, and a desire to quit. The teachers' weakened commitment resulted in employee migration and attrition.

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The final case (Hughes, 2012) quantitatively analyzed leaders' supportive practices and the relationship between teacher turnover from the perspective of the teacher and the administrators. A holistic analysis of the results revealed that teachers' perceptions of administrators' supportive behaviors directly influenced the administrators' ability to support the teacher. This study also showed a discrepancy in the principals' perception of the level of support they gave teachers, and teachers' perceptions of the level of support they received from their administrators (Hughes, 2012). Therefore, the data showed that communication was crucial to establishing and maintaining committed teachers. Effective communication was necessary for maintaining a positive culture. Leaders must be accessible and willing to discuss concerns and to evaluate through open discourse the needs of the school, teachers, and students. To cultivate committed educators, leaders must provide responsive support, positive feedback, recognition for a job well done, and opportunities for professional development. The data also show that teachers demonstrated a higher degree of commitment when leaders are visible, accessible and willing to accept constructive observations, that benefit the organization. Teachers who are a part of the decision-making process had a higher degree of normative commitment and a lower turnover rate.

Figure 4. Commitment

Figure 4. *The Relationship Between Leadership and Commitment*

A cross-sectional analysis of the data showed that leadership mediated by teacher commitment influences retention. Situational Leadership practices were identified in all three cases, and emotional support had the highest association with a 33-point index and a relative index of 21 percent. The researcher also identified Distributed, Servant and Transformational leadership practices in the three targeted cases. The results suggested a need for a Situational leadership approach with Distributed, Transformational, and Servant leadership styles used based on the circumstance and the needs of the teacher. Leadership supportive practices have a significant and direct influence on teachers' organizational commitment, and organizational

commitment has a positive and direct impact on teachers' retention. Although all four domains

of support were represented in the data, emotional supportive practice showed the highest

association with ten indicators of emotional support represented and a 31 percent association and

a 33-point density index. The results identified seven indicators of environmental and

instructional support practices, with environment support showing a 10 percent association and

instructional support showing a 20 percent association. The four indicators of technical support

showed a 9 percent association to the factors that contribute to the commitment and retention of
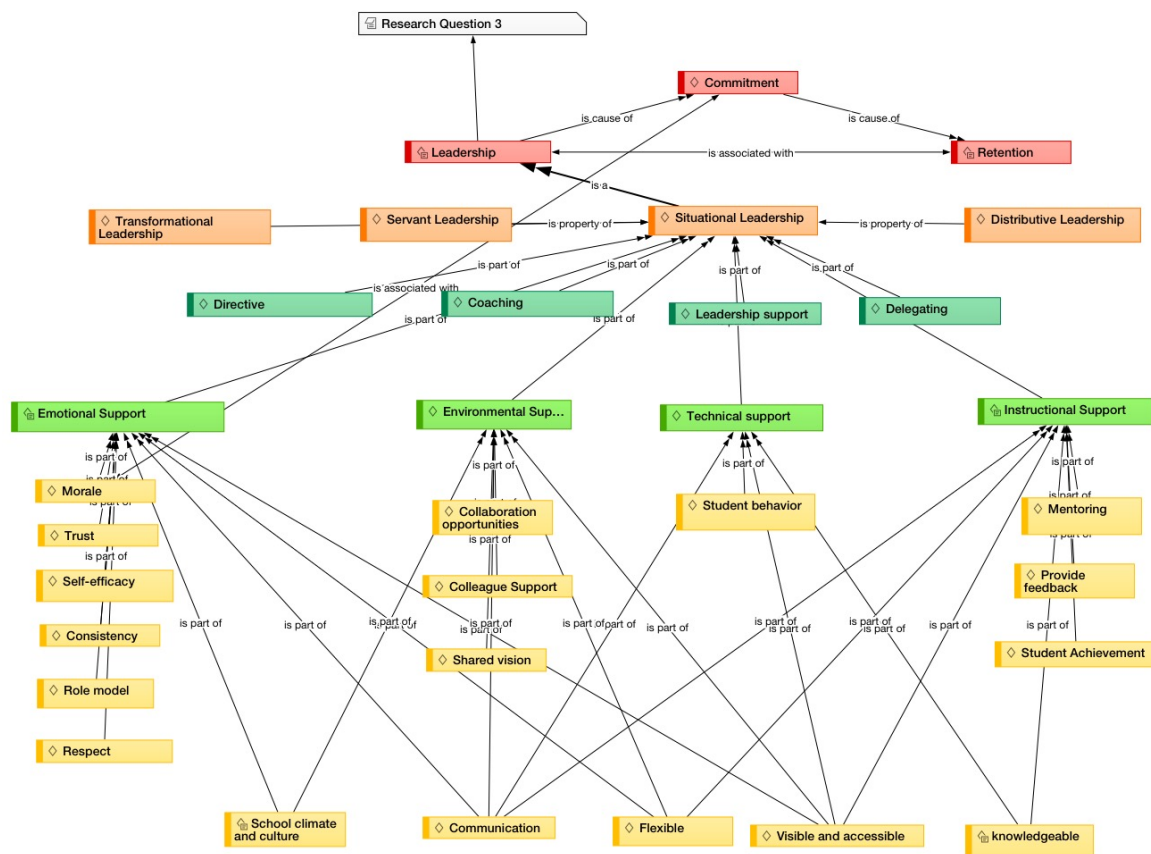
teachers.

Figure 5. Leadership

Figure 5.. *Leadership Attributes Associated with Increased Retention*

Leadership behaviors that promote teacher commitment and retention

The results of the study indicated that a flexible leadership style is needed to increase the commitment and retention of teachers effectively. The data showed seven distinct themes that include; teacher empowerment, directive leadership, coaching, emotional support, effective communication, visibility and accessibility. To increase commitment the teachers needed to feel empowered. They required opportunities to give input in order to invest in the shared vision. Distributed leadership or the delegation of leadership responsibilities provides opportunities for teacher to offer their insight, thus increasing normative commitment. In contrast, the findings indicated the need for a directive and a coaching approach. The study revealed that effective communication, visibility, accessibility and emotional supportive practices promoted affective, continuance and normative commitment. According to the themes identified, the data supported a Situational leadership approach to increase all three domains of commitment and to effectively retain teachers.

Situational leadership is comprised of two dimensions, directive and supportive. The leaders must assess teachers' commitment and competence and determine the degree of directive or supportive behaviors needed for the situation (Northouse, 2016). Blanchard, Zigarman, and Zigarman (2013) further classified Situational Leadership into four distinct categories consisting of supporting, coaching delegating, and directing behaviors. Leaders must have the flexibility to adjust their approach to the developmental level and the level of commitment of the teachers, and the teachers may move forward or backward along the continuum.

Figure 6. Situational Leadership Model

Supporting	Coaching
Moderate Commitment/ Moderate Competence	Low Commitment/ Competent
Situational Leadership	
Delegating	Directing
High Commitment/ High Competence	High Commitment/ Low Competence

Figure 6. *Adapted from: Blanchard and Zigarman Situational Leadership II (2013)*

An aggregation of the themes revealed seven distinct leadership practices that promote teachers' commitment and retention with Situational Leadership at the center. The identified leadership behaviors that promoted teacher commitment and retention include: (1) facilitating a shared vision and mission, (2) creating a culture and climate for collaboration (3) building trusting relationships, (4) maintaining effective communication (5) remaining visible and accessible (6) empowering leaders (7) cultivating a community of learners.
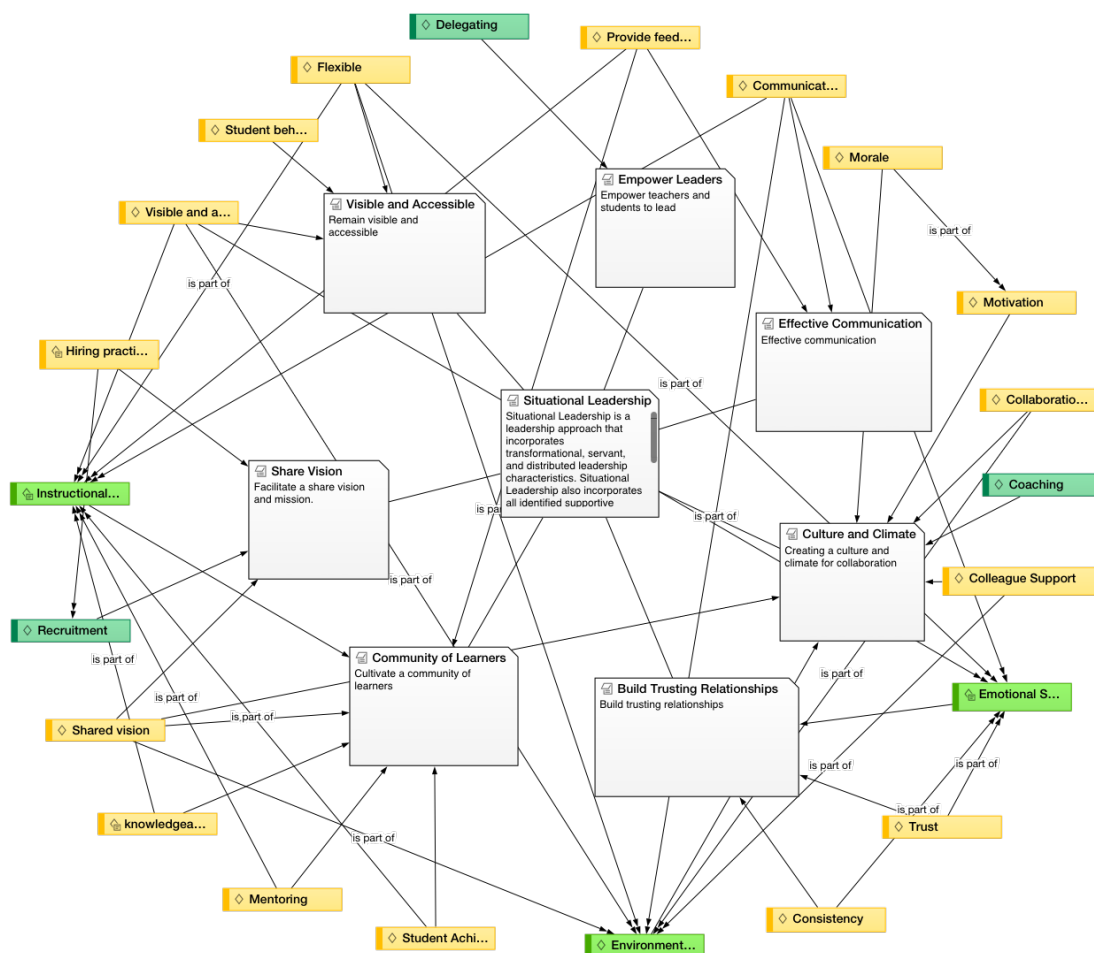
Figure 7. Leadership Supportive Practices

Figure 7. *The Seven Leadership Practices that Increase Teacher Commitment & Retention*

Facilitating A Shared Vision and Mission. The first leadership practice, facilitating a

shared vision and mission, incorporates hiring practices and collaboration. To promote the

success of students, leaders must facilitate a shared school mission and vision. The leader must

collaborate with teachers, parents, community members and when possible, students to work

toward the shared student success goals. The development of the vision and mission should lead

to the articulation of a set of shared school core values and goals. The vision and mission should

be strategically developed, student-centered, data-driven, and based on the needs of the students.

Leaders must ensure that students and staff remain committed to the shared mission and vision

by efficiently communicating the school's progression toward the goals and objectives. The research shows that collaboration and communication ensure a shared disposition of learning and promotes continual and sustainable commitment.

Creating A Climate and Culture for Collaboration. The findings showed that the second leadership practices, creating a climate and culture for collaboration, had a profound impact on teacher retention. Effective leaders promote a culture and climate of fairness and respect while ensuring that all instructional needs are met with high expectations. The data showed that teachers demonstrated higher normative commitment when allowed to work in collaborative teams. Principals set the tone for a supportive culture and climate. The findings indicated that teachers who did not feel supported by administrators also did not feel supported by colleagues. The results showed that a lack of collaboration and support from colleagues decreased motivation, increased stress and produced job dissatisfaction. Coaching and mentoring and collaboration increased teachers' self-efficacy, reduced work-related stressors and promoted teacher retention.

Building Trusting Relationships. The third leadership practice, building trusting relationships, was based on the emotional support domain, which was the highest recurring theme in all three cases, with an overall density of 131. The emotional support domain consists of trust, consistency, role modeling, respect and an awareness of staff issues and needs, communication, stress, trust, and consistency. In Case II, Miller (2010) identified the leadership practice that pushed teacher turnover. Miller interviewed 16 teachers who decided to leave their school. All 16 participants in the study described a turbulent or nonexistent relationship with their former administrators. Many indicated a lack of trust, respect, and communication as the primary reason for the weak relationship with their previous administrator. In Case Study I,

Brown and Wynn interviewed 12 principals that were successful at retaining teachers in a high turnover school district. The administrator shared the practices they used to motivate, support and engage teachers. Each administrator mentioned the importance of having conversations with their teachers and getting to know them personally, "I want to know my teachers personally and prefer to know their issues sooner than later. If you've got a problem, let me know before you're crying" (Brown & Wynn, 2009, p.52). Just as teachers should get to know their students, leaders should get to know their teachers. The principal should understand what drives and motivates their teachers, what are their frustrations, and needs. When leaders connect with their teacher on a personal level, teachers respond with increased affective commitment.

  Effective Communication. Practice four, maintaining effective communication, was a common recurring theme in all three cases. Effective communication is necessary because communication can have a positive or negative impact on commitment. An environment of open communication trust and respect should be established to improve the educational environment for all students and teachers. Leaders should use multiple methods of communication because communication is essential for teacher morale and emotional support. Leaders should rely on formal and informal communication. Schools that rely solely on formal communication may constrain discourse and discovery by placing restrictions on open dialog. On the other hand, school leaders must ensure transparency and consistency through formal networks of communication. Also, teachers should receive autonomy in the exchange of knowledge and information. Educators must feel comfortable to share ideas and provide feedback to school leaders. Communication is pivotal to establishing a culture and community of trust, transparency, and collaboration.

Visible and Accessible. Leaders who are effective at retaining teachers are visible and accessible. The findings suggested that visibility and accessibility was a common indicator in all three cases with a density of 17. In Case Study I, supportive principals indicated that they have an open door policy for teachers and students. They also reported that they are visible in the halls and accessible. One administrator stated that he wanted the teachers to feel comfortable enough to give him real feedback (Brown & Wynn, 2009). On the contrary, in Case Study II, teachers discussed their former principal's lack of visibility and accessibility, and the impact it had on their decision to leave their previous schools. The teachers expressed feeling unsupported and frustrated because the principal was unapproachable. One teacher said that she left her school because "her principal was so far removed from the staff that he placed black construction paper over the windows of his office to block others visibility into the office" (Miller, 2010, p. 100). Therefore, to promote the commitment and retention of teachers, leaders should make informal check-ins with teachers and students. Also, leaders should be visible in the halls. Moreover, teachers must have direct access to the administrators, and the administrators should be open to receive constructive feedback for the benefit of the students.

Empowering Leaders. The research indicated that delegation of leadership and distributed leadership characteristics is an indicator of teacher organizational commitment with a total density index of 14 and a relative percentage of 13 percent. The data determined that teachers that participated in shared decision-making were more invested in the organization. Therefore, empowering leaders is a critical component of promoting commitment and teacher retention, and, when possible, leaders should encourage team decision-making. In Case Study I, the principals interviewed discussed how they valued the teachers' input and opinions. "Each principal described how many of the school-based decisions were made as leadership teams,

interview teams, or site-based management teams, with the new teacher's opinion just as important as the person that's been here 25 years" (Brown & Wynn, 2009, p.55). Leaders can empower teachers, parents, and students to have an active role in school decision-making.

Cultivate A Community of Learners. The final leadership trait developed from the research was, cultivate a community of learners. The results show that leaders who are effective at retaining committed teachers demonstrate all four domains of support. To provide teachers and students with the technical support needed, the principals must be knowledgeable and continue to develop professionally as a leader. Administrators must also provide instructional support and the resources needed to engage and promote the success of all students. Teachers must have regular feedback, positive recognition, and professional development to help to increase their effectiveness, and reduce stress. The school should be a learning environment for all staff and students. The environmental support domain suggest that principals must ensure that the school is student centered and that all students and teachers have access to the instructional tools needed to be successful. The leaders must recruit and hire teachers that share the school's vision and values and mentor, guide, and support new teachers. Teacher retention requires a mosaic of support components and leaders should be malleable enough to meet the needs of the individual rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach (Wilkinson, 2009).

Summary

The data indicated that leadership behavior mediated by commitment has a significant influence on teacher retention. The research showed that a Situational Leadership approach and Leadership supportive practices had a significant and positive effect on teacher organizational commitment and retention. The results also led to the development of seven specific leadership attributes that promoted the commitment and retention of teachers. These practices include: (1)

facilitate a shared vision and mission, (2) create a culture and climate for collaboration, (3) build trusting relationships, (4) maintain effective communication, (5) be visible and accessible, (6) empower leaders, and (7) cultivate a community of learners. The leadership supportive behaviors identified from the research increased teachers' motivation, job satisfaction and commitment. Leaders may also need to show characteristics of Distributed Leadership, Servant Leadership, and Transformational Leadership. Therefore, the data supported Situational Leadership as an appropriate approach to meet the needs of all students and teachers.

Educational leaders must have the commitment, flexibility, knowledge, and skill to motivate the school community to support a shared vision. Leaders who model ethical values and professional behaviors effectively promote a climate of fairness and respect, while ensuring that all instructional needs are met with high expectations. Cultivating a community of collaboration is pivotal to establishing an environment that engages students' learning. The seven leadership practices outlined in this study supports students' academic success by fostering teacher commitment and retention. Above all, leaders are responsible for recruiting and retaining effective teachers, and creating an environment where everyone is committed to the success and welfare of all students.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

Discussion

I started this research because I had a profound interest in the achievement gap present among marginalized populations in high poverty schools. While studying the literature on the achievement gap, several indicators occurred consistently. The signs included; teaching, social and emotional constraints, facility conditions, and limited funding and resources. Upon further investigation I noticed that the achievement dispersity among minority groups was not localized to schools in the high poverty areas, but was also apparent in affluent areas. These findings suggested that social and emotional constraints, resources, and funding did not adequately explain the achievement gaps present among marginalized populations. However, one domain, teaching, was present throughout the literature.

To address the achievement gap school districts spent millions of dollars on teacher training such as; cultural responsiveness resources, curriculum and instruction programs, and differentiation professional developments. Nevertheless, achievement remained an issue, and teachers in hard-to-staff schools and affluent areas shared similar concerns. The teachers reported feeling stressed, demoralized, a lack of support and diminished commitment. Moreover, teacher turnover was prevalent in both demographics. After investing billions of dollars yearly in staff development nationwide, 50 percent of new teachers left the profession within five years. These teachers migrated before the students could reap the benefits of their knowledge and training. The data led me to conclude that research must first attend to the teacher attrition phenomenon plaguing American schools to address the achievement barriers present within marginalized populations. Educational leaders must be aware of the influence teacher dissatisfaction and diminished commitment has on student achievement. Moreover, to increase

student achievement and ensure the success of all students, the leaders must also understand the specific leadership behaviors that promote teacher commitment and retention.

The purpose of this comparative case study analysis was to explore three models to provide an in-depth understanding of the precise leadership practices that enhance the commitment and retention of teachers. The comparative case study model allowed for a thorough explanation of the leadership practices that contribute to the teacher retention phenomenon. I selected each article outlined in this study for its ability to provide multiple perspectives on the relationship between leader, commitment, and retention. The first case, Finding Keeping and Supporting: The Role of the Principal in Teacher Retention Issues (Brown & Wynn, 2009) provided the principals' perspective of the behaviors that promote teacher retention. The second case study, The Revolving Door: How leaders support teacher turnover (Miller, 2010) provided data to show the leadership practices that causes teacher turnover and attrition. The Final case selected, The relationship between principal support and teacher retention in hard to staff schools (Hughes, 2012) provided evidence to identify the leadership behaviors that promoted teacher retention and turnover from the perspective of teachers and principals. The research used the purposefully selected cases to answer and explain the following research question:

1. What is the relationship between leadership behavior and retention?

2. What is the relationship between leadership behavior and teacher commitment?

3. What are the specific leadership behaviors that promote teacher commitment and retention?

The proposed leadership practices evolved from extensive research of scholarly studies and theoretical perspectives from the world's leading educational leadership theorists. The research utilized the Path-Goal theory of leadership behavior, as defined by House (1971), to

explain the leadership behaviors that promote teacher commitment and retention. The Path-Goal Theory explained that leadership practices should be based on characteristics of followers' and their needs (Northouse, 2016). House's (1971) Path-Goal Theory of leadership suggested that leaders who engage in behaviors that complement subordinates' abilities, and who are instrumental to subordinates' job satisfaction and performance positively influence followers' path-goal perceptions in the organization. The theoretical framework firmly reinforces the conclusion derived from the study, which suggests that the relationship between motivation and satisfaction is contingent on the degree to which the leader provides supportive behaviors to teachers that allow for adequate performance and the successful completion of job-related tasks.

Teachers are pivotal to providing an exemplary education for students. Moreover, teacher retention is significant for student success, because research shows that teacher turnover hurts student achievement (Evans & Leonard, 2013; Paslay, 2013; Hughes, Matt, & O'Reilly, 2014). Furthermore, teacher turnover costs America billions of dollars yearly (Paslay, 2013), and depletes assets that could be used for providing additional resources for our nation's children. The findings from this study suggest that leadership behavior mediated by organizational commitment has a significant influence on teacher turnover and retention. Additionally, leadership has a direct impact on teacher commitment and committed teachers have higher job effort, satisfaction, and are less likely to leave their position.

Educators' foremost responsibility is to ensure the success and welfare of every child. Educational leaders and teachers are charged with the obligation to provide an equitable, high-quality education for all students. Leaders must create an educational institution that maintains teachers who are committed to the development of every student. By facilitating and implementing a caring, safe learning environment for students and staff, leaders promote a

culture of growth and student achievement. To ensure that students develop the attitudes and knowledge needed to achieve intellectual and personal excellence, leaders must make sure that staff, teachers, and community members are committed to the school's shared vision. The review of literature suggests that committed teachers are more likely to remain in the organization, and teacher retention increases student achievement. Teachers who feel that they are supported emotionally by their administrator, and who think they are a contributing part of a community, reciprocate with a high degree of dedication, commitment and increased job performance. The literature also supported the assertion that teacher turnover negatively impacts student achievement.

This comparative case study analysis explored the relationship between leadership, teacher commitment, and retention to determine the specific leadership behaviors that promote teacher retention. The review of the literature and the findings suggest a Situational leadership approach has a significant and positive role in teacher retention. The data also supported a need for Distributed, Servant and Transformational leadership qualities to create a culture and climate of collaboration and dedication. The Situational Leadership approach allows the leader to look at the situation to determine the appropriate strategy. Administrators must have the knowledge and flexibility to determine the degree of directive, delegating, coaching and supportive behaviors needed for each circumstance. Leaders must assess teachers' commitment and competence to determine the degree of directive or supportive behaviors. Therefore, a Situational leadership approach requires that administrators know their staff's strengths, weaknesses, and interests. Moreover, a situational approach demands that the principals have an awareness of staff issues and constraints. A leader can use the Situational leadership style as a framework for determining the best leadership approach to ensure the commitment and retention of teachers.

The data also supported the need for seven distinctive leadership practices to encourage teacher retention and commitment. The seven leadership practices that promote teacher retention evolved from extensive research of current scholarly studies and theoretical perspectives reviewed in the literature. The results indicate that leaders improve the commitment and retention of teachers when they (1) facilitate a shared vision and mission; (2) create a culture and climate for collaboration; (3) build trusting relationships; (4) maintain effective communication; (5) are visible and accessible; (6) empower leaders; and (7) cultivate a community of learners. Teachers who feel that they are supported emotionally by their administrator and who believe they are a contributing part of the school community reciprocate with a high degree of dedication and commitment to the organization.

Summary

A good teacher cultivates and inspires life-long learners. They embrace their responsibility for ensuring that society's future goals are met. However, America is losing ten percent of its teachers each year, and the nation is currently faced with a teacher shortage. The deficit in educators is particularly evident in urban areas, where the achievement gap is most severe. Although the loss of teachers is a significant issue, recruiting and hiring new teachers will not alleviate the problem. To reduce the teacher deficit, leaders must retain competent educators who are committed to students' well-being and success. School leadership, climate, and teacher relationships increase teacher retention and commitment. Educational leaders must prepare themselves to attend to the teacher turnover crisis to provide a quality education for all students.

Research shows that several factors contribute to teachers' decision to leave the teaching profession. However, the results of this study indicate a significant and direct relationship

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between leadership practices and teacher commitment, and commitment directly impacts teacher retention. Educational leaders must acknowledge that principals play an essential role in retaining teachers. A lack of leadership support, specifically emotional support, contributes to teacher attrition.

This comparative case study analysis aimed to explore leadership supportive practices mediated by organizational commitment and its influence on teacher retention. Committed teachers demonstrate greater job effort, more involvement and are less likely to leave their position. To reduce teacher turnover nationally, and to increase the number of inspiring educators, leaders must understand how to motivate educators to remain committed to the organization and profession. Principals should adjust their approach to support and drive teachers to stay at the organization.

The analysis of the literature showed a relationship between leadership behaviors and teacher retention. The research also showed that leadership styles such as Transformational, Distributive, Servant and Situational leadership have an impact on teacher commitment. The studies also indicate that a leader is an indicator of teacher satisfaction, motivation, and performance. The three targeted cases utilized in this study provide wide-ranging data to explore the specific leadership practices that push teacher turnover and reduce teacher commitment. The study also provided relevant information to determine the specific leadership behaviors that support teachers' commitment and retention.

A holistic and cross-case analysis revealed leadership behavior mediated by commitment has a significant influence on teacher retention. Additionally, the data led to the development of the theoretical model outlined in this study. The model asserts that there are seven precise leadership practices with Situational Leadership at the center that reinforces teacher commitment

and retention. The data supported the need for the following seven methods that encourage teacher retention and commitment: (1) facilitate a shared vision and mission; (2) create a culture and climate for collaboration; (3) build trusting relationships; (4) maintain effective communication; (5) be visible and accessible; (6) empower leaders; and (7) cultivate a community of learners. To retain teachers, leaders must enhance teachers' commitment and job satisfaction by focusing on the teachers' motivation and adjusting their leadership style accordingly.

Recommendations

Studies in the area of teacher retention are important to educational research because the ability to maintain quality teachers has become an ever-increasing problem. The focus of this research helps to explain the causes of teacher attrition, and the factors that contribute to increased commitment and retention. The implications of this study could aid in future leadership training programs. This study could also prepare educational leaders for the moral dilemmas faced by teachers educating under the current policies.

Recommendations for future research include conducting the study with an emphasis on district-level leadership and principal retention to determine if the seven supportive practices can be applied to increase principal retention. Future researchers may want to conduct the study using cases that focus on a broader population to increase the generalizability of the results. Additionally, each case identified in the study used a cross-sectional design and was conducted within a ten-year period, which limits the ability to show fluctuating patterns. Completing the exploration using a longitudinal analysis or historical cases would identify changes in teachers' perceptions over time. Furthermore, the research showed that high-stakes accountability was a contributing factor to attrition. Future researchers may want to revise the study to determine the

relationship between high-stakes accountability and teachers' organizational commitment and retention. Moreover, one limitation of the study was it relied on second-hand accounts of teachers' and principals' perceptions of leadership's influence on commitment and retention. Recreating the study using first-hand qualitative data would allow the study participants to share their views directly with the researcher and provide detail explanations.

Implications

Five practical implications to educational leadership can be drawn from the literature and results identified in this study. First, Situational leadership provides a reference for principals to determine the most appropriate approach to meet the needs of students and teachers. Second, the literature described in the study outlines the specific leadership practices that increase turnover intentions. The third implication provides a framework for supportive practices that improve teacher retention. Lastly, the research provides evidence of supportive practices that increase trust, effective communication, and commitment among the staff and teachers.

The Situational leadership approach outlined in the literature provides leaders with a reference for identifying the appropriate method to meet the needs and competency of the followers. Therefore, the first practical implication for this study includes providing a framework for supportive leadership practices that increase organizational commitment retention. Leaders could also utilize this research when choosing a leadership style that best meets the needs of their teachers. It is crucial for an educational leader to understand the role leadership plays in the commitment and retention of teachers. Principals must have the flexibility to adjust their leadership behaviors to support, encourage and enhance the performance of all teachers.

Secondly, the research adds to the body of knowledge on the teacher attrition phenomenon by providing literature that identifies the specific leadership practices that push teacher turnover. Moreover, as evidenced in the literature review, teacher attrition harms student achievement and contributes to the achievement gap in hard-to-staff schools (Ronfeldt, Loeb, and Wychoff, 2013; Hughes, 2012). The results of this inquiry may provide administrators and researchers with the information needed to overcome teacher shortages, and to motivate, support and retain teachers, specifically in hard-to-staff environments where the teacher shortage has had the most consequential effects on student achievement. Additionally, district leaders can utilize the results of this study to identify and employ principals that will successfully develop a school environment of collaboration where teachers dedicate themselves to the academic success and well-being of all students.

Another practical implication for this study includes providing a foundation for supportive leadership practices that reduce teacher turnover. The theoretical model developed from this study could provide leadership preparation programs with a framework for developing leaders who effectively cultivate learning communities in which teacher are motivated and invested in the organization's goals. Future administrators should consider incorporating the principles identified to establish relationships that improve teacher engagement.

Finally, current administrators might consider the theoretical principles identified in this study when considering the best supportive practices to reduce stress, increase trust and provide efficient communication among the staff. Leaders should consider the dynamic Situational Leadership approach, emotional support, and the seven leadership supportive practice model as a foundation for reinvigorating teachers' commitment and cultivating a positive school climate.

Conclusion

The findings in this study are consistent with information found in the literature and indicated that leadership mediated by commitment has an impact on teacher retention. Teacher attrition adversely affects student academic success and contributes to the achievement gap within our Nation's schools. The data verified that leadership behaviors, specifically leadership supportive practices play a significant role in teachers' organizational commitment and retention. When teachers feel disconnected from the organization or a lack the support from their leaders, they can no longer access the rewards from teaching, and begin to experience heightened stress and withdrawal behaviors. In contrast, the results of this study showed that improving working conditions through collaboration, and supportive practices positively influences teacher retention.

The study concludes that teacher attrition does not necessarily reflect a lack of competence, but instead may represent internal and emotional conflicts that contribute to stress and dissatisfaction. Stress and dissatisfaction may lead to diminished commitment and demoralization. Administrators must understand the mediating influence of teacher job dissatisfaction and decreased commitment on teacher turnover. Therefore, it is essential to address all factors that contribute to low retention, because the ability to maintain quality teachers has become an ever-increasing problem.

The purpose of this research was to explain the causes of low teacher retention while highlighting the specific leadership behaviors that promote the commitment and retention of teachers. The study exposed the need for leaders to maintain flexibility and the ability to adjust their approach to meet the needs of teachers and students. The implications of this study could aid in the recruitment and training of future leaders on the skills needed to help teachers cope

with the stress that leads to withdrawal. This study could also prepare educational leaders for the dilemmas faced by teachers educating under the current policies and constraints. Instructional leaders must question whether they are placing additional stressors on teachers. Likewise, they must strive to provide the emotional support that alleviates stress and limits unnecessary constraints on teachers' and students' progress. Retaining teachers provides a solution to several problems within our nation's schools systems. Teacher retention resolves the teacher shortage and saves billions of dollars in teacher recruitment, salaries, and training programs. Furthermore, the literature review verified that teacher retention has a positive impact on the achievement gap in hard to staff schools. Retaining teachers through supportive leadership and collaborative practices will ensure the success and welfare of every student, by providing consistent, well-trained educators dedicated to the students of our nation.

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