

TOWARD A THEORY OF FAITHFULNESS:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS
RELATED TO HUMAN CAPITAL RETENTION IN THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

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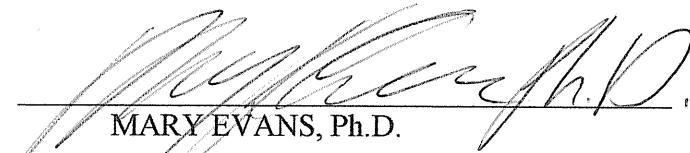
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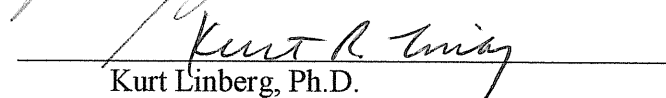
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Abstract

This exploratory, qualitative study utilizing the grounded theory approach addressed the research question of what are the factors Christian teachers feel, believe, and/or understand are meaningful and motivating to their decision to continue teaching in a Christian school? This focus on human capital retention in the Christian school was necessary due to a concern for teachers leaving the profession within the first few years of their careers, thus lowering the quality of education provided. The teachers participating in the study shared their feelings, thoughts, stories, and experiences through the use of in-depth interviews. The resulting analysis provided the opportunity for six core categories to be formed resulting in two major themes. The first major theme of a desire for personal fulfillment of the teachers to be motivated to continue teaching is seen in their (a) need to belong and feel connected, (b) need to provide direction and guidance for the students, their colleagues, and the administration, and ultimately to fulfill a (c) need for a feeling of accomplishment and contribution. The second major theme which emerged during the data collection and analysis was that of a desire for spiritual fulfillment. There was a deep sense the spiritual needs and desires of the teachers were the ultimate reason for teaching specifically in a Christian school. The desire for spiritual fulfillment can be seen through the shared experiences, stories, attitudes, and feelings of the teachers. The three primary concepts flowing from this theme are (d) a need to feel whole and complete, (e) a need to openly practice one's faith, and (f) a need to be obedient to God's call on the teacher's life. This preliminary framework toward a theory of faithfulness begins to offer an explanation of the phenomenon of

the Christian school teachers' experiences and why they are faithful to teaching in a Christian school.

Dedication

I dedicate this effort of love to my aunt, Joyce Houck – an awesome teacher and an amazing woman of God. From when I first met you as a little girl, I knew you loved me – unconditionally. You never missed an opportunity to sing to me, pray with me, and to tell me how much God loved me. Although it took many years for me to understand, my walk with the Lord began with the seed you planted. Through your words and as a result of your prayers, I found strength to endure. My prayer for you is that you will always find comfort in His arms, and know you, too, have been obedient to His call on your life – as a wife, mother, daughter, sister, aunt, and teacher. Finally, I dedicate this study to my Father in Heaven without whom I could not have accomplished the task. My Father was found faithful, as He has promised, in providing me the strength, the time, the patience, and the resources by which I was able to honor Him through obedience to His call on my life. "I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me" Phil. 4:13 (Holman Christian Standard Bible). He has given me the ability to learn, the passion for justice, and the desire to serve all He places in my path.

Acknowledgments

To my mentor, Dr. Mary Kathryn Evans, words are not enough. You saw the desire and passion and provided the direction. You have given me encouragement when I needed it the most – often without realizing it. You have been a blessing. I am honored to call you my friend. I do not believe in coincidences, but in divine appointments. I believe that both Dr. Barbara Lyon and Dr. Douglas Buck were destined to be a part of the journey. Your experiences, wisdom, support, and guidance have made this possible. I will be forever grateful to you both.

To my fellow teachers and lifelong friends, Dawn, Sandi, and Pat, you are angels in the eyes of the Lord. You inspired this work. Your prayers were powerful!

To my sisters, Sarah and Cathi, you were always quick to give an encouraging word when I was doubtful or distracted. In you I see a genuine desire to do good and to serve others. Although we have been separated by distance, we were brought together by love. My brother, Rocky, whom I always knew was there if I needed you – may God bless you. I honor my parents, Ray and Linda, in this work. I hope I have made you proud.

To my husband, Scott, and children, Jordan and Karen, you were tireless in your support, encouragement, devotion, and love. For many years you have prayed continually for God to direct my path and provide the strength by which I could honor His plan. You each gave all you had to ensure I had all I needed. This is the end and the beginning. Because of God's love for us, we have a beautiful path ahead. Thank you – I love you.

Table of Contents

Dedication	iii
Acknowledgments	iv
List of Tables	vii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Purpose of the Study	3
Significance of the Study	4
Definition of Terms	6
Assumptions	9
Limitations	9
Nature of the Study	10
Organization of the Remainder of the Study	11
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	13
Commitment and Job Satisfaction	13
Individual Factors	15
Organizational Factors	28
Conclusion	47
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	51
Statement of Purpose	51
Method	51

Site and Sample Selection	54
Data Collection and Analysis	57
Reliability and Validity	58
Researcher Role Management	59
Summary	61
CHAPTER 4: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	63
Teacher Profile	64
Interviews	65
Coding the Results	66
Theme 1: Desire for Personal Fulfillment	67
Theme 2: Desire for Spiritual Fulfillment	74
Conclusion	83
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	86
Moments of Frustration	86
Theme 1: Desire for Personal Fulfillment	89
Theme 2: Desire for Spiritual fulfillment	94
Conclusion	100
Recommendations	101
REFERENCES	106
APPENDIX	114

List of Tables

Table 1: Teacher Profile	64
Table 2: Motivation Factors for Teaching in a Christian School	67

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

"Getting and keeping good teachers is a difficult challenge" (Shann, 1998, p. 67). The assurance there will be sufficient teachers in the classroom is a current priority for the government of nearly every Western nation (Hayes, 2004). The Department of Education in the United States has reported the number of public and private classroom teachers must increase by 350,000 between the years of 1995 and 2007 while class sizes, under current proposals will decrease (Stinebrickner, 2002).

The critically related concern is in the ability to retain teachers. Current research conducted both in the United States and internationally indicates "the need for good teachers is unprecedented" (Dove, 2004, p. 8). Murphy, De Armond, and Guin (2003) state "one of the more frequently cited figures about the problem suggests that the nation will need to hire 2.2 million teachers over the next decade" (para. 7). Further, U.S. Education Department statistics suggests that as many as 9 percent of new teachers quit during their first year of teaching and as many as one-out-of-five teachers leave in the first three years (Yasin, 1999). Additional research indicates between thirty and fifty percent of teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching ("Oregon Quality", 2002; Woods & Weasmer, 2004).

The compounding problem researchers have concluded is "the most talented teachers have the best chance of being hired by other systems and organizations" (Norton, 1999, p. 1), thereby potentially affecting the quality of education in the classroom. As reported by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) in the following statement (Johnston & Hovda, 2003):

In the mistaken belief that teacher supply is the core problem, quality teaching is too often compromised in an effort to recruit a sufficient quantity of teachers to fill classrooms. The results: standards for entry into the profession are lowered; quality teacher preparation is undercut; licensure becomes a bureaucratic barrier to be sidestepped, instead of a mark of quality; and the mythology that 'anyone can teach' gains more ground with each fall's round of stopgap hiring. Today, thousands of unqualified individuals are in classrooms across the nation, hired because state laws and district policies are ignored in the name of meeting immediate needs of schools that appear to face "shortages." But the real problem is that these schools are unable to retain a sufficient number of teachers with the proper credentials. We have mistaken the symptom for the problem. (p. 43)

The quality and quantity of the teacher workforce are each "impacted by the persistent deficit of teachers" (Houchins, Shippen & Cattret, 2004, p. 374). This problem, as research has indicated, is not limited to public education. As Brokke (2002) states, "Christian schools are also experiencing a shortage in available teachers" (p. 169) affecting the quality and often availability of education for students desiring Christian education. Understanding the elements of job satisfaction of the Christian teacher employed in Christian schools provided insight into the determinants of commitment of this group of professional educators. As students enrolled in Christian schools deserve to be educated by high-quality, committed teachers who are satisfied with their jobs, it was necessary to further understand the elements surrounding job satisfaction of the Christian teacher employed in a Christian school.

Statement of the Problem

The literature review conducted revealed studies indicating the problems in education today. These problems involve concerns for economic issues as well as a concern for the quality of education being provided. The studies signify these concerns are a result of teachers leaving the profession within the first three to five years of employment thereby guiding the need to answer the research question:

What are the factors Christian teachers feel, believe, and/or understand are meaningful and motivating to their decision to continue teaching in a Christian school?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the experiences, stories, feelings, and attitudes of teachers specifically employed by Christian schools to identify what factors are meaningful and motivating to the teachers' decision to continue teaching in a Christian school. Inman and Marlow (2004) describe the need to identify which factors may cause or motivate teachers to continue in the teaching profession so as to more effectively plan for the future. By investigating the experiences, stories, feelings, and attitudes of Christian school teachers who have taught for least three years, it was expected this exploration of these personal stories may aid in understanding what is meaningful and motivating to the Christian teacher. Furthermore, "Understanding teacher turnover and retention is important for the efficiency of educational administration" (Dolton & van der Klaauw, 1999, p. 543). Upon understanding the factors which contribute to the Christian school teacher's decision to continue teaching in a Christian school, it was desired that a theory would emerge which would support development of retention policies and practices by the administration in Christian schools.

Significance of the Study

As studies have revealed, it is critical for teachers to be committed to remain in the classroom in order to improve the quality of education for students, reduce instability of the staff, and decrease the time and cost of recruitment efforts, training and development programs, and retention strategies (Charlotte Advocates for Education, 2004). Although research has indicated the factors which cause or motivate a teacher to leave the profession, there is an additional requirement to understand what teachers need or desire in order to feel satisfied with their job and increase the likelihood of retention due to job commitment. Teacher commitment is determined by job satisfaction which has been shown to be predictive of teacher retention (Shann, 1998). Woods and Weasmer (2004) propose "strategies to increase job satisfaction, aid in retention, and improve school climate" (p. 120).

While Mitchell and Arnold (2004) suggest schools need to find out why teachers leave in order to improve teacher retention, Inman and Marlow (2004) alternatively describe:

accurate measures of teacher attrition are important if school systems, administrators, and potential teachers are to effectively plan for the coming years, the need to identify factors which cause teachers to remain in the profession is perhaps of greater importance. (p. 605)

As the focus of this study was to better recognize what is meaningful and motivating to Christian school teachers in regard to their decision to continue teaching, the factors or elements identified in relation to job satisfaction and commitment were explored as "There is nothing better for man than to eat, drink, and to enjoy his work" Eccl. 2: 24 (Holman Christian Standard Bible). By identifying what the Christian school teacher finds meaningful and motivating in his

or her job, policy makers may be better able to improve the retention of the Christian teacher in Christian schools.

In relation to the specific concern for job satisfaction and commitment of Christian teachers, Sanders, Hopkins, and Geroy (2004) state "in order for society and its organizations to meet current and future challenges, it is imperative that they begin to understand the relationships of organizational dynamics involved in spirituality in the workplace" (A6) as is innate, or at the very least expected, within the Christian school environment. Yet, current models of organizational behavior have not accounted for the effects of spirituality in the workplace (Mohamed, Wisnieski, Askar, & Syed, 2004). This is despite surveys conducted in the United States which have shown results that 90% of its citizens believe in God, while the workplace conversely is regarded traditionally as a place which is off limits to demonstrations of faith (Henneman, 2004; Morgan, 2004).

This is changing, however, as an increasing number of organizations are accommodating for the spiritual lives of their employees in the workplace. Hicks observes individuals are increasingly attempting to integrate their personal and spiritual lives in diverse expressions and practices necessitating an analysis of organizational culture and values (2003). There is a desire of individuals to "lead lives which are more in tune with their spiritual values" (Lampman, 2003, p. 14).

Yet, motivational theories offered by management scholars have not accommodated specifically for spirituality in the workplace as may be necessary to reveal factors of retention for the teacher employed by a Christian school. To date there is a lack of scholarly research offering empirical attention to this phenomenon (Sanders, Hopkins, & Geroy). Various approaches and

explanations for this movement have been attempted, yet there continues to be a lack of scholarly support for the implications of individual and organizational behavior related to spirituality in the workplace. This is despite studies revealing, such as that of Grant, O'Neil, and Stephens (2004), employees continuing to struggle for ways to practice their spiritual beliefs within the context of their work. In conjunction with the lack of scholarly research, the United States has limited legal frameworks on which organizations and individuals can base spiritual decisions and practices (Morgan, 2004). This study seeks to shed light on one area of the workplace where spirituality is assumed to play an important role in job satisfaction.

As the literature review included in this study is inclusive of multiple aspects of teacher retention factors described by various researchers, it was revealed there are significant gaps in the literature to explain why Christian teachers, specifically, choose to continue teaching in a Christian school. Therefore, the research problem in this study addresses the teacher experience within a Christian school environment. In sum, as there is no current relevant theoretical premise on which to build an absolute understanding of why Christian teachers choose to continue teaching in a Christian school, this study was necessary to facilitate the possibility of a theory to emerge in which the factors of retention might be better understood.

Definition of Terms

Axial coding. Axial coding is the data analysis procedure in which categories are related to their subcategories. The term axial, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998), is a result of the coding occurring "around the axis of a category, linking categories at the level of properties and dimensions" (p. 123).

Christian. A Christian is an individual who has professed a belief through faith in Jesus Christ as his or her personal Lord and Savior. Through Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection the Christian is saved from sin. This faith in Jesus as the Messiah and the acceptance of God as the Trinity (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) is what separates the believer from the unbeliever. As a Christian, an individual upon his or her physical death is promised eternal life with God in Heaven. The Christian is not bound to practice one's faith under a specific Christian denominational teaching, but by the Word of God known as the Holy Bible. The Christian believes, through faith, the Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God. The Holy Bible is the foundation upon and reference for how the Christian will practice and live as a witness to his or her faith for the glory of God and His will.

Christian teacher. A Christian teacher is an academic and spiritual educator who is trained and responsible for providing consistent instruction to an individual in the areas of academia, social responsibility, and spiritual growth through which the whole child is trained "in the way he should go" Prov. 22: 6. The Christian teachers in this study are not required to practice a specific Christian denominational teaching. Rather, the Christian teacher has agreed to live and teach, according to the Word of God, and agreed to the statement of faith of The Christian School.

Faith. Faith is defined as "a confident belief in the truth, value, or trustworthiness of a person, idea, or thing" which does not rely on "logical proof or material evidence" and within the context of Christianity, is a "theological virtue defined as secure belief in God and trusting acceptance of God's will" (Dictionary.com, on-line) and the Bible as truth.

Grounded theory (GT). According to the creators, Glaser and Strauss (1999), grounded theory is a qualitative approach to research in which the result is a "discovery of theory from data" (p. 1) through a systematic approach of comparative analysis.

Motivation. Motivation is "the psychological feature that arouses an organism to action toward a desired goal; the reason for the action; that which gives purpose and direction to behavior" (Dictionary.com, on-line).

Open coding. This is the process by which "concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in the data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 101).

Selective coding. Selective coding is defined by Strauss and Corbin (1998) as "the process of integrating and refining the theory" (p. 143).

Spirituality. Spirituality in the context of Christianity is expressed through a belief in the Trinity of God as the Father, Jesus Christ as the Son, and the Holy Spirit who dwells within the Christian. The expression of a Christian's spirituality is seen through communication with God through prayer, belief through faith in the Holy Bible as the inerrant truth and in the life lived as a witness for God and His glory.

The Christian School. All employees of The Christian School in which this study was conducted are required to have professed through faith a belief in Jesus as their Lord and Savior for the forgiveness of sin. The Christian School believes "learning must be based upon Scriptural principles rather than secular principles, and Christian precepts must be built into the curriculum" and "only Christian education deals with all of the dimensions of life as viewed from a Biblical perspective" (*Parent/Student Handbook*, 2004, p. 1). The Christian School's mission statement is: "Mature students spiritually, Mold Christ-like character, Motivate students

to a high academic standard, Maintain a partnership between home and school, and Mobilize students to Christian service" (*Parent/Student Handbook*, p. i).

Theoretical saturation. The point at which there are no new dimensions, properties, or relationships which emerge during the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Assumptions

1. Each participant was truthfully depicting his or her personal experiences as a teacher in a Christian school environment and attached his or her own understanding and meaning to the educational experiences.
2. Grounded theory was the appropriate tool to gather, interpret, and disclose the personal experiences of the Christian teacher employed by a Christian school.
3. The Christian teachers were in agreement with the statement of faith of The Christian School and were willing to practice their faith within the context of their duties as educators.
4. The researcher's own work experience in Christian school environments was helpful in understanding and interpreting the participants' experiences as a teacher in a Christian school.

Limitations

1. The study was limited to the interpretation and understanding of the experiences of Christian teachers and did not seek to understand the experiences of non-Christian educators, administrators, clergy, or parents of students.

2. The findings were limited to the researcher's ability to interpret the participants' understanding of their experiences and were not expected to be generalized nor inferred to a larger population as a result of the use of purposive sampling.
3. The inexperience of the researcher as a tool in interviewing using grounded theory may have been limiting to the study due to potential misinterpretations or misunderstandings of the information revealed.
4. This study included only participants from one Christian school who have taught one or more grades levels from kindergarten through eighth grade for at least three years and identified by the administrator as being qualified and likely to actively participate in the study.
5. This study was limited by the researcher's own understanding of the concepts of spirituality and Christianity. This limitation was acknowledged as a potential bias and predisposition on the part of the researcher which are disclosed here and within the methodology chapter (chapter 3) of this document. The researcher's disclosures were
 - a. A belief that spirituality plays a significant role in the motivation of individuals.
 - b. A belief that a Christian cannot ultimately separate his or her faith from work motivation and behavior.

Nature of the Study

The nature of this study is a result of the concern for the retention of Christian teachers in Christian schools. As it was not be possible, due to time, financial, and logistical constraints of

the researcher to conduct this study across multiple Christian schools, this study included only those participants employed by a single Christian school.

This research took place in a private Christian school located in a southern state within the United States, subsequently referred to as The Christian School. Although the governing church of The Christian School is of the Southern Baptist denomination, the teachers hired are not required to proclaim a specific denominational teaching beyond the scope of the definition of a Christian, as long as the teachers accept the statement of faith as described in the employee handbook of The Christian School.

To affectively and accurately understand the dimensions of the life experience of the Christian teacher, the decision to utilize the grounded theory approach was chosen. This approach allowed for the depth and breadth of meaning and understanding of the Christian teachers' experiences in relation to teaching in The Christian School through the use of in-depth interviews. These interviews were transcribed, the data coded, verified, and validated through a systematic process aided by the NVivo qualitative software specifically designed for this purpose. The expectation was that through the systematic process of the grounded theory approach, a theory may emerge which would aid in understanding the experiences of the Christian school teacher.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

The literature review which follows will provide support to the necessity of this study to be conducted due to the gaps clearly identified in current research. Following the literature review is a detailed account of grounded theory, its purpose, and the relevance of its use for the study of The Christian School teachers' experiences with the purpose of answering the research

question of what are the factors Christian teachers feel, believe, and/or understand are meaningful and motivating to their decision to continue teaching in a Christian school? Upon completion of the data collection and analysis, the researcher provides a summary of the results and offers recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Although there is considerable evidence of the factors of retention concerning the teacher revealed in previous studies, there is a lack of research specifically addressing the Christian teachers' experiences and motivations to teach in a Christian school. Therefore, the literature reviewed was primarily based on those elements or factors of retention of the teacher (not necessarily employed in a Christian school) to have a basis by which to understand the significance of the study at hand. The literature reviewed was not to form an initial opinion or direct the researcher to premature conclusions as to the nature of the experience of the Christian school teacher.

Commitment and Job Satisfaction

"Teacher satisfaction influences job performance, attrition, and ultimately, student performance" (Shann, p. 68). Evaluating teacher commitment and job satisfaction was necessary to identify the factors which may contribute to strategies to improve teacher retention. A committed employee, according to Meyer and Allen (1997), is "one who stays with the organization through thick and thin, attends work regularly, puts in a full day (and maybe more), protects company assets, shares company goals, and so on" (p. 3). Organizational commitment may additionally involve the employee having an emotional attachment to and identification with a particular organization (McShane & Von Glinow, 2003). "The sustaining power of relationships comes from commitment. . . . Therefore, people who are committed feel connected, and they are motivated to maintain that connection" (O'Malley, 2000, p. 27).

The initial commitment to teaching must be positive at the time of entry into the position for the teacher to be likely to stay for more than a few years (Billingsley, 1993). An additional

study revealed the primary factors influencing teacher retention were related to both personal and employment factors (Inman & Marlow, 2004). This study examined the attitudes of teachers early in their careers with the intention of classifying the factors which may lead to teacher retention as described by Inman and Marlow. The results of the survey revealed beginning teachers may benefit when provided with opportunities to interact and work with teacher mentors, colleagues with similar ideas about teaching and working cooperatively, administrators who encourage and promote teachers' ideas, and a community which feels positive about the educational system and those involved (Inman & Marlow).

The employee demonstrating commitment through increased job engagement and productivity is more likely to be experiencing job satisfaction (Hagedorn, 2000). Therefore, to clearly evaluate the studies relating to teacher commitment, the concept of job satisfaction must additionally be described. Research, thus far, does not clearly concur on an explicit definition of job satisfaction. However, it is found to be "made up of affective, cognitive and behavioral components. . . . and have different functions for different individuals" (Harpaz, 1983, p. 21). The predictors of job satisfaction of teachers, as reported by Shann (1998), include: interactions with students and colleagues, professional challenges, autonomy, advancement, as well as working conditions and salary.

To keep committed educators, Billingsley (2004) suggests "we prepare qualified teachers, provide responsive supports as they enter teaching, work with them to establish reasonable roles, create work environments that are characterized by supportive relationships, and provide opportunities for professional growth" (p. 375). Therefore, the individual and organizational elements of focus for this literature review included the individual factors of self-leadership,

motivation, professional development, and rewards and the organizational factors to include recruitment, induction, administration, mentoring, and work environment (administration, culture, and spirituality in the workplace) as each related to predictors of job satisfaction and ultimately commitment of the Christian teacher to remain in the profession. These elements reviewed were a result of previous studies conducted offering insight into the experiences and meanings derived by the schoolteacher.

Individual Factors

There are individual factors which were critical to examine when faced with increasing the retention of teachers in educational institutions. These individual elements include those of self-leadership, work motivation (and the applicable theories), professional development, and rewards. The individual must become an active rather than reactive participant in this process by accomplishing tasks such as: task mastery, role clarification, acculturation and social integration (Lueke & Svyantek, 2000). Reave (2002) describes one of the main themes in today's workplace as employees being expected to contribute actively to the direction of their organization. Futrell (1988) suggests teachers must not work in isolation but school wide programs must be designed so that "all teachers help all teachers" (p. 225) through the support of teachers as self-leaders.

Self-Leadership

For organizations to reach optimal production, their employees must develop the ability to become self-leaders through self-motivation. Murdock (2002) believes people are not only interested in what they are paid, but they also value the output of their work. In other words, individuals place value on the quality of their performance which goes beyond their paycheck. Additionally, Murdock discusses the two sources of intrinsic motivation (task involvement and

goal identification) as objectives of an individual to accomplish independent of any financial reward. This value will aid in motivating individuals to develop the skills of self-leadership.

Self-leadership within organizations, however, can only be as effective as the organizations allow. Therefore, empowering teachers to develop self-efficacy, set goals, design rewards, self-monitor, and self-reinforce is imperative for an organization to accomplish to facilitate the concept of self-leadership. Eccles and Wigfield (2002) describe how an individual who believes he or she can be successful and have control over a task will perform positively. Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson (2001) discuss studies conducted which show that involving employees in decision making and other organizational strategies tends to be effective in our society. Through the establishment of a culture which encourages self-leadership, there will be an increase in performance, job satisfaction, and ultimately commitment.

Motivation

Evans (1998) posits there has been considerable research conducted in regard to motivational theories, yet there is not a preeminent definition of motivation applicable to teachers. Therefore, offered here are a few approaches to both defining motivation and applying primary theories of motivation to teachers' work behavior. To begin, Maslow (1954, cited in Evans) describes motivation as the following:

Current conceptions of motivation seem to proceed on the assumption that a motivational state is a special, peculiar state, sharply marked off from the other happenings in the organism. Sound motivational theory should, on the contrary, assume that motivation is constant, never ending, fluctuating, and complex, and that it is an almost universal characteristic of practically every organismic state of affairs. (p. 33)

Beck (2000) describes motivation as a theoretical concept which explains the reasons why individuals engage in certain behaviors at certain times. The concept of motivation, according to Petri and Govern (2004), includes the suggestion of intensity and persistence in describing the "forces acting on or within an organism to initiate and direct behavior" (p. 16). Motivation is defined by Mathis & Jackson (1997) as the desire within a person causing that person to act with the intention of reaching a goal. Whereas, Evans (1998) describes motivation as "a condition, or the creation of a condition, that encompasses all those factors that determine the degree of inclination towards engagement in an activity" (p. 34). Of applicability to the motivation of teachers is the tendency to move toward (motivating factors) or away from (demotivating factors) an activity or behavior as in the description of motivation offered by Evans rather than the actual performance of the behavior.

To adequately discuss the factors of motivation which may be applicable to teachers, a few primary theories of motivation were evaluated. Content theories of motivation reviewed are: Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Alderfer's ERG theory, Herzberg's two-factor needs based theory, and McClelland's learned needs theory. Content theories of motivation focus on the dynamics of employee needs (McShane & Von Glinow, 2003). The cognitive or process theories reviewed included: the expectancy theory, the equity theory, the goal-setting theory, and the social learning theory. Process theories focus on the importance of the work itself and the challenges, growth opportunities, and responsibilities work provides for employees. The processes through which an employee's needs are translated into behavior are described through the motivational theories (McShane & Von Glinow). This motivation is controlled by conscious thoughts, beliefs, and judgments (Schultz & Schultz, 1998).

Content theories. One of the founders of humanistic psychology, Abraham Maslow, developed the needs hierarchy theory of motivation in which human needs are arranged in a hierarchy of importance with those needs which have already been satisfied no longer being motivators (Schultz & Schultz, 1998). Teachers articulate to have feelings of job satisfaction they need to be appreciated, enjoy interpersonal relationships with other teachers, and be successful at what they have committed to do – teach. These feelings suggest teachers are motivated when their higher level needs are met according to Maslow's hierarchy (Schultz & Schultz). In contradiction with Maslow's theory (Schultz & Schultz) however, these needs may not each be met individually before the next higher needs are seen as motivating. In other words, a new teacher may not feel close to the other teachers, yet feel job satisfaction due to rewarding teaching experiences within the classroom.

The two-factor motivational theory developed by Herzberg, an organizational behavior scholar, proposes employees are motivated primarily by growth and esteem needs (Herzberg, 2003). The motivating factors (the higher needs) are those which motivate teachers to high nature or content of the job tasks and the person's level of responsibility, achievement, recognition, career development, growth, and advancement (Evans, 1998). The growth needs (of teachers), therefore, can be satisfied by providing stimulating, absorbing, and challenging work (Gawel, 1997).

The hygiene factors include supervision, company policy, administration, working conditions, interpersonal relations with peers, subordinates, and supervisors, job security, salary, and personal life (Herzberg, 2003). The concern with Herzberg's theory is that the mere presence of hygiene factors will not be motivators to teachers in and of themselves. Rather, the lack of the

hygiene needs being met as perceived by the teacher may cause dissatisfaction toward the job (Brokke, 2002) thereby affecting retention. By adding motivator factors, though, individuals (teachers) may be able to improve job satisfaction (DeSimone & Harris, 1998; Steers, Mowday, & Shapiro, 2004) and be more committed to their work.

The results of a recently reported study supports the hypothesis that teachers are more likely to leave a position or the profession due to feelings of job dissatisfaction if they experience "limited access to necessary materials, difficulty in managing their jobs, paperwork that interferes with teaching, feelings of not being included in their schools, and having principals who do not understand what they do" (Billingsley, Carlson, & Klein, 2004, p. 333-344). Therefore, teachers appear to be motivated primarily by their intrinsic need for personal fulfillment, achievement, and recognition while serving students and the community. However, teachers are likely to be de-motivated when these needs are not or cannot be met.

Clayton Alderfer, another organizational behavior scholar, developed the ERG theory. This theory was designed in the attempt to overcome the weaknesses in Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (McShane & Von Glinow, 2003). The ERG theory groups the needs of humans into three primary categories. These categories include: existence, relatedness, and growth needs (Hersey et al., 2001).

A study completed by Arnolds and Boshoff (2002) attempted to explain the correlation between the influence of need satisfaction on work behavior and personality as related to job performance. This would assist in ascertaining what administrators could do to effectively compile motivation packages tailor-made for specific individuals or groups of employees such as teachers (Arnolds & Boshoff). The significance of this study in regard to motivating factors

influencing teacher retention is the identification of the specific ERG needs, as described by Alderfer's existence, relatedness, growth needs, affected by certain motivating factors. Teacher commitment must be thought of as being on a continuum. In other words, as needs change and job satisfaction fluctuates, retention of teachers is affected.

The analysis completed by Bastick (2000) and Evans (1998) of the motivating factors to both become a teacher and to remain a teacher included both intrinsic and altruistic factors, while denying extrinsic factors (such as pay). This intrinsic motivation of teachers seems to be, as defined by Fry (2004), as having an "interest and enjoyment in an activity for its own sake and is associated with active engagement in tasks that people [the teachers] find interesting and fun and that, in turn, promote growth and satisfy higher order needs" (p. 699). The ERG theory suggests the combined processes of satisfaction-progression and frustration-regression provide a more accurate explanation as to why teachers' needs change over time, requiring administrators to regularly review the motivating factors of teachers.

The final content theory discussed is that of David McClelland's theory of learned needs. The previous theoretical models relied only on the individual's primary or instinctive needs and drives. The theory designed by McClelland focuses on the secondary needs or drives. These are the needs or drives that are learned and reinforced through childhood learning, parental styles, and social norms (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005). The secondary needs which McClelland devoted to study as important sources of motivation are the need for affiliation, the need for achievement, the need for power, and the need for autonomy (Evans, 1998; McShane & Von Glinow). McClelland's learned needs theory presumes individuals have varying levels of needs surrounding achievement, affiliation, autonomy, and the need for power.

For example, the low need for affiliation teacher tries to project a favorable image of him or herself and form positive relationships with others. Teachers prefer working with others than in roles that require decision making which could potentially lead to conflict (Evans, 1998) as they value interpersonal relationships.

Process theories. Vroom suggested in his expectancy theory that felt needs cause human behavior and people will experience an increase in motivated behavior in a work setting due to these felt needs if they perceive a positive relationship between effort and performance. Additionally, Hersey et al. (2001) describe how motivated behavior may be increased if the individual perceives a positive relationship between good performance and outcomes or rewards. The difficulty found in applying this theory specifically to the concern of teacher retention is this theory assumes all behavior is a result of conscious thought and effort and tends "to ignore habitual behavior and subconscious motivation" (Evans, 1998, p. 39).

Whereas, according to the equity theory, motivation is influenced by our perception of how equitably or fairly we are treated at work (Schultz & Schultz, 1998). The three behavioral response patterns relating to the equity perception include: benevolent, equity-sensitive, and entitled (Schultz & Schultz). The behavioral response patterns as described by Schultz and Schultz may each be applicable to the teacher work behavior. For instance, as revealed in studies discussed, teachers value recognition for their work effort and performance. Therefore, if teachers believe they are not being recognized (by administrators, parents of students, or even by the students themselves), the inequality they perceive may cause the teacher to have feelings of dissatisfaction, thereby increasing the risk of attrition. A limitation with this theory is that it does not attempt to specifically forecast how an individual will be motivated or behave and assumes

individuals are fundamentally individualistic and selfish (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005) which appears to be contradictory to the motivation of a teacher as described in the research.

The expectancy theory provides guidelines for increasing employee motivation. The theory requires an individual develop or have enough self-efficacy to believe he or she can not only set a goal, but successfully achieve that goal as well as provide oneself with rewards. When teachers feel successful, job satisfaction is increased, thereby increasing commitment to the organization. A teacher, for instance, who perceives he or she can effectively teach algebra to middle school students, will feel job satisfaction when the students display the learning of algebraic concepts has occurred.

The goal-setting theory, developed by Edwin Locke, discusses the relevance performance goals play in motivation. According to Locke (1968), an individual's intentions, which are defined as the "cognitive representations of goals to which the person is committed" (Katzell & Thompson, 1990, p. 145) are influenced by goals. This commitment continues to guide employee behavior either until the goal is changed, redirected, or achieved (DeSimone & Harris, 1998). Factors which may influence goal commitment, according to Schultz and Schultz (1998), are authority, peer influence, and external rewards.

An extension of the goal-setting theory, as created by Porter and Lawler (Steers et al., 2004) is the high performance cycle. Ultimately, the high performance cycle illustrates when employees' needs and values (internal and external) are satisfied, teachers will have high job satisfaction. This high satisfaction leads to greater organizational commitment and a willingness to accept new goals and challenges.

The goal-setting theory and high performance cycle appear to be applicable to the motivation of teachers. The first way of improving teacher performance through goal-setting is by stretching the intensity and persistence of effort. Second, goal-setting gives teachers clearer role perceptions so their effort is channeled toward behaviors improving work performance. Studies have consistently revealed teachers place value on goal achievement and recognition when they perform (or their students perform) well. One of the limitations of goal-setting, according to McShane and Von Glinow (2003), is when goals are tied to monetary incentives. This tends to promote setting easy rather than difficult goals. As most teachers do not receive literal financial compensation for goal achievement (other than a stipend increase for an advanced degree), this particular element of the goal-setting theory is limited in its application.

The final theory identified as pertinent to identifying motivating factors of teachers is the social learning theory developed by Bandura in 1977. This theory presumes motivation is fundamentally the result of outcome and self-efficacy expectations affecting individual performance (DeSimone & Harris, 1998). The major prediction of the social learning theory is that a person's self-efficacy expectations will determine: (a) whether a behavior will be performed, (b) how much effort will be spent, and (c) how long the person will continue to perform the behavior (DeSimone and Harris).

As the social learning theory emphasizes whether or not a particular behavior will be performed, and to what extent and how long it will be performed as a result of the individual's self-efficacy, the application to the retention to teachers may be seen in a few ways. Primarily, if the teacher does not perceive his or her extended effort of teaching to be successful, then according to the social learning theory, the effort will be terminated. Further, if the teacher does

not see himself or herself as capable of achieving the goals set (such as standards of learning set by the school, district, or state), then the fear of failure may influence whether or not the teacher remains in the school or even in the profession of teaching.

In conclusion, "Science in the schoolhouse cannot exist without qualified, motivated teachers who have the work circumstances needed to do their work well" (Billingsley, 2004, p. 375). This portion of the literature review compared various theories of motivation and evaluated these theories of motivation so as to determine the factors applicable to the motivation of teachers. The result of the analysis provided an overall description of teachers' needs and the requirement that these needs be met to feel job satisfaction. The motivations of teachers, as supported by Brunetti (2001), cannot be compartmentalized as "categories overlap" and "idiosyncrasies abound" (p. 57). Evans (1998) further explains "what motivates, therefore, in a work context is the desire for job satisfaction; individuals are motivated to participate in activities that appear to them to be oriented towards job satisfaction" (p. 40).

The primary motivating factors given by teachers in a study by Weiner (cited in Bastick, 2000) for joining the teaching profession: (a) wanting the opportunity to be creative, (b) enjoying work with young people, and (c) desiring a socially useful job. Consequently, the factors found to be motivating or of influence to job satisfaction thereby influencing commitment and retention of teachers have been found to be: (a) the interaction with students/children, (b) pedagogy, (c) achievement, (d) interaction with colleagues, and (e) the recognition for achievement (Bastick, 2000; Evans, 1998). Other motivators revealed include those of professional satisfaction factors such as "teaching one's subject, serving society, and having autonomy in the classroom" (Brunetti, 2001, p. 68) as well as having positive interpersonal relationships with colleagues to

include mentoring relationships (de Janasz, Sullivan, & Whiting , 2003). The response given as the "single most powerful motivator" (Brunetti, p. 57) for teachers remaining in the profession was working with the students.

Professional Development

In addition to the identification of work motivation factors, it is important to identify the elements of professional development which may affect retention of the teacher in the classroom. Self-leaders in education are concerned with their individual professional or career development. At various stages of life and career development a teacher will experience, their values and goals will be evaluated. Dessler (2000) reports individuals at these various stages will have specific attitudes toward their job performance and job satisfaction. These attitudes directly relate to the retention of teachers given that if the individual is successful in the classroom, they are more likely to develop an increase in organizational commitment. Whereas, if they have feelings of failure then often a change in career plans is desired (Dessler).

Smaby and Peterson support this idea that individuals in the teaching profession progress through a cycle of development phases of concern (1994). "No teacher has completed – or *ever* completes – the process of professional growth and development. . . . the best of teachers is a lifelong learner" (Futrell, 1999, p. 225). Dessler (2000) defines career planning and development as "the deliberate process through which a person becomes aware of personal career-related attributes and the life-long series of stages that contribute to his or her career fulfillment" (p. 363). The idea of this as a purposeful and deliberate process lends to the thinking the educator must take an active role in his or her own career development.

Boe, Bobbitt, and Cook (1997) suggest, as a result of a national study conducted, professional development will improve the qualification of teachers while easing their stress thereby improving retention. The professional development needs to include increased knowledge and skills in working with colleagues, students, parents, and administrators with diversity in languages and other social and cultural factors. Billingsley (1993) supports the idea that feedback, encouragement, and continued opportunities for growth and development will aid in teachers experiencing intrinsic rewards, thereby increasing the likelihood of job satisfaction and commitment. In accord, professional satisfaction factors (e.g., teaching one's subject, serving society, and having autonomy in the classroom) have been shown to be greater predictors of teacher satisfaction and retention than practical satisfaction factors such as pay, benefits, and job security (Brunetti, 2001).

Rewards

Discussion and research surrounding the monetary rewards or compensation of teachers is abundant yet questionable. Allen (2002) suggests keeping teachers from moving to other districts, compensation must be comparable to that of other districts, regions, and even other states. The study conducted by Dolton and van der Klaauw (1999) analyzing the decision by teachers to leave the profession offers significant support to their claim stating:

The higher the opportunity wage outside teaching the more likely teachers are to leave teaching for an alternative career. In addition, the higher the wage in teaching the less likely the teacher is to quit a teaching job for career or family reasons. (p. 548)

Of interest, however, is the study reported by Brown, Sturman, and Simmering (2003), which clearly indicates that although increased pay may be linked to increased performance,

decreased turnover, and increased motivation, there are limits to this effect. The practical satisfaction factors surrounding compensation, benefits, and security are the least influential of motivators for the teachers surveyed and interviewed (Brunetti, 2001; & Bastick, 2000). Pay has been found to not be a significant factor related to job satisfaction, whereas, "principal recognition, satisfaction with teaching assignment, years in current assignment, and job 'autonomy'" was closely related to job satisfaction (Wright & Custer, 1998, para. 19).

In other words, there is a point in which elements beyond increased pay come into effect in designing an effective compensation strategy. Richter (2003) reports organizations cannot simply raise the pay levels and expect to attract and retain high performing employees. Although the study by Sturman, Trevor, Boudreau, and Gerhart (2003) support the concept that pay may influence employee behavior, it does not dictate that behavior.

Richter (2003) furthers the discussion on compensation by stating, "any aspect of employment that attracts, retains, and motivates is part of 'compensation' or the total rewards package" (pp. 17-18). Commitment is also the result, according to Singh and Billingsley (1996) when facets such as "retirement earnings or friendships are viewed as rewards that are not easily transportable" (para. 8). Teachers are also more likely to be committed due to job satisfaction if they believe they are making a difference (Billingsley, 1993). Studies have clearly identified students are one of the reasons many teachers are committed to their profession (Brunetti, 2001). "Working with young people and seeing them learn and grow" (Brunetti, p. 68) was identified as a major motivator for job satisfaction. The reward of making a difference in the lives of their children offers job satisfaction, thereby commitment to the role of the teacher.

Organizational Factors

Recruitment

Attracting individuals to an organization today is certainly a challenge. With the varying levels of skills and abilities entering the teacher workforce, it is increasingly difficult to fill positions in the areas to which teachers are not attracted. Allen (2002) suggests "teachers who have a personal connection with a school or the neighborhood where the school is located are more likely to be interested in teaching in that school and to remain there for the long-term" (p. 10). This, although an attractive idea, may be limiting due to a potential lack of qualified, quality teachers in any one particular area. Organizations must focus on recruiting individuals from knowledge and skill-based points of view rather than a job-based point of view (Lawler, 2000). Further implied by Lawler, is there is not sufficient importance given to the needs of human capital when utilizing the job-based approach. In support, Spector (1997) reports studies which agree job satisfaction will occur when the individual and job characteristics are matched, as well as interests and values being congruent with the organization's (O'Malley, 2000).

For individuals to be attracted to the organization they must believe their knowledge and skills are valued rather than feel as if they are merely filling a gap in a department. Having job choice will improve the likelihood the individual will experience job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). Allen (2002) supports this concept in suggesting organizations ensure "teachers are placed in positions that match their level of experience and ability; placing inexperienced teachers in challenging positions is an invitation to failure and frustration" (p. 10).

Induction

It must be noted that in addition to the focus on teacher recruitment, careful attention to the induction of teachers is needed (Billingsley et al., 2004). To further attract qualified teachers, the schools must include well-designed and well-funded induction and mentoring programs (Allen, 2002). Teacher induction efforts have a significant impact on teacher retention (McGlamery & Edick, 2004).

Dessler (2000) states, "perhaps at no other stage in a person's career is it more important for the employer to be career development-oriented than when a person is recruited, hired, and gets a first assignment and boss" (p. 364). At this point in time, new hires in education are confronted with the reality of their position and responsibilities. The beginning teacher's experience is one of "shock and survival" (Billingsley, 2004, p. 371) and "because beginning teachers are at risk of attrition in these early years, researchers have called for induction programs that serve to both retain new teachers and to foster teacher learning and growth" (Billingsley et al., 2004, p. 345). The organizational members are responsible for providing a truthful depiction of the role the new teacher is filling. Further, individuals may be more easily socialized and committed to their jobs if they understand there will be a period of adjustment and they will have to seek out additional or new information (Ranft & Lord, 2000). Socialization, as defined by Lueke and Svyantek (2000), is "the process by which an individual fits in or becomes adjusted to a new role in an organization and learns the content of information necessary for adjustment to the new role" (p. 384-385).

In addition to socialization, teachers must have programs designed to improve their ability to adjust to the classroom environment through having "the maximum amount of well-

structured, hands-on classroom experience if they are to be adequately prepared for the realities of teaching" (p. 9) as well as ensuring teachers are afforded the opportunity for adequate subject matter preparation and subject-specific pedagogy, and alternative route programs (Allen, 2002). Billingsley reports having strong teacher preparation programs will aid in increasing teacher's skills and commitment which will result in the teacher's decision to stay (1993). Teachers who feel they are prepared for the complexities involved in classroom teaching are more likely to experience an increase in job satisfaction.

The initial commitment to a career in teaching as well as having positive early work experiences is necessary for teachers to remain in the profession (Chapman & Green, 1986). Additional strategies include aligning course and graduation requirements, preparing teachers to teach specific populations (e.g., special needs students, advanced students, students of diverse backgrounds or ethnicity), strong institutional support for teacher preparation, and strong formal relationships between institutions of higher education and local school districts (Allen, 2002). Futrell suggests prospective teachers of all educational institutions must be trained and prepared to teach in culturally diverse school environments (1999) as studies reveal the student population is increasingly more diverse (Billingsley & Cross, 1992). For teachers to feel satisfied with their job, thereby improving commitment, the induction support must be flexible, responsive, and include both psychological and instruction-related support (Billingsley et al.).

Mentoring

According to the literature, in addition to the successful acquisition and induction of a new teacher, it is essential to provide both formal and informal mentoring. In addition to formalized systems, teachers report other teachers often provide the needed support and feedback

(more than administrators or principals) which positively contributes to their emotional well-being and job satisfaction during the induction period (Billingsley et al., 2004). Mentoring, in the context of the teacher relationship, is an effort "of working collegially to help each other hone skills, translate abstract research results into practical classroom strategies, and expand subject-area knowledge" (Futrell, 1988, p. 224). This mentoring contributes to the overall socialization which must take place in the work environment.

The first point to discuss in relation to the concept of mentoring in the new millennium is simply a realization that mentoring itself is changing. Mentoring, as described by McShane and Von Glinow (2003), involves "learning the ropes of organizational life from a senior person within the company" (p. 565) as well as giving advice and feedback, meaningful work opportunities, and career coaching. Teachers who do not receive strong mentoring support leave the teaching profession at a rate of 70.0 times higher than those who do have mentors (Johnston & Hovda, 2003). Pastore (2003) reported that protégés who had mentors were less stressed and more motivated to continue teaching than their peers who did not have mentors.

Of additional importance is the reality that new teachers are not alone in the need for mentoring. In effect, "mentors also learn from their protégés – developing new insights into their own and others' teaching, new relationships, and a renewal of enthusiasm and commitment to their craft and career" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000, p. 52). Beasley, Corbin, Feiman-Nemser, and Shank (1996) successfully conducted a mentoring project in which each participant involved had the opportunity to fulfill the role of mentee as well as mentor. This project demonstrated mentoring is increasingly successful when it is a revolving process. This idea of co-mentoring was further studied by Mullen (2000) who found it "has the potential to infiltrate and reshape the

socialization process" (p. 5). Lengnick-Hall and Lengnick-Hall (2003) support the idea of human resource management moving beyond simply supporting the building of individual relationships and taking an active role in the orchestration and expansion of the range of relationships. The human resource departments in school districts, therefore, may contribute to the success of individual school mentoring programs by assisting in the development and implementation of a district-wide program.

Additionally, mentoring today must be in the context of realizing the breadth of expansion of teachers' repertoires in the science of teaching itself (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000). These new developments are found in the areas of constructivism, cooperative learning, assessment strategies, increases in technology, and additional students from diverse backgrounds (Hargreaves & Fullan). This increase in the responsibilities of the teacher may be the cause of additional stress and anxiety which is linked to the attrition of quality teachers. As Hargreaves and Fullan surmise, the teaching profession is an emotionally charged one and teachers are in the position of not only instructing students but also caring for and forming relationships with them as many are from fractured, poor, and single-parented families. As was effectively affirmed by Hargreaves & Fullan:

In today's demanding classrooms, experienced teachers also need this kind of support – to talk through their emotions, manage their anxieties and frustrations, and be guided and reassured about the limits to the care they can provide when guilt threatens to overwhelm them. (p. 53)

In fact, the culture of the organization should be such that it supports mentoring to include policies and procedures for mentor selection, provide the time to develop the

relationships, and consideration of compensation. It is suggested mentors be selected by peers rather than administration, thereby offering the possibility of decision making over issues which may potentially enhance instruction (Futrell, 1999). A study reported by Smaby and Peterson (1994) and conducted by following the mentoring process of participants (mentees and mentors) over a school year found a significant link to emotion. In fact, "offering new teachers support through emphatic listening and sharing experiences" (Smaby & Peterson, para. 25) was a persistent concern during the entire academic year in which the study was conducted. "Without strong mentoring support, new teachers feel isolated and alone" (Johnston & Hovda, 2003, pp. 42-43).

The financial considerations of a mentoring program must additionally be considered. The key to compensation for a mentoring program is to ensure divisiveness is reduced (Futrell, 1999) through fair and reasonable rewards. Therefore, in the case of formal mentoring programs, the rewards for the participants must be clearly and appropriately linked to the mentoring process. More importantly than the monetary rewards of being a mentor, as explained by de Janasz et al. (2003), is the opinion of experts who support the notion "individuals with mentors earn higher salaries, have higher job satisfaction, get more promotions, and have greater organizational commitment" (p. 78).

As stated by McShane and Von Glinow (2003), "employee involvement [as described occurs in mentoring relationships] tends to improve job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and feelings of empowerment", thereby increasing work motivation and reducing turnover (p. 278). With changing technology and the shifting of organizational structures, as described by

de Janasz et al. (2003), it may be necessary to incorporate the use of multiple mentors to build knowledge through boundaryless practices. This will allow for flexibility within organizations and across projects as is desired by the individuals in today's workplace (de Janasz et al.). For instance, mentoring within a school district would be beneficial in addition to in-house mentoring.

"Mentoring of new teachers will never reach its potential unless it is guided by a deeper conceptualization that treats it as central to the task of transforming the teaching profession itself" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000, p. 50). The three strategies suggested by Hargreaves and Fullan are as follows: (a) conceptualize and design mentoring programs so that they are viewed as tools of school reculturing, (b) mentoring must be linked to all components of the teaching profession, and (c) each individual involved in the process and implementation of teacher mentoring must understand they are a part of recreating the profession. Ultimately stated, "mentoring matters" (de Janasz et al., 2003, p. 78) as even new teachers are expected to work at the same level as veteran teachers (Johnston & Hovda, 2003) all of whom need support and encouragement to sustain job satisfaction. Futrell (1988) offers the suggestion mentoring be a career-long, organization wide program. The ongoing support, through methods, management, and emotional encouragement which mentor relationships offer is critical to the retention of these valuable employees.

Work Environment

Administration. The work environments of teachers must accommodate and encourage feelings and behavior associated with self-worth, self-leadership, and value (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Indicated as a need for the acquisition and retention of quality teachers is ensuring there is

strong, supportive, and effective leadership in the organization. School leadership is, according to Evans (1998), the most common factor influencing job satisfaction. This was supported by the results of the study by Singh and Billingsley (1996) indicating "the strongest influence on job satisfaction was principal support" (para. 29) and "administrative support is a key factor in teacher commitment" (para.10).

Administrators, schools, and districts can either positively or negatively affect teacher commitment through their actions, programs, and dedication perceived by the educators. The study reported by Littrell and Billingsley (1994) concluded when principals (administrators) provide both emotional and informational support, teachers are more likely to be satisfied with their job. It was clearly suggested by Tillman (2003) principals make a specific effort to clarify the expectations of the teacher and even make suggestions regarding effective teaching and discipline strategies. Supported by the study conducted by Billingsley and Cross (1992), "increasing administrative support is an important aspect of building a committed and satisfied teaching staff" (p. 468). When principals (administrators) offer emotional and instrumental support, teachers are more likely to be committed to the job. This can be accomplished when administrators encourage an atmosphere or culture of optimism and camaraderie with a focus on unifying the staff (Littrell & Billingsley).

In contrast, the primary de-motivating factor discovered in various studies was the lack of administrative support both emotionally and practically and the extended work environment variables. The results of a recently reported study supports the hypothesis teachers are more likely to leave a position or the profession due to feelings of job dissatisfaction if they experience "limited access to necessary materials, difficulty in managing their jobs, paperwork that

interferes with teaching, feelings of not being included in their schools, and having principals who do not understand what they do" (Billingsley et al., 2004, p. 333-344).

It is apparent school administrators must be concerned with teacher job satisfaction for teachers to have an increased sense of commitment (Shann, 1998). Billingsley and Cross (1992) found there to be a high correlation between job satisfaction and leadership support thereby increasing organizational commitment.

Therefore, the initial step in ensuring individuals in administrative positions have a positive impact on teacher retention might be self-awareness. According to Friedman and Lobel (2003), "self-awareness enables executives [administrators] to identify priorities and to ensure that their allocation of time and energy reinforces these priorities" (p. 90). It is suggested by Billingsley and Cross (1992) individuals in training to be administrators have opportunities to develop such competencies as self growth and understanding, "group process analysis, stress management, conflict reduction, problem solving, and organizational change" (p. 468). This is contributed to by offering clear communication as to the policies and procedures as well as an overview of the culture within the organization.

"Policy makers and administrators interested in reducing attrition [thereby increasing retention] must facilitate the development of better work environments" (Billingsley, 2004, p. 53) by providing reasonable work assignments and reduced role-ambiguity, adequate resources, formal induction and mentoring programs, and professional development and achievement opportunities to improve retention of teachers. Brokke's (2002) study further emphasizes the "key to the success of any organization" are good leaders and "if the goal of Christian schools is

to produce young people with a well-prepared heart and a well-equipped mind, then the Christian school movement must have good administrators as well" (p. 170).

Culture. McElroy (2001) states, "to enhance affective commitment is to employ practices that communicate to employees the organization is supportive of their efforts, the organization treats its employees fairly, and the organization is interested in building employees' self-worth and importance" (p. 334). The culture within an organization is usually created by those at the top of the organization and, according to McShane and Von Glinow (2005), it is "pervasive and operates unconsciously. . . is the 'social glue' that bonds people together and makes them feel part of the organizational experience" (p. 481) as well as "fulfill their need for social identity" (p. 482). As Lueke and Svyantek (2000) mention, often a decision to leave an organization is due to a lack of adjustment to the culture. Administrators can create supportive cultures through (a) respecting the various choices individual employees make, (b) communicating with employees about their priorities, (c) assisting employees in taking responsibility, and (d) creating environments which foster trust (Friedman and Lobel, 2003). Developing a culture in which the teachers' contributions, creativity, and innovations are appreciated is a crucial component for organizations to incorporate. Allen (2002) posits:

Schools that are organized for learning success and teacher and student satisfaction are much more likely to retain their teachers. . . . Indeed, recent studies indicate that difficult working conditions contribute more to the high turnover rate in the teaching profession than does low compensation. (p. 10)

In agreement, "education is a collective faculty responsibility" and "works best when schools create working environments which facilitate teacher interaction and foster the sharing of ideas and insights" (Futrell, 1988, p. 224).

In contrast, when role-ambiguity and role-conflict are a part of the workplace, results of studies indicate teachers are less likely to have job satisfaction and less intent to remain in the teaching profession (Singh & Billingsley, 1996). The culture of the school, therefore, must be such that a shared vision and mission is clear and mutually supported by both teachers and administrators in order for job-related attitudes to be positive (Evans, 1998). There may be nothing more important, therefore, in defining the culture in a Christian school than the inclusion of a specific spiritual framework and perspective.

Spirituality in the workplace. A key element of the culture of the Christian organization is whether or not it supports spirituality in the workplace throughout its policies and practices. The purpose of this portion of the literature review was to evaluate the research related to spirituality in the workplace and determine the dimensions of spirituality as related to organizational dynamics.

Mitroff (2003) describes the desire of people ultimately wanting to realize their full potential as human beings, to work for ethical organizations, and to do interesting work while bringing their whole selves to the workplace. Mitroff additionally states, "today's organization's and today's jobs are in serious need of redesign" as "far too many pose a serious threat to the human soul" (p. 375). Fry posits (2004) a positive impact of workplace spirituality on organizational effectiveness will be understood when there is a focus on the relationship among organizational, team, and individual values. Pratt (2000) supports this explanation by stating

"individuals attempt to find meaning and purpose in their work through the adoption and practice of deeply held values and beliefs" (p. 36). Guillory (2000) concludes spirituality in the workplace is "the integration of humanistic principles, practices, and behaviors with sound business functioning" (p. xii).

To move toward a deeper understanding of this unfolding phenomenon and be able to relate its dimensions to the dynamics of the organization, it is essential to be aware of how spirituality in the workplace transpired. Spirituality in the workplace became invisible when individuals, as they moved from agricultural to industrial mechanistic jobs, found they must disregard their own innate rhythms and spirituality giving in to the logic of efficiency (Briskin, 1998). Over the last several decades this depletion of the spiritual self has caused an increase in stress, health concerns, and an aspiration for something meaningful in the life of the employee. Employees in the last decade have expressed having feelings of emptiness in their lives despite being exponentially busier due to increased work hours and exhausting demands (Morgan, 2004). This quandary is also seen in the decrease of social capital reflected in less people participating in civic organizations such as neighborhood groups, parent-teacher associations, and scouting groups (Hicks, 2003) leaving individuals searching for meaning and wholeness in their lives.

The increased desire for spirituality in the workplace is also due in large part to the programs for organizational change which transpired during the 1970's, 1980's and early 1990's (Guillory, 2000) which brought the negative effect of undue stress and fear on the lives of employees due to layoffs and "constant reorganization" (Mohamed et al., 2004, p. 102). Some of

the distrust and fears employees describe are related to losing their jobs, being victims of violence, getting cancer, and dying alone (Cash & Gray, 2000).

Grant, O'Neil, and Stephens (2004) suggest "modern developments have launched individuals on a quest for meaning and wholeness" while "simultaneously, organized religion has become institutionally separated from the everyday experience" (p. 269). Baby boomers have begun to question what they have accomplished (Chalofsky, 2003); while international organizations are seeking ways in which to address the management issues related to doing business with countries that bring a spiritual dimension to their organization (Chalofsky; Mohamed et al., 2004). As a result of an increase in highly specialized jobs, increased Internet usage, and technological advances, individuals have less chance to display "spiritual acts of caring" (Grant et al., p. 270). Individuals are also concerned about demonstrating their spirituality and bringing their whole selves to work due to a fear of rejection, misunderstanding, or prejudiced reaction (Chalofsky). The changing demographics of the workplace are also increasing the spiritual activities being observed and practiced. Employees who have migrated from societies where work and faith practices are intertwined add a new complexity to the spirituality in the workplace (Cash & Gray, 2000; Morgan, 2004) which many individuals of other faiths or spiritual practices do not understand.

These questions and concerns have caused organizations to look for ways to reform their management models. Although there has been a recent surge of written contributions in the area of spirituality in the workplace, management scholars have not been diligent in seeking empirical evidence to address these concerns. Many of these written contributions to spirituality in the workplace are aimed at the level of self-help, such as the text offered by Pierce (2001), rather

than of a scholarly intent. There is a need for the literature in this growing area of concern to include revised or improved management theories and models which organizations and individuals will be able to utilize to improve the lives of their employees as well as contribute to the organization. Mohamed et al. (2004), state:

It is our belief that the neglect of spirituality as a topic by management scholars reflects their intellectual bias, more than methodological concerns. Management scholars have not studied spirituality because they do not want to rather than because they can not. (p. 102)

The researchers further posit current micro and macro behavior and organizational change models simply do not account for spirituality in the workplace (Mohamed et al.). Human resource professionals are increasingly being confronted with employees sharing concerns that are not only professional, but personal and spiritual in nature and requesting nontraditional accommodations for observing spiritual or religious practices (Cash & Gray, 2000). To move toward the development of a synthesized approach to spirituality in the workplace allowing for the improvement of legal, managerial, and human resource practices the dimensions of this phenomenon must be addressed.

A living organization, according to Guillory (2000), re-creates itself as it responds to both internal and external changes in the business environment. This living organization is one which has an imbedded spiritual component as the "life force that permeates and drives . . . in the pursuit of its business objectives" (Guillory, p. x). To facilitate contribution to the future research of spirituality in the workplace and understand the effect this phenomenon has on the behavior of

individuals and the organization's pursuit of its business objectives, the complex dimensions of spirituality at work must be discussed.

As a result of evaluating studies previously conducted, the most significant offering of the dimensions of spirituality was provided by Pfeffer (2003). Pfeffer offers four fundamental dimensions of what individuals search for in their quest for spiritual fulfillment as related to their work: (a) interesting and meaningful work that permits them to learn, develop, and have a sense of competence and mastery, (b) meaningful work that provides some feelings of purpose, (c) a sense of connection and positive social relations with their coworkers, and (d) the ability to live an integrated life, in order for the person's roles to be in harmony with who they essentially are as a human being (Fry, 2004). Researchers, Manz, Manz, Marx, and Neck (2004) provide support to these dimensions and recognize "a desire among us to make meaningful contributions, especially through our work" (p. 611). These dimensions must be incorporated into the organizational dynamics of employee-friendly work environments, service orientation, creativity and innovation, personal and collective transformation, environmental sensitivity, and high performance (Guillory, 2000) to have an impact on organizational effectiveness.

As researchers continue to uncover and integrate the dimensions of spirituality in the workplace with organizational dynamics, there are many profound reasons given for paying close attention to this development. Individuals, in an increasing global economy, are spending more of their time at work. As Fry (2004) states, "the office is where more and more people eat, exercise, date, and drop their kids and even nap" and now "American managers and leaders want a deeper sense of meaning and fulfillment of the job – even more than they want money and time off" (p. 702).

These individual elements of organizational behavior are fundamentally linked to the spiritual dimensions and condition of the employees. A challenge for individuals in the face of increased and changing demands is to preserve confidence in oneself (Briskin, 1998). When individuals are not allowed or are simply not comfortable incorporating their emotions and souls in addition to their brains in the workplace, the organization suffers as it is not reaching its full competitive and creative potential (Mitroff, 2003). As such, a discussion of the synthesis of the dimensions of spirituality in the workplace and its effect on organizational behavior was necessary to understand why this phenomenon must be evaluated, understood, and acted upon.

The dimensions of spirituality in the workplace have both personal and organizational outcomes which are intricately intertwined. Research suggests when organizations have workplace spirituality programs, their employees have increased peace, job satisfaction, commitment, and improved retention and productivity (Fry, 2004). One explanation offered to justify the complexity of this phenomenon of spirituality in the workplace and its role in organizational behavior, is the suggestion of spirituality being the sixth factor (Mohamed et al., 2004) supplementary to the Big Five personality factors of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience (Schultz & Schultz, 1998). As the Big Five personality factors have been linked to job performance, managerial success, and training proficiency (Schultz & Schultz), Mohamed et al., assert that spirituality as a personality factor could be linked to organizational behavior. Understanding that spirituality is fundamental to whom an individual is and why they behave the way they do is important for organizations to explore further.

It is evident as the studies begin to emerge and scholars are scrambling to account for the influx of this phenomenon in the workplace called spirituality, the underlying premise is that of an intrinsic motivation and a desire for growth. These concepts, originating from theorists Maslow, Herzberg, and Alderfer, are not lost (Chalofsky, 2003). In fact, it is this intrinsic motivation, described as an "internal emotional preference for a task that gives us satisfaction and meaning" (Chalofsky, p. 56) that begins to explain further the link between organizational behavior and an individual's spirituality in the workplace. This motivation or desire describe the first and second dimensions of spirituality in the workplace as was suggested by Pfeffer (2003) of interesting and meaningful work that permits them to learn, develop, and have a sense of competence and mastery which provides feelings of purpose. Individuals need to see themselves going somewhere – "as being on a journey in pursuit of a significant purpose" (Thomas, 2002, p. 22).

Pratt (2000) posits organizations who allow members to transform or transcend their organizational experiences will in turn provide the organization with "more effective leadership, managerial decision-making, teamwork, and organizational vision" (p. 37). A study completed by Duerr (2004) utilizing the grounded theory approach, discovered individuals who were part of an organization which supported contemplative practices were more committed to the organizational mission and values, enjoyed enhanced relationships, and felt an increased sense of community. These studies support the third dimension of spirituality in the workplace of individuals having a sense of connection and positive social relations with their coworkers. de Janasz et al. (2003) describe the necessity for individuals to have multiple mentors to contribute to the overall sense of positive social relations with co-workers. These relationships are expected

to contribute to the effectiveness of organizational behavior by increasing the positive effects of individual and team processes and services.

Mohamed et al. (2004) claim "one of the clearest relationships between spirituality and work behavior may do with how people handle work's failures and stress" as spiritual individuals are "less likely to suffer from the negative psychological and physical consequences" (p. 104). This decrease in stress may contribute to organizations observing a decline in absenteeism for illness or appointments, and an increase in productivity. In addition to this increase in productivity, individual's positive organizational behavior seen as a result of spirituality in the workplace may also include having an increase in creativity, ethical conduct, and flexibility.

Each of these elements of positive work behavior can be attributed to the fourth dimension of spirituality in the workplace when an individual is afforded the ability to live an integrated life with their roles in harmony with who they essentially are as a human being. When individuals are afforded the opportunity to express their creativity, for example, they are likely to feel improved job satisfaction. Spector's (1997) studies on job satisfaction supports this concept when describing the positive effect on work attitudes when individuals have an increased locus of control. This perception of an increased locus of control has been found to have a significant correlation with job performance, leadership behavior, perceptions of the job, work motivation, and ultimately job satisfaction and commitment (Spector).

Some of the ways in which surveyed employees have requested to have their spiritual values acknowledged have been in regard to company policies and practices which allow for religious observance with personal days off, flexible hours for prayer (which have been shown to take less time than a coffee break), and attire (Salopek, 2004). When employees know they are

free to bring their spiritual beliefs and values to the workplace, they are "happier, more productive, stay longer and help the company more than people who don't feel like they can bring their values to work" (Henneman, 2004, p. 76).

Organizations have reported by incorporating spiritual practices or faith-based employee resource groups, their workforce-diversity goals are being met while contributing to the bottom line through an increase of recruitment, retention, employee development, and enhanced company position (Henneman, 2004). The most significant finding, according to Mitroff (2003), was the organizations which were the most profitable were the most tolerant of spirituality in the workplace or were perceived as having a greater spiritual orientation. However, it must not be assumed simply having more spirituality in the workplace means greater financial return. Guillory (2000) asserts continued organizational success is contingent upon the attraction and retention of knowledgeable individuals who continually learn through their ability to creatively integrate information. This creative integration of information is at the core of an individual's spiritual being yet must be cultivated by both the individual and the organization through a willingness to accommodate spirituality in the workplace.

A critical aspect worth noting is none of the primary motivational theories offered by management scholars have accommodated specifically for spirituality in the workplace as may be necessary to reveal additional factors of retention for the teacher employed by a Christian school. Also, current models of organizational behavior have not accounted for the effects of spirituality in the workplace (Mohamed et al., 2004). To date there is a lack of scholarly research offering empirical attention to this phenomenon (Sanders et al., 2004). Therefore, the applicability of neither a motivational theory nor organizational behavioral model with specific

spiritual underpinnings was revealed in relation to teachers employed in either a public, private, or Christian school.

Conclusion

Each of the elements relating to the individual factors of self-leadership, motivation, professional development, and rewards and the organizational factors to include: recruitment, induction, administration, mentoring, and work environment (administration, culture, and spirituality in the workplace) of the teacher were explored through comparing and contrasting various studies and theories to relate aspects of job satisfaction to teacher commitment. The elements of commitment were evaluated through related studies to gain a deeper understanding of what may contribute to teacher job satisfaction thus affecting commitment and increased teacher retention.

Teachers both desire and are motivated by opportunities to be self-leaders. According to the literature, ensuring teachers have opportunities for self-leadership and professional development will positively contribute to improving teacher job satisfaction and commitment. Self-leadership provides a sense of autonomy and increased morale. This increased morale leads to a greater chance of achieving job satisfaction and increased teacher retention.

The elements affecting teacher motivation of both an intrinsic and extrinsic nature, as supported by the major motivational theories, was positively linked to increased job satisfaction and work commitment. The intrinsic rewards described by teachers are most often in relation to working with the children, making a difference, and the development of strong interpersonal relationships. The extrinsic rewards are often associated with pay and benefits. However, the monetary compensation of the teacher appears to be less of a factor than do other means of

reward. Studies affirm teachers, although concerned with aspects of pay, job satisfaction and commitment were more likely to be positively correlated with those elements of intrinsic value.

Through careful attention to the recruitment and induction of the new teacher, the administration may be able to improve the likelihood of increased retention. However, it is imperative the teacher be placed in a position for which he or she is adequately trained and supported. It is the responsibility of both the teacher and administration to ensure the "fit" of the position and the individual. According to the literature, a conscientious effort to inducting the new teacher into the classroom, the school, and the profession will make a considerable difference in the retention of the teacher beyond the first year.

One way in which to provide this support is through the informal and formal implementation of mentoring programs. Developing a culture which incorporates mentoring as a key component of teaching will improve the likelihood of teachers feeling satisfaction with their jobs, thereby increasing commitment and retention. It is through this mentoring relationship both the new and experienced teachers are able to communicate, learn, and support one another. This increased building of interpersonal relationships has been shown to be a remarkable predictor of teacher retention.

Lastly, the work environment is an important factor influencing teacher job satisfaction and commitment. The three elements of the work environment considered in the literature review for this study are those of the administration, organizational culture, and spirituality in the workplace. A key to the successful induction of the teacher is to provide an administrative and support staff which is aware and concerned with providing support through appropriate and adequately communicated policies and procedures. Additional support needed by the new

teacher is from an emotional standpoint. The role and responsibilities of the new teacher has been found to be stressful and often overwhelming. Therefore, by providing a means of support to the teacher, the possibility of improving retention is greater. The retention of teachers is also increased if the culture of the school is such that the teacher feels supported both professionally and personally. Professionally, the teacher needs to have opportunities for growth and development. Supportive organizational cultures will allow the time and the resources for teachers to receive increased training in order to maintain a desired level of expertise. Teachers also need to be a part of the decision-making process of the school in which he or she is employed. The culture of the school will increase the retention of teachers if they feel personally supported, encouraged, and rewarded.

Finally, attention to the literature concerning spirituality in the workplace was necessary to conclude whether or not there were studies previously conducted in regard to the teacher experience and the relationship (if any) to spirituality in the workplace. The result of the literature review for this particular element clearly identified the individual's need for an inclusion of this aspect of their being in the workplace. However, despite the concern for the retention of teachers in schools, there seems to be a lack of scholarly research relating this aspect of an individual to the role of the teacher.

Teachers' commitment to the profession is likely, as revealed in the studies evaluated, to be determined by their job satisfaction. Although studies have exposed elements of teacher job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, (Inman & Marlow, 2004; Singh & Billingsley, 1996; Boe, Bobbitt, Cook, Whitener, & Weber, 1997), it is clear due to the continuing concern for teacher retention (Billingsley, 2004; Joffres & Haughey, 2001; Chapman & Green, 1986) further

research is needed to identify why teachers stay beyond the first few years in the profession. In sum, although the literature reviewed offers both individual and organizational factors relating to the retention of teachers, it continues to fail to offer any scholarly support specifically regarding the factors of retention for the Christian teacher employed in a Christian school.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the experiences, stories, feelings, and attitudes of teachers specifically employed by Christian schools to identify what factors are meaningful and motivating to the teachers' decision to continue teaching in a Christian school.

Method

Business research is specifically defined by Zikmund (1997) as the "systematic and objective process of gathering, recording, and analyzing data for aid in making business decisions" (p. 6). The researcher must begin with a desire to answer a question or understand a phenomenon and then choose the most appropriate method of inquiry for the research question to adequately and appropriately implement the study. Zikmund posits there "is no one best research design for all situations", and "there are no hard-and-fast rules for good business research" (p. 53). The researcher must, however, evaluate the options available for the investigation so as to not inadvertently choose an inappropriate design which may result in an irrelevant or erroneous conclusion. As such, various methods of both quantitative and qualitative research were considered in light of the research question offered in this study. The result of this inquiry was to choose a specific qualitative research approach lending itself to answer the research question.

Qualitative research has increasingly become a viable and widely used alternative to a pure quantitative method for understanding and explaining the behavior of individuals in education (Seidman, 1998). Qualitative research is, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998):

any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. It can refer to research about persons' lives, lived

experiences, behaviors, emotions, and feelings as well as about organizational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomena, and interactions between nations.

(p. 10-11)

The characteristics of a good qualitative design include the following: (a) rigorous data collection procedures, (b) elements of an evolving/emerging design with multiple realities and possibly multiple methods (c) personal involvement of the researcher with the enquiry, (d) desire to understand a problem or phenomenon rather than a specific causal relationship, (e) requirement of verifiable and accurate information, and (f) the reflection of the complexities of real life occurring in a natural setting, while being believable (Creswell, 2003). Wimpenny and Gass (2000) suggest the phenomenological approach is a precursor to the grounded theory approach as it is focused "on eliciting the experiences of respondents so that the phenomenon can be revealed" (p. 1491) which may then be followed by the researcher seeking to develop an emerging theory as is the case in this study.

Grounded Theory

The grounded theory approach focuses on "developing a theory grounded in data from the field" (Robson, 2002, p. 165). Additionally, Robson states "the aim of grounded theory analysis is to generate a theory to explain what is central in the data" (p. 493). Therefore, the approach chosen for this management question was to conduct in-depth interviews utilizing a grounded theory approach with the purpose of aiding in the development of a theory to identify the factors which Christian teachers feel are meaningful and motivating to their decision to continue teaching in a Christian school.

In-depth Interviews

The primary method of data collection in grounded theory is with the utilization of in-depth interviews. The major task of the in-depth interview approach is to "build upon and explore" the participants' responses to questions and to "have the participant reconstruct his or her experience within the topic under study" (Seidman, 1998, p. 9). This reconstruction will allow the participant to focus on his or her life history, detail the experience, and reflect on the meaning of the experiences (Seidman).

The first step of the research was to utilize a flexible approach through in-depth interviews of Christian teachers. The "face-to-face interviews offer the possibility of modifying one's line of enquiry, following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives in a way that postal and other self-administered questionnaires cannot" (Robson, 2002, pp. 272-273). The in-depth interview in the grounded theory approach began with an open-ended interview with each participant (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). Semi-structured interviews were used as the researcher followed up on the conceptual categories initially revealed.

The specific length of each interview was not be predetermined; rather was based on the logical conclusion to the dialogue between the researcher and the participant and did not exceed 90 minutes per session as recommended by Seidman (1998) for interviews in qualitative research. The researcher was aware a lengthy interview may unnecessarily cause the participant undesirable stress or anxiety. Whereas, an interview shortened prematurely may impede the process of the discussion thereby hindering the data collection. Therefore, the researcher was aware of the time elapsed during each interview with respect to the process and the participant.

As is necessary in purposive sampling, the initial questions (Appendix) and subsequent responses determined the path the interview(s) followed. The order and specific questions were determined at the time of each interview. This flexibility was necessary for the in-depth interview to be accurately imbedded in the grounded theory approach.

Site and Sample Selection

Site

This study took place in a private Christian school, subsequently referred to as The Christian School, in a southern state within the United States. The initial interviews took place in The Christian School's library. The site was chosen as the optimal place for the in-depth interviews due to the convenience for the participants and the researcher. The convenience allowed for the participants and the researcher to easily accommodate the interview schedule. The location was recognized to be a place in which the participants were expected to be familiar, at ease, and have the least amount of distraction.

Grounded Theory Sample

The sampling plan utilized for the study of retention factors in The Christian School was that of purposive (or theoretical) sampling to retrieve rich text of the experiences of the Christian teacher. Theoretical sampling is, according to Glaser and Strauss (1999), "the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges" (p. 45).

Sample Selection. To begin the data collection the researcher must make an initial decision as to which individuals might be most helpful in understanding the phenomenon of

interest. This approach is appropriate for the grounded theory methodology. The use of purposive sampling in grounded theory or phenomenology is to "not seek a representative sample for its own sake; there is certainly no notion of random sampling from a known population to achieve statistical generalizability", rather purposive sampling achieves a "sampling of people to interview or events to observe is undertaken so that additional information can be obtained to help in generating conceptual categories" (Robson, 2002, p. 193). The key was to begin with an "ongoing inclusion" (Glaser & Strauss, 1999, p. 50) so as to realize the participants were determined as the study progressed.

The criteria guiding the initial selection of the participants included in this study were those teachers who have taught between the grades of K-5 through eighth grade, who have achieved at least a four year degree at an accredited institution of higher education, have been employed by a Christian school for at least 3 years, and are currently employed by The Christian School. The governing church of The Christian School is of the Southern Baptist denomination. The teachers hired are not required to proclaim a specific denominational teaching beyond the scope of the definition of a Christian as long as the teachers accept the statement of faith as described in the *Parent/Student Handbook* of The Christian School and therefore are assumed to be of the Christian faith. The principal of the school was the initial contact for the purpose of identifying those individuals who met the minimum criteria as well as assisted the researcher in scheduling the interviews during a time convenient for the participants with minimal disruption to The Christian School's daily activities.

Sample Size. As stated by Robson (2002), "researchers following the 'grounded theory' approach carry out initial sampling, and from analysis of the results extend the sample in ways

guided by their emerging theory" (p. 265). The number of participants, in addition to being limited by the number of available teachers within The Christian School is small, as supported by Leedy and Ormrod (2002), "rather than sample a large number of people with the intent of making generalizations, qualitative researchers tend to select a few participants who can best shed light on the phenomenon under investigation" (p. 102). Qualitative sampling in the grounded theory or phenomenological study, as is true to the process of flexible research, will be emergent in nature and may range from only 5 to 25 individuals according to Leedy and Ormrod. The grounded theory researcher will not decide, though, who or what group to interview next until the data collection has begun revealing either gaps in theory development or by previous answers suggesting further or additional questions from the initial interview(s) (Glaser & Strauss, 1999).

This study, utilizing the grounded theory approach, did not have a preset number of individuals involved in the interview process. The total number of participants in this research project was not known until the study was complete. The number of participants was expected to be between 8 and 10 individuals depending upon the number of available, qualified, and willing participants as well as dependent upon the success of the data collection as each participant was interviewed. However, due to both saturation in data early in the collection and a lack of teachers willing or able to participate, the total number of teachers who participated in the study was seven. The study began with the first participant interviewed. The data (e.g., words, concepts, feelings, and stories) revealed during this process then lead the researcher to choose the next participant.

Data Collection and Analysis

As the constant comparative method of grounded theory is defined "data collection and analysis occur simultaneously and each item of data is compared with every other item of data" (Cutcliffe, 2000, p. 1477). As the categories emerged and were checked for credibility and reliability through additional interviews, the theory developed into a cohesive theoretical structure.

Interpretation of the data obtained in the in-depth interviews began in the form of gathering, documenting, and defining words and meanings of words or actions. The interviews (and interpretation of the data) continued until the categories were saturated and the researcher was no longer able to identify any new information or data to contribute (Robson, 2002). This was then followed by a three step codification process as supported by the studies depicted in the text offered by Strauss and Corbin (1997).

The recorded information retrieved from the interviews was transcribed and imported into the NVivo software program specifically designed for qualitative research. Both the electronic recording and transcription was completed by the researcher. The verification of the data was completed through "the repeated comparison of information from data collection" (Robson, 2002, p. 193).

The first step in the process of analysis was that of open coding in which the initial categories were formed. Using the NVivo software, the rich text was entered as documents into the program. The open coding will "open up the text and expose the thoughts, ideas, and meanings contained therein" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Next, shaping the data into sets in order to sort and manage the data aided in moving to the next step in the codification process. A

concept is described by Strauss and Corbin as a labeled phenomenon and an abstract representation of an object, event, or action/interaction. The concepts had recognizable properties which aided in the classification of the phenomenon.

The second step was to assemble the data, or classified concepts, through the use of axial coding by using a coding paradigm or logic diagram. It is at this point in the data analysis when the researcher began to identify the central or major phenomenon(s), and explore the relationships among the various dimensions, concepts, and subcategories. The NVivo software assisted in the identification of relationships between the dimensions of the data and provided information as to how often the text was coded at a particular node.

The final step of this grounded theory analysis was that of selective coding. It was at this time in the study the central or core category was the centerpiece of the analysis, grounded in the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). The categories, as describe by Strauss and Corbin (1998), were "integrated to form a larger theoretical scheme" (p. 143) which began to take the form of theory.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability of a study can be found when there is an assurance that the study can consistently be repeated under comparable circumstances. To increase the reliability of this study, it was necessary to standardize the manner in which the notes, memos, and transcripts were prepared. Additionally, to improve the likelihood of reliability of this study, the researcher ensured the systematic process of the study was accurately documented and described.

Validation in grounded theory, "is a process of comparing concepts and their relationships against data during the research act to determine how well they stand up to such scrutiny" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 24). The meanings, as stated by Miles and Huberman

(1994), must be "tested for their plausibility, their sturdiness, their 'confirmability' – that is their validity" (p. 11). In the constant comparison of categories and data revealed by the participant (interviewee), beginning with a small dataset and continuing through the process of data collection, validity is increased (Silverman, 2001).

An initial concern of the researcher was the truthfulness of the participants in response to interview questions and the impact dishonesty may have on the validity of the study. Although the dishonesty in and of itself would be interesting and significant data, it was important for the researcher to be sensitive to this possibility and be prepared to further explore questionable responses. Additionally, the researcher strived to recognize the impact of the interaction between the interviewer and participant and minimize any possible distortion which would thereby invalidate the information received during the process (Seidman, 1998). Seidman further suggests the interviewer conduct multiple interviews of the participants in order to "account for idiosyncratic days and to check for the internal consistency of what they say" ultimately working towards validity by ensuring the "participants understand and make meaning of their experience" (p. 17). The researcher in this study conducted an initial interview with each participant lasting between 27 minutes and 1 hour and 24 minutes. There were two follow-up interviews conducted with two of the participants lasting 47 minutes and 26 minutes.

Researcher's Role Management

The researcher of the qualitative study must have a holistic view of the social phenomena, and the "introspection and acknowledgment of biases, values, and interests (or reflexivity) inseparable from the researcher-self" (Creswell, 2003, p. 182). Further, "phenomenological approaches to qualitative research [as is the case with grounded theory]", as

described by Robson (2002), "stress the importance of reflexivity, i.e. an awareness of the ways in which the researcher as an individual with a particular social identity and background has an impact on the research process" (p. 172). It is imperative to allow the theory to emerge from the data while the researcher minimizes the input of preconceived elements (Martinez-Pons, 1998). Qualitative research, in other words, requires the researcher to appreciate the personal involvement he or she will have with the participants and take this relationship into consideration when conducting the data collection, analysis, and concluding propositions or theories.

Specifically, the qualitative researcher may choose to not allow himself or herself be guided by any particular theory, rather allow the theory to emerge as the end point for a study as in grounded theory (Creswell, 2003; Glaser & Strauss, 1999). It is essential the grounded theory researcher be truly flexible throughout the process as well as possess the ability to think abstractly, be open to criticism, be sensitive to words and actions, have the ability to recognize bias, and step back and critically analyze situations (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Having held the positions of a Christian teacher, Interim Administrator, and Director of Education in Christian schools, the researcher expected to be effectively prepared for the dialogue and a communication surrounding the in-depth interviews, understand the meanings relayed by the participants of their experiences, and is able to assess the relationships of concepts as they emerged in the data. However, as a result of this background the researcher acknowledges potential bias and predispositions as disclosed:

1. A belief that spirituality plays a significant role in the motivation of individuals.
2. A belief that a Christian cannot ultimately separate his or her faith from work motivation and behavior.

Therefore, the researcher strived to rely on the participants' own words and their own understanding of the experiences as well as use multiple interviews to validate the interpretations of the data to ensure preconceptions and biases minimally affected the data. It was the intention of the researcher to exercise all necessary and appropriate precautionary measures to make certain the security and validity of the investigation was not compromised. This was accomplished through strict adherence of guidelines related to the use of human participants in research. Further, the researcher acknowledged the position as instrument in the process of data collection and analysis in this type of methodological approach and was mindful of the importance of not infiltrating the data with personal opinion or wrongful interpretation.

Summary

It was expected the research conducted in this study through the use of the grounded theory approach would be vital to investigating the experience of the teacher in a Christian school to discover the factors of retention. This was supported by the fact there has not yet been one preeminent way presented to gather the breadth and depth of the life experiences of the teacher, nor solitary theory to explain the behavior of the teacher to understand why some teachers choose to continue teaching despite a high percentage of their peers leaving the profession.

In sum, grounded theory was the appropriate research approach for the investigation of the experiences and stories of teachers to develop a theory which would aid in the identification of the factors of retention. This was supported through the process of the in-depth interview which is exploratory by nature. Robson (2002) states in light of the phenomenological or grounded theory approach the following questions lend themselves to just such a study which

asks: "What is their experience like? How can one understand and describe what happens to them from their own point of view?" (p. 195).

CHAPTER 4: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

As the purpose of this study was to respond to the research question of what are the factors that Christian teachers feel, believe, and/or understand are meaningful and motivating to their decision to continue teaching in a Christian school, the data collection and analysis offered here provides a clear vision of what is meaningful and motivating to the Christian teacher employed in The Christian School. This question was guided by the need to address a lack of scholarly research regarding this topic. Although research has indicated the factors which cause or motivate a teacher to leave the profession, there is an additional need to understand what teachers need or desire to feel satisfied with their job and increase the likelihood of retention due to job commitment. Shann reports teacher commitment is determined by job satisfaction which has been shown to be predictive of teacher retention (1998).

The selection criteria for inclusion of the research participants was determined by the lack of research previously completed in Christian schools in regard to Christian teacher retention despite results of previous studies indicating an increased need for committed and qualified teachers to continue teaching beyond the first few years in the profession. The participants interviewed in this study included only Christian teachers employed in one Christian school with at least a four year degree and a minimum of three years experience. The number of willing and available teachers who met the minimum criteria for this study totaled seven participants.

As is necessary in the grounded theory approach of qualitative research, the data collected was obtained through the use of in-depth interviews. Each teacher participated in at

least one face-to-face in-depth interview. Two of the teachers were called for follow-up interviews in an attempt to expand on stories and feelings mentioned in the first interview.

Teacher Profile

To begin, it is important to offer a profile of the group of participants for this study. This profile demonstrates, as seen in Table 1, the participants have ample experience both in public and Christian schools to effectively contribute to the study.

Table 1
Teacher Profile

Teacher	Total years teaching	Public experience	Qualified for certification	Current grade teaching
1	6	yes	yes	4th
2	16	yes	no	K5
3	16	yes	yes	K5
4	6	yes	yes	K3-8th
5	32	no	yes	1st
6	13	yes	yes	6 th -8th
7	16	yes	yes	5th

The number of years of experience of the participants ranged from 6-32 years. Five of the seven participants were female. Six of the seven participants had experience working in both a public and Christian school. Six of the seven participants had experience working in at least one other Christian school. Each of the participants had a four year degree. One of the participants holds an advanced degree. One of the participants is currently a graduate student. The range of

teaching experience is from K3-12th grade with the current teaching year's experience ranging from K5-8th grade. Five of the seven teachers have signed a contract or intend to sign a contract to teach in the upcoming school year.

Interviews

During each interview the participants were initially asked basic demographic questions. The primary purpose of these questions was to ensure that the participants met the minimum criteria as well as provided the researcher with information from which to ask additional questions. The remaining questions related to various topics guided both by the research question and the participants' responses. The interviews included both semi-structured and unstructured questions. The order of the questions for each participant was dependant upon the stories, experiences, feelings, and attitudes offered by the participants during the interviews. The questions that were developed prior to the interview process followed a format of evolvement as each interview took place and guided the researcher to expand the questions. These questions (Appendix) were not necessarily asked in a specific order, but were dependent upon the path the interview took as well as based on data collected. The continual accrument and constant comparison of the data through the use of in-depth interviews allows the researcher to further explore the core concepts and develop central categories until a possible theory emerges (Strauss & Corbin, 1977).

The participants appeared at ease in sharing their personal stories, experiences, thoughts, and opinions. The interviews with the participants offered a wide range of emotions to include displays of laughter, frustration, and tears. The participants each shared numerous stories regarding their teaching experiences which were easily interpreted and understood by the

researcher. Upon the completion of each interview, the researcher was able to identify key concepts and categories by which to code the results.

Coding the Results

As each interview was transcribed by the researcher, the researcher made additional notes as to identifiable concepts. Upon completion of the transcribed interviews, each document was read several times. Each document was uploaded into the NVivo qualitative software. The researcher then surveyed each interview document and coded the core concepts using open coding. The instrument used by the grounded theory approach for analysis must begin with this process of coding. The initial coding offered 43 different concepts. As the core concepts were further evaluated and interpreted, the concepts were grouped into categories further defined by the relationships identified. These relationships were seen through the words and stories of the participants. The following testimonies of the participants in response to the questions are offered as validation to the analysis. The researcher has taken steps to ensure any elements which would identify the participants individually are removed or replaced with the researcher's words in brackets.

The axial coding narrowed the scope of the initial concepts annotated by nodes to six primary concepts. The six primary concepts were then further identified with two major themes. The participants revealed these themes as seen in Table 2 with the related concepts in the interviews.

Table 2
 Motivation Factors for Teaching in a Christian School

Core Categories/Themes	Related Concepts
Desire for Personal fulfillment	Need to belong/feel connected
	Need to provide direction and guidance
	Need to feel accomplishment/contribution
Desire for Spiritual fulfillment	Need to feel whole/complete
	Need to openly practice faith
	Need to be obedient to God’s call

The participants in this study clearly identified the elements of motivation which have affected their decision to have continued to teach in a Christian school. There were two primary themes which emerged during the data collection and analysis. The two themes as noted in Table 2 are:

- 1) A desire for personal fulfillment, and even more importantly
- 2) A desire for spiritual fulfillment.

Theme 1: A Desire for Personal Fulfillment

The desire for personal fulfillment of the teachers to be motivated to continue teaching is seen in their (a) need to belong and feel connected, (b) need to provide direction and guidance for the students, their colleagues, and the administration, and ultimately to fulfill (c) a need for a feeling of accomplishment and contribution.

The enjoyment of feeling as if they belong was a consistent theme which the teachers shared during the revealing of numerous experiences. This enjoyment contributes, according to

the participants, to their continued job satisfaction and ultimately commitment to both the profession of teaching and to The Christian School. For instance, when discussing the relationships they have with their colleagues they had several personal stories to contribute. These stories involved the idea of family and the importance of this family to their working environment and to their job satisfaction.

Teacher A shared:

And so here we kind of have more of a family atmosphere where I can go and say this is bothering me and this isn't fair and things like that. . . . I think because we have devotions and we talk about our prayer requests and our concerns and things like that. I think that your family are the people who know you the best. And I think that because we are able to talk about our ups and our downs and our concerns and our frustrations and all of those things.

. . . I think it's really good to have people that know what's going on and this is referring to staff not to the students to have people who know what's going on and can help you through those times.

And like I had a bad day today and another teacher knew about it and came to check on me later to be sure that I was ok and asked if I needed anything or if she could take my class for me so that I could have some time if I needed it.

Teacher B offered:

She laughs at my corny jokes and she has a great laugh and we can talk about just about anything spiritual or professional. It is much more congenial relationship there and that is what I enjoy.

Teacher C described:

I know like my [grade taught] teacher from the last two years or three years it was really nice. We could we just clicked. And we shared a lot of things family wise. But, we would just talk and sometimes we would just unload on each other too which was really nice.

Teacher E experienced:

Right now the two ladies that I work with . . . we have a great time in [the grade taught]. We just have a wonderful teaching team concept and the kids are happy. We're working hard and I am very, very content in that classroom, very content.

Teacher F believed:

Every year I always told my children that we were like a little family together. But as far as getting along, we are a wonderful team. I love it in the classroom. It is fun. We have a lot of fun in there.

Teacher G included:

I have several [teachers] that I am very good friends with one in particular that is basically my best friend. We pretty much are close. We talk about everything. We are sounding boards. We are there for each other. I need advice, I need help, you know. We see each other often during the day. . . . But I feel in my mind that I'm friends with everybody. We get along. It is a family atmosphere so to speak.

You have that bond here because I think that we are bonded by our faith. Because we are Christians and we know how we're supposed to treat each other for the most part the parents see us not only as their child's teacher but as their friend. They will say "we're praying for you. Is there anything that we can do?" So you just know you fit in you feel comfortable. It is like a puzzle piece I guess you go right in. I think I have gotten through more troubled times by working here than anywhere else because I do have that support system.

The additional feelings most of the teachers revealed were in regard to the many differences they had experienced working in non-Christian organizations versus the Christian school in regard to the lack of a family atmosphere and its impact on a feeling of belonging in a non-Christian organization. Although it had not been expected, the comparison with the non-Christian organizations seemed to be a natural and important element for the teachers to relate their experiences, attitudes, and feelings about the teaching profession. Teacher A offered this:

And when I student taught in a public school and I substituted in a public school they didn't have devotions in the morning and they didn't have prayer requests, and they didn't let you talk about those kinds of things. When you had a staff meeting it was about the meeting the things that you were there to talk about not about anything personal. So, I think that that may be part of what makes this more of a family atmosphere.

This statement was supported by Teacher G's experience teaching in a public school:

I despised subbing in public school. The children are mean, hateful, and our students can be like that. But I think for the most part our students, because they are raised in a different environment. And I am not saying all public school students are not Christians, but because that is the majority of what we have here. We do have. I don't want to say fewer problems. But for the most part the students are well behaved and just the overall environment.

At public school, well, it was a job. When you went there you got your job done and went home. And a feeling of I need to call my friend that I teach with or even our administration. There have been times in my life when I have called [the principal] with situations because [the principal] was the one I knew I could go to for that particular problem. It's just the family atmosphere being here as opposed to public school where you feel like you are just a number. Students are just numbers and teachers are just numbers.

I know that they want our enrollment to grow. But personally, I think that the reason it is nice is that most of the teachers do know most of the students. We know in that family, you know that the grandpa just died or the mom is in the hospital. You know things like that about the families and you can be there to encourage the child no matter what the situation is. The staff we have a small number of staff and we know what is going on in each others' lives to know that Suzy wasn't at work today because her child is sick.

The family atmosphere, the closeness, not just with the staff but with the students and parents as well, you just feel. You feel like if you know what is going on in a child's life then you can maybe understand why they are acting out. Or why your fellow teacher wasn't there that day because of something going on at home or with their family. It is not just knowing to be nosy, but because you care.

In specific regard to the relationship the teachers shared they have with their administrator, the findings were similar to those regarding their relationships with their colleagues to include the differences in the relationships between administrators in public versus Christian schools. When asked, "Do you experience or recognize any differences between your relationships with administrators that you might have had in a public school or colleagues in a public school vs. your relationships here?", Teacher F replied:

Yea, a lot of difference. Even though I got to know the principals pretty well because you have to have a relationship with them when you come to their school, I didn't feel it was. I felt that friendliness. But, I didn't feel the warmth even though they treated me very respectfully. They treated me probably more respectfully than the other teachers did.

Because you are there and you are doing really a favor [as a substitute] for them. So we didn't present a threat to them. We were there to help.

Here it is totally different to me. Because I feel like that the principal is my friend here. I could go talk to [the principal] about anything even if it is non-school related. She just has that open door policy. I really appreciate that with her.

. . . I'll be honest with you. I have never been a person that goes down to the office that much. I don't know why. I just don't feel the need to. But when I do need to go, I feel very comfortable talking with my principal.

The second and third concepts are similar to each other and relate to the desire for personal fulfillment. These concepts are those of a need to provide direction and guidance and to feel like they (the teachers) have accomplished something special. This was primarily a need to provide guidance toward the children under the teachers' care. Teacher A mentioned the enjoyment of working with children, teaching them about God, and although does not get too friendly with the students, loves each of them. Teacher B responded when asked about the relationship with students, "I think it's very good. I'm able to have fun with them in class. They know where the line is."

When asked the question, how would you describe working in a Christian organization as being different (if you see it as different) than working in an organization that was not a Christian organization? Teacher B replied:

Small classes - I have six to ten students, although we'd like to increase that. I'm able to give far more attention to each student. And in the public sector, in some city schools for instance, the teacher teaches to those who want to learn and then the rest who don't want to learn are what? Left in the back to do whatever they need to do and want to do as long as they don't interrupt those who want to learn.

Well, in a small class I try to make sure that everybody is learning whether or not they want to. And in a class of six I can say "Joe Shmoe do you understand that?" And his head will pop up. "Let's review that again". I also get to know the students. They're not just numbers or you know. I can see them as individuals so much more. Although if I were to try to do that if I were in a public sector and had 30 students in class it would be so much more draining to do that, so much more time consuming.

When the teachers were asked what they enjoy about teaching or what the reward was in teaching they responded in the following ways:

Teacher B:

Being used to change lives often in ways that I do not understand. That is ok. I don't have to know all of the results. That is not the important thing, but [knowing] that God uses me to change lives. Whether it's to increase their understanding in the educational process, or increase factual knowledge, or increase understanding how life works better.

Teacher C:

I think its touching kids lives in some way. There are many that you don't reach. But there are so many that you do. In some way you touch a life. I received a graduation announcement today. This is a girl that I had here at [The Christian School]. And I think that is the first one that I've ever received from a [grade taught]. In other words, its been almost 12 years since I've had her. And yet she sent me a graduation announcement and a picture. I just thought . . . well, evidently I've touched her life you know. I know that I've touched others. They've told me. But it's just I guess that's what you enjoy the most - knowing that you have made a difference.

Teacher D:

I just enjoy working with them a lot. . . . I chose teaching because I pretty much saw that there were a lot of teachers around that were not in it for the children. They were pretty much in it for a job to be working. I saw a lot of children even in some of my earlier experiences that really just needed the extra person or extra role model to try to just be there for them to understand a lot of what they've gone through.

I really thought there was a need for more role models. I know that there are a lot of broken homes. I know that the Christian schools try to at least in my experience tries to reach a little bit more to that child. You can also talk about God too which is a good thing that you can express not just by talk but also by actions what God can do and has done for people. The children are blessed by that and you get blessed through just helping them with their strengths also.

There is always going to be one or two children that you're going to be able to touch for life. And you know and that's a shame you can't get one or two every year. Some do and some don't. But that's just the type of experience that that really does help me say "you know what? I am glad I'm in teaching because I've touched this child's life."

Teacher E:

I like being with the kids. I like making a difference in their lives. I like teaching them about the Lord. I like making sure that they're grounded in spiritual things. I like to have fun. I want school to be a place where they really have a good time and have a lot of hands on stuff. But mostly I want them to have a good time learning about the Lord.

. . . I can remember several occasions where children have finally learned to read. You can just see the joy in their eyes when all of a sudden they can figure out what those letters mean when you put them together and actually make a word.

. . . If you can leave at the end of the day knowing that you have done something or made a difference in a child's life even if its just one little smile, you patted a kid on the head, gave the kid a hug, if that is all you have accomplished in a day, that is job satisfaction.

If you feel you're in it to minister to children and teach them about the Lord then you have done what you wanted to do. It doesn't matter if you have taught them to read or you have taught them to do all of this other stuff. Did you accomplish something today that you think would make the Lord proud of you and pleased and honor Him? I think those are the biggest things.

Teacher F:

Being with the children and hearing what they have to say and seeing them learn things - seeing them smile. It keeps me feeling young.

I enjoy being in a setting that is really Christian. Where I can tell the children the Christmas story, tell them the Easter story. We don't have to celebrate witches and goblins at Halloween. I enjoy all of that. Just teaching the children about God and what His Word says. It reaffirms it for me every time I teach it.

. . . Well, I guess one of the main things that I look back on is that I was about their age when I came to know the Lord. So I tell them that I have known Jesus for a really long time - ever since I was your age. So I know that they can know Him too.

It is so wonderful to tell a story to a child who has never heard it before. When you do that it is like it just becomes so new to you all over again and then you, well sometimes you think I have heard this story many times. But when you see how excited a child can get about the disciples throwing a net out of the boat and getting all of these fish just because the Lord told them where to throw it. They get so excited. Then it makes you excited again and you realize how real all of that really is. It encourages me and makes me want to teach here even more when I see that.

Teacher G:

Well, this could be true in public school too, but I want to touch one child, and if I've just helped or touched one child in their life then I've made a difference.

. . . I have always loved children. I have always enjoyed watching them learn, the satisfaction of seeing them get an idea to learn from something and just the atmosphere. I knew I wanted to help children in some way and teaching was the first choice.

I enjoy seeing the students learn a new concept especially the ones that are frustrated with something . . . when they finally catch on and I know that I had helped them in some way learn in their overall education process, just to be a part of that.

Sometimes just seeing the students when they are just happy . . . yesterday in chapel they were just singing. And that made me just it makes your heart feel good to see them learn, and smile, and have a good time.

Theme 2: A Desire for Spiritual Fulfillment

The second theme which emerged during the data collection and analysis was of a desire for spiritual fulfillment. This appears to be a critical issue for all of the teachers interviewed.

There was deep sense the spiritual needs and desires of the teachers were the ultimate reason for teaching specifically in a Christian school.

The desire for spiritual fulfillment can be seen through the shared experiences, stories, attitudes, and feelings of the teachers. The three primary concepts flowing from this theme are (d) a need to feel whole and complete, (e) a need to openly practice one's faith, and (f) a need to be obedient to God's call on their life. Each participant openly shared their commitment to their faith in God. Although this was not a surprise to the researcher, it was not expected each participant would declare in multiple ways the ultimate reason he or she was teaching in a Christian school was due to this desire to have spiritual fulfillment as related to the three concepts.

The need to feel whole and complete was expressed by the teachers in various ways. Teacher A expressed this concept clearly when discussing the differences in experiences between working in a Christian school verses a public school.

I just feel like I can be myself. And if something is bothering me or if something is going well or if something you know happened that I'm really excited about I just feel like I can say it and it doesn't just have to be this person learned how to divide. It can be this person asked Jesus into their heart, this person, you know, said this and I like that atmosphere.

The additional idea that blended with feeling whole and complete was in the ability to have the freedom to use the gifts given to the participant by God. There was a noticeable discomfort or annoyance when the participants discussed times when they have been stifled from using these gifts in non-Christian organizations. For instance, Teacher B shared several instances where this freedom was critical to the teaching experience.

I guess each of us is engaged in a journey called life and part of that journey involves finding out who we are. And for those who truly are seeking we begin to understand how God has gifted us.

And there has been some talk, probably starting back in the 80's, about finding your true spiritual gift and using it. There were programs, as churches do programs. But then it goes deeper than that because it's when you discover how God has made you and how you function best, what your passions are, certain areas that develop more naturally than others. Those are the areas that you need to pay attention to.

And one of the strongest areas where God has gifted me is in teaching. For me to turn away from that would be like turning away from. It would be like an investment broker, I guess, turning away from an ethical and legal 'hot tip' and not putting his money there.

This teacher further described, when discussing the differences in pay, the reason for the commitment to teaching in a Christian school despite the significant difference in salary both from the participant's spouse and from public school and its relation to using one's strengths and abilities.

Unless you say I want to be where God wants me to be. Okay, so I'm making less, a lot less than my [spouse]. But, is it better to be in a place knowing where you're supposed to be, making less, and then to be making a lot more grinding it out everyday, hating your job, for whatever reason, maybe colleagues, just not in where you're supposed to be according to your abilities and strengths. Put a price tag on that one.

Teacher C shared quite eloquently the impact of teaching in a Christian school.

I didn't know there were any other schools [laughing]. It is where I can be me completely what is in there [pointing to chest] me. I mean I don't have to hide anything. I don't know what it would be like teaching in a public school because I haven't taught there. But I would think that there were some certain situations where you would have to keep quiet about your faith. Here I can be me.

The teacher continued when asked how that feels, "It gives you a good feeling. It's the way it's supposed to be."

Teacher D contributed the following in regard to including faith in the workplace:

I think that one thing that I have is that I can pretty much be myself. That may be something that may come back to haunt me, but I can just be myself. I can relate to, for example, we have a couple of children here that really have had they are both from single parents and I am just able to get down to their level whether its me acting like a goofball or whether its me just being able to put my arm around them.

Teacher E supported this idea when saying:

My faith is my teaching. That's it. I couldn't teach in a school without my faith. My faith is the reason I treat my children and my class work and my job as I do because I just . . . that is why I am here. I am here because of my faith. I think that is the most critical factor of my responsibility as a teacher. My faith is to show my students.

A key concept of finding spiritual fulfillment as a teacher in a Christian school as shared by the participants is in the ability to meet the need of openly practice their faith. This was expressed through examples of experiences and desires of their hearts regarding the inclusion of their faith and expression of their faith through prayer in the school.

Teacher A offered:

I think we have a time when we ask people to pray about that with us. I think that people know us better than they would if it was just all on the surface you know. I'm having a problem with this kid period. There wouldn't be any personal side to it. Because you just wouldn't, unless maybe you had maybe one or two good friends that you wanted to talk to about your personal life, that wouldn't really come up.

In response to being asked about a memorable experience where prayer was a part of that experience, the participant shared the following story:

And then there's some other situation that I remember [pause] when I had a student who had a childhood that was similar to mine and moved around a lot and didn't have a lot of friends and was very quiet. I prayed with him about Jesus being his best friend. And

[crying] I just remember that. And it's nice when you're able to relate, not only your personal experiences, but your faith.

And another person came to me today and did not know that I had had a difficult morning and said that they had just been thinking about me and I asked if they had prayed for me and they said no. And I told them about what had happened and they said 'well, the next time I think about you I'll pray for you because that's probably what I was supposed to be doing and I didn't realize it at the time'.

Additionally, the participant shared some insight into the spouse's work experience with the following thoughts:

You know my husband works at a place where they can't talk about spiritual things. And they don't really. Probably part of it's because he is a man and he wouldn't anyway. But I just think it's sterile.

Teacher B described the experience with the following thoughts:

Well, I teach four subjects. I teach Bible, science, math, and band. There is so much knowledge out there. . . . I love the science because it speaks volumes about God's creation. I enjoy math because it is so because it can be so black and white. And then I enjoy teaching Bible because that's I get to teach foundational elements of life.

Yes, well I am able to, for instance, this morning I talked about the topic of sin [laughing]. So we can deal with spiritual issues. And they are afraid in a lot of public sectors to even touch on that subject because there is supposed to be separation between church and state and that is often misunderstood where Bibles aren't even allowed in some school libraries. Well that doesn't mean separation of church and state because the Bible is a book. I can approach the Bible from a spiritual standpoint but from a scientific and historical. I can deal with issues that I know go well beyond academics here. I can lay a foundation for who they are supposed to become in God's eyes beyond [the grade taught] and into the rest of their lives.

. . . We are a Christian school. We are not a perfect school because nobody here is perfect. Which means that although I've strived to live by the ideal set God has laid out in His Word, and those are very rewarding even if I don't succeed . . . when I fail it is just [pause] At least I have a common foundation, a common link with my colleagues. And when someone says, "I have to go to the doctor today for an exam because there is a lump that needs to be examined." I can tell that person freely "I am praying for you." And that person understands what I am talking about.

. . . In the public sector that person might be offended. So my expression of concern probably in the deepest way I can express myself, "I am praying for you", could be stifled.

When I was in the public sector there was one of the students who had uttered a profanity and you know there is a fellow teacher standing there and I was the teacher

could see that I responded in a way to that negative output from the student and the teacher said, 'ooh, a dirty word'. Okay, so where does it stop?

All you have to do is look in so many of our public schools and it hasn't stopped. Guns brought into schools now we have metal detectors. We have police on sight. First it started with dirty words which you know okay let's slap their hands. And now we can't have corporal punishment. We can't have, you know, what does it take?

At least we can have parameters here established so students understand the guidelines and the reasons for the guidelines instead of just having them, what? Established by some government institution - that leaves us powerless, without a foundation, a real foundation for doing what we do.

When asked what a benefit was regarding teaching in a Christian school, Teacher B replied:

I get to talk freely about my, about issues in life. I can if I have my Bible curriculum and a question comes up, I can, and I believe it's a significant question. We can address that. Because who knows out there who is dealing with what issues. And instead of skirting around or being really sensitive about talking about spiritual issues in the public arena, I can deal with them directly.

When asked what motivated the participant to continue teaching in a Christian school, the reply was significant:

And in far too many arenas of American life we've taken the spiritual element out and we've substituted it with something else. We need to keep that spiritual foundation. We took that spiritual foundation away starting in the '60s and you see what is happening to our country. That doesn't take a Ph.D. to see.

. . . I need to, I want to be a part, and I want to be a part of the process that keeps that spiritual foundation in place.

When asked how faith was a part of the participant's teaching experience, Teacher C answered with the following:

My faith is me. I hope. You know I . . . I hope they can't separate it too much. But I suppose they can. But I hope they see I do my best. It's only because what He does for us that we can do anything. But all of us are made by Him. And we are all special to Him. All of these things you hope come through to the kids. You hope that your faith just always - you hope that they understand that.

You can talk about things and you can relate it to the Word of God. This is the reason we don't do this or this is the reason we should not do this. God knows what is down the road if we do that. He knows if we do that we are going to be hurting. We don't

want to do that. That is what He says in His Word. You can always take it back to His Word. What else is there?

Teacher D believes:

You can also talk about God too which is a good thing that you can express not just by talk but also by actions what God can do and has done for people.

You just need to make sure that you are yourself. And I think that as a Christian you need to say "you know what - in everything you do would God do this? Or would God think this is the right thing?" And again, like you know you have heard many times you can say "what would Jesus do in this situation?"

When asked if there had been times when the participant felt unable to practice their spirituality or faith while working as a teacher the response was:

Oh, there have been situations. I have been told in public systems that you can't say that or you can't say this. I just say "you know what? I can accept your rules but I'm going to just use my actions for my words."

When asked, "How do you feel about being able to pray with your students?" Teacher D responded:

I think it's great! Actually, we did a little bit in public school and technically we weren't supposed to but there were some that would come to me. Or some that you know they would say "can I pray?" and I would say "yes." So we did it behind some people's backs and I don't feel bad for that even though technically we weren't supposed to do that because I think it's the right thing that God wanted to do. And I think in the long haul it's going to be fine. It's one of those things that I enjoy though and I think it's good for them [the students] just to see more of us also.

Teacher E reflected on the experience teaching in public school in regard to practicing faith at work:

Back in those times you were still [pause to reflect] it was still ok to share your faith and it was still ok to talk about the Lord. And I really didn't have too many problems.

When I subbed in the public school when we moved here I had to be very careful. I think that if you go on with your attitude the way it should be or the way that I think it should be you don't have problems. You know there are things that you have to face in every grade level or whatever, but I just really feel like the only difference now would be the lack of allowance of Christian principles to be taught or spoken of in a public school setting.

In response to the question: “How do you feel about being able to have your faith be a part of your teaching?”

Oh, it is critically important to me! I have to live my faith everyday. My whole goal is to make sure my children see Jesus Christ in what I do. Because I can’t teach them about Him if I don’t model Him in front of them so it is absolutely critical. I mean that’s at the top.

Teacher F shared:

I know a lot of the teachers in the public school love those children but their hands are tied. They do whatever they can. They have to be careful. They don’t want a parent coming in there and bringing some law suit.

Because I like the freedom of being able to read a Bible to the children. I like the freedom of knowing that I can tell these children to stand up and salute that flag and instill in them patriotism and love for their country.

Teacher G:

I try to impart that faith on my students. I try to be a good role model. I don’t want to just teach them about a curriculum. I want to show them. I cannot teach them about being honest if I am not honest myself. I cannot teach them about having a joyful or giving attitude if I don’t have that attitude myself.

We have our faith to fall back on. We know that we may have rocky times and we may have days that we are just frustrated. But we can come together as a staff and pray together and be there and support each other in that way.

The third concept found to be strongly related to the desire for spiritual fulfillment is the need to be obedient to the call to teaching by God. This calling was described in different ways by the participants. Ultimately, however, the participants described why they were teaching in a Christian school was due to this call by God to do so.

When Teacher A was asked, “If you were asked - someone just came up and wanted to know what you did for a living and you told them that you were a Christian school teacher and they asked you ‘why do you do that?’, what would you tell them?”

[tearing] I think I would probably say what I said at the beginning because of my faith. I feel like I was called to teach in a Christian school.

However, I know that there are Christian teachers who are not called to be in a Christian school. So, I don't really know why. I guess only God knows why it's different. But, my [relative] is a Christian and she feels definitely called to teach in public school. So, I don't really know why it would be different. But, that's just how I strongly feel. And now having kids of my own I want them to be in Christian school, so I guess I want to be there with them. But, I was in Christian school before I had kids. So, it wasn't because of that that I made that choice.

Teacher B replied, "I don't think God is done with me here yet. I think I see my role as an educator primarily. I'm feeling I'm on the path that God has laid out for me." When asked, "What would you say your motivators are?" to teaching in a Christian school the participant replied:

I think the most important motivation for me is to become and be the person that God wants me to be. If I'm going to, and this sounds selfish, if I'm going to enjoy get the most out of this life given to me, who better to direct my path than the One [God] who has allowed me to be here? So, I try to be the person God wants me to be above all.

When the participant was asked about the idea of knowing and following God's plan verses deviating from that calling, the response was clearly portrayed through a couple of analogies.

Well, I could use some analogies. If you were to drive along the interstate heading north in south facing traffic, how would that feel? Or, if you were at the beach and you went out even though the signs were up for strong undertows and you found yourself, oh, about fifty feet out not able to make it back in struggling kind of for your life.

As opposed to being 33,000 feet up viewing a beautiful sunrise or something - And understanding I'm in the right place at the right time. There is just a flow to life that you go with naturally. Not that there aren't glitches. There are glitches. I mean the Bible says that Jesus understood faithfulness through what He suffered. So, to have an absolutely free-flowing life is not the ideal because we go through our adversities and challenges that come before us. But, there is a certain peace in what I do even when I face the challenges.

Teacher C offered an inspiring account of when the decision was made to become a Christian school teacher and the reasons why.

I was thinking about working in a church something like that. But, there was a certain incident that just turned my life around and made me realize that this is what I want. I wanted to teach in a Christian school.

One of the Christian schools in the area . . . was a well known school at that time and they taught I guess kindergarten through high school. The school master took a bus out and had all of us Christian Ed majors from the college come out for a little banquet or supper at the school. We went out I think around 4 o'clock and supper wasn't until later. So we had all this time to walk around the campus and for some reason I got separated from the others.

And I was by myself and I went into this one classroom and I was just kind of like "hmmm, what is this going to be like to be, what would it be like to be a teacher?" And I walked up to the front of the classroom and sat, pulled the chair out, sat down in it, and pushed it up under the desk.

And I looked up and there was a big picture of Christ. And I thought this is what it's supposed to be. I had never been in a Christian school. But, this is what it was supposed to be. Christ at the head of the classroom or right there watching everything that was going on. And from that moment on I just guess that was what I was going to do was to teach in a Christian school. . . . I would always go back to that was how it is supposed to be. I guess it was because I felt called to the Christian school.

Teacher D stated, "I am in teaching to do what's best for what God wants me to do."

When asked what being called meant to the participant, the response was:

I think it is something that you are just good at. I still see things at times that I'm not sure if I'm called to do this, but then I keep getting reminded by other people that "yes I am great at this." So I am hearing it from other people. I guess I am hearing God's Word from a Christian perspective from other people for God.

When asked what 'being called' meant to the participant, Teacher E replied:

It means you know in your heart that there is something special that God wants you to do. It could be a call to preach, or it could be a call to teach, or it could be a call to nurse, or a gift of some sort. But, to me, a call is something that tugs at your heart strings that God puts there and you are not satisfied until you do it. That's why I think I am called. Because I think God touched me and when I had an opportunity and didn't even know it and here I am.

Teacher F replied to the same question regarding being called to teach:

It means that God has placed in your life a place for you to be. You know that you are meant to be there.

People say that God has spoken to them. I can't necessarily say that. But, I do know that I never thought I would teach in a Christian school. I was trained for public school. A friend of mine told me about the job here. I applied. Two weeks into my job I knew I wouldn't leave Christian education. I knew that this was where God had called me to be.

Conclusion

In sum, the data revealed various concepts derived from the transcribed interviews which were initially coded at the node level using the NVivo coding tool. These concepts included feelings, attitudes, experiences, and ideas labeled as individual words or phrases. Examples of these initial concepts coded included elements such as: frustration, job satisfaction, faith, relationships, family, joy, prayer, ability to be whole, mentoring experience, memorable experience, and so forth. This coding and constant comparison of concepts continued until there were no new incidents identified. This is the point at which theoretical saturation has occurred (Glaser & Strauss, 1999).

This approach to the coding and subsequent analysis allowed the researcher to create and manage the categories, modify the references to the categories, view the coded data, rethink or recode, explore the text surrounding the category, and investigate the patterns surrounding the coding (Richards, 1999). As Glaser and Strauss (1999) posit, the constant comparison of concepts begins to “generate theoretical properties of a category” (p. 107). As the coding continued to expose relationships of the concepts and processes (actions/interactions), the relationships were shaped into sets or categories with the aid of the set editor in the NVivo software. This allowed the researcher to further manage the data through the use of sets. These

sets or categories were explored, compared, and interpreted in order to be sure the concepts were supported by the data obtained from the transcribed interviews of the participants.

At this point the researcher was able to narrow the scope of the exploration to six primary categories. As the reduction of categories occurs, theory begins to be delimited (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). This delimiting of theory is seen as the reduction of categories occurred and became theoretically saturated. For instance, although the participants shared multiple experiences which provided a view of the joys and frustrations of teaching, the reduction of concepts to categories through the constant comparison detailed the specific experiences or needs of the participants. These categories revealed the primary feelings, attitudes, experiences, and ideas of the participants which were shared as critical to job satisfaction and commitment. These categories, as described in Table 2, include (a) a need to belong and feel connected, (b) a need to provide direction and guidance for the students, their colleagues, and the administration, (c) a need for a feeling of accomplishment and contribution, (d) a need to feel whole and complete, (e) a need to openly practice one's faith, and (f) a need to be obedient to God's call on their life.

The conceptual framework had become apparent. It is this framework that leads the qualitative researcher toward theory. As supported by Miles and Huberman (1994) "theory building relies on a few general constructs that subsume a mountain of particulars" (p. 18). At this time the researcher returned to the original data, reviewed the concepts, reread the transcripts and found that the two themes which ultimately demonstrated a culmination of these six categories were those of a desire for personal fulfillment and a desire for spiritual fulfillment. The themes which emerged from the data are both validated and supported by the data collected, explored, and interpreted.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The summary of findings derived from the research and the recommendations offered by the researcher are the two major sections included in this chapter. To begin, a restatement of the research question is offered:

This study addressed the research question of what are the factors Christian teachers feel, believe, and/or understand are meaningful and motivating to their decision to continue teaching in a Christian school?

As grounded theory was found to be the appropriate tool to utilize to address this question, the primary form of data collection was the in-depth interview. These interviews offered a picture with clarity of the phenomenon involving the motivation of the Christian teacher to teach in The Christian School.

Moments of Frustration

There were certainly moments during the interviews involving stories or experiences in which the teachers had not been happy or were dissatisfied with the way an event had transpired or the manner in which an administrator did or did not appropriately support the teacher. It is important to include these thoughts and feelings so as to not give the impression the teachers never had job dissatisfaction teaching in The Christian School. These instances, though, were not the overriding themes which emerged from the data. For instance, during the process of one particular interview Teacher A described feelings regarding the expectations of the students in comparison to expectations of the teachers:

Because it is very frustrating and very hard for me to understand why someone would have their child in a Christian school but then not expect them to do anything. And expect me to be perfect, but they don't have to do anything and their child doesn't have to do

anything. And the administration expects teachers to be perfect also never to get upset or ever have lapses in professionalism [laughing].

So, if I were to leave [The Christian School] it wouldn't be because of the money. You know even just leaving this school or any other school. I don't think it would be because of the money because obviously I am not in it for the money, because I don't get paid very much. But it would be probably a combination of being frustrated over situations and feeling like I was supposed to be doing something else and maybe the frustration I would think would be a large factor in that in not being able to deal with it anymore and thinking that it is time to do something else.

Although it is obvious this teacher has experienced periods of frustrations and concern, the following comments clarified the motivations of this teacher to be in the profession specifically in a Christian school:

And so here we kind of have a more of a family atmosphere where I can go and say this is bothering me and this isn't fair and things like that you might not say if you were talking to your boss if 60 or 70 employees [laughing]. But you can say that when it is someone that you know really well.

Another teacher mentioned a time when an event had inspired an intense feeling of frustration with an administrator. Here Teacher E describes:

One time she really made me mad and hurt my feelings and I was furious. If I had spoken to her I would have said things that I know that I would have been sorry for saying and so God just closed those doors. She left. I couldn't talk to her. But it was a good thing because two days later when she finally did come back when I could talk to her I had calmed down. I had realized that it was just as much my fault as it was her fault.

At another point in the interview the same teacher states:

I will just say that there have probably been a couple of instances where parents who did not support, did not believe, did not encourage us as teachers. They took the side of the child instead of the teacher. I can think of one experience where a child basically lied to their father and told the father and mother what I had done. I hadn't done it. But the child didn't want to be in trouble so got me in trouble instead. I mean, those are the kinds of experiences that are just heart wrenching because you don't want to call the kid a liar but the kid lied. And then, you know, you're reputation is slandered because the parents, if they say anything to anybody else before they find out the story. It is terrible.

Whereas, just a few moments later in the interview Teacher E continues with this comment when discussing the thoughts surrounding signing a new contract to continue teaching "I also look at the fact that it is something that I love to do. As long as I am still happy doing it and physically able to do it, then I want to keep doing it because that is my joy. I really enjoy doing it."

It was the overwhelming feelings described by the teachers that the job satisfaction which was experienced in The Christian School ultimately overrode any feelings of dissatisfaction which may lead them to leave the teaching profession or at the very least to transfer to teach in a public school. These feelings are supported by the literature reviewed which describes the importance of job satisfaction of teachers for them to feel or be more likely to be committed to the organization and the profession of teaching. As the review of the literature primarily surrounded the experiences, attitudes, thoughts, and feelings of the teacher in general, it was quite interesting to note the similarities and differences or literal gaps found in what constitutes motivating factors of the Christian school teacher in this study.

As the literature review for this study describes both the individual and organizational factors involved in the teacher experience, many of these elements were found in the data provided from the interviews of the participants. The findings of this study offered some elements of similarities surrounding various needs described by the teachers and results of previous studies conducted found in the literature involving the individual and organizational factors already described.

For instance, the review of the theories of work motivation was critical to establish or understand what may or may not be applicable in regard to the work motivation factors of the

Christian teacher employed in a Christian school. The feelings, experiences, attitudes, and thoughts of the teachers in this study supported many of the concepts of the major motivational theorists. The research findings of this study indicate that there are six primary needs of the Christian teacher which must be met to feel as if he or she is to be motivated to continue teaching in a Christian school. These six primary needs are divided evenly between the two primary themes of:

- (1) A desire for personal fulfillment
- (2) A desire for spiritual fulfillment.

Following are the two primary themes which emerged from the data and the supporting concepts for each theme.

Theme 1: A Desire for Personal Fulfillment

As was discovered in the literature review, the intrinsic rewards described by teachers are most often in relation to working with the children, making a difference, and the development of strong interpersonal relationships. This was clearly supported by the data provided in this study.

Concept A: The Need to Belong and Feel Connected

The first of these is of a need to belong and feel connected. As is described both in McClelland's theory of learned needs as the need for affiliation and Alderfer's ERG theory describing an individual's relatedness needs (Hersey et al., 2001) the teachers each offered stories, feelings, and experiences to describe how important the fulfillment of this need was to their experience of teaching in The Christian School. There were several points made during the interviews in which the teachers shared how different it was to work in a Christian school where it felt more like a family. This was in contrast to the experiences in the public school in which

the same closeness and warmth was absent. This idea of family or the close work environment was reiterated several times during the progress of the interviews.

The feeling of family or of fitting in was not only in respect to the teachers' colleagues, but also in regard to the administration and parents of their students. Teacher G shared:

I feel comfortable here. I feel like I am a part of it. I have worked at jobs before where I felt like an outcast and that nobody like me. I know that sounds elementary, but we as adults like to be accepted. I just blended with the staff and with the students and the parents.

One teacher relayed an extremely personal story in which a parent approached the teacher in tears and described a family situation that was currently being experienced. As Teacher F had experienced the same event the two were able to communicate and support each other.

So I went through a time when I felt very unworthy to be there in front of these children. How can I stand here when my [situation described] . . . Because I felt that way for a while, one morning - you know being in this setting the parents a lot of times they still bring their children to the door. They are just hard to let go. I had a parent come to my door one morning and she said "I need to talk to you." And I went outside in the hall and she broke down and she shared with me that she was going through [the same situation]. At that moment I knew that God could use me to minister to the families. We don't just teach the children. The whole family is involved in what we do.

It was believed by the teacher this would not have been the case if the teacher were still employed in a public school as the level of intimacy of the relationship (such as praying together) could not have been comfortably established.

Concept B: The Need to Provide Direction and Guidance

Secondly, the need to provide direction and guidance for the students, their colleagues, and the administration was a critically important concept shared repeatedly by the teachers.

When discussing what they most enjoy about being a teacher was the idea or belief they are able to mentor or guide others towards the path of what God would have for their lives. In

conjunction with this concept was the reiterated idea the teacher must recognize the importance of the role they occupy.

Teacher D mentions, "I saw a lot of children even in some of my earlier experiences that really just needed the extra person or extra role model to try to just be there for them to understand a lot of what they've gone through." As Teacher G states:

I try to be a good role model. I don't want to just teach them about a curriculum. I want to show them. But, I try to connect with them in some way, find something that each child is interested in. One of my students, I taught her cousin. So we had that connection. Another student likes to read like I do. So I give her book suggestions. I try to find something that I have in common with each of them and kind of connect with them and bond in that way.

In other words, the teachers believe not only their words, but their actions have the potential of having a significant effect on those around them to include the students, parents, administrators, and colleagues. This role did not appear to be one which caused the teachers stress or discomfort. Rather, the task was undertaken with joy and a feeling as if they were part of a greater plan.

As was described by Billingsley et al. (2004) teachers report other teachers often provide the needed support and feedback (more than administrators or principals) which positively contributes to their emotional well-being and job satisfaction during the induction period. The idea of mentoring, specifically, was discussed in a few of the interviews. Although none of the teachers ever had the opportunity to experience a formal mentoring relationship, they each shared a point in time or a range of experiences in which there had been someone whom had offered the support and guidance of a mentor or a time when they had had an opportunity to be a mentor.

Teacher C shared, “She was a mentor to me I know that. She helped me a lot and kept me going.” In addition, Teacher E reflected on a colleague with whom there was a reciprocal type of mentoring relationship:

The two of us were really good together because she was so relaxed and so loving and easy going, but she needed somebody to make her be firm. And I needed somebody to let me chill out a little bit. Sometimes I would just get so freaked out and I wanted everything to be perfect and get everything in a row.

Teacher G supported this feeling:

We have several excellent teachers who have been here for awhile and are very willing to help with whatever. I needed that at the time when I was a new teacher. And even now, and that is one thing about our staff. We have teachers who are really good at this or we have teachers who are really good at that let me go ask them. We can just kind of bounce ideas off of each other.

These experiences were reflected upon as being very important and helpful. Additionally, two of the teachers expressed times when they had had the opportunity to provide mentoring to student teachers. This experience offered the teachers an occasion to offer words of wisdom, teach the mentee new skills, and provide opportunities for the mentee to teach the class with the teacher there as a guide. Overall, each teacher expressed how meaningful these experiences had been to them.

A few of the teachers shared specifically about times when they had opportunities to talk freely with the administration. It was very clear none of the teachers felt unable to communicate concerns, frustrations, or ideas with the administrator. In fact, there were several moments when the teachers offered stories of moments when guidance was given to the administrator and maybe it was not followed, but the teacher was able to feel good it had been heard. For example,

Teacher E reflected:

Because of [the principal] and my relationship I think I have a little bit better in and I know I can influence some of the things that are done and said throughout the school because [the principal] trusts me and values my judgment. And in turn I will respect her and do what she says to do because I feel that is my job as a teacher under her administration.

Teacher G concurred:

They are very good at listening to us - at what we have to say. Sometimes our ideas seem to be taken too late. And sometimes our ideas are taken and they use them. I think it is pretty much just what the administrator wants. If they like our idea they will use it and if not if it goes along with their plan.

Concept C: The Need for a Feeling of Accomplishment and Contribution

The third concept which was shown to be important to the teachers' job satisfaction as a teacher was the need for a feeling of accomplishment and contribution. Teacher B stated the following when sharing what was important about teaching, "Changing lives, being used to change lives often in ways that I do not understand." Teacher C shares a time when a parent who had been told the child would not be able to learn easily due to a disability had realized the child was now reading:

She just thought that I walked on water and of course I didn't. But I was just so amazed that I had done so much for her son. I know there has been other parents that have said "oh, you helped my child so much. I can't do anything right but you can" and things like this. There have been moments like that that just amazes me. Yea, I put the material out there. They just sop it up. They learn. You don't have to stand on your head. It just happens.

Teacher G shared the importance of being a part of the experience which contributes to a child's learning:

I enjoy seeing the students learn a new concept especially the ones that are frustrated with something. When they finally catch on and I know that I had helped them in some way learn in their overall education process just to be a part of that.

Interestingly the teachers, in sharing the importance of feeling like they had contributed to the learning and the spiritual growth of a child, each demonstrated a tremendous amount of humility. For instance, Teacher D offered a detailed account of a relationship with a child who went through a remarkable transformation.

The good part about that is that I had one child one year that walked into open house three years ago or about three years ago. The child was a very timid child, very quiet child. And this child pretty much was very quiet for the first year that she was here.

It was one of those things where she got to the point at the end of the season she was willing to openly just to pray on her own or to have a comment about a Bible devotion we did. And the next year she was here it was like night and day. She was very open and that is the type of experience or one of the types of experiences I think blossoms and keeps me in teaching is that there is always going to be one or two children that you're going to be able to touch for life. And you know and that's a shame you can't get one or two every year. Some do and some don't. But that's just the type of experience that that really does help me say "You know what? I am glad I'm in teaching because I've touched this child's life."

Despite the apparent impact this teacher had on the child's life the teacher repeatedly made statements to the following affect "And I do not take the credit for that. I just was able to be in her life and hope for that."

Theme 2: A Desire for Spiritual Fulfillment

The following three concepts which were discovered as a result of the analysis of the interviews are significant in regard to the specific motivation for these participants to have continued to teach in a Christian school. As the conceptual framework became apparent, this theme was found to be substantive in building toward a theory.

Concept D: The Need to Feel Whole and Complete

The first concept related to Theme 2 is that of the need to feel whole and complete as an individual. As the teachers shared their experiences and feelings about teaching, both in public and Christian school as well as experiences they had working in other positions than teaching,

there was a significant belief held by the teachers that they enjoyed working in a Christian environment because it was a place where they could be themselves. This was quite clearly stated by Teacher C:

I don't know what it would be like teaching in a public school because I haven't taught there. But I would think that there were some certain situations you would have to keep quiet about your faith. Here I can be me.

One of the strongest statements regarding the significance of the teacher's faith being who they are was made by Teacher E: "My faith is my teaching. That's it. I couldn't teach in a school without my faith". This statement could be related to all of the teachers' feelings about the inability to be themselves without being able to openly practice their faith. This idea led to the following concept which is closely linked to the need to feel whole and complete as an individual.

Concept E: The Need to Openly Practice One's Faith

The ability to openly share their faith was found to be priceless to the teachers who participated in this study. In fact, it was made quite apparent, although these teachers worked in this position for a paycheck that is significantly less than their public counterparts, they were willing to do so for the ability to have spiritual freedom. As Teacher B shares:

I get to talk freely about my about issues in life instead of skirting around or being really sensitive about talking about spiritual issues in the public arena. I can deal with them directly. In the public sector that person might be offended.

When discussing the part faith plays in the teacher's role Teacher C shares: "My faith is me". Later in the interview the teacher continued sharing the significance of the ability to practice her faith with the following words:

It gives you a good feeling. It's the way it's supposed to be. You can talk about things and you can relate it to the Word of God. This is the reason we don't do this or this is the

reason we should not do this. God knows what is down the road if we do that. He knows if we do that we are going to be hurting. We don't want to do that. That is what He says in His Word. You can always take it back to His Word. What else is there?

This concept is supported by the literature reviewed as being necessary for increased job satisfaction and commitment. In other words, when the teachers felt like they could relax and speak freely without their words and actions being monitored under fear of punishment or retribution they were more productive and more committed to the organization. As posited by Fry (2004), research suggests when organizations have workplace spirituality programs, their employees have increased peace, job satisfaction, commitment, and improved retention and productivity.

One of the most significant ways the teachers shared they need to have freedom is to have the ability to pray in the workplace as a way to practice or express their faith or spirituality. Teacher C stated, "It makes a difference, a spiritual kind of thing you know" when sharing the importance of freedom to practice faith at work.

One teacher described a different opinion about the differences in regard to freedom in a Christian school verses teaching in a public school:

I think I was more myself when I was in the public sector than I was in private. I just I think I had more freedom. It may have been more freedom and maybe it was more that I just missed the point that people didn't want me to have the freedom. I think I had more freedom to pretty much do my thing with what I was doing. I think I also had. I didn't have as many people having to check up on things. And that's fine. I think maybe its just one of those things. I think it may depend on the setting and the school you're in. But I just had more freedom to do more of what I wanted to do in the public sector when I was there.

In contrast to expressing this opinion, the same teacher later described the ability to openly pray and practice one's faith more so in the Christian setting while there were times when praying was done secretly in the public setting.

Teacher E describes moments of prayer and the importance it plays in the classroom:

My kids know that they can come if they have prayer requests that they can come and ask us. We pray as a class. We pray all kinds of times. We have a prayer leader in the classroom who is expected to lead the students in prayer. And they each learn to pray aloud. I think it is important and I think that they understand it. But I pray with the kids all the time. I pray for my students every day. I pray in the car on my drive to school. I pray in the classroom.

As teachers . . . we remember our classes in prayer. We have our department devotions and that kind of thing . . . we remember our kids in prayer. It is easy to pray. It is just really critical. The children, when they come to you with a prayer request they want you to pray now. They don't want to wait until prayer time. So you do. You just pray because that is part of what you do as a teacher. Obviously you are not going to pray in the middle of some learning time, but that has happened though. When it is something that they want to talk about, you just do it. It is critical. They need to know that you will hear their prayer anytime. So you pray and it is special.

Teacher G, when describing how it is important to practice faith openly in order to deal with frustrations that may arise shares, “we can come together as a staff and pray together and be there and support each other in that way.”

The ability to pray with students, parents, colleagues, and even administrators is, according to the teachers, a critical part of their job. Without the ability to openly pray the teachers shared that they would not be able to be themselves, they would not have the same peace that comes with being able to rely on God to answer their prayers. The need to practice their faith is critical as they do not see themselves as being able to separate their faith from themselves. In other words, they would not be able to teach, as they feel they are instructed by God to do so, without this freedom. This feeling led to the final concept relating to the major theme of a desire for spiritual fulfillment.

Concept F: The Need to be Obedient to God's Call

The need to be obedient to God's call on their lives to teach in a Christian school is so powerful every teacher who participated in the study each visibly displayed feelings of

conviction when describing the reasons they are teaching in a Christian school. They believe the call by God to teach cannot be ignored. In fact, through both analogies and actual experiences the teachers shared multiple ways they believed their lives would not be following the correct path if they were not following God's plan.

This call to teach seemed to bring about the most intense emotions, thoughts, and feelings when describing their role in this life as a teacher. The teachers interviewed did not feel as if they are merely filling a position or marking time in a job. They truly feel as if they are going to be found faithful to God if they are obedient to His plan for their lives. Teacher A eloquently stated, "I feel like I was called to teach in a Christian school."

There is a peace found when the teachers believe they are following God's plan for their life. Whereas this peace is absent when they stray from the path where He has directed them. Teacher B offers the following statement to describe the gifts that God has provided, "where God has gifted me is in teaching". The teachers believe the ability to teach is a gift from God and to turn away from this gift or to not use the gift would be a mistake and would demonstrate a lack of faith in God. Teacher B continues this feeling when sharing the different experiences between working in a Christian school and working in a non-Christian organization, "like I was following a path that had been set out before me and when I deviated I realized it and when I was on it I knew it."

In addition, the teachers shared in various ways the lack of extrinsic benefits that come with the role of teaching in a Christian school. These included the lack of compensation, lack of benefits, lack of resources, lack of physical teaching space, and so forth. Yet, as offered by

Brunetti (2001) and Bastick (2000) the factors surrounding compensation, benefits, and security are the least influential of motivators for the teachers surveyed and interviewed.

The way the teachers explained how they were able to accommodate for or cope with the lack of financial and physical resources was in their faith in God to provide for their needs and His faithfulness in keeping the promises in His Word. In other words, the teachers firmly believe that if they are obedient to God's call on their life then He would provide all they need in the way of extrinsic rewards. Their faith or trust in God to provide rose above any feelings of discomfort that may lead them to leaving the profession of teaching in The Christian School. For example, Teacher B shares:

It just doesn't make sense financially for us to be doing as well as we are.

Unless you say I want to be where God wants me to be. Okay, so I'm making less. But, is it better to be in a place knowing where you're supposed to be making less then to be making a lot more grinding it out everyday, hating your job, for whatever reason maybe colleagues, just not in where you're supposed to be according to your abilities and strengths. Put a price tag on that one.

Teacher C supported these thoughts with the following:

I knew that I wanted to be there. I wanted to be in the school so much. It was so. I just felt. I knew that's where I was supposed to be. I had success at the other place. I had more raises than most of them there. That wasn't what makes you happy. . . . It's doing what you know God wants you to do.

In summary, the call by God to teach is what the participants revealed prompted and continues to motivate them to continue teaching in The Christian School. To deviate from this calling, as stated by one of the participants, is to not be obedient to God. This calling is supported through what the teachers believe are gifts to teach and the faithfulness to endure that God has given them. These gifts are coupled with the ability to pray and have support through times of frustration and concern.

Conclusion

As described in this study, the teachers offered an intimate look at the motivating factors of Christian teachers who have chosen to continue teaching in The Christian School. The motivating factors for teaching in The Christian School, according to the analysis completed in this study, are primarily intrinsic needs which must be met or fulfilled. These factors are found in the six primary concepts discussed in this chapter. The factors identified were discovered as a result of recognizing the processes, or as described by Strauss and Corbin (1998), the action/interaction of the experiences of the teachers.

Strauss and Corbin (1998) posit that when attempting to build either general or substantive theory, identifying the process by which structure begins to develop is necessary. Ultimately, as the structural process of the study became evident, these six concepts allowed two primary themes to emerge. The themes are the result of the constant comparative analysis which continued until each category was saturated and there were no new concepts to identify resulting in a theoretical framework. The theoretical framework established the themes of a desire for personal fulfillment and a desire for spiritual fulfillment.

The purpose of utilizing the grounded theory approach was to allow for the possibility of a theory to emerge. As a result of this study, the preliminary framework of a theory is offered. Silverman suggests that theory occurs when sets of concepts are arranged to define or explain a phenomenon (2001). The researcher found the overwhelming feelings of the teachers who participated in the study of committing to the role of teaching in The Christian School were due to the faithfulness of the teachers to be obedient to God's call on their life. By doing so the teachers experienced the ability to be themselves and openly practice their faith thereby meeting

the desire for spiritual fulfillment. Therefore, this study is offered as a preliminary framework toward a theory of faithfulness so as to provide an explanation for the motivation of teachers to continue teaching in The Christian School.

This faithfulness is at the core of the teacher experience. During the last interview, when asking the participant who was preparing to retire after 32 years of teaching in a Christian school setting if there was any one particular scripture or Bible story that the participant drew strength from or relied upon, the response was the following:

No, there were many times I went to various places in God's Word for help. But, the one thing that I can think of [pause for reflection] well, I had the teachers sing this song at the last devotion this week: *Great is Thy Faithfulness*. That is the song that I relied on throughout my entire teaching career.

The author of the song, Thomas Chisolm, was also a school teacher.

Recommendations

Recommendations Based on Data

The teachers participating in this study were quick to offer suggestions or advice to administrators. Following are some of the recommendations made by these teachers committed to teaching in The Christian School:

Teacher C believes:

I probably would do what I could to change the policy on people coming here. I would have it for Christian parents. I would make it for those parents who really want their children whose parents really want their children in a Christian atmosphere. I think we need to we say we are an arm of the Christian family; we are there to help the Christian family. Then that is what we should do. I don't think we can do that have this open door ministry so to speak. I just don't think it's possible.

You don't take everybody. There is a certain criteria there. I don't know what it is but you have to have an interview. You have to be an outgoing Christian in order to have your child going to school there. I think that is what the Christian school should be for. I just think it really brings the name of Christian down when you have some of these kids. . . . I mean, yes we can ask these kids. . . . They don't understand what it is all about

because they still believe in Santa Claus. How can they separate what is real and what is not if they still believe in Santa Claus? I just really feel that we are giving into the idea that they are a Christian. Most of them aren't. You come across one or two. Usually you find that Christian parent behind them when you hear them talking. Well, we need to pray about. It's the Christian parent behind. I can say it and it is not going to make a difference. But when it's that Christian parent who is saying it at home they've heard it all these years, they're going to say it in school too. That's what we should be about. We're giving these other students the idea that they're a Christian just because they attend a Christian school. They have raised their hand and that just really bothers me sometimes.

I just think we need to beef up on some things. One of the things I think we need is an administrator who will get things done. And will not listen to gripes and complaints, that's not for here and just go for it. And just say this has got to get done and get some other little things going as well.

Teacher D agrees:

We need to have in writing that this is what is going to happen. I think there is not the consistency that needs to be there. I think a mission statement is great to have. But if you don't have people follow it then it becomes a problem. I think that there are going to be people that don't necessarily understand at all the mission statement, but I think that you need to understand what it is saying overall. I think to have this written paper and just have writing on it or just have scripture on it I think that some people just don't get that.

I think there are different ways to learn things. I think that some people don't realize that you can't just see it you have to also hear it too. I think that overall that the mission statement changes. I am not saying that is a negative or positive I just that that there is no consistency there.

Teacher E sees a need for the following:

I wish that we had some kind of parenting program. We tried to get started a long time ago and never came to fruition because it was a real long commitment that people would have to make. I think that parents need to be trained to be parents. We see parents that don't know how to parent. We have and that in turn then defeats the purpose of a parent-teacher relationship because the parent sides with the child. They don't understand the teacher.

If the teacher is called to be here and to do this work then the teacher obviously is going to be doing their very best to do what the Lord and the administration and everybody else wants them to do. I would love to see some kind of parenting program here teaching people how to be good parents.

I would love to see more of a mentoring program where we really do take total responsibility for people who are coming in for their first year. I mean we have got people who come in and use us for a year as a stepping stone for someplace else. That is too bad because some of them. That is fine let them go because they are not really

interested in a ministry. But others would probably do great if they had a chance and had some help. To me those are the two biggest issues.

But, if you could say something to somebody who wanted to come in and teach for the first time and stay I would say you need to have something that is going to help the parents understand what you are doing and why you are doing it. You need to teach the parents to parent. And then getting some help for new teachers so that they don't feel so overwhelmed or lost or think that they know it all and don't.

Teacher F:

I think that we need more organizational skills. I think that we need to work on chain of command. I think that we need to work on confidentiality. When something is shared that it stays where it is supposed to be and you don't have to hear it down the road from somebody else.

I think we need professionalism. It is the main thing that we need to work on. It is hard when you are in a Christian setting because sometimes your love and your gentleness and your Godliness . . . you want to please and make everybody happy gets in the way. But I still feel like that we need to be very professional when dealing with other people.

Not to the point where we are cold or anything like that. But they need to see that we are very qualified to teach their children. Loving the Lord and being a Christian is wonderful. But that should not be the only prerequisite for being a Christian teacher.

Teacher G:

The administration needs to support decisions or ideas that you may have. Maybe not necessarily support but willing to hear but just because they're a new teacher. They may have really good ideas that need to be heard and maybe put into practice.

Just in the experience I have had, being more supportive of your teachers. When they [the teachers] are attacked, not physically but verbally attacked, by parents or from the parents, the administration needs to say, "hey, these are my teachers, they are certified, they are qualified to do their job. Please refrain from talking to them like that." I mean, nobody deserves to be treated that way. If the parents are speaking to us that way and have no respect for us then I know the students won't. I think I have tried to deal with it on my level, but I think that the administration needs to handle the parents when they start getting to a point where they are hateful.

I think that they need to be held accountable for how they act as parents too. Not just the students, but the parents. Well, administration just needs to take a look at, "yes, our parents are the ones who pay the money, but what about us." We wouldn't have a school if there were no teachers that were willing to stay here and work for, when I say a measly salary. Money is not everything in this world. But, you need to be paid for what you do as well. If you are not getting paid a lot, then there is something holding you here. It needs to be. We need to feel like we are worth something and that we are doing our jobs right.

The suggestions and recommendations offered by the teachers clearly communicated what they believe would be beneficial to them and their job satisfaction as a Christian school teacher. Many of these suggestions mimicked the literature review conducted for this study. For instance, the teachers state that they would like to see the following: (a) supportive administration, (b) supportive and responsible parents, (c) mentoring programs, (d) consistency in policy, and ultimately (e) an increase in professionalism and organization.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the study conducted and the resulting findings, there are a few recommendations for future research offered here. The first recommendation is to further explore the impact administrative and organizational practices have on the job satisfaction or dissatisfaction of Christian teachers employed in a Christian school. Although the teachers in this study described having a positive and friendly relationship with the administration, there was a concern they were not always supported. Additionally, the inconsistency in policies and procedures seemed to cause some concern and discomfort. Therefore, it seems necessary to further look into this area of education to understand the situation in more depth.

Additionally, the apparent need for a feeling of belonging and acceptance was significant to the teachers in this study. In conjunction, the teachers indicated in their recommendations to administration they would like to see a more formalized mentoring program. Therefore, there is a recommendation to further explore the impact of a formal versus informal mentoring system. Questions to possibly consider include: Is it feasible to design and implement a formal mentoring system in the Christian school? What impact does the mentoring system have on job satisfaction?

Finally and most significantly is the last recommendation as a result of this study. As practicing one's faith in the workplace has been found to have a significant impact on the job satisfaction and commitment of teachers employed in The Christian School, it appears this is a critical aspect of which not only school administrators, but of which management in other industries must take note. Of concern to the researcher, however, was the lack of scholarly literature available surrounding the topic of spirituality in the workplace with specific regard to teachers.

As this is the foundation upon which The Christian School bases its mission, it is relevant to continue to conduct research surrounding this element of the workplace. Therefore, the researcher believes this study should be expanded beyond that of one Christian school to multiple Christian schools across various demographic areas.

First, by expanding research on the effect of spirituality in the workplace in the Christian school, the current study has the possibility of gaining additional validation. Second, and more importantly, by continuing research in the area of spirituality in the workplace, administrators and policy makers may gain a deeper sense of what must be accomplished in order to increase the retention of their most valuable resource, the teacher. By doing this there is the increased possibility of improving the quality of education offered to our children. This is critical for two reasons: (a) students enrolled in Christian schools deserve to be educated by high-quality, committed teachers who are satisfied with their jobs and (b) as commanded by God we are to "teach a youth about the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it" Prov. 22: 6.

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APPENDIX

The primary interview questions utilized were as follows:

Demographic/historical information

How many years have you been teaching?

How many years have you been teaching in the current school?

Do you have a four-year degree? If so, what is the degree?

Do you have an advanced degree? If so, what is the degree?

Do you meet the qualifications to teach for the state in a public school?

Do you have a state issued teaching certificate?

What grade do you currently teach?

Teaching

Do you anticipate that you will continue with teaching as your chosen career?

If so, describe why you will continue teaching?

Describe why you chose teaching as a career.

What do you enjoy about teaching?

What do you dislike about teaching?

Describe your relationships with your students.

Describe your relationships with your colleagues.

Describe your relationships with your previous administrators.

Describe your current relationships with your administrators.

Describe a memorable experience in regard to teaching.

Do you intend to sign a new contract for the upcoming school year?

What are you feeling as you are considering signing a new contract for the upcoming school year?

What are your thoughts in regard to signing a new contract for the upcoming school year?

If you are staying to teach for another school year, describe your reasons for staying.

If you are not staying to teach for another school year, describe your reasons for leaving.

What do you enjoy about teaching in a Christian school?

How do you feel about being able to pray with your students?

What has been your experience being able to pray with your colleagues or with your students?

How would you describe your experience working in a Christian organization as being different (if you see it as different) than working in an organization which is not defined as a Christian organization?

How would you describe a challenging experience that you have had teaching?

How did you handle or cope with that situation?

How would you describe the benefits?

How would you describe the rewards?

What are your primary reasons for teaching in a Christian school?

How would you describe the call to teaching or of having a call?

How is your faith a part of your teaching?

How do you feel about being able to have your faith as a part of your teaching?

Did you ever have an opportunity to have a mentor?

Has there ever been anyone in your teaching experience you have mentored?

If you were given an opportunity to change some of the things you have concerns about, what are the things that you would want to have done differently?

What do you think could be done, improved upon, or changed for new teachers in the profession to want to keep teaching in a Christian school?

Have you considered entering a profession other than teaching?

In what ways have you had job satisfaction working in a Christian school?

Have you ever considered leaving to go to (or back to) a public school?

If you were to have an opportunity to sit down with a new teacher who was just getting ready to start their first year, what would you say to that person? What words of advice would you offer?

When you worked in an organization where you couldn't talk about your faith, how did you handle that?

What is it that really motivates you?